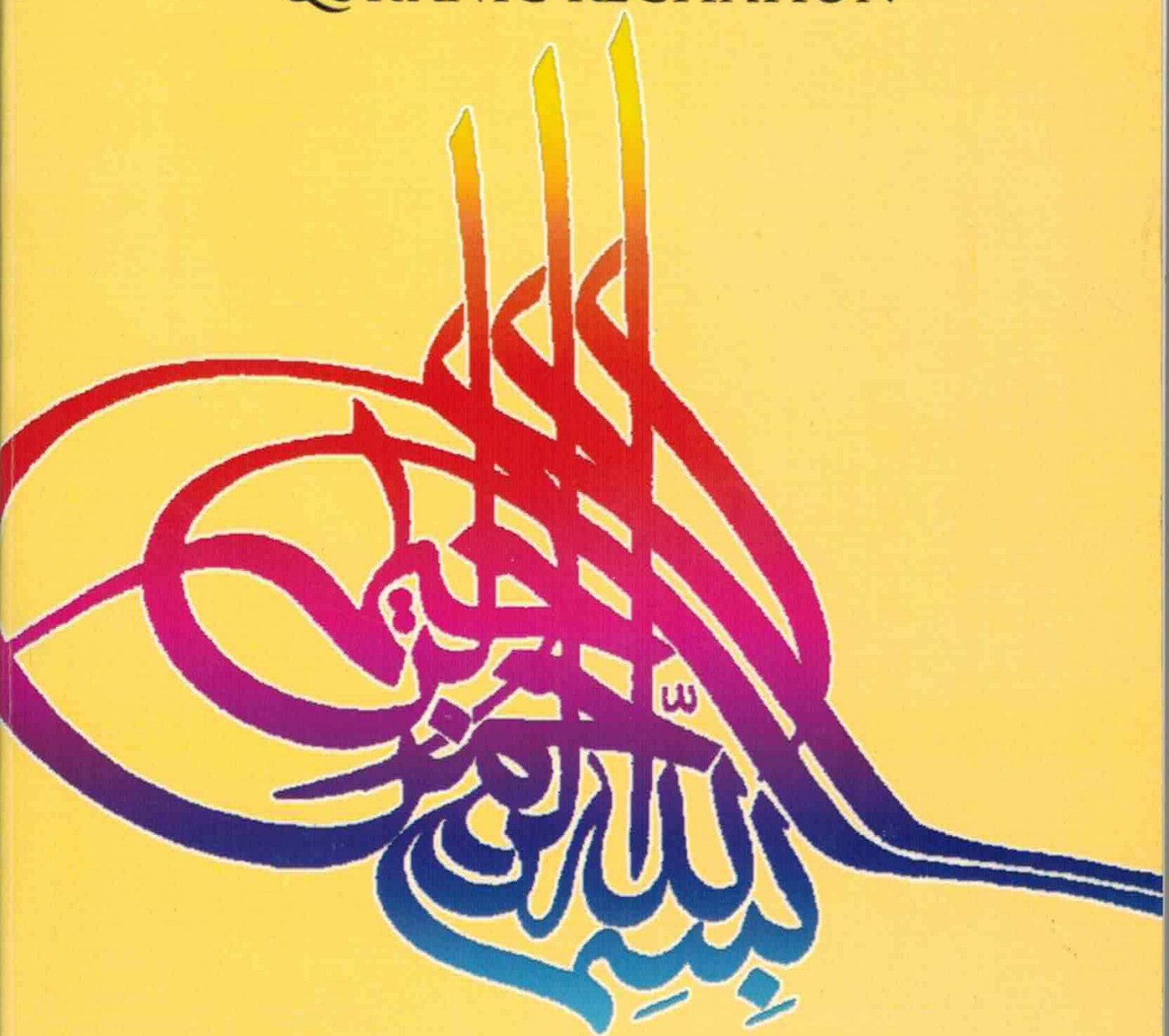


BASIC READER FOR THE HOLY QUR'AN

MASTERING THE ART OF
QUR'ANIC RECITATION



SYED MAHMOOD HASAN

BASIC READER FOR THE HOLY QUR'AN

MASTERING THE ART OF
QUR'ANIC RECITATION

SYED MAHMOOD HASAN

Translated and adapted from Urdu by
SYED TAHIR MAHMOOD

Goodword Books

Original Urdu Version
Qur'an-e-Karim ki Basic Reader ya Rahnuma-e-Tilawat
by Syed Mahmood Hasan

First published by Maktaba Al-Furqan, Lucknow 1982
Reprinted by Islamic Wonders Bureau, Delhi 1999
Hindi version, Delhi 2000

English version first published by Goodword Books 2002
© Syed Tahir Mahmood 2002

Goodword Books
1, Nizamuddin West Market,
New Delhi-110 013
Tel. 9111-4182-7083, 4652-1511
Fax: 9111-4565-1771
email: info@goodwordbooks.com
www.goodwordbooks.com
www.goodword.net

Islamic Vision Ltd.
434 Coventry Road, Small Heath
Birmingham B10 0UG, U.K.
Tel. 121-773-0137
Fax: 121-766-8577
e-mail: info@ipci-iv.co.uk
www.islamicvision.co.uk

IB Publisher Inc.
81 Bloomingdale Rd, Hicksville
NY 11801, USA
Tel. 516-933-1000, Fax: 516-933-1200
Toll Free: 1-888-560-3222
email: info@ibpublisher.com
www.ibpublisher.com

Printed in India

Contents

Foreword to English Version

— *S. Tahir Mahmood*

6

English Transliteration Table

10

Foreword to Urdu Version

— *M. Manzoor Nomani*

13

Introduction

15

A Note for Readers

21

Lesson 1

The Holy Book

23

Lesson 2

Terminology

28

Lesson 3

Arabic Alphabet

30

Lesson 4

Sounds of Arabic Letters

31

Lesson 5

Chracteristics of Arabic Letters

37

Lesson 6

Still Nun and Tanwin

41

Lesson 7

Letters Mim and Nun

45

<i>Lesson 8</i> Amalgamation of Letters	47
<i>Lesson 9</i> The Letter Ra	48
<i>Lesson 10</i> Allah and Allahumma	53
<i>Lesson 11</i> Reading A Thick Alif	55
<i>Lesson 12</i> Rules of Madd	57
<i>Lesson 13</i> Short-Vowel Signs	61
<i>Lesson 14</i> Correct Spelling	63
<i>Lesson 15</i> Prefix letters	65
<i>Lesson 16</i> Miscellaneous Spelling Rules	71
<i>Lesson 17</i> Recognising Full Words	73
<i>Lesson 18</i> The Script	77
<i>Lesson 19</i> Waqf and Wasl	80

Waqf and Wasl 80*Lesson 20***Be Careful:
Where Alif is Never Read** 89*Lesson 21***Beware:
Harakat Change may cause Blasphemy** 92*Lesson 22***Prefatory Invocations** 95*Lesson 23***Touching and Reading the Holy Book** 96

Foreword to English Version

My father the late Syed Mahmood Hasan Saheb – may the Lord shower Heaven's choicest blessings on him – was by profession a lawyer. He hailed from Eastern UP and had obtained an MA in Arabic and a Law degree, both together in 1928, from the Aligarh Muslim University. Due to his God-given extraordinary brilliance he had soon become a very busy lawyer always in demand. During his professional growth he had tried his hands also at politics but was soon disillusioned. All his life he had taken a deep interest in the affairs and problems of the Muslims of India. In his old age he had become a deeply religious and saintly person. Having breathed his last on 18th December 1975 at Makkah Mukarramah soon after performing *Haj*, he is buried in the holy city's historic graveyard – the Jannat-ul-Ma'la. A full account of his life, outlook and thoughts may be seen in his Urdu biography, *Hayat-e-Mahmood*, written and published by me in 1977.

My father was a regular reader of the Holy Qur'an and had studied it in depth through numerous translations and exegeses in Arabic, Persian, Urdu and English. He was especially fascinated by the *Tafsir-e-Bayan-ul-Qur'an* whose illustrious author, the late Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi, had granted him *bai'at* during the prime of his youth. Later he had also taken a keen interest in the late Maulana Abd-ul-Majid Daryabadi's works on the Qur'an. In his home town and its neighbourhood he had acquired a high reputation for his skill in the art of correctly reading the Holy Book of Islam with a meticulous accuracy in all respects. He was not a regular *hafiz* or *qari*, but could and often did instantaneously detect and skilfully correct errors of all kinds in the reading or recitation of the Qur'an by any one else in his presence and hearing. During his visits anywhere in the country

he would regularly attend prayers in the local mosques and unhesitatingly point out and correct all sorts of mistakes in Qur'an-reading committed by the *imams* – even those with whom he had no prior acquaintance. In the fasting month every year the local *huffaz* used to approach him with a request to join them in the *taravih* prayers to correct and perfect their Qur'an-reading.

