

History of Revelation of the Quran

For XPC ONLY

- Spread over various distinct stages
- Being the last Divine Word, special Divine arrangement for its security and sanctity.
- Was kept in a Preserved Tablet:

"It is, rather, a glorious Quran in the Preserved Tablet." (85:21-22, al-Buruj)

• From the 'Preserved Tablet', descended twice:

1. First, the whole of it was brought down ^{from the heaven} to the Bait al 'Izzah/ Bait al Ma'mur, which is the most exalted house on the firmament of the world (the sky nearest to the world); it is the place of worship for angels

This descension took place in the Night of Power (one of the nights during the last days of Ramadan); this is supported by other verses of the Quran:

a. "Ramadan is the month in which was sent down the Quran"

(2:185, al-Baqarah) ✓

b. "We sent it (Quran) in a blessed night" (44:3, al-Dukhan)

c. "We have indeed revealed it (Quran) in the Night of Power"

(97:1, al-Qadr)

2. In the second stage, it was gradually descended (revealed) on the heart of the Prophet, over a period of about 23 years; the first revelation was, again in the Night of Power; first five verses of Surah 96 (al-'Alaq) were revealed:

"Read in the name of your Lord Who created. Created man from a clot of congealed blood. Read! for your Lord is Most Bountiful. Who taught (the use of) the Pen. Taught man that which he knew not."

• All authentic traditions (Ahadith) prove that the event took place during the last odd nights of Ramadan (many believe it was 27 night of Ramadan)

• After this, there was a long gap of about 3 years (it might be lesser than that); the gap is called, Fatrah.

• Then were revealed the verses of Surah 74 (al-Muddathir). → "O you wrapped in your cloak! rise and warn"

3. After this, various portions of the Quran were revealed; sometimes only a few verses, at others a whole Surah; the smallest Surah was al-Kauthar (108,) & the longest Surah revealed all at once; al-An'am (Surah 6), though the longest of all is Surah 2 (al-Baqarah)

• last revelations; 5:3 (al-Maidah), al-Nasr (110) and al-Bara'ah (9)

Reasons for Revelation in Parts

“The disbelievers said, “Why has the Quran not been sent down upon him all at once?” ; We did this (revealed in parts) so that We may strengthen your heart thereby, and We have recited it quite distinctly. They do not bring to you any similitude but We reveal to you the Truth and the best explanation thereof.” (25:32-33, al-Furqan).

- Being the last Divine Message, it had to be revealed in parts in order
 - ① (to convey it to mankind precisely)
- The Holy Prophet was an unlettered man ; (it would have been
 - ② difficult for him to remember & recite the whole bulk of the Quran); for this reason, he was divinely helped to memorise various revelations:

“Do not move your tongue in haste (concerning the Quran). For it is for Us to collect it and to promulgate it” (75:16-17 , al-Qiyamah)
- (Contrary to this, the Torah was revealed to Prophet Musa at a single time as he knew reading and writing.)
- All Quranic injunctions could not be implemented at once because a
 - ③ large portion of the Quran is related to the contextual details of the prevailing circumstances, in Makka & Madina; this helped to answer the questions of the disbelievers as well as strengthen the insight of the Muslims

The Makkan & Madinian Surahs

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The Makkan Surhas:

- Revealed b/w 610 & 622 AD, before the Prophet had migrated to Madina
- Not only those revealed in Makka city, but those revealed during the Makkan period, regardless of the place, e.g. in Mina, Arafat, during the journey of the Hijrah & Mairaj.
- Usually deal with the fundamentals of faith ; Tawhid, Hereafter, consolation for the Prophet in the wake of hostilities in Makka
- Language is impressive, often in poetic diction, according to the cultural traditions of the Makkans who took great pride in their poetic skills; several Surahs are highly rhyming ; al-Kawther, al-Takwir, al-Inshiqaq, al-Infitar, al-Muddathir & most of the surahs of section 30
- Generally address mankind in general ; "O People" & the disbelievers ; "Say, O you ! that reject faith"
- Also address the Prophet directly e.g. "O you folded in cloak" (Surah 74), "We indeed granted you the abundance" (Surah 108) or, at places, indirectly, e.g., "Nor does he (Muhammad) say anything of his own desire. It is no less than an inspiration sent down to him" (al-Najm, 53).
- Story of Adam, Eve and Iblis is found in Makkan Surahs only; Surah 2 is the only Madinian Surah mentioning this story.

Short
Surahs

The Madinian Surahs :-

- o Revealed b/w 622 and 632 A.D
- o during Madinian period.
- o Long Surahs.

Methods of Revelation

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- Various modes of receiving revelation
- 1). Divine sounds ; chiming of bells; (the hardest mode)
 - Heard by the Prophet, but at times, buzzing of honey-bees was heard by those very close to him, e.g. , Umar reported such incidents.
 - Profuse sweating even in winters; pale face of the Prophet; wilting of the camel he rode, under his unusually increased weight ; report of Zayd bin Thabit, when Prophet's head rested on his lap & revelation began ; Zayd's leg bone about to break under the weight.
 - At the end of the chime-sequence, the revelation got committed to Prophet's memory
 - 2). Angel, Jibreel, would come to him, in human form, e.g. , in the form of Dihyah al-Kalbi or as a stranger (the easiest mode)
 - 3). Jibreel in his real form ; this happened only a few time.
 - 4). Direct conversation with God ; only twice ; once, in the Mairaj & second, in a dream.
 - 5). Inscription of the words of revelation on Prophet's heart by Jibreel without appearing before him; it was called, Nafth fi al-rau' (blowing into the heart).