

# AL-QURAN

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## AT A GLANCE

### What is the Quran?

Al-Quran is the eternal miracle. It is the last Book of Allah sent for the guidance of humanity through the last Prophet, Muhammad, peace be upon him (PBUH).

### Revelation of the Quran

The Quran was revealed piecemeal throughout a period of about 23 years. The Prophet received the first revelation in 610CE, in the Cave of Hira in the Mountain of Light (Jabale-Noor), two and a half miles away from the House of Allah in the city of Makkah in Arabia.

The first revelation was the first five verses of *Surah* (chapter) Al-Alaq: "*Iqra bismi rabbikalla dhi khalaq. Khalaqal insana min alaq. Iqra wa rabbukal akram. Alladhi 'allama bil qalam. 'Allamal insana malam ya'lam,*" which means "Read in the name of your Lord who created, created man from a clot. Read, for your Lord is most Generous, Who teaches by means of the pen, teaches man what he does not know." (Al-Quran 96:1-5)

The last revelation was the third verse of *Surah* Al-Maidah, which was sent down to the Prophet in 632CE: "*Al yawma akmaltu' lakum dinakam wa amamtu alaikam ni'mati wa raditu lakumul islaama dinan',*" which means "Today I perfected your religion for you and completed my favor to you and have chosen for you Al-Islam as your religion." (Al-Quran 5:3)

*Surah* Al-Fatiha (The Opening Chapter) was the first complete chapter to be revealed and *Surah* An-Nasr was the last.

## **Divisions of the Quran**

Al-Quran is divided into thirty equal divisions, which are called juz in Arabic. There are 114 chapters, of varying length. The longest chapter is Al-Baqarah consisting of 286 verses and the shortest chapter is Al-Kawthar consisting of three verses only. The whole Quran has 6,666 verses containing 336,233 letters.

The chapters revealed before the migration of the Prophet to Madina are called Makkan, whereas those sent down after the migration are called Madinan.

## **Topics of the Chapters**

Makkan chapters generally consist of brief sentences that are full of enthusiasm, poetical, lofty and brilliant. They stress the Unity and Majesty of Allah, the Most Exalted, Most High (SWT), denounce idle worship, promise paradise for the righteous and warn wrongdoers of their punishment in Hellfire, confirm the prophet hood of Muhammad (PBUH), and remind humanity of the past prophets and events of their time.

On the other hand, the Madinan chapters are lengthy and the verses are more prosaic. They outline ritualistic aspects of Islam such as Zakah, Fasting, and Hajj, lay down moral and ethical codes, criminal laws, social, economic, and state policies, give guidelines for foreign relations, rules and regulations for battle and the captives of war. They also contain descriptions of some of the early battles of Islam, condemnation of hypocrites, emphasis on the unified basic message of all the past prophets, and confirmation that the process of prophet hood and revelation is complete, so that no Prophet will come after Muhammad (PBUH), no new book will be revealed, and Allah's religion is complete through Al-Quran. So here Allah (SWT) exhorted the followers of truth to make Al-Quran as their only guide.

## **The Importance of the Quran**

The Quran is considered the eternal miracle of Islam. It is the complete and best guide for living one's life and seeking Allah's pleasure. The teachings of the Quran are universal, addressed to all people throughout the world regardless of their creed and color. They enlighten man's soul, purify his morals, condemn all wrongs, order good deeds and call for the establishment of justice and fraternity through obeying Allah as the supreme authority. The Quran provides the regulations that create the proper relations between man and Allah and man and man. It leads man to understand his role in this world, encourages him to think and ponder, and guides him in the usage of natural resources. In short, the Quran provides all the guidance that humanity needs. Without the guidance of the Quran, humanity would still be groping in the darkness of ignorance.

## Compilation of the Quran

The Quran was revealed piecemeal, according to the needs of the time. Angel Jibrail (PBUH) brought it to the Prophet (PBUH) who would memorize it. Afterwards, it was preserved in two ways.

First, through memorization. There were a number of early Muslims who would memorize each revelation as soon as it was revealed and thus had the whole Quran memorized at the time of the final revelation. The tradition of memorizing the entire Quran still continues, and a person who does so is called a *Hafize Quran*.

Second, the Quran was preserved through writing. Whenever any revelation took place, it was written at once on tablets, palm branches, shorn of leaves, or animal skin. This was done primarily by Zaid bin Thabit, who was the main scribe out of the 42 scribes of the revelation. The Prophet (PBUH) set the order of the chapters under the guidance of Angel Jibrail (PBUH) and ordered his companions to maintain that order. Abu Bakr, the first caliph of Islam, compiled the Quran, and Uthman, the third caliph, made numerous copies and sent one copy to each state capital.

## Eternal Miracle

Al-Quran is the only ever-living miracle. Today no other miracle of any prophet exists. According to a survey, the number of *Huffaz* (*persons* who have memorized the whole Quran) today is more than 10 million.

Millions of editions and copies were printed and handwritten in almost every part of the world. They were also translated into most of the languages of mankind. During the period of over 1400 years since the Quran was revealed, not a single letter was changed. This is one of the greatest miracles of the Quran.

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