In the early 1970s my father had completely retired from the legal profession and begun spending all his time in thinking about how to ensure that people could read correctly the Holy Book of Islam even without learning the Arabic language. After months of deep meditation he began evolving and developing certain “rules” (*qawa'id*) which, if carefully followed, would lead to such a result. His fairly good knowledge of the Arabic language and command over the niceties of law and logic enabled him to devise some ingenious “rules” for this purpose. During those days I used to regularly visit him in my home town and always found him either engrossed in deep thinking or busy writing what he had thought of. Often he would share his ideas with me and had also told me of his choice for the title. Before too long he had begun writing down a manuscript on the subject in Urdu and given it a double title, viz. *Qur'an-e-Karim ki Basic Reader* and *Rahnuma-e-Tilawat*. Throughout 1975 my learned father literally burned the midnight oil to complete his work on the Holy Qur'an before proceeding for the *Haj* to Makkah Mukarramah, which he seemed to be pretty sure would be his last earthly destination.

A complete hand-written manuscript of this book and an incomplete “Will for the Community” were the heritage my father left for posterity. His incomplete “will” was published by me as an appendix to his biography – *Hayat-e-Mahmood*. As per his will, the manuscript of his work on the Holy Qur'an was sent to the late

Maulana Mohammad Manzoor Nomani of Lucknow, who highly appreciated it, wrote a foreword for it and advised its immediate publication.

The original book in Urdu, painstakingly written by my father, was first published in 1982 under the aegis of the Maktaba Al-Furqan of Lucknow. It was released on the lawns of my father's house in Bahraich by the late Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, for whom he always had a devotional respect. Seventeen years later, the book was reprinted by the Islamic Wonders Bureau in Delhi. A Hindi transliteration of the book was also published last year.

In 1982, when the original book was first published, I had decided to prepare an English version which a Muslim schools trust in London had offered to publish. By mid-1982 I had translated nearly half of the book. Unfortunately the project had to be shelved then for reasons beyond my control. I was however determined to some day reopen it. I owed this debt to my late father, which by the grace of God Almighty I have now been able to discharge. Luckily I could trace my 1982 translation file and the work was at last complete by the end of January 2001. God Almighty however willed that the final draft of my work be given another look in the Holy Land where my father is lying in eternal sleep. In February this year I received an invitation from the Saudi Government to participate in a pre-Hajj Seminar and perform the Holy Pilgrimage. I took the manuscript along and gave it a fresh look in the Divine aura of Makkah, Arafat and Mina. God must, I am sure, have guided me to the right path in those holiest of the holy places on earth in conveying accurately in English what my father had at heart while writing the original book in Urdu.

Rendering into English a technical work like this -- originally written for Urdu-speaking readers only -- was no easy job. What was required was not a mere translation but a careful adaptation of the Urdu text to English language and usage. I have done my best to make the English version useful for those who, not

knowing Urdu, may want to benefit from this unique work. A special system of transliteration of Arabic consonants, vowels and short-vowel signs – detailed on the next three pages– has been carefully devised and uniformly used throughout the book.

This work has been done by me *fi-sabilillah*. I seek no return whatsoever for this humble service to the Holy Qur'an.

I am deeply obliged to Janab Saniyasnain Khan of Goodword Books Pvt. Ltd. for undertaking publication of this English version of my late father's highly educative book.

Incidentally, I am signing this Foreword on the illustrious author's 26th death anniversary as a befitting tribute to his memory. May his soul rest in peace.

Syed Tahir Mahmood

18 December 2001

English Transliteration Table

I. Arabic consonants denoted by single English letters :

ب	BA	=	B	ف	FA	=	F
ت	TA	=	T	ق	QAF	=	Q
ج	JIM	=	J	ك	KAF	=	K
د	DAL	=	D	ل	LAM	=	L
ر	RA	=	R	م	MIM	=	M
ز	ZA	=	Z	ن	NUN	=	N
س	SIN	=	S	ه	HA	=	H

II. Arabic consonants denoted by two English letters :

ث	THA	=	TH
خ	KHA	=	KH
ذ	DHAL	=	DH
ش	SHIN	=	SH
غ	GHAIN	=	GH

III. Arabic consonants denoted by underlined English letters:

ح	<u>HA</u>	=	<u>H</u>
ص	<u>SAD</u>	=	<u>S</u>
ض	<u>DAD</u>	=	<u>D</u>
ط	<u>TA</u>	=	<u>T</u>
ظ	<u>ZA</u>	=	<u>Z</u>

IV. Arabic letters denoted by diacritics :

ع 'AIN = (') [opening single quote mark]

ء HAMZAH = (') [closing single quote mark]

V. Arabic vowels denoted by English letters:

initial middle/terminal

ا ALIF = A A [sound as English *far/jar*]

و WAU = W U [sound as English *mood/noon*]

ي YA = Y I [sound as English *been/seen*]

VI. Arabic *harakat* denoted by English letters:

fathah = A [sound as English *fun/run* unlike *fan/ran*]

kasrah = I [sound as English *bit/sit* – unlike *bet/set*]

dhammah = U [sound as English *put/foot*]

madd = A, I, U written double

Notes:

1. The Arabic ط is traditionally denoted in English as T, ذ as D, and ق as Q – although in English the sounds of these letters are not exactly the same as of the parallel Arabic letters. English consonants G and P and the English sound of CH [like in *chin/chair*] do not exist in Arabic.
2. The diacritic for 'ain is put before English vowels a, i or u if the original Arabic letter has a *fathah*, *kasrah* or *dammah* – if it is still the same mark is put after these vowels. The diacritic for *hamzah* is put generally after these vowels.

3. Arabic letters with *fathah* are denoted as *AI* if followed by a ا [to sound like in English *aee*], and as *AU* if followed by a و [to sound as in English *aoo*]. Letters with *kasrah* if followed by a واو are denoted as *IU* [to sound as in English *view*]
4. Against the general practice we have used here only dashes – not dots – and put these everywhere below the English letters. This makes the system of transliteration simpler and uniform.

Foreword to Urdu Version

The author of this book, the late Maulavi Syed Mahmood Hasan, was a resident of the famous Bahraich city. He was a lawyer by profession – and a very prominent and successful lawyer. His formal education was of the college and university, but God had also destined for him a deep concern for and insight in the religious and community matters of Muslims. Such concern is not uncommon in the section of the society he belonged to, but such insight is indeed exceptional.

I had known him, as far I remember, for 30 to 35 years and the basis of our acquaintance was his religious temperament and nature. About 17-18 years ago, when a Deeni Talimi Council was set up in our State he was one of its active members; and I too was on the Council. He would come several times every year to attend the sessions of the Council or of its Executive Committee. Apart from our meetings during the sessions he regarded it as his duty to visit me and spend some time with me; and our talks often related to social reform. I have now heard that he knew Arabic, used to study religious books in Arabic and had a deep interest in the Holy Qur'an. But he never mentioned all this to me; nor could I ever feel it from his conversation. It was undoubtedly his greatness that he never propagated all this in the least.

The late Syed Saheb never told me that he was writing a book on the Qur'an. Rather during the hundreds of meetings that we had he never let me have an impression that he had any special interest in the reading and recitation of the Holy Qur'an. It is only now after reading this book that I have known what an extraordinary interest he had in the Holy Book and that he not only knew the art of reading the Qur'an correctly but had in fact command over it. I am indeed flabbergasted at this greatness

of his character. His book also reveals that he had a deep concern and commitment to ensure that the Muslims must realise the need for reading the Holy Qur'an accurately and learn for it the necessary rules of *tajwid* with the outlets, features and peculiarities of Quranic words. This book is the result, rather the mirror, of his heart-felt desire in this regard.

I read the entire manuscript of the book. But since I have not learned Qur'an-reading and recitation as an art – during my early student life I had made only necessary practice – I read it not for correcting it but with an intention of taking advantage; and I did greatly benefit from it. In fact I discovered and corrected some of my own mistakes in Qur'an-reading. Due to this personal experience, I beseech all Muslims having an interest in Qur'anic recitation that in order to take proper guidance for avoiding mistakes they must read this book.

It is true that to learn the art of Qur'anic recitation and *tajwid* it is more useful to depend on a teacher than on a book. But for those who cannot find time to learn in a school or from a teacher this book itself will serve as a teacher and a school. On this art this is the first book of its kind. The special features of this book have made it extremely useful for the educated Muslims of all sections—men, women, teachers and students alike.

May God accept this great service to the Holy Qur'an rendered by the late author and duly reward him with Heaven's blessings.

