

# **The Holy Quran, Some Basic Facts**

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This text is a short introduction to the basic facts about the Holy Quran and gives an overview about the Holy Book

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# **Introduction**

The Quran is the last revealed Book of Allah. It is a word-by-word record of Allah's communication with Prophet Muhammad, His last Messenger on earth. The Divine Message called Revelation (*Wahi*), was brought by the Archangel Jibrail (Gabriel) from time to time over a period of 23 years.

It is fully established by tradition and research that the Quran, in its present shape and form, was arranged in the lifetime of the Prophet in his own supervision. The Message was received by the Prophet as a Divine instruction to guide him as well as the people in specific situations, or as a response to the non-believers' objections. These Messages received at different times, were placed immediately in a particular Chapter (*Sura*) by the scribes as advised by the Prophet. There is consensus of Islamic scholars that the Quran in its present shape and form has existed through the centuries, without any change or alteration and there is no doubt about its authenticity.

The present book is intended to provide the facts about the Quran to the students. It is hoped however, that other readers will also find it useful, and it will help them in their understanding of the Quran.

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# **Introduction to the Basic Facts**

The Basic Facts on the Quran are culled from the Quran itself. It is also in a sense, the thumb-nail

'history' of the Quran, and the history of its translations. The history of the translations of the Quran is adapted from the translation and commentary of the Quran by A. Yusuf Ali.

I hope that the students of the Quran will find this modest attempt interesting.

### **Quran is the Manifesto of Islam**

Islam is the world's only major monotheistic religion that is also a total political system, complete with rules of law, a system of government, and an economic infrastructure.

Islam is not the religion of Muhammad, the Messenger of God (may God bless him and his Ahl al-Bayt). It is the religion of surrender to God's Will – the surrender implicit in the submission of Abraham (Ibrahim) and his son Ismael, in the supreme test – the attempted sacrifice expressed in the word *aslama*.

**Tauheed** or belief in the Oneness of God, is the central doctrine of Islam. All of Islam revolves around *Tauheed*. It is the first Article of Faith in Islam, and is summed up in the 112nd Chapter of the Quran (Sura Ikhlas) or (Purity of Faith), which reads as follows:

**"Say; he is God, the One and Only; (112:1).**

**God, the Eternal, Absolute; (112:2).**

**He begetteth not nor is He begotten; (112:3).**

**And there is none like unto Him." (112:4).**

Etymologically the term Quran simply means 'reading' or 'reciting'. Theologically it means the Word of God Almighty.

Quran, the Divine Book of Islam, was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (may God bless him and his Ahl al-Bayt), for the guidance of mankind, for all times to come. The Quran is the last and final revelation.

The first Revelation was brought to Prophet Muhammad by the Archangel Gabriel. The Prophet was 40 years old when this occurred. Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, forty years after the Year of the Elephant (570 AD), or thirteen years before the Hijra (the migration of the Prophet from Makkah to Medina in 622 AD). He was in the cave of Hira when he received the first Revelation. Hira is a cave on a hill, three miles north-east of Makkah in Arabia.

The first Revelation consisted of the following five verses:

**"Read! In the name of your Lord and Cherisher, (96:1).**

**Who created – created man out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood, (96:2).**

**Read! And your Lord is most bountiful, (96:3).**

**He who taught (the use of) the pen, (96:4).**

**Taught man that he knew not." (96:5).**

These five verses are at the beginning of the 96th Sura or Chapter of the Quran. The Chapter is called *Iqraa* (Read or Proclaim), or *Alaq* (the clot of congealed blood).

The last verse of the Quran which was revealed to Muhammad, the Apostle of Allah, was the following one:

***"This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." (5:3).***

This clause occurs in the 3rd verse of the fifth chapter *Al-Maida* (the Table Spread) of the Quran. It was revealed on the plain of *Ghadir*, on the 18th of *Zilhajj* of 10 AH, a date which corresponds to March 21, 632, when the Prophet had completed the Farewell Pilgrimage, and was returning from Makkah to Medina.

Since God Himself perfected Islam, it is not subject to any modification by anyone; it is impervious to change for all time. But Islam allows flexibility in the interpretation of its laws.

After the revelation of this verse, the Prophet of Islam, lived another 80 days in the world. No other revelation came to him during those eighty days. The Message was complete; the religion had been perfected. The Revelation had thus ended forever.

The opening Sura (chapter) of the Quran is *Al-Fatiha*. It is indeed the essence of Quran. It consists of seven verses. Recited at least seventeen times daily in the five daily prayers by every man and woman, old and young, this is the most recited prayer in the world. It is most inspiring to dwell upon each word of this miraculous revelation.

