



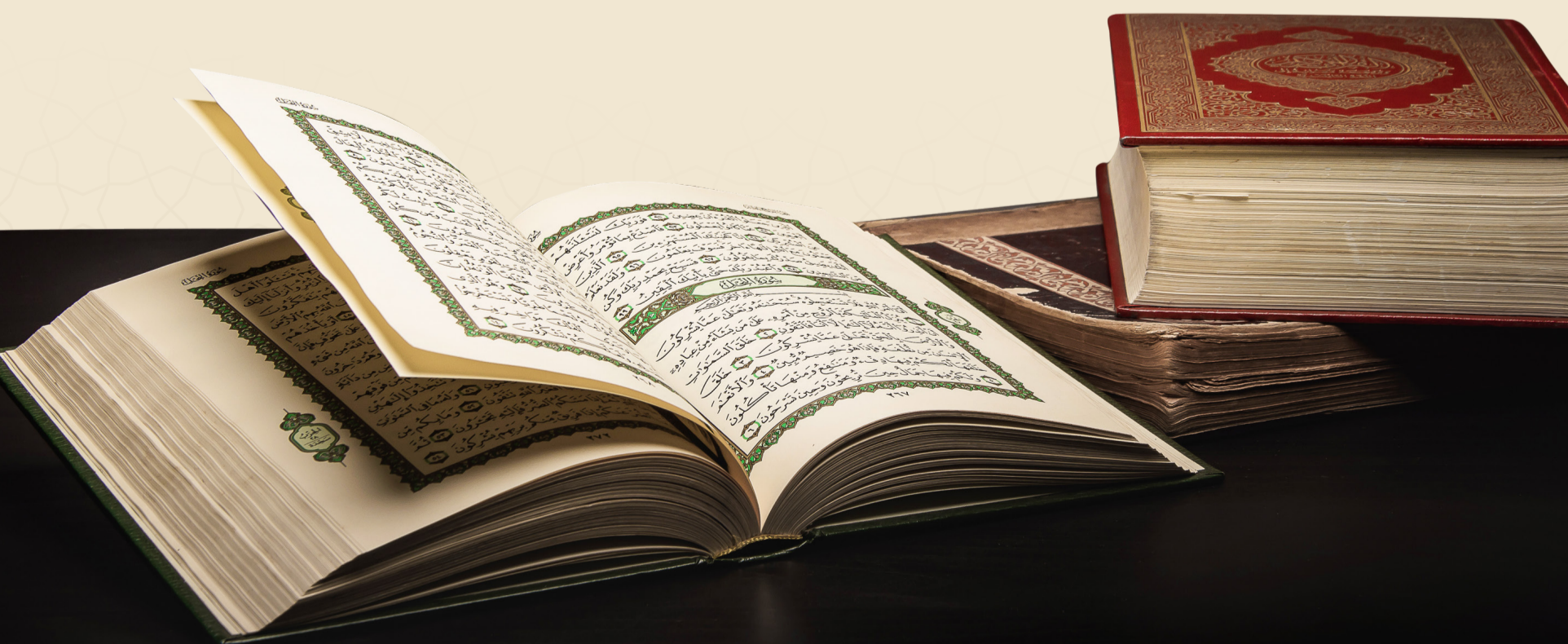
NEW MUSLIM
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An Introduction to the

Quran

The Quran is the scripture that God revealed to His final Messenger Muhammad. Contained in it are the literal words of God that were revealed to the Messenger Muhammad through the Angel Gabriel. The Quran is guidance from God and teachings that will bring happiness and success, if implemented correctly, to mankind in this life and the next. For this reason, Muslims are encouraged to read it, memorize it, study and understand it, apply it in their lives and preach its teachings to others.



The Basics

The Quran is in the Arabic language. It was revealed in the oral form to the Messenger Muhammad, who then relayed it orally to his disciples. Some of these disciples wrote down the Quranic revelation as it was revealed. Over time, these writings would be brought together (written and oral), and became a scripture. The oral and written forms are exactly the same and have been read and memorized for centuries by millions of Muslims, thus preserving the oral tradition since the time of the Messenger Muhammad. The Quran is not a story book, a biography, a book of history or a novel. It is unique. It has stories, the biographical details of some of God's Messengers, and aspects of history. It also covers theology, polemics, financial, family, criminal and civil laws, character development and spirituality. It is a book of guidance full of principles and lessons, by which a Muslim can navigate life in the manner most pleasing to God.

The Quran was revealed in parts over the entirety of the Messenger Muhammad's mission, which lasted 23 years. The Quran addresses real life events that occurred during the life of the Messenger Muhammad, and directly addresses Muslims, Jews and Christians, polytheists and people in general.

How is the Quran Organized?

The Quran consists of 114 chapters (Arabic: Surah). These 114 chapters are spread across 30 parts (Juz) and vary in length. Some are only a few lines long, whereas others are many pages long. Each chapter consists of passages (Ayah). The shortest chapters in the Quran consist of three passages, and there are three such chapters, #103, 108, 110. The longest chapter in the Quran has 286 passages.