Mohammad Manzoor Nomani

Lucknow, 1st December 1977

Introduction

In the name of God the Compassionate the Merciful

Whatever be the language, the method of correctly reading its text is that the student first of all learns all its letters and their sounds, then picks up short words made of a few letters and their meaning in his mother tongue, and then gradually learns the meaning of bigger words and the syntax of long sentences. To understand the language the student also keeps on writing the letters, words and sentences. This is how within a few years the student learns to speak, read and write that language and to understand its text, all at once. He knows well where a particular word ends and where the next one begins. Without learning a particular language no student can correctly read its text.

In some languages all letters of a word are in writing joined to each other. The student, after recognising the letters, can also read each word of such a language separately, though he might not pronounce it correctly or understand the meaning of the text.

However, if there is a language in writing which all letters of a word are not joined to each other, it is not possible to read its words separately merely by recognising the letters. For instance, in English all letters of every word are in writing joined to each other and then, after leaving some space, the next word is written in the same way.

So, a student of English can, after recognising the letters of that language, read all words of its text separately, though he might not correctly pronounce them or understand their meaning.

In the scripts of Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages all letters of every word cannot in writing be joined to each other. For instance, in Arabic write two words *wa* وَ and *ra'aita* رَأَيْتَ. Now, a student who does not know the Arabic language can wrongly read these as "*wara-aita*" regarding *wara* as one and *aita* as the next word. He may possibly also read the whole as "*waraaita*" by joining all the letters and regarding it as a single word.

In the text of every language sentences are written separately. In the Holy Qur'an too there are separate sentences which are called *ayat*. If the words of any sentence are wrongly joined together and are broken in spelling so as to join the latter part of a word to the first part of the next word, the text will become absurd. For instance, suppose a person has to read in English: "we have written everything on two papers". If he breaks the words of this sentence so as to read it as "*weha vewrit teneve rythin gont wopa pers*" the sentence will become absurd and the listeners will laugh at the reader.

Juz (Part) IV of the Holy Qur'an begins with the words *Lan tanalu* لَنْ تَنَالُوا and *al-birra* الْبِرِّ. A reader may think that these are two words - "*lantana*" and "*lulbirra*" - and regarding the last syllable *lu* in *tanalu* as the first syllable of the next word he may make an absurd and meaningless word "*lulbirra*". While teaching his pupils a teacher may spell *lantana* together and *lulbirra* separate. Consequently, all his pupils throughout their lives may read and later teach these words like that.

Similarly, due to mis-spelling, in Part 30 in *Surah Kafirun* people read an expression as "*Qulya*", though *Qul* قُلْ is one word and the word *ya* is to be joined to the next word so as to be read and taught as *Qul ya ayyuh-al-kafirun* قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ. This is nothing short of impudence and disrespect to the words of God.

It is disrespect to the Qur'anic alphabet when, for instance, four different Arabic letters ذ 'ز' ض 'ظ' are all pronounced like a 'z' in English; whereas in the Arabic language each of these letters has a different sound. The Arabic ض is taught to be pronounced as د by some teachers and as ز by others, though no original English letter carries the sound of the Arabic ض. Similarly, we have not been told of the phonetic difference between the letters ح and ه in Arabic. In the same way overlooking the true Arabic sounds of many Arabic letters we begin reading the text of the Holy Qur'an in non-Arabic pronunciation.

As regards the Arabic *harakat* حَرَكَات (short vowels), no attention is paid to how these are expressed in Arabic. Some people read as *al-hamdo lillahey* – instead of the correct *al-hamd-u lillah-i*.

When Islam spread out of Arabia and reached the non-Arab world, the non-Arabs must have faced the problem how to read the Holy Qur'an correctly without learning the Arabic language. The solution of the problem for each non-Arab country was to develop a system to teach how people knowing the local language could correctly read the Qur'an without learning the Arabic language.

In the Indian subcontinent the language of all regions is not the same; a person of one region cannot at all understand the language of another. It was therefore necessary here to produce literature in all regional languages on the art of correctly reading the Qur'an without learning the Arabic language. Under this system correct sounds of all Arabic letters should have been made clear. The characteristics of some Arabic letters without knowing which those letters cannot be pronounced should have been explained. Arabic sounds of the *harakat* should have been made

known. Rules should have been framed to understand where one word ends and another begins. To sum up, scholars and men of letters should have produced comprehensive books in every non-Arabic language on the rules required to read each of the words and the *harakat* of the Holy Book correctly in the Arabic pronunciation -- rules without learning which correct recitation of the Qur'an would be simply impossible. Such a book in each language could work as the 'basic reader' for the Holy Qur'an. Unfortunately nothing of this sort seems to have been done. I regret to observe that at least I am not aware of any such basic reader enveloping all essential rules for the correct reading and teaching of the text of the Holy Qur'an by those who do not know Arabic.

First of all, it is necessary to learn fully the sounds of Arabic letters, their method of expression and special characteristics. As every language is spoken and read in its own accent, expression and pronunciation, it is all the more necessary for reading the Book of God. There are books on *tajwid* (art of Qur'anic recitation), but before beginning to read the Qur'an students do not read these books. The number of even those who do read these books at least after finishing the Qur'anic text is microscopic.

The Muslims in general think that it is one thing to simply read the Qur'an, another to learn *tajwid* and *qir'at* and that the two are not inter-dependent. Most readers of the Qur'an think that they are not *qari* and need not therefore learn *tajwid* and *qir'at*. This is totally wrong. If somebody utters or reads English letters, words and texts in the Urdu or Hindi pronunciation he would be regarded unlettered or insane. Similarly, to overlook the correct

Arabic pronunciation and accent and read the Arabic text of the Holy Qur'an in a non-Arabic accent and pronunciation is height of folly as well as a grave disrespect to the Book of God.

In the existing books on the arts of *tajwid* and *qir'at* we do not find all the necessary rules of correct spelling and the methods to spell out every word separately and correctly. Perhaps no book has so far been written in Urdu to fulfil this important need.

As a result of our negligence in the matter, today a very large number of the readers of the Qur'an read the Qur'anic letters with a non-Arabic pronunciation; pronounce the Arabic *harakat* wrongly and break the words in Qur'anic sentences so as to join the last syllable of one word to the first syllable of the following word. In short, they play havoc with the Arabic text of the Holy Book of God and, instead of reading it in Arabic, in fact recite it in a local accent and pronunciation of their choice. Though being done unintentionally and in ignorance, it is a grave error.

To fulfil the aforesaid need, the present book has been prepared in a simple language which can be easily understood even by the moderately educated children, youngsters and old people alike.

A Call from the Heart

The *qaris*, *imams* of the mosques and the Muslims in general reading the Qur'an, all are requested to study this book carefully and attentively and to rectify their mistakes, if any, in the reading of the Qur'an by following the rules given in it.

Those who teach the Holy Qur'an in religious schools and seminaries are also requested to study this book carefully lesson by lesson, correct their own mistakes, if any, and thereafter teach its rules to their pupils before they begin reading the Holy Book.

Eespecially, I respectfully beseech the *'ulama* (scholars of Islam) to note that I — an English-speaking Muslim, lawyer by profession — claim to be nothing but just a student of the Qur'an. Whatever rules essential to the correct reading of the Divine Book I could manage to formulate have been collected in this book. The book has been written from a new angle of thought and therefore there must be flaws in it. If any error or omission is found in this collection of the author's thoughts, regarding it as a human lapse the *'ulama* will kindly point it out and duly correct it.

Through this humble work I invite the scholars of Islam all over the world to prepare in all languages books on this pattern which may assure a correct reading of the Qur'an, comprehending all essential rules for the same, and to arrange their large-scale publication. They must also impress upon the Muslims in general that all those men, women and children who wish to read the Qur'an must first learn the basic rules in those books and then only read the Holy Book.

There is another request. All readers of this Basic Reader — especially those who read it lesson by lesson and teach it to others — shall kindly do the favour of praying to God that He may bestow heavenly blessings in the life hereafter on me and on all my relatives and friends. I would be most grateful.

