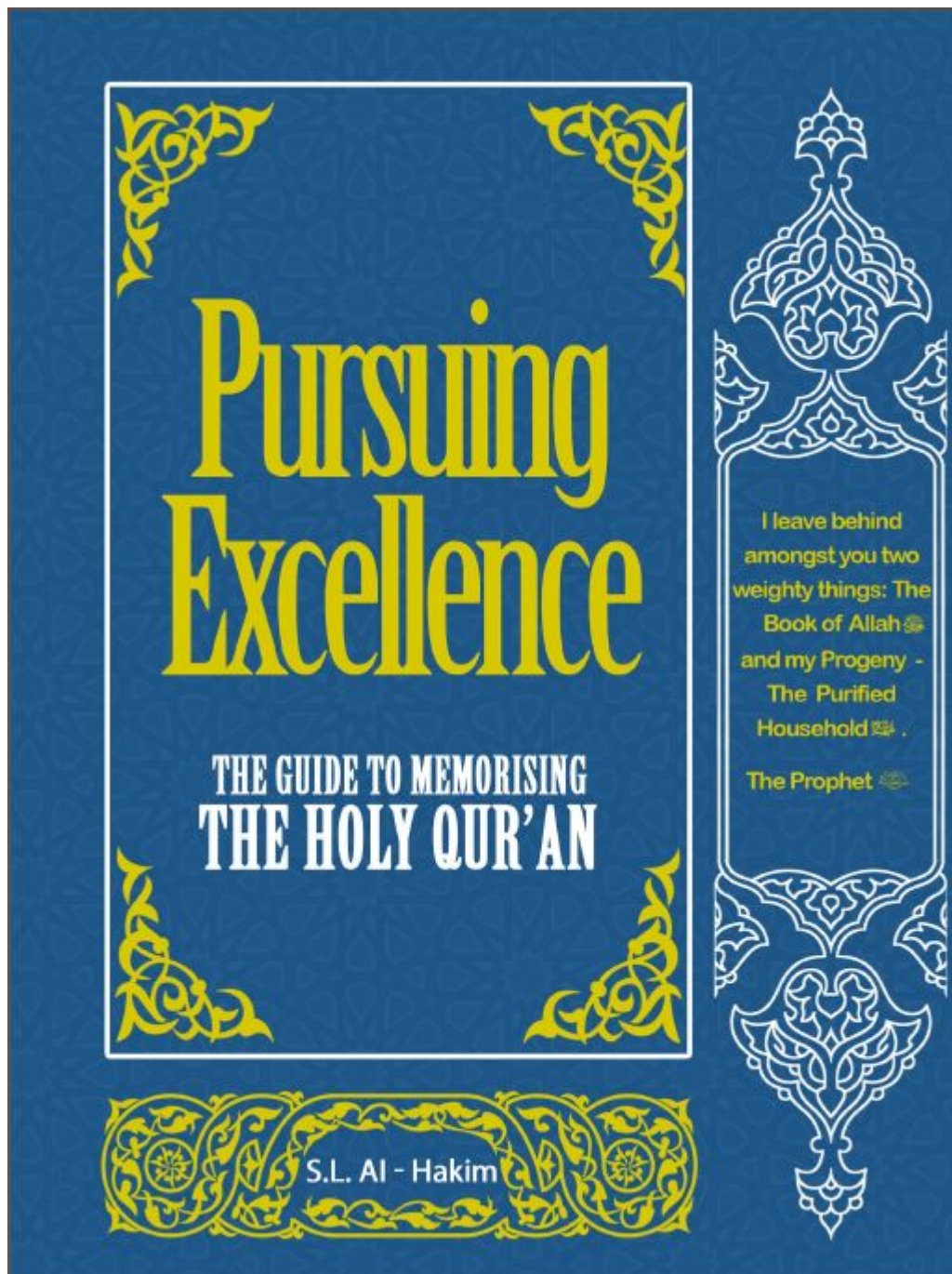


Pursuing Excellence, The Guide to Memorising The Holy Qur'an

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This text explores the importance of Memorising the Holy Qur'an in light of the Holy Books itself and many traditions of the Holy Prophet (S) and the Pure Imams of the Ahlul Bayt (as). It gives also many practical suggestions that will help anyone who would like to start memorising the Holy Book at any age.



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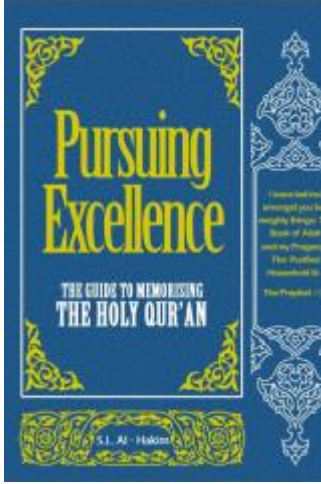
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Featured Category:

Muslim Practices [5]

Dedication

Dedicated to

Syeda Fatima Massooma (s.a.) in Qom, heart of Islamic knowledge and sanctuary for The Purified Household (as).

Written for

Our Children

For the desire is for the new generation of our Nation to live with and by the Holy Qur'an, and not be in the despair and regret I find myself in when compiling this booklet because of my self-inflicted negligence and failure, of years gone past that could have been used with more wisdom.

**And special thanks,
and request for prayers, to my
parents.**

Authors Foreword

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم:

إني تارك فيكم الثقلين: كتاب الله وعترتي أهل بيتي، وإنهما لن يفترقا حتى يردا علي الحوض.

I leave behind amongst you two weighty things: The Book of Allah and my Progeny – The Purified Household, and never shall these two ever separate till they return to me by the Pool (of Paradise).

The Prophet of Allah (S)

The Prophet (S) has stated in narrations that are agreed upon by both major schools of thought, in multiple ways and at multiple times, that he leaves with us two significant and invaluable resources, which are inseparable. In another similar narration, he states that we shall never go astray if we hold fast on to these two weighty things.

This undisputed tradition, and others like it, cement in place the importance of both the Holy Qur'an and the etiquettes and teachings of The Purified Household (as).

That we cannot separate one from the other, nor can we hold on fast to one, but not the other. It is a confirmation that if we wish to climb the spiritual journey in pursuit of perfection, our prescribed goal, we must adhere to both weighty things. And to neglect one ultimately leads to neglecting both!

A bird, after all, can only fly with two wings.

In Surah Ibrahim, the Holy Qur'an states:

كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطِ
الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ

A Book We have sent down to thee that thou mayest bring forth mankind from the shadows to the light by the leave of their Lord, to the path of the All-mighty, the All-laudable. (Ibrahim 14:1)

No doubt, the Holy Qur'an is the key to ascension from the darkness of the bottomless pit of the lowly world to the spiritual heights that can be reached by every human being.

Familiarity with the Holy Qur'an is one of the most important and significant requirements of every Muslim. It is a guide, protector and answers all the necessary questions to reach the perfection for which mankind was created for.

Of course, reciting the Holy Qur'an once twice a year is not going to find any form of the intimate familiarity and in-depth understanding being sought, but only a cold, distant, and perhaps even

mundane glimpse at shallow words.

Reciting it and understanding the terminology is only a first step, and an ever so important one... but further steps are needed to help find intimacy.

One of the best ways in which one can be familiar with the Holy Qur'an is its memorisation. This requires effort, dedication, time, and motivation. Like anything of great value and worth, it takes years and a constant review of one's own reasons and methods for memorising the Holy Qur'an, renewing and realigning intentions to suit the best and most perfect of intention – the intention of seeking nearness to Allah .

Familiarity is gained because to memorise, one needs to constantly review and repeat the verses until they become engrained in the heart. Like your mother language, or your own name, it will be an unforgettable and everlasting part of your flesh and blood and the heart will beat to the tunes of the Holy Qur'an with every pulse, eyes with every blink, and lungs with every breath.

In the Islamic world, the need for those who carry the Holy Qur'an in their heart is growing ever so strongly as the influence of materialism and capitalism strains our relationship with the Creator, and our love for the deceptive glitz and glamour of the world grows. To distance the faithful from their religious scriptures, those with differing world views have, and are, sparing no effort and no cost to detach people from the only source of true perfection and completeness that humans can reach, the Holy Qur'an.

It is with this view that we present a small contribution presenting the importance, significance, benefits, and proven method for memorising the Holy Qur'an, while dispelling some of the myths surrounding this important subject.

S.L Al-Hakim

Ramadhan 1438

Beware: Satan's Whispers

A common argument is that there is no point in reading, let alone memorising, the Holy Qur'an if we do not understand it, and that the language is foreign to us. This, of course, is one of many forms of demotivating sophistries by the master of fallacies, Satan. Subtle, yet convincing. Plausible, yet fallacious. Imam Khomeini, may his soul rest in peace, states that

We imagine that recitation without insight has no effect –this is the whisper of Satan.

Had it not been for worship and piety, Satan would have been amongst the noblest, and behind the Divinely Guided (as), Satan would be most knowledgeable of creations in all forms of sciences. With that

knowledge, and having sworn to be the enemy of mankind, the tools at the disposal of Satan, the cursed, is far greater than imaginable, and he should always be expected to be waiting in ambush for the next opportunity.

قَالَ فَبِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَاطَكَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ثُمَّ لَآتِيَنَّهُمْ مِّنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَانِهِمْ وَعَنْ شَمَائِلِهِمْ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَاكِرِينَ

***Satan Said, 'Now, for Thy perverting me, I shall surely sit in ambush for them on Thy straight path; then I shall come on them from before them and from behind them, from their right hands and their left hands; Thou wilt not find most of them thankful.'* (Al-A'raf 7: 17-18)**

Be on guard!

Always. Even at times when one feels that finally they have started to climb the mountain of spirituality. For it could be an illusion, a decoration of our deeds, a deception of the time, and one that can lead to a greater loss. And we must also be on guard that the actions we think are pious and good, and performed in the name of religion, may not be according to the commands of the Creator. We must always question our actions lest they be decorated in a way that makes us believe something which is not.

وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَكَانُوا مُسْتَبْصِرِينَ

***...and Satan decked out fair to them their works, and barred them from the way, though they saw clearly.* (Al-Ankabut 29:39)**

فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَكِنْ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

***..if only, when Our might came upon them, they had been humble! But their hearts were hard, and Satan decked out fair to them what they were doing.* (Al-A'nam 6:43)**

Is it a wonder why so many narrations confirm the need to start any task in the Name of Allah, reciting the first Ayah of the Holy Qur'an.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful. (Al-Fatiha 1:1)

Yet, when wanting to recite the Holy Qur'an, we must first seek refuge from the cursed Satan?

فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

So when you recite the Qur'an, [first] seek refuge in Allah from Satan, the expelled [from His mercy]. (An-Nahl 16:98)

Satan will do everything to take you away from reciting the Holy Qur'an, finding every excuse, and showing you every temptation. Phones will ring, messages start coming in on social media, and lucrative deals and opportunities will be put before you.

Take heed, this is the work of Satan, the Cursed one, tempting us away from the duty on hand.

Part 1: Why Memorise The Holy Qur'an?

The youthful mind is designed to remember and memorise. That's a primary function of the brain: Memory. It will seek out things to store in its memory, and will therefore chase poetry, passages, speeches, songs and whatever it can find in order to remember. Is it not better that one has a program to assist the mind in memorising the Holy Qur'an?

It is unfortunate however, that some scholars may discourage the youth (let alone the elders) of their communities from memorising the Holy Qur'an. Many reasons may be presented, such as that

1. It is not important to do so;
2. Some of the enemies of the Purified Household (as) have memorised the Holy Qur'an and it did not benefit them, why or how could it benefit us?
3. More important than committing to heart is the application of the Holy Qur'an...

Some will ask if there is even any narrations suggesting we should memorise, or that there is no point memorising without understanding.

Part I will provide answers to these questions, while Part II will look in to memorisation technique.

Memorisation of the Holy Qur'an in the eyes of the Holy Qur'an

Memorisation of the Holy Qur'an is one of the best ways to become intimately familiar with the Divinely sent words.

As the divine and unaltered word of Allah, the Holy Qur'an is viewed as the uniting force for all Muslims across the world regardless of nationality, sect, or political point of view. It is the undisputed source of information, and therefore given the topic and content, it would be a large lacuna to omit what the Holy Qur'an itself has to say with regards to this subject.

Al Qamar 54:17 – Easy To Recite And Remember

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ

Now We have made the Qur'an easy for Remembrance. Is there any that will remember? (Al Qamar 54:17)

In interpreting this Ayah, and those that follow, the exegesis of both schools of thought are used.¹ The conclusion of the abovementioned Ayah is clear. ذَكَرَ is a term used for remembrance, the opposite of which is to forget. In Arabic, the term for memory and retentive faculty is this term, used for remembrance. مُدَكِّرٍ is a word that was initially مُذَكِّرٍ, which is a term used for someone remembers the Holy Qur'an, and where due to the closeness of the letters ت and ذ, the letters have become conjoined to become مُدَكِّرٍ.

The Ayah therefore asks; this Holy Qur'an has definitely been made easy to recite and remember, and the challenge is that is being asked of mankind, is there anyone who will be able to remember and be awakened by it?

Martyr Mutahhari, may his soul rest in peace, states in the book Getting Familiar with the Holy Qur'an² under this Ayah, that no other book has been made easier to memorise than the Holy Qur'an, it is designed to be remembered and the brain was created for that purpose.

It is therefore clear; the All-Wise All-Knowing and All-Powerful Creator would not describe the Holy Qur'an with this attribute in vain and without purpose, and to further emphasise the point, this Ayah was repeated four times over in Surah Al Qamar (54:17,22,32,40).

