

# THE GLORIOUS QUR'AN

From Revelation To Recitation & Beyond

## *PRESERVATION OF THE QUR'AN*

Published By:



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## PRESERVATION OF THE QUR'AN

The compilation of the Qur'an is a unique phenomenon that is peculiar to Islamic history. The Qur'an is the only heavenly book that has been preserved in its original form, without a single error or distortion. It is preserved and recited in its original revealed form.

How can it not be preserved, when Allah has taken it upon himself to guard it and protect it? *“We, Ourselves, have sent down the Qur'an, and we are there to protect it.”*

Allah describes the Qur'an as: *“And surely, it is an unassailable book; that cannot be contested by falsehood, neither from its front, nor from behind – a revelation from the All-wise, the Ever-praised.”*

The Qur'an is the only divinely-revealed scripture whose preservation is guaranteed. Allah Ta'ala has taken this task upon himself to preserve the Qur'an. The responsibility of preserving earlier scriptures had been placed upon its recipients, without any divine aid.

The fact that Nabi ﷺ could not read and write was meant to be one of the greatest proofs that the Qur'an was not from him, but rather from Allah Ta'ala. If the Prophet ﷺ had been a writer, this might have given reason to doubt the Prophet's claim to prophethood, but since the Prophet ﷺ was illiterate, and well known to be so, then such a doubt could not exist.

## PRESERVATION BY MEMORY

The Qur'an has been transmitted to in two forms: orally and written.

As we know, the Qur'an Shareef was not revealed in a single revelation. It was revealed in a gradual process that continued for twenty-three years. During the initial stage of Islam, great emphasis was placed on memory as a means of preserving the noble Qur'an. Whenever a verse or a number of verses were revealed to Nabi ﷺ, he committed it to his memory. Initially, Nabi ﷺ would tend to repeat its words instantly. Thereafter, Allah Ta'ala directed him through the verses of Surah Qiyamah that he need not repeat the words of revelation hurriedly or immediately as wahi came down. Allah Ta'ala would himself endow him with a memory to memorise the words of the wahi once it was revealed. Thus, the noble chest of Nabi ﷺ was the most protected vault for the Qur'an, in which there was no error, mistake, editing or alteration.

Moreover, as a matter of additional precaution, the Prophet ﷺ used to recite the Qur'an before Jibreel عليه السلام every year during the month of Ramadan, and the year of his demise he completed a cumulative review of Qur'anic recitation twice with Jibreel عليه السلام. The companions themselves were also eager to memorise the Qur'an. The companions were blessed with extraordinary memories. They would recite what they memorised in Tahajjud Salah. One of the most admirable and outstanding attributes of this Ummah is the fact that the Qur'an is committed to memory and preserved in the hearts of its adherents.

## COMPANIONS WHO MEMORISED THE QUR'AN

Allamah Suyuti (Rahimahullah) mentions more than twenty well known persons who memorised the revelation, among them were Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali, Ibn Masud, Abu Hurairah, Abdullah bin Abbas, Abdullah bin Amr bin Al Aas, Aisha, Hafsa, and Umme Salma ؓ.

From among them, Nabi ﷺ himself recommended four persons especially: Abdullah bin Amr mentioned Abdullah bin Masud and said: I shall forever love that man, for I heard Nabi ﷺ saying: "Take (learn) The Qur'an from the four: Abdullah bin Masud, Salim, Mu'adh and Ubai bin Ka'b ؓ.

Another Hadith informs us about those companions who memorised the Qur'an in its entirety and revised over it with Nabi ﷺ before his demise.

Qatada (Rahimahullah) narrated: "I asked Anas bin Malik ؓ, who collated the Qur'an at the time of Nabi ﷺ? He replied, "Four, all of whom were from the Ansar: Ubai bin Ka'b, Mu'adh bin Jabal, Zaid bin Thabit, and Abu Zaid ؓ. (*The Noble Qur'an - Qari Ismail Londt*)

This tradition continued among the companions after the Prophet's death and, later, among all generations of Muslims that have followed, until today.

## PRESERVATION BY WRITING AND RECORDING

Since the Prophet ﷺ could not write these verses himself, he had appointed a number of Sahabah ؓ as scribes of the Qur'an Shareef. Amongst them Hazrat Zayd bin Thabit, the four rightly guided khalifs, Hazrat Ubay bin K'ab, Hazrat Zubair bin Awwam, Hazrat Muawiyah, Hazrat Mughira bin Shu'bah, Hazrat Khalid bin Walid, Hazrat Thabit bin Qays, Hazrat Shurahbeel, Hazrat Abdullah bin Rawaha, Abdullah bin Arqam Hazrat Aban bin Said ؓ. As soon as a verse was revealed, the Prophet ﷺ would call one of them and dictate the verses received in the fresh revelation.

Once the newly revealed verses were written, Nabi ﷺ would order the writer to read what was written. Due to the shortage of paper, the verses were mostly written on pieces of parchments, palm-leaves, animal bones, shoulder blades of animals, skins of animals, tree-leaves, and on stone slabs and rock. Nabi ﷺ used to direct the scribes to the placement of the new verses in a respective surah. Once the revelation was dictated by Nabi ﷺ in this way, the other Sahabah ﷺ would memorise the verses and prepare copies for their own use. A large number of the noble Sahabah ﷺ of Nabi ﷺ had thus memorised the Qur'an Shareef and committed it to writing as well. A large number of companions would make copies of the Qur'anic verses and keep them for personal recollection.

## **WHY WAS THE QUR'AN NOT PRESENTED IN A COMPLETE BOOK?**

Nabi Muhammad ﷺ did not present the revelation collected and arranged in a single written volume or book. There are a number of good reasons for this:

1. Because the revelation did not come down in one piece, but at intervals and was received continuously until the end of the Prophet's life.
2. Because some verses were abrogated in the course of revelation, and therefore flexibility needed to be maintained.
3. The verses and surahs were not always revealed in their final order, but were arranged later.
4. Nabi ﷺ lived for only nine days after the last revelation.
5. There was no dispute or doubt about the accuracy of the Qur'an during the time of the Prophet that occurred afterwards when he, as the final authority, was no longer present.





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