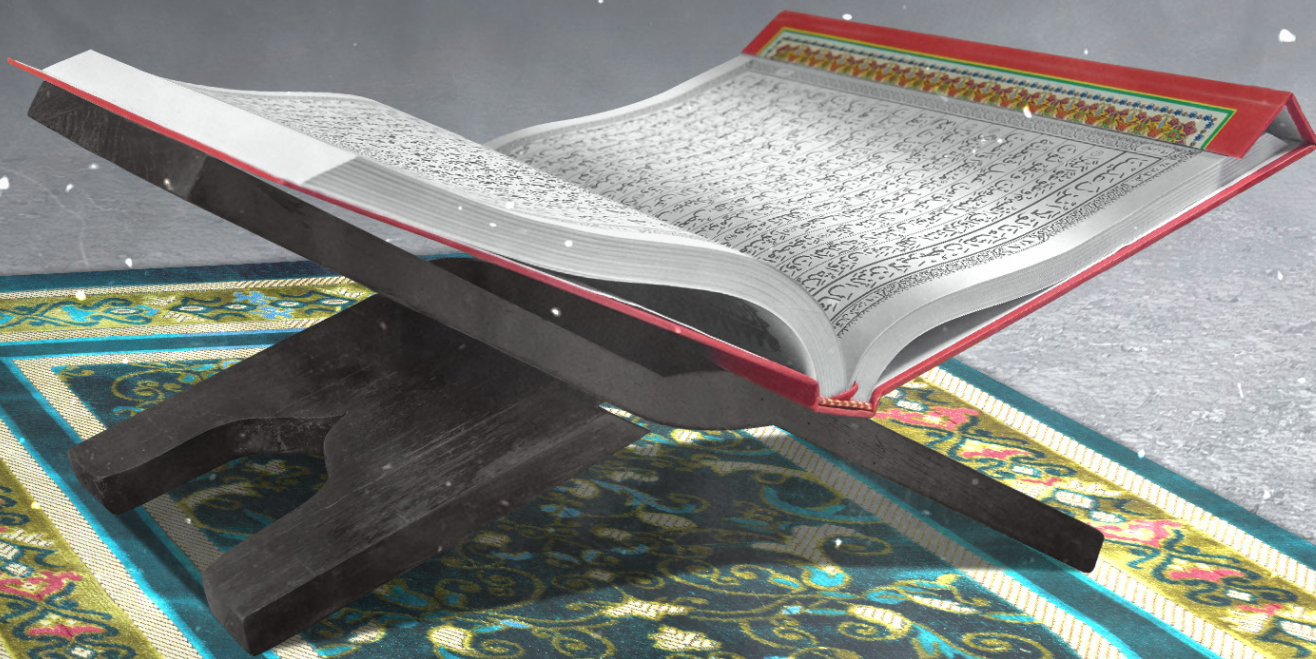




NEW MUSLIM
ACADEMY

HOW TO UNDERSTAND AND APPROACH THE QURAN



The Quran is a Book of Guidance. Whoever reads, understands, and acts in accordance to it will find happiness and success. God says, “This Quran that is revealed to Muhammad guides to the best way, which is the way of Islam, and it informs those who have faith in Allah and who do good deeds of something that will please them, which is that they will receive a great reward from Allah.” [17:9].

However, for a new Muslim, it can sometimes be daunting to read the Quran and attempt to understand it. Here are some important points to help you:



Objectives of the Quran

The Quran is not like any other book. It is not a biography or a story book. Rather, it is a book of guidance for every time and place, teaching people what they need to know in order to worship God and attain Paradise.

Broadly speaking, the Quran is divided into the following major themes:

- **Belief in God Alone** – many Quranic passages speak about God and His right to be worshipped alone. God speaks about faith, reward, punishment, and the next life to establish this objective. In fact, the whole Quran speaks to this one major point.
- **God's Commands** – This includes what God has allowed or prohibited. Part of realizing the objective of belief in God alone and worship of Him is through the commands of how to worship Him.
- **Stories** – God often mentions stories of previous messengers and nations, as well as individuals. All of these stories contain parables and lessons, again to emphasize the objective of belief in God alone.

Increasing Faith

The Quran should increase us in faith and bring us closer to God. Reading and understanding it should soften our hearts. To this end, focusing on contemplating over what we read and reflecting upon it is very important.

By doing this, we understand the passages of the Quran and appreciate them, as opposed to simply reading them with little to no understanding.



A Few Passages at a Time

The Companions of the Messenger Muhammad would only read and learn a handful of passages at a time.

Their goal was not to quickly finish the chapter, but to learn and benefit, increase in faith, and come closer to God in action and belief. Taking one or two passages and focusing on them before moving onto the next one or two is better than going too fast and not understanding much.



Frequently Read Chapters

There are certain chapters and passages of the Quran that you will read or hear frequently. For example, **Chapter 1, Chapters 112, 113 and 114** are all short **Chapters** of the Quran that you will most likely read multiple times a day in your daily prescribed ritual, Salah. Focusing on these chapters first will help you in a practical way when you read them or hear them being read by others. In general, **Chapter 50** onwards are the shortest chapters of the Quran, and therefore the easiest to begin with.

The way of the early Muslims was to start their study by focusing on **Chapters 50 -114** before moving to the longer **Chapters 2 -49**. These chapters establish the foundations of creed and morality and do not focus on regulations and laws. In addition, after **Chapter 1**, working in reverse order from **Chapter 114** is easier for memorization. **Chapter 18**, although longer, is also one you can give attention to, as the **Messenger Muhammad recommended reading it every Friday**.

Extra Study

Finding the time to study a few passages at a time by referring to qualified scholarly works on the interpretation of the Quran will help you to understand and reflect upon the Quran.

Consider listening to the Arabic and have an English audio translation as well. Noble.Tv is a good resource.

You can also read a translation that you feel comfortable with. Here are some recommendations (focus on Uthmani, Saheeh and MAS Abdelhaleem translations):

1. Quran.com

2. <http://www.englishtafsir.com/>

3. Qtafsir.com

