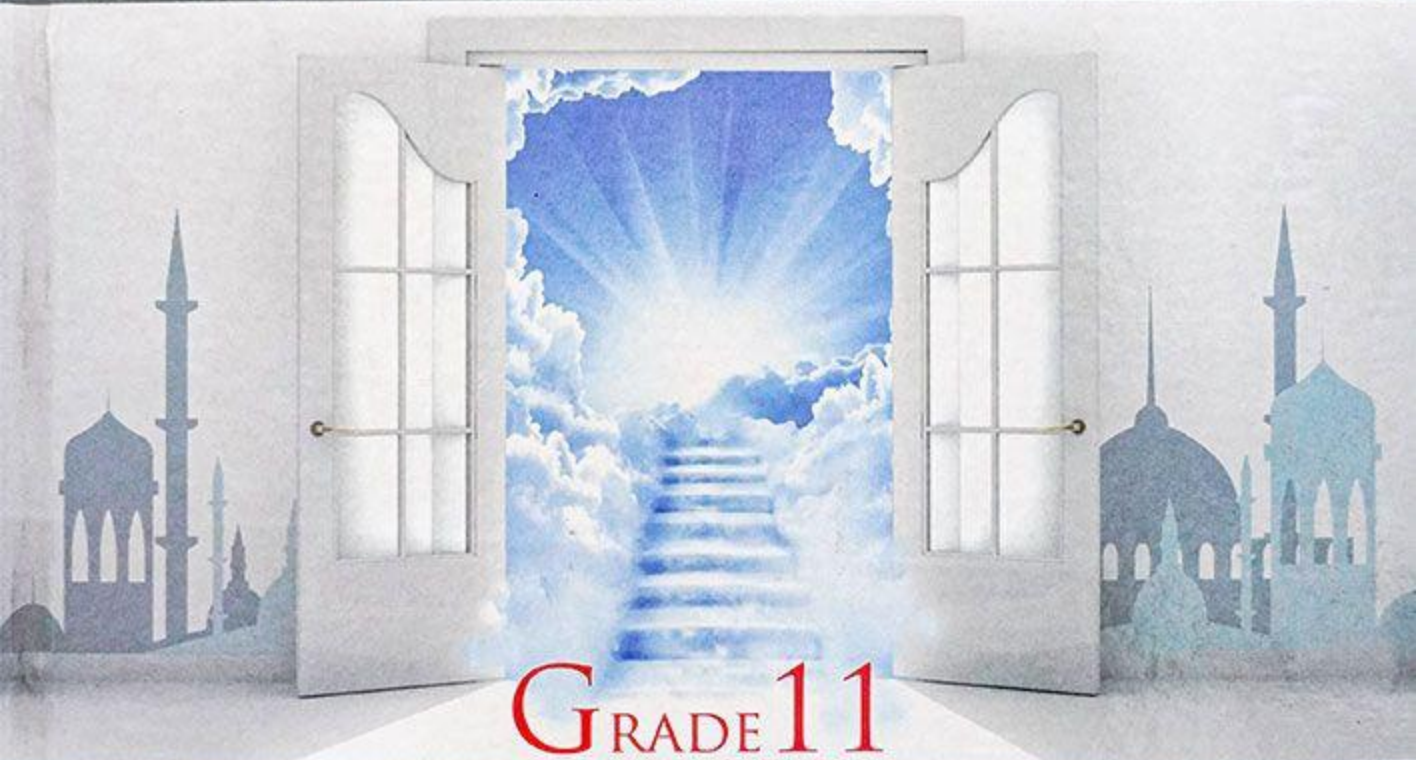


Islamic Studies

A CORE TEXT FOR **O** LEVEL



GRADE 11

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MA. English Literature

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DARUSSALAM
GLOBAL LEADER IN ISLAMIC BOOKS

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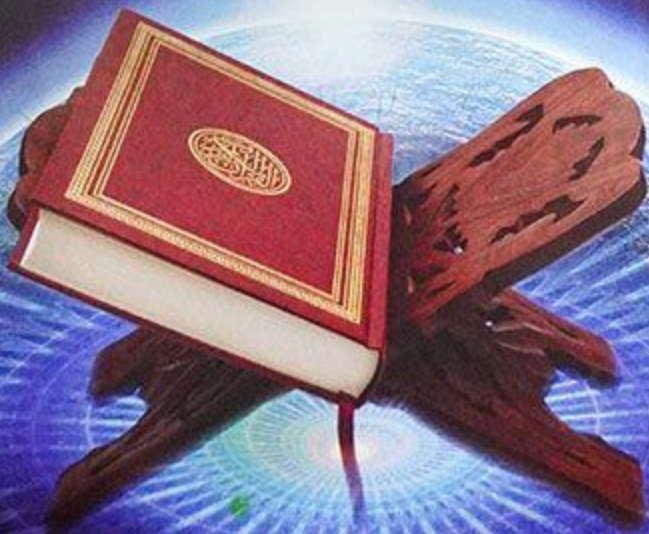
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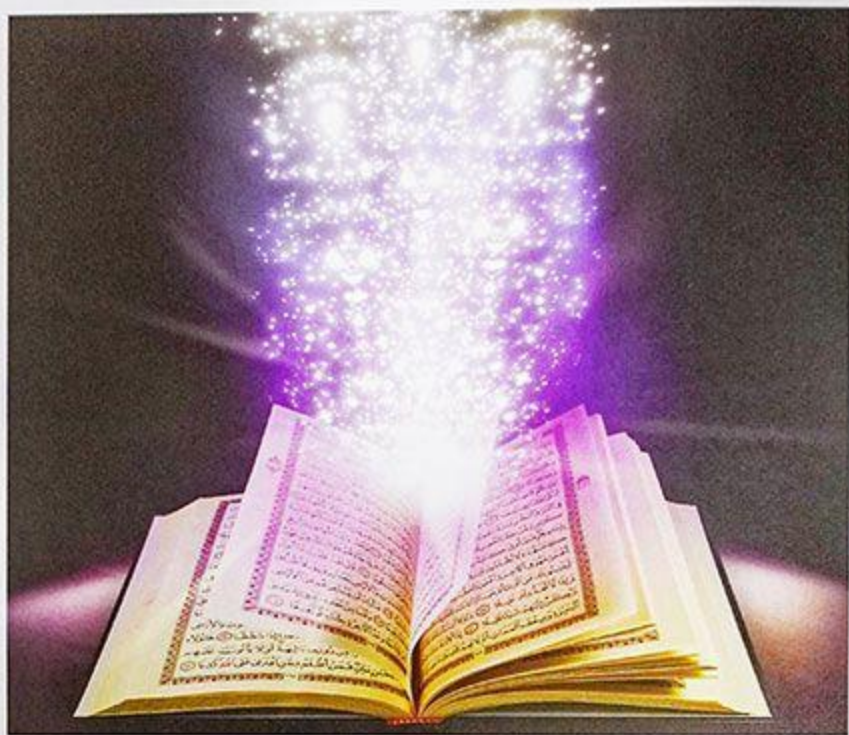
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What is the Qur'an?

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1.1. Definition of the Qur'an

The Qur'an is the Arabic Speech of Allah which He revealed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ (47:2) through Angel Jibreel ﷺ in its precise meaning and exact wording. It is the literal, uncreated Word of Allah. The word 'Qur'an' is frequently mentioned in the Glorious Book itself (See for instance 2:185, 10:37, 10:61 and 17:106).

The Qur'an clearly states to whom, when, in what language, how and why it was revealed: It was revealed in the month of *Ramadaan* (2:185) on the Night of Power or Decree '*Laylat-ul-Qadr*' (97:1): 'We revealed it on a blessed Night.' (44:3)

It was revealed in the Arabic language: 'Surely, We have made it in the Arabic language so that you may be able to understand it.' (43:3).