Sura *Al-Baqara* (the Cow), is the second chapter in Quran. It is the longest chapter in the Book and contains 286 verses. Also, its verse 2:282, is the longest verse of the Quran.

Ayat *Al-Kursi* (the Verse of the Throne), verse 2:255 also occurs in the Sura *Baqara*. It is one of the most important verses of the Quran, repeatedly recited by the Muslims for *thawab* (blissful reward).

*Al-Baqara* is also important because it encompasses the bulk of Islamic jurisprudence.

The second longest chapter in the Quran is the 26th Chapter, *Shuaraa* (the Poets), with 227 verses; the third longest is the 7th Chapter, *Araf*, (the Heights), with 206 verses; and the fourth longest is the 3rd Chapter, *Al-Imran*, with 200 verses.

The following three short Suras consists of three verses each.

1. *Al-Asr* (Time) – Chapter 103
2. *Al-Kauthar* (Abundance) – Chapter 108
3. *Al-Nasr* (Help) – Chapter 110

*Al-Kauthar* is the shortest Sura.

The Quran was completed in 23 years – from 610 AD to 632 AD.

The Quran is divided into 30 parts; it is sub-divided into 114 Suras. The Suras are designated as *Makkan* or *Madinite* according to where it was revealed. The number of Makkan Suras (those revealed in Makkah) is 70, whereas the number of Madinite Suras (those revealed in Medina) is 44.

Quran has 338,606 letters (*huruf*); 86,430 words (*kalemat*); and 6,666 verses (*ayat*). It has 39,582 signs of *kasra* (*zer*); 53242 *fatha* (*zabar*) and 8804 *zamma* (*pesh*). It has 1252 *tashdeed*, 1771 *madda* and 105,684 dots. It is the basis of religion, and the canon of ethical and moral life. It is also the first prose book in Arabic. Its style is Divine, and inimitable. It is one of the greatest miracles.

The following Suras (Chapters) have been named after the Prophets:

1. *Yunus* – Chapter 10
2. *Hud* – Chapter 11
3. *Yusuf* – Chapter 12
4. *Ibrahim* – Chapter 14
5. *Luqman* – Chapter 31
6. *Muhammad* – Chapter 47
7. *Nuh* – Chapter 71

We are not sure if Hazrat Luqman was a Prophet as the traditions vary.

Janabe Mary or *Maryam*, the mother of Prophet Jesus (*Isa*) (peace be upon them), is the only woman mentioned by name in the Quran. The 19th Chapter of the Quran – Maryam – is named after her. *Zaid* is the only companion of the last Prophet, mentioned by name in the Quran.

*Sura Anam* (the Cattle), is the sixth Chapter of the Quran. It has the names of 18 Prophets in four consecutive verses.

The following 28 Prophets have been mentioned by their names in Quran:

1. Adam
2. Nuh (Noah)
3. Ibrahim (Abraham)
4. Ismael
5. Ishaq (Isaac)
6. Yaqub (Yaqub)
7. Yusuf (Goseph)
8. Al-Yasa (Elisha)
9. Yunus

10. Lut
11. Saleh
12. Hud
13. Shuaib
14. Dawud (David)
15. Sulayman (Solomon)
16. Dhul-Kifl (Issiah)
17. Idris (Enoch)
18. Ilias (Alias)
19. Zakariya
20. Yahya (Gohn)
21. Ayub (Gob)
22. Musa (Moses)
23. Haroon (Aaron)
24. Isa (Jesus)
25. Uzair (Ezra)
26. Luqman
27. Zulqarnayn
28. Muhammad

Prophet Abraham (Ibrahim), has been called 'friend of Allah'; the verse 125 of the Sura *an-Nisaa* or the Women, (Chapter 4), reads as follows:

***"Who can be better in religion than one who submits his whole self to Allah, does good, and follows the way of Abraham the true in faith! For Allah did take Abraham for a friend." (4: 125)***

Prophet Abraham had two sons. "The younger son's progeny developed the Faith of Israel and that of Christ; the elder son's progeny perfected the more universal Faith of Islam, the Faith of Abraham the True." (A. Yusuf Ali).

