



The Holy Quran (Introduction, Preservation and Excellence)

Introduction

Almighty Allah is the Creator of the universe. Man is a part of this universe. Allah created man as the most eminent of all the created beings. He created not only material resources to meet man's physical and instinctive needs, but also made provisions for the guidance of his intellect and soul. He blessed mankind with a conscience to differentiate between good and evil. Moreover, Almighty Allah sent His Messengers and revealed to them the holy Books and Scriptures for the complete guidance of mankind. The Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ) is the Last Prophet of Allah. Almighty Allah revealed to him the Holy Quran. Being the last book of Allah, the Holy Quran is a permanent source of guidance for all mankind. The Book also testifies all the previous Divine Scriptures and Books:

Almighty Allah had also sent His Prophets for the guidance of the previous generations, and revealed His Books to some of them. However the teachings of those prophets and the books revealed to them have not been preserved with their original text. In the Holy Quran Allah says:

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ
وَمُهَيِّمًا عَلَيْهِ (المائدة-48)

"And to Thee We revealed the Book with the truth, confirming the Scripture that came before it, and this (the Holy Quran) is a watcher over it."

In this verse of the Holy Quran, Allah has used the word 'Muhaiman' (that which guards or watches) for the Holy Quran. This expression means that

the contents of the previous books which could not be preserved have now been preserved in the Holy Quran. That is why the teachings of the Holy Quran are trustworthy and can be followed with entire satisfaction in all the ages to come.

The Holy Quran provides guidance in regard to all the aspects of human life. It describes the reality of life, the good and evil, the lawful and unlawful, the righteousness and unrighteousness, moral teachings and all other aspects of life. The Holy Quran also provides detailed information about the life in the Hereafter and discusses its importance very effectively. The Holy Quran imparts basic teachings about man's individual and collective life, his rights and duties in society and his economic matters. It also educates man comprehensively in the fields of politics and international affairs and morality. In short the Holy Quran is a treasure of information and guidance covering all the aspects of human life. It elaborately explains all the things which a common man must know and there is no other source for him to get the required knowledge.

Preservation

The Holy Quran has been revealed by Almighty Allah and He Himself took the responsibility to safeguard it. In the Holy Quran He says:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ (الحجر.9)

“Without doubt we have sent down the Message and without doubt we will guard it”

We see that Allah carried out His promise so perfectly that not even a single word, letter or a vowel-point of the holy Quran has so far been changed.

The Holy Quran with its complete text was not revealed at one and the same time. Rather it was revealed little by little. It took about twenty-three years for this Divine Book to be completed. Whenever some Quranic verses were revealed, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) sent for the scribe and dictated the revelation to him. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) also gave him the instructions as to where the new verses were to be included, i. e. in which Surah and before or after which verses they were to be included. The passage of the revelation was placed at a fixed place in Masjid-e- Nabvi. The companions

of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) copied the verses of the revelation and learnt it by heart. They recited the verses in their everyday five prayers and tried to comprehend and practise them. Thus whenever a part of the Holy Quran was revealed, it was recorded and learnt by heart by the companions of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). This practice was carried out by both the men and the women.

It was during the pious life of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) that most of his wives, the members of his family, and the male and female companions (رضي الله عنهم) of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) had learnt the complete text of the Holy Quran by heart. A number of venerable companions (رضي الله عنهم) of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) had also prepared the copies of the Holy Quran.

After the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) passed away, Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique (رضي الله عنه) preserved all the parts of the Holy Quran together in the order prescribed by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). The verses of the Holy Quran were arranged in the same order and the Surahs were given the same names as were prescribed by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) under the command of Almighty Allah. Hazrat Usman, during the period of his Caliphate, prepared several copies of the Holy Quran, arranged accordingly and sent one copy to each of the provincial capital cities.

Excellence

In the Holy Quran whatever is stated is based on the definite knowledge and reality. There is no doubt in the truth of its contents. It provides complete guidance to the human beings of all times and regions. The success of mankind in this world and in the Hereafter depends on to what extent he practises the teachings of the Holy Quran. That is why this book excels in providing true guidance to everyone. As this Divine work is better than all other works of literature, similarly a person who has learnt the Holy Quran and teaches it to others is better than all others who have not learnt it. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) Said:

خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ-

“The best amongst you is the one who learnt the Holy Quran and teaches it to others.”

We should, therefore, learn the Holy Quran whole-heartedly and should leave no stone unturned in gaining this Divine knowledge.

The recitation of the Holy Quran is an act of great virtue. Allah gives the reward equal to ten virtues for the recitation of each letter of the Holy Quran. One who practises the Quranic teachings, Allah exalts him in this world and in the Hereafter. Those who refuse to acknowledge it are disgraced. The history of mankind bears witness that as long as the Muslims acted upon the teachings of the Holy Quran, they were predominant in the world. On the other hand when they became careless about the principles of Islam, they lost their eminence. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) once told his followers that Almighty Allah would make many nations eminent due to acting upon the golden teachings of the Holy Quran and bring many nations to disgrace due to their being careless about these principles. We should, therefore, recite the Holy Quran, grasp it and try to act upon its golden teachings.

EXERCISE

Answer the following questions.

1. Give a brief introduction of the Holy Quran.
2. How has the Holy Quran been preserved?
3. Write a note on the distinct characteristics of the Holy Quran.