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Analytical Study of The Miraculous Night Journey and the Mystery of Time Travel in the Light of Science

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Abstract

Possibility of time travel is in question for the past few decades in modern day science. But the phenomenon of miraculous nature has been discussed in Holy Quran almost fifteen centuries ago. Be it the story of Uzair A.S time-lapse of Ashab e Kahf, Throne of Sheeba or the Night of Travel, phenomenon of time travel and time portals are beautifully explained. In this specific research, mysteries and theories related to the night of Isra wal Miraj will be highlighted in light of quantum mechanics. Faith of Muslims in the miraculous nature of Ira wal Miraj is as old as the journey of Holy

Prophet (PBUH) itself. But the research and experimentation of this topic is a relatively new thing for Muslim researchers and scientists. Even though Holy Quran does not owe anything to science but science and its theories owe a lot more to Islam than it accepts. But Allah Almighty has also ordered us several times in Holy Quran to “observe”, to do “Tafakur” in the very forces of nature. Hence, it is crucial to understand the scientific phenomenon of events of Miraj un Nabi (SAW)

Key Words: Miraculous, Time, Science, travel, journey, nature, universe

Introduction

The night of Isra wal Miraj is one the most significant and highlighted events in the history of Islam and specifically in the final era of Prophethood. It is one of the many greatest signs of Allah Almighty and a beautiful miracle of Holy Quran. Muslims all over the world throughout the chapters and pages of history have shown great devotion towards this event of miraculous nature. Even when there was no proper machinery based vehicles, advent of human flight was nowhere close to reality and humanity was unaware of vastness, heights, depths and dimensions of the universe, believers and followers of Allah Almighty and His Prophet (PBUH) believed this miracle in an eye blink. But the exploratory study of this journey has become a highlighted discussion contemporary scientists now. Whether time travel is possible or not has become a hot debate over the past few decades. Scientists have disclosed several theories in to the possibility of this phenomenon. But even before the slightest, wildest thoughts in the minds of modern scientists generated, Holy Quran talked about time travel at several occasions out of which, the night of Isra is of great importance.

The phenomenon of time travels through the journey of Miraj in light of theories presented by quantum mechanics and possibility of further time travel will be discussed in detail in this research paper. Before moving towards the quantum mechanics and its relation with the night of Miraj, have a look at the brief introduction of Isra wal Miraj in following lines:

Introduction of Isra wal Miraj

The night of Isra holds a great value in Islamic history since it marked the journey of Holy Prophet (PBUH) to the greatest heights of skies.

The Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) miraculous nighttime voyage and ascent, during which He (PBUH) travelled from Makkah to Masjid Al-Aqsa in Jerusalem before rising to heaven, took place. The trek by night from Makkah to Masjid Al-Aqsa is known as Isra'. The mi'raj is the pilgrimage to the sky from Masjid Al-Aqsa.

It is one of the most significant examples of time travel which literally took place in a blink of an eye. Allah Almighty says in Holy Quran:

سُبْحٰنَ الَّذِيْٓ اَسْرٰى بِعَبْدِهٖ لَيْلًا
مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ اِلَى
الْمَسْجِدِ الْاَقْصَا الَّذِي بَرَكْنَا
حَوْلَهٗ لِنُرِيَهٗ مِنْ اٰيٰتِنَا اِنَّهٗ
هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْبَصِيْٓ ۱

Holy is He Who carried His servant by night from the Holy Mosque (in Makkah) to the farther Mosque (in Jerusalem) whose surroundings We have blessed that We might show him some of Our Signs.¹ Indeed He alone is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.

لَقَدْ رَاٰى مِنْ اٰيٰتِ رَبِّهٖ
الْكُبْرٰى . 2

and he certainly saw some of the greatest
Signs of His Lord.

Al-Isra' wal-Mi'raj took place while the Prophet (saw) was going through a period of extreme adversity and suffering. The Prophet (saw) and his followers were continuously mocked, degraded, and oppressed by the Quraysh, who were both His (PBUH) tribe and His (PBUH) relatives. Additionally, the Prophet (saw) had just endured the Year of Suffering ('Aam al-Huzn), in which He (saw) lost his cherished wife Khadijah (RA), as well as his uncle Abu Talib, who had served as both his defender and ally.

In addition to all of these difficulties, Ta'if's residents cruelly rejected the Prophet (saw) when He (PBUH) visited the city to promote the message of Islam by sending their kids out into the streets to stone him until he fled.

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) received a wonderfully lovely and consoling gift after going through so much anguish and suffering. He (PBUH) was brought to The Divine Presence, the origin of all solace and hope along with the Sacred Sanctuary and the heavens. Therefore, one of Al-Isra' wal-Mi'raj's most crucial lessons is that:

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا²

"with every hardship [there will be] ease."

