

Ajza' (30 parts) of the Quran

Syed-Mohsin Naquvi

The Organization of the Holy Qur'an

The Qur'an is organized in 114 chapters called *suras*; each *sura* has a varied number of verses of various lengths in it.

This organization was done by the Prophet of Islam himself in his lifetime. He decided as to which verse or verses will go in which chapter of the Qur'an and he also named each chapter (*sura*). He also organized the order of the chapter in the book.

There are a number of reports about the Qur'an not being complete or verse of this and that kind missing from the text. All such reports were discussed hotly during the very early period of Islamic history¹. However, most of those reports have been discredited as either being false or misunderstandings. There is nothing missing from the Qur'an and there is no intervention in its organization by any human being, other than the Prophet of Islam himself².

The first chapter contains eight verses and it is called *Al-Fateha* (literally, "the opening"). The first verse of those eight verses is *bismillah-ir-rahman-ir-raheem*, but the *bismillah* verse is not counted when numbering the verses in each Sura.

The second chapter is named *Al-Baqara* and it contains 286 verses. The beginning of this chapter is also the *bismillah* verse but it is not numbered.

¹ The two most famous such reports are the one attributed to Hazrat Ayesha in which she claims that such-and-such a verse was kept on a piece of paper and that piece of paper was kept inside the pillow of the Prophet. During the last illness of the Prophet, once a domestic animal straddled inside the house and ate up that piece of paper, thus that particular verse was lost. The second report is attributed to the second khalifa, Umar ibn al-Khattab. That report will be found in Imam Malik's collection of Hadeeth titled *Mawatta*. Umar says that "let no one say that the 'stoning verse' was not a part of the Qur'an. It is very much a part of the Qur'an and if I was not afraid of being blamed for interfering in the collection of the Qur'an, I would have written that verse with my own hands and included it in the Qur'an."

² The best and complete discussion on this issue will be found in the book titled: *Collection of the Qur'an* by John Burton, published by the Cambridge University Press, 1979

The same system is maintained in the rest of the Qur'an, i.e., each new chapter begins with the *bismillah* verse but it is not counted while numbering the verses in the *sura*. That system is broken in Chapter 9 (*Sura Tawba*). There is no *bismillah* verse in that chapter.

Another exception is in Chapter 27 (*Sura Namal*), where the *bismillah* verse is included as a part of a larger verse in the chapter and here it is counted as such. (Q. 27:30).

The Division of the Qur'anic Text in Arbitrary Parts or Juz

The second *khalifa* Umar ibn al-Khattab, during his reign in the 15th/16th year of Hijra, made a sweeping new law. That was the institution of *Taraweeh* salat during every night of the month of Ramadhan. After the *Isha* salat, he would call the faithful men back to the mosque and he ordered them to recite a part of the Holy Qur'an, thus completing the recital of the complete book over a period of thirty days.

As we said, the Quran is organized in 114 chapters (*suras*) of various lengths. Therefore, to complete the full Quran recital in thirty days, the Quran was divided into 30 equal parts containing roughly 200 verses in each part. Thus the long Suras were divided into a number of such parts (each called a *juz*, Arabic word for "part"), and one *juz* has a number of small *suras*, such as the last *juz*, number 30.

Sura *Al-Baqara* is the longest *sura* in the Quran, it has a total of 286 verses in it.

The first *juz* begins with Sura *Al-Fateha*, which has seven verses and then the *juz* continues to verse number 141 of Sura *Al-Baqara*. The second *juz* begins with verse number 142 of Sura *Al-Baqara* and ends with verse number 252.

The third *juz* begins with verse number 253 of Sura *Al-Baqara* and ends with verse number 91 of Sura *Aal-e-Imran* (the third chapter), and so on.

In addition to the very arbitrary division of the Quran in parts called *ajza'* (*plural of juz*) or "*para*", each *juz* has also been divided into a number of *rukoos*, so that each *rukoo* can be recited in each *rak'at* of the *Taraweeh* salat.

The size of each *rukoo* and each *juz* is actually not equal in number of verses, since verses could be long or short. The actual discretion in that division has been the actual time taken in recital. For example, the seven verses of Sura *Al-Fateha* consist of one *rukoo*. But in Sura *Al-Baqara*, the first *rukoo* consists of seven verses while the second *rukoo* consists of twelve verses, and so on.

