

Fast 8

1. “Surely We have revealed the Quran to you (O Prophet), **in portions**. So wait patiently for the judgment of your Lord, and do not obey a sinner or an ungrateful one among them. And glorify the name of your Lord morning and evening. And during part of the night adore Him, and glorify Him throughout a long night.” — Ch. 76, v. 23–26.
2. “And it is a Quran We have made distinct, so that you may read it to the people **by slow degrees**, and We have revealed it **in portions**.” — Ch. 17, v. 106.
3. “And those who disbelieve say: Why has not the Quran been revealed to him all at once? It is so that We may strengthen your heart with it (O Prophet) and We have arranged it well in arranging.” — Ch. 25, v. 32.

Notes: The Quran was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad over a period of 23 years. Over that period his circumstances passed through the widest variety possible. Thus the Quran could give him guidance covering each of those vastly differing situations in which he was placed during those years, as each such situation arose.

It was not revealed all at once, or within a short period, so that: (1) every revelation would be relevant to the circumstances in which it came, and not merely convey theoretical teachings unrelated to present needs, (2) the Holy Prophet could teach the meaning of each revelation as it came, both by his words and his practical example, (3) whatever of the Quran had been revealed up to any point, people would be fully acquainted with it, (4) fresh revelations would give him solace and strength, and (5) the Holy Prophet would not be cut off from revelation, which would happen if the entire Quran was revealed at one time or within a short period.

In a prophecy about the coming of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the prophet Isaiah referred to the revelation of the coming prophet as follows: “For it is precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little” (Isaiah, 28:10). This is a picture of how the Quran was revealed, in portions.

The 2nd verse quoted above shows that the Holy Quran needs to be read “by slow degrees”, and taught to people in the same way.

The 3rd verse says that, while the Quran was being revealed piecemeal, yet God Himself was also arranging its contents in the best possible arrangement. Maulana Muhammad Ali writes under this verse:

“The Quran was revealed piecemeal so that, under the varying circumstances through which the Prophet passed, the Divine revelation might be a source of strength to his

heart; and then, as it were, to refute any suggestion that the revelation might remain a disorderly collection of fragments revealed under different circumstances, having no connection with each other, it is added that the entire arrangement was also Divinely accomplished. The arrangement of the Quran, according to this verse, was a part of the Divine scheme, brought about in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, who was the recipient of the Divine revelation.”

Muhammad Asad, another famous translator of the Quran into English, writes under this verse:

“Inasmuch as full consistency and freedom from contradictions in a message spread over twenty-three years of a life as full of movement and drama as that of the Prophet does give a clear indication of its God-inspired quality, it is bound to strengthen the faith of every thinking believer: and herein lies, according to the Quran itself, the deepest reason for its slow, gradual revelation.”

That is to say, the “deepest reason” for the gradual revelation of the Quran was to strengthen the faith of “every thinking believer”, by showing him the miracle of the Quran: that this book, revealed in portions over 23 years, was consistent and free from contradictions.

Inspiring sayings about the Quran

Maulana Muhammad Ali said in a Friday *khutba*:

“Allah the Most High does not let go to waste anyone’s labour on the Holy Quran, however lowly he may be. I am an ordinary person; it is merely that a man who had spiritual power [Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad] created a zeal and passion within my heart and as a result Allah enabled me to do some service to the Holy Quran. ... When I look at myself, I think, O Allah, how could a weak and worthless person like me do service of the Holy Quran?” — A Mighty Striving, p. 278.