Al Ankabut 29:49 – In The Breasts Of Those Who Have Been Given Knowledge

بَلْ هُوَ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ فِي صُدُورِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِآيَاتِنَا إِلَّا الظَّالِمُونَ

Nay; rather it is signs, clear signs in the breasts of those who have been given knowledge; and none denies Our signs but the evildoers. (Al Ankabut 29:49)

Those who have been given knowledge are the Prophet (S), the Divinely Guided (as) and the companions and in such exegesis as that of Alama Tabrasi, may his soul rest in peace, “Jawami Al-jami”³, describes in this category the believers who are Memorisers of the Holy Qur’an, who carry in the hearts the Holy Qur’an and its meanings.

Al Ahzab 33:34 – Remember That Which Is Recited In Your Houses

وَاذْكُرْنَ مَا يُتْلَىٰ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ لَطِيفًا خَبِيرًا

And remember that which is recited in your houses of the signs of God and the Wisdom; God is All-subtle, All-aware. (Al Ahzab 33:34)

In several Ayahs of this Surah, Allah orders the wives of the Prophet (S) with several commands. The Ayah above is one of those commandments.

The Ayah commands the wives, who have the privilege of being in the home of Prophet (S) where the Holy Qur’an is recited and entrusted and the etiquette of the Prophet (S) is practiced, to recite, protect and conduct themselves according to their practical applications. The term “in your houses” is to emphasise that they are at the source of Islam, and that they should understand that significant status and be role models for the rest of us.

While the command is directed to the wives of the Prophet (S), the Islamic Nation as a whole is also entrusted with this command as they hold close to their hearts the Holy Qur’an and the Etiquettes of the Prophet (S).

The term “remember” is again in contrast to “forget”, and along with “in your houses”, amplifies the advice to have the Holy Qur’an carried in your heart.

Some have considered this Ayah to indicate gratefulness to Allah, especially given the conclusion of the same Ayah – God is All-subtle, All-aware.

However, in the Exegesis of Al-Mizan⁴, the author contests this and explains had that been the case, the conclusion would have in fact been “God is All-thankful, All-knowing”⁵ or “We will recompense the thankful.”⁶

The attributes of Allah in this Ayah, however, are in line with the remembrance of the Holy Qur'an.

Al Muzzammil 73:20 – Recite as much as is feasible

فَاقْرَأُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ

So recite the Holy Qur'an so much as is feasible. (Al-Muzzammil 73:20)

In Bihar Al Anwar, under the chapter of Etiquettes and Precepts of Reciting the Holy Qur'an, it states that "so much as feasible", along with the words before it, "He knows that you will not number it", Surahs of the Holy Qur'an are understood to have been designed to be easy to remember and memorise, as is its recitation.

"Therefore recite of the Holy Qur'an so much as is feasible" is stipulating that we should recite what is easy for our own abilities. For those who have strong Arabic and memorisation skills, larger Surahs such as Al Baqarah will be easy to memorise. Those who have less of ability, can memorise other Surahs such as Ar Rahman, and those who are beginners in Arabic and/or have poor memories, can recite and memorise short Surahs, such as Al Kawthar.

It must be noted that this Ayah is referring to recitation of the Holy Qur'an outside the prescribed obligatory prayers and therefore is a recommended deed, and not an obligation.

Yet some scholars see it as an obligation, through the reasoning that certain Surahs are recommended in certain recommended prayers throughout the days, months and year, and since it is not permitted by some scholars (and recommended against by others) to recite the Holy Qur'an during prayers from the scriptures of the Holy Qur'an itself, it is evident that the recitation of these Surahs is required to be from memory.

In the book "Kashaf Al Qina", Al Bahooti says that the memorisation of the Holy Qur'an is considered a recommended deed by all scholars and likewise, consider it to be an obligation upon at least some members of the community".

Memorising the Holy Qur'an, in itself, is a means to protecting it from deviation and alteration.

Memorisation of the Holy Qur'an in the eyes of the Divinely Guided

In this section, we will look at some of the many narrations that have been passed down to us to indicate the importance and significance of this task.

After the Holy Qur'an, the most important source of information and knowledge there is, is that of the narrations and traditions of the Divinely Guided (as), often referred to as Infallibles (as), as they are chosen by Allah himself to be the teachers and exegetists of the Holy Qur'an. They have the role of guidance for the society and instilling love and passion for the Holy Qur'an and its memorisation as well as the practical application of the commands within it.

The most authentic sources⁷ available to us are used to explore this topic.

One such book is Usool Al-Kaafi (اصول الكافي), one of the oldest, most authentic texts available and written by the respected Shiekh Al Kulaini, may his soul rest in peace. It was written during the minor occultation of the Imam of our Time, may his return be hastened, and with consultation with his four representatives. It is the most valuable, authentic, complete, and comprehensive book amongst the four major texts.⁸

It is divided in to 35 divisions, called Kitab (or book), starting with the Book of Intellect and Ignorance. One of these Kitabs is a section on the Holy Qur'an⁹, and three chapters in that division are dedicated to the memorisation of the Holy Qur'an.

Wasail Al Shia¹⁰ is a book collated by Sheikh Amily, using over 180 authentic and accepted books of narrations including the four major books, he compiled the best and most authentic of these narrations in to this well-known and accepted book.

Volume 89 of the encyclopedia Bihar Al-Anwar compiled by Al Majlisi, may his soul rest in peace, is dedicated to the Holy Qur'an.

The following are forty narrations grouped by topic and their translations, the first being the recommendation to learn the Holy Qur'an.

1. Recommendations

Narration 1 - It is incumbent upon the believer

ينبغي للمؤمن أن لا يموت حتى يتعلم القرآن، أو يكون في تعلمه

It is incumbent upon the believer to not pass away till he learns the Holy Qur'an, or be in the process of learning it. 11.

Imam as-Sadiq (as)

Narration 2 – It is the best narration

تعلموا القرآن فإنه أحسن الحديث، وتفقهوا فيه فإنه ربيع القلوب، واستشفوا بنوره فإنه شفاء الصدور، وأحسنوا تلاوته فإنه أنفع القصص

Learn the Holy Qur'an for it is the best narration, and grasp it for it is the spring of the heart, and heal yourselves with its light for it is a remedy for the chests, and master its recitation for it is the most beneficial of accounts. 12

Imam Ali (as)

Narration 3 – Happiness, Martyrdom, Salvation

إن أردتم عيش السعداء وموت الشهداء والنجاة يوم الحسرة والظل يوم الحرور والهدى يوم الضلالة فادرسوا القرآن، فإنه كلام الرحمن وحرز من الشيطان ورجحان في الميزان

If you want to the life of happiness, the death of a martyr, salvation from the day of regret, the shadow on the day of heat, and guidance on the day of straying, so then study the Holy Qur'an for it is the Word of the Merciful and the shield against Satan and the predominant (weight) on the scales (of deeds). 13

The Prophet (S)

Narration 4 – The best of the best of you

خياركم من تعلم القرآن وعلمه.

The best of the best of you is whomever learns the Holy Qur'an and acts upon it. 14

The Prophet (S)

Narration 5 – The trust to His creation

القرآن عهد الله إلى خلقه فقد ينبغي للمرء المسلم أن ينظر في عهده وأن يقرأ

منه في كل يوم خمسين آية

The Holy Qur'an is the trust of Allahﷻ to his creation, so it is desirable to the Muslim to look upon this trust and to recite from the Holy Qur'an every day fifty Ayahs. 15

Imam as-Sadiq (as)

Narration 6 - A house of ruin

إن الذي ليس في جوفه شيء من القرآن كالبيت الخرب

Certainly, he who has nothing of the Holy Qur'an within his heart is like a house in ruin. 16

The Prophet (S)

2. Start Young

Narration 7 - Infused in to blood and flesh

من قرأ القرآن وهو شاب مؤمن اختلط القرآن بدمه ولحمه وجعله الله مع
السفرة الكرام البررة وكان القرآن حجيجا عنه يوم القيامة

Whomever recites the Holy Qur'an when he is a young believer, the Holy Qur'an will infuse in to their blood and flesh and Allahﷻ will place him with the noble, devoted Angels, and the Holy Qur'an will shield him on the Day of Resurrection. 17

Imam as-Sadiq (as)

3. The Holy Qur'an Will Complain

Narration 8 - Three will complain

ثلاثة يشكون إلى الله عز وجل: مسجد خراب لا يصلي فيه أهله، وعالم بين
جهال، ومصحف معلق قد وقع عليه غبار ولا يقرأ فيه

Three will complain to Allah – A deserted Mosque where its people do not pray, a scholar amongst the ignorant, and a Holy Qur'an gathering dust and not recited with. 18.

Imam as-Sadiq (as)

4. Merits of Recitation

Recitation of the Holy Qur'an is a deed which is superior to many others. Imam ar-Ridha' (as) says the following:

Narration 9 – Better than remembrance

قراءة القرآن أفضل من الذكر، والذكر أفضل من الصدقة، والصدقة أفضل من الصيام، والصوم جنة من النار

Recitation of the Holy Qur'an is better than remembrance, and remembrance is better than charity, and charity is better than fasting, and fasting is a shield from the fire. 19.

Imam ar-Ridha' (as)

5. Types of People Who Recite

Narration 10 – Three kinds of people

عدة من أصحابنا، عن أحمد بن محمد بن خالد، عن إسماعيل بن مهران عن عبيس بن هشام، عن ذكره، عن أبي جعفر (عليه السلام) قال: قراءة القرآن ثلاثة:

رجل قرأ القرآن فاتخذه بضاعة واستدر به الملوك واستطال به على الناس ورجل قرأ القرآن فحفظ حروفه وضيع حدوده وأقامه إقامة القدح فلا كثر الله هؤلاء من حملة القرآن ورجل قرأ القرآن فوضع دواء القرآن على داء قلبه فأسهر به ليله وأظمأ به نهاره وقام به في مساجده وتجاوى به عن فراشه فبأولئك يدفع الله العزيز الجبار البلاء وبأولئك يديل الله عز وجل من الأعداء وبأولئك ينزل

الله عز وجل الغيث من السماء فوالله لهؤلاء في قراءة القرآن أعز من الكبريت الأحمر.

Imam al-Baqir (as) is quoted to have said there are three kinds of people who recite the Holy Qur'an:

1. One who recites the Holy Qur'an as though a product to trade with, to win over kings and dominate over the people,
2. Another who memorises the letters, but loses its boundaries and keep guards it like a delicate glass, showing it off for a time to profit from it, may Allahﷻ not increase the numbers of this group,
3. And one who recites the Holy Qur'an as the medicine for the illnesses of his heart, keeps vigil of the night with it, endures thirst with it through his day, teaches and recites it in Mosques, and leaves his bed for its sake, 20

Imam al-Baqir (as) states that through the latter group, Allah, the Most Majestic, the Almighty, keeps away calamity, and through them, Allah keeps away the enemy, and through them, Allah brings down the rains from the sky. Imam al-Baqir (as) then swears by the name of Allah that certainly those reciters of the Holy Qur'an are of more cherished than The Red Kabrit.²¹

This narration is directly answering those who claim that memorising the Holy Qur'an is not necessary, brushing it off with sophisms such as those who fought Imam Ali (as) were memorisers; and look where they ended up! Or that it brings no benefits to us.

The answer is clear. Memorising the Holy Qur'an should not be to make a profit or lure people, nor simply memorise the words and lose the boundaries, as is the case in the first two groups of people described in the narration, but rather, memorising the Holy Qur'an means acting upon its guidance to be able to reap the rewards.

Narration 11 - Nobility

Imam as-Sadiq (as) states the following

الحافظ للقرآن العامل به، مع السفارة الكرام البررة

The memoriser of the Holy Qur'an, who implements it, is with the noble, pious. 22

Imam as-Sadiq (as)

The term “**noble and pious**” is the same one used in the Holy Qur’an in Surah 80, Ayah 16.

5. Memorising Through Hardship

A common detractor from any attempt to memorise the Holy Qur’an is in believing that one requires good memory in order to achieve any of the goals of memorising, and the belief that their memory is not up to the task.

The goal must be considered incremental. The primary goal should be one of association with the Holy Qur’an. To be on the path of familiarity and to grow with Divine Text, knowing that memorising the Holy Qur’an is no easy task.

This is clear through chapters entitled “Who Learns the Holy Qur’an with Difficulty” in Al-Kafi and “Recommendation of memorising the Holy Qur’an and bearing hardships in learning it and memorising it” in Mustadrak Al-Wasail²³ amongst many others. These chapters give us an indication that throughout history and since the Dawn of Islam, Muslims have struggled with and have endured hardship in order to learn and memorise the Holy Qur’an, but also that learning and memorising come hand in hand together.

Narration 12 – Double the reward for hardship

إن الذي يعالج القرآن ويحفظه بمشقة منه وقلة حفظ له أجران

Whoever engages the Holy Qur’an, enduring hardship and difficulty in memorising it, will have double the reward. 24.

Imam as-Sadiq (as)

And the doubter may shed the following doubt – in that if memorisation of the Holy Qur’an comes with hardship and difficulty, that one may rebel and the opposite of the desired effect results.

Yet the same individuals strive and work hard, and encourages, pushes and motivates their child towards obtaining knowledge in sciences and arts, to obtain livelihood, to train and push through pain barriers in order to excel in sports, or to pass final examinations etc.... without such reservations!

It is true that the worldly obligations can have a toll on the goal of reciting and learning the whole of the Holy Qur’an, restrictions on time and work or study loads can come at the expense of such a goal, but it must be at least concluded that some of the Holy Qur’an can be memorised.

6. Don't Forget What You Learnt!

Narration 13 – How I wish you were mine

قال أبو عبد الله (عليه السلام): من نسي سورة من القرآن مثلت له في صورة حسنة ودرجة رفيعة في الجنة فإذا رآها قال: ما أنت ما أحسنك لبيتك لي؟ فيقول: أما تعرفني؟ أنا سورة كذا وكذا ولو لم تنسني رفعتك إلى هذا.

