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Established 2005

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VOLUME ONE

NUMBER NINE

“Jam’ul Qur’ân” – Compilation of the Qur’ân

Continued from the previous issue (Part 2/4)

The Glorious Qur’ân calls itself a ‘Kitâb / Book’

One of the many important factors that show that the Glorious Qur’ân is protected in written form is that Allâh Ta’âlâ mentions in the Glorious Qur’ân, ‘only the pure ones may touch it.’ [Surah al Wâq’ah 56:79] There are different explanations regarding the meaning of this verse. One of these explanations is that the Glorious Qur’ân is compiled in a written form and should not be touched if one is in the state of impurity. What greater proof do we require other than the fact that the Glorious Qur’ân itself is saying that do not touch it except in the state of purity.

The Glorious Qur’ân says; تنزيل الكتاب, and what is a *kitâb*, Book? A *kitâb* is a written book. So the Glorious Qur’ân is referring to itself as a *kitâb*, thus meaning that it is in a written form. These verses indicate that the Glorious Qur’ân was compiled in a written form.

We also find that Rasulullâh *sallallâhu alayhi wa sallam* mentioned to the Sahâbah *radhiyallâhu anhum* on certain occasions “Do not take the Glorious Qur’ân with you on a journey because I fear that if you are overpowered by the enemy, the Glorious Qur’ân will fall into their hands and they will show disrespect to the book of Allâh Ta’âlâ.”

However, we should understand that the Glorious Qur’ân could not have been compiled fully in the time of Rasulullâh *sallallâhu alayhi wa sallam*, because *Wahy* (revelation) was to continue till the end of the life of The messenger of Allâh *sallallâhu alayhi wa sallam*, and therefore it was not possible to compile the entire Glorious Qur’ân at one time. After the demise of Rasulullâh *sallallâhu alayhi wa sallam*, Allâh Ta’âlâ put the worry and concern in the heart of a great man of Islâm – Hazrat Umar *radhiyallâhu anhu* – to compile the Qur’ân in book form.

The hearts of Huffâz are like vaults

The Hearts of the Huffâz are like vaults and it is so safe that no person can reach inside it. Allâh Ta’âlâ used these hearts to protect the Glorious Qur’ân and at that time the Glorious Qur’ân was in the hearts of thousands of the companions of Rasulullâh *sallallâhu alayhi wa sallam*. In the massacre of Bir al Ma’unah, seventy Sahâbah *radhiyallâhu anhum*-all Huffâz-were martyred. During the time of Abu Bakr *radhiyallâhu anhu*, in the battle of Yamâmah, seventy to seven hundred Huffâz were martyred.

It was due to these occurrences that concern increased in the heart of Umar *radhiyallâhu anhu* causing him to go to Abu Bakr *radhiyallâhu anhu* and to say; ‘Why don’t we compile the Glorious Qur’ân in a book form.’ Abu Bakr *radhiyallâhu anhu* was initially against this idea and said ‘How can I do something that Rasulullâh *sallallâhu alayhi wa sallam* did not do in his lifetime?’

Umar *radhiyallâhu anhu* however persisted until Allâh Ta’âlâ opened the heart of Abu Bakr *radhiyallâhu anhu*. He then saw the merit and the need for the Glorious Qur’ân to be compiled in a book form. Abu Bakr *radhiyallâhu anhu* summoned Zaid Bin Thâbit *radhiyallâhu anhu* for this task. He possessed many outstanding qualities. He was young, intelligent, learned, pious, and vigorous. He was always in the close company of Rasulullâh *sallallâhu alayhi wa sallam* and was also very fortunate for he sat in that assembly wherein Rasulullâh *sallallâhu alayhi wa sallam* recited the Glorious Qur’ân to Jibrîl *alaihi as salaam* and Jibrîl *alaihi as salaam* recited it to Rasulullâh *sallallâhu alayhi wa sallam*.

