

Similarity and Distinct features of Quran with other Revealed scriptures by Allah (ﷻ)

بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالزُّبُرِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ
“We raised earlier Messengers with clear signs and Divine Books and We have now sent down this Reminder (Quran) upon you that you may explain clearly to mankind as to what was sent down to them so that they may think about them.
[Qur’an: 16: 44]

Human civilization has evolved from the Stone Age to the Cyber Age. It did not happen overnight, nor did it happen accidentally or magically. It still continues uncovering new frontiers. Allah SWT has created man with curiosity and a creative mind to explore and invent ways and means to meet the needs of this physical life and excel by using the faculties granted to him:

قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَكُمْ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ

“...Allah it is Who created you, and gave you the faculties of hearing and sight and gave you the hearts for thinking and understanding, yet you are seldom thankful [Q, 67: 23]

He has provided the resources needed to accomplish the task. Everything made in this world is for man’s benefit:

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

“It is He Who created for you all that is on earth... [Q, 2: 29]

The purpose behind these faculties and glamorous things is to see who benefits from them wisely and shows loyalty to his Creator; and also to identify those who are reckless, arrogant, and defiant to Him:

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَّهَا لِنَبْلُوهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا

“Surely, We have made all that is on earth an embellishment for it in order to test people as to who of them is better in conduct.” [Q, 18: 7]

Consequently, advances in science and technology have profoundly revolutionized our lives with all their ramifications, especially in the areas of communication and transportation. This evolutionary process began with human activity on this planet and accelerated with the passage of time. Prophet Adam AS built the first structure on earth without a hammer and, 5K years ago, the Egyptians raised the Pyramids of Giza without a crane. By that time, however, they had invented the sleds, rollers, and levers. The wheel was invented about 6K years ago which led to other major advances, most notably transportation and mechanization of industrial functions.

Communication is the most significant part of human expression for collaborative efforts. The writing was invented in Iraq and Egypt around 3,200 BC and in China in 1,500 BC. The next big step in 1,600 BC was the invention of the alphabet in what is now Israel and Lebanon. Many civilizations, including Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Rome, and China, had efficient postal systems to deliver messages to parts of their empires using relays of horses. The Chinese invented paper in about 200 BC. The knowledge of how to make paper passed to the Arabs and, in the Middle Ages, it reached Europe. The early 7th century saw rapid changes in material culture that reverberated across nations due to improved communication and transportation technologies.

Today, we live in a virtual age with unlimited horizons. All electronically transmitted communications can be preserved indefinitely. These innovations are credited to the ingenuity of the human brain. Allah SWT, Who has gifted this creativity, is aware of its potential and can foresee the trajectory of human accomplishments through time and what can be expected of a man who possesses this capability. Further, Allah SWT has created this physical world and everything in it with its own specific characteristics and purposes. All occurrences in this world are governed by the physical laws and other known or yet-to-be-known scientific principles inbred at creation. Although, Allah SWT has the power to make things happen by simply willing it to be:

إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

“Whenever He wills a thing, He just commands it ‘Be’ and it is.” [Q, 36: 82],

Yet He allows things to happen in a causal progression humans can experience, comprehend and rationalize. By His decision and permission, the cause-and-effect relationship is operative across the universe. Normally, based on physical laws, water drowns, fire burns, and the wind blows. He can suspend this causation at Will, as He has in the past; but that is an exception, not a rule. Likewise, everyone’s provision is promised, but one must labor for it and seek it out, or starve.

In keeping with His promise, Allah SWT has sent a chain of Messengers who periodically came with Divine Scriptures to guide mankind:

قُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا مِنْهَا جَمِيعاً فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنْ تَبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

“We said: Get you down from here..., and guidance shall come to you from Me, those who accept and follow that guidance shall have nothing to fear or to grieve.” [Q, 2: 38]

This series concluded in the early 7th century with the advent of the Prophet Muhammad SAW and the Qur’an revealed to him:

بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالزُّبُرِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

“We raised earlier Messengers with clear signs and Divine Books, and We now sent down this Reminder (Quran) upon you that you may elucidate to people the teaching that has been sent down for them so they may think about it. [Q, 16: 44]

All revealed Scriptures were absolutely true and unerring. With the exception of the Qur’an, however, all were distorted or modified or simply vanished. The Qur’an is intact in its original form and has remained in the public domain ever since. Its integrity is promised:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

“Surely, We have revealed it (Quran) and We indeed are its guardians.” [Q, 15: 9]

For Allah SWT stands guard over it, no one can destroy it. As a conscience-piercing guidance, it will continue to exist for those who yearn for it.