Whoever forgets a Surah from the Holy Qur'an, it will appear to them in the best and highest form in paradise, and when they see it, and asks what are you? How beautiful! How I wish you were mine!.. The Surah will reply "Don't you know me? I am such and such a Surah, had you not forgotten me I would have raised you up to this" 25

Imam as-Sadiq (as)

Narration 14 – No sin was greater

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: عرضت على ذنوب أمتي فلم أر ذنبا أعظم من سورة من القرآن أو آية أوتيتها رجل ثم نسيها

The sins of my Nation were displayed to me and no sin was greater than a Surah of the Holy Qur'an or an Ayah that a man brings and then forgets it. 26.

The Prophet (S)

These two narrations show the significance and importance of working hard to recite with the intention of remembering the Ayahs... for not only will there be missed rewards by not remembering them, but also a punishment.

A conclusion may be drawn here, that it is best not to memorise the Holy Qur'an in the first place, lest one forgets the Ayahs memorised and the responsibility that sits with having to memorise it. Reasons such as not having the time to review and revise and having a weak memory can be used as excuses.

This is a shallow reasoning, however, as the contrary is true. A parable may be that it would be like saying to escape the law of the land, it is best to not even know what those laws are. Ignorance is not bliss.

Some grand scholars even view the forbidding of forgetting the Surahs and Ayahs to be a valuable blessing. It guarantees the need to constantly be associated with the Holy Qur'an through consistent review and recitation.

Some scholars from both schools of thought view the need to constantly review what has been memorised as obligatory, and not doing so, if risking forgetting those Ayahs memorised, as a sin. This is based on some narrations such as those listed and sometimes even quote such Ayahs as 126 of Surah Taha:

قَالَ كَذَلِكَ أَتَتْكَ آيَاتُنَا فَنَسِيتَهَا وَكَذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ تُنْسَى

***God shall say, 'Even so it is. Our signs came unto thee, and thou didst forget them; and so today thou art forgotten.'* (Ta-Ha 20: 126)**

Ayatollah Tabrizi, may Allah bless his soul, says it is an obligatory precaution that one who has memorised Surahs to review them constantly so as to not forget them.²⁷

Not all scholars are of this view, with most exegesis explaining this Ayah to mean not implementing the commands of the Ayahs, rather than not forgetting them.

Ayatollah Araki, may Allah bless his soul, states that the forbidding of forgetting the Holy Qur'an is not a proven law, and suggests it is rather despised to do so, citing narrations which indicate it is not a sin to have forgotten what has been memorised.

Ayatollah Araki states that given the memorisation of the Holy Qur'an is a recommendation, so is its apparent constant recitation to guard against forgetting it.

He concludes that it may therefore be the negligence and lack of importance given to the Holy Qur'an and its recitation, causing one to forget, as being one of the greatest sins²⁸.

7. The Holy Qur'an is Your Protection

Narration 15 – I fear learning the Holy Qur'an

جاء أبو ذر إلى النبي (صلى الله عليه وآله)، فقال: يا رسول الله، اني أخاف ان أتعلم القرآن ولا أعمل به، فقال رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وآله): لا يعذب الله قلبا أسكنه القرآن

Abu Dharr came to the Prophet and said” Oh Prophet, I fear learning the Holy Qur’an and not act upon it, so the Prophet said in reply: Allah will not punish a heart in which the Holy Qur’an resides in. 29.

The Prophet (S)

Narration 16 – The fire will not touch it.

لو كان القرآن في إهاب، ما مسه النار.

If the Holy Qur’an is embedded in skin, the fire will not touch it. 30

The Prophet (S)

Narration 17 – No punishment

اقرأوا القرآن واستظهِروه، فإن الله تعالى لا يعذب قلبا وعاء القرآن

Recite the Holy Qur’an and commit it to memory, for Allah does not punish a heart that has memorised the Holy Qur’an. .31

The Prophet (S)

Narration 18 – The earth responds

إذا مات حامل القرآن أوحى الله إلى الأرض ان لا تأكلي لحمه، قالت الهى كيف
أكل لحمه وكلامك في جوفه

When a memoriser of the Holy Qur’an passes away, Allah will reveal to the earth to not eat their flesh. The earth responds: My Lord, how could I eat the flesh with your Words infused with in it? 32.

The Prophet (S)

Narration 19 – Reduce punishment upon parents

من قرأ القرآن في المصحف، خفف الله تعالى العذاب عن والديه وان كانا

مشركين، ومن قرأ القرآن عن حفظه، ثم ظن أن الله تعالى لا يغفره فهو ممن
استهزأ بآيات الله

Whomever recites the Holy Qur'an off the scripture, Allah will reduce the punishment upon his parents even if they should be polytheists, and whomever recites the Holy Qur'an memoriter, and then suspects that Allah does not forgive him, then he is of those who mock the Ayahs of Allah.³³

The Prophet (S)

Narration 20 - A calamity from the sky

إذا انزل الله عاهة من السماء عوفي منها حملة القرآن، ورعاة الشمس: أي
الحافظون لأوقات الصلاة، وعمار المساجد

When Allah sends down a calamity from the sky, forgiven from it is the bearer of the Holy Qur'an and those who heed the sun, that is, those who keep the time of their prayers, and those who build Mosques.
34.

The Prophet (S)

8. Implementing the Holy Qur'an is a Pre-Requisite

Narration 21 - Two kinds of scholars

سمعت أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام يحدث عن النبي صلى الله عليه وآله أنه قال
في كلام له: العلماء رجلان: رجل عالم أخذ بعلمه فهذا ناج وعالم تارك لعلمه
فهذا هالك، وإن أهل النار ليتأذون من ريح العالم التارك لعلمه، وإن أشد أهل
النار ندامة وحسرة رجل دعا عبداً إلى الله فاستجاب له وقبل منه فأطاع الله
فأدخله الله الجنة وأدخل الداعي النار بتركه علمه واتباعه الهوى وطول الأمل،
أما اتباع الهوى فيصد عن الحق وطول الأمل ينسي الآخرة.

There are two kinds of scholars, one who upholds and implements their knowledge, they are saved, and another who disregards their knowledge, they face destruction. The people of the hell fire will be troubled by the putrid stink of the scholar who disregards their knowledge, and certainly, the most regretful of the

hell bound are and most lamenting are those who invites another to Allah and the invitee responds and accepts and answers the call and so enters Paradise, and the one who was inviting is entered in to Hell for not implementing their knowledge, but instead followed their whims and desires and infinite worldly aspirations. For succumbing to whims and desires obstructs the Truth, infinite worldly aspirations makes one forget the Hereafter. 35

Imam Ali (as) speaks of the Prophet's (S) words.

Narrations IV and V make it evident that it is the implementation of the Holy Qur'an and not the memorisation of the words alone that leads to the beneficial effects and protection of the Holy Qur'an to the one who holds it, and it only leads to destruction to those who ignore the knowledge, message, and instructions carried within it. Those hell-bound individuals who had memorised the Holy Qur'an but showed enmity to The Purified Household (as), fighting and killing them and their supporters, benefited not from the Holy Qur'an in their hearts but rather it added to their losses, as evident in the Holy Qur'an:

وَنُنزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا

And We send down, of the Koran, that which is a healing and a mercy to the believers; and the unbelievers it increases not, except in loss. (Al-Isra 17:82)

9. Supplications for Memorisation

One of the chapters found in authentic books collate the supplications by the Divinely Guided (as) that teach us how to supplicate for assistance in memorisation of the Holy Qur'an, which in itself speaks volumes as to the importance given to this topic by the Divinely Guided (as).

Imam as-Sadiq (as) is reported in Al-Kafi to have the following supplication:

Narration 22 – Bless me with the memorisation

اللهم إني أسألك ولم يسأل العباد مثلك أسألك بحق محمد نبيك ورسولك
وإبراهيم خليلك وصفيك وموسى كليمك ونجيك وعيسى كلمتك وروحك
وأسألك بصحف إبراهيم وتوراة موسى وزبور داود وإنجيل عيسى وقرآن محمد

(صلى الله عليه وآله) وبكل وحي أوحيته وقضاء أمضيته وحق قضيته وغنى أغنيته وضال هديته وسائل أعطيته وأسألك باسمك الذي وضعته على الليل فأظلم وباسمك الذي وضعته على النهار فاستنار وباسمك الذي وضعته على الأرض فاستقرت ودعمت به السماوات فاستقلت ووضعته على الجبال فرست وباسمك الذي بثت به الأرزاق وأسألك باسمك الذي تحيي به الموتى وأسألك بمعاهد العز من عرشك ومنتهى الرحمة من كتابك أسألك أن تصلي على محمد وآل محمد وأن ترزقني حفظ القرآن وأصناف العلم وأن تثبتها في قلبي وسمعي وبصري وأن تخالط بها لحمي ودمي وعظامي ومخي وتستعمل بها ليلي ونهاري برحمتك وقدرتك فإنه لا حول ولا قوة إلا بك يا حي يا قيوم

Oh Lord, I ask of You, and none of Your worshippers ask anyone like You, by the certitude of Muhammad Your prophet and messenger, and Ibrahim Your friend and chosen one, and Moses whom You converse with and Your confidant, and Jesus Your Word and Your Spirit, and I ask You by the manuscripts of Ibrahim and the Torah of Moses and the Zabur of David, and the Bible of Jesus, and the Holy Qur'an of Muhammad, and with every revelation You have revealed and judgement You have executed, and Truth You ordained, and rich You made wealthy, and stray You have guided and beggar You gave, and I ask of You in Your name that You place upon the night so it darkens and by Your name that you place upon the day so it brightens, and by Your name that you place upon the Earth so it settled, and supported the skies so it became independent, and You placed it upon the mountains to be anchored, and by Your name that You sent with it sustenance, and I ask in Your name that you give life to the dead, I plead before You through the bond of majesty of Your Throne, and by the boundaries of Your mercy from Your Book, I ask You to send blessings upon the Prophet and the Purified Household of the Prophet, and that You bless me with the memorisation of the Holy Qur'an and assortment of the science and that You establish it in my heart and hearing and sight and that You infuse it within my flesh and blood and bones and brain, and You use it my nights and days through Your mercy and might, for it is certain that there is might nor power except with You, Oh Ever Living, Eternal. 36.

Imam as-Sadiq (as)

In another Hadith narrated through the Imams (as) and attributed to the Prophet (S)

Narration 23 – Hold my heart to the memorisation

اللهم ارحمني بترك معاصيك أبدا ما أبقيتني وارحمني من تكلف ما لا يعينني وارزقني حسن المنظر فيما يرضيك عني وألزم قلبي حفظ كتابك كما علمتني

وارزقني أن أتلوه على النحو الذي يرضيك عني، اللهم نور بكتابك بصري
واشرح به صدري وفرح به قلبي وأطلق به لساني واستعمل به بدني وقوني على
ذلك وأعني عليه، إنه لا معين عليه إلا أنت، لا إله إلا أنت.

Oh Allah, have mercy upon me so that I may never disobey you so long as you allow me to live, and have mercy upon me from the burden of what does not concern me, and bless me the best of appearance in what pleases you of me, and hold my heart to the memorisation of Your Book just as you taught and bless me so that I may recite it in the way that I may please You. Oh Allah, enlighten with your book my sight and expand with it my chest, and gratify with it my heart, and with it make my tongue speak, and use my body with it and strengthen me and support me in upon this, there is supporter in this except You, no God except You. 37

The Imams (as) through Imam Ali (as) through the Prophet (S)

In Mafith Al Jinan³⁸ by Shiekh Abbas Al-Qummi, may his soul rest in peace, under the first chapter (describing recommended post prayer supplications and acts), has the following supplication taught to Imam Ali (as) by the Prophet (S):

Narration 24 - Light, Insight, Comprehension

سبحان من لا يعتدي على أهل مملكته، سبحان من لا يأخذ أهل الأرض بألوان
العذاب، سبحان الرؤف الرحيم، اللهم اجعل لي في قلبي نورا وبصرا وفهما
وعلما إنك على كل شيء قدير

Glorified is He who does not infringe upon those of His kingdom, glorified is He who does not overwhelm those of the Earth with the colours of punishment, glorified is He who is The Compassionate, The Merciful. Oh Allah make it so for me that in my heart a light and insight and comprehension and knowledge, for it is certain that You have power over everything. 39.

The Prophet (S)

10. Be An Intercessor

Intercession is often seen to be only for the Divinely Guided (as) or particular companions or scholars, but what of someone who has memorised the Holy Qur'an? Do they have any such privileges? A narration from the Prophet (S) answers that question.

Narration 25 – Intercede on behalf of ten

من استظهر القرآن وحفظه، وأحل حلاله، وحرّم حرامه، أدخله الله به الجنة،
وشفّعه في عشرة من أهل بيته، كلهم قد وجب له النار

Whoever commits the Holy Qur'an to memory, and makes permissible what it has made permissible, and forbids what it has forbidden, Allah will with it enter him in to Paradise and will allow him to intercede on behalf of ten of his household all of whom were obliged to enter Hell. 40.

The Prophet (S)

11. Levels of Heaven

Narration 26 – Levels in Paradise

عدد درج الجنة عدد آي القرآن، فإذا دخل صاحب القرآن الجنة قيل له: ارقأ
واقراً لكل آية درجة فلا تكون فوق حافظ القرآن درجة

The number of levels in Paradise are the number of Ayahs in the Holy Qur'an, so when the companion of the Holy Qur'an enters Paradise, it is said to him: "Rise and read⁴¹ for every Ayah a level, for there is no higher level in Paradise than that of a memoriser of the Holy Qur'an." 42.