Abu Bakr *radhiyallâhu anhu* explained to him the task at hand, i.e. to compile the Glorious Qur'an in book form. He also had the same misgivings that Abu Bakr *radhiyallâhu anhu* initially had that 'how can we do something which Rasulullâh *sallallâhu alayhi wa sallam* did not do.' After much explanation, he said that if Abu Bakr *radhiyallâhu anhu* told me to move a mountain, it would have been easier for me than the task with which he entrusted me.

The greatest mission undertaken by this Ummah

This was the greatest mission that this Ummah had undertaken, and may Allâh Ta'âlâ reward those honorable Sahâbah *radhiyallâhu anhum* Due to their untiring efforts and striving we have the Glorious Qur'an – fourteen hundred years later – as it was revealed to Rasulullâh *sallallâhu alayhi wa sallam*.

The stringent procedure adopted by Abu Bakr *radhiyallâhu anhu* was that first Bilâl *radhiyallâhu anhu* was entreated by Abu Bakr *radhiyallâhu anhu* to announce in the streets of Madinah Munawwarah that: 'whosoever has a single verse of the Glorious Qur'an written by him, should go to the Masjid and present it to Zaid bin Thâbit *radhiyallâhu anhu*.' [To be continued - Extracted from a lecture by Mufti Zubair Bhayât Sahib, rendered at the 1st Qurrâ-e-Qadeem programme - 26th & 27th Muharram 1427 (25th, 26th/02/2006) at Madrasah Arabia Islamia, Azaadville]

Did you know ?

Four reasons for why a person may recite the Holy Qur'an

(Extracted from 'Qur'anic Gatherings')

Many people object to the gatherings held in which many Qurrâ' (plural of Qâri) gather and recite the holy Qur'an in which each reciter tries to recite better than the other. Do such gatherings not entail pride, pomp and show that renders such gatherings sinful and impermissible?

Pride and fame is a direct result of intention, which is a condition of the heart. Others do not have knowledge of this. It is a condition known to only the reciter and Allâh. If the Qari's intention for recital is:

1. To acquire name and fame, then this is ostentation, hence it will be impermissible.
2. To acquire reward and to portray the grandeur of the Qur'an, then it will be an action of reward.
3. To bring joy and delight to a Muslim's heart, then this too will bring reward. Such incidents have been recorded in various ahâdith.
4. To draw the attention of the audience towards the excellence and grandeur of the Qur'an and to inculcate the importance, passion and zeal for reciting the Qur'an in the correct way, and in a melodious manner. Such an intention will be regarded as a religious service.

Tazkirah Qurrâ' e Hind

In the Qur'an, Allâh Ta'âlâ has promised to protect the honourable Qur'an from even the slightest modification. This promise applies to not only the text, but to its pronunciation and recitation as well. Beyond the imagination of the world's intellectuals, He raised a group of special people to codify the various forms of recitation-the Qurrâ'.

Up until now very little credence has been given to the sacrifices and services of the Qurrâ'. Books have been authored, encapsulating the services to the Qur'an by the Qurrâ' of North Africa and other parts of the Arab world. The endeavours of the Qurrâ' of the Indo Pak subcontinent has been overlooked by many of those not linked to the subject of Qirâ'ah, and also by many present day Qurrâ'.

To fill the gap, and open our minds to the services to the field of Qirâ'ah by these Indian Qurrâ', *Mirza Ahmad Beg*-appropriately given the title of 'Imâd al Qurrâ'- has authored Tazkirah Qurrâ' e Hind. A major academic work of three volumes giving an account of the origin and development of the science of Qirâ'ah, and the efforts of the Qurrâ' of India during the last eight centuries to popularize and sustain interest in this science among the Muslims of India.

The book is a result of sixteen years of research and travel all over India in search of pertinent material and was published in the seventies. It includes the lives and services of over two thousand Qurrâ'. It is also worthy to note that many of them were ascetics as well, i.e. they were dedicated to *Tasawwuf*. This is due to the fact that the Qur'an plays an integral role in order to strengthen ones relationship with Allâh, and to reform ones self as well. A must read for all students and teachers of the Qur'an, especially the present day Qurrâ' whose chain of transmission links to the Qurrâ' of the Indo Pak subcontinent.