There are various Prophetic narrations about the journey of Isra wal Miraj which states the miraculous nature of this events. These narrations have been presented in the most authentic books of Ahadith; Bukhari, Muslim and Tirmazi. Some of them are following:

It is narrated about the night of Miraj that:

" فُرِجَ سَفْفِي وَأَنَا بِمَكَّةَ، فَنَزَلَ جِبْرِيْلُ - عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ - فَفَرَجَ صَدْرِي، ثُمَّ غَسَلَهُ بِمَاءِ زَمْزَمَ، ثُمَّ جَاءَ بِطَسْتٍ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ مُمْتَلِيٍّ حِكْمَةً وَإِيمَانًا، فَأَفْرَغَهَا فِي صَدْرِي، ثُمَّ أَطْبَقَهُ، ثُمَّ أَخَذَ بِيَدِي فَعَرَجَ إِلَيَّ السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا. قَالَ جِبْرِيْلُ لِحَاظِنِ السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا افْتَحْ. قَالَ مَنْ هَذَا قَالَ جِبْرِيْلُ " ³

"The roof of my house was made open while I was at Makkah (on the night of Mi'raj) and Jibril descended. He opened up my chest and washed it with the water of Zamzam. The he brought

the golden tray full of Wisdom and Belief and poured it in my chest and then closed it. The he took hold of my hand and ascended to the nearest heaven. Jibril told the gatekeeper of the nearest heaven to open the gate. The gatekeeper asked, "Who is it?" Jibril replied, "I am Jibril."

This is one of the most famous and most quoted narration presented in Sahih Bukhari about the beginning of Isra wal Miraj.

Narration about “The Buraq”

It is famously narrated that Holy Prophet (PBUH) made this journey while travelling at the back of an animal named “buraq”. The word Buraq comes from Burq , which means " The Lighting" . It is narrated that:

ثُمَّ أُتِيْتُ بِدَابَّةٍ أَبْيَضٍ يُقَالُ لَهُ الْبُرَاقُ فَوْقَ الْجَمَارِ وَدُونَ الْبَعْلِ يَمُجُّ خَطْوُهُ عِنْدَ أَقْصَى
طَرْفِهِ فَحَمَلْتُ عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ انْطَلَقْنَا حَتَّى أَتَيْنَا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا فَاسْتَفْتَحَ⁴

“I was then brought a white beast which is called al-Buraq, bigger than a donkey and smaller than a mule. Its stride was as long as the eye could reach. I was mounted on it, and then we went forth till we reached the lowest heaven”

This narration about “buraq” is of great importance when it is studied in light of quantum mechanics and theories of time travel which will be discussed further with details in this study.

It goes without saying that if the incident had only been a mystic vision, it would not have been introduced by the words that imply the Being who caused it is devoid of all flaws and imperfections. Once more, the phrase "took His servant by night" demonstrates that this was a physical voyage that Allah arranged for the Prophet (PBUH) to take in His signs with His (PBUH) physical eyes rather than a vision or dream. One must therefore acknowledge that Allah Almighty provided for His Prophet (PBUH) to go physically and observe His (PBUH) surroundings, rather than just having a spiritual experience.

It is odd that some people believe that this extraordinary journey is not possible, but now that man, with his very limited power, has been able to reach the moon, it is ridiculous to claim that Allah Almighty, with His unlimited power, could not have made it possible for His Messenger (PBUH) to complete the journey in the incredibly brief amount of time it did.

The Knowledge of Hadith gives a more thorough account of this travel. It's interesting to think that during Isra and Miraj, respectively, this journey may experience both kinematic and gravitational time dilation.

The prophet (PBUH) traveled on Al Buraq which is described as a winged steed that moved with unimaginable speed. The journey involved moving from east to west and back again. It is during this part of the journey kinematic time dilation would have been achieved. The prophet (PBUH) after reaching Bait ul Maqdas (in Jerusalem) ascended to heaven. This ascension to heaven would require coming out of a gravitational field which in turns also explains the gravitational time dilation that would have occurred ⁵.

Al Isra Wal Miraj in light of Einstein Theory of Relativity and Quantum Laws

While metaphysical phenomena are not within the purview of modern science, and Islam's tenets do not require scientific validation to be upheld, it is noteworthy that recent discoveries in contemporary physics raise intriguing possibilities regarding the potential for the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) Mi'raj.

One of the most compelling theories for time travel is Einstein's theory of relativity. According to Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity, time is relative, meaning that its velocity changes depending on your frame of reference. It is not always possible for witnesses to describe the motion of a bouncing ball in two different frames of reference, just as it is not always evident when or how long anything took to happen. A second could be longer in one reference frame than it is in another.

General relativity follows from Einstein's principle of equivalence: on a local scale it is impossible to distinguish between physical effects due to gravity and those due to acceleration.

Gravity is treated as a geometric phenomenon that arises from the curvature of space-time. The solution of the field equations that describe general relativity can yield answers to different physical situations, such as planetary dynamics, the birth and death of stars, black holes, and the evolution of the universe ⁶.

