

# MIFTAAH SEMINAR

## THE PRESERVED MESSAGE



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### The Written Transmission of the Quran: How the Quran Was Written Down During the Time of the Prophet ﷺ

#### The Prophet's ﷺ Forgetfulness According to Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani

Imam Ibn Hajar's Explanation:

- Imam Ibn Hajar, in his commentary on *Sahih al-Bukhari*, quoted Imam Al-Isma'ili and provided a categorization of the Prophet's ﷺ forgetfulness. He focused on the nature of what was forgotten and its relation to the Prophet's ﷺ duty of conveying the message.

#### Forgetfulness in Matters Unrelated to Conveying the Divine Message:

- If the matter being forgotten is unrelated to the Prophet's ﷺ responsibility of delivering revelation, then it is possible that he might forget it.
- His role as a prophet was to convey the divine message, and anything outside this responsibility could be subject to forgetfulness.

#### Forgetfulness in Matters Related to Conveying the Divine Message:

Forgetfulness in revelation-related matters may occur but only under **two conditions**:

- **Condition 1: Forgetting After Conveying the Message**

- Hypothetically, if the Prophet ﷺ was commanded by Allah to convey a specific ruling or commandment, and after delivering it, he forgot it, then this might be possible.
- However, there is no actual example of this occurring.
- **Condition 2: Forgetting but Later Remembering**
  - If the Prophet ﷺ ever forgot something related to revelation, he would always remember it afterward.
  - This recollection could happen either:
    - By himself (naturally recalling it), or
    - By someone else reminding him.

One of the hadiths that led to this discussion is when the Prophet ﷺ said:

*"May Allah have mercy on him, as that companion reminded me of such and such verses from such and such surahs, which I was caused to forget."*

- This hadith demonstrates that the Prophet's ﷺ forgetfulness was momentary and that he would always be reminded of what he had forgotten, ensuring the accuracy and preservation of the Quran.

### The Prophet's ﷺ Trustworthiness in Delivering the Message

- The Prophet ﷺ was fully aware of his responsibility to convey the revelation and fulfilled this duty with complete integrity. The Quran itself contains verses that emphasize this responsibility, including instances where Allah directly addresses or even reproaches him.
  - Allah commands the Prophet ﷺ the Quran

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ

*"O Messenger! Announce that which has been revealed to you from your Lord. And if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message." (Surah Al-Ma'idah 5:67).*

- This verse highlights that delivering revelation was the Prophet's ﷺ foremost duty, and Allah ensured that he fulfilled it completely.

### The Quran's Honesty in Addressing the Prophet ﷺ

- The Quran contains verses that correct or admonish the Prophet ﷺ, proving that he did not alter or omit any part of the message.
- If he had fabricated anything, there would be no reason for such verses to exist. This reinforces his truthfulness and integrity as a messenger of Allah.

### Theological Qualities of Prophethood

Islamic theology affirms that every prophet must possess:

- **Truthfulness (Sidq)**
- **Honesty (Amanah)**
- **Complete conveyance of the message (Tabligh)**
- **Intelligence and wisdom (Fatanah)**
  - These qualities ensure that the Prophet ﷺ fulfilled his mission with sincerity and accuracy, without alteration or omission.

### The Prophetic Responsibility to Convey the Divine Message

- The Prophet ﷺ memorized and fully conveyed the Quran to his companions. Scholars explain that the Quran was first revealed in its entirety to the nearest heaven on Laylatul Qadr before being sent down gradually over 23 years. This first revelation is known as **النزول الجملي (Al-Nuzool Al-Jumli)**, where the Quran descended from *Baytul 'Izza* to the lowest heaven.

### The Prophet's ﷺ Memorization and Review of the Quran

- Although Allah SWT guaranteed the Prophet's ﷺ memorization, the Prophet ﷺ did not rely solely on divine preservation. Allah says:

*"Indeed, upon Us is its collection and its recitation."* (Quran 75:17)

- Instead, the Prophet ﷺ consistently recited and reviewed the Quran with Jibreel AS every Ramadan.

- This annual review included everything revealed up to that point.
- During the final Ramadan before his passing, the Prophet ﷺ reviewed the Quran twice with Jibreel (AS), confirming:
  - **The final arrangement of verses and chapters**
  - **The elimination of abrogated verses**

### The Purpose of the Annual Review

- To refresh the Prophet's ﷺ knowledge of the Quran as well as to ensure that abrogated verses were removed, as some rulings changed over time in response to events such as war and new legislation.