The Prophet (S)

12. Teaching the Holy Qur'an

There are also numerous narrations on the teaching of the Holy Qur'an, including the following:

Narration 27 – A driver and a guide

ألا من تعلم القرآن وعلمه وعمل بما فيه فأنا له سائق إلى الجنة ودليل إلى الجنة

Certainly, whomever learns the Holy Qur'an and teaches it, and implements it, certainly for him is a driver to Paradise and a guide to Paradise. 43.

The Prophet (S)

Narration 28 – Rights upon the father

حق الولد على الوالد أن يحسن اسمه، ويحسن أدبه، ويعلمه القرآن

The right of the offspring upon the father are to select the finest name, and to better his manners, and to teach him the Holy Qur'an. 44.

Imam Ali (as)

Narration 29 – Forgiveness

معلم القرآن ومتعلمه يستغفر له كل شيء حتى الحوت في البحر

The teacher of the Holy Qur'an and the one who learns it will have everything seek forgiveness for him, even the fish in the sea. 45.

The Prophet (S)

13. Reciting From the Holy Qur'an

Vision is an important part of memorisation and science today confirms that using more of your senses will help solidify and strengthen your memory. So by looking at the Holy Qur'an and seeing the words on the page is reinforcing memorisation with visual aid.

Narration 30 – By heart or from the book?

جعلت فداك إني أحفظ القرآن على ظهر قلبي فأقرأه على ظهر قلبي أفضل أو
أنظر في المصحف؟ قال: فقال لي: بل أقرأه وانظر في المصحف فهو أفضل،
أما علمت أن النظر في المصحف عبادة

May I be sacrificed for you, I have learnt the Holy Qur'an off by heart, so is it better I recite it by heart or to look at the scripture? So Imam as-Sadiq[ؑ] replied: Recite it and look at the scripture for it is better, for you should know that looking at the scripture is in itself worship. 46.

Imam as-Sadiq (as)

Narration 31 – Satan’s nightmare

ليس شيء أشد على الشيطان من القراءة في المصحف نظراً

There is nothing worse upon Satan than the recitation by viewing the Holy Qur’an. 47.

The Prophet (S)

And as for the earlier narration also, “Whomever recites the Holy Qur’an off the scripture... and whomever recites the Holy Qur’an memoriter...” The Prophet (S) is teaching us that whether we recite off the scripture or off by heart, there is reward in it!

14. Measurable Motivation, Immeasurable Strength, Social Status

The Imams (as) did not only use the hereafter as motivation for their followers to memorise the Holy Qur’an, but also material, worldly motivations such as social status and monetary rewards, as well as physical strength that’s beyond imagination.

Here are some narrations to illustrate, with the first narration giving so much importance to those who memorise the Holy Qur’an that they are entitled to annual monetary rewards from the Islamic Treasury.

Narration 32 – Annual Income

من دخل في الاسلام طائعاً وقرأ القرآن ظاهراً فله في كل سنة مائتا دينار في بيت مال المسلمين، وإن منع في الدنيا أخذها يوم القيامة وأفية أحوج ما يكون إليها

Whoso enters faithfully into Islam and recited the Holy Qur’an memoriter for him is two hundred dinars in the Islamic Treasury annually, and if he is prevented from getting it in this world he will take it on the Day or Resurrection in its entirety whenever so in need of it. 48.

Imam Ali (as)

Narration 33 – Societal Status

حملة القرآن المخصوصون برحمة الله تعالى الملبسون نور الله تعالى
المعلمون كلام الله تعالى المقربون عند الله تعالى من والاهم فقد والى الله
تعالى ومن عاداهم فقد عادى الله تعالى

Those who carry the Holy Qur'an are the ones particularly privileged with the Mercy of Allah, who are draped with the Light of Allah, who are taught the Words of Allah, who are closest to Allah, whomsoever champions them champions Allah, and whomsoever makes enemies of them will be making enemies with Allah⁴⁹.

The Prophet (S)

Narration 34 – Strength

من قرأ مائة آية من القرآن من أي القرآن شاء ثم قال: يا الله سبع مرات فلو دعا
على الصخرة لقلعها إن شاء الله.

Whomever recites one hundred Ayahs from the Holy Qur'an from any part of the Holy Qur'an he wishes and then says "Ya Allah" seven times, if he then imprecates upon a boulder he would uproot it with the will of Allah.⁵⁰

Imam Ali (as)

Narration 35 – Highest status

إن أهل القرآن في أعلى درجة من الآدميين ما خلا النبيين والمرسلين فلا
تستضعفوا أهل القرآن حقوقهم فإن لهم من الله العزيز الجبار لمكانا عليا

Certainly, the people of the Holy Qur'an are the highest status of human beings save the Prophets and Messengers, so do not seek to diminish the rights of the people of the Holy Qur'an, for certainly they have a high place for them from The All Mighty Allah.⁵¹.

The Prophet (S)

Narration 36 – Pass the Straight Path with the prophets

إن أكرم العباد إلى الله بعد الأنبياء العلماء ثم حملة القرآن يخرجون من الدنيا كما يخرج الأنبياء، ويُحشرون من قبورهم مع الأنبياء ويمرّون على الصراط مع الأنبياء ويأخذون ثواب الأنبياء، فطوبى لطالب العلم وحامل القرآن مما لهم عند الله من الكرامة والشرف

The most honourable of the worshippers to Allah after the Prophets are the scholars, then the bearers of the Holy Qur'an, they leave the world just as the prophets leave, and they are resurrected from their graves with the prophets, and they pass the Straight Path with the prophets, and they take the rewards of the prophets, so blessed are the seekers of knowledge and the bearers of the Holy Qur'an of what they have with Allah of honour and prestige. 52.

The Prophet (S)

Narration 37 – Most honourable

أشرف امتي حملة القرآن وأصحاب الليل

The most honourable of my nation are the bearers of the Holy Qur'an and those who keep vigil at night 53.

The Prophet (S)

Narration 38 – The standard of Islam

حامل القرآن حامل راية الإسلام، من أكرمه فقد أكرم الله، ومن أهانه فعليه لعنة الله عز وجل.

The bearer of the Holy Qur'an is the bearer of the standard of Islam, whoever honours him, so Allah will honour him, and whoever insults him, so upon him is the curse of Allah.54

The Prophet (S)

In well-known and documented historical events, the Prophet (S) would seek to make the Commander in Chief of a group of men to be sent to battle or for a mission by asking each one what and how much of the Holy Qur'an they have memorised. In one such instance, a young man says Surah Al-Baqarah and some of other parts of the Holy Qur'an is what he has memorised, and so was assigned the post of Commander in Chief. When the rest of the men complained that this man was the youngest of all of us!! The Prophet(S) replied "Yes, but he has memorised Surah Al-Baqarah".55

Likewise, when burying the Martyrs of the Battle of Uhud, the Prophet (S) asked for those who memorised the Holy Qur'an to be buried before others.56

15. Memory and Cognition Is Maintained

Narration 39 – Faculty of mind

من جمع القرآن متعه الله بعقله حتى يموت

Whomever memorises the Holy Qur'an Allah will make him enjoy the faculty of his mind till his death 57.

The Prophet (S)

Narration 40 – Memory

ثلاثة يزدن في الحفظ ويذهبن بالبلغم قراءة القرآن والعسل واللبن

Three increase memory and drive away phlegm, recitation of the Holy Qur'an, honey, and dairy products 58.

Imam Ali (as)

Quick Overview

1. The Prophet (S) and the Divinely Guided Imams (as) have been reported on multiple occasions ordering and recommending the memorisation of the Holy Qur'an. And taking their advice in doing so is the path to happiness and perfection in this world and the hereafter.
2. The Prophet (S) and the Divinely Guided Imams (as) themselves are bearers of the Holy Qur'an and encouraged their families and supporters to do so.

3. The supplications that seek help in memorising the Holy Qur'an are in themselves testimony to the weight put on memorisation of the Holy Qur'an.
4. Not only where rewards for the Hereafter described, but material rewards should be used to encourage memorisation, including annual income from the Islamic Treasury.
5. It is a shield against the fire of Hell, and one who starts young and has the Holy Qur'an infused in to their flesh and skin, will certainly be protected.
6. There are medical benefits such as the protection of the mind and intellect from diseases that may be seen such as Alzheimer's and improvement of memory that other texts such as poetry does not have.
7. In taking in the challenge to memorise the Holy Qur'an, you use your time and every moment you have in preserving what you have memorised through regular reviews and in learning new Ayahs. This makes you one who is associated with the Holy Qur'an.
8. Many narrations describe different surahs to be recited in different prayers, especially in the Night Prayer, where long surahs are recommended. On the other hand, reading from the pages of the Holy Qur'an during prayers is not recommended. The conclusion is that one must memorise these surahs in order to be able to recite them during the prayers.
9. In order to succeed in this task, and in any task, one must supplicate and pray, and seek intercession, so that Allah can bless them with this privilege, and to know that without this support and blessing, success will otherwise be elusive.
10. One must have the right intention when committing to reciting of the Holy Qur'an. Imam as-Sadiq (as) says the following with this regard:

إن من الناس من يقرأ القرآن ليقال: فلان قارئ و منهم من يقرأ القرآن ليطلب
به الدنيا ولا خير في ذلك و منهم من يقرأ القرآن لينتفع به في صلاته و ليله
ونهاره.

Certainly, amongst the people are those that recite the Holy Qur'an so that people can see so and so is a reciter, and amongst them is who recites the Holy Qur'an in order to ask for worldly gains and not that of the Hereafter, and amongst them is who recites the Holy Qur'an so that he benefits with it in his prayers, and night, and days. 59

Imam as-Sadiq (as)

Memorisation of the Holy Qur'an in the eyes of Scholars

The Holy Qur'an, the Prophet (S) and the Divinely Guided Imams (as) have all emphasised the significance and importance of constant recitation, memorisation and action upon the Holy Qur'an. In this section, a snapshot of quotes from past and present scholars of Islam are showcased.

The First Martyr

Muhammad Ibn Makki Al-Aamali, known as the Martyr, or The First Martyr. He lived in the eighth century and was born in Lebanon into a scholarly family. He studied widely and travelled broadly to study including to Al-Hilla, Baghdad, Damascus, Holy Mecca, Madinah, Quds in Palestine, Al-Khalil and Egypt.

One of his most important and last works was on jurisprudence "Al Lum'a Al Dimishqiya"⁶⁰ which was written while in prison, in no more than seven days and while knowing he was to be executed at the end of the week, after which he was crucified and burnt in Damascus under the orders of the oppressive powers of the time.⁶¹ May his soul rest in peace.

In his published will, he writes that

If you can memorise the Holy Qur'an, then definitely do so, but if you see yourself unable to, then do so for whatever amount you can.⁶²

The Second Martyr

Sheikh Zain Ul-Deen Ali Ibn Muhammad Al-Aamali, known as the Second Martyr, was born in 911AH in Lebanon. Also a well-known and respected scholar having travelled widely to study, including Damascus, Egypt, Mecca, Madinah, and holy places in Iraq.

The Second Martyr has written a significant commentary on the works of the First Martyr, "Explanation of The Lum'a Al-Damishqiya", which continues to be studied in Islamic Seminaries until today. As with the First Martyr, he was ordered to be executed, may his soul rest in peace, by an oppressive government.⁶³

He writes on this topic in another book still relevant today, "Muniat El Mureed"⁶⁴ that

...the first thing a seeker of knowledge must occupy himself with is the masterful memorisation of the Holy Qur'an. Why? Because the Holy Qur'an is the basis and most important of sciences. The way of previous scholars was that sciences of jurisprudence and narrations would not be taught unless the student was a memoriser of the Holy Qur'an. And after its memorisation, further studies must be so as to not slowly drift in to forgetting the Holy Qur'an...but rather a portion must be consistently recited on a daily basis...

The above advice was repeated in “Al Murad Min Meniat El Mureed”⁶⁵ a summary of the original work by Syed Muhammad Ridha’ Tabatabaie.

Ayatollah Borujerdi

The Grand Ayatollah and Marja of his time until his death in 1961 at 86 years of age, may his soul rest in peace. It was him that revived the Islamic Seminaries of Qom and was a teacher to such students as Syed Ruhallah Al-Musawi Khomeini, Syed Ali Khamenei, the current Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Syed Ali Sistani, current Grand Marja based in Najaf, Iraq.

He is buried between The Greater Mosque and the Holy Shrine of Syeda Fatimah Ma’sooma, peace be upon her, in Qom, Islamic Republic of Iran.

His comment on the Holy Qur’an is that

*Memorisation of the Holy Qur’an is the provision of the journey for mankind. Alas! Regret upon he who leaves this world without any provisions.*⁶⁶

Ayatollah Muhammad Taqi Bahjat

Born 1916 and having passed away only recently in 2009 at 92 years of age, may his soul rest in peace, many still remember the prayers he led and the Islamic Seminaries in Qom continue to tell stories of this very special man. His works continue to be published and have significant impact on today’s society, and is buried near the Holy Shrine of Syeda Fatimah Ma’sooma, peace be upon her, in Qom, Islamic Republic of Iran.