Prophet Moses (Musa), was honored by Allah Who spoke to him directly; the verse 164 of the Sura *an-Nisaa* or the Women, (Chapter 4), reads as follows:

***"Of some Apostles We have already told you the story; of others We have not; and to Moses Allah spoke direct." (4: 164).***

The name of Prophet Muhammad (may God bless him and his Ahl al-Bayt) has been honored in Quran in the following verses:

1. ***"O Prophet! Truly We have sent you as a Witness, A Bearer of Glad Tidings, and a Warner" (33:45).***

2. **"And as one who invites to Allah's (Grace) by His leave, And as a Lamp spreading Light."** (33:46).
3. **"We have not sent you but as a universal (Messenger) to men, Giving them glad tidings, and warning them (against sin), but most men do not understand."** (34:28).
4. **"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, But (he is) the Apostle of Allah, and the Seal of the Prophets, And Allah has full knowledge of all things."** (33:40).
5. **"We have sent you not, but as a Mercy for all creatures."** (21: 107).

The name of Prophet, Muhammad occurs in Quran in the following five verses:

**- Chapter 3, Verse 144:**

***And Muhammad is no more than a messenger; the messengers have already passed away before him; if then he dies or is killed will you turn back upon your heels? And whoever turns back upon his heels, he will by no means do harm to Allah in the least and Allah will reward the grateful.***  
(3: 144).

**- Chapter 33, Verse 40**

***Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Last of the prophets; and Allah is cognizant of all things.*** (33:40).

**Chapter 47, Verse 2**

***And (as for) those who believe and do good, and believe in what has been revealed to Muhammad, and it is the very truth from their Lord, He will remove their evil from them and improve their condition.*** (47:2).

**Chapter 48, Verse 29**

***Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those with him are firm of heart against the unbelievers, compassionate among themselves; you will see them bowing down, prostrating themselves, seeking grace from Allah and pleasure; their marks are in their faces because of the effect of prostration; that is their description in the Taurat and their description in the Injeel; like as seed-produce that puts forth its sprout, then strengthens it, so it becomes stout and stands firmly on its stem, delighting the sowers that He may enrage the unbelievers on account of them; Allah has promised those among them who believe and do good, forgiveness and a great reward.***  
(48:29).

**Chapter 61, Verse 6 (as Ahmad)**

***And when Isa son of Marium said: O children of Israel! Surely I am the messenger of Allah to you, verifying that which is before me of the Taurat and giving the good news of an Messenger who will come after me, his name being Ahmad, but when he came to them with clear arguments they said: This is clear magic.*** (61:6).

Among all the contemporaries of the last Prophet of Islam, only two men have been mentioned by name in the Quran; they are Zayd bin Haritha and Abu Lahab. They are cited in the following verses:

1. **"Then when Zayd (bin Haritha) had dissolved (his marriage) with her, With the necessary (formality), We joined her in marriage to thee: "** (33:37).
2. **"Perish the hands of Abu Lahab (the Father of the Flame)! Perish he!"** (111: 1).

#### **In the Quran:**

Adam is mentioned 25 times, Idris twice, Nuh 49 times, Hud 8 times, Saleh 9 times, Ibrahim 49 times, Ismael 12 times, Ishaaq 17 times, Yaqub 16 times, Yusuf 27 times, Lut 27 times, Ayub 4 times, Shoaib 11 times, Musa 133 times (the most mentioned name of a Prophet), Haroon 19 times, Dawood 16 times, Sulayman 17 times, Yahya 7 times, Isa 36 times, Uzair once, Al-Yasa twice, Dhul-Kifl twice, Yunus 6 times, Ilias 3 times and Zakariah 7 times.

May Allah's peace be upon all of them.

#### **The first Ayat of the Quran:**

*Bismillahir Rahmaniir Rahim*, has 19 Arabic alphabets. It is interesting to note that whereas every chapter of the Quran starts with this Ayat (*Bismillah*), except for Sura *Tauba*, all *Kaleemats* (sentences) of the Quran, have one or more out of the 19 alphabets of *Bismillah* except for one Kalima, 'Qad Saghat' in Ayat 4 of the 66th Sura, *Tahreen*.

The Quran is called in its own text – by 55 titles according to Al-Suyuti's book, *Itqaan*. Some of these titles are given here under with their meanings:

1. *Al-Kitab*: The Book
2. *Al-Quran*: The Reading
3. *Al-Mubin*: The Enlightener
4. *Al-Kalam*: The Word
5. *Al-Burhan*: The Proof
6. *An-Noor*: The Light
7. *Al-Huda*: The Guide
8. *Az-Zikr*: The Reminder
9. *Ash-Shifa*: The Healing
10. *Al-Hikmah*: The Wisdom
11. *Al-Ali*: The Lofty
12. *Ar-Rahman*: The Mercy
13. *Al-Bayan*: The Explanation
14. *Al-Balagh*: The Message

Allah (swt) has used His Name, *Allah*, in the Quran 2698 times, *Rahman* 57 times, *Rahim* 114 times and *Ism* 19 times. These numbers are other than *Bismillahir Rahmaniir Rahim*.

