

Makki and Madani Verses

Learning Objectives:

- To understand the difference between Makki and Madani verses.
- To be able to identify a Makki or Madani verse when reading the Quran.
- To understand why it is important to know the difference between Makki and Madani verses.

The Quran was revealed over 23 years, mainly in the Holy cities of Makka and Madina. To decide whether a verse is Makki or Madani, the criteria was the Hijra, the Prophet's migration from Makka to Madina. Any verse revealed prior to the migration, is classified as Makki, and any verse revealed after the migration, is classified as Madani.

In this definition it is not where the verse was revealed, but whether it was revealed before or after the Hijra; eg the verses revealed at the conquest of Makka, in 8AH, are considered Madani because these verses were revealed after the Hijra, although the actual place of revelation was Makka.

According to this definition:

The Makki phase lasted about 13 years – from the time of the first revelation until the entry of the Prophet (S) into Madina after his migration; about 2/3 of the Quran was revealed then.

The Madani phase lasted about 10 years – from the time of the entry of the Prophet into Madina until his death in 11AH; about 1/3 of the Quran was revealed then.

The differences between the Makki and the Madani verses

Each phase of revelation of the surah (Makki or Madani) catered for a different need, and a different audience:

	Makka	Medina
Muslim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very few Muslims • Had no government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of people were Muslims • Already established an Islamic State
Non-Muslim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polytheists of Quraysh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People of the book, mostly Jewish

As the needs of the Muslim community changed, so did the style and content of the verses:

In the early stages of revelation, Islam was new to the people and their knowledge was basic and practise was simple and limited. In addition, the Muslims were oppressed and had very little power, and so they needed constant moral encouragement. Hence some of the characteristics of the Makki verses:

1. Lots of history. There are many stories of the previous generations, Prophets and nations, and the trials and tribulations faced by them and the believers at the hands of the disbelievers, and the warning to the disbelievers of the punishment suffered by the previous disobedient nations.
2. The verses that explain Belief - Usul: Tawhid, Prophethood and the Day of Judgement
3. All the verses where prostration (sajda) is obligatory (wajib) or recommended (mustahab)

In comparison, after the migration, the Muslims had their own state and were fairly well established. The basic beliefs of Islam had now been revealed and so the Muslims were now in need of Divine guidance in their daily and social lives. They also needed to know the rules and conduct of Jihad and the manner of inter-religious dialogue. Hence some of the characteristics of the Madani verses:

1. All verses which make a reference to the hypocrites in the Muslim ranks (Munafiqun).
2. The verses that discuss the shortcomings in the religion practised by the Jews and Christians - done by explaining the true teachings of Prophet Musa (A) and Prophet Isa (A).
3. The verses that explain Actions - Furu: Salaat, Sawm, Haj, Zakaat, Khums, Jihad...

Examples of how to spot a Makki or Madani verses:

	Makki	Madani
Form of Address	“O people” or “O children of Adam!”	“O you who believe!”
Length of the Verses and Chapters	Short e.g Most of the 30 th Juz is Makki	Long e.g Most of Surah Baqara is Madani

Why is it important to know if a verse is Makki or Madani?

To understand the history of the progress of the Muslim community.

To see the development of Islamic Sharia (law).

To see how the Prophet (S) dealt with all different groups of non-Muslims such as polytheists, Christians and Jews.

Helps us to understand the verse properly and benefit from its guidance if we know when the verse was revealed.

Activity:

Pick and read three Verses that have not been discussed in this lesson. Decide whether they are Makki or Madani. Why?

Key Points:

1. The Criteria to decide whether a verse is Makki or Madani is the Hijra.
2. The differences between the Makki and the Madani verses is to cater for the different Audiences in Makka and Madina and their needs
3. The Makki verses have more stories from the past and concentrate on the belief system, whereas the Madani verses focus more on the social aspect and the rulings.