Ada-e-haqq-e-muhabbat 'inayetest ze dost
Wagarna ashiq-e-miskin ba hech khursandast

If the debt is discharged it is just God's grace
 Otherwise this humble self can have no solace

Syed Mahmood Hasan
 Bahraich City, UP, 17 June 1975

A Note for Readers

- (i) Whatever time you spend on this book always keep it in mind, with a firm conviction, that the Holy Qur'an is a Divine Book, revealed by Allah, true and complete. There is no other way to live peacefully the life in this world and the hereafter but to have faith in what unknown things the Holy Qur'an tells us and to adhere to its teachings throughout life.
- (ii) Whatever blessings Allah has bestowed on us the Qur'an is the biggest among these. Give it its due regard. Read the present book first. Carefully follow each of its lessons and in accordance with the rules given in it learn to read the Qur'an correctly, uttering the Arabic letters and words in the Arabic accent and pronunciation. Do read this book carefully even if you have already read the Holy Qur'an. In that case if you find that you make some mistakes in reading and reciting the Qur'an, do correct the same. A correct reading of the Qur'an is a form of great *'ibadat* (worship).
- (iii) Try to read the Qur'an as best as possible by following the instructions and rules of this book with great care and attention. Nevertheless believe in your heart, and affirm also by word of mouth, that you have not yet given its due to the Book of God. Believe firmly that all those who read the Qur'an, or have memorised it, are as Muslims better than you and compared with them you are but a small fry, a sinner.
- (iv) Leave alone pride, you must never even imagine that by reading this book of a few pages, or any other bigger book, you will or have become a better reader of the Holy Qur'an than others; this would render all your labour useless. Beware of it.

- (v) Having learnt the lessons of this book, do not think that you are no more committing any mistake in reading the Qur'an. Wherever and whenever you meet a scholar of authority who is also a *qari* [Qur'an-reciter] let him hear you read some portion of the Qur'an and correct your remaining mistakes, if any.
- (vi) The method of teaching the Qur'anic text in the schools is very defective. In your areas of acquaintance let people know that reading the Arabic text of the Holy Qur'an in a non-Arabic accent or pronunciation and ignoring the need to recite it correctly is a big sin. To avoid this sin it is necessary that before beginning to read the Qur'anic text every reader of the Qur'an must learn to pronounce correctly all Arabic letters and *harakat*, to recognise all the Arabic words in full, and to spell the same accurately.
- (vii) Whatever labour and the hard work that you put in correcting your own reading of the Qur'an and in popularising its correct recitation, it must be for the pleasure of Allah only; and Allah will reward you for it. If you are desirous of worldly reputation and recognition in so doing, you will wholly lose His blessings and the reward in the life-hereafter.

-The Author

Lesson 1

The Holy Book

God is the Creator of Universe. It is He who has created the 'Arsh (Divine Throne) and the Kursi (Divine Chair), the *Lauh* (Tablet) and the *Qalam* (Pen), the Heaven and the Hell, the Nymphs and the Angels, the Earth and the Sky, the man and the *jinn*, the animals, the trees and the inorganic matters -- in short, all animate and inanimate objects. In other words, everything is the creature and God is its Creator. All creatures must perish some day; only the being and the characteristics of God are eternal and immortal -- these have always been there and will always exist.

The Holy Qur'an is the Book of God. It is one of the attributes of God which are all immortal, not open to destruction. So this Book -- Speech of God -- is also eternal and immortal, not open to destruction. It has always been there and shall ever exist. It has not been created; to regard it a creature is a big sin.

When God so intended He rendered His eternal, immortal speech into letters and words to be preserved in the *Lauh-i Mahfuz* (Guarded Tablet). For the guidance of mankind He began despatching the Prophets -- Saiyidina Adam being the first of them. He kept on sending His messengers, crowned by Prophethood, to every region and every community. At last nearly one and a half thousand years ago from now He completed the chain of Prophets. Our Prophet -- Saiyidina Muhammad Mustafa [peace be on him], Mercy for Mankind and the Seal of the Prophets -- was the last among them.

In a Holy Night of the month of *Ramadan* God transferred His eternal speech -- the Holy Qur'an -- to the Sky of the human world. Then, in His Divine wisdom, He gradually revealed it in a

period of twenty-three years – through His close and trusted Archangel Gabriel – to the holy heart of the last of the Prophets, Saiyidina Muḥammad [peace be upon him].

At the beginning, whatever verses of the Qur'an were brought to the Prophet by Archangel Gabriel in a single instalment, he would repeat them hurriedly to make it sure that he did not miss out any word. God then proclaimed:

Move not your tongue to make haste therewith. It is for Us to collect it in your heart and to have it duly taken by you. When We reveal it just follow its recital. It is for Us, again, to have it faithfully repeated by you.

God thus took upon Himself the responsibility to see that the whole of the Qur'an reached the Prophet accurately, without any addition or omission, and that the Prophet repeated the whole of it with utmost accuracy and understood its meaning.

After these verses were revealed the Prophet gave up repeating the verses during the course of revelation. Whatever portion of the Qur'an was now brought to the Prophet by Gabriel in a single revelation, he would just listen to it with great care and then, as guaranteed by God, recite in full all the verses so revealed to him.

Every revelation used to clarify to the Prophet also its particular place – that for every verse – in the Qur'an. One of His Companions Saiyidina Zaid bin Thābit, as also some others, would then write the revealed verses in that sequence.

The revelation continued for twenty-three years and the Qur'an became complete. Once in every year the Archangel Gabriel would make the Prophet revise the Divine Book in his presence and hearing. In the last year of his life the Prophet revised the Qur'an twice in Gabriel's presence and hearing. During the same

period Saiyidina Zaid too memorised the whole of the Qur'an and recited it in the presence and hearing of the Prophet. Many other Companions of the Prophet had also memorised by then the whole of the Qur'an.

During the reign of the first Caliph, Saiyidina Abu Bakr Siddiq, once seventy Companions of the Prophet, who had learnt the Qur'an by heart, were martyred. Until then the whole of the Qur'an was not available in a book form and was found in different piecemeal collections as dictated by the Prophet. The demise of those seventy *hafiz*-Companions led Saiyidina 'Umar Faruq to the idea of having the Qur'an collected in a single volume. So, on his advice, Saiyidina Abu Bakr Siddiq entrusted to the Scribe of Revelation Saiyidina Zaid the job of collecting the whole of the Qur'an in one volume.

With great care and hard work Saiyidina Zaid meticulously recorded the whole of the Qur'an in a single volume – with the same sequence of verses as had been dictated by the Prophet during his lifetime. After so collecting the Divine Book Saiyidina Zaid handed it over to Saiyidina Abu Bakr. This was the first manuscript of the Qur'an in full. Until then, of course, there were still in existence a large number of the other devotees of Islam and Qur'an-loving Companions of the Prophet who had learnt the whole of it by heart.

Later, during the reign of the third Caliph Saiyidina 'Uthman the Muslims of Iraq and Syria developed some difference of opinion over certain words and *harakat* in the recitation of the Qur'an. This raised a grave apprehension that in future some people might begin reading the Qur'an deviating from its authentic manuscript prepared by Saiyidina Zaid. Caliph 'Uthman then sent for the said manuscript and asked the Scribe of Qur'an Saiyidina Zaid, 'Abdullah bin Zubair and Sa'd bin 'As to prepare

its true copies. These Companions prepared more than half a dozen copies of the manuscript with full accuracy. Saiyidina 'Uthman then sent one copy each to Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, Basra and Kufa – which were then the central places in the Islamic Empire – and kept one of these in Madina. These copies remained in use throughout the reigns of Saiyidina 'Uthman and the next Caliph Saiyidina 'Ali bin Abi Talib.

Throughout the Muslim world of that time the Qur'an was read and taught by all Muslims in accordance with these copies. Each and every verse in the thirty Parts of the Qur'an thus became engrafted in their hearts and memorised by their tongues. The *huffaz* (memorisers of the Qur'an), all of whom were devotees of Islam and lovers of the Holy Book, were found in all Islamic lands of the time. They taught the Qur'an to their descendants and disciples in accordance with the copies prepared under the orders of Saiyidina 'Uthman. The Qur'an-memorisers of the day spent their lives in reciting the same Qur'an in and outside the daily prayers and also in the annual *taravīh* of the *Ramadan*.

This is how that first authentic manuscript of the Qur'an which had been originally prepared by the Scribe of Revelation Saiyidina Zaid bin Thabit during the reign of the first Caliph Saiyidina Abu Bakr Siddiq – multiple copies of which had later been prepared by him and some other Companions during the reign of the Third Caliph Saiyidina 'Uthman under instruction from him – kept on devolving in its original form from one generation to another, from the fathers to the sons, from the teachers to the pupils and from the ascendants to the descendants.

It is, then, that very Holy Speech of God – which His true and trusted Archangel Saiyidina Gabriel had revealed to the holy heart of the His last messenger and the noblest of men Saiyidina Muḥammad Mustafa [peace be upon him] – that, in its original condition and authentic sequence of contents conveyed to the Prophet by Archangel Gabriel, remains preserved until today in our homes and on the tongues of the Qur'an-readers and the huffaz.

God had said in the Holy Qur'an:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

*Inna nahn-u nazzal-na-dh-dhikr-a Wa inna
lah-u la-hafizun*

We have revealed the Qur'an
And We are its Guard and Protector.

