

## MODES OF REVELATION

1. According to the holy Qur'an, revelation refers to the message from Allah containing guidance to His people. It can be an individual message or for a common lot.
2. Modes of revelation refer to the ways through which revelation (message) from Allah reaches His creation/people.
3. According to the holy Qur'an, it is not right for man to speak to Allah directly except through stipulated ways.

Allah says in **Q (42:51)**;      *“It is not fitting for a man that Allah should speak to him except by inspiration, or from behind a veil, or by the sending of a messenger...”*

4. From the above verse, three modes of revelation are mentioned i.e inspiration, speaking from behind a veil and messengership.
5. **Inspiration**; this is a mode of revelation where Allah's message is thrown into the heart of a righteous person or prophet or messenger to enable him deal with a given situation.
6. The message contained in this mode of revelation can be a command from Allah or a suggestion or a prohibition or an explanation of the great truth.
7. Inspiration is not a message in words but simply an idea which comes like a flash and clears up a doubtful or hard situation.
8. Important to note also is that inspiration does not come as a result of meditation. That is, a person to receive Allah's message through this mode does not have to seek for it from Allah.
9. Prophet Ibrahim (AS) received Allah's message through this mode. While asleep, he had a voice telling him to fulfill his promise to Allah of sacrificing his son, Ismail.
10. In **Q (37:99-103)**, Prophet Ibrahim accepted to offer his son as a sacrifice but as he tried to slaughter him several times and failed, Allah substituted him with a sheep which he finally sacrificed. This finally gave rise to Eid al-Adhuha in Islam.
11. Another example of inspiration came from Prophet Musa's mother. When pharaoh vowed to kill every male child born in Misiri to save his power, Musa was still in his infancy and he was among pharaoh's targets.
12. According to **Q (28:7-14)**, to save Musa, Allah revealed (inspired) to her mother the secrets of pharaoh and gave her ways of protecting her son by putting him down the stream.
13. Prophet Muhammad PBUH also provided a solution on how to replace the 'Black Stone' after repairing the Kaaba before his messengership. The wisdom he used to bring together the Quraish tribes that were about to shed blood was inspired in him by Allah.

14. Inspiration is regarded as inner revelation. This is confirmed by the traditions of Prophet Muhammad PBUH such as where he said; “The holy spirit has inspired this into my heart”
15. **Speaking from behind a veil**; this is a means of revelation where Allah’s message is communicated directly to a righteous person in form of words.
16. This form of revelation is common to both prophets and righteous men. The message is brought in form of words being spoken to a chosen person but behind a veil.
17. The veil referred to here is a mystic veil of light but not material veil where the speech of Allah comes from. The recipient of the message is neither asleep nor fully awake.
18. According to Islam, only three people have ever spoken to Allah directly under this mode of revelation i.e Prophet Adam (AS), Prophet Musa (AS) and Prophet Muhammad PBUH.
19. According to **Q (2:30-38)**, Prophet Adam (AS) spoke to Allah when he was being taught the names of all Allah’s creatures in the universe and during the time he was being condemned by Allah for eating the forbidden fruit.
20. According to **Q (27:7-14)**, Prophet Musa (AS) spoke to Allah on Mount Sinai and he was given a mission to go and liberate the Israelites from Misiri. He wanted to see Allah but he was barred by the mystical light.
21. **Q (17:1)** speaks about Prophet Muhammad PBUH on the Night journey. It was during this journey that he spoke to Allah when he was being given the five daily prayers.
22. However, it should be noted that none of these three prophets has ever seen Allah with their naked eyes. They spoke to Him from behind a veil.
23. **Messengership**; this is a mode of revelation in which the messenger bearing Allah’s message is sent to the recipient and delivered in words.
24. This is the highest form of divine revelation which is sometimes referred to as revelation that is recited.
25. What happens is that the messenger (Angel) bearing Allah’s message is sent to the prophet chosen by Allah. The Angel entrusted with divine revelation is Jibril.  
Allah says in **Q (2:97)**;            “*Say: Whoever is an enemy to Jibril; for he brings down the revelation to your heart by Allah’s will...*”
26. This mode of revelation is restricted to only prophets where the divine message is delivered in actual words.
27. It is important to note that the holy Qur’an from the beginning up to the end was delivered to Prophet Muhammad PBUH in this form by Angel Jibril.