Each part of the Quran (Juz) is numbered and further divided into quarters and eighths. Each chapter of the Quran has a name. All chapters except one begin with the Prayer of Beginnings, "With the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful." Using passages, chapters and parts numbers is easier to read and memorize, as it allows Muslims to segment their reading, memorization or study of the Quran.



Quranic Style

The Quran is the most eloquent form of the Arabic language. Its topics are discussed in different ways, and the style changes accordingly. The Quran relates stories, only focusing on the most important lessons and morals. The Quran uses parables and asks pondering questions, prompting the attentive listener to think and reflect. The Quran points towards God's creation and signs, often by using oaths to show the beauty and significance of different creations.

The Quran rebukes people who do wrong and evil, often refuting their justifications and reasoning. It points towards past perished nations and the evil they committed and the resulting punishment they received. It gives commands and prohibitions to show the path to worship God correctly and live a life of modesty, purity and goodness for oneself and others.



Quran Translations

There is only one Quran, and that is the original Arabic form. Translations are not the Quran or versions of it. They are instead human attempts to convey the meanings of the Arabic Quran into other languages. The best translations are those done by qualified scholars of Islam who know the tradition and are committed to it. However, no translator can mimic the Arabic Quran in its power, beauty and eloquence. Therefore, some translations are more accurate than others in this attempt, and others less so.

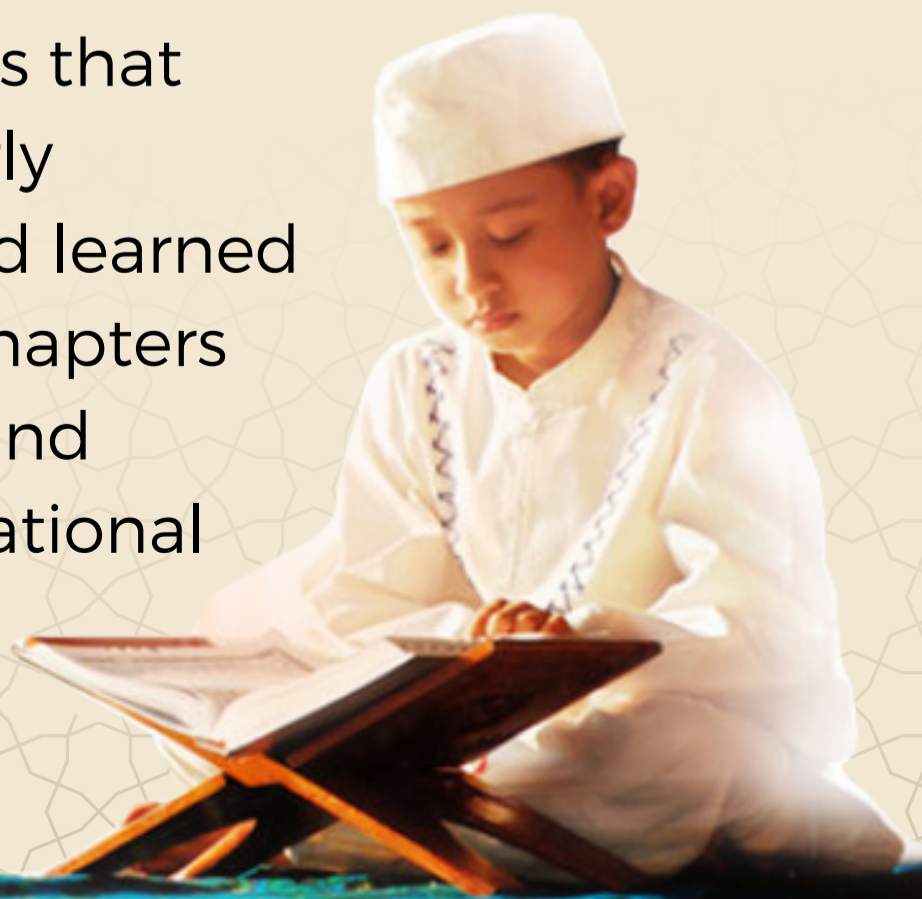
A good study translation for a new Muslim is the one titled, "Towards Understanding the Quran." It is an abridgement of a commentary and therefore more detailed than most translations, providing important context and greater depth of understanding for someone who is unfamiliar with the Quran. The wider context allows for the reader to better understand the overarching concepts and principles being discussed. For a more basic translation, the Saheeh International and The Clear Quran are suitable reads.

Quranic Commentary and Exegesis

Scholars since the very early Muslim generations have commented and explained the words and passages of the Quran. Commentaries and exegeses allow one to have greater understanding of the Quran, as they draw out lessons, linguistic benefits, rulings, principles and much more. Most such commentaries and exegeses are in the Arabic language, but some have been authored or translated into English. A good commentary is the one titled “Under the Shade of the Quran.”

For a new Muslim, audio and video lectures in English by qualified teachers that cover the study of passages or short chapters of the Quran are better suited. Usually, the speaker will summarize the content into an easy to understand manner, drawing lessons and showing how they apply to everyday life and situations.

To study the Quran one should focus on chapters 50 to 114, as that was the way the early Muslims studied and learned the Quran. These chapters were revealed first and establish the foundational beliefs of Islam.





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