

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

What is The Qur'an?

Understanding what the Qur'an is forms the foundation of our belief. It is not just a book of information, but the living Speech of Allah — His Word, uncreated, unmatched, and miraculous — revealed to the final Messenger ﷺ for the guidance of mankind.



The Qur'an is the Speech of Allah, uncreated, revealed to His Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in the Arabic language. It is miraculous, an act of worship, transmitted by tawātur, written in the masaahif, beginning with al-Fātiḥah and ending with an-Nās.

The Linguistic Definition of the Qur'an (اللغة)

The word Qur'an (القرآن) comes from the Arabic root قَرَأَ – yaqra'u – qirā'ah, which means; to read or to recite

Allah says:

﴿إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ﴾

“Indeed, upon Us is its collection and its recitation.”¹

¹ Surah al-Qiyāmah 75:17

This highlights the dual linguistic implication of the Qur'an — it is meant to be recited, not just read, and preserved and gathered.

Some scholars also connect its root to جمع (jama'a) — “to gather,” because the Qur'an gathers within it:

- Divine laws and commands
- Eternal guidance and wisdom
- Stories of the past nations
- Warnings for the disbelievers
- Glad tidings for the believers

Ibn al-Jawzi رحمه الله said: “It is called Qur'an because it is gathered (jama') in the hearts, recited on the tongues, and written in the masaahif.”²

The Qur'an is the Uncreated Speech of Allah

One of the pillars of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah is belief that the Qur'an is the actual Speech of Allah, not created, not resembling human speech.

Allah says:

﴿وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ﴾

“If one of the polytheists seeks your protection, grant it to him so he may hear the Speech of Allah.”³

Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal رحمه الله said: “The Qur'an is the Speech of Allah. It is not created. Whoever says it is created is a disbeliever.”

This belief was the center of the famous mihnah (trial) during which the Imams of the Salaf — like Ahmad ibn Hanbal — stood firm while others compromised.

² Zād al-Masīr

³ Surah at-Tawbah 9:6

The Qur'an was Revealed to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

The Qur'an is not something created on earth, nor composed by the Prophet ﷺ. Rather, it was revealed from Allah, via Jibreel عليه السلام, directly to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Allah says:

﴿ نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ. عَلَى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ ﴾

“The Trustworthy Spirit [Jibreel] has brought it down. Upon your heart, [O Muhammad], that you may be of the warner's.”⁴

The Qur'an affirms this repeatedly, distinguishing the Prophet ﷺ as its recipient and conveyor — never its author.

The Qur'an is in Clear Arabic

Allah says:

﴿ إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴾

“Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an so that you may understand.”⁵

The Qur'an was revealed in the purest, clearest form of Arabic, making it both linguistically miraculous and accessible to the original audience of the Prophet ﷺ.

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله said: “The Arabic language is from the religion. Knowing it is obligatory to understand the Qur'an and Sunnah.”

The Qur'an is Miraculous (Mu'jiz)

The Qur'an challenges all of mankind and jinn to produce anything like it:

﴿ قُلْ لَّيِّنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ ﴾

⁴ Surah ash-Shu'arā 26:193–194

⁵ Surah Yusuf 12:2

“Say: If all of mankind and jinn were to come together to produce something like this Qur’an, they could not produce the like of it...”⁶

It is a linguistic miracle, a legislative miracle, and a spiritual miracle — no book matches it in eloquence, guidance, or impact.

Imam ash-Shāfi‘i رحمه الله said: “People were asked to bring the like of ten surahs — and they failed. Then one surah — and they still failed. This proves it is not from creation.”

The Qur’an is Worship

Reciting the Qur’an is not merely reading — it is a form of worship.

“Whoever reads one letter from the Book of Allah will have one good deed, and that good deed is multiplied by ten...”⁷

When we recite the Qur’an with sincerity, we are engaging in direct worship of Allah, gaining reward, increasing in knowledge, and purifying the soul.

The Qur’an Was Transmitted by Tawātur

The Qur’an has been preserved and passed down through generations of reliable, mass transmitters (tawātur) — both written and oral — so there is no possibility of error or distortion.

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ﴾

“Indeed, We sent down the Dhikr, and We will surely preserve it.”⁸

Ibn al-Mundhir رحمه الله said: “The Qur’an was preserved in the hearts, transmitted by the tongues, and recorded in writing — none like it exists in any other nation.”

⁶ Surah al-Isrā’ 17:88

⁷ Sunan at-Tirmidhi

⁸ Surah al-Hijr 15:9

The Qur'an is Written in the Masaahif

The Qur'an was compiled into physical written form during the time of Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, and later standardized by 'Uthman ibn 'Affan, ensuring its preservation and unity.

Zayd ibn Thabit رضي الله عنه said: "Abu Bakr said to me: 'You are a wise young man, and we do not suspect you. So compile the Qur'an.'"⁹

From that moment, the Qur'an has been known by its written form (Masaahif), memorized, recited, and passed on without alteration.

The Qur'an is a Living Miracle

The Qur'an is not just a holy book — it is the living Speech of Allah, preserved by Him, unmatched in its power, and a source of guidance for mankind. Whoever holds fast to it will never go astray. Whoever turns away from it is blind, even if his eyes see. Let us be among those who recite it with sincerity, reflect upon it deeply, and live by it completely.

⁹ Sahih al-Bukhari

