

Lecture No. 3: Holy Qur'an and its sciences – I

(Module 1(12): Introduction to the Holy Qur'an)

The literal meaning of the Qur'an:

The word Qur'an is derived from "Qira'at" (قراءة) which means to read. One opinion is that the word Qur'an is derived from the word "Qara" (قرأ) which means to collect.

Definition of the Holy Quran:

The Qur'an is the Word of Allah, which He revealed to Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), in both word and meaning, which is preserved in Mushaf (مصحف) and has come down to us in a continuous manner. It is a challenge for mankind to create something similar.

Names of the Quran:

Allama Jalaluddin Sayyuti has written fifty-five (55) attributes of Allah's Book derived from the Holy Qur'an in his famous book "Al-Attiquan fi Uloom al-Qur'an" (الاتقان في علوم القرآن). Allah Almighty has mentioned many names in the Qur'an itself, for example, Al-Qur'an, Al-Furqan, Al-Zikr, Al-Noor and Al-Kitab, etc.

(Module 2(13): Verses and Surahs of the Holy Qur'an)

The literal meaning of the verse is symbol or sign. The verses of the Qur'an are signs and symbols of the knowledge and wisdom of Allah while the term "Ayat" refers to a sentence of the Holy Qur'an which has a different status from the sentences before and after it. According to a popular saying, the number of verses in the Holy Quran is 6236.

Surahs of the Holy Quran:

A collection of more than two verses is called a surah. In the Arabic language, the literal meaning of the surah is elevation and exaltation. Each chapter of the Holy Quran is called a Surah as if each Surah is the name of a high place. There are a total of 114 surahs in the Holy Quran, the largest surah of the Holy Quran is Surah Al-Baqarah (سورة البقرة) and the shortest surah is Surah Al-Kawsar (سورة الكوثر).

Descending order:

The order according to which the Quran was revealed is called the order of descent (نزولي). In terms of revelation, the first five verses of Surah Al-Alaq (سورة العلق) were revealed first.

Tawqifi order:

Al-Tawqifi arrangement refers to the current arrangement of the Holy Qur'an, such as Surat al-Fatihah (سورة الفاتحة) at the beginning and Surat al-Nas (سورة الناس) at the end.

(Module 3(14): Fazail-e-Qur'an)

- Learning the Qur'an and teaching it to others is a noble and blessed act.
- There is one good deed recorded for reciting each letter of the Qur'an, and according to the hadith, one good deed is rewarded by Allah equal to ten good deeds. So if someone recites Alif (الف) , Laam(لام) , Meem(ميم) , he will get a reward equal to thirty good deeds.
- One of the sayings of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) means that the person who works carefully with understanding and reciting the Holy Qur'an. And he is busy in this auspicious process, and he does not get the opportunity or time to pray. So Allah Almighty says that because of his involvement in this work, He will give him a better reward than that of the supplicants.
- The meaning of the blessed hadith is that envy is not permissible except in two situations: one is with a person to whom Allah Almighty has given wealth and he spends it in the way of Allah Almighty. And the second is with the person whom Allah Almighty has blessed with the Quran, and he reads and teaches the Qur'an.

(Module 4(15): Compilation of the Holy Qur'an in the Prophetic era)

- The Holy Quran was revealed to the Prophet (PBUH) over a period of about twenty-three years, in the perspectives of different circumstances and needs.
- In view of the importance and greatness of the Holy Qur'an, the Prophet (PBUH) at the time of revelation used to repeat the Qur'anic verses quickly.

On this, Allah Almighty said:

لَا تُحَرِّكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتُحْضِلَ فِيهِ مِنْ أَلْقَامٍ أَفَلَا يَدْرِكُهَا نَافِثٌ مِنْهُ بِغَيْرِ الْحَرْثِ يُحِيطْ بِمَا شَاءَ لَا يَنْصُرُهُ الْقَوْمُ وَكَذَلِكَ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ (القيامة: 17-16:75)

“(O Beloved!) Do not move your tongue in a hurry (to learn the Qur'an by heart when it is revealed to you) assuredly, upon us rests its collection and preservation (in your breast) and its recitation (by your tongue).” (Al-Qi amah, 75: 16)

- A large number of the Companions memorized the Holy Qur'an, and in addition, the Prophet (PBUH) created a group of scribes of revelation who used to write down the Qur'anic verses on various objects for the purpose of preserving the Holy Qur'an.

(Module 5(16): Compilation of the Holy Qur'an in the era of Hazrat Abu-Bakr Siddiq R.A)

- After the martyrdom of a large number of Hufaz (حفظ) among the Companions in the Battle of Yamama, the concern of protecting the Holy Quran became intense among the Companions. So that the divine book of guidance be preserved for the people who would come later.

- Hazrat Umar (RA) advised Hazrat Abu Bakr (RA) to collect the Holy Quran in one piece. But Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (R.A.) hesitated because he could not make up his mind for it. He said: “How can we do what the Holy Prophet did not do.” Later, he expressed his willingness to do this work in view of Hazrat Umar's insistence and for the protection of the Quran for future.
- **Collection and Editing of the Quran:** Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq RA formed a two-member committee consisting of Hazrat Umar Farooq RA and Hazrat Zaid bin Thabit RA for the compilation and editing of the Holy Quran. So that, they might collect the verses of the Quran from the people and write it down in book form after researching and verifying them. For this purpose, he compiled the Holy Quran in book form keeping in mind some principles and methods. This compilation was initially named "The Master Copy" and later "Mushaf" (مصحف). This copy of the Mushaf was initially under the custody of the Caliph Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique RA and later, under the custody of the second Caliph Hazrat Umar Farooq RA. After the martyrdom of Hazrat Umar Farooq RA, that manuscript was preserved with Hazrat Hafsa, the daughter of Hazrat Umar Farooq RA and the mother of the believers and wife of the holy prophet, till the caliphate of Hazrat Uthman Ghani RA.

(Module 6(17): Compilation of the Holy Qur'an in the caliphate of Hazrat Usman Ghani R.A)

- When Islam spread out of Arabia and came to Asia, Central Asia and other distant lands, due to the differences between the Arabs and non-Arabs, there occurred differences in the way of reading of the Holy Quran.
- Hazrat Huzaifa bin Yaman RA came to Hazrat Uthman Ghani RA and reported that the people who became Muslims in the remote areas were differing in the recitation of the Quran because they were not familiar with the Arabic language and reading. Because of this, there was a fear of conflicts and clashes among Muslims on the reading of the Quran.
- Hazrat Usman Ghani formed a four-member committee for the collection of the Quran. In which there were Hazrat Zaid bin Thabit RA, Hazrat Abdullah bin Zubair RA, Hazrat Saeed bin Al-Aas RA and Hazrat Abd al-Rahman bin Harith bin Hisham RA. This committee compiled the Holy Quran on the Qurayshid dialect and then prepared seven identical copies of the Holy Quran. Which were sent to various major Islamic cities such as Makkah, Syria and Kufa etc.
- **Diacritics of Quran and Punctuation:** Since the people of Arabs were proficient in own language, they did not need diacritics i.e., zabar, zir, pesh and dots to read the Quran. But when the Quran reached the non-Arabs, it required diacritics to read it properly in whose absence there was a fear of misreading of the Quran. The responsibility of making diacritics of Quran was given to Abu Asad Al-Dawli, a great expert in literature and art of that time, in the Umayyad period.