It was revealed in portions, each of which was written and committed to memory as soon as it was revealed, and its revelation was spread over twenty-three years of the Prophet's life during which time he was occupied solely with the spread of its message:

"It is a Qur'an which We have divided [into parts from time to time] so that you may recite it to the people at intervals; and We have revealed it by stages." (17:106)

1.2. The Qur'an is the Highest Form of Revelation

Although the Gracious Qur'an was revealed piecemeal, the entire revelation is one whole. It is the Word of Allah revealed through the Holy Spirit, that is, Angel Jibreel عليه السلام. Revelation takes place in three forms: 'It is not fitting for any human being that Allah should speak to him except by revelation, from behind a veil or by sending a messenger that reveals – by His permission – whatever Allah wills.' (42:51)

The first of these modes is called *wahy*, which is used here in its literal sense of *al-ishaarah as-saree'ah*, that is to say, a quick suggestion into the mind of man.

The Qur'an is unique. It is inimitable and is protected by Allah from all forms of corruption. The word Qur'an is a verbal noun which means 'the reading' or 'recitation'.

1.3. The Qur'an is Protected by Allah from Corruption

Previous revelations had been corrupted intentionally, but the Qur'an's final message to man is exactly the same in its present form as it was revealed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ more than 1400 years ago.

Islam teaches us that Allah created the entire universe, the angels, the *jinn* and then mankind in the persons of Adam and his wife. The history of humanity began with the disobedience of the first couple and their expulsion from Paradise, but Allah did not abandon them; rather, He promised to guide them by sending them prophets.

Adam عليه السلام was the first Prophet. Some of the prophets brought people Sacred Books from Allah: the best known were the Torah (*at-Tawraat*), which was given to Prophet Moosaa عليه السلام; the Psalms (*az-Zaboor*), which was given to Prophet Daawood عليه السلام; and the Gospel (*al-Injeel*) which was given to Prophet 'Eesaa عليه السلام. Many additions and deletions had crept into these books, but the Qur'an has remained

intact because Allah the Almighty has taken it upon Himself to protect it, as the Qur'an says, 'We have sent down the Reminder, and We will guard it [from corruption].'(Soorat al-Hijr, 15:9)

Harun Yahya writes,

The Divine Scriptures that were revealed before Islam lost their original forms over time; they are either incomplete or not fully accurate. In the case of the Qur'an, however, Allah placed the revelations into our Prophet's memory.

In addition, after he received each revelation, the Prophet ﷺ told his numerous companions to write them down, thereby ensuring the Qur'an's preservation in its original textual form. Caliph Abu Bakr (632-634) had the Qur'an compiled into a single copy, and Caliph 'Uthmaan (644-656) had copies of it sent to important Islamic cities. The following verses explain how our Prophet ﷺ tried to remember the revelations, and how Allah helped him do so:



Do not move your tongue trying to hasten it. Its collection and recitation are Our affair. So when We recite it, follow its recitation. Then its explanation is Our concern. (*Soorat al-Qiyaamah*, 75:16-19)

As the verses maintain, our Prophet ﷺ remembered the Qur'an in a unique way, for Allah implanted its verses in his mind. As his Companions wrote it all down while he was still alive, in compliance with His promise, each of its letters has remained unaltered since the beginning of its revelation over 1,400 years ago. Therefore, Allah's revelation has survived intact to our day.

The Qur'an's lack of any internal contradiction and discrepancy also shows that it is from Allah and is immune to change. The Qur'an is internally consistent and in full agreement with historical developments and scientific discoveries. This attribute is so certain and explicit that our Lord stated:

Will they not ponder the Qur'an? If it had been from other than Allah, they would have found many inconsistencies in it. (*Soorat an-Nisaa'*, 4: 82)¹

¹ Harun Yahya, *Allah Promised to Protect the Qur'an*, available at: http://www.nnseek.com/e/aus.religion.islam/allah_promised_to_protect_the_qur_an_24845933t.html