Since all previously revealed Scriptures were from Allah SWT for the guidance of mankind, one might wonder why none of them was protected the way the Qur’an was. Pursuant to the earlier discussion, of course, Allah SWT has the power to have things happen at Will with or without means or reasons. However, in this physical world, He has decreed things to happen logically, not magically, consonant with human understanding and facts on the ground. The dynamics of this world and human experiential intelligence constantly reshape civilizational conditions conducive to new possibilities. Given the sophistication level, for instance, what may be unthinkable today, may become a reality tomorrow. Since it is with His granted talents and opportunities that man is able to accomplish

many things, Allah SWT majestically refers those accomplishments to Himself. We work hard, for instance, to make our living, yet He calls Himself the Razzaq – the Sustainer:

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ هَلْ مِنْ شُرَكَائِكُمْ مَن يَفْعَلُ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ مِّن شَيْءٍ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

“It is Allah Who created you, then provided you your sustenance...” [Q, 30 40]

Reviewing the history of all revealed Scriptures, the Qur’an is the only document whose text remains intact in its original form, and there is no argument about it. As it continues to be in the public domain since its beginning dating back over 14 centuries, with no interruptions, any claim otherwise would be utter insanity. Thus, they fall into two natural categories: (a) All previous Scriptures and, (b) the Qur’an. A comparative examination of the two categories reveals that they all share two features, whereas eight distinct attributes of the Quran differentiate it from the rest.

The shared features include: (a) The month in which they all were revealed and, (b) their central message. As is well known, the Qur’an was revealed during the month of Ramadan:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

“During the month of Ramadan the Qur’an was sent down as guidance to the mankind...” [Q, 2: 185]

But the greater merit of this month is that Allah SWT has chosen this month to provide His guidance to mankind that traces back to Prophet Adam. Thus, it implies that all Scriptures were sent down during Ramadan. In a narration, it is also confirmed by the Prophet SAW: “The Ibrahimic Scriptures were revealed on Ramadan 1st, the Torah on Ramadan 6th, the Gospel on Ramadan 13th, and the Qur’an on Ramadan 24th.” [Ahmad] In yet another narration, it appears that Zabur (Psalms) was revealed on Ramadan 12th and the Gospel on Ramadan 18th [Ibn Kathir]

Allah SWT created the father of mankind with one mission:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“...Your Lord said...: ‘Lo! I am about to place a vicegerent on earth...” [Q, 2: 30]

As Ruler’s administrative deputy, his job is to establish Allah’s Sovereignty on earth by living in accordance with His code of conduct:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

“I did not create jinn and humans except to worship Me.” [Q, 51: 56]

In the sight of Allah SWT there is only one system of life and way of conduct which consists of man’s recognition of Allah SWT as his Lord and obedience to Him (worship). This mode of thought and action is known as Islam:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَعْثًا بَيْنَهُمْ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

“The true religion with Allah is Islam...” [Q, 3: 19]

All Messengers came to redirect mankind towards this system of life. It lends itself to conclude that the central message of their accompanied Scriptures must have been unified:

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ

“Yet all that they (Messengers) had been commanded was that they serve Allah, with utter sincerity, devoting themselves exclusively to Him and that they establish Prayer and pay Zakah (poor-due). That is the Right Faith. [Q, 98: 5]

The true faith reinstated by the Prophet SAW is the same as presented by earlier Messengers. The core structure of their universal message comprised of Tawheed, Akhairah, and Obedience to Allah SWT. These concepts inspire a person of conscience to live a disciplined life to the liking of his Creator. Righteous conduct includes serving Allah SAW alone, shunning any association with him, practicing daily prayers, paying Zakah, and fulfilling obligations towards fellow humans. The believers of all generations have been promised by Allah SWT the same reward for doing their duty:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بِأَنْ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ وَعَدًّا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ وَالْقُرْآنِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَى بِعَهْدِهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَاسْتَبْشِرُوا بِبَيْعِكُمُ الَّذِي بَايَعْتُمْ بِهِ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

“Surely Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their belongings and in return has promised that they shall have Paradise...Such is the promise He has made incumbent upon Himself in the **Torah**, and the **Gospel**, and the **Qur’an**...” [Q, 9: 111]

The Qur’an not only authenticates the teachings of preceding Books, but it also claims to be a repeat of those teachings:

لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ مَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُفْتَرَى وَلَكِنْ تَصْدِيقَ الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

“...What is being narrated in the Qur’an is no fabrication; it is rather a confirmation of the Books that preceded it and a detailed exposition of everything and is a guidance and blessing for the people who believe. [Q, 12: 111]

It lays no claim of introducing anything novel or coming forth with any innovation at variance with the fundamental teachings already communicated through preceding Prophets. Its claim merely consists of confirming and authenticating them and being in line with them:

مَا يُقَالُ لَكَ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ قِيلَ لِلرُّسُلِ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو مَغْفِرَةٍ وَذُو عِقَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

“O Prophet, nothing is being said to you (in this Qur’an) that has not already been said to the messengers before you...” [Q, 41: 43].

