

Quran and *KUN-FA-YAKOONU*

By: Khurshid Imam

At eight places in Quran, Allah says: “*kun fa yagoonu*” = “(Allah says) Be! And it is (it happens).”

This phrase is generally misunderstood by the Muslims. They think that it means whenever Allah decides something to happen, He orders “Be!” and then it happens **instantaneously**, **without any process and time duration in between.**

Wherever in the Quran, this phrase is used, indication is towards a process. For example:

بَدِيعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

Originator of the heavens and the earth. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, "Be," and it is. Quran: 2:117

A. *Kun fayagoonu* and creation of heavens and the earth:

This *ayat* talks about the creation of heavens and earth. Obviously the heavens and earth did not come into existence instantaneously. The process took several billion years. Moreover, Quran itself says that the heavens and the earth took six ‘*ayyaam* (plural of *yaum*)’ to come into existence. Quran 10:3, 25:59; 57:4;

So when it is said about the creation of the universe “*kun fa yagoonu*”, then this phrase means that the universe formed according to the laws set by Allah and its formation process took its due time (six long time intervals).

At all the other places in the Quran this phrase indicates a process.

B. *Kun fayagoonu* and birth of Prophet Jesus:

Consider one more example – the birth of Prophet Jesus (pbuh). Regarding this, Allah says that the birth of a child without a father is not anything impossible for Allah. He has to only order it “Be!” and it would take place. This is what happened in the case of Prophet Jesus. Does it mean that Prophet Jesus took birth instantaneously, without any fetal development period? The simple answer is no. The process took the normal time. So, again this clarifies that “*kun fa yagoonu*” does not mean to happen instantaneously.

So, “*kun fa yagoonu*” simply means that whenever Allah orders something to happen, it happens, but it takes its own due time as regulated by the laws set by Allah.

C. The word(s) "*kun fayagoonu*" appears 8 times in Quran.

1. To Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth: When He decrees a matter, **He says to it: "Be," and it is.** Quran 2:117

بَدِيعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

2. She said, "My Lord, how will I have a child when no man has touched me?" [The angel] said, "Such is Allah; He creates what He wills. When He decrees a matter, He only **says to it, 'Be,' and it is.** Quran 3:47

قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَمَمْ يَمْسَسُنِي بِشَرٍّ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

3. Indeed, the example of Jesus to Allah is like that of Adam. He created Him from dust; then He **said to him, "Be," and he was.** Quran 3:59

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

4. And it is He who created the heavens and earth in truth. And the day **He says, "Be," and it is.....** Quran 6:73

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

5. Indeed, Our word to a thing when We intend it is but that We **say to it, "Be," and it is.** Quran 16:40

إِنَّمَا قَوْلُنَا لِشَيْءٍ إِذَا أَرَدْنَاهُ أَنْ نَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

6. It is not [befitting] for Allah to take a son; exalted is He! When He decrees an affair, He only **says to it, "Be," and it is.** Quran 19:35

مَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ مِنْ وَلَدٍ سُبْحَانَهُ إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

7. Quran 36:77-81 talks about creation of human being from sperm, life to bones, resurrection in the life hereafter, production of fire, creation of heavens and the earth etc. and then Quran says: 36: 82. Verily, when He intends a thing, **His Command is, "be", and it is!**

إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

8. Quran 40: 67 says “*It is He Who has created you from dust then from a sperm-drop, then from a leech-like clot; then does he get you out (into the light) as a child: then lets you (grow and) reach your age of full strength; then lets you become old,- though of you there are some who die before;- and lets you reach a Term appointed; in order that ye may learn wisdom.*”

40: 68. It is He Who gives Life and Death; and when He decides upon an affair, **He says to it, "Be", and it is.**

هُوَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

D. Conclusion: At each place where Quran talks about *kun fayakoonu*, it is in the sense of formation of something by following the due process, by going through laws of Allah. Nothing unnatural happens in the house of Islam. Everything is natural and as per the laws of God.