Sura *Mujadilah* is the only Sura of the Quran, where in each verse (Ayat), the name of Allah has been mentioned.

Whereas the longest verse (Ayat) of Quran is Verse of Sura *Al-Baqara* 2:282, the shortest verse is Verse of Sura *Muddaththir* 74:21.

There are 29 letters in the Arabic alphabet (counting *hamza* and *alif* as two letters), and there are 29 Suras (chapters) which have abbreviated letters prefixed to them. These abbreviated letters are called *Muqattaat*.

The core doctrines of Islam are summed up in the following verses:

1. ***"O you who believe! Believe in Allah, and His Apostle, and the scripture which He has sent to His Apostle and the scripture which He sent to those before (him). Any who denies Allah, His angels, His Books, His Apostles, and the Day of Judgment, has gone far, far astray."*** (4: 136).
2. ***"But those among them who are well-grounded in knowledge, and the Believers, believe in what has been revealed to you and what was revealed before you and (especially) those who establish regular prayer and practice regular charity and believe in Allah and in the Last Day: to them We shall soon give a great reward."*** (4: 162).
3. ***"The Believers, men and women, are protectors, one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, practice regular charity, and obey Allah and His Apostle. On them Allah will pour His mercy: for Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise."*** (9:71).
4. ***"But it is righteousness - to believe in Allah and the Last Day, and the Angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; to spend of your substance, out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity; to fulfill the contracts which you have made; and be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the God-fearing."*** (2: 177).

The mission of the Prophet of Islam has been delineated in the following verse:

***"A similar (favor you have already received) in that We have sent among you as Apostle of your own, rehearsing to you Our Signs, and sanctifying you, and instructing you in Scripture and Wisdom, and in new Knowledge."*** (2: 151).

According to this verse, Muhammad Mustafa (S) had to carry out the following duties as the Messenger of Allah:

1. Rehearsing the Signs of Allah;

2. Sanctifying the Muslims through Faith and Good Works. Most important of the Good Works are the five daily canonical prayers of Islam, regular charity, and the duty of commanding others to do good, and forbidding them from doing wrong;

3. Instructing the Muslims in Scripture and good sense; and

4. Imparting new Knowledge to the Muslims.

Islam is the greatest leveler of political, social and economic inequalities, and ethnic and national distinctions, as we read in the following verse:

***"O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)."*** (49: 13).

This verse is addressed to all mankind and not only to the Muslim brotherhood. The tribes, races and nations are convenient labels by which we may know certain differing characteristics. Before God they are all one, and he gets most honor who is most righteous. (A. Yusuf Ali )

There is no question now of race or nation, of a 'chosen people' or the 'seed of Abraham'; or the 'seed of David'; or of Hindu Arya-varta; of Jew or Gentile, Arab or 'Ajam (Persian), Turk or Tajik, European or Asiatic, White or Colored; Aryan, Semitic, Mongolian, or African; or American, Australian, or Polynesian. To all men and creatures other than men who have any spiritual responsibility, the principles universally apply. (A. Yusuf Ali)

Each Chapter of the Quran begins with *Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim* (in the name of Allah, Most Beneficent, Most Merciful) except for Sura *Tauba* (Repentance) or *Berat* (Immunity) – the 9th Chapter.

This Sura was a notable declaration of State policy promulgated about the month of Shawwal, 9 AH (630 AD). The Messenger of Allah selected Ali ibn Abi Talib to promulgate this important Sura (Chapter).

Muhammad Husayn Haykal, the Egyptian biographer of the Prophet of Islam, writes in his *The Life of Muhammad*, about the promulgation of this chapter, as follows:

"Ali ibn Abi Talib was entrusted by the Prophet with the duty to proclaim the commandments of God and His Prophet. When the pilgrims congregated at Mina, Ali rose, and delivered all these verses from Surah *Al-Taubah*. After he finished his recitation of the Qur'an, he continued in his own words: *"O men, no unbeliever will enter paradise; no polytheist will perform pilgrimage after this year; and no naked man will be allowed to circumambulate the Kaaba. Whoever has entered into a covenant with the Apostle of Allah will have his covenant fulfilled as long as its term lasts."* Ali proclaimed these four instructions to the people and then gave everybody four months of general peace and amnesty during which anyone could return safely home. From that time on no polytheist performed the pilgrimage and no naked man

circumambulated the Kaaba. From that day onwards, the Islamic state was established."