Unlike other Scriptures, eight distinct features of the Qur’an seem to contribute to its continued existence in its original text and construct, including, in particular, the mode and methodology of its communication and the state-of-the-art technologies at the time of its transmission:

First, it was communicated to the Prophet SAW orally, rather than as a written document. The primary reason was that he was known to be unlettered. He was unable to read or write:

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ

وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ
وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ مَعَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

“Those who follow the Messenger, the **unlettered Prophet**, whom they find written in what they have of the **Torah** and the **Gospel**...” [Q, 7, 157]

But the strategic reason was that his opponents would not have any legitimate basis for accusing that the Qur’an was his fabrication. Naturally, as the Qur’an was being revealed orally, the Prophet SAW was nervous to be able to fully retain it in his memory and would often concurrently repeat the words he feared to forget. He was instructed to stay calm:

فَتَعَالَى اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ وَلَا تَعْجَلْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يُقْضَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَحْيُهُ وَقُلْ رَبِّ
زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

“...Hasten not with reciting the Qur’an before its revelation to you is finished...” [Q, 20, 114]

On more than one occasion he showed the same human tendencies and each time he was reminded and reassured that not only the Qur’an would be secured in his heart; he would be able to recite it to people and explain it to them fully:

لَا تُحْرِكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ

فَإِذَا قَرَأْنَاهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ

ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ

“Move not your tongue concerning the Qur’an to make haste therewith. It is for Us to collect it and promulgate it. So when We have promulgated it, follow its recital as promulgated. Then it is for Us to explain it.” [Q, 75, 16 – 19]

Second, all previous Books were handed down in their entirety on day one. In contrast, the Qur’an was revealed to the Prophet SAW gradually over a period of

23 years. Obviously, the adoption of this methodology was a necessity for oral transmission, but the wisdom behind it was much deeper still. For the critics, if the message was divine, it must be dispatched in its entirety; otherwise, the Messenger might be fabricating it piece by piece:

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَّاحِدَةً كَذَلِكَ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ وَرَتَّلْنَاهُ تَرْتِيلًا

“Those who disbelieve say: Why was the Qur’an not revealed to him all at once? ...” [Q, 25: 32]

For the unbelievers, the piecemeal delivery of the message seemed a self-evident proof that the Qur’an was a forgery.

The accusation was a thoughtless ploy and Allah SWT dispelled it vehemently and described the wisdom behind the measured approach for its effectiveness:

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَّاحِدَةً كَذَلِكَ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ وَرَتَّلْنَاهُ تَرْتِيلًا

“... It was revealed thus that We may fully impress it on your mind; We have revealed it gradually (according to a scheme) in fragments.” [Q, 25: 32]

In just a few words, many good considerations have been explained for the piecemeal mode of the Qur’anic delivery, such as word-for-word retention of the Qur’an in the memory of an unlettered Messenger and mostly illiterate people it was directed to; full comprehension of the teachings of the Qur’an needed to be internalized and practiced; firm conviction about the way of life that the Qur’an expounded and a stable transformation; proper timing of an injunction in response to a question or problem for its effective relevance; and constant awareness of Allah’s presence and His support by periodically receiving His Messages.

The Qur’an is not a typical textbook on any particular subject or a formal presentation on any topic. It was not revealed written on a piece of paper. Rather, it is a recorded conversation and collection of Allah’s own Words spoken on a variety of topics related to shaping a disciplined life, socially and morally. In order to launch a campaign to transform the citizens of an illiterate society into the moral leaders of the world, the most natural way is to provide guidance interactively in phases, as and when needed. This provides yet another strategic reason for the gradual transmission of the Qur’an:

وَلَا يَأْتُونَكَ بِمَثَلٍ إِلَّا جِئْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَأَحْسَنَ تَفْسِيرًا

“(This is also done so that) whenever they raise any strange question to you, We send its right answer and explain the matter in the best manner.” [Q, 25: 33]

