

The Glorious Qur'an and the Holy Ahlul Bayt (A.S.) cannot be separated from each other

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Among the arguments put forward from the Ahl' ul-Sunnah to justify the adallah (justice) of the sahaba is that they compiled the Qur'an. To question their trustworthiness is to question the authenticity of the Qur'an. Hence even if the sahaba are in the wrong, we must interpret in such a way to protect their integrity (even if it means degrading the position of Prophethood.

(Examples of this exist in the chapter on the will of the Prophet (saw) for such an example.) All the references from this section have been taken from Shah Waliyullah's book 'Izalatul Khifa' setting out the merits of the four rightly guided khalifas. Much of what Shah Waliyullah writes can also be found in Suyuti's analysis of the Qur'an 'al Itqan' - (Expect if otherwise indicated)

Shah Waliyullah writes:

"At the time of the death of the Prophet (saaws) the Qur'an had not been compiled in to a book form. Surah's and Ayats were scattered amongst the people" (sic). Izalatul Khifa by Shah Waliyullah, Vol 4 p 252, publishers Kadheemi Kutubkhana, Karachi He continues:

"Zaid bin Thabit narrates that "Abu Bakr as Siddiq sent for me when the people of Yama-ma had been killed (i.e. a number of the Prophet's companions who fought against Musalima). (I went to him) and found Umar bin Al Khattab sitting with him. Abu Bakr then said (to me), Umar has come to me and said "Casualties were heavy among the Qurra of the Qur'an (i.e. those who knew the Qur'an by heart) on the day of the Battle of Yamama, and I am afraid that more heavy casualties may take place among the Qurra on other battlefields, whereby a large part of the Qur'an may be lost. Therefore I suggest you (Abu Bakr) order that the Qur'an be collected" (sic). I said to 'Umar "How can you do something that Allah's Apostle (saws) did not do so". Umar said by Allah this is a good project". 'Umar kept on urging me to accept his proposal till Allah opened my chest for it and I began to realize the good idea which 'Umar had realized. Then Abu Bakr said (to me), 'You are a wise young man and we do not have any suspicion about you, and you used to write the Divine Inspiration for 'Allah's Apostle (saws). So you should search for (the fragmentary scripts of_ the Qur'an and collect it (in one book)". By Allah! If they had ordered me to shift one of the mountains, it would not have been heavier for me than this ordering me to collect the Qur'an. Then I said to 'Abu Bakr, "How will you do

something which Allah's Apostle did not do?". 'Abu Bakr replied, "By Allah it is a good project". 'Abu Bakr kept on urging me to accept his idea until Allah opened my chest for what He had opened the chests of 'Abu Bakr and 'Umar. So I started looking for the Qur'an and collecting it from (what was written on) palm leaf stalks, thin white stones and also from the men who knew it by heart, till I found the Last Verse of Surat at Tauba (Repentance) with Abi Khuzaima al Ansari and I did not find it with anybody other than him....Then the complete manuscripts (copy) of the Qur'an remained with 'Abu Bakr till he died, then with 'Umar till the end of his life, and then with Hafsa, the daughter of 'Umar"

Izalatul Khifa by Shah Waliyullah, Vol 4 p 253, publishers Kadheemi Kutubkhana, Karachi Sahih Bukhari, Arabic - English Volume 6 hadith number 509

Reading on:

"Anas bin Malik narrates that Hudhaifa came to see Uthman following the battle of Yaman. He expressed his concern at hearing people reciting the same verses of the Qur'an differently. Hadhrath Uthman asked Hadhrath Hafsa for the collated papers and then established a committee to compile the Qur'an comprising of Abdullah bin Zubayr, Saeed bin Aas, Abdur Rahman bin Harith, Zaid bin Thabit".

Izalatul Khifa by Shah Waliyullah, Vol 4 p 255, publishers Kadheemi Kutubkhana, Karachi Sahih al Bukhari Hadith number 510 The Qur'an we have today in book form is the form collated by these 4 men. Further more Sayyid Qutb writes:

"Tirmidhi reports that Abdullah ibn Abbas, a close and knowledgeable Companion of the Prophet, said that he had asked Uthman ibn Affan, the third Caliph who is universally recognized as having authorized the compilation and canonisation of the Qur'anic text as we have today, why Surah 8, al-Anfal, consisting of less than 100 verses, was placed before Surah 9, al-Tawbah, which comprises over 100 verses, and which, unlike other Surah's, does not contain the usual opening phrase of 'In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful?' He further enquired from him why the two Surah's were grouped with the long Surah that appear at the beginning of the Qur'an?