[Qur'an, 15: 9]

Every saying and very promise of Allah is true. This promise of God also proved true. The Divine Book is preserved until this day and shall always remain preserved.

Lesson 2

Terminology

Certain terms will occur in this book again and again. Their meanings are being stated here and have to be kept in mind.

- i) *harf* حَرْف: letter [plural : *huruf* حُرُوف]
- ii) *harakat* حَرَكَة: short- vowel sign
= *fathah* فَتْحَة, *kasrah* كَسْرَة or *dammah* ضَمَّة
[plural : *harakat* حَرَكَات]
- iii) *harf-i mutaharrik* حَرْف مُتَحَرِّك:
a letter with any of the *harakat* حَرَكَات
- iv) *harf-i sakin* حَرْف سَاكِن:
a still letter, one with none of the *harakat* حَرَكَات denoted by
a *jazm* جَزْم [small *dal* دال or circle]
- v) *jazm* جَزْم: a sign like a small *dal* د or circle denoting a still
letter having none of the *harakat* حَرَكَات
- vi) *tanwin* تَنْوِين: nunnation = sign of two *harakat* together –
i.e., two *fathahs*, *kasrahs* or *dammahs* – giving the sound of
nun ن

Note: In the Arabic script two *harakat* are put on a letter by adding an *alif* ا to it – except in the case of the letter *hamzah* هَمْزَة (ء) in which case these are put on the *hamzah* itself.

- vii) *tashdid* تَشْدِيد: doubling of the sound of a letter by putting
a sign over it – e.g., ر in *ar-rahman* and *ar-rahim*; a letter
with *tashdid* تَشْدِيد on it is called *mushddad* مُشَدَّد (doubled in
sound).

- viii) *ghunnah* غُنَّة: twang = nasalised pronunciation of the letters م and ن; there is no other nasal letter in Arabic
- ix) *huruf-i 'illah* حُرُوفٌ عِلَّةٌ: long vowels
= letters *alif* ا, *wau* و and *ya* ي
- x) *waqf* وَقْف: this means to stop and have a breath -- e.g., the short-vowel sign on the final *nun* ن in '*alamin-a* عَلَمِينَ is a *fathah* فَتْحَةٌ but it may be treated as a still letter in order to have a breath so as to read the word as '*alamin* عَلَمِينَ; where this is done we say we had *waqf* on '*alamin-a*.
- xi) *saktah*: pause = to have a break in reciting the Qur'an but without discontinuing the breath.
- xii) *makhraj*: phonetic issue point
= part of mouth from which a particular letter is uttered
[plural: *makharij*]
- xiii) *sifat* صِفَة: peculiarity of each of Arabic letters [plural: *sifat* صِفَات]
- xiv) *huruf-i halaqiah* حُرُوفٌ حَلْقِيَّةٌ: annular letters
= six letters uttered from the throat -- i.e., , *ha* ح, *kha* خ, '*ain* ع, *ghain* غ, *hamzah* ء and *ha* ه
- xv) *lahn-i jali* لَحْنٌ جَلِيٌّ and *lahn-i khafi* لَحْنٌ خَفِيٌّ: patent and latent misreading; details of these terms may be seen in Lesson 4, *infra*
- xvi) *qalqalah* قَلْقَلَة: thickening of letters in pronunciation; there are only nine such letters -- *kha* خ, *sad* ص, *dad* ض, *ta* ط, *za* ظ, *ghain* غ, *qaf* ق [as per rules given in Lesson 5]; *ra* ر [Lesson 8] and *lam* ل in *Allah* اللهُ and *Allahumma* اَللّٰهُمَّ [Lesson 5]

Lesson 3

Arabic Alphabet

Every language has got its own letters -- each of these having its own distinct sound. The total number of letters is not the same in all languages. The English language has 26 letters only, while Urdu has 36. The Arabic language has 29 letters in all.

In the Arabic language no two letters have the same sound -- although in Urdu certain different letters borrowed from Arabic have assumed the same sound. For instance, four different letters borrowed from Arabic - ذ, ز, ض and ظ - have the same sound in Urdu which is denoted in English by the letter 'z'. In the original Arabic these four letters have different names and different sounds and have, therefore, to be distinctively denoted in English transliteration.

The Urdu language has taken all the 29 letters of Arabic, but most of these with a different sound and accent. Twelve of these have even changed their names in Urdu.

Some letters of a particular language may not exist at all in another language. Thus the hard 'd' and 't' of English are not found in Arabic -- while many Arabic letters, like ع and غ, have no parallels in English.

The Urdu letters *alif* (ا) and *hamzah* (ء) do exist in Arabic, but unlike in Urdu in Arabic *alif* never has a *harakat* or *jazm* on it -- wherever in the Qur'an there is a *harakat* or *jazm* on a letter seeming like an *alif*, it is *hamzah* and not *alif*.

All the 29 letters of the Arabic alphabet -- with their English equivalents as adopted in this book -- are given in the English Transliteration Table, on pages 11-13 supra. These are not being repeated here. The readers may please refer to the said table.

Lesson 4

Sounds of Arabic Letters

Misreading of the Qur'an

In the Arabic language no two letters are exactly same in sound or expression. Therefore before beginning to read the Holy Book of God everybody must learn the distinct sounds of each of the Arabic letters. An effort has been made in this lesson to explain the sounds of the Arabic letters.

A faulty reading of the Qur'anic letters – i.e., to read them in an improper way or wrongly in any manner -- is called *lahn* لَحن (misreading).

Lahn is of two kinds -- *lahn-i jali* لَحن جَلِي (patent misreading) and *lahn-i khafi* لَحن خَفِي (latent misreading).

(a) *lahn-i jali* لَحن جَلِي

If somebody utters one Arabic letter with the sound of another, it will be *lahn-i jali* – e.g. :

(i) if ث is uttered as س or ذ as ز ;

(ii) if ع is uttered like an *alif* or a *hamzah* ;

(iii) if ح is read like ه

Every *lahn-i jali* is *haram* – i.e. absolutely forbidden and therefore sinful. Those who so misread the Qur'an, or let another person so misread it, or listen to such misreading, all will be committing a big sin.

Caution:- Many of us commit the sin of *lahn-i jali* daily in our regular five-time prayers. We must learn from some expert to correctly utter at least the prayer-wordings in order to avoid all *lahn-i jali* and correct their prayers.

(b) *lahn-i khafi* لَحْنٌ خَفِيّ

To read the Qur'an in a way so as to spoil the beauty of the Arabic letters – to explain which to the readers rules have been sated in this book – is called *lahn-i khafi*.

For instance, where by rule the letter *ra* in a particular word is to be thickened – if this is not done it will be *lahn-i khafi*.

Every *lahn-i khafi* in the recitation of the Qur'an is *makruh* (detestable). This too should be avoided.

Caution:- Since wherever *lahn-i jali* occurs the reader, the teacher and the listeners all will be committing a sin, all of us must do a little bit of hard work in order to learn the correct sound and utterance of each of the Arabic letters.

Makharij and *sifat* مَخَارِجُ وَصِفَاتُ

In Lesson 2 on Terminology the terms *makharij* (phonetic issue-points) and *sifat* (characteristics) have already been explained.

Since the mode of uttering many Arabic letters is peculiar to that language, in order to understand their sound and expression it is necessary to know the *makharij* and *sifat* of each of them – i.e., which part of the mouth these letters are uttered from and what are their special characteristics.

An easy way of knowing the *makhraj* of any letter is to add the letter *alif* before it. For example, to know the *makhraj* of the letter *mim* add an *alif* before it and say *أم*. You will see that you have to join your lips and shut your mouth. So you know that the *makhraj* of *mim* is the outer part of the lips (dry part). Now say *أب*. To say this you have joined only the inner part of your lips (the wet part). So, the *makhraj* of *ب* is the inner wet part of the lips.

In the same way may be learned and practised the *makharij* of all Arabic letters. To avoid any mistake, it is better however not to depend on this method only and seek the guidance of an expert who may demonstrate the sounds of all letters. Let us now proceed to know the *makharij* and *sifat* of some peculiar Arabic letters.

(i) ث، ذ، ز

The *makhraj* of these three letters is the same. These are uttered from the point of the tongue and the end of the upper front teeth.

The slight difference in the utterance of these three letters may be noted.

To utter *ث* join the point of the tongue to the end – not the root – of the upper front teeth very softly so that the breath is not stopped and a weak sound comes out. Do not shut the lips, so that the sound does not disappear. The tongue should not go up to the palate. Say it again and again to practise the letter.

To utter *ذ* join the point of the tongue to the upper front teeth so as to break the breath and speak softly.

