

Importance of The Holy Qur'an

Learning Objectives:

- To understand the importance of the Quran.
- To be able to acknowledge how to show the Quran respect.
- To know what is recommended to do when reciting the Quran.

The Qur'an is the Book of Allah. It is in Arabic and every word in the Qur'an has come from Allah to Prophet Muhammad (S) through angel Jibra'eel. The Prophet (S) appointed special people known as "Scribes" to write down the words of Allah.

The Holy Qur'an is guidance to all. Other Divine Books were also sent to previous prophets.

These are:

- Suhuf to Prophet Ibrahim (A)
- Zabur to Prophet Dawood (A)
- Tawrah to Prophet Musa (A)
- Injeel to Prophet Isa (A).

The difference between the Qur'an and past revealed books is that the Qur'an is the only Divine Book that has remained unaltered. The Qur'an we have with us contains exactly the same words that were told to Prophet Muhammad (S) by Allah.



Birmingham University in their archives actually have 4 pages (parts of Surah 18 to 20) of a Quran that has been found to date back to the time of Imam Ali (AS); 568CE and 645CE. Photograph: Birmingham University/EPA

Respect and Rights of The Holy Qur'an

Now that we know that the Holy Qur'an is not an ordinary book, but a Divine Book sent by Allah for the guidance of all people, we must show respect to it. Once you show something respect, you are acknowledging its greatness.

Here are some of the points we need to remember:

A part of the Qur'an carries the same respect as the entire Qur'an. Allah says:

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ الْقُرْآنُ فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ وَأَنْصِتُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

And when the Quran is recited, then listen to it and remain silent, so that mercy may be shown to you.
[7:204]

Allah uses the word Qur'an for the part that is being recited. Therefore, if you have a binder or a booklet that contains passages from the Qur'an, you must treat it like a Qur'an. So if your Madrasah bag contains the Qur'an, or a part of it (eg. In your manual), take extra care of the bag.

Do not leaving the Quran open, if you are not reading it and do not put any another book above the Qur'an.

It is Haraam (forbidden) to make Najaasaat (impure things like blood and urine) touch the Qur'an. In the event where the Qur'an becomes Najis, for instance if it falls in Najis water, it is Waajib (obligatory) to purify it (make it Taahir).

Old and worn out copies of the Qur'an should be disposed in safe places. This includes sending them for recycling, burying them in the earth or casting in rivers.

When the Qur'an is being recited, listen to it and pay attention. There is reward in this.

Imam Ali Zaynul 'Aabideen (A) said: Whoever listens to a letter of the book of Allah, the Glorious and Almighty, without even reading it, Allah will write down for him one good deed, forgive a sin, and raise him a degree.

The Qur'an should be recited regularly. It is disrespectful to keep the Holy Qur'an unread.

Prophet Muhammad (S) said: Brighten your homes with reciting Qur'an; do not turn them into graves. Surely the house in which a lot of recitation takes place enjoys many blessings and the members benefit from it. Such a household shines for the inhabitants of Heaven as stars shine to the inhabitants of the earth.

On the Day of Judgment the Prophet (S) will complain to Allah about some Muslims who abandoned the Qur'an

وَقَالَ الرَّسُولُ يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا

And the Messenger cried out: O my Lord! Surely my people have treated this Quran as a forsaken thing.
[25:30]

It is also the right and respect of the Qur'an that it should be followed.

Imam Ja'far Sadiq (A) said: Lo! One, who learns the Qur'an, teaches it and practices according to it, I will guide and lead him to Paradise.

To know how to follow it, we need to turn to the Holy Prophet (S) and the Ahlul Bayt (A)

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said: I leave behind two weighty things among you: The Book of Allah and my family – the Ahlul Bayt. Indeed these two will never separate until they reach me near the pool of Kawthar.

When reciting the Holy Quran

Perform Wudhoo before you prepare to read the Qur'an. Allah says:

None can touch it (the Qur'an) save the purified ones (56:79).

Once Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (A) asked his son Ismail to read the Qur'an. The latter said that he was not in Wudhoo. The Imam said in that case he could recite it but should not touch the writings of the Qur'an.

When you begin reading the Qur'an, say:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed Shaytaan.

This is what Allah instructs us to do in the Holy Quran itself:

فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ {98}

So when you recite the Quran, seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Shaitan, [16:98]

Then say:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

It is highly recommended to sit facing Qiblaah when reciting the Qur'an.

Recite the Qur'an with Tarteel (in a good voice with rhythm) and slowly:

...وَرَتَّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلاً

...and recite the Quran as it ought to be recited. [73:4]

لَا تُحْرِكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ

Do not move your tongue with it to make haste with it, [75:16]

Read from the Qur'an by looking at the words instead of reciting from your memory.