Third, with some specificity consonant with the existing conditions, the core structure of each scripture has been the same: Tawheed, Akhairah, and Obedience. The essence of all Scriptures and the mission of all Prophets were to reinforce these concepts. Thus, in character, each one was universal with no geographical limits (see for example: Q, 6: 91)

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِذْ قَالُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ بَشَرًا مِّنْ شَيْءٍ قُلْ مَنْ أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ الَّذِي جَاءَ بِهِ مُوسَى نُورًا وَهُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ تَجْعَلُونَهُ قَرَاطِيسَ تُبْدُونَهَا وَتُخْفُونَ كَثِيرًا وَعُلِّمْتُمْ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنْتُمْ وَلَا آبَاؤُكُمْ قُلِ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ ذَرْهُمْ فِي خَوْضِهِمْ يَلْعَبُونَ

They do not value God as He should be valued, when they say, “Allah did not reveal anything to any human being.” Say, “Who revealed the Scripture which Moses brought—a light and guidance for humanity?” You put it on scrolls, displaying them, yet concealing much. And you were taught what you did not know—neither you, nor your ancestors. Say, “Allah;” then leave them toying away in their speculation.

. The range of its influence, however, was constrained by state-of-the-art transportation and communication technologies. In most cases, the message remained localized and eventually fizzled out. By the end of the 6th century, however, both means of interacting across territories had sufficiently improved. The flow of information, commerce and travel via land and sea had taken a leap. The Qur’an was revealed during the early 7th century and had spread across the Arabian Peninsula and beyond within 23 years before the passing of the Prophet SAW on June 8, 632. Soon his companions were traveling to other parts of the world with the irresistible message of the Qur’an, enthusiastically received by the citizenries. Today, in the Cyber Age, the Qur’an is in every corner of the world, word for word, beyond the possibility of any alteration.

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

Allah SWT has His own ways of keeping His promises: “...We have revealed it and We indeed are its guardians.” [Q, 15: 9]

Fourth, the commanding role of language in expressing, disseminating, and preserving a text is undeniable. Languages evolve over time, some become extinct, and others cease to be spoken. None of the original languages of the

earlier Scriptures is spoken today. The original texts are nonexistent. Whatever is available in some cases is nothing more than generational translations replete with unsubstantiated interpretations, views, and slants. In contrast, the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic with a stunningly mesmerizing eloquence. It set an insurmountable threshold of articulacy and literacy. It has not changed an iota. It is widely spoken, taught at universities, and is required of all Islamic curricula. To date, it is studied and taught in its own language.

Fifth, a Prophet is a role model in his teachings for the followers to emulate. Neither the original Scripture of any Prophet nor details of his life are available anywhere. Along with the Qur'an, on the other hand, the complete life of the Prophet SAW is recorded. Today, the Qur'an is explained in the light of his words and actions. Once his wife Aisha RA described him as a walking Qur'an: "...*Verily, the character of the Prophet of Allah was the Quran.*" [Muslim] Thus, the Qur'an continues to exist in its original text accompanied by the model life of the Prophet SAW.

Sixth, the Qur'an has been rendered in writing for convenience and for those who do not have it memorized. But it was revealed orally and stored in the memory of the Prophet SAW. He in turn transmitted it orally to his companions. The practice continues. It is incumbent on every Muslim, regardless of his native language, to memorize at least some portions of the Qur'an in Arabic to be able to perform daily prayers. But thousands around the world memorize it, cover to cover, as an honor. One may choose to burn all copies of the Qur'an on the planet. That fire will only burn the inside of the insane as it resides not on a piece of paper, rather in the hearts of the believers.

This has been happening, generation after generation, in every ethnic society. This is a living miracle of the Qur'an. No book has ever existed – not a pamphlet, in human history that anyone might have memorized even in his native tongue, let alone a foreign language. The Qur'an stands out alone in this sense. It contains 114 chapters, 6, 236 verses, and 77, 430 words that continue to be memorized after 1,445 years, even by people who have no clue of the Arabic language. This is because:

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ

"...*We have made the Qur'an easy to remember...*" [Q, 54: 40]; and it is timeless.

