

Honouring the Qur'aan and the Importance of Tajweed

Q: Ilm-44: The people in our area have little regard for studying the Qur'aan but tremendous interest in other studies. Furthermore, in places where an interest is shown in learning the Qur'aan, no importance is attached to Tajweed Please furnish a detailed reply by which reverence for the Qur'aan and importance for Tajweed can be instilled within people's hearts.

Answer: The Qur'aan is a great bounty for the Muslims and the best of all divine scriptures. Because it is really the speech of Allaah, Rasulullaah SAW. said that the best of all speech is the Qur'aan and that the virtue of the Qur'aan over all other words is like the virtue Allaah has over all of creation.

The Qur'aan is the last and complete code of law that Allaah sent and is a distinguishing factor of this Ummah. It is for this reason that Rasulullaah SAW. said, "Every nation has mark of honour by which they can feel proud and that mark of honour for my Ummah is the Qur'aan. While people in this world boast about their lineage or wealth or something else, the true mark of honour is the Qur'aan and therefore the person who knows more of the Qur'aan is that much more elevated in status and honour. This honour is such that no other worldly honour can compare with.

From amongst the many thousands of books that can be taught in the world, the best is the Qur'aan because while the text of other books are from the limited and inferior minds of people, the Qur'aan is from Allaah Whose knowledge is limitless and Who knows everything in the universe. Those who study the Qur'aan are therefore much more superior than those who study any other books. It is for this reason that Rasulullaah SAW. said, "The best of you are those who learn the Qur'aan and teach it.

Rasulullaah SAW. once addressed Hadhrat Abu Hurayrah RADI. saying, "O Abu Hurayrah! Learn the Qur'aan and teach it because if you pass away doing so, the angels will visit your grave just as they visit the Kabah."

Rasulullaah SAW. also said, "Respect the bearers of the Qur'aan because the one who respects them actually shows respect to Allaah. You must also never undermine the status or rights due to the bearers of the Qur'aan because in the sight of Allaah they are like the Ambiyaa ALY. the only difference being that they do not receive revelation."

In another Hadith, Rasulullaah SAW. said, "The bearers of the Qur'aan are the flag-bearers of Islaam. The one who respects them actually shows respect to Allaah and the one who humiliates them is cursed by Allaah."

Rasulullaah SAW. also said, "When the bearer of the Qur'aan passes away, Allaah instructs the ground not to consume his body. The ground then says, 'How can I consume his body when he has Your speech in him?'

Rasulullaah SAW. also told us that on the Day of Qiyaamah, Allaah will tell the Haafidh to read the Qur'aan as he recited with ease and clarity in this world and to continue ascending the levels of Jannah until the final verse he can recite. He will therefore continue ascending to the highest levels of Jannah. How deprived will those people be who attain only the knowledge of this world and do not learn the Qur'aan? In fact, Rasulullaah SAW. likened the heart with no part of the Qur'aan in it to a deserted house.

Yet another Hadith states that the person who becomes a Haafidh and regards what is Halaal as Halaal and Haraam as Haraam, he will enter Jannah and his intercession will be accepted on behalf of ten members of his family who would have been destined for Jahannam.

Allaahu Akbar! So great is the honour accorded to the Haafidh of the Qur'aan! None can really explain the greatness of the word of Allaah. Whenever revelation of the Qur'aan came to Rasulullaah SAW., his face would turn red and the strain was so much on him that it appeared as if he would stop breathing. When it stopped, beads of perspiration would be apparent on his forehead, even during cold winter days.

Hadhrat Ubaadah bin Saamit RADI. reports that when revelation would come to Rasulullaah SAW. he would lower his head and the Sahabah RADI. would also lower their heads. Rasulullaah SAW. would then raise his head once the revelation was over.

Hadhrat Zaid bin Thaabit RADI. narrates that he was once sitting beside Rasulullaah SAW. when a portion of a verse was revealed. Rasulullaah SAW. thigh was at that moment on Hadhrat Zaid RADI.'s thigh, Hadhrat Zaid RADI. says that the pressure of the revelation made him feel as if his thigh would break into pieces.

