

NEWSLETTER

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Unchallenged Beauty of the Qur'ān

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Muqaffa’, originally from Khurāsān, Persia, was a fire-worshipper who embraced Islam at the hands of ‘Īsā ibn ‘Alī. A brilliant scholar of Arabic grammar and rhetoric, he authored many works and translated classical texts - including those of Aristotle - into Arabic. His writings are quoted by great Qur’ānic commentators like Imām Qurṭubī and ‘Allāmah Ālūsī. He is most known for translating Kalīlah wa Dimnah, a collection of moral fables, from Persian to Arabic. This work spread globally and influenced European literature, with familiar tales like “The hare and the tortoise” and “The fox and the crow”.

Ibn al-Muqaffa’s eloquence in Arabic was unmatched. One of his well-known sayings, quoted in books of tafsīr, is:

قَوْلٌ بِلَا عَمَلٍ كَطَعَامٍ بِلَا دَسْمٍ، وَسَحَابٌ بِلَا مَطَرٍ، وَقَوْسٌ بِلَا وَتَرٍ

"Words without action are like gravy without fat, a cloud without rain, or a bow without a string".

Confident in his mastery, he once attempted to rival the Qur’ān’s eloquence. But as he passed a boy reciting the verse:

وَقِيلَ يَا أَرْضُ ابْلَعِي مَاءَكِ وَيَا سَّمَاءُ أَقْلِعِي وَغِيضَ الْمَاءِ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ

And it was said: “O earth, swallow your water, and O sky, withhold [your rain]”, And the water subsided, and the matter was accomplished”. (Sūrah Hūd: 44)

He was stunned by its unmatched depth and expression. Overwhelmed, he abandoned his effort and declared: “I testify that this (Qur’ān) can never be challenged. It is not the word of man”.

Allāhu Akbar! Even masters of the Arabic language were humbled by the Qur’ān. Throughout history, many experts in poetry and prose - especially during the time of the Prophet ﷺ - were compelled to admit its divine origin. Beyond its beauty and power, the Qur’ān is full of wisdom and truth. Truly successful are those who recite it, understand it, and live by its guidance.

Reference: Maulānā Afzal Ismail, Pearls from the Path, (Pages 44-45)

100 ways to enter Jannah (66-70)

66

To love Allāh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ

67

A person who recites the Holy Qur’ān

68

One who enjoins good and forbids evil

69

Being just towards Allāh’s creations

70

To worship Allāh ﷻ with Ihsaan (perfection/excellence)

Reference: 100 Ways to Enter Jannah, Dr. Shabbir Ahmed

Islām of Ja‘far (RA), ‘Afīf (RA), and Talḥah (RA)

On one occasion, ‘Alī (RA) was performing Ṣalāh, standing to the right of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. At that moment, Abū Ṭālib happened to walk by, accompanied by his son Ja‘far (RA). Observing the scene, Abū Ṭālib turned to Ja‘far (RA) and gently advised: “My son, support your cousin just as ‘Alī does. Stand on his left and join him in prayer”. Ja‘far (RA) took his father’s words to heart and joined the Ṣalāh. He would go on to become one of the earliest Muslims, accepting Islām as either the twenty-first or twenty-fifth person.

‘Afīf al-Kindī was a close friend of ‘Abbās ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib (RA) and a well-known perfume merchant. Due to his trade, he would frequently travel between regions, including Yemen.

He once recalled a profound moment that took place in Minā: “I was in Minā with ‘Abbās (RA)”, he said: “when I saw a man come forward, perform wuḍū’ carefully and stand for Ṣalāh”. A short while later, he continued: “A woman appeared, made wuḍū’ in the same way, and stood for Ṣalāh beside him”. Then came a young boy, around eleven years old, who also performed wuḍū’ and joined them in prayer.

Surprised, ‘Afīf (RA) asked: “What religion is this?” ‘Abbās (RA) replied: “This is the Dīn of my nephew Muḥammad ﷺ, who professes to be the Messenger of Allāh ﷻ. This boy is ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (RA), also my nephew, and the woman is Muḥammad bin ‘Abdullāh’s wife” (Khadījah RA).

Years later, ‘Afīf (RA) would embrace Islām himself. But he would often express a deep regret over that missed opportunity, saying: “If only I had been the fourth person to accept Islām”.

Talḥah (RA) narrated: “I went on a business trip to Busrā. One day, while I was in the marketplace, I heard a monk calling out: “Is there anyone here from the Ḥaram of Makkah”? I responded: “I am from the Ḥaram of Makkah”. The monk asked: “Has Aḥmad ﷺ appeared yet?” I said: “Come again—who?” The monk replied: “The son of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib. This is the very month of his expected appearance. He will emerge in the Ḥaram of Makkah and then migrate to a rocky land full of date palms. He is the final messenger. Be alert and do not be left behind”.

Talḥah (RA) continued: “His words deeply affected my heart. I returned to Makkah at once and began asking if anything new had occurred. They replied: “Yes, Muḥammad, the Trustworthy, has claimed prophethood, and the son of Abū Quḥāfah (i.e. Abū Bakr RA) has joined him”. Without hesitation, I went to Abū Bakr (RA), and he took me to Rasūlullāh ﷺ. There, I accepted Islām and related to the Prophet ﷺ everything that had taken place between me and the monk in Busrā”.

Reference: Muḥammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī, Seeratul Muṣṭafā (Pages 49-50)

DID YOU KNOW?



The Sūrahs of the Qur’ān are classified as Makki or Madani - not based on location, but based on time. That is, the classification depends on whether the verses were revealed before or after Hijrah, regardless of whether the revelation occurred in Makkah or Madīnah. Most Sūrahs are either entirely Makki or Madani, though some contain a mixture and are labelled according to the majority of their verses. Some verses that were revealed in Makkah post Hijrah are still classified as Madani.

Makki Sūrahs focus on the core beliefs of Islam - such as belief in Allāh ﷻ, the afterlife, and prophethood. They refute shirk, respond to objections from disbelievers, and recount the stories of earlier prophets, often with vivid descriptions of Qiyāmah, Jannah, and Jahannam. Revealed during a time of severe persecution, they served to uplift and strengthen the early Muslims. In contrast, Madani Sūrahs were revealed after the Prophet ﷺ had established the Islamic state in Madinah. They address the practical needs of a developing Muslim society, including laws related to social conduct, politics, economics, family, Jihād, and interactions with other religious groups.

Reference: Mufti Muḥammad Taqī Usmani, The Meanings of the Noble Qur’ān, (Page: 17)