

Fast 23

“And you (O Prophet) **did not recite before it any book**, nor did you transcribe one with your right hand, for then could those have doubted who call it false.” — Ch. 29, v. 48.

“And thus did We reveal to you (O Prophet) an inspired Book by Our command. You **did not know what the Book was**, nor faith, but We made it a light, guiding with it whom We please of Our servants. And surely you guide to the right path...” — Ch. 42, v. 52.

Notes: The broad principles of religion and the beautiful moral and spiritual truths which find expression in the Quran could only have been collected by a highly learned person — that is assuming it were possible to collect them by human effort — by someone who had comprehensive knowledge of previous scriptures as well as extensive mastery over various other branches of knowledge such as philosophy and literature. On the other hand, the Prophet Muhammad had not read a single book, nor of course written one, as he could not read or write. This is confirmation of the truth of his claim that the Quran was revealed to him by God. Take, for example, the teaching of the Quran that Divine revelation had previously come to *all nations*. This had never been taught or recognized by any religion or by any man before the Holy Prophet. It is remarkable that such a broad truth should have been preached by one who had never read the scriptures of any religion and who lived in a country which was almost cut off from all communication with other countries.

It is also a striking fact that the very first word revealed to the Holy Prophet was the command to “Read” (96:1), and this revelation went on to describe God as one “Who taught by the pen” (96:4). This could only be revelation from God, which was emphasising the importance of reading and writing, since the Holy Prophet was himself an unlettered man with no previous interest in reading or writing.

The second verse quoted above states that, before the revelation of the Quran, the Holy Prophet did not know what the revelation of a book was, nor the principles of faith. This was why, after he had his first experience of the revelation of the Quran, he rushed home from the cave Hira to his wife Khadija in a state of great anxiety.

“And you (O Prophet) **did not expect** that the Book would be inspired to you, but it is a mercy from your Lord, so do not be a backer of the disbelievers. And let them not

turn you aside from the messages of Allah after they have been revealed to you, and call (people) to your Lord and do not be of those who set up partners (with Allah).” — Ch. 28, v. 86-87.

Notes: The Prophet Muhammad had no idea or inkling before his being commissioned to the Divine office of prophethood that he would be a recipient of a book from God. Nothing in his life before had indicated such a desire or hope by him. This is another evidence that it was God Who raised him to this office, and it was not a claim he pre-planned and contrived to make himself.

“Surely We have revealed it — an Arabic Quran — that you (O people) may understand. We narrate to you (O Prophet) the best of narratives, in that We have revealed to you this Quran, **though before this you were of those who are unaware.**” — Ch. 12, v. 2–3.

Notes: This passage occurs immediately before the story of Joseph is related in the Quran. The story of Joseph is an example of “the best of narratives” because this account, as related in the Quran, conveys noble, sublime, and elevating lessons for people. Previous to the revelation of this narrative, the Holy Prophet did not know it. In fact, no one knew certain ennobling elements of this story disclosed by the Quran, because the account in the Bible does not include them.

Inspiring sayings

Maulana Muhammad Ali, after quoting a verse from a poem by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, said in a Friday *khutba*:

“I would dance with joy a hundred times, if I see that the captivating beauty of the Quran is no longer hidden.

This verse shows his deep passion that the beauty of the Holy Quran should be known to the world.”

— *A Mighty Striving*, page 303.