To utter *j* too the point of the tongue is to be joined to the end of the upper front teeth, but here the middle part of tongue should touch the palate so as to thicken the letter and break the breath.

(ii) ج

The letter *j* in English is uttered by joining the point of tongue to the root of the upper front teeth; but in Arabic ج is different. Join the middle part of the tongue to the palate to pronounce the Arabic ج. Practise it well by adding *alif* at the beginning and utter it like that wherever it occurs in the Qur'an.

(iii) ع ، ح

These two letters come out of the middle part of throat. Lift your tongue a little so as to raise it to the middle part of the throat. Practise these by adding an *alif*. Never read ع like an *alif* and the letter ح like ه in the Qur'an; that is a sin.

(iv) غ ، خ

These letters are uttered from that part of the throat which is on the side of the mouth.

Our throat has three parts – (i) that towards the mouth; (ii) that in the middle, and (iii) that towards the chest below.

The letters خ and غ come out of the upper part of the throat towards the mouth; ح and ع out of the middle part; and ه and ء out of the lower part (towards the chest).

This is why these six letters are called *huruf-i halaqiah* حُرُوفِ حَلَقِيَّة (letters of the throat).

(v) ز، س، ص

These three letters have the same *makharij*. Join the point of the tongue firmly to the end of the lower front teeth so as to keep the tongue-point near the upper front teeth.

Caution:- You have known the *makharij* of ذ and ز under headings (i) above. Do understand well the difference between the two. ذ is soft like a ث – to utter it join the point of tongue to the lower end of the upper front teeth and keep the lips open. On the other hand, to utter ز you have to join the tongue-point firmly to the lower front teeth so as to produce a sharp sound while keeping the lips open. Practise it by repeatedly saying اذ and از. It is not difficult at all. Do not utter ذ like a ز; sounds of these two letters differ a lot from one another. Do learn how to pronounce correctly the Arabic ذ.

(vi) ض

This is the most difficult of all Arabic letters. You must learn its correct sound. It has no parallel sound in English. Do not read it as a ز ذ or ظ. The *makhraj* of ض is the right or the left side of the tongue and the root of the upper teeth there. To utter it with the right side of the tongue is a little difficult. It is easier to utter it by joining the left side of the tongue to the root of the upper teeth there.

Carefully utter the long sound of ض with the use of the full side of the tongue from its front part to the back portion, lifting the upper middle part of the tongue towards the palate so as to produce a thick sound. You may have to practise it with some good *qari* قاري.

Caution:- These days some people try to pronounce ض by thickening the sound of د. Numerous people utter this letter as

dw [like in dwarf]; many read it simply as د. All this is wrong. Never do so, as this amounts to replacing one letter in the Book of God with another letter of your choice. The *makhraj* of ض as stated above is mentioned in all books of authority; and the *makhraj* of د is wholly different from it. But for one of its characteristics ض is closer to ظ and, when uttered from its correct *makhraj* and with all its *sifat*, it sounds like a ظ.

(vii) ط

To utter the Arabic letter ط join the tongue-point to the root of the upper front teeth in the palate. It may be practised by adding an *alif* before it.

(viii) ق

The root of the tongue is in the throat near the uvula. To utter ق join this root there itself to the palate. Practise it by adding an *alif* before the letter.

Note:- The *makhraj* مَخْرَج of the letter ك is different. Those who read ك for a ق replace one Arabic letter with another. This is *lahn-i jali* لَحْنٌ جَلِيٌّ which in the reading of the Qur'an is a big sin.

Lesson 5

Characteristics of Arabic Letters

In the last Lesson the *makharij* مَخَارِج of many Arabic letters have been explained. Among these there are nine letters which cannot be accurately uttered simply by knowing their *makharij* مَخَارِج - one has to learn their special characteristics too.

Among these letters, characteristics of seven are quite different from those of the remaining two. So we will discuss them in two separate categories as follows:

Category A : *kha*, *sad*, *dad*, *'ain*, *ta*, *qaf*, *za*

خ، ص، ض، ع، ط، ق، ظ

Category B : *za*, *sin*. ز، س

The seven letters in category A are called *huruf isti'la* حُرُوف اسْتِعْلَاء. Their peculiarity is that while uttering these letters we have to raise our tongue towards the palate inside the mouth, which thickens these letters in sound. This is why in scholarly language these are called the letters of *isti'la* (lifting up).

Out of these seven letters, in uttering four we cover the palate by the middle of the tongue, and this thickens their sound further. For this reason these letters are in scholarly language known as the *hurufi mutbiqah* حُرُوف مُطْبِقَة (covering letters). In uttering the remaining three letters we do raise the tongue towards the palate but the tongue does not cover the palate and so these are less thick in sound than the other four.

Now we will state in the form of rules all those special requirements which must be kept in mind and fulfilled in reading the Qur'an and in saying the prayers.

The first four letters of Category A have no parallel either in the rest of the Arabic alphabet or in the letters of any other language. For this reason we have framed rule for these separate from the other three *huruf isti'la* حُرُوفِ اسْتِعْلَاءَ.

Rule 1

While uttering the *hurufi mutbiqah* حُرُوف مُطْبِقَة from their true *makharij* مَخَارِج also raise your tongue there itself so that its middle part covers the palate.

Very often these letters are wrongly uttered. As these may be either with one of the *harakat* حَرَكَات or in a still form, for the readers' convenience we give below examples of both separately.

Examples-I : [*huruf-i-mutbiqah* حُرُوف مُطْبِقَة with *harakat* حَرَكَات]

salihin-a صَلَاحِينَ; *dallin-a* ضَالِّينَ; *a'tainaka* أَعْطَيْنَاكَ; *dalimin-a* ظَالِمِينَ

Examples II : [*huruf-i mutbiqah* in still form]

sa-yasla سَيَّصَلِّي; *nasrullah-i* نَصْرُ اللَّهِ; *wa-l-'asr-i* وَالْعَصْرِ; *wa-drib* وَاضْرِبْ; *at'am-a-hum* أَطْعَمَهُمْ; *mudlimun-a* مُظْلِمُونَ

Caution:- If you do not properly utter the *huruf-i mutbiqah* حُرُوف مُطْبِقَة in each of the above examples you will not be reading Arabic letters -- in their place you will be reading letters of some other language.

Keep it in mind that there is no other letter except these four to utter which you have to fully cover your palate by the middle of your tongue

In uttering the other three *huruf-i isti'la* حُرُوفِ اسْتِعْلَاءَ the tongue is raised towards the palate but it does not cover the palate.

Rule 2

While uttering خ , غ or ق from their respective *makharij*, raise the middle portion of the tongue towards the palate but the tongue should not touch the palate.

Examples -I [these letters with *harakat* حَرَكَات] *khasirin-a* خَاسِرِينَ, *gha'ibin-a* غَائِبِينَ, *qanitin-a* قَانِتِينَ

Examples-II [where these letters are still] *akhladah* أَخْلَدَهُ, *al-maghrib* الْمَغْرِبُ, *iqra'* اقْرَأْ

Note:- Add an *alif* to any of the seven *huruf-i isti'la* حُرُوفِ اسْتِعْلَاء and you will see that the *alif* when following these letters also gets thickened in sound [as explained in Lesson 10 infra].

We now proceed to state the Rules for the two Category B letters mentioned above. Their peculiarity – on which is based Rule 3 below – is shared also by the letter *sad* ص [in addition to its peculiarity mentioned in Rule 1 above] and therefore *sad* ص is also being included here with ز and س.

In the *Surah-al-Fatihah* سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ there is a three-word verse *ihdina-ssirat-al-mustaqim* اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ. In the middle word, *sirat*, there are two *huruf-i isti'la* حُرُوفِ اسْتِعْلَاء – *sad* ص and *ta* ط – both of which are also *huruf-i mutbiqah* حُرُوفِ مُطْبِقَةٍ. Utter both of these from their correct *makharij* مَخَارِج as stated in Lesson 4 and expressing their characteristics as explained above in this Lesson. You must never pronounce the letter ص as a س, or the letter ط as a soft ت.

Rule 3

Wherever the letter ز, س or ص appears in Arabic, utter it with a sharp whistling sound.

Resounding Letters

Five Arabic letters are known as the *huruf-i qalqalah* حُرُوف قَلْقَلَة. These are ق, ط, د, ج, ب.

The word *qalqalah* قَلْقَلَة means movement or shaking. When any of these letters is still, the speaker gives a little shake to its *makhraj* مَخْرَج so as to softly continue for a while the sound of that letter. This is what is known as *qalqalah* قَلْقَلَة. No letter in English has this particular characteristic.