### Reading the Quran in Intervals

#### Wisdom Behind Gradual Revelation

Scholars have identified various wisdoms behind Allah SWT revealing the Quran over time rather than all at once:

- **Ease of Memorization:** If the Quran had been revealed in one day, it would have been difficult for the companions to memorize and preserve it. The gradual revelation facilitated memorization and oral transmission.
- **Oral Tradition:** The Arab society of that time primarily relied on oral transmission, as reading and writing were not widespread.
- **Strengthening the Prophet's ﷺ Heart:** When disbelievers questioned why the Quran was not revealed all at once, Allah responded:

*"The disbelievers say, 'If only the Quran had been sent down to him all at once!' 'We have sent it' as such 'in stages' so We may reassure your heart with it. And We have revealed it at a deliberate pace." (Surah Al-Furqan 25:32)*

- Two interpretations of *لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ* (so We may reassure your heart):

- To **strengthen** the Prophet's ﷺ heart in an ongoing manner.
- To **ensure his memorization**, preventing potential lapses that disbelievers could exploit.
- **Abrogation and Legal Development:** The Quran was revealed dynamically to address unfolding events, legislative changes, and societal circumstances.

### The Prophet's ﷺ Role in Preserving the Quran

- Although memorization is a human effort, Allah ensured that the Prophet ﷺ would retain the entire Quran without forgetting. Since he was the primary recipient, divine preservation was necessary.

### The Seven Ahruf vs. Qira'at

- **Ahruf (الأحرف السبعة):** These refer to seven modes of reading permitted during the Prophet's ﷺ time, allowing variations in dialects.
- **Qira'at (القراءات العشر):** These are the ten recitations we recognize today, refined and preserved through scholarly transmission.
  - The Prophet ﷺ asked Allah to make Quranic recitation easy for his Ummah, particularly for those struggling with Tajweed. This ease in recitation was a divine mercy.

### The Command to Recite the Quran

The Quran repeatedly emphasizes the Prophet's ﷺ responsibility to recite the revelation:

وَأَتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ

"And recite to them..." (Surah Yunus 10:15)

قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَنُلِّ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ

"Come, I will recite to you what your Lord has prohibited for you." (Surah AL-Anam 6:151)

وَقُرْءَانًا فَرَقْتَهُ لِتَفْرَأَهُ عَلَى النَّاسِ عَلَى مُكْتٍ وَنَزَّلْتَهُ تَنْزِيلًا

*"It is a Quran which We have separated by intervals that you might recite it to people over a prolonged period."* (Surah Al-Isra 17:106)

إِنَّمَا أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ رَبَّ هَذِهِ الْبَلَدَةِ الَّذِي حَرَّمَهَا وَلَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَأَنْ أَتْلُو الْقُرْآنَ

*"Say, 'O Prophet,' 'I have only been commanded to worship the Lord of this city 'of Mecca', Who has made it sacred, and to Him belongs everything. And I am commanded to be one of those who 'fully' submit 'to Him', and to recite the Quran."* (Surah An-Naml 27:91-92)

- These verses show that recitation was a universal and continuous responsibility of the Prophet ﷺ.

### The Prophet's ﷺ Efforts in Quranic Documentation

- Despite oral transmission being the primary method, the Prophet ﷺ actively encouraged written documentation.
- He appointed official scribes to record the revelation, ensuring literacy and preservation.
- However, verbal delivery remained the primary method, even after much of the Quran was written.

### How the Prophet ﷺ Taught the Quran

The Prophet ﷺ taught the Quran through two primary methods:

- **Method of "Iqra' (اقرأ)"**
  - The Prophet ﷺ would recite a passage of the Quran to a companion. The companion would then recite the same passage back to the Prophet ﷺ in the same manner.
- **Method of "Ard (عرض)"**
  - The companion would recite the Quran to the Prophet ﷺ from memory based on what they had previously learned.
  - *Ard* was the primary method of Quranic transmission.
  - Unlike *Iqra'*, *Ard* focused more on the student's recitation rather than the teacher's.

- **Ard as a Method of Oral Transmission**

- *Ard* was used in other Islamic disciplines, such as Hadith transmission, but with different conditions.
- The *Ard* of the Quran required specific conditions that made it distinct from Hadith narration.

### Three Conditions of Quranic Ard:

#### 1. Memorization

- Quran must be recited from memory, unlike Hadith, which could be read from a written source.

#### 2. Recitation to an Instructor

- One must recite to a qualified teacher; reading alone does not qualify as *Ard*.

#### 3. Rules of Accuracy (*Dhabt-ظبط*)

- General Accuracy: Precise pronunciation of the Quranic text.
- Specific Accuracy: Recitation must follow a particular *Qira'ah* (reading style).

### The Importance of Exact Recitation Among the Companions

- The Companions emphasized the precision of Quranic recitation by comparing it to the teaching of other significant acts of worship.
- Examples:
  - The Prophet ﷺ taught the dua for protection from Hellfire and the trials of the afterlife in the same way he taught a Surah of the Quran.
  - The Prophet ﷺ taught the Dua of Istikhara (prayer for guidance) just as he taught the Surahs of the Quran.
- Tashahhud in Salah was transmitted by many Companions with minor variations.
  - Umar RA was known to teach the Tashahhud from the pulpit because of its essential role in Salah.

- If the Companions placed such importance on perfecting *Tashahhud* and *duas*, their dedication to preserving the Quran was even greater.
- The Quran holds a much higher status than *Tashahhud*, reinforcing the intense effort and accuracy in its transmission.

