

Concise Principles in Tafseer & Qurâ□□ anic Science (Part 6): The Preservation Process by Abu Bakr, Umar & Uthman

Description

Bismillah Wa Salaatu Wa Salaamu â□□ Alaa Rasoolillah:

Ammaa bâ□□ ad:

Concerning the Preservation, Collection and compilation of the Qurâ□□ aan

As mentioned in that which has passed, the Qurâ□□ aan was revealed in accordance with occurrences and incidents that took place during the life of the messenger (saw) or that Allah choose to reveal it without there being an incident related to its revelation.

On occasions Allah revealed whole surahs at once, at others times parts of surahs and at other times parts of Ayahs.

Stages in the collection of the Qurâ□□ aan

The people of knowledge mention that there were three main stages in the collection of the qurâ□□ aan:

1. The Era of the Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi was Salam)

During this period the qurâ□□ aan, alongside being revealed was naturally being recorded by the companions of the messenger (Sallallahu alaihi was Salam).

The main method of preserving the Qurâ□□ aan in this period was through memory. The Arabs were well known for having exceptional memories and thus it was memorised by many in this period through this means. It was also preserved in writing during the life of the prophet (Sallallahu alahi was salam) on various material. It was preserved on Animal skins, bone, Date palm wood and animal shoulder.

The known memorisors and recitors of the qurâ□□ aan were many.

That which will bring clarity to this fact is the hadeeth of Anas ibn Maalik who said:

â□□ The prophet (Sallallahu alahi was salam) sent seventy men who were known as â□□ Al Qurraaâ□□ (The proficient reciters of the qurâ□□ aan) upon a mission. They were confronted by the people of the tribes of Hayaan, Raâ□□ l and dhakwaan (Tribes who had animosity with the messenger (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam) and were (all) killedâ□ ¦â□□

(Collected by Al Bukhaari 4088 and Muslim 1581)

On the basis of this incident the messenger supplicated against them in the dua of Qunoot for the period of a month

The Hadeeth establishes the fact that the memorisers of the qurâ□□ aan at the time of the messenger (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam) were many.

Imaam Abu Ubaid in his book â□□ Al Qiraaâ□□ aatâ□□ mentions some of the most popular of those who had memorised the quarâ□□ aan. From them we have the four caliphs of the messenger (Sallallahu alaihi was salam) and the likes of Abdullah ibn masâ□□ ood, Abdullah ibn Umar, Abdullah ibn Abbaas, Abdullah ibn Zubair, Abdullah ibn al Amrâ□□ ibnil Aas, Saalim the freed slave of Abi Hudhaifa, Ubayy Ibn Kaâ□□ b, Muâ□□ aadh ibn Jabal, Zaid ibn Thaabit and Abu Darda. Alongside Aisha, Hafsa and Umm Sala to name but a few.

1. The period of Abu Bakr As Sideeq (Radhiyallahu â□□ Anhu)

During the caliphate of Abu Bakr in the twelfth year after Hijra, Abu Bakr commissioned the second stage in the compilation and preservation of the Qurâ□□ aan. The reason for his compilation was that which took place during the Battle of Yamaamah a large number

of memorisers of the qurâ□□ aan were killed in battle. Abu Bakr, who was the khalifah at the time was concerned about the deaths of the proficient in the recitation of the qurâ□□ aan since it was not officially collected in one book
at the time but either memorised in its totality or preserved in writing in various places

During this battle known as â□□ the wars of apostacyâ□□ against Musailima the great liar and false prophet, a great number of memorisers of the Qurâ□□ aan were killed (more than 400 in number) thus Abu Bakr in order to protect the qurâ□□ aan had it officially collected since at that time it was either preserved writing present in various places or it was preserved in totality in the chests of the believers. An explanation of this incident occurs in the following hadeeth in Saheeh Bukhaari. Zaid Ibn Thaabit (who was commissioned by Abu Bakr to undertake the task of collecting the Qurâ□□ aan, narrates the conversation he had with Abu Bakr in the presence of Umar, who had suggested to Abu Bakr that the Qurâ□□ aan should be collected, the incident occurs in the following hadeeth:

Narrated Zaid bin Thabit Al-Ansari, one of the scribes of the Revelation: Abu Bakr sent for me after the casualties among the warriors (of the battle) of Yamaama (where a great number of Qurra were killed). â□□ Umar was in the presence of Abu Bakr, when he (Abu Bakr) said (to Zaid): â□□ Umar has come to me and said, the People have suffered heavy casualties on the day of (the battle of) Yamama, and I am afraid that there will be some casualties among the Qurra (those who know the Qurâ□□ an by heart) elsewhere, whereby a large part of the Qurâ□□ an may be lost, unless you collect it. Thus I am of the opinion that you should collect the Qurâ□□ an.â□□ Abu Bakr added, â□□ I said to â□□ Umar, â□□ How can I do something which Allahâ□□ s Apostle has not done?â□□ â□□ Umar said (to me) â□□ By Allah, it is a good thingâ□□ . So â□□ Umar kept on pressing trying to persuade me to accept his proposal, till Allah opened my bosom for it and I had the same opinion as â□□ Umarâ□□ . (Zaid bin Thaabit added:) â□□ Umar was sitting with him (Abu Bakr) and was not speaking. Abu Bakr said (to me), â□□ You are a wise young man and we do not suspect you (of telling lies or of forgetfulness); and you used to write the Divine Inspiration for Allahâ□□ s Apostle. Therefore, look for the Qurâ□□ aan and collect it (in one manuscript)â□□ . By Allah, if he (Abu Bakr) had ordered me to shift one of the mountains (from its place) it would not have been harder for me than what he had ordered me concerning the collection of the Qurâ□□ an. I said to both of them, â□□ How will you carry out a thing which the Prophet has not done?â□□ Abu Bakr said, â□□ By Allah, it is a good thing. So I continued discussing with him about it till Allah opened