All the teachings contained in the former scriptures that were meant to be of lasting value and importance are included in the Qur'an. The Qur'an gives some specific accounts of what the pre-Qur'anic scriptures contained. The basic message of all the prophets of Allah, and hence all scriptures they brought, was one and the same message from Allah to people:

Indeed, We have sent forth among every community a messenger with the commandment "Worship Allah Alone and shun all false deities and objects of worship!" (16:36)

Thus, the Qur'an not only preserves the essential teachings of the previous revelations but also sets out once and for all the eternal truth in its entirety. Indeed, it is a book that contains the essence of the revelations made to the prophets, preserving them so perfectly

that the reader has no need to have recourse to other sacred scriptures, which have undergone all forms of corruption.

All the essential points, in every respect, are given to us in the Qur'an. The Muslims, therefore, regard the Qur'an as the Most Sacred object on earth – Allah's Supreme Gift to mankind. It is an object of veneration and the foundation of human understanding of the universe and man's place in it:

If all men and jinn were to collaborate, they could not produce its like. (17:88)

The Prophet ﷺ was authorized to challenge his critics and opponents to produce something comparable (10:38). The challenge was taken up by more than one stylist in Arabic literature – with a predictable result. The style of the Qur'an is Allah's style – this is basically what forms the miraculous character of the Qur'an.

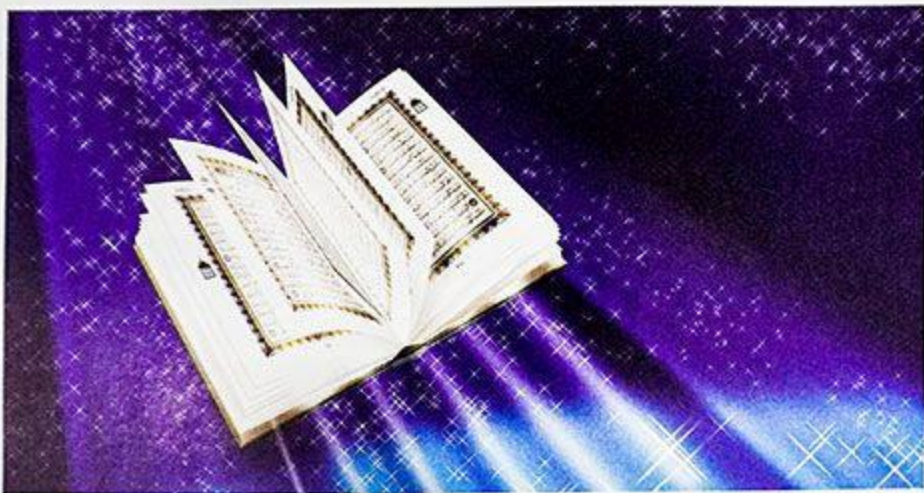
1.4. The Names of the Qur'an

Almighty Allah refers to the Qur'an by a number of names. These include "the Qur'an" (17:88), the Book "*al-Kitaab*" (2:2), the Criterion "*al-Furqaan*" (25:1), the Reminder "*ad-Dhikr*" (15:9) and the Revelation sent down "*at-Tanzeel*" (26:192).

Other references to the Qur'an are by such terms as *an-Noor* (the Light), *Hudaa* (Guidance), *Rahmah* (Mercy), *Majeed* (Glorious), *Mubaarak* (Blessed) and *Nadheer* (Warner), among other names.

1.5. The Qur'an: the Final Revelation

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was the Last Messenger from Allah to mankind; he brought the final revelation – the Qur'an – from Allah to man. Therefore, the Qur'an is the last of the Holy Scriptures.



1.6. The Beginning of Revelation

The revelation of the Qur'an began in *Laylat-ul-Qadr* (the Night of Power) of *Ramadaan* (the twenty-seventh night or one of the odd nights of its third part) after Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had passed the fortieth year of his life, during his seclusion in the cave of *Hiraa'*, on a mountain near Makkah, in the year 610 CE.