Rule 4

When any of the five *huruf-i qalqalah* حُرُوف قَلْقَلَة is still – or has to be treated as still in order to have a *waqf* وَقْف – mildly shake its *makhraj* مَخْرَج so as to slightly resound that letter; but do not overdo it so as to give it the sound of a *harakat* حَرَكَة or *tashdid* تَشْدِيد.

Example-I [ق]

In *bi-rabb-il-falaq-i* بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ there is *kasrah* كَسْرَة on ق. If in order to stop at this you have to treat the ق as still, utter it with *qalqalah* قَلْقَلَة as has been explained above.

Example-II [د]

In *huw-allahu ahad-un* هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ there is *tanwin* تَنْوِين on the د of *ahad* أَحَد. If in order to stop at this you have to treat the د as still, utter it with a *qalqalah* قَلْقَلَة in the same way. Practise this with some expert of the subject in respect of each of the *huruf-i-qalqalah* حُرُوف قَلْقَلَة.

Lesson 6

Still Nun and Tanwin

In Lesson 2 on the Terminology you have learned that tanwin (nunnation) also has the sound of the letter ن. This is why both ن and tanwin are governed by the rules given below.

Rule 5

If a still ن or tanwin is followed by one of the huruf-i halaqiah حُرُوفِ حَلَقِيَّة, read it clearly as a final ن [like in “run”, “sun” in English].

Examples-I [ن]

wa-in-hakamt-a وَأَنْ حَكَمْتَ; man-khaffat مَنْ خَفَّتْ; an‘amt-a أُنْعِمْتَ;
min-ghill-in مِنْ غِلٍّ

Examples-II [tanwin]

kufuw-an ahad كُفُوا أَحَدًا; salam-un hiya سَلَامٌ هِيَ

Rule 6

Where a ن or tanwin is still and is followed by the letter ب replace it with م so as to drop the sound of ن and utter this م with ghunnah.

Example-I [ن]

In min-ba‘du مِنْ بَعْدُ the ن of min مِنْ is followed by the ب of the next word. So it will become م so that the two words will be read as mim-ba‘du.

Example-II [tanwin]

In ‘alim-un bi-dhat-i-ssudur عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ the nun of ‘alim-un will become mim م – read it as ‘alim-um.

The next rule applies to 15 Arabic letters — ت، ث، ج، د، ذ، ز، س، ش، ص، ض، ط، ظ، ف، ق، ك،

Rule 7

When a still ن or *tanwin* تَنْوِين is followed by any of the letters given above and it has a *harakat*, utter the ن or *tanwin* تَنْوِين with *ghunnah* غُنَّة (nasal prolongation) – i.e., take the sound inside the nose, keep it there for a while and then utter a ن.

Example:

In the *Surah Ilaf*, in *min ju'-in* مِنْ جُوعِ the ن of *min* مِنْ is followed by a ج which is one of the fifteen letters covered by Rule 7. So, read the ن of *min* مِنْ with *ghunnah* غُنَّة.

In this very *Surah* later comes *min khauf-in* مِنْ خَوْفٍ – where the ن is followed by a خ. Since خ is not covered by Rule 7 and is a *harf-i halaqiah*, as per Rule 5 above the ن of this *min* مِنْ will not be read with *ghunnah* غُنَّة.

Note:– The 15 letters to which Rule 7 applies account for all Arabic letters other than *alif* (which is always still) and the thirteen letters left out of Rules 5, 6, 8 and 9.

Keep it in mind that except *alif* and the letters covered by Rules 5 and 6 above – or by Rules 8 and 9 below – when any other letter is with a *harakat* and is followed by the letter ن or *tanwin*, it has to be uttered with *ghunnah*.

Rule 8

Where a still *nun* ن or *tanwin* is followed by the letter ر or ل, the ن or *tanwin* will not be pronounced at all. Instead, join the letter preceding the ن or *tanwin* تَنْوِين to the one following it.

Example-I [*ra* ر following *nun* ن]

In *min rabbi-him* مِنْ رَبِّهِم the still ن of *min* مِنْ is followed by the ر of the next word, so it will become silent and the م of *min* مِنْ

will be joined to the ر of *rabbi-him* رَبِّهِمْ so as to read the two words as *mir-rabbi-him*.

Example-II [ن following ل]

In *lam yakun-lahu* لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ the ن of *yakun* يَكُنْ – being followed by the ل of *lahu* لَهُ – will become silent and the ك of *yakun* يَكُنْ will be joined to the ل of *lahu* لَهُ so as to read the words as *lam yakul-lahu*.

Caution:– Numerous people saying *salat* (prayers) or *takbir* (pre-prayer invocation) say *ashhad-u an la-ilaha illallah*. This is wholly wrong. As the still ن of *an* اَنْ is followed by the ل of *la* لَا, in accordance with Rule 8 above the sound of ن will be omitted and you will read *ashhad-u al-la ilaha illallah*.

Rule 9

Where a still *nun* or *tanwin* is followed by the letter م, ن, و or ي, join it to that letter and utter the two with *ghunnah*.

Example-1 [still ن followed by ي]

In *man yasha'u* مَنْ يَشَاءُ the still ن of *man* مَنْ is followed by the ي of *yasha'u* and will therefore be read as *main-yasha'u* مَنْ يَشَاءُ with *ghunnah* in both ن and ي read together.

Example-II [*tanwin* followed by م]

In *sirat-an-mustaqim-an* صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ the sound of م following the *tanwin* on ط of *sirat* will be read with *ghunnah* as *sirata-m-mustaqima* صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ.

Example-III [still ن followed by و]

In *min waq-in* مِنْ وَاَقِ the ن of *min* will be joined to the و of *waq-in* and read with *ghunnah* as *minw-waqin*.

Note:-

Refer to Lesson 2 for learning how to read a letter with *ghunnah*.

Exception

There are only four words in the whole of the Qur'an to which Rule 9 does not apply. These are *dunya* دُنْيَا, *bunyan-un* بُنْيَانٌ, *sinwan-un* صِنْوَانٌ and *qinwan-un* قِنْوَانٌ.

In the first two of these words the *nun* ن is followed by a *y* ي, and in the other two by a *w* و. Yet Rule 9 will not apply to these words – and so the ن will not be joined to the ي or و and there will be no *ghunnah*.

Lesson 7

Letters *Mim* and *Nun*

Rule 10

Where the letter م or ن has a *tashdid* on it – i.e., has to be doubly uttered -- read it with *ghunnah*.

Examples-I [double م]

lamma لَمَّا; *Muhammad-in* مُحَمَّدٍ

Read the double letter *mim* م in these words with *ghunnah*.

Examples-II [double ن]

bi-rabb-i-nnas-i بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ; *ilah-i-nnas-i* إِلَهِ النَّاسِ; *inna* إِنَّ; *anna* أَنَّ

Read the double *nun* ن in all these words with *ghunnah*.

Rule 11

Where a still م is followed by another م, join the two *mims* to be read as double *mim* and read it with *ghunnah*, as stated above in Rule 10. Similarly, when a still ن is followed by another ن, join the two *nuns* to be read as double ن and read with *ghunnah*.

Example-I [م followed by م]

ilaikum mursulun-a إِلَيْكُمْ مُرْسَلُونَ

Read the two *mims* here as double م and pronounce it with *ghunnah*.

Example-II [ن followed by ن]

in-nasha إِنَّ نَشَأَ

Read the two nuns here as a double ن and pronounce it with *ghunnah*.

Rule 12

Where a still م is followed by a ب with any *harakat*, join the م to that ب and read it with *ghunnah*.

Example

ما هُم بِمُؤْمِنِينَ *ma hum bi-mu'minin-a*

Here the letter م in the word *hum* هُم is still – i.e., has none of the *harakat* on it – and is followed by the letter ب of *bi*. Join this م to the ب of the next word and read with *ghunnah*.

Lesson 8

Amalgamation of Letters

In the Arabic language sometimes we amalgamate two letters in such a way that the sound of the first letter wholly disappears.

Rule 13

Where a still letter is followed by a vowelled letter which has also a *tashdid* on it, omit that still letter and spell by joining the letter preceding it to the letter with *tashdid*.

Example -1

In *qul-rrabb-i* قُلْ رَبِّ the ل of *qul* قُلْ is still and is followed by a vowelled letter ر with a *tashdid* on it. So omit the sound of ل, join the ق of *qul* قُلْ to the ر of *rabb-i* and read it as *q-u-rrabb-i*.

Example-II

In '*abad-ttum* [in *Surah Kafirun*] there is a still د which is followed by a vowelled ت with a *tashdid* on it. So omit the sound of د, join ب of '*abad* to the double ت of *tum* and read it as '*abattum*.

Exception:

Rule 13 does not apply to a particular expression in the Qur'an - viz., بَلْ رَانَ occurring in Part 30, *Surah-al-Mutaffifin* الْمُطَفِّفِينَ. There you will find the pause sign س over the ل of بَلْ. So, you have to make a pause on بَلْ without breaking your breath and then proceed to say رَانَ.