Experimental evidence for general relativity includes observations of gravitational lenses, Mercury's orbit, time dilation in the Earth's gravitational field, and gravitational waves resulting from merging black holes. It is reported that the same phenomena were employed on the night of Isra.

Black Holes and Time Travel in light of Holy Quran

Allah Almighty refers to the idea of black holes in “Surah al Tariq” of Holy Quran. It says:

وَالسَّمَاءِ وَالطَّارِقِ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الطَّارِقُ النُّجْمُ الثَّاقِبُ ⁷

“ By the heaven and the nightly star! And what will make you realize what the nightly star is? ‘It is’ the star of piercing brightness.”

The word "althaqibu," which comes from the root "thaqaba," which means "hole," is used in the poem to denote "piercing, opening a hole, penetrating, and passing through." "Puncture" is the term used in scientific journals to characterize black holes. The Qur'an uses this word to explain the characteristics of black holes, and it does so with much acumen. The Qur'an's statement of this star-related characteristic is significant proof that it is, in fact, Allah's exact word.

Numerous new findings concerning celestial occurrences in the universe were made during the 20th century. The black hole is one of these objects, which has only lately been observed. These are created when a star that has run out of fuel collapses in on itself. The result is a black hole that has zero volume, infinite density, and a tremendously strong magnetic field. Even with the most powerful telescope, we are unable to view black holes because of their intense gravitational pull, which prevents light from leaving them. Nonetheless, one can observe a collapsed star of this kind by observing the impact it makes on its surroundings. Allah calls attention to this issue in Surah Al-Waqi'a by swearing upon positions of stars. Allah Almighty says:

8 فَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِمَوَاقِعِ النُّجُومِ وَإِنَّهُ لَقَسَمٌ لَّو تَعْلَمُونَ عَظِيمٌ

“So, I do swear by the positions of the stars
and this, if only you knew, is indeed a great
oath.”

Light cannot escape from a black hole because it is such a high concentration of mass in a small space. The enormous gravitational field captures the photons and even the fastest particles. For example, the final stage of a typical star, three times the mass of the Sun, ends after its burning out and its implosion as a black hole of only 20 km (12.5 miles) in diameter! Black holes are “black,” i.e. veiled from direct observation ⁹.

According to Albert Einstein's general theory of relativity, matter and energy have an odd influence on the cosmos. Space is bent and stretched by matter and energy. The more space that is bent and stretched around an item, the more massive it is.

A large item forms a space valley of sorts. Objects tumble into the valley as they approach.

Time is stretched along with space. When a clock is close to a huge item, its ticking rate will be slower than when it is next to a much smaller object. In comparison to a clock on Earth, one located close to a black hole will tick incredibly slowly. That being said, the possibility of Isra wal Miraj through black hole hits too close to home.

Dilation of Time

Time dilation is defined as the "slowing down" of a clock as experienced by an observer moving in relation to the clock, in accordance with special relativity theory. The miracle of the night of Isra demonstrate this phenomenon.

“In special relativity, an observer in inertial (i.e., nonaccelerating) motion has a well-defined means of determining which events occur simultaneously with a given event. A second inertial observer, who is in relative motion with respect to the first, however, will disagree with the first observer regarding which events are simultaneous with that given event. (Neither observer is wrong in this determination; rather, their disagreement merely reflects the fact that simultaneity

is an observer-dependent notion in special relativity.) A notion of simultaneity is required in order to make a comparison of the rates of clocks carried by the two observers. If the first observer's notion of simultaneity is used, it is found that the second observer's clock runs slower than the first observer's by a factor of Square root of $\sqrt{1 - v^2/c^2}$, where v is the relative velocity of the observers and c equals 299,792 km (186,282 miles) per second—i.e., the speed of light. Similarly, using the second observer's notion of simultaneity, it is found that the first observer's clock runs slower by the same factor. Thus, each inertial observer determines that all clocks in motion relative to that observer run slower than that observer's own clock”¹⁰

Conclusion

It is an undeniable fact that the answer to the time-space riddle will determine whether the Mi'raj is true. An implicit acceptance of the concept of time—which is streaming through the world and binds and controls everything—was there in the query at the start of the essay. In actuality, Newton and other early physicists made this assumption about absolute time. Time and space were grouped together under Einstein's theory of relativity, which meant that they were not absolute concepts in and of themselves and could vary depending on moving and stationary things. Two distinct processes for slowing down time have been demonstrated by the theory of relativity and confirmed by experiments. Despite providing numerous answers, physicists acknowledge that they are unable to fully unravel the enigma of time. In short, the answer to the question "how a human being can go a thousand-year-distance within a couple of minutes" is yes according to modern physics, which supports this claim with experiments. When we think carefully, we imagine that the ascent in the Mi'raj is not explicable by the sciences of today. Nonetheless, leading physicists disagree about whether the event is possible given the laws of physics. If complicated ideas of time and space, unknown at the time, are the only means by which science can explain an event that occurred 1400 years ago and occurs now, then it must be true.

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