

The Revelation of the Qur'an (Wahy)

A. Central Role and Significance of the Qur'an

The Qur'an is the **literal word of God (Allah)**, revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through the Angel Jibra'il (Gabriel).

- **Final and Perfect Guidance:** It is believed to be the final, perfect, and **uncorrupted** word of God, offering guidance for all aspects of life (personal morality, worship, social justice, law, and economics).
- **Primary Source:** It is the **primary source** of Islamic law (Shari'ah), ethics, and spirituality, providing a complete moral and ethical framework for individuals and societies.
- **Divine Miracle:** The Qur'an's unmatched linguistic excellence and inimitability are considered a **divine miracle (I'jaz al-Qur'an)**, which proved the Prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH).

B. The First Revelation (Laylat al-Qadr)

The first revelation occurred in **610 CE**, during the month of **Ramadan**, in the **Cave of Hira** on Mount Nur, outside Makkah.

Aspect	Description
Spiritual Context	Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) would retreat to the cave seeking solitude and spiritual contemplation, away from the moral decay of Makkan society.
The Event	The Angel Jibra'il (Gabriel) commanded the Prophet to " Read " (<i>Iqra'</i>). The first five verses of Surah Al-Alaq were revealed: "Read! In the Name of your Lord Who created..."
The Aftermath	The Prophet was initially terrified. His wife, Khadijah (ra), comforted him and took him to her cousin, Waraqah ibn Nawfal , a Christian scholar, who confirmed that this was the same Divine Law (<i>Namus</i>) revealed to Moses (Musa).

2. The Compilation of the Qur'an

The Qur'an was revealed in portions over 23 years. During the Prophet's lifetime, it was preserved in two ways:

1. **Memorisation:** By many companions, known as **Huffaz** (memorizers).
2. **Writing:** By scribes (*Kuttāb al-Wahy*) on scattered materials such as animal bones, palm leaves, and pieces of leather.

The compilation into a single, official volume (*Mushaf*) took place in two main stages after the Prophet's death:

Stage 1: Compilation under Caliph Abu Bakr (ra)

Element	Details
Reason for Compilation	The Battle of Yamama (12 AH/633 CE), where around 70 prominent <i>Huffaz</i> were martyred. 'Umar ibn al-Khattab (ra) feared the loss of the Qur'an and advised Caliph Abu Bakr (ra) to compile it.
The Process	Zayd ibn Thabit (ra), the Prophet's chief scribe, was appointed to lead the task. He was reluctant at first but accepted the immense responsibility. Zayd verified every verse by confirming it with the written fragments and requiring two witnesses who could testify that they had heard the Prophet recite it.
Outcome	A single, bound volume called the Mushaf of Abu Bakr was created. It was kept with the Caliph and, after his death, was entrusted to Hafsah (ra), the Prophet's wife.

Stage 2: Standardization under Caliph 'Uthman (ra)

Element	Details
Reason for Standardization	During the expansion of the Muslim Empire into non-Arab lands, different companions from various regions of Arabia taught the recitation of the Qur'an in their native dialects . This led to disputes over the correct reading among the new Muslims, prompting Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman (ra) to advise 'Uthman (ra).

Element	Details
The Process	Caliph 'Uthman (ra) ordered Zayd ibn Thabit (ra) to lead a committee to create an authorized, standardized version based on the Mushaf of Hafsah . The new copies were written in the dialect of the Quraysh, the Prophet's tribe, as it was considered the purest form.
Outcome	Several official copies (<i>Masahif</i>) were made and sent to the main centers of the Muslim world (e.g., Kufa, Basra, Damascus). 'Uthman ordered all other unofficial versions and fragments to be destroyed to eliminate further disputes and ensure unity. This standardized text is known as the Mushaf of 'Uthman and is the same text used by Muslims today.

Edexcel Islamiyat Past Paper Questions

These questions are representative of the types of questions asked in the Edexcel IGCSE Islamic Studies exam on the topic of the Qur'an.

Part (a) - Knowledge and Recall (Typically 10 Marks)

These questions require a detailed, descriptive account of a specific event or process.

1. Give an account of **how the Qur'an was first revealed to the Prophet** (PBUH) and the immediate events that followed. [10]
2. Write an account of the ways in which the Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet between the years 610 and 632. [10]
3. **Trace the main stages in the compilation of the Qur'an** in the time of the caliphs **Abu Bakr** (ra) and **'Uthman** (ra). [10]
4. Give an account of how the Qur'an developed into book form. [10]

Part (b) - Analysis and Significance (Typically 4 Marks)

These questions require you to explain the importance or implications of the events you have described.

1. Explain **why the first community of Muslims thought it was necessary to compile the Qur'an**. [4]
2. What is the **significance to Muslims today of having the Qur'an in the form of a book?** [4]
3. Explain the **significance of the Qur'an being revealed over a period of time (23 years)**. [4]
4. What does the Prophet's first experience of revelation tell us about the **nature of prophethood in Islam?** [4]