

About the Qur'an in Nahjul Balagha (From the book "What is True Success?")

Introduction: The divinely revealed scripture to Prophet Muhammad (s) is unique among all scriptures. The Angel Gabriel brought the messages from God to Muhammad (s). The revelations continued over a period of twenty-three years. Muhammad repeated the messages (verses or chapter) to his disciples, who memorized them. The revelations were also inscribed on parchments. Nonetheless, generation after generation, Muslims continue to memorize the entire scripture word for word. The written word of God in Arabic in the Qur'an is exactly same as it was memorized and inscribed from the time it was revealed to the Prophet. Therefore, the authenticity of the scripture as the original word of God is preserved beyond any doubt. Not only the language of the revelation is alive and current, but also the message is as relevant today as it was 1,400 years ago. In this chapter, Imam Ali (p) expounds on some of the spiritual aspects of the Qur'an.

The Contents of the Qur'an:

The Prophet (s) left for you the Book (Qur'an), which clarifies the permitted and the prohibited by God, the obligatory and the discretionary. It contains topics that are general as well as particular; it has lessons and illustrations, and long and short verses. There are verses whose knowledge is obligatory.

(Sermon 1)

God Says in the Qur'an:

"We have not neglected anything in the Book (Qur'an)." (Qur'an 6:38)

The Qur'an is Free of any Discrepancies:

"And if it had been from any other than God, they would surely have found in it much discrepancy." (Qur'an 4:82)²

(Sermon 18)

The Apparent and the Hidden in the Qur'an:

Certainly, the outside of the Qur'an (exoteric) is wonderful, and its inside is deep (in meaning). Its wonders will never end, its amazements will never exhaust, and its intricacies cannot be comprehended, except through itself.

Qur'an is a "Lamp":

Its wonders are inexhaustible and its subtleties are unending. It is a light (of guidance) for the darkness (of ignorance). (The doors of) virtue cannot be opened save with its keys, nor can gloom be dispelled save with its light. God has protected its inaccessible points (from enemies) and allowed grazing (to its followers) in its pastures. It contains the remedy (from the ailment of misguidance) for the seeker.

(Sermon 151)

² This refers to the revelations that came over a span of twenty-three years of the ministry of Prophet Muhammad (s). There is no contradiction in the messages, despite such a long period of revelations. This, itself is a proof that Qur'an is a Divine revelation. If it were a "man-made" book, as alleged by the opponents, then contradictions would be unavoidable.

The Qur'an, a Fair Discourse:

Learn the Qur'an, for it is the fairest of discourses, and (strive to) understand it thoroughly, for it is the best for blossoming of hearts. Seek cure with its light, for it is the cure for (the diseases of) the hearts. Recite it in a beautiful manner, for it is the most beautiful of all narrations.

(Sermon 109)

Qur'an is a "House with Sturdy Pillars":

The Book of God is among you. It speaks and its tongue does not falter. It is a house, whose supports do not crumble and a power whose helpers cannot be routed.

(Sermon 132)

Qur'an is a "Strong Rope":

The Qur'an is a strong rope, a clear light, a cure, a quencher for thirst (for knowledge), a protector and deliverer (from calamities). Therefore, I advise you to adhere to it. There is no crookedness in it. Hearing its repeated recitation does not fatigue the ears. Quoting the Qur'an is expounding the truth.

(Sermon 155)

Qur'an Contains Knowledge of the Future:

The Prophet came with a Book (Qur'an) testifying to the (older) Scriptures. It contains knowledge of what is to come about in the future, the stories of the past, cure for your (spiritual and moral) ills, and regulations for all the situations that you might face.

(Sermon 157)

Qur'an is an Advisor:

The Qur'an is an advisor, a leader that never deceives, and a narrator that never speaks a lie. No one will sit (listen or recite) beside this Qur'an but that when he rises up, he will achieve either guidance or healing of (spiritual) blindness. You should know that no one will need any other guidance after (receiving guidance from) the Qur'an. Therefore, seek cure from it for your ailments, and seek its assistance in your distress. It contains a cure for the worst of the diseases, including the unbelief (in God), hypocrisy, rebellion (against God), and misguidance (from the true Path). Pray to God through its recitation and turn to God with its help. There is nothing like the Qur'an, through which one should turn to god, the Sublime.

Know that the Qur'an is an (effective) intercessor¹ and its intercession will be accepted (on the Day of Reckoning). Therefore, you should be among the adherents and followers of the Qur'an.

Make it your guide for seeking God. Follow its advice and do not rely on your own views beyond what is in the Qur'an. God, the Glorified, has not counseled anyone with the likes of this Qur'an, for it is the strong rope (support) of God and His trustworthy means. It contains the blossoming of the heart and springs of knowledge. For the heart, there is no other purifier better than the Qur'an.

(Sermon 175)

Qur'an is Proof of God:

The Qur'an orders as well as refrains, and it remains silent as well as speaks. It is the proof of God for His creation. He has perfected its effulgence and has perfected His religion through it. He deputed the Prophet to convey to the people all His commands through it.

(Sermon 182)

Qur'an is the Quencher of Thirst for the Seeker of Knowledge:

Then God sent to the Prophet (s) the Book (Qur'an) as a lamp whose flame cannot be extinguished, a light whose brightness does not diminish, a sea whose depth cannot be fathomed, a way that does not mislead, and a ray of light that does not dim. It is a discriminator (of good from evil) whose arguments cannot not be belittled, a clarifier whose foundation cannot be shaken, a cure which leaves no trace of the disease, a book of honor whose supporters cannot be overcome, and a truth whose helpers are not abandoned. It is the mine of belief, the source of knowledge, the courtyard of justice, the foundation stone of Islam, the valleys and the plains of truth, the spring whose water is inexhaustible, the goal that the travelers striving towards it do not get lost, and the signpost that no seeker fails to see.

God has made it a quencher of the thirst of the learned, a blooming for the hearts of religious jurists, a highway for the ways of the righteous, a cure after which no ailment remains, a brightness with which no darkness remains, a rope whose grip is strong, a fortress that is invulnerable. It honors him who loves it, a place of peace for him who enters it, a guide for him who follows it, a success for him who argues with its help, a witness against him who rebukes it. It is a shield for him who arms himself (against misguidance), a source of knowledge for him who listens to it carefully, a worthy narration for him who recites it, and a conclusive verdict for him who gives out judgment (according to it).

(Sermon 197)

(The End)