There is a great controversy among Sunni Muslim scholars as to whether the *Taraweeh* salat consists of eight *rak'ats* or twenty *rak'ats*.

“*Para*” is a word in the Persian language, which became more popular in Farsi-speaking countries such as Iran and Azerbaijan, and later in India and Pakistan.

Below is a complete table of the division of the Qur’anic text into chapters (*suras*) and juz (plural “*ajza*”):

Juz	Suras
1	Al-Fātiha (1), Al-Baqara (2).
2	Al-Baqara (2).
3	Al-Baqara (2), Ale-’Imrān (3).
4	Ale-’Imrān (3), An-Nisā’ (4).
5	An-Nisā’ (4).
6	An-Nisa’ (4), Al-Mā’ida (5).
7	Al-Mā’ida (5), Al-An’ām (6).
8	Al-An’ām (6), Al-A’rāf (7).
9	Al-A’rāf (7), Al-Anfāl (8).

10	Al-Anfāl (8), At-Tawba (9).
11	At-Tawba (9), Yūnus (10), Hūd (11).
12	Hūd (11), Yūsuf (12).
13	Yūsuf (12), Ar-Ra'ed (13), Ibrāhīm (14).
14	Al-Hijr (15), An-Nahl (16).
15	Al-Isrā' (17), Al-Kahf (18).
16	Al-Kahf (18), Mariam (19), Tāhā (20).
17	Al-Anbiyā' (21), Al-Hajj (22).
18	Al-Mu'minūn (23), An-Nūr (24), Al-Furqan (25).
19	Al-Furqan (25), Ash-Shu'arā' (26), An-Naml (27).
20	An-Naml (27), Al-Qasas (28), Al-'Ankabūt (29).
21	Al-'Ankabūt (29), Ar-Rūm (30), Luqmān (31), As-Sajda (32), Al-Ahzāb (33).
22	Al-Ahzab (33), Saba' (34), Fātir (35), Yāsīn (36).
23	Yāsīn (36), As-Sāfāt (37), Sād (38), Az-Zumar (39).
24	Az-Zumar (39), Ghāfir (40), Fussilāt (41).
25	Fussilāt (41), Ash-Shūra (42), Az-Zakhruf (43), Ad-Dukhān (44), Al-Jāthia (45).
26	Al-Jāthia (45), Al-Ahqāf (46), Mohammed (47), Al-Fath (48), Al-Hujurāt (49), Qāf (50), Adh-Dhāriāt (41).
27	Adh-Dhāriāt (51), At-Tūr (52), An-Najm (53), Al-Qamar (54), Ar-Rahmān (55), Al-Wāqī'a (56), Al-Hadīd (57).

28	Al-Hadīd (57), Al-Mujādila (58), Al-Hashir (59), Al-Mumtahana (60), Al-Saff (61), Al-Jumu'a (62), Al-Munafiqūn (63), At-Taghābun (64), At-Talaq (65), At-Tahrīm (66).
29	Al-Mulk (67), Al-Qalam (68), Al-Hāqqah (69), Al-Ma'ārij (70), Nūh (71), Al-Jinn (72), Al-Muzzammil (73), Al-Mudatthir (74), Al-Qiyāma (75), Al-Insān (76), Al-Mursalāt (77).
30	An-Naba' (78), An-Nāzi'āt (79), 'Abasa (80), At-Takwīr (81), Al-Infītār (82), Al-Mutaffīfīn (83), Al-Inshiqāq (84), Al-Burūj (85), At-Tāriq (86), Al-A'la (87), Al-Ghāshiya (88), Al-Fajr (89), Al-Balad (90), Ash-Shams (91), Al-Lail (92), Ad-Duha (93), Ash-Sharh (94), At-Tīn (95), Al-'Alaq (96), Al-Qadir (97), Al-Bayyina (98), Az-Zalzala (99), Al-'Adiyāt (100), Al-Qāri'a (101), At-Takāthur (102), Al-'Asr (103), Al-Humaza (104), Al-Fīl (105), Al-Quraish (106), Al-Mā'ūn (107), Al-Kauthar (108), Al-Kāfirūn (109), An-Nasr (110), Al-Masad (111), Al-Ikhlās (112), Al-Falaq (113), An-Nās (114).



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