Uthman answered that the Prophet, God's peace and blessings be upon him, used at times receive verses or passages from several Surah's at the same time. He would call the scribes and instruct them to put specific verses at specified places in their respective Surah's. Al-Anfal was one of the earliest Surah's revealed at Madinah while al-Tawbah was one of the largest, but their subject matter was very similar that he suspected they might be one Surah. The Prophet passed away without clarifying the matter, and so Uthman placed them next to each other without separating them by the usual opening phrase, and grouped them with the long Surah's

at the beginning of the Qur'an."

Fi Zilal al-Qur'an page 10 by Sayyid Qutb English translation published by The Islamic Foundation (1st edition 1999) To summarize this position:

1. At the death of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) the Qur'an was scattered among the people.
 2. Zaib bin Thabit regarded it easier to move one mountain than to compile the Qur'an.
 3. That the Prophet[saww] died without clarifying the locations of the Surah of the Qur'an, so it was up to Uthman to decide the position of Surah al-Tawbah.
 4. Hadhrath Umar was afraid that the Qur'an would be lost so he wanted to compile the Qur'an.
- Whilst the Prophet did not take heed of such a matter because he[saww] did not make any attempt to compile the Qur'an.

The Qur'an we have today in book form is the form collated by these 4 men. We also have the following unnerving statement in the same book where we read the following: "Hadhrath Ali compiled the Qur'an during the lifetime of the Prophet[saww] but Allah's taqdir prevented this from coming forward". Izalatul Khifa, by Shah Waliyullah Volume 4 p 497 The above evidences from the most regarded sources including the Sahih of al-Bukhari begs the following rational questions:

1. If the Qur'an had not been compiled during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet then why did he during his farewell pilgrimage tell the companions the following: "I am leaving amongst you two weighty things the Book of Allah (Kitabullah) and my Ahlulbayt"? (a mutawatir narration). It is incorrect to call Qur'an al-kitab when it is merely in the people's memory. Furthermore, it is even inappropriate to apply the word al-kitab to the fragments written on palm branches, flat stones, and shoulder blades, except when such an application is figurative and from particulate attention. But a word may not be used metaphorically without something to indicate that. The word al-kitab obviously signifies a single and united entity. It is not applied to a text which is scattered and not collected, let alone one which is unwritten and preserved in memory only.
2. Hadhrath Umar said "The Book of Allah is sufficient for us", when the Prophet (saaws) asked for a pen and paper on his deathbed did? Why say 'Book' and not just say Qur'an?
3. If the Qur'an was not compiled then why did this verse descend "Today, I have perfected your religion and completed my bounty upon you, and I was satisfied that your religion be Islam" (Qur'an 5:3)? This is especially true when the narration of Tirmidhi states of the Prophet[saww] died without specifying the location of Surah al-Tawbah. Would this therefore not imply that Islam was incomplete because Muslims did not know the positions of the Surah's?

4. Why would the Holy Prophet leave the earth leaving this task unfulfilled - after all his prime purpose in the earthly sphere of existence was the deliverance of the Revelation to guide the billions who followed till the Day of Judgment. It would have been prudent to at the very least have one copy of the Qur'an preserved on indelible materials under his immaculate supervision, either compiled as the Revelation was issued from his tongue or at the end of his Mission.

5. Hadhrath Umar wanted to collate the Qur'an into book form because he was concerned that it would get lost. How can this be the case when Allah (swt) states categorically "Certainly We sent down the Dhikr (i.e., Qur'an), and certainly we shall protect it" (Qur'an 15:9), did Hadhrath Umar not have faith in this verse?

6. Why did Hadhrath Abu Bakr opt to choose Zaid bin Thabit as compiler when prominent Sahaba famed for their knowledge of the Qur'an such as Ubayy bin Ka'ab and Abdullah ibne Masud present. The latter were acknowledged as the foremost in their knowledge of the Qur'an excepting the Holy Prophet himself.