Each chapter of the Quran begins with *Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim* (in the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful) except for the Sura *Tauba* (Repentance) or *Berat* (Immunity), the 9th Chapter.

Sura *Naml* (the Ants), the 27th Chapter of the Quran, has two *Bismillahs*, one at the beginning, and one in Verse 30.

*Ramadan* (the 9th month of the Islamic calendar) is the only month mentioned in the Quran. The name occurs in Verse 85 of Sura *Baqara* (the second Sura).

Friday is the only day mentioned in the Quran. Sura 62 has been titled *Jumaa* (Friday).

The names of the following cities or countries or places have been mentioned in the Quran:

- Mt. Sinai – Chapter 2; Verse 93:

*And when We made a covenant with you and raised the mountain over you: Take hold of what We have given you with firmness and be obedient. They said: We hear and disobey. And they were made to imbibe (the love of) the calf into their hearts on account of their unbelief Say: Evil is that which your belief bids you if you are believers.* (2:93).

- Babylon – Chapter 2; Verse 102:

*And they followed what the Shaitans chanted of sorcery in the reign of Sulaiman, and Sulaiman was not an unbeliever, but the Shaitans disbelieved, they taught men sorcery and that was sent down to the two angels at Babel, Harut and Marut, yet these two taught no man until they had said, "Surely we are only a trial, therefore do not be a disbeliever." Even then men learned from these two, magic by which they might cause a separation between a man and his wife; and they cannot hurt with it any one except with Allah's permission, and they learned what harmed them and did not profit them, and certainly they know that he who bought it should have no share of good in the hereafter and evil was the price for which they sold their souls, had they but known this.* (2: 102).

- Arafat – Chapter 2; Verse 198:

*There is no blame on you in seeking bounty from your Lord, so when you hasten on from "Arafat", then remember Allah near the Holy Monument, and remember Him as He has guided you, though before that you were certainly of the erring ones.* (2: 198).

- Bakka or Makkah – Chapter 3; Verse 96:

*Most surely the first house appointed for men is the one at Bekka, blessed and a guidance for the*

*nations. (3:96).*

• **Badr – Chapter 3; Verse 123:**

*And Allah did certainly assist you at Badr when you were weak; be careful of (your duty to) Allah then, that you may give thanks. (3: 123).*

• **Hunain – Chapter 9; Verse 25:**

*Certainly Allah helped you in many battlefields and on the day of Hunain, when your great numbers made you vain, but they availed you nothing and the earth became strait to you notwithstanding its spaciousness, then you turned back retreating. (9:25).*

• **Egypt – Chapter 10; Verse 87:**

*And We revealed to Musa and his brother, saying: Take for your people houses to abide in Egypt and make your houses places of worship and keep up prayer and give good news to the believers. (10:87).*

• **Egypt – Chapter 12; Verse 21:**

*And the Egyptian who bought him said to his wife: Give him an honorable abode, maybe he will be useful to us, or we may adopt him as a son. And thus did We establish Yusuf in the land and that We might teach him the interpretation of sayings; and Allah is the master of His affair, but most people do not know. (12:21).*

• **Mt. Judi – Chapter 11; Verse 44:**

*And it was said: O earth, swallow down your water, and O cloud, clear away; and the water was made to abate and the affair was decided, and the ark rested on the Judi, and it was said: Away with the unjust people. (11:44).*

• **Valley of Tuwa – Chapter 20; Verse 12:**

*Surely I am your Lord, therefore put off your shoes; surely you are in the sacred valley, Tuwa, (20: 12).*

• **Madyan – Chapter 28; Verse 45:**

*But We raised up generations, then life became prolonged to them; and you were not dwelling among the people of Madyan, reciting to them Our communications, but We were the senders. (28:45).*

• **Mountain of Tur – Chapter 28; Verse 46:**

*And you were not on this side of the mountain when We called, but a mercy from your Lord that you may warn a people to whom no warner came before you, that they may be mindful. (28:46).*

- Rome (Rum) – Chapter 30; Verse 2:

*The Romans are vanquished, (30:2).*

- Yathrib – Chapter 33; Verse 13:

*And when a party of them said: O people of Yasrib! there IS no place to stand for you (here), therefore go back; and a party of them asked permission of the prophet, saying. Surely our houses are exposed; and they were not exposed; they only desired to fly away. (33: 13).*

- Saba – Chapter 34; Verse 15:

*Certainly there was a sign for Saba in their abode; two gardens on the right and the left; eat of the sustenance of your Lord and give thanks to Him: a good land and a Forgiving Lord! (34: 15).*