The first revelation he received constitutes the first five verses of *Soorat al-'Alaq* (the Clinging Clot):

Read in the Name of your Lord, who created; created man from a clinging clot.

Read! And your Lord is the Most Gracious One; He Who has taught by the pen; He has taught man that which he knew not. (96:1-5)

The remainder part of this *soorah*, which consists of 19 verses, was revealed on some other occasion.

1.7. The Second Revelation

The second portion of the Glorious Qur'an revealed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was the beginning of *Soorat Al-Muddath-thir* (74:1-5). The rest of the *soorah* was revealed later. This *soorah* consists of 56 verses.

1.8. The Last Revelation

Many Muslim Scholars are agreed that the last revelation was verse 281 of *Soorat al-Baqarah*:

And fear the day when you shall be brought to Allah. Then each soul shall be paid in full what it has earned and none shall be dealt with unjustly.

The Prophet ﷺ passed away nine nights after the last revelation. Some scholars, however, hold that the following verse was the last verse to be revealed.

This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. (*Soorat al-Maa'idah*, 5:3)

This opinion, however, is not sound according to many scholars who argue that this verse was actually revealed during the Farewell Pilgrimage.

Review

- Define the word 'Qur'an'.
- What are the different names of the Qur'an?
- Can you explain how the Qur'an is inimitable?
- What are the three forms of revelation? How can the Qur'an be the highest form of revelation?
- The Qur'an is the essence of all former revelations. Discuss.
- How and why has the Qur'an remained unchanged?
- How can you prove that the Qur'an is the final revelation of Allah?
- How did the revelation of the Qur'an begin? What do you know about the final and last revelations?
- What do you think is meant by "Farewell Pilgrimage"?



1.9. Reasons why the Qur'an was Revealed in Stages

- The Gracious Qur'an was sent down in stages over a period of 23 years, and not as a complete book in one single act of revelation. There are several reasons for this, and the following are the most significant:
- To strengthen the heart of Allah's Messenger ﷺ from time to time and whenever the need for guidance arose.
- Out of consideration for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, since revelation was a very difficult experience for him.
- To gradually implement the commands of Allah.
- To make understanding, translation into action and memorization of the revelation easier for the believers.
- It is established that the Qur'an had been memorized in its entirety by the companions of the Prophet ﷺ during his lifetime. This tradition continued after the Prophet's death and later among all generations of Muslims that have followed, until today.

1.10 How was the Qur'an Collected?

Although the Qur'an was revealed in portions, it did not remain long on that fragmentary condition. As its very name suggests, it was a book from the first; it could not be complete until its last verse was revealed; it was never without some form of arrangement. In fact, every single verse, part of a verse or *soorah* that was revealed had its own definite place in the Gracious Book. The arrangement of the Qur'an was thus a part of divine scheme. It has been established that the Qur'an had been written down in its entirety in the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ but had not been brought together in one single place. However, the ordering of the Qur'an and the arrangement of the various *soorahs* was fixed by the Prophet ﷺ himself and safeguarded through oral transmission.

Whenever a *soorah* or verses of a *soorah* were revealed to the Prophet ﷺ, he would call one of his scribes¹ and say to him, 'Write such-

¹ A scribe is a person who made copies of written documents before printing was invented.

Islamic Studies

GRADE 11

ABOUT THE BOOK

The present series covers all areas of Islamic studies: *tafseer, hadeeth, tawheed, fiqh, seerah*, and general etiquette relating to different areas and situations. Every effort has been made to ensure that the material presented in the series is authentic, and most of the terms are presented in their original Arabic script, along with the transliteration and the translation of their meanings. This also applies to supplications which have to be memorised in their Arabic version. The aim here is to help the reader read the original text and understand its meaning. Each lesson is followed by exercises covering questions about the lesson.

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The series aims to acquaint the student with the teachings of Islam in every aspect: beliefs, practices and moral conduct. The series, with its unique features, certainly fills a gap in this area which has long been partially neglected.



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