If this was the weight of a single portion of the Qur'aan. one can well imagine the strain that was placed on the man upon which the entire Qur'aan was revealed. How esteemed must he be above all other people? This strain was not only felt by people, but by animals as well. Hadhrat Aa'isha RADI. reports that revelation once came to Rasulullaah SAW. while he was sitting on a camel. The weight of the revelation made the camel lower her head and she was unable to even move her neck until the revelation had stopped. Rasulullaah SAW. then recited the verse:

Verily We shall soon cast a weighty (important) word (the Qur'aan) upon you. {Surah Muzammil, verse 5}

Allaah also says:

If We have to reveal this Qur'aan to a mountain (and grant it understanding of the Qur'aan without the barrier of carnal desires), you will see it humble itself and shatter out of fear for Allaah. These are examples that We relate to people so that they reflect (about their personal conditions). {Surah Hashar, uerse 21}

Shah Abdul Azeez Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. narrates in his Tafseer a narration from Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. that when Allaah gave the tablets of the Torah to Hadhrat Moosa RADI. he was unable to carry it. Allaah then sent an angel to carry every verse, but they were unable to do so, when Allaah sent an angel to carry a single letter each, they were unable to do

this even. When Hadhrat Moosa ALY. and the angels learnt to narrate by meaning, Allaah told him that carrying the tablets had now been made easy for him. It was then that he managed to carry it to the Bani Israa'eel.

If carrying even single letters of Allaah's speech is so difficulty for the mighty angels, it is only by the grace of Allaah that He has made it easy for our little children to learn the Qur'aan. In fact, Allaah declares several times:

Undoubtedly We have made the Qur'aan simple to learn (and to understand), so is there any who will do so? {Surah Qamar}

Because the Qur'aan is such a great Book, we have learnt from our elders to show great respect to it. Hadhrat Ikrama bin Abu Jahal RADI. used to place the Qur'aan on his face and say, "This is the word of my Rabb. This is the word of my Rabb." Ulema have therefore specified a few etiquettes for reciting the Qur'aan. A person should make wudhu, use a Miswaak and sit alone in a quiet place and sit with respect without reclining against anything. He should then start reciting with humility and with the thought in mind that these are the words of the King of all kings. If one understands the meaning, one must contemplate over the meanings, make du'aa for Allaah's mercy when the verses of mercy are recited and make du'aa for safety when the verses of punishment are recited. When verses stating Allaah's purity are recited, one must recite 'subhaanallaah'. One must also try to cry when reciting the Qur'aan, or at least appear to look like a crying person. This was the instruction of Rasulullaah SAW. who always cried when reciting the Qur'aan.

When Hadhrat Saalih RADI. once recited the Qur'aan to Rasulullaah SAW. Rasulullaah SAW. asked, "O Saalih! You are reciting the Qur'aan, but where is the weeping?"

Another important etiquette of reciting the Qur'aan is never to rush through the recitation and to recite it with Tajweed. Tajweed cannot be separated from the Qur'aan and if it is, the true reality of the Qur'aan will be lost. In fact, the person who recites the Qur'aan without Tajweed will be a sinner. It is with reference to such people that Rasulullaah SAW. mentioned, "There are many people who recite the Qur'aan while the Qur'aan curses them".

Imaam Jazari RAH. writes, "It is incumbent to adopt Tajweed because the one who does not will be sinful since it was with Tajweed that the Qur'aan was revealed and with Tajweed was it conveyed to us."

It is therefore incumbent to recite the Qur'aan as it was conveyed to us without a break in the chain of narration, according to the seven Imaams of Qiraa'ah. Let alone knowing how to recite the Qur'aan in the seven types of Qiraa'ah, people today do not even know how to recite the Qur'aan according to the most famous Qiraa'a of Imaam Hafs RAH. People have no idea how to pronounce the letters of the Qur'aan, when to stop between the verses or how to recite the letters with their unique qualities. They then make serious error in their recitation. because of which their salaah is nullified. They then destroy all of their deen because Rasulullaah SAW. said, "salaah is a vital pillar of Deen, so whoever keeps it standing will keep their Deen standing and who ever demolishes it will demolish his entire Deen,"

Another of the etiquettes is to recite the Qur'aan in a good voice, as Rasulullaah SAW.

instructed and liked people to do. He said. "Adorn the Qur'aan with your voices." This is however not possible without knowing Tajweed and studying under someone knowledgeable.

May Allaah grant us all the ability to appreciate the Qur'aan, to make it's learning common amongst the Ummah and may He fill our hearts with respect and honour for it. Aameen, And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

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