He is well known for his simple, but effective instructions on life. On the issue of the Holy Qur’an, he says:

*“We must have absolute certainty in the fact that looking at the Qur’an is not like looking at any other book!”*⁶⁷

and that

*“Looking at the Qur’an continuously is the remedy for the pain of eyes.”*⁶⁸

On the issue of learning and acting upon the Holy Qur’an, he says:

*“We have the responsibility of striving to learn, teach, recite, and act upon the Qur’an. However, whilst we place the Qur’an upon our heads on the nights of vigil [i.e. the Nights of Power], in practice, we step upon the verses of hijab, backbiting, lying and the verses, **“Woe to the defrauders,”** [Surah al-Mutaffifeen (83): 1] **“Do not speak to your parents in an ill-tempered manner,”** [Surah al-Israa (17): 23] and **“Do not walk exultantly on the earth.”** [Surah al-Israa (17): 37].”*⁶⁹

And on memorisation itself, he says

Memorise the Holy Qur'an so that it is always by our side and we are always by its side. Seek refuge with the Holy Qur'an, it is the means to our protection during times of difficulty and hardships of this world.... 70

The result of memorising the Holy Qur'an is indescribable...Memorising the Holy Qur'an, is as a rule, easy, as according to narrations, "Allah has made its memorisation easy for his (The Prophets) nation", but it must be repeated constantly as it can escape the memory quickly.⁷¹

Ayatollah Sheikh Muhammad Nahavandi

Memorisation of the Holy Qur'an is one of the most important forms of worships and most emphatically recommended. Memorisation the Holy Qur'an with knowledge and faith gives light to the heart and expands the chest and soul and refines the self, its reward on the Day of Resurrection is commensurate with its value, because the memoriser of the Holy Qur'an is drowned in the light of God and is near God and is of the near ones, but unfortunately in this day and age, we have left this. While in the times before us, it is said that it was prevalent those amongst Muslims who were not memorisers were of little worth in society.⁷²

Ayatollah Fazel Lankarani

Without doubt, reciting and repeating and memorising the Holy Qur'an has much virtue and was seen as a distinction amongst Muslims at the Dawn of Islam, and God Willing, the believers, especially the dear youth, give more importance to this issue.⁷³

Ayatollah Khoei

In one of the sessions by Ayatollah Makarim Shirazi, may his life be lengthened, he said that Ayatollah Khoei⁷⁴...

...was memorising the Holy Qur'an in old age.

And what is commonly known is that it was in those years that he was able to memorise twenty-five chapters of the Holy Qur'an.⁷⁴

Sheikh Mansour Leghaei⁷⁵, may his life be lengthened, relates a story from one of the students of Ayatollah Khoei⁷⁶ in a lecture he gave recently on this issue. The student said that despite the heat of the summer of Iraq, Ayatollah Khoei⁷⁷ would utilise the time travelling between Kufa and Najaf in the taxi to memorise the Holy Qur'an while he was in his 70s, and has expressed his wish to have started at seven, and not 70.

Ayatollah Safi Golpayegani

A student of Ayatollah Borujerdi⁷⁵ and currently in Qom, Ayatollah Safi Golpayegani, may his life be lengthened, says that

*Memorising the Holy Qur'an was and is for all levels of believers, the clarity of this matter is so much so that it is not in need of any explanation or detail.*⁷⁶

Ayatollah Ja'far Sobhani

Ayatollah Ja'far Sobhani, may his life be lengthened, has said that should Allah grant him his life over, he would give the priority to memorising the Holy Qur'an over Arabic poetry and the like.

When asked in a session with students of the Islamic Seminary what effects the memorisation of the Holy Qur'an would have, he said...

The Holy Qur'an is light. If one has light in their minds it is apparent that it will have an effect. I have tested this, people who are familiar with the Holy Qur'an, much of it or less, sin less... this very familiarity with the Holy Qur'an protects one from sin.

Ayatollah Ma'refat

When it comes to memorising, and what the bearer or carrier of the Holy Qur'an means, Ayatollah Ma'refat⁷⁶ says...

*The bearer of the Holy Qur'an is one who carries the Holy Qur'an in their heart, not merely that in writing and in the bookcase....in summary, memorisation and mastering the correct recitation is one of the jurisprudential obligations at all times and especially in the current era....*⁷⁷

Ayatollah Hassan Hasanzadeh Amoli

Ayatollah Hassan Hasanzadeh Amoli was, at the earlier stages of his studies, passionate about memorising poetry. He now says:

*Alas! Had only someone advised us at that very time, "Sir! Instead of memorising these (poems), start memorising the Holy Qur'an...!" This regret now remains with me... If only the passion and longing to memorise poetry was put to use towards the memorisation of the Holy Qur'an instead.*⁷⁸

Syed Ali Khamenei

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, may his life be lengthened, consistently emphasises the importance of the memorisation of the Holy Qur'an and suggests

The lack of attention paid to memorisation of the Holy Qur'an in our Islamic Seminaries at the moment is truly a significant deficiency.

In some of Islamic Seminaries of the Sunni schools, as it was previously, from the very get go, memorisation of the Holy Qur'an is part of the conditions of the school. In some others where it is not a condition, there is encouragement for it.

Memorisation of the Holy Qur'an is very valuable. The Sunni brothers, in their Islamic Seminaries, while they have not delved in to the scientific and jurisprudential depth that we have on many issues, they have this significant privilege over us in that their students, as soon as they enter the seminaries, start studying and learning the recitation of the and then with the memorisation of the Holy Qur'an.

He also expresses a similar theme to that of Ayatollah Hassan Hasanzadeh Amoli, in regretting not memorising in his youth and that no one was there to advise them to start memorising it.

I swear by Allah ﷻ, on many occasions I have thought to myself that if it were possible, whatever I had I would give in return for the memorisation of the Holy Qur'an... but alas that's not possible...

...Take very seriously the issue of memorising the Holy Qur'an.⁷⁹

Summary

1. In order to be able to contemplate upon the Holy Qur'an, we must continuously recite it, it won't happen if we recite it occasionally or once a year. One of the best way to contemplate is to memorise.
2. We must be aware of and know each single Ayah to be able to determine our duties in each circumstance and if we wish to act upon and implement the Holy Qur'an, and so we need to be intimate with the Holy Qur'an. Memorisation leads to intimacy.
3. If a loved one sends us a letter to read, we would read it over several times, keep it close to us, and reread it over again so much so we would commit it to heart without ever getting tired of reading it. The One who loves you the most has sent you this letter... and if we were true to our words in our love of our faith, the Holy Qur'an would continue to be an intimate part of our life.
4. Much of the fallacies that surround Shia Islam can be answered through the Holy Qur'an, and the lack of our intimate knowledge of it and ability to answer those fallacies has led to some take advantage of this to distribute false allegations about Shia Islam, including over air, during hajj pilgrimage, social media and other platforms. Intimate knowledge of the Holy Qur'an can help overcome this challenge.
5. Many scholars, who have in their time memorised many things including poetry, have expressed regret over not giving priority to the Holy Qur'an over everything else. Our duty is to learn from the mistakes of our history and not repeat them.

6. Like learning the multiplication time table and its application, no school will hesitate in teaching it due to the knowledge that at any point in time in life, we may need them. Likewise, the Holy Qur'an is such that at any point in our life, we will be in need of it and its applications.

7. The preservation of the Holy Qur'an relies on those who memorise it. Mistakes happen, intentionally or otherwise, in printed Qur'ans and in digital ones. And many occasions have been recorded where a memoriser of the Holy Qur'an has picked up mistakes, leading to a recall and correction. In one instance, Qur'ans printed by Israelis and distributed in Kuwait were found to have replaced certain words to completely change the meanings, such as the omission of negating words (لا) in some Ayahs.

8. Many love and encourage the memorisation of songs, poetry, carols etc but as soon as one mentions memorisation of the Holy Qur'an, the same people would attack the idea! Is it not better to memorise the best of narrations over songs and poetry?

1. Many are included in this list, but some of those are listed here from and are from both schools of thought:

الميزان في تفسير القرآن، مجمع البيان، اثنا عشري، شبر، معين، منهج الصادقين، جوامع الجامع، شريف لا هيجي، عاملي، الجديد في تفسير القرآن المجيد، بحر العلوم، جلالين، تفسير المنير، تفسير المنير، تفسير الوسيط، كشف الأسرار، لباب التأويل، ابن كثير

2. آشنایى با قرآن

3. تفسير جوامع الجامع

4. تفسير الميزان

5. Al Nisa 4: 147

6. Al Imran 3: 145

7. These include, but not limited to the following:

اصول الكافي، وسائل الشريعة، مستدرک الوسائل، بحار الانوار، معاني الأخبار، ثواب الأعمال، الخصال، تفسير الامام العسكري، جمال الأسبوع بكمال العمل المشروع، قرب الأسناد، المالي شيخ طوسي، لب الباب، جامع الأخبار، ميزان الحكمة، مكارم الأخلاق، الجعفریات، مشكات الأنوار، النوادر....رواندي، تفسير عن ابن إبراهيم القمي، معاني الأخبار، عيون اخبار الرضا عليه السلام و

8. The four major texts are:

أصول الكافي، من لا يحضره الفقيه، تهذيب الأحكام، الاستبصار

9. فصل القرآن

10. وسائل الشريعة

11. (Mizan Al-Hikmah الميزان الحكمة) V3 P2521

12. (نهج البلاغة - خطب الإمام علي (ع) - Nahjul Balagha)

13. (Mizan Al-Hikmah الميزان الحكمة) V3 P2521

14. (Mustadrak al-Wasail المستدرک الوسائل) V4 P233

15. (Usool Al Kafi - اصول الكافي) V2 P609

16. (Mizan Al-Hikmah الميزان الحكمة) V3 P2522

17. (Syed Sistani - Simplified Jursiprudence - السيد السيستاني - الفتاوى الميسرة) P377

18. (Al Khisal - الخصال) P142

19. (Bihar Al Anwar - بحار الأنوار) V89 P200-201

20. (Usool Al Kafi - اصول الكافي) - Volume 2 P627

21. What The Red Kabrit is... is up for discussion, however, the certainty is that is rare and invaluable.

22. (Sheikh Al Sadooqs Al Amali - الأمالي للصدوق) - under the chapter of "Merits of the Memoriser of the Holy Qur'an"

23. (Mustadrak al-Wasail المستدرک الوسائل)

24. (Usool Al Kafi – اصول الكافي – V2 P606.
25. (Usool Al Kafi – اصول الكافي – V2 P608.
26. (Sunan Abi Dawood – سنن أبي داود – V1 P113
27. (Quranic Rulings – استفتاءات قرآني – P140
28. (Nafahat Ar Rahman – نفحات الرحمن – V1 p38
29. (Mustadrak al-Was'ail – مستدرک الوسائل – V4 P233
30. (Mustadrak al-Was'ail – مستدرک الوسائل – V4 P233
31. (Mizan Al-Hikmah – ميزان الحكمة – V3 P2523
32. (Kanz Ul Amal – كنز الأعمال – V1 Narration 2488.
33. (Mustadrak al-Was'ail – مستدرک الوسائل – V4 P269
34. (Encyclopedia of Shia Narrations – جامع احاديث الشيعة – V4 P59
35. (Usool Al Kafi – اصول الكافي – V1 P44
36. (Usool Al Kafi – اصول الكافي – V2 P576
37. (Usool Al Kafi – اصول الكافي – V2 P577
38. (Mafatih Al-Jinan – مفاتيح الجنان –
39. (Bihar Al Anwar – بحار الأنوار – V83 P9
40. (Mustadrak al-Was'ail – مستدرک الوسائل – V4 P245
41. In other narrations, it is “Read and rise”.
42. (Bihar Al Anwar – بحار الأنوار – V89 P22
43. (Mizan Al-Hikmah – ميزان الحكمة – V3 P2522
44. (Mizan Al-Hikmah – ميزان الحكمة – V3 P2522
45. (Encyclopedia of Shia Narrations – جامع احاديث الشيعة – V15 P9
46. (Usool Al Kafi – اصول الكافي – V2 P614
47. (Wasa'il Al Shia الشيعة وسائل – V6 P204
48. (Al Khisal – الخصال – V2 P602
49. (Tafisr of Imam Al-Askari) P13
50. (Rewards of Deeds – ثواب الأعمال – P104
51. (Usool Al Kafi – اصول الكافي – V2 P603
52. (Full Collection of Narrations – جامع الأخبار – P114
53. (Encyclopedia of Shia Narrations – جامع احاديث الشيعة – V9 P111
54. (Mizan Al-Hikmah – ميزان الحكمة – V3 P2523
55. روي أن النبي ص بعث بعثا ثم تتبعهم يستقرئهم فجاء إنسان منهم فقال ما ذا معك من القرآن حتى أتى على أحدثهم سنا فقال له ما ذا معك من القرآن قال كذا وكذا و سورة البقرة فقال أخرجوا و هذا عليكم أمير قالوا يا رسول الله ص هو أحدثنا سنا قال معه سورة البقرة – مجمع البيان في تفسير القرآن (Majmaul Bayan Fi Tafisr Al-Quran – مجمع البيان في تفسير القرآن – V1 P111
56. (Mizan Al-Hikmah – ميزان الحكمة – V3 P2523
57. (Mizan Al-Hikmah – ميزان الحكمة – V3 P2523,
58. (Wasa'il Al Shia الشيعة وسائل – V25 P25
59. (Usool Al Kafi – اصول الكافي – V2 P607
60. اللمعة دمشقية
61. (Explanation of The Works Al Lum'a Al Damishqiya – الروضة البهية في شرح اللمعة الدمشقية – V1 P15
62. Will of The First Martyr quoted from (Why we should memorise the Holy Qur'an – چرا قرآن را حفظ کنیم – P146.
63. (Explanation of The Works Al Lum'a Al Damishqiya – الروضة البهية في شرح اللمعة الدمشقية – V1 P17
64. منية المرید
65. المراد من منية المرید
66. The Life of Ayatollah Borujerdi, P165, quoted from (Why we should memorise the Holy Qur'an – چرا قرآن را حفظ کنیم – P150
67. Cited from <http://bahjat.ir/en/category/2288/instructions> [6], The Center for Compilation and Publication of the Works of Grand Ayatollah Bahjat, date of citation 31/05/17.