7. Hadhrath Uthman went even further and appointed, with the presence in Madina of some of the greats amongst the companions who were famed for their knowledge of the Qur'an, companions who were mere boys during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. If one analyses their ages we learn Abdullah bin Zubayr was born in 2 Hijri, Saeed bin Aas in 1 Hijri, Abdur Rahman bin Harith in 1 Hijri, the eldest Zaid bin Thabit was 11 years of age at the time of the Hijrath. The last verse of the Qur'an descended in 10 Hijri that means all four were very young - in fact children, three of whom were still not even Baligh (attained the age of adolescence). Why were these four preferred to prominent sahaba such as Abdullah ibne Masud and Ubayy bin Ka'ab?

8. The learning of Abdullah bin Masud and Ubai bin Ka'b is preserved in the Sahih Bukhari where we read this hadith narrated by Abdullah bin Amr:

"I heard the Holy Prophet saying, 'Take (Learn) the Qur'an from four: Abdullah bin Masud, Salim, Mu'adh, and Ubai bin Ka'b.'" Sahih Bukhari Arabic - English Vol 6 hadith number 521
If this is indeed the case then why did neither Hadhrath Abu Bakr nor Hadhrath Uthman select any of these men to collate and compile the Qur'an?

9. Za'id began to compile the Qur'an during Hadhrath Abu Bakr's life. The task stopped and did not start again until Hadhrath Uthman's khilafath. Why was there this pause, especially since the mighty Hadhrath Umar prevented any civil instability in and around Madina, which was not the case with the first and third khalifas whose rules were marred by civil war in and around Madina? What more tranquil, relatively speaking, an opportunity, especially since the compilation of this Qur'an was the suggestion of Hadhrath Umar himself - why this gap period of in excess of no less than 10 years? When Hadhrath Umar was so concerned that the Qur'an

be collated why did he not ensure that the task was completed during his ten year reign? He said that he was worried that reciters were dying on the battlefield. Many more wars occurred during his own khilafath so why did he lose that concern? 10. Rather than go to the extraordinary length of appointing a four man committee to collate the Qur'an in to book fashion, a painstaking process would it not have been easier to use the Qur'an that had been

compiled by Hadhrath Ali (as)?

Here are a further to questions for our Salafi brothers:

11. Did the Sahaba not commit bidah by compiling the Qur'an when the Prophet (S) did not?

12. Are you not committing bidah by keeping the Qur'an at home when according to Sahih al Bukhari did NOT compile the Word of Allah (swt) in Book form? If all bidah's are in the fire then

is this bidah not also in the fire?

Clearly, this makes no sense. It is a gross slander to suggest that the Prophet[saww] would fail to collate the revelation in to a book form. We believe that he arranged for the compilation during his lifetime - this is simple rationality - and entrusted the Gate of Knowledge Imam Ali (as) with the task, as confirmed by Shah Waliyullah. To suggest that this did not happen because Allah (swt) did not want this compilation makes no sense. How could Imam Ali (as)

be removed from this instrumental role when the Prophet[saww] had stated:

"Ali is with the Qur'an and the Qur'an is with Ali, they will never separate until they reach me at the Fountain of Kauthar". Al Mustadrak al Hakim, Volume 3 p 124

Compare the enormous reservation expressed by Za'id bin to the challenge of Imam Ali (as):

"Ask me about the Book of Allah, because there is no Ayah but that I know whether it was revealed at night or in daytime, on the plain or in the mountain"

History of the Khalifa's who took the right way by Jalaladeen Suyuti, English translation by Abdassamad Clarke, p 194 The Wahabie scholar Shah Ismail Shaheed expands on this point

to an even greater depth:

"Imamate is the Shadow of the Prophethood. The Imam's leadership is openly declared. Whereas history provides evidence of Saints that remained silent, the Imam announces whatever powers he possesses as Imam Ali did when he declared 'I am the Sidiq al Akbar (The Great Truthful One) and whoever declares this after me is a liar and I am the talking Qur'an".

Munsub e Imamate by Shah Ismail Shaheed page 69

To summarize we can understand this to be an attempt to lessen the honour and prestige of the Holy Prophet[saww] and Imam Ali (as) by giving the role of the collection of the Qur'an to the sahaba (even though the Qur'an was completed during the Prophet[saww] time).

