

Manners of Reciting the Qur'an

Translated By Dr. Ali Al-Halawani

1. Purification

Tirmidhi, in his *Nawadir Al-Usul*, said: The Glorious Qur'an is sacred so that one can not even touch it without being pure and safe from filth. The same is applicable upon starting to recite it. Moreover, one should use the siwak (tooth-stick) to clean and purify his mouth, as it is the way the Qur'an takes.

Yazeed Ibn Abu Malik said: Your mouths are a way taken by the Glorious Qur'an, so, clean and purify them as much as you can.

2. Getting Prepared for Recitation

The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so one dress well as if he is getting prepared for meeting a royal prince, for he addresses Allah the Almighty. One should direct his face towards the Qiblah. Abu Al-`Aaliyah used to put his turban on along with his finest clothes and direct his face towards the Qiblah. [Of course, this is not required all the time].

Moreover, one should rinse his mouth whenever he clears his throat. Shu`bah narrated on the authority of Abu Hamzah after Ibn `Abbas that: "He used to have before him a bowl to rinse his mouth each time he cleared his throat, then began to make Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah). He used to do this all the time."

In addition, one should pause or stop the recitation upon yawning because he is considered to be addressing his Lord, and that yawning is caused by Satan. Mujahed said: If you yawn while reciting the Glorious Qur'an, stop reciting till you stop yawning as a mark of your glorification of the Glorious Qur'an. And `Ikrimah said the same.

3. Seeking Refuge with Allah upon Starting Recitation

Upon starting to recite the Glorious Qur'an, one should seek refuge with Allah the Almighty from the cursed devil by saying, "A`udhu billahi min Ash-Shaytan-ir-rajeem," [I seek refuge with Allah from the cursed devil]. He should say: "Bismi-llah ir-Rahman ir-Raheem" (In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful) if he starts the recitation from the beginning of the Surah or the location he stopped at last time.

4. Do not Disrupt the Recitation Unnecessarily

One should not disrupt his recitation by speaking to others unnecessarily. The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so one should recite it in privacy in order not to be interrupted by others. By not reading in seclusion, one dismisses the seeking-of-refuge he obtained upon starting to recite.

5. Slow Recitation Allows Comprehension

The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so one should recite it very slowly and with full awareness to comprehend and understand all that he reads. Moreover, one should ask for Allah's Grace and Bounty upon coming to a promising verse, and should seek Allah's Refuge and Help upon coming to a threatening verse. One should take heed of its similitudes and attempt to realize their purposes. One should articulate or pronounce all its letters rightly and properly, as he is rewarded for each letter with ten blessings.

6. Saying " Sadaqa Allah ul-`Azheem (Allah Says the Truth)" and Invoking Allah after Recitation

The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so after finishing the recitation, one should (it is recommended to) say "Allah Says the Truth", bear witness that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, has truly delivered the message, and testify that the Glorious Qur'an is all true. One should say: "Our Lord! You have said the Truth. Your messengers have delivered the message. We testify on all this. O Allah! Make us bear witness of the truth and observe justice in all our dealings." Then, one should supplicate Allah, asking for His Grace and Bounty.

One should restart reciting the Glorious Qur'an when he comes to its end in order not to render it disused or forsaken. The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, when he finished reciting the Glorious Qur'an, used to read about five verses from the beginning in order not to render it deserted. Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that a man came and said: O Messenger of Allah! What is the best of all deeds? He said: Be like a man who is constantly on the go. The man said: what is meant by "a man on the go"? The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: He is reciter of the Glorious Qur'an who starts reciting it from the beginning to its end, then starts from its beginning once more; whenever he settles he travels again.

It is recommended to gather one's household together upon finishing recitation of the Glorious Qur'an. Abu Bakr Al-Anbari said: Idris told us that Khalaf told us that Waki` told us on the authority of Mus`ar after Qatadah, that Anas Ibn Malik used to gather his household when he came to finish reciting the Glorious Qur'an and started to invoke Allah the Almighty.