68. Ibid
69. Ibid
70. Quoted from “On the way to the beloved” P165 quoted from (Why we should memorise the Holy Qur’an – چرا قرآن را حفظ کنیم) P150.
71. Quoted from “In the presence of Ayatollah Bahjat” P115 quoted from (Why we should memorise the Holy Qur’an – چرا قرآن را حفظ کنیم) P151.
72. Exegesis of Nafhat ArRahman V1 P35 quoted from (Why we should memorise the Holy Qur’an – چرا قرآن را حفظ کنیم) P152
73. (Why we should memorise the Holy Qur’an – چرا قرآن را حفظ کنیم) P152
74. Ibid, P153
75. See <http://www.ehawza.com/> [7]
76. (Why we should memorise the Holy Qur’an – چرا قرآن را حفظ کنیم) P154
77. (Why we should memorise the Holy Qur’an – چرا قرآن را حفظ کنیم) P156
78. Page 563 of میراث ماندگار – Lasting Legacy quoted from (Why we should memorise the Holy Qur’an – چرا قرآن را حفظ کنیم) P158
79. Quotes from various sources and speeches sourced from (Why we should memorise the Holy Qur’an – چرا قرآن را حفظ کنیم)

Part 2: How to Memorise the Holy Qur’an?

Strengthening Your Memory

In narrations and traditions, advice has been given on the health of the mind, improving memory, remaining youthful and being joyful.

These can be divided in to four parts, and a summary is provided below. Each is a topic of its own and details are outside the scope of this booklet.

First: Hygiene

“Healthy Body, Healthy Mind” is sometimes used as a marketing tool for gym memberships, so called health snacks etc. It is in fact an important part of the steps needed to be taken to start memorising the Holy Qur’an. These include

- Regular exercise and practice recreational activities,
- Tooth brushing,
- Nail hygiene,
- Oiling the skin,

- Resting enough,
- A short sleep through the day,
- And blood cupping.

Second: Healthy Diet

A healthy diet and appropriate eating habits are very important in nurturing a healthy mind and memory and preventing the erosion of our intellectual abilities. Foods that are good for the memory, according to narrations, including the following:

- Honey
- Lentil
- Meat
- Celery
- Zucchini
- Quince
- Purslane
- Citron
- Broad beans
- Vinegar
- Pomegranate
- Currants
- Dairy Products
- Halwa
- Saffron
- Clove gillyflower
- Rue
- Beetroot

Notes:

1. Meat, especially the meat close to the animal's neck, and preferably that of sheep, camel, and ostrich. Avoid beef, and goes without saying; pork is forbidden!

2. Pomegranate: With the white skin inside it.

And likewise, avoid foods such as cheese, sour apples, and coriander as they weaken memory.

Importantly, it has been emphasised in narrations the avoidance of eating to ones fill and overeating and that one should get accustomed to eating less and fasting.

Third: Strengthening the Soul

Remembrance of Allah, seeking His help, recitation of the Holy Qur'an, especially Ayah Al-Kursi¹, keeping good manners with respect to others that are unknown to you, are all listed as matters which assist in strengthening memory.

The supplications listed above in 9. Supplications For Memorisation, should also be part of the program.

Fourth: Exercising the Mind

Just like the muscles of the body, the mind also needs to be exercised to build up its strength and abilities. Correct methodologies should be adopted and practiced in a consistent, systematic manner to maximise benefits. Those related to memorising the Holy Qur'an will be discussed later.

Preliminaries to Memorising the Holy Qur'an**Pure Intention**

Any intention, other than purely for the pleasure of Allah and to seek closeness, will be rewarded with anything but Divine Pleasure. This intention must be constantly maintained and renewed, as intentions can easily and slowly stray into other areas.

Any intention other than for the pleasure of Allah and to seek closeness to Him, should be quickly changed and removed. Memorising so you can show off to others; to score political, social, or scholarly points; so as to give lectures, or other similar intentions are worldly and the reward will be worldly. Make sure these intentions are cleared and sincerely purified so that the intention is solely and purely for closeness to Allah.

Satan's whispers may also enter, either to discourage, demotivate, and to strengthen any feelings of hopelessness, or Satan may sneak in from the door of piety. Through this door, one may feel a sense of pride and achievement, progress, and dignity. Some begin to see themselves as better and more pious than others, arrogance sets in, and the rise before the fall begins. The same fate as that of Satan will

befall the arrogant one, in being ejected from Heaven, for if there is an atom of arrogance in one's heart, they cannot be in Heaven.^{2,3}

A strong and correct intention will give strength to the mind and soul, and motivation to continue with the task at hand. This is important, as times will come where hopelessness and fear may set in and a sense of wanting to give up will set in. Here, renew your intention, re-read the narrations, repledge your promise to memorise and move forward on.

Will Power and Effort

Some may have the right motivations and desire to do something but no will power to do it with, lacking the effort to achieve their goals. Others may have weaker motivations, but a stronger will. The latter group are more likely to achieve their goals. Strong will power is a significant factor in ensuring success.

Planning And Consistency

A program to help assist with the desired task is a necessary. Proper planning prevents poor performance and leads to success.

Once a plan is drawn, consistently implementing it then becomes the key. Nothing should come in the way of implementing the daily, weekly, and monthly rotation of new memorisations and reviews of ayahs already memorised.

Supplication

Supplication is a form of worship that brings one closer to Allah and happiness to the heart of mankind. It brings blessings and spiritual success, and will make memorisation a much easier task. Our task, as worshippers, is to supplicate, and Allah will respond.

Seeking and asking for, through supplication, to make easier the task of memorisation, and application, of the Holy Qur'an has been advised through narrations. Intercession should also be sought through the Prophet (S) and his Purified Household (as).

A tried and tested deed that could also be utilised is to gift the recitation of the Holy Qur'an to those who have passed away before us, especially to the scholars and, more so, to souls of the Prophet (S) and his Purified Household (as).

Supplication is unfortunately a lost form of remedy to many of the problems we have in today's world. We tend to seek advice from doctors, take medications, see coaches, go training, work for pay, etc, but forget to supplicate for health and healing from the Healer and sustenance from the Sustainer. It needs to come back in to our daily life, and not one when we feel we have problems we cannot solve by ourselves or with the help of others, but rather, as the primary form of support.

Find A Partner

A memorisation partner will catapult results as you motivate and encourage each other and move forward together. Some of the important characteristics to look for when selecting your memorisation partner are the following:

- Be similar in age, spiritual status, and mannerism.
- Be orderly, serious and puts effort in.
- Is interested and motivated.
- Be at a similar level of memorisation.
- Be similarly able to memorise.

Have attention to detail, able to comprehend the Holy Qur'an, and able to point out errors when listening to your recitation.

Your best partner may not be too far away. It may be your sibling spouse, your best friend, or work colleague.

Use a Guide and Mentor

Find a mentor to guide the memorisation process. A mentor who has themselves memorised the Holy Qur'an and is well versed can be very beneficial. Some points can only be raised or picked up with the help of a mentor who has already memorised the Holy Qur'an, such as similar ayahs in the Holy Qur'an, how to memorise particular ayahs and similar themes.

A class formed for this purpose where the mentor listens to daily memorisations of students is one of the most effective methods. Regular, consistent attendance to class will lead to success.

Choosing Your Holy Qur'an

Select a Holy Qur'an that you will use for this specific purpose and to be kept with you always. Visual assistance in memorisation is paramount, and using the same Holy Qur'an all the time will help continue reinforce the memory visually. If you use a different Holy Qur'an every day, and possibly having different scriptures, background colours and different type settings, this will make the visual memorisation more difficult. The same one used every day will naturally make it easier.

There are certain criteria for selecting your Holy Qur'an to maximise benefits and minimise and possible problems. These are as follows:

Standard scripture: The scripture of the Holy Qur'an you choose needs to be standardised, with all the

appropriate characteristics of identifying where to start, stop, pause, where the Ayah starts and ends, its numbers etc all should be clear and easy to read.

The best scripture for this purpose is one written by the **Uthman Taha**, which is the most popularly circulated and available.

There are a number of special features in this scripture, such as:

- The page starts with the start of an Ayah, and ends at the end of an Ayah.
- There are fifteen lines to each page.
- Each chapter, or Juz, is 20 pages, except for the first and last chapters (21 and 23 pages respectively), totalling 604 pages.
- Easy to recognise symbols to help with the recitation rules.
- Clear, easy to read, and have appropriate spacing between words and lines.

Plain text: Avoid Qur'ans that are very colourful in decorating the pages. The plainer it is, the easier it is to focus on the scripture.

Also avoid Qur'ans that have in between line translations, or on opposites of the page, or on the sides, as that takes your focus away from the text again. Another Holy Qur'an with translation should be used for that purpose.

A simple, plain, Qur'anic scriptures that allow you to focus on the task at hand is the best one to select.

Background Colour: An appropriate background colour that's easy on the eyes and pleasing to look at. Pure white backgrounds tend to tire the eye, while light colours of blue or cream tend to be easier on the eye and commonly used by memorisers.

Size of the Holy Qur'an: An appropriate sized book should be chosen for your Holy Qur'an. If it is too large, it would be difficult to carry, if too small, it would be hard to read. An appropriate and common size may be the 5.25"x8" or 5"x7.5" trim size, or something close to that. That's the right size that makes it easy to carry as well as to read.

A smaller version can be utilised, if desired, for when you revise memorised ayahs, however, it should be emphasised that it should have the same scripture and structure as the one being used to memorise new ayahs.

Selecting a Translation

Now that you have selected the Holy Qur'an that will accompany you through the journey of memorising

the Holy Qur'an, it is now time to select a translation of it.

To be able to remember what you are reciting, you must understand the meanings of the words. This not only helps understand the Ayah, but also helps remembering it and making sense of the structure of the Holy Qur'an.

Selecting a Reciter

One of the steps in memorising is utilising sound to assist in correct recitation and memorisation. An appropriately paced, clear, correct recitation of the Holy Qur'an should be selected to accompany your program in memorising ayahs and reviewing previously memorised ones.

A specific one should not be relied on totally, as that will make it difficult to recollect an Ayah easily and readily where the stop/start or tune of the recitation differs from the version memorised.

For the younger memorisers, however, this is difficult to avoid as they rely heavily on audio memorisation, and should listen to a reciter until they can mimic their style. But in the adult, it is better not to rely heavily on one single reciter, to be able to recite faster or slower, and in different tunes, as required.

Al-Minshawi, Parhizgar, and Al-Husary are three commonly used reciters who are excellent for the purpose, and each has a unique feature. For example,

- Al-Minshawi is well paced, and has a nice melody;
- Parhizgar is known for having a reason for each stop and each start of the recitation;
- Al-Husary for his well-paced but slower recitation if you wish to pin point recitation rules.

Of course, that's not to say that each one's strength takes away from the other, but rather, these are features that have been identified with each of the recitations.

Points to consider if selecting another reciter are the following:

- Correct Arabic recitation and pronunciations
- Correct starting and stopping of the recitation. This is especially important when stopping in the middle of an Ayah, as incorrect application can sometimes give the meaning of polytheism or other incorrect meanings.
- Correct use of tunes and melody and beautifying the recitation with an appropriately nice voice.
- Appropriate speed of recitation, that is, no faster than 50 minutes and no slower than 60 minutes per chapter.

In comparison, it can be said Egyptian reciters (Al-Minshawi is the best and most comprehensive) are better than that of the Saudi Arabians, and after the Egyptians, the Iranian reciters (Parhizgar).

There are numerous applications and websites available online and as downloadable applications on PC, tablet and mobile. A good site to visit where you can choose reciters, translations, search, and display options as well Ayah repetitions for memorisation is <http://tanzil.net> [8].

Necessary Skills and Sciences

Like all other activities, there are necessary skills that need to be studied and learnt before proceeding to memorisation. These skills will not only make memorisation easier, it will also help with correct understanding and interpretation of the Holy Qur'an. They are as follows:

Recitation Skills

This is the first and most important step. In order to be able to memorise the Holy Qur'an correctly, you need to be able to pronounce the letters and words correctly, and finally to be able to recite sentences fluently.

Otherwise, memorisation can be a difficult task. It is more difficult to correct an Ayah that has been memorised incorrectly than to memorise correctly the first time! So, this important step should not be skipped.

Unfortunately, some insist on beginning the process of memorisation before adopting correct recitation, meeting difficulties along the way and then giving up on the task all together.

Recitation skills in itself has levels, from beginner to expert. Someone should be able to start memorisation where they can recite an entire page error-free within a three-minute interval.

This requires finding and attending classes regularly and practicing consistently each recitation rule as it is taught. The more familiarity one has with the Holy Qur'an, its text, rules of recitation, and listening to recitations, the easier the process of memorisation becomes.

Practice is essential. Listening to reciters such as those mentioned earlier and reading along, and reading to a mentor to have any issues identified can assist in quickly developing recitation skills.

Tajweed

The next step is Tajweed. This is the recitation with the correct Arabic accent and dialect. This science is divided in to theoretical and practical application. Both are required in order to not only be able to recite beautifully, but to be able to memorise more easily.

سَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكْنَا

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا عَبَدْنَا

These two Ayahs from Al-A'nam 6: 148 and An-Nahl 16:35 are quite similar, but the presence of a separated lengthening, highlighted in the first Ayah, will make this a distinguishing feature between the two.

At least, introductory Tajweed should be completed, which studies how letters are sounded from the mouth, their attributes, and rulings.

Conjugation and Syntax

Syntax, known as “Sarf”, is how words are formulated from their root words and the changes that apply to the root word itself.

For example, in English, from the word “run”, it can be modified to mean an action that occurred in the past (“ran”), present (“running”), future or as a command (“run”).

In Arabic, there are differences between words with regards to gender (male/female), quantity (single, double, plural) and whether it is being spoken in the first person, to the second person, or third person. A total of fourteen variations is possible for each verb and noun.