Be Humble when reciting the Qur'an and open your heart and mind to the Qur'an and ponder over what you read.

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا

Do they not then reflect on the Quran? Nay, on the hearts there are locks. [Shakir 47:24]

Finish your recitation with:

صَدَقَ اللَّهُ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

Allah, the Sublime, the Great, is truthful in what He has said

Key Points:

1. The Quran is important because it is the words of Allah which has not been altered.
2. One of the main ways of showing respect to the Quran is to recite it regularly and follow its teachings.
3. The Quran is not an ordinary book, so when we recite it there is an etiquette that should be followed

The Event of Ghadeer

Learning Objectives:

- To become acquainted with the event of Ghadeer
- To memorise the Arabic and English translation of the verses related to the event of Ghadeer (5:67 & 5:3)

In the last year of the Holy Prophet's life, the year 10 AH, he performed his first and only Hajj. This was known as Hajjatul wida (the Farewell Hajj). In this journey lots of Muslims from different parts of Arabia including the Muslims of Madina took part in the pilgrimage with the Holy Prophet (S) to gain a great honour and credit.

While returning from his Hajj, the Holy Prophet (S) was with a huge caravan of nearly 100,000 Muslims. Suddenly he ordered the marching caravan to stop at Ghadeer Khum, a midway stop between Makka and Madina, which is today known as Johfa. Then this verse was revealed:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ ۖ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَغْتَ
رِسَالَاتِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ

O Messenger! Convey what has been sent to you from your Lord and if you do not do it then (it will be as if) you have not conveyed His message (at all) and surely Allah will protect you from (the mischief) of men. Verily Allah does not guide a disbelieving people. [5:67]

The Holy Prophet (SAW) mounted a tall pulpit, which was made out of saddles of the camels. Then he delivered a long sermon recounting his services towards the fulfilment of his mission as the messenger of Allah (SWT). He then told them that he will soon depart from this world and that he is leaving them with 2 weighty things - the Qur'an and his Ahlul Bait. These 2 will never get separated from each other until they meet him in heaven. Then he asked the audience whether he had conveyed to them the commands of Allah (SWT), enumerating them one after another.

The huge gathering in one voice said "yes." Then he said: "Do I have authority over your souls more than you yourselves?" They replied: "Certainly, O Messenger of Allah."

Then he asked Imam Ali (A) to come up. He held his hand and raised it up so high that the whole assembly of men and women saw him clearly.

He again addressed them: "O Men and Women! Allah is my Mawla (Master) I am the Mawla of the believers. I have a clear authority over your souls."

Then he added: "To whomsoever I am the Mawla, this Ali is his Mawla" and he repeated this 3 or 4 times. Then he said: "O Allah! Love him who loves Ali, and hate him who hates Ali."

At the end of the declaration, Jibra'il came down and revealed this verse to the Holy Prophet (SAW):

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

....."This day I have perfected for you your religion, and have completed my favour on you, and have chosen for you Islam as religion." [5:3]

Analysis

“O Messenger! Deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord and if you do not do it, then you have not delivered His message and Allah will protect you from the people, Indeed Allah does not guide the unbelieving people.”

In this verse only the Holy Prophet (SAW) is addressed. It states his duty, it begins with “O Messenger!” and continues very clearly commanding him only.

Then, the verse warns him that if he refrains from fulfilling this commandment, then he has not conveyed the message of Islam to the people at all.

After that, the revelation consoles him, that if he is anxious and worried about anything in particular, he should not be afraid of people for performing this duty. Allah (WT) will protect him.

At the end of the verse, as a threat and punishment to those who reject or deny this message the verse says: “Verily Allah does not guide the unbelieving people.”

This was the most important task the Holy Prophet (S) had to perform during the last few months of his life, such that not conveying this has been counted equivalent to the lack of Messengership wholly!

In different books of the scholars of both Sunnis and Shi’ah schools of thought, there are many authentic traditions recorded to say that this verse has been revealed at Ghadeer-e- Khum about the appointment of the successor for the Prophet (S) and the future fate of Islam and Muslims.

After the declaration at Ghadeer Khum, the Holy Prophet (S) said takbeer twice and then said,

“Allah is the Greatest upon the perfection of religion and completion of favour, and the Lord became pleased with my Messengership and Ali’s Mastership after me.”

The crowd congratulated Imam Ali (A) including Umar and Abu Bakr, saying:

بَخِ بَخٍ لَكَ يَا بَنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ ، أَصْبَحْتَ مَوْلَايَ وَمَوْلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ وَمُسْلِمَةٍ

“Congratulations O son of Abi Talib. You have now become my Mawla and the Mawla of every Muslim man and woman.”

HOMEWORK:

Memorise the Arabic and English translation of verse 5:67 and the portion of verse 5:3 that is related to the event of Ghadeer.