Idris told us that Khalaf told us that Jarir told us on the authority of Mansour after Al-Hakam, who said: Mujahid, `Abdullah Ibn Ubai and others used to frequently recite the Glorious Qur'an. And when they come to finish reciting the whole Glorious Qur'an they brought us because mercy descends upon finishing recitation of the Qur'an.

Idris told us that Khalaf told us that Hasheem told us on the authority of Al-`Awwam after Ibrahim Al-Taimi, who said: The Angels pray and supplicate for the sake of those who finish reciting the Glorious Qur'an at the beginning of day till the evening comes, and for those who finish it at the beginning of evening till the day comes. He

added: For this, they preferred to finish reciting it at the beginning of either day or evening.

7. Reciting the Whole Surah

The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so one should not pick up certain verses from different surahs to read. It is narrated on the authority of Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him, that he passed by Bilal (May Allah be pleased with him) while he was reciting certain verses from each surah. He ordered him to recite the whole surah, or as was said by him, peace and blessings be upon him.

8. Sacredness and the Due Glorification of the Copy of the Qur'an

The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so it should not be left open when it is not in use. Nothing should be placed over it so that it is kept exalted and higher than any other book of any kind. It is not allowed for anyone to put it on the floor while reading.

If the Qur'an is written on a (chalk or white) board, one should not erase it from the board with spittle. Instead, one should wipe it with pure and clean water. And, in case one washes or wipes it with water, he should avoid pouring it out in impure places or footpaths because the remnant water is sacred as well. Our ancestors used to use that remnant water as a cure.

In addition, the Qur'an's old and worn out leaves should not be used as covers for other leaves or books, for this seems to be severe transgression. One should not take a copy of the Qur'an for a pillow or to lean on it, nor should he hand it to others by throwing it.

Moreover, the copy of the Glorious Qur'an should not be miniaturized. Al-A`mash narrated on the authority of Ibrahim after `Ali Ibn Abi Talib (May Allah be pleased with him) who said: A copy of the Glorious Qur'an should not be miniaturized. Ibn Kathir said: It was narrated on the authority of `Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (May Allah be pleased with him) that he noticed a tiny copy of the Glorious Qur'an in the hands of a man. He asked him: Who wrote it? The man said: I did. `Umar beat him with his staff and said: Glorify the Glorious Qur'an.

It was narrated on the authority of Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that he prohibited Muslims to say "musajjid" (the diminutive form of masjid "mosque") and " musaihif " (the diminutive form of mushaf "copy of the Qur'an").

Also, the Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so nothing other than its sheets should be mixed with it or placed in between them. Moreover, it should not be gilded or written with gold in order not to be touched with the simple ornaments of this world. It was narrated on the authority of Mughirah after Ibrahim that he disliked to decorate the copy of the Glorious Qur'an or to write it with gold or to mark beginnings of verses or to minimize its size.

It was narrated on the authority of Abu Al-Darda' who said: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: If you decorate your mosques and copies of the Glorious Qur'an, the (vehement) wind will overwhelm you all.

When Ibn `Abbas saw a copy of the Glorious Qur'an decorated with silver, he said: In so doing, you will be seducing the thief, while its true ornament and decoration are within it.

In addition, it is sacred, so it should not be written on the ground or on walls as done nowadays in modern mosques. Muhammad Ibn `Ali Al-Shaqiqi narrated on the authority of his father after `Abdullah Ibn Al-Mubarak after Sufian after Muhammad Ibn Al-Zubair, who said: I listened to `Umar Ibn `Abdul-`Aziz while narrating hadiths of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, saying: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, passed by some writings on the ground and said to a young man from the Huzail tribe: What is this? The young man said: Some part of the Glorious Qur'an, written by a Jew. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said: May Allah the Almighty curse him (the one) who did so. Do not place the Book of Allah in other than its proper place.