Memorisation is made easier with this science as the Ayah will guide us, once we understand the meaning, as to which of these should be used. For example, is the Ayah talking to a group of male or female audience, a single person, two, or more...

Conjugation, or “Nahw”, is the interaction of the words with each other and how one effects the other. If mastered, memorisation becomes a much simpler task. For example, if asking someone what they did yesterday, the reply may be “I went for a run.” Although “run” does not indicate past tense, to say “I went for a ran” is incorrect.

Even more importantly, conjugation and syntax has a significant role to play in assisting the overall interpretation of the Ayahs being read, which becomes the foundation of better, stronger, more permanent memorisation of the Holy Qur'an.

The following site is an excellent example of how each Ayah can be broken down grammatically:

<http://corpus.quran.com/> [9]

Translation and Interpretation

As already pointed out, understanding the meanings of the Ayahs being memorised is extremely beneficial, and necessary, part of memorisation. It helps understand the flow of the recitation and is more easily imprinted in the mind. For this reason, Arab seeking individuals may find memorisation an easier task.

The following is one example where Qur'anic words can be found within the Holy Qur'an and their meanings translated online: <http://www.almaany.com/quran-b/> [10].

Understanding the Fundamentals of Memorisation of the Holy Qur'an

The understanding of how to memorise the Holy Qur'an makes the entire process a much more pleasant, rewarding one. Starting without a clear understanding of the fundamentals behind memorising can lead to feelings of hopelessness and failure.

Conditions of Initiation

What Age Is Suitable To Start?

This is often the first question that may be asked by parents who wish to have their children memorise the Holy Qur'an. It is possible for all ages to participate, children as young as five years old have been proven to be able to have the whole Holy Qur'an memorised with understanding⁴, and examples of much older people starting the process⁵. There are, however, general guidelines to follow.

Children under the age of seven, as per the manners of raising children according to the Ahlul Bayt (as), should not be put through the process of official schooling, but rather be allowed to play and be taught mannerism. That does not mean they should not be exposed to the Holy Qur'an, on the contrary, the Holy Qur'an should be part of our everyday life, and the companionship of the family with the Holy Qur'an should be the role model for them. This will set the foundations for the child to memorise as they grow up in that familiar environment and closeness with the Holy Qur'an.

From the age of four years of age, children may be taught short, useful Ayahs that are related to manners such as the following:

وَيَا أُولِي الدِّينِ إِحْسَانًا

....and to be good to parents.

and;

وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا

...and speak well to people.

This will help prepare the child and set the grounds for getting familiar with the Holy Qur'an, but also help raise them in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and Ahlul Bayt (as).

The most significant contributor, is the consistent role modelling by parents of having a strong relationship with the Holy Qur'an and behaving in accordance with Islamic teaching. These years, if filled with the fragrance and sounds of the Holy Qur'an in a loving home, attendance of Qur'anic gatherings and mosques, will set the right foundations for the child.

Once the child enters school, and starts to read and write, the thirtieth chapter should be the first to be memorised. With these shorter Surahs, these help both parent and child feel a sense of motivation and success as they progress through the short surah progressively.

Memorisation During Gestation?

Well not quite, but science has shown that the foetus does hear and can recognise words while in the womb. So, a pregnant woman, while reciting the Holy Qur'an or listening to it, will have an effect in the ground work in increasing familiarity for the child.

Likewise, it is emphasised that listening to inappropriate sounds or music should be avoided, as that will in turn have a negative effect.

Other items affecting the growing foetus are halal sustenance (source of income) and food, parental spiritual purity (constant ablution), and their attention to Islamic Jurisprudential issues.

Likewise, the above also applies to the baby once born, and breastfeeding while in spiritual purity, has an effect on the spirituality of the child as they grow.

Best Years

Youth of the age of 12 to 18 are in the best position to take in and remember new information, followed by the age group of 19–25 years of age.

They also generally have less responsibilities and duties and so can free their time for this purpose. As one grows, so do responsibilities. Higher education becomes more difficult, workloads increase, and family responsibilities also grows. Each of these will make the process harder to go through as time becomes a scarcer resource.

How Long Will It Take?

That depends on the capability and effort put in to the memorisation process. The following should also be taken in to account:

- Age
- Available time
- Current education and pressures
- Single or married
- Ability and readiness
- Familiarity with the Holy Qur'an
- Familiarity with the Arabic language
- Motivation to memorise

It is important to not put too much pressure on oneself, or neglect important parts of one's life, but rather, continue to work so long as motivated and to stop short before losing all energy, to rest, then reinitiating the process.

There are one year programs to memorise the Holy Qur'an, however, they are not recommended, as students need another two to three years of reinforcing their learnings and will end up with 3-4 years of work anyway, but will have had considerable pressure placed upon themselves, potentially leaving them exhausted, demotivated, and not having understood much of it.

The preferred option is to continue the process of memorisation with motivation and energy, at an appropriate speed to the individual, and a sense of satisfaction.

Any program to memorise needs to consider each of the seven days per week, and each day needs to have a program to memorise. Some days, for example Friday, may be rest days, however, the revision of the Ayahs memorised should not have a break.

The following is a table of expected duration for the process of memorisation the entire Holy Qur'an considering the number of lines memorised per day:

Based on experience, 3-4 years to memorise the entire Holy Qur'an is the best and most appropriate duration. Note that the number of lines do not necessarily need to be set in concrete, but the story behind the Ayahs should also be considered, and perhaps on occasion it may be better to add an extra line, or deduct one, so that memorisation of a story can be finished and a new one started the next day.

Best Time

Prioritise Tasks

To start memorisation, you should set aside the right time and place for the task. Your day should be planned so that multiple tasks are prioritised and given their time of day accordingly. And when it comes to the Holy Qur'an, the best time of day should be given. Having too many programs or trying to recite in a busy, disruptive environment will lead to a stuttered and difficult memorisation.

For example, if you have two equally important tasks to do at a given time, one being the Holy Qur'an, the other studying for an exam, you should give each their own time and place and according to the priorities set, finish one before moving on to the other.

The best time may differ for different people. Some find the time before, or after, the morning prayers to be a good, quite time. The time between dawn and sunrise is set as a time of worship and sleep has been advised against in that time, so perhaps that may work for some.

Body and Mind Attentive

The time of day chosen should be one where the body and mind are alert, energetic and attentive. One where there has been at least a short period of rest beforehand.

After two hours at the cinemas, after a long day at work, or an exercise session, may not be the best times to choose.

Just before sleep is also considered a good time to memorise new Ayahs, and has been suggested to help with memorisation. Especially if the first thing done on waking up is to review the Ayah again. Conditional, of course, on the body not being overly tired.

Pavlovian Training

Once a time is chosen, stick to it. Keep consistent. This trains the mind and the body that at certain periods of time, or after a certain task, it becomes time to memorise the Holy Qur'an.

Very much like when the lunch time bell rings, students at school begin to ready themselves bodily and psychologically to consume lunch. They may not be hungry, but it has become routine, and the bell suggests that the time for food has come.

Serenity

Choosing the right time means considering the needs of your surroundings, such as your family, parents, children, colleagues, and others. It should be a time where it is generally known to be a quiet time around, where there is no hustle and bustle to distract you.

Again, between dawn and sunrise is typically a good time. It is highly recommended against sleeping at those times in narrations, which makes it prime time to memorise.

Best Place

Simplicity

When studying or reciting the Holy Qur'an, remove distractions such as social media⁶ and television. Have a set place where you can sit and memorise quietly if possible, in a well-lit and simple room. Sitting on a white cloth will also help minimise visual lateral distraction.

Holy Places

If possible, choose a quiet mosque or holy place to sit in a quiet corner where interruptions are unlikely. This can help elevate levels of spirituality.

If not possible, choose a quiet spot with minimal distractions that you can easily and regularly access. This may also be where you pray at home.

Consistency

As with the time, keep the location consistent as much as possible.

Places such as buses while in motion and in cars or trains, are inappropriate. They can, however, be used to maximise effective use of time for preparing the ground work to a memorisation session or listening to previously memorised Ayahs.

Continue Regardless

Despite the importance placed on the right time and place to choose for memorisation, simply having them changed, voluntarily or otherwise, should not be used as an excuse to skip the day. If the time changes, or if the place changes, or even if both change simultaneously, keep going on with the program regardless – that is the key to success.

Kinds of Memorisations

A brief look at methods utilised around the world in memorising the Holy Qur'an.

Sequential Memorisation

For the serious player, sequential memorisation is the best form, where you memorise the entire Holy Qur'an cover to cover. Generally, starting with the final one or two chapters, and then going back to chapter one and continuing from there.

Chapter 30 has 37 surahs, so it gives a huge sense of achievement when completed having memorise 37 of the 114 Surahs in the Holy Qur'an.

When memorising sequentially, a little of the thematic memorisation should also be taken in to account. In that when aiming to memorise, for example, five lines, do not stop at the end of the fifth line, and start the new memorisation on the sixth line, regardless of where an Ayah starts or stops, or where a theme starts or stops. Keep all these factors in mind, and memorising a little more or less to help with the understanding and fluidity of memorisation with themes is very helpful.

Of course, a theme may need to be memorised over several days if it extends over a number of pages.

Thematic Memorisation

For those who feel their time is limited, thematic memorisation can be utilised. A selection of themes can be chosen and appropriate Ayahs to represent that theme selected to memorise. The selection of the Ayahs should be under the supervision of someone who has mastered the Holy Qur'an. Alternatively, publications are available on this topic.⁷

Selected Surahs

If it is impractical for either sequential or thematic memorisation to be achieved, this is another option. Surahs that can be beneficial in practical application could be selectively memorised.

These may be the Surahs in Chapter 30, Al-Mulk (67), Al-Waqi'a (56), Ar-Rahman (55), Ya-Sin (36), and the seven Surahs known as the Musabihat (Surahs 17,57,59,61,62,64,87).

Methods of Memorisations

Audio Only

Continuously listening to the same Ayah until memorised. How many times this is needed will depend on the ability of each individual.

The first couple of times listening should be purely to listen to the Ayah, then reciting along with the audio, followed by reciting along from memory and checking accuracy.

A minimum of five repetitions are needed, but up to ten or more may also be required. The melody can also be memorised through this technique.

Longer Ayahs need to be divided in to suitable portions for memorisation.

This technique is suited to the very young, illiterate, or blind.

Prompting

A mentor recites to the student, the students listen then repeat the Ayah from the prompt of the mentor. This repeated until the Ayah is memorised.

It is important that the mentor is well versed with recitation rules of the Holy Qur'an to correctly recite and teach the Ayahs.

Some parents choose this technique and accompany their children in the memorisation processes.

Writing

By using a whiteboard or other writing tools, and looking at the Ayahs in the Holy Qur'an, repeatedly writing and rewriting the Ayah intended to be memorised until it is.

Repeated Reading

The most popular method is reading from the Holy Qur'an and repeating the Ayah until it is memorised.

This method has the benefit of looking at the holy scripture as well, which has blessings with it, but also reinforces the memory with visual image of the page being memorised for a more permanent effect.

The Eight Step Method of Memorisation

Having briefly covered the popular techniques for memorisation, the following presents the best and most comprehensive method of memorisation, taking the best of the general techniques and putting it in to an eight-step technique.

Step 1: Translation and Understanding

An understanding of what each word means, what the overall meaning of the Ayah is, how it is constructed, and a brief exegesis should be read to get an understanding of what message the Ayah is conveying.

By understanding the Ayah and the message within it, memorisation becomes a pleasurable experience and practical applications can be considered. With this, the blessings of the Holy Qur'an will flow as the Ayah is not just being memorised, but also understood and acted upon. Also, the words in the Holy Qur'an will become more and more familiar as progress is made.

Step 2: Listening to Reciters

This improves the auditory perception of the Holy Qur'an and improves ability to memorise through the auditory system. Choice of role model reciters has been discussed under the heading Selecting a

Reciter earlier.

Listening to the Ayah in question should be repeated a number of times while looking at the Ayah in the Holy Qur'an. This is to reinforce visual auditory connections between the sounds and the scriptures. Attention should be paid to

- Possible errors in recitation
- Strengthening recitation skills
- Stop/start locations

Overtime, this step will improve your ability to recite beautifully and minimise errors.

The memoriser can also indicate on the personal Holy Qur'an any difficult words and start/stop locations to replicate that in their own recitation and memorisation. Listening to the reciter and achieving these goals can be accomplished with a minimum of three repetitions:

Step 3: Recitation

With close attention to the scripture in the Holy Qur'an, recite with a moderate voice the Ayahs carefully and with detail, mimicking the audio. The number of times this is to be repeated needs to be so the memoriser has a clear overall picture of all the Ayahs being memorised in the mind.

To reach this level of proficiency, usually three to five attentive repetitions are required.

Step 4: Subdivision and Repetition

This is the most important step. Once we have understood what we are memorising, and have listened and recited the Ayah several times, the Ayah should be subdivided into bite-sized sentences or segments that are able to be memorised easily. Obviously, this applies to longer Ayahs and short Ayahs do not need to be subdivided. Some may also be able to memorise longer Ayahs more easily than others... so which Ayah is to be subdivided is relative to the individual.

The following demonstrates this: 8

Each colour may represent one segment to memorise. The blue/underlined part of the Ayah would be memorised in the first instance, followed by the red/bold, then final/italicised segment of the Ayah.

In order to memorise each segment, a minimum of three to five recitations are required while reading from the scripture, with the intention of memorising the segment. It is imperative in this step to be looking at the scripture in detail. This image is what will be recalled when reciting from memory and will greatly assist the memorisation process.

Thereafter, without looking at the scripture, attempt to repeat the segment from memory a number of times. Once we have mastered the first segment, we can move on to the next.