The issue so alarmed the Sunni scholar Mahmud Abu Riyyah that he wrote the following:

"The strangest thing and embarrassing point is that they have never even included the name of Ali within those entrusted with collecting and writing down the Qur'an, neither during the reign of Abu Bakr nor that of Uthman! Mentioning instead the name of those lower than him in degrees of knowledge and fiqh! Was Ali unable to undertake such a task! Or was he among those untrustworthy men? Or among those who were incompetent to be consulted or committed to shoulder this responsibility?

While in fact reason and logic necessitate that Ali should be the foremost and most competent man entrusted with this job, due to possessing attributes and merits of which all other Companions were deprived. He was reared and grown up under the care of the Prophet [saww], living long under his protection, attending the Wahi from the first days of revelation up to the day of cessation, in a way that he did not miss even one of his verse?!

So if he was not to be called for such a critical task, what thing else would he be called for?! And if they invented justifications for ignoring him (Imam Ali) in regard of the caliphate of Abu Bakr, never consulting him or seeking him or seeking his opinion about it, what excuse they can give for not inviting him to the task of writing the Qur'an? Is there any logical reason for this behavior? What judgement can be issued by any just judge? What a surprising matter it is, and we have nothing to say but: May God help you O Ali! They have not treated you with equity in anything!"

Adwa' ala' al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah (lights on the Muhammadan Sunnah) page 300, by Mahmud Abu Riyyah - English edition published by Ansariyan publications 1999

If Imam Ali had collected the Qur'an during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet [saww], it is clear that he must have done so under the specific command of the Holy Prophet. The question now arises - why, after the death of the Holy Prophet, was this version not taken as the official version by Hadhrath Abu Bakr? There is left little room but to contemplate the fact that this was another step in the conspiracy against the family to separate the Qur'an from the Ahlulbayt so that no one turns to them for guidance.

This was, in other words, a form of ostracization, one that in fact amounted to censorship of the Qur'an till the state had officially eliminated Imam Ali from any claim towards its compilation, an achievement they would take the credit for, and one that if acknowledged would have brought the masses to Imam Ali and not to them for guidance. The khilafath of man had originated in the connivance of men to establish an alternative form of khilafath to that intended by the Holy Prophet. This khilafath was in opposition to that intended by the Holy Prophet, which had been a khilafath that was from a lineage within the family of the Holy Prophet, a lineage that also linked to the Qur'an. The khilafath had been snatched from the

family. The other easy means of approach for guidance, the Qur'an, was also snatched. The state took the Book and monopolized its production, distribution and took lofty credit for the achievement, credit that exists to this day when we still hear that it was Hadhrath Uthman who finally compiled the Qur'an. It is also self-evident in this premise that if Imam Ali (as)'s versions had been taken then people would turn to him to seek clarification on verses this would undermine their positions as Leaders of the State - for example the Qur'anic verses of appointment, and further notice certain departures of the first three khalifas from the Book. It was a minority, the earliest Shi'i, who gathered with Imam Ali took him as the interpreter of the Holy Qur'an - seeking guidance from his copy. The majority was left without a Qur'an for 20 years after the death of the Holy Prophet. This is a staggering fact. The Shi'i have held to the Qur'an through the family exactly as instructed by the Holy Prophet, and without intermission. The majority had absolutely no Qur'an in any Muslim house for 20 years - a whole generation, the first Muslims born into a world from which the Seal of Messengers had departed - without a Qur'an amongst them.

The 2 copies of the Qur'an were of course preserved by Allah - since Allah writes that He has preserved His dhikr in the Qur'an - there was no difference on this between the Qur'an as compiled by Imam Ali and that compiled by Hadhrath Uthman - but the fact remains - the followers of Imam Ali received guidance through the Qur'an from the very moment of the death of the Holy Prophet. The clarity of the Shi'i vision is unfolding. The conclusions of this section are quite clear:

1. The Qur'an is with Ali and Ali is with the Qur'an.
2. The Shi'i, being the party of Imam Ali, have had uninterrupted communion with the Word of Allah.
- .3. The Shi'i and only the Shi'i can claim this amongst all Muslims