- Makkah – Chapter 48; Verse 24:

*And He it is Who held back their hands from you and your hands from them in the valley of Mecca after He had given you victory over them; and Allah is Seeing what you do. (48:24).*

The following eatables and drinks have been mentioned in the Quran:

- Manna and Salwa – Chapter 2; Verse 57:

*And We made the clouds to give shade over you and We sent to you manna and quails: Eat of the good things that We have given you; and they did not do Us any harm, but they made their own souls suffer the loss. (2:57).*

- Pot-herbs, Cucumbers, Garlic, Lentils, Onions – Chapter 2; Verse 61:

*And when you said: O Musa! we cannot bear with one food, therefore pray Lord on our behalf to bring forth for us out of what the earth grows, of its herbs and its cucumbers and its garlic and its lentils and its onions. (2:61).*

- Date-palms and Vines – Chapter 2; Verse 266:

*Does one of you like that he should have a garden of palms and vines with streams flowing beneath it; he has in it all kinds of fruits; and old age has overtaken him and he has weak offspring, when, (lo!) a whirlwind with fire in it smites it so it becomes blasted; thus Allah makes the communications clear to you, that you may reflect. (2:266).*

- Meat – Chapter 5; Verse 2-3:

*O you who believe! do not violate the signs appointed by Allah nor the sacred month, nor (interfere with) the offerings, nor the sacrificial animals with garlands, nor those going to the sacred house seeking the grace and pleasure of their Lord; and when you are free from the obligations of the pilgrimage, then hunt, and let not hatred of a people-- because they hindered you from the Sacred Masjid-- incite you to exceed the limits, and help one another in goodness and piety, and do not help one another in sin and aggression; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah; surely Allah is severe in requiting (evil). (5:2) Forbidden to you is that which dies of itself, and blood, and flesh of swine, and that on which any other name than that of Allah has been invoked, and the strangled (animal) and that beaten to death, and that killed by a fall and that killed by being smitten with the horn, and that which wild beasts have eaten, except what you slaughter, and what is sacrificed on stones set up (for idols) and that you divide by the arrows; that is a transgression. (5:3).*

- **Grain, Grapes, Olives and Pomegranates – Chapter 6; Verse 99:**

*And He it is Who sends down water from the cloud, then We bring forth with it buds of all (plants), then We bring forth from it green (foliage) from which We produce grain piled up (in the ear); and of the palm-tree, of the sheaths of it, come forth clusters (of dates) within reach, and gardens of grapes and olives and pomegranates, alike and unlike; behold the fruit of it when it yields the fruit and the ripening of it; most surely there are signs in this for a people who believe. (6:99).*

- **Corn – Chapter 13; Verse 4:**

*And in the earth there are tracts side by side and gardens of grapes and corn and palm trees having one root and (others) having distinct roots-- they are watered with one water, and We make some of them excel others in fruit; most surely there are signs in this for a people who understand. (13:4).*

- **Fish – Chapter 16; Verse 14:**

*And if you would wonder, then wondrous is their saying: What! when we are dust, shall we then certainly be in a new creation? These are they who disbelieve in their Lord, and these have chains on their necks, and they are the inmates of the fire; in it they shall abide. (16: 14).*

- **Milk – Chapter 16; Verse 66:**

*And most surely there is a lesson for you in the cattle; We give you to drink of what is in their bellies-- from betwixt the feces and the blood-- pure milk, easy and agreeable to swallow for those who drink. (16:66).*

- **Honey – Chapter 47; Verse 15:**

***A parable of the garden which those guarding (against evil) are promised: Therein are rivers of water that does not alter, and rivers of milk the taste whereof does not change, and rivers of drink delicious to those who drink, and rivers of honey clarified and for them therein are all fruits and protection from their Lord. (Are these) like those who abide in the fire and who are made to drink boiling water so it rends their bowels asunder. (47: 15).***

• Water – Chapter 47; Verse 15:

***A parable of the garden which those guarding (against evil) are promised: Therein are rivers of water that does not alter, and rivers of milk the taste whereof does not change, and rivers of drink delicious to those who drink, and rivers of honey clarified and for them therein are all fruits and protection from their Lord. (Are these) like those who abide in the fire and who are made to drink boiling water so it rends their bowels asunder. (47: 15).***

• Wine – Chapter 47; Verse 15:

***A parable of the garden which those guarding (against evil) are promised: Therein are rivers of water that does not alter, and rivers of milk the taste whereof does not change, and rivers of drink delicious to those who drink, and rivers of honey clarified and for them therein are all fruits and protection from their Lord. (Are these) like those who abide in the fire and who are made to drink boiling water so it rends their bowels asunder. (47: 15).***