This is the step that the mind will rely on the most in order to recall the Ayahs and is what leads to success. It is important to be attentive and not rush this step.

Step 5: Connecting the Dots

Between Sentences of an Ayah

After completing the second segment, re-read the scripture to reinforce the visual image for the first and second segment. Then recite the first and second segment from memory sequentially.

Then, repeat the process for the third (and subsequent) segment(s).

Once repeated from memory to the point where there is confidence in having memorised solidly, move on to the next Ayah.

Between Ayahs

After memorising each Ayah, you need to make the connection with the previous Ayah also. That creates a connection between the previous and the new Ayah memorised, so that when we hear the previous Ayah, our minds automatically lock in to the next one.

With every new Ayah memorised, go back to the last few Ayahs and recite them sequentially so that the connection between them grows exponentially. Those who forget the sequence of Ayahs typically forgo this exercise.

Likewise, as you memorise each Ayah and make a connection with the preceding Ayahs, a connection also needs to be made between the pages, themes, and different Surahs, so that each flow in to the next sequentially and fluidly. Attention is therefore needed to the name of the Surah, the themes, the page number and the beginning Ayah of each page. After each of these are memorised, reciting with attention to these subdivisions and the surroundings of what was memorised for the day needs to be recited three to five times to help solidify in the mind what has been memorised and its relationship to what was preceding it.

Step 6: Strengthening and Finalising

After some hours completing the above steps, some of what was memorised may be lost over the next few hours or the mind begins to discard what was memorised in the short-term memory. It is therefore important to reinforce the days learning.

Repeating what was memorised through the day is therefore imperative so as to not suffer any loss. It is

recommended to repeat the days memorisation after two, six and twelve hours from initially memorising it, and finally, once more before sleep. Should anything have been forgotten in during this stage, a brief revision, repetition, and some practice, will help set everything back in to place.

Step 7: Writing from Memory

While learning, writing can help reinforce what has been learnt. Re-write what you have memorised on a white board and identify any weaknesses.

When writing the Ayahs, it is best to start and end each Ayah as it is on the page of the Holy Qur'an, which will reinforce the visual memorisation.

Step 8: Repetition and Passage

Thus far, everything has been to work on the short-term memory. It is now necessary to move everything to the medium, and then finally to long-term permanent memory.

To that effect, what was memorised on day one needs to be repeated over the next few days. Depending on your ability to memorise, the minimum number of days each day's memorisation should be repeated is ten days. For the average individual, it is twenty days and for those with weaker memories, forty days. After which what has been memorised will be solidly and firmly placed in the medium-term memory.

To move it to the long-term department, all that has been memorised needs to be repeated every three to ten days at least. Slowly, but surely, the Ayahs of the Holy Qur'an will move in to permanent storage, and eventually, become second nature.

While this may take a number of years, the important factor here is that what has been memorised will not be easily forgotten. And once firmly memorised, it would no longer be necessary to repeat every three to ten days, but rather passage can be made every month in order to maintain the memorisation.

Sample Memory Chart

Assuming one page a day is memorised, here is what a memory chart may look like:

A blank copy of the above sample is in Appendix 2: One Month Daily Memorisation Chart, page 52.

Target Number of Chapters for Daily Passage

Passage for memorisers who have progressed through to having memorised the first Chapter and beyond, are shown below and will depend on the target number of years to memorise the whole of the Holy Qur'an:

Minimum Amount of Passage for 5-6-Year Duration

Memorised 1–10 Chapters: Half a chapter.

Memorised 11–20 Chapters: One chapter.

Memorised 21–30 Chapters: One and a half chapters.

Minimum Amount of Passage for 3–4– Year Duration

Memorised 1–10 Chapters: One chapter.

Memorised 11–20 Chapters: Two chapters.

Memorised 21–30 Chapters: Two and a half chapters.

Minimum Amount of Passage for 2– Year Duration

Memorised 1–10 Chapters: One and a half chapters

Memorised 11–20 Chapters: Two and a half chapters.

Memorised 21–30 Chapters: Three chapters.

Minimum Amount of Passage for 1– Year Duration

Memorised 1–10 Chapters: Two chapters

Memorised 11–20 Chapters: Three chapters.

Memorised 21–30 Chapters: Four chapters.

The above information is displayed in a tabulated form on page 53.

Tips for New Ayahs

Here are some tips for memorising new Ayahs.

Group

When memorising a new section, look at the overall picture of the Ayahs and see if they can be grouped in to different sections. Each section should be memorised separately and then joined for sequential linking

For example, the first five Ayahs of Surah Al-Baqarah is about believers, Ayahs six to seven are about the disbelievers, and Ayahs 8–20 are about hypocrites. So these three sections can be memorised separately, then linked to sequentially follow each other.

Focus

When overviewing what is being memorised, identify portions that are familiar, and that you have heard before, and those which are completely new and possibly even foreign. Some words may be difficult to pronounce, or simply new to the individual.

These more difficult words should be focused on to master them. Of course, that is not to say the rest should be quickly scanned and feebly memorised.

Scansion

This is where we divide the Ayah to determine the pattern of the Ayah.

For example, when trying to remember a mobile number, it is hard to remember as a 10-digit number, such as 0432441196. Rather, it would be easier to break it in to portions, or a pattern. The first four numbers being the header: 0432... then pair up the rest, so it would be remembered as 0432 44 11 96.

It would also be more difficult if the scansion was inappropriately divided, such as to memorise it as 04324 41 196, and even more inappropriate where the meanings of the words come in to consideration. Therefore, when deciding on how to determine the pattern, ensure the meaning been taken in to account.

An example of the Holy Qur'an was demonstrated in Step 4: Subdivision and Repetition on page 42.

Experience

Sometimes, and with some Ayahs, a personal experience can be associated with the Ayah. This may make it easier to remember.

For example, a particular Ayah may have been recited somewhere such as special event. By associating the Ayah with that personal experience, the memory can be reinforced.

Imagination

Many Ayahs can be imagined in the mind, take for instance Surah Al-Feel, The Elephant. The Surah can be imagined and scenes can be produced in the mind to portray the Ayahs one after the other as a storyline would.

During the normal process of the memorisation, if done properly and with adequate attention, this normally occurs without proactively visualising the Ayah or creating a storyline. Hence perhaps more importantly from this point of view, is to give adequate attention to what is being memorised.

Rest

Memorisation takes much effort and energy, ensuring rest before and after each session is important.

Sometimes, an Ayah may be difficult to memorise, but after a short rest, it becomes easier.

Exercise

Practicing such exercises as recollecting the beginning of each Ayah on a page, the first Ayah of each page, writing the Ayahs from memory, memorising and practicing Ayah numbers, completing Ayahs asked by a partner or mentor, reciting to your partner or mentor, re-hearing audio, researching the meanings of the Ayahs again, explaining it to others, can all form part of the exercises useful in helping to strengthen the memory.

For The Younger Ones

For the younger ones who cannot read and write, it is apparent a slightly different program needs to be set. This requires the assistance of a mentor or parent to help the child memorise the Holy Qur'an using the following steps:

- Listening to Audio through Qur'anic software or mentor.
- Repeating after the mentor short portions of the Ayah being memorised.
- Connecting the sentences of each Ayah memorised with the help of the mentor.
- Connecting the Ayahs memorised with the help of the mentor.
- Exercises practiced with the mentor.
- Repeating new Ayahs memorised for at least the next ten days, with the mentor.
- Repeating past memorised Ayahs every 3–10 days, with the mentor.

Tips for Parents

Tip 1: Try to provide an appropriate environment for Qur'anic lifestyle.

Tip 2: Please note – our children are not how we want them to be! They will become who how we are. The parents need to be ever in touch with the Holy Qur'an so that the children too are affected by this.

Tip 3: Remember that memorising the Holy Qur'an is recommended, not obligatory. What is important is that the child befriends the Holy Qur'an, understands it, can recite it, act on it, and love it. If they show a desire to memorise with your encouragement, then be thankful and provide the necessary support to do

so.

Tip 4: The environment should be fun and attractive, encouraging for the child and something to look forward to.

Tip 5: Start easily, just one easy Ayah, and remove any expectation to have that Ayah perfected in the first session, even if it is

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Tip 6: Do not insist on learning the Holy Qur'an in a direct manner, sitting in a corner just listening and reciting. Indirect methods may work best, using games and fun activities, and using applications on electronic devices to help.

Tip 7: Ensure the child is full of energy. At the first hint of feeling tired or uninterested, you should not continue that session.

Tip 8: Do not set goals and timelines for your child, that they must have memorised so much by such a time. Rather, continue at the pace of the child.

Tip 9: Never fall short of encouragement, and always show your satisfaction for their efforts.

Tip 10: For the issue of memorising the Holy Qur'an, you do not have permission to punish them at any time. This may only discourage and create distaste.

Tip 11: Short, topical Ayahs that are to help with the manners of your child could be ideal to start with, such as Ayahs about prayers, forgiveness, good deeds, saying the truth, being good to parents saying "Peace be upon you", reacting to bad with good etc.

Tip 12: After short theme related Ayahs, start with Surah Al-Nas, the last Surah in the Holy Qur'an, and work backwards through the 30th Chapter.

Tip 13: Attempt to explain each Ayah as they are memorised, defining the words alongside memorisation.

Tip 14: With each session, teach some pointers about recitation rules, correct pronunciations, mimicking the reciters on audio, and understanding the meaning of the Ayah according to the age appropriate level and interest of the child.

Memorising Ayah Numbers

One of the questions raised is should the Ayah numbers be memorised. There are both pros and cons to doing this.

Pros

The first benefit is that the Ayahs will be far more firmly memorised if the Ayah numbers are correctly learnt. The Ayahs are grouped correctly and there are less mistakes in the mind of the memoriser.

The second benefit is the ability to recall an Ayah more quickly and easily, and able to find Ayahs in their mind comfortably. The visual memory is strengthened and those who memorise the Ayahs and their numbers are able to recall the location of the Ayah on a page, and are able to recall the Ayahs before and after more efficiently also.

Cons

Firstly, an individual may get stuck in to memorising the Ayah with the numbers and would not be able to recall an Ayah unless they can also recall the number, and they forget a number of one Ayah they may not be able to recall anything that follows.

Secondly, if not taken seriously and memorised correctly, weak memory of the Ayah numbers will lead to weaker memorisation of the Ayahs. It is therefore important to memorise the Ayah numbers, if desired, firmly from the beginning.

Thirdly, some make the mistake of remembering some Ayah numbers but not others. This mix and match technique will do more damage overall. This is because some Ayahs will only be recalled along with an Ayah number while others without, causing an overall weakness in the memorisation progress.

Finally, an individual may become obsessive in memorising unnecessarily the number of pages, words in an Ayah, number of letters...while there are surprising miracles in these facts, the main task at hand needs to be in focus: The memorisation, understanding and practical application of the Holy Qur'an.

Methodology

The best method for memorising the Ayah numbers is after memorising a group of Ayahs, a final portion of memorisation is allocated specifically to the Ayah numbers. Write down each Ayah followed by its number sequentially below each other, and after passing through them a number of times, one should be able to easily recall their numbers. Answering questions about Ayah numbers from a partner or mentor will help further strengthen this.

The following is an example:

Some prefer to memorise the Ayah number as part of the Ayah itself from the initial stages of the memorisation process, while others like to group Ayahs in fives or tens and only memorise the fifth or tenth Ayah number respectively. As an example, only Ayah numbers 5,10,15,20... or 10,20,30,40... and over time, the in between Ayah numbers becomes memorised through practice, passage, and answering questions. This may be beneficial where the Surah is shorter and there are lots of smaller Ayahs.

1. Holy Qur'an 2:255

2. Al-A'raf 7: 13:

قَالَ فَاهْبِطْ مِنْهَا فَمَا يَكُونُ لَكَ أَنْ تَتَّكِبَ فِيهَا فَاخْرُجْ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الصَّاغِرِينَ

Said He, 'Get thee down out of it; it is not for thee to wax proud here, so go thou forth; surely thou art among the humbled.'

3. (Usool Al Kafi – اصول الكافي) V2 P310, Chapter on Arrogance:

عن زرارة عن أبي جعفر وأبي عبد الله (عليهما السلام) قال: لا يدخل الجنة من في قلبه مثقال ذرة من كبر.

“He will not enter paradise who has in their heart an atoms worth of arrogance.”

4. For example; Syed Muhammad Tabatabaei.

5. Such as Ayatollah Khomeini, may his soul rest in peace.

6. Turn off the internet!

7. Publication are available in Persian to that effect called Thematic Memorisation of the Holy Qur'an –Five Volumes:

درسنامه حفظ موضوعی قرآن – توسط فرهنگ قرآن و عترت نور الثقلين

One Volume:

درسنامه حفظ موضوعی قرآن – جامعة القرآن الكريم

8. Ar-Ra'd 13:29

Appendices

Appendix 1: Holy Qur'an Memorisation Tracker

Appendix 2: One Month Daily Memorisation Chart

Appendix 3: Target Number of Chapters For Daily Passage

Appendix 4: Points of Interest

Overall Word Qur'anic Statistics

Total Words: 77,807

Total Ayahs: 6,3481

Number of Surahs: 114

Medani Surahs: 28

Meddani Ayahs: 1,768

Meccan Surahs: 86

Meccan Ayahs: 4,468

Surahs of Obligatory Prostration

Chapter 21 – Surah Sajda 32:15

Chapter 24 – Surah Fussilat 41:38

Chapter 27 – Surah Najm 53:62

Chapter 30 – Surah Al-Alaq 96:19

Names of Prophets (as) Mentioned in the Holy Qur'an

1. Including the first Ayahs of “In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate”, or 6,236 Ayahs without.

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