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The Excellence of Qur'an according to Ma'soomen (a.s.)

No pen is capable of describing the excellence and magnificence of the Glorious Qur'an. This statement is absolutely correct, because while describing the Holy Qur'an, Prophet Muhammad (S) himself said:

"The superiority of the Speech of God over other speeches is like the superiority of God over His creatures."

Ayatullah Al-Marja' Marhum Syed Al-Khui (r.a.) said: "What can a person say in describing the eminence of the Qur'an and its glory? What can he say to explain its excellence and sublimity? How can a contingent being perceive the greatness of the speech of the Absolute Being? What can an author write about this subject and what can a speaker say? Can a limited being describe anything that is unlimited?

"It is sufficient greatness for the Qur'an, and sufficient eminence and glory, that it is the speech of the Almighty God, and the miracle of His noble Prophet (S), and that its verses are the guarantee for the guidance of human beings in all their concerns and circumstances and at all times. This is their guarantee to reach the final goal and the great happiness now and later on.

"Indeed, it is better to hand over the elucidation of the excellence of the Qur'an to those comparable to the Qur'an. They are Prophet Muhammad (S) and Ahlul Bayt (as). They are the persons most knowledgeable about its status, and the best able to point out its lofty prestige, and they are its peers in excellence and its associates in guidance".

Absolutely true! Let us leave the M'asoomen (as) to explain to us the excellence of the Qur'an as they are the teachers of the Qur'an. Allah (swt) taught the Qur'an to His Prophet and appointed him as the teacher of the Book:

The Faithful Spirit has descended with it upon your heart that you may be of the warners, in plain Arabic language (26: 193-4);

and We have revealed to you the Reminder that you may make clear to men what has been revealed to them, and that haply they may reflect (16:44) ;

. . . an Apostle . . . who recites to them His communications and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom (62:2).

Prophet (S) describes the Holy Qur'an

Therefore, let us ponder and reflect upon what the Prophet (S), the teacher of the Holy Qur'an, said about the excellence of the Holy Qur'an. He said about it in a sermon thus:

☐ "... Therefore, when mischief come to confuse you like the segments of darkened night, then hold fast to the Qur'an;

☐ as it is the intercessor whose intercession shall be granted;

☐ and it is a credible advocate;

☐ and whoever keeps it before him, it will lead him to the Garden;

☐ and whoever keeps it behind, it will drive him to the Fire;

☐ and it is the guide that guides to the best path;

☐ and it is a book in which there is explanation, particularization and recapitulation;

☐ and it is a decisive (word), and not a joke;

☐ and there is in it a manifest (meaning) and an esoteric (one);

☐ thus its apparent (meaning) is firm, and its esoteric (one) is knowledge;

☐ its exterior is elegant and its interior deep;

☐ it has (many) boundaries, and its boundaries have (many) boundaries;

☐ its wonders shall not cease, and its (unexpected) marvels shall not be old.

☐ There are in it the lamps of guidance and the beacon of wisdom, and guide to knowledge for him who knows the attributes.

☐ Therefore, one should extend his sight; and should let his eyes reach the attribute; so that one who is in perdition may get deliverance, and one who is entangled may get free;

☐ because meditation is the life of the heart of the one who sees, as the one having a light

(easily) walks in darkness; therefore, you must seek good deliverance and (that) with little waiting”.

After his death, the Prophet appointed his progeny Ahlul Bayt to carry on this work after him – to explain the true meaning of Qur’an to the people. It is clear from his unanimously accepted tradition:

“I am leaving behind among you two precious things; as long as you hold fast to them you will never go astray after me: The Book of Allah and my progeny, my family members; and these two shall never separate from each other until they reach me (on) the fountain”.

And Allah has confirmed, in the following two verses, this declaration of the Prophet that his progeny had the real knowledge of the Book:

Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House! and to purify you a (thorough) purifying (33:33);

Most surely it is an honoured Qur’an, in a Book that is hidden; None do touch it save the purified ones (56:77 –79) .

Now let us see what Ahlul Bayt have said about the excellence of Qur’an:

Allama Majlisi in volume 19 of his multivolume work Bihar al-Anwar has reported that : Al-Harith al-Hamadani related the following:

“I entered the mosque and some persons were in deep controversy about some hadith traditions. I went to “Ali bin Abi Talib and said: ‘Are you aware that people at the mosque are in dispute over hadith?’ He said, ‘So they have done it!’ I said, ‘Yes.’

He (as) said, ‘I have indeed heard from the Prophet (S) saying, “There shall be sedition (fitna) after me.”’ I asked: ‘How do we avoid that?’

