

PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF THE HOLY QURAN

1. Preservation of the holy Qur'an means the measures taken by Muslims to protect the holy Qur'an in order to retain its spiritual status as it was revealed by Allah through Angel Jibril to Prophet Muhammad PBUH.
2. It is certainly clear that the holy Qur'an has purely retained its purity without a slight change in words, order or punctuation marks despite being in use for fourteen centuries.
3. The protection and preservation of the holy Qur'an rests entirely on Allah and man through Him also offers protection to the holy book. In this case, man refers to the Prophet PBUH, the caliphs and the entire Muslim community.

Allah's Protection

4. It should be noted that the first protection offered by Allah to the holy Qur'an occurred when it was still in heaven on the tablet preserved.

Q (85:21-22) says; *“This is a Glorious Qur'an on the Preserved Tablet”*

5. In addition, Allah scornfully replied to those who thought that they could corrupt the holy Qur'an when He said in **Q (41:42)**; *“No falsehood can approach it from before or behind it...”*
6. Furthermore, Allah continued to protect the holy Qur'an even after revealing it to Prophet Muhammad PBUH.

Q (15:9) says; *“We have, without doubt, sent down the message and We will surely guard it from corruption”*

7. Again, it should be noted that even at the time of collection and compilation of the holy Qur'an when it seemed easy for the pagan Quraish to corrupt the Qur'anic message if they desired, Allah continued to protect it when He said in **Q (75:17)**;

“It is for Us to collect it and to promulgate it”

8. Following the above verse, the Arabs who maybe wanted to introduce their words in the holy Qur'an did not manage as its promulgation lies with Allah.
9. However, Muslims through the grace of Allah have also put in place measures to protect the holy Qur'an right from the Prophet's time to date.

The Role of man in the protection and preservation of the holy Qur'an

10. It is reported that whenever the Prophet PBUH received a verse, he would call on his scribes to write it immediately by telling them that put it in such and such a chapter next to such and such a verse. This saved the Qur'anic message from getting lost.
11. The prophet PBUH discouraged his followers from writing down anything from him apart from the holy Qur'an. He at one time said; *“Do not write anything from me except the holy Qur'an”*

12. In addition, the Prophet PBUH looked for suitable writing materials at that time where to record the holy Qur'an. He encouraged his followers to write it on stones, leaves and barks of trees, bones, hard rocks and others for purposes of saving it from getting lost.
13. Today, the holy Qur'an has continued to be preserved in the same method. Many copies of it have been printed including Qur'anic pamphlets, charts, textbooks, and others. This is aimed at preserving the divine message.
14. Prophet Muhammad PBUH encouraged his followers to memorise the holy Qur'an. He said;

“Whoever puts the holy Qur'an to memory shall be saved from the torment of hell”

With this, many Muslims memorized the holy Qur'an, thereby offering protection to it.
15. Today, Muslims have continued to preserve the holy Qur'an in the same way. Adult and young Muslims have committed it to memory and most cases prizes are given to the best memorisers to encourage others to do the same. Hence, offering protection to the divine book.
16. Frequent recitation of the holy Qur'an was another method employed by the prophet PBUH to protect and preserve the holy Qur'an. He encouraged his followers to read the holy Qur'an every day especially in prayer to enable them learn and understand it.
17. Today, Muslims also recite the holy Qur'an especially in the five daily prayers. They also organize Qur'anic recitation competitions and award winners so as to encourage them read more of the holy book, hence protecting it.
18. Transmission as a method was also applied by the prophet PBUH to protect and preserve the holy book. He encouraged his followers to transmit Qur'anic knowledge to those who would be absent during his preachings. Many companions in turn taught their fellows especially on how to read the holy Qur'an.
19. Today, transmission still applies as many Muslims are taught in mosques, public seminars and several women are taught by their husbands at home. Hence ensuring that the holy message is protected.
20. Prophet Muhammad PBUH trained his companions with the aim of teaching the holy Qur'an to others especially in far distant places. This served to protect the holy Qur'an.
21. He further used to supervise his Qur'anic reciters to ensure that they gave clear instructions to their students. This ensured that pure message was passed on to the Muslims.
22. During the caliphate period, Abu Bakar (RA), on the advice of Umar bin Khattab, compiled the holy Qur'an into a book form as a way of preserving it after noticing the death of many Qur'anic memorisers in the battle of Yamamah.

23. During the caliphate of Uthman bin Affan, the Qur'an was standardized by burning all the Qur'anic copies that were not in the original dialect in which it was revealed to the Prophet (PBUH). Thereby bringing about unified recitation and meaning of the divine message.
24. The Umayyads through Hujaji bin Yusuf added vowels in the compiled text of the holy Qur'an to make it easy for reading especially by non-Arab Muslims.
25. Due to improved technology, Muslims have recorded the Qur'an on modern gadgets e.g tapes, discs, computers and others. All this is aimed at protecting and preserving the heavenly message.
26. Muslims have set up libraries and museums where copies of the holy Qur'an are kept. Certainly, whatever item bearing any Qur'anic message is highly preserved.
27. In many Muslim families, copies of the Qur'an are kept and at least a copy in every mosque. Many Muslim agencies have distributed copies of the holy Qur'an in schools and mosques to encourage Muslims to recite and memorise it as a way of protecting and preserving it.

THE HOLINESS OF THE QUR'AN

Evidence from the holy Qur'an to show that it is a holy book

1. It was revealed and taught by Allah Himself. Allah says in Q 55:1-2
 "Allah Most Gracious it is He Who has taught the holy Qur'an."
2. It was revealed in a holy month of Ramadhan in the night of power. Allah says in Q 2:185
 "Ramadhan is the month in which was sent down the Qur'an as a guide to mankind..."
3. It was revealed through the Holy Spirit i.e Angel Jibril, the head of all angels with the duty of delivering Allah's message to His selected people. He says in Q 26:192-193
 "Verily! This is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds, with it came down the spirit of faith and truth..."
4. It is not touched by one with ceremonial impurities such as post child birth bleeding, post sexual dirt and others. However, the cleanliness does not stop on the body but also the mind. Allah says in
Q 56:77-79
 "That this is indeed a Qur'an most honourable, in a book well-guarded, which none shall touch but those who are clean."
5. One must seek refuge from Allah against Satan before reading the holy Qur'an. Allah says in **Q 16:98** "When you read the Qur'an, seek Allah's protection from Satan the rejected one."
6. Some verses attract prostration by the reciter and the listener e.g **Q 7:2016** and **Q 96:19**.

7. It is not read by one in a hurry but in a slow measured rhythmic motion. Allah says in **Q 73:4**
“Or a little more and recite the Qur’an in slow, measured rhythmic tones.”