Muhammad Ibn Al-Zubair said: Once, `Umar Ibn `Abdul-`Aziz saw a son of his writing something of the Glorious Qur'an on a wall and therefore, he beat him.

The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so if one soaked some writings of it in water and washed with that water, seeking cure and treatment by the blessing of Allah the Almighty, he should not pour the water out on dirt or a filthy place or on a footpath. Instead, he should place it aside in a place that is not usually walked or stepped on by people. Or, he should pour it into a hole in the land and cover it with pure dust, or pour it out into a running river to mix with its waters.

9. Abandoning Recitation is Forbidden

One should look inside (read) some portions of the Glorious Qur'an every day. Abu Musa said: I feel shame not to look inside (read) some portions of my Lord's Covenant every day even for once.

10. Looking at its Writing

One should give his eyes their happy share of looking at the writing of the Glorious Qur'an, for when one reads something while looking attentively at it, this gives him a great opportunity to realize and comprehend its connotations and to capture all possible hints and signals. It was narrated on the authority of Zaid Ibn Aslam after `Ata' Ibn Yasar after Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri (May Allah be please with him) that: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: Allow your eyes to have their lot of worship. This means looking at the Qur'an, reflecting on its content and taking lessons out of its wonders.

In addition, it was narrated on the authority of Makhul after `Ubadah Ibn Al-Samit who said: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: The best act of worship observed by my Ummah (nation) is reciting the Qur'an while looking at it.

11. Not to Interpret It with a Material Thing from this World

The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so one should not liken any part of it to any of the happenings of this world. `Amr Ibn Ziad Al-Hanzali told us that Hushaim Ibn Bashir told us on the authority of Al-Mughirah after Ibrahim, who said: He disliked to interpret or liken anything of the Glorious Qur'an to anything of this doomed-to-vanish world. This act is just like your saying to a man who comes to you " Then didst thou come hither as ordained, O Moses!" (Taha, 40), or, "Eat ye and drink ye, with full satisfaction; because of the (good) that ye sent before you, in the days that are gone!" (Al-Haqqah, 24) when food is served and the like.

12. Not to Reverse its Order in Recitation

The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so it should not be reversed in recitation (this means to recite its verses in reverse order or its words backwards) as done by some people to show off. They are mistaken about that.

13. Not to Recite It Vaguely

The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so one should not recite it vaguely or obscurely but should enunciate clearly.

14. Not to Imitate Singers or Christians' Tunes

The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so one should not read it with melodies or tunes such as are used by godless or sinful people. Also, one should not read it in the way Christians read in their churches. All this is falsehood.

15. Make Fine Its Calligraphy

The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so one should write it with fine handwriting. On the authority of Abu Hukaimah who said that he was making copies of the Glorious Qur'an at Kufa and `Ali Ibn Abi Talib (May Allah be pleased with him) looked at his writings and said: Make fine your handwriting. Thus, I sharpened my pen and resumed my work while `Ali was looking at me and said: Yes, just like that; make it just fine as it was made so by Allah the Almighty.

16. Not to Disturb Others with Reciting

The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so one should not raise his voice with it in such a way as to disturb others who may dislike what they hear.

17. Not to Argue with Others about the Different Ways of Reciting

The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so one should not argue with others concerning the different ways of reciting it. Moreover, one is not allowed to say to another, "It is not like this!" For it may be that that way of reciting is right and authenticated, and by saying so, one involves himself in wronging the Book of Allah the Almighty.

18. Not to Recite It in Markets

The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so one should not recite it in markets or at foolish meetings and gatherings. Don't forget that Allah the Almighty mentions His servants and worshipers and praises them for passing gently by foolish gatherings. That is for passing by themselves; what about passing by those foolish gatherings while reciting the Glorious Words of Allah, Lord of all creatures and creation?

19. Not to Enter the Toilet with It

The Glorious Qur'an is sacred, so one should not make any portions of it as jewelry and then enter the toilet room while wearing them.

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