

# Compilation of the Holy Quran

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) could not read or write. When revelations came to him by Hazrat Jibrael, the scribes wrote them down. They used bones of animals, leaves, pieces of pottery and any other things they could find. The Qur'an was complete by the Holy Prophet's death, but it was not written down in one copy.

The first caliph Hazrat Abu Bakr experienced many difficulties. One of the main difficulties was the false prophets. The worst of these was Musaylima. Hazrat Abu Bakr fought against him in the Garden of Death at Yamama. In this battle although Muslims won and Musaylima was killed, but many Muslims who memorized the Qur'an were also martyred. So Hazrat 'Umar suggested to Hazrat Abu Bakr to make a written collection of the Qur'an. He was worried that if more Huffaz were killed the Qur'an may be lost. Hazrat Abu Bakr did not want to do this, because the Holy Prophet had not done it. But Hazrat 'Umar persuaded him, and so he asked Hazrat Zayd Ibn Thabit, the Prophet's secretary, to do the work. He was also at first hesitant but eventually agreed. Hazrat Zayd felt that it would be more difficult to compile the Holy Quran than to carry a mountain as he was aware that he would be answerable for it on the Day of Judgment. However, he worked very hard. He consulted the senior Muslims and at last found all the parts of the Quran. The collection was made. It was given to Hazrat Abu Bakr. When Hazrat Abu Bakr died; Hazrat Umar the second caliph took its possession. After his death in 644AD, this copy passed to his daughter Hazrat Hafsa, who was also the widow of the Holy Prophet. Since she kept it safe, so it was known as mushaf-e-Hafsa (*Hafsa's copy of the Holy Book*).

In the time of Hazrat 'Uthman, the third caliph, the Muslim empire expanded very widely. Many people with different languages (not Arabic) became Muslim. Hazrat 'Uthman learnt through his commanders like Hazrat Anas and Hazrat Huzaifa that some of these people were reading the Qur'an differently from the Arabs. They were reciting the words in a different way. Hazrat 'Uthman thought that the true Qur'an may be lost, so he ordered a true collection to be made. Hazrat Zayd Ibn Thabit did this work with three other senior Muslims. They collected all the true copies, and they ensured these contained only the words of the Prophet. Finally, they compared their collection with Mushaf-e-Hafsa for a double check. They decided that the Holy Quran must be in the dialect of Quraysh, because that was the Holy Prophet's speech. Hazrat 'Uthman sent copies of this official Qur'an to parts of the empire and he ordered all other copies to be burnt, so that only the correct word of Allah be recited. Muslims read the same Quran today

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Q: Why did the rightly guided caliphs think it was important to make a compilation of the Holy Quran? [04]

- When many memorizers of the Holy Quran were killed in Battle of Yamama, Hazrat Abu Bakr realized that Quran could not be kept in memories alone and if in future battles more memorizers would be martyred then the word of Allah could be lost. Therefore, he thought it was important to compile the Holy Quran in a book form to preserve its authenticity although he was aware that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) did not do this job.
- When Hazrat Usman was told that the Holy Quran was being recited in different dialects by different Muslims, he realized that this could result in the loss of the original meaning of the Holy Quran. Hence for providing Muslims with a single source of guidance, he ordered for an authentic version of the Holy Quran to be made.
- He also thought that if people were allowed to read the Holy Quran differently there would be different interpretations as well which could cause disunity within Muslim Ummah as people might have conflicts with each other on the meaning of the Holy Quran. Therefore, he considered that a genuine copy of the Holy Quran was important to be made so that the unity of the Muslims could be maintained.