• Ginger (*Zanjabil*) – Chapter 76; Verse 17:

***And they shall be made to drink therein a cup the admixture of which shall be ginger, (76: 17).***

• Wine (pure and holy) – Chapter 76; Verse 21:

***Upon them shall be garments of fine green silk and thick silk interwoven with gold, and they shall be adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Lord shall make them drink a pure drink. (76:21).***

• Corn and Vegetables – Chapter 78; Verse 15:

***That We may bring forth thereby corn and herbs, (78: 15).***

• Fig – Chapter 95; Verse 1:

***I swear by the fig and the olive, (95: 1).***

The following colors have been mentioned in the Quran:

• White, Red, and Black – Chapter 35; Verse 27:

***Do you not see that Allah sends down water from the cloud, then We bring forth therewith fruits***

*of various colors; and in the mountains are streaks, white and red, of various hues and (others) intensely black? (35:27).*

- **Green (Tree) – Chapter 36; Verse 80:**

*He Who has made for you the fire (to burn) from the green tree, so that with it you kindle (fire). (36:80).*

- **Pink (or Red) – Chapter 55; Verse 37:**

*And when the heaven is rent asunder, and then becomes red like red hide. (55:37).*

- **Dark Green – Chapter 55; Verse 64:**

*Dark-green in colour (from plentiful watering). (55:64).*

- **Green (Garments) – Chapter 76; Verse 21:**

*Upon them shall be garments of fine green silk and thick silk interwoven with gold, and they shall be adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Lord shall make them drink a pure drink. (76:21).*

*Ya-Sin* or the 36th Sura of the Quran, is particularly devoted to the last Prophet and the Revelation which he brought. The abbreviated letters *Ya-Sin* are usually construed as a title of the holy Prophet. This Sura is considered to be 'the heart' of the Quran; as it concerns the central figure in the teaching of Islam and the central doctrine of Revelation and the Hereafter. As referring to the Hereafter, it is appropriately read in solemn ceremonies after death. (A. Yusuf Ali)

The first chapter of the Quran revealed in Medina, was *Al-Baqara*, the second Sura.

The last chapter of the Quran revealed in Makkah, was *Mutaffifin*, the 83rd Sura.

The Treaty of *Hudaybiyya* has been called The Manifest Victory (*Fath al-Mubin*) in the following verse of the Quran:

***"Verily We have granted you a Manifest Victory."* (48:1).**

"By this Treaty the Meccan *Quraish*, after many years of unrelenting conflict with Islam, at length recognized Islam as (what they thought) an equal power with themselves. In reality the door was then opened for the free spread of Islam throughout Arabia and thence through the world." (A. Yusuf Ali)

The Treaty of *Hudaybiyya* is the most important political document in the entire history of Islam. The Secretary who was chosen by the Prophet of Islam for inditing its terms, was Ali ibn Abi Talib. The Treaty of *Hudaybiyya* was signed in Zilqaad 6 AH (February 628).

# Exegesis (Tafsir) of the Qur'an

The principal exponent of the exegesis (explanation or critical interpretation of a text) of the Quran was Abdullah ibn Abbas ibn Abdul Muttalib. He was the cousin of the last Prophet and Ali ibn Abi Talib.

Reynold A. Nicholson says in his book, *A Literary History of the Arabs*: "The real founder of Quranic Exegesis was "Abdullah b. Abbas". Abdullah ibn Abbas was a pupil of Ali ibn Abi Talib and learned all the sciences of Quran from him.

## Translations of the Qur'an

Latin was the first language in which the Quran was translated. In 1143, the Catholic monk, Robertus Cetenensis (Robert the Moine), who lived in Spain and knew Arabic, translated the Quran into Latin. This first translation was published only in 1543 at Basel, Switzerland, and the publisher was Bibliander.

Maracci produced in 1689 a Latin version of the Quran. Maracci was a Confessor to Pope Innocent XI; and he dedicated his work to the holy Roman Emperor Leopold I.

Schweigger's German translation was published at Nurenburg (Bavaria) in 1616.

A French translation by Du Ryer was published at Paris in 1647.

A Russian translation was published at St. Petersburg in 1776. A second translation by G.S. Sablukov was published in Kazan in 1878. Another translation by Krachkovskii was published in 1963.

