

# Author of the Quran does not know Mathematics

By Dr. Zakir Naik, Islamic Voice, April 2001

**Question:** According to Arun Shourie there is a mathematical error in the Quran. In chapter 4 verses 11 and 12 when you add up the different parts of inheritance given to the heirs, it is more than one. Therefore the author of the Quran does not know mathematics.

**Answer:** The Quran mentions about inheritance in many places, in

- Surah Al Baqarah-Chapter 2 verse 180
- Surah Al Baqarah-Chapter 2 verse 240
- Surah Al Nisa-Chapter 4 verses 7 to 9
- Surah Al Nisa-Chapter 4 verses 19 and 33
- Surah Al Maidah-Chapter 5 verses 105 and 108

Regarding the share of inheritance it is clearly given in Surah Nisa-chapter 4 verse 11, 12 and 176.

Let us examine the verses quoted by Arun Shourie, i.e. Surah Nisa chapter 4 verses 11 and 12:

Allah (swt) (thus) directs you as regards your childrens (inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two females: if only daughters, two or more, their share is two-thirds of the inheritance; if only one, her share is a half.

For parents, a sixth share of the inheritance to each, if the deceased left children; if no children, and the parents are the (only) heirs, the mother has a third; if the deceased left brothers (or sisters) the mother has a sixth. (The distribution in all cases is) after the payment of legacies and debts. Ye know not whether your parents or your children are nearest to you in benefit. These are settled portions ordained by Allah; and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

In what your wives leave, your share is a half, if they leave no child; but if they leave child, ye get a fourth; after payment of legacies and debts. In what ye leave, their share is a fourth, if ye leave no child; but if ye leave a child, they get an eighth; after payment of legacies and debts. [Al-Quran 4:11-12]

Islam explains the law of inheritance in great detail. The broad and basic outline is given in the Quran and the minute details are given in the Ahadith i.e. the tradition and sayings of the Prophet (Pbuh).

A person can spend his full life only on the research of the Islamic law of inheritance with its various permutations and combinations. Arun Shourie expects to know the law only by superficially reading two verses of the Quran without knowing the criteria.

It is similar to a person who wants to solve a mathematical equation but does not know the basic rule of mathematics, i.e. BODMAS which says that in a mathematical equation, irrespective of which mathematical sign appears first, you will first solve BODMAS: 1st Brackets Off, 2nd Division, 3rd Multiplication, 4th Addition and 5th Subtraction. If Arun Shourie does not know mathematics and first does multiplication

then subtraction, then brackets off, then division and finally addition, the answer that he will obtain is bound to be wrong.

Similarly, when the Quran mentions the law of inheritance in Surah Nisa chapter 4 verses 11 and 12, even though the childrens share is mentioned first and then that of the parents and spouses, according to the law of inheritance in Islam after paying off the debts and liabilities first, the share is given to the spouses and the parents depending on whether the deceased has left children or not, and whatever portion of wealth is remaining is divided between the sons and the daughters according to their respective shares.

So where does the question arise of the total coming to more than one? So it is not Allah who does not know mathematics but it is Arun Shourie himself who is ignorant about mathematics.