Allah says in **Q (16:102)**; *“Say, the Holy Spirit has brought the revelation from your Lord in truth, in order to strength those who believe...”*

28. Unlike the other modes of revelation, messengership is accompanied by a violent change in the recipient. The burden of the message is not only felt by him but it is also visible by those who see him.

### THE PROPHET’S EXPERIENCE OF THE REVELATION

1. Prophet Muhammad PBUH received the first message in 610AD at the age of 40 while he meditating in the cave of Mount Hira in the month of Ramadhan. This is when he first experienced the impact of the divine revelation.
2. Prior to disclosure of the message, he was commanded to read several times by the voice he did not know but insisted that he could not read until when he was strongly squeezed.

The prophet said; *“He seized me to such an extent that I was quite exhausted”*

3. After telling him what to read and introducing himself to him, Angel Jibril left but the Prophet PBUH thought that he had been possessed by the evil spirits and ran home immediately with in shock and fear.
4. He asked his wife Khadijah to cover him in his bed before narrating the experience in the cave while trembling.
5. Before he received the second revelation, the Prophet PBUH experienced a recess period of three years without any message from Allah. During this period, he faced a number of mocks and abuses from the Quraish Meccans that his God had forsaken him.
6. In the subsequent revelations, he continued to experience the effects of the Holy Spirit.

Lady Aisha narrates; *“I saw revelation coming down upon him on the coldest of the day and when the message was over, sweat ran down his forehead.”*

7. A companion by the names of Ubaidah stated that whenever revelation was sent to the prophet, he felt like one in grief and a change could come over his face.
8. Another companion called **Zaid bin Thabit** said that he was sitting with Prophet Muhammad PBUH and his legs were under those of the prophet PBUH. When revelation came upon him, he felt his legs were being crashed by the weight of the prophet’s legs.
9. Sometimes the prophet’s face could change whenever he received the revelation. A companion called **Y’ala** narrates that he saw the prophet’s face turning red after receiving revelation.
10. He used to receive revelation in two ways. That is, sometimes like the ringing of a bell and sometimes Angel Jibril physically appeared to him in shape of a man.

11. The hardest form was the ringing of a bell because the words of Allah were uttered to him like the ringing of a bell in a harsh and hard tone.
12. Angel Jibril used to appear to the prophet (PBUH) in different shapes. Sometimes in shape of a man and gently talked to him.
13. One time Jibril appeared to the prophet (PBUH) in full shape of an angel with six hundred wings covering the horizons of the earth.

**Question:**

- a) **Examine the mode in which the holy Qur'an was revealed.**
- b) **Explain the significance of the above mode.**

**Approach:**

- a) - Define the term Qur'an and modes of revelation.
- State the verse that supports the modes of revelation Q (42:51)
- Indicate that the main mode in which the holy Qur'an was revealed is messengership.
- Elaborate messengership in detail.

**b) Significance of messengership as a mode of revelation.**

- It strengthened the faith of the Muslims after witnessing the prophet's experiences whenever he received the message e.g **Y'ala** and **Zaid bin Thabit**.
- It confirms angel Jibril as the chief angel responsible for bringing Allah's message to prophets.
- It illustrates the miraculous nature of the holy Qur'an as being the only book revealed in this mode.
- It contributed to the gradual development of the Islamic law because verses were revealed according to the demands of the time.
- It illustrates the difficulty the prophet PBUH encountered in his mission given the experiences he went through whenever he received the revelation.
- It serves to explain to man the stages of the revelation of the holy Qur'an.
- It contributed to the fine arrangement of the holy Qur'an because angel Jibril used to guide the Prophet as to where to fix which verse in which chapter.
- It accounts for the uniqueness of the holy Qur'an from the earlier revealed books.
- It shows the unmatched power of Allah because He used to reveal Qur'anic verses according to the circumstances of time.
- It confirms the authenticity of the holy Qur'an and its originality from Allah. **Ref: Q 2:97**