my bosom for that which He had opened the bosoms of Abu Bakr and â□□ Umar. So I started locating the Quranic material and collecting it from parchments, scapula, leafstalks of date palms and from the memories of men (who knew it by heart). I found with Khuzaima two verses of Suraat-at-Tauba which I had not found with anybody else (and they were):

â□□ Verily there has come to you an Apostle (Muhammad) from among yourselves. It grieves him that you should receive any injury or difficulty. He (Muhammad) is ardently anxious over you (to be rightly guided)â□□ (9:128).

The manuscript on which the Qurâ□□ an was collected, remained with Abu Bakr till Allah took him unto Him, and then with â□□ Umar till Allah took him unto Him, and finally it remained with Hafsa, â□□ Umarâ□□ s daughter.

(Collected by Imaam Al Bukhaari in his â□□ Saheehâ□□ 4679)

This ordering of the collection and compilation of the Qurâ□□ aan carried out by Abu Bakr is mentioned as being from the greatest of his virtues.

1. The compilation of the Third Caliph Uthmaan

The Qurâ□□ aan, as is established in authentic hadeeth, was revealed in seven â□□ Ahrufâ□□ (different Arabic dialects). The revelation of the qurâ□□ aan in these dialects was to accommodate the various dialect of the Arab tribes in the region at that time. During the time of Uthmaan there occurred differing over the modes of recitation. This differing led to a big trial among the muslims and to fighting and bloodshed.

Thus trial was what lead to the third stage in the Compilation of the Qurâ□□ aan.

Narrated Anas bin Malik: Hudhaifa bin Al-Yaman came to â□□ Uthmaan at the time when the people of Sham and the people of Iraq were waging war to conquer Arminya and Adharbijan. Hudhaifa was afraid of their (the people of Sham and Iraq) differences in the recitation of the Qurâ□□ an, so he said to â□□ Uthmaan, â□□ O chief of the Believers! Save this nation before they differ about the Book (Qurâ□□ an), as Jews and the Christians have differed (before)â□□ . So â□□ Uthmaan sent a message to Hafsa saying, â□□ Send us the manuscripts of the Qurâ□□ an so that we mayncompile the Qurâ□□ anic materials in perfect copies and return the

manuscripts to
youâ□□ . Hafsa sent it to â□□ Uthmaan. â□□ Uthmaan then ordered Zaid bin Thaabit, â□□ Abdullah
bin Az-Zubair, Saâ□□ eed bin Al-â□□ Aas and â□□ Abdur Rahman bin Haarith bin Hishaam to
copy the manuscripts in perfect copies. â□□ Uthmaan said to the three Quraishi men (the three other than Zaid ibn Thaabit), â□□ If you disagree with Zaid bin Thaabit on any point in the Qurâ□□ an, then write it in the dialect of Quraish as the Qurâ□□ an was revealed in their tongueâ□□ . They did so, and when they had written copies, â□□ Uthman returned the original manuscripts to Hafsa. â□□ Uthmaan sent to every Muslim province one copy of what they had copied, and ordered that all the other Qurâ□□ anic materials whether written in fragmentary manuscripts or whole copies, be burnt. Zaid bin Thaabit added, â□□ i could not find a verse from Sura al-Ahzab when we copied the Qurâ□□ an which I used to hear Allahâ□□ s Apostle reciting. So we searched and found it with Khuzaima bin Thaabit Al-Ansaariâ□□ . (That verse was): â□□ Among the Believers are men who have been true in their covenant with Allahâ□□ (33: 23).

Thus we see the difference between the collection of Abu Bakr and the collection of Uthmaan is that the compilation of Abu Bakr was done with the intent of gathering the parts of the Qurâ□□ aan that where preserved in writing with the companions into one official book, while the collection of Uthmaan was to establish a standardised Qurâ□□ aan that the people would unite upon and not differ about.

(Collected by Imaamul Bukhaari in his â□□ Saheehâ□□ 4702)

Thus the three stages are in summary:

1. Memorisation and preservation (During the Era of the Messenger (Sallallahu â□□ alaihi was salam)

2. Collection and compilation (During the Era of Abu Bakr As Sideeq â□□ Radhiyallahu â□□ Anhu)

3. Standardisation (During the Era of Uthmaan â□□ Radhiyallahu â□□ Anhu)

Wa Billahit Tawfeeq

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Category

1. Science of the Qur'aan
2. Tafseer

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