The Qur'an cannot be altered or corrupted. It is like a mosaic, which consists of an assortment of a large number of pieces with different overlapping colors, shades, shapes, sizes, configurations, and delineations. Collectively, when fitted together, they form a perfect picture. A piece can be replaced only with an

identical piece in all its attributes. The interlocking system, cross-historical references, contextual narratives and their segmentations, invariable scientific insertions, and seamless transition from one theme to another, yet always returning to the same focal point of reconnecting with the Creator, only attest to the fact that the Qur'an is the Word of Allah SWT. Nearly 78,000 words blend together in perfect unison, echoing Allah's Sovereignty. No piece can be removed, added, or replaced with comparable merit, except with an identical one:

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

“If you are in any doubt whether it is We Who have revealed this Book to Our servant, then produce just a verse like it, and call all your supporters and seek in it the help of all others...” [Q, 2: 23]

In fact, those who disbelieve in the Qur'an and claim that it is a fabrication of the Prophet SAW would fail to produce a Book like this even if they were to enlist the support of all men and even the Jinn:

قُلْ لَّئِنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا

“Surely, If men and jinn were to get together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they will never be able to produce the like of it, however, they might help one another.” [Q, 17: 88]

Seventh, mistakes do occur inadvertently and add up fast. Memorization of the Qur'an does not guarantee against unintentional slip-ups in reciting unless a check-and-balance mechanism is in place. The Prophet SAW did institute such a system to keep Qur'an's textual integrity and its vocalization protected. He introduced a special night prayer (now known as *Taraweeh*) to be offered every night of Ramadan: *“Whoever prayed at night the whole month of Ramadan out of sincere Faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven.”* [Bukhari] Typically, during this prayer, one cycle of the Qur'an is orally completed by the end of the month. Keeping with this tradition, in every society around the world, thousands of Huffaz (the Qur'an memorizers) orally recite the Qur'an each night and millions more listen to it vigilantly. This has been a very deliberate effort since the very beginning to protect the recital accuracy of the Qur'an. Though the Qur'an has been translated in every spoken language in the world for understanding, its original text is kept side-by-side, ensuring its accuracy in all corners of the world. Due to conditions at the time, none of the earlier Scriptures had such safeguards.

Eighth, knowing the right way that would ensure both sound intellectual orientation and right behavior is man's greatest need. Allah SWT has taken it upon Himself to show him the right way:

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ قَصْدُ السَّبِيلِ وَمِنْهَا جَائِرٌ وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَهَدَاكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

"It rests with Allah alone to show you the right way, even when there are many crooked ways..." [Q, 16: 9]

It is precisely this need that is fulfilled by means of the institution of Prophethood. Also, in the scheme of things relating to Allah's Judgment of man, the Messengers occupy a central role. Allah SWT has made it incumbent upon Himself to send Prophets to guide people before holding them responsible for their conduct:

مَنْ اهْتَدَى فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّىٰ نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا

"...And never shall We punish anyone until We send a Messenger (to make the truth distinct to them from falsehood)." [Q, 17: 15]

A Prophet, thus, was sent to a region simply because the teachings of the previous Prophet were lost or had not yet reached there. The chain of Prophets and Scriptures continued for thousands of years. Now, with the secured presence of the Qur'an, that need has been fulfilled for the rest of the time, making the Prophet SWT the last in the chain:

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا

"...He (Muhammad) is the messenger of Allah and the seal of the Prophets..." [Q, 33: 40]

He pointed to the universal aspect of his Prophetic office: *"I have been sent to all men, the white and the black. [Muslim, Ahmad] He reiterated in his Last Sermon: "No Prophet or Messenger will come after me ... I leave behind the Qur'an and my Sunnah (tradition); if you follow them you will never go astray."* With its distinct features, the Qur'an is the Last Word of Allah SWT:

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا

"Most Exalted is He Who has sent down this Furqan (Criterion/Qur'an) on His Servant (Muhammad), to be a Warner to all mankind." [Q, 2: 23]

Finally, the highest possible elucidating criterion differentiating between truth and falsehood has been presented to people:

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ اهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا وَمَا أَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِوَكِيلٍ

“...O People! The Truth has come to you from your Lord. Whosoever, then, follows the true guidance does so for his own good; and whosoever strays from it, his straying will be for his own harm...” [Q, 10: 108]

This leads a sensible person to conclude the obvious and respond accordingly:

“Your Lord is One God; so submit yourselves to Him (in obedience)...” [Quran]

Non-acceptance of clear guidance necessarily produces grave consequences – and damaging ones. As soon as a person deviates from the Straight way, he falls prey to bewilderment and perplexity. He is diverted away from a steady advance toward maturity and betterment. Eventually, he is deprived of the opportunity of self-realization with which to approach his Creator in devotion. No recourse is expected:

فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ

“Now, what message can be there better after this Qur’an in which they will believe?” [Q, 77, 50]