He (the Prophet, saw) said: **‘The Book of God, the Book of God.**

☞ **In it is the information about those who were before you and what will come after you, and it will be the judge among you.**

☞ ***It is the final decision and not a jest. (86: 13–14)***

☞ **It is that which not even the might could forsake without being shattered by God.**

☞ **Whoever seeks guidance in anything other than it, God will lead him astray.**

☞ **It is the firm rope of God.**

☞ ***It is the wise remembrance (3:58).***

☞ It is the straight path.

☞ With it, hearts will never deviate, nor will the tongues utter confusion.

☞ Scholars will never have their full of it; it will not wear out from constant use, nor will its wonders be exhausted.

☞ *It is that which when the jinns heard it, they could not help saying: 'We heard a marvelous Qur'an (recitation). (7:21)'*

☞ Whoever utters it speaks the truth, whoever rules by it is just; whoever abides by it will receive his just reward; and whoever calls for it shall be guided to the straight path. Follow it.”

Imam 'Ali Describes the Holy Qur'an

In another place, the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali ibn Abi Talib describes the Holy Qur'an as follows:

“Then God revealed to him (the Prophet [S]) the Book.

☞ It is a light whose radiance shall not be extinguished;

☞ A lamp whose flame shall not die;

☞ An ocean whose depth shall not be fathomed;

☞ A path which shall not lead astray;

☞ A blaze whose brilliance shall not be darkened;

☞ A criterion whose evidence shall not be suppressed;

☞ An elucidation whose cornerstones shall not be demolished;

☞ A cure with which there is no fear of ailments;

☞ A power whose supporters cannot be defeated;

☞ A truth whose helpers will not be forsaken.

☞ Thus, it is the source of faith and its prosperity;

☞ It is the fountain-head of knowledge and its vastness;

☞ The meadow of justice and its flowing streams;

☞ The support of Islam and its foundation;

☞ The valleys of the truth and its fields;

☞ An ocean that shall not be drained by those who draw upon it;

☞ A spring that shall not be exhausted by those who draw from it;

☞ A watering place that shall not be depleted by those who come to it;

☞ A station whose road the travelers do not miss;

☞ A signpost which the wayfarers will always see;

☞ The hilltops that cannot be bypassed by those who seek them.

☞ God has made it the quencher of the thirst of scholars,

- ☞ **A vernal season for the hearts of the jurists,**
- ☞ **A destination for the path of the righteous,**
- ☞ **A cure after which there is no malady,**
- ☞ **A light which does not alternate with darkness,**
- ☞ **A rope whose knots are firm,**
- ☞ **A stronghold whose peak is impregnable.**
- ☞ **It is power for whoever cultivates it,**
- ☞ **Peace for whoever dwells on it,**
- ☞ **A guidance for whoever follows it,**
- ☞ **A laudable act for whoever embraces it,**
- ☞ **An argument for whoever speaks for it,**
- ☞ **A witness for whoever fights for it,**
- ☞ **A sharp instrument for whoever bases his arguments on it,**
- ☞ **A support for whoever supports it,**
- ☞ **A means of deliverance for whoever employs it,**
- ☞ **A sign for the discriminating, a shelter for whoever seeks healing,**
- ☞ **A source of knowledge for whoever has sense,**
- ☞ **And the best narrative for its transmitters,**
- ☞ **And a means for the one who sits in judgment.”**

Subhaanallah! This brilliant oration reviews many important points which call for careful reflection.

For instance, by saying that the Qur'an is 'a lamp whose flame shall not die,' Imam "Ali (as) means, as he does in many other statements in this oration, that the Qur'an is a book whose signification shall not be exhausted. It will remain fresh and new until the Day of Resurrection.

A verse may have been sent down regarding a specific occasion or community, yet its relevance is not limited to that occasion, person, or community; rather, its signification and applicability are general.

Regarding the verse

“For every people there is a guide (13:7),”

al-'Ayyashi reports the following discussion with Abu Ja'far (Imam al-Baqir (as):

“The Imam said, **“Ali is the guide, and the guide is always one of us.”**

I said, ‘Then you – for whom may my life be a sacrifice – are now the guide.’

‘You are right,’ said the Imam (as). **‘The Qur'an lives and will not die; the verses live and will not die. If a verse were to die with the death of the persons concerning whom it came down, then the Qur'an would have definitely died. Rather, such a verse would continue to apply to those who are**

alive as it did to those who died.”

Another tradition reports that Imam al-Sadiq (as) said, **“Certainly, the Qur’an lives, and has not died; and it is existent just as the day and the night and the sun and the moon are existent. And it will exist for the last among us as it has existed for the first.”**

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