The first English translation – by Alexander Ross – was published in London in 1649. It was a translation of the first French translation of Du Ryer of 1647, and bore the title – *The Alcoran of Mahomet*, "translated out of Arabique into French and now Englished, for the satisfaction of all that desire to look into the Turkish vanities."

George Sale published his translation in 1734. He based it on Maracci's Latin version.

J. M. Rodwell's translation was published in 1861. In his translation, he restored a chronological order of verses.

Edward H. Palmer's translation was first published in 1880 in The Sacred Books of the East series.

Richard Bell published his translation with a critical rearrangement of the Sura, (Edinburgh, 1937–39),

and he applied the methods of 'higher criticism' to the Quran.

Richard Bell's posthumous Introduction to the Qur'an contains important discussions of many questions concerning the form, composition, chronology and textual history of the Qur'an.

Arthur J. Arberry's translation, *The Koran Interpreted*, was published in London in 1955. It has a literary distinction for overall effect in spontaneous reading.

N. J. Dawood's translation was published in 1956. It is a free translation and easy to read for non-Muslims.

The earliest Urdu (the language of the East – with countries as India and Pakistan) translation was made by Shah Abdul Qadir of Delhi who died in 1826. He was the son of the famous Muhibbuddin of Delhi, Shah Waliullah, and the brother of Shah Abdul Aziz who died in 1824.

The first Muslim to undertake an English translation of the Quran was Dr. Muhammad Abdul Hakim Khan, of Patiala (East Punjab, India). His translation was published in 1905.

Maulvi Muhammad Ali's translation of the Quran was first published in 1917. It has explanatory matter in the notes and a fairly complete index.

Marmaduke Pickthall, an English Muslim, published the Quran with Arabic text and English translation, entitled *The Meaning of the Glorious Quran*, in 1930.

Only a small portion of the Quran takes the form of legal prescriptions – some 600 verses in all, and of this number only about 80 can be considered legislation in the strict sense. The remainder deal with religious duties, with the rituals of prayer, fasting and pilgrimage and so on. Most of the Qur'anic verses relate to the general ethical principle and day-to-day life of human beings on this planet, i.e., *Muamalat*.

Quran was revealed through events in the midst of war and peace and under the varying conditions of political, economic and social life. It talks of human life – of glory and fulfillment when men responded to the Divine Will, and of tragedy when they disregarded the Divine Will. Quran is, therefore, an ethico-religious and a socio-political document.

The essential value of the Quran lies in its ability to encourage every individual to enter the sanctuary of personal communion with God; to receive a vivid sense of the Divine Presence in daily living; and its centrality in terms of authority, tradition and reason.

Rallying to God and tuning our will with His Universal Will is another name for Islam.

Mercy is the predominant feature in God's universe. "He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

Enforcement of the Muslim Brotherhood is the greatest social ideal of Islam. On it was based the Prophet's Sermon at his last pilgrimage, and Islam cannot be completely realized until this ideal is

achieved. (A. Yusuf Ali)

***"The believers are but a single brotherhood: So make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers; and fear God, that ye may receive mercy." (49: 10).***

Islam holds fast to the one central fact in the spiritual world, the unity of God, and all Reality springing from Him and Him alone. There can be no one and nothing in competition with that one and only Reality.

It is the essence of Truth. All other ideas or existence, including our perception of Self, are merely relative, mere projections from the wonderful faculties which He has given to us. This is not, to us, mere hypothesis. It is in our inmost experience. In the physical world, they say that seeing is believing. In our inner world this sense of God is as clear as sight in the physical world. Therefore, Mustafa and those who really follow him in the truest sense of the word, call all the world to see this Truth, feel this experience, follow this Way. They will never be distracted by metaphysical speculations, whose validity will always be doubtful, nor be deluded with phantoms which lead men astray. (A. Yusuf Ali)

Quran presents a lucid conception of Allah and His attributes. He is a Transcendent Being, Infinite, Eternal, Arbitrary, and Absolute Ruler of the Universe. His existence is absolute, and not conditioned by Time or Place. Quran lays great stress upon Faith and Good Works, and upon giving priority and preference to the Hereafter. It constantly reminds Muslims of the Day of Judgment and their accountability before Allah.

Its main teachings focus on:

- a. Sovereignty of God, and
- b. Obedience to the Messenger of God, Muhammad Mustafa, the blessed one, and that,
- c. Human salvation through compliance (Atuya) with Divine Orders,
- d. Code of Life,
- e. The believers by their self-surrender to God, can obtain eternal Felicity. They must dedicate themselves to Him entirely and without reserve.

For the believers, the Quran is the key – to the door of proximity to Allah; success in this world, and salvation in the Hereafter.

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