Lesson 9

The Letter Ra

In the Arabic language the letter ر is uttered differently in different places.

In some places it has to be thickened. In the other places this is not done and the ر remains sharp. Refer to Lesson 2 to know how a ر is to be thickened.

Transliteration note . -- A thick ر reads somewhat like the 'r' in "raw" in English – and a sharp ر like the 'r' in "rather."

Rule 14

When over the letter ر there is the sign of a *fathah* or *dammah* – or of the *tanwin* of either – it has to be thickened in utterance.

Example-I [ر with *fathah*]

In *rabb-il-'alamin* رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ there is a *fathah* on the letter ر and so the ر is to be thickened.

Example-II [ر with *dammah*]

In *ghafur-u-rrahim* غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ there is *tanwin* of *dammah* over the ر of *ghafur* and also a *fathah* on the ر of *rahim*. So in both the words the ر will be thickened.

Rule 15

When ر is still, or is to be treated as still in order to have a *waqf*, look to the preceding letter – if that letter has a *fathah* or *dammah* over it, read a thick ر there.

Examples

wa-nhar وَأَنْحَرْ ; *abtar* أَبْتَرْ ; *mursalin-a* مُرْسَلِينَ ; *Qur'an-un* قُرْآنٌ

In the first two examples here there is a *fathah* on the preceding letters [ح ، خ], and in the last two examples there is a *dammah* on the preceding letter [ق ، م]. So in all these examples read a thick ر.

Rule 16

Where in any word the ر is to be treated as still in order to have a *waqf* and the letter preceding it is already still, look to the last vowelled letter in that word. If that letter has a *fathah* or *dammah* over it, read a thick ر ; but not if it has a *kasrah* below it.

Examples-I [ر to be thick]

In *ghafur-un* غَفُورٌ if you have to stop at *ghafur*, since the letter preceding its ر (i.e., و) is already still and the last vowelled letter in this word (i.e., ف) has a *dammah* over it the ر will be thickened.

In *lailat-ul-qadr* لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ if ر of *qadr* is to be treated as still in order to have a stop, as the preceding د too is still and the last vowelled letter (i.e., ق) has a *fathah* on it, the ر will be thickened.

Example-II [ر not to be thick]

In *dhikr-un* ذِكْرٌ if you have to treat ر of *dhikr* as still in order to have a stop, since the preceding ق too is still but before that letter ذ has a *kasrah* under it, the ر will not be thickened.

Note: In examples 2 and 3 above if you are not having a stop at *al-qadr-i* الْقَدْرِ or *dhikr-un* ذِكْرٌ, the ر in the first of these words will not be thickened because of *kasrah* [as per Rule 18 below], but that in the other word shall have to be thickened due to the *dammah* [as per Rule 14 above].

Rule 17

As an exception to Rule 16 above, where **ر** is still – or is treated to be still for the purpose of a stop – and it is preceded by a still **ي**, never thicken the **ر** even if there be a *fathah* on the letter **ي**.

Example

In *khair-un* خَيْرٌ; *sair-un* سَيْرٌ; *khair-un* خَيْرٌ: if you have to stop at the word, since **ر** is preceded by a **ي** it will not be read thick although there is a *fathah* on the preceding *kha* and *sa*.

Rule 18

Whenever the letter **ر** has a *kasrah* below it, read it sharp and do not make it thick.

Example

In *ghair-il-magh-dub-i* غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ and *sudur-i-nnas-i* صُورِ النَّاسِ the **ر** in *ghair* and *sudur* has a *kasrah*; so do not thicken it

Rule 19

Where **ر** is still -- or is to be treated as still for the purpose of a *waqf* – and the letter preceding it is also still, if the last vowelled letter in the syllable has a *kasrah* under it do not read a thick **ر**.

Examples

fa-sbir فَاصْبِرْ; *shirk* شِرْكٌ

In the first word **ر** will not be read thick since it is still and the preceding **ب** has a *kasrah* below it. In the second word if you want to have a *waqf* and have therefore to treat **ك** as still, since the preceding letter has a *kasrah*, the **ر** will not be read thick.

Rule 20

Rule 19 too has an exception. Where a still ر is preceded by a letter having a *kasrah* under it but is followed in the same word by any of the *huruf-i isti'la*, do read a thick ر.

Note: For *huruf-i isti'la* refer to Lesson 5.

Examples

qirtas قِرْطَاس ; *bil-mirsad* بِالْمِرْصَاد ; *irsad-an* اِرْصَاداً ; *firqat-un* فِرْقَةٌ

These are the only four words in the Holy Book to which this Rule will apply. In all these ر is followed by ط , ص , ق which are *huruf-i isti'la*. Read a thick ر in all these against the general Rule 19 given above.

Rule 21

Where the letter having a *kasrah* under it is the last letter of the preceding word and not part of that in which the still ر falls, a thick ر is to be read.

Example

In *am-i-rtabu* اَمْ اِرْتَابُوا there are two words – *am* اَمْ and *irtabu* اِرْتَابُوا. This is to be identified, as per Rule 45 in Lesson 17, by noting that the two words could have been joined but yet have been written separately. So a thick ر will be read.

Rule 22

Where ر has a *tashdid* (doubling sign) over it, note the *harakat* over the *tashdid*. If there is a *fathah* or a *dammah* over it, read a thick ر ; but not if it has *kasrah* under it.

Example-I

In *Bismillah-i-rrahman-ir-rahim* بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ there is a *tashdid* on the ر in both *a-rrahman* الرَّحْمٰن and *a-rrahim* الرَّحِيْمِ,

and there is a *fathah* on both. So the *ر* in both words will be read thick ignoring that the preceding vowelised letters in both words have a *kasrah* below.

Example-II

In *min sharr-il-waswas-i* مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ the *ش* preceding the *ر* has a *fathah* over it, but *ر* is double and has a *kasrah* below it. So do not read it thick.

Caution

In Part 12 of the Qur'an – in *Surah Hud*, Verse 41 – there is a word “*majray-ha*.” It is actually *majra-ha*; but on the margin there you find the word “*imalah*” اِمَالَه – which means that the *alif* has to be uttered in a depressed form. That is why it is read as *majray-ha* [*ray* sounding like in English]. This is unique in the whole Qur'an. Do not thicken the *ر* there.

Lesson 10

Allah and *Allahumma*

The letter *lam* ل is generally not thickened in utterance. In the words *Allah* الله and *Allahumma* اللَّهُ however ل is to be read thick in some particular situations, both while reading and speaking. This is by way of respect for the name of God.

Rule 23

When the vowelled letter preceding the ل of *Allah* الله or *Allahumma* اللَّهُ has a *fathah* over it, read a thick ل in both these words.

Note

Raise the front portion of your tongue towards the plate, shrink it a little and let it strike the gums of the upper front-teeth and the adjoining three teeth on either side (eight teeth in all) – the ل will get thickened. Do practise it with somebody who knows how to do it.

Examples

huwa-llah-u-ahad هُوَ اللهُ أَحَدٌ; *rasul-u-llah-i* رَسُولُ اللهِ; *subhan-ak-allahumma* سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ

In *huwa* هُوَ the و has a *fathah* over it, the ل in *rasul* رَسُول was a *dammah* and the ك in *subhan-a-ka* سُبْحَانَكَ also a *fathah*. In all three the ل will therefore be read thick.

Rule 24

When the vowelled letter preceding the ل of *Allah* الله or *Allahumma* اللَّهُ has a *kasrah* below it, do not read a thick ل.

Examples

A'udhu billah-i بِسْمِ اللَّهِ ; *Bismillah-i* بِسْمِ اللَّهِ

In the first word a ب precedes the ل and has a *kasrah* below it; while in the second word a م with *kasrah* precedes the ل. In both cases therefore the ل will not be read thick.

Caution:

Some people calling the *adhan* or saying the *takbir* often read a thick ل in the word *la* in *ashhad-u al-la ilaha ill-allah* أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ. This is wholly wrong.

The ل is read thick only in *Allah* اللَّهُ and *Allahumma* اللَّهُمَّ as per Rule 23 above, and nowhere else.

Lesson 11

Reading A Thick Alif

- (a) In Lesson 5 you have been told of the seven *huruf-i isti'la* حُرُوفِ اِسْتِعْلَاءَ and the rule that an *alif* following any of those letters is also thickened along with them.
- (b) In Lesson 8 you have learned where the letter ر is to be read thick. In all those situations an *alif* following the ر will also have to be read thick.
- (c) In Lesson 9 above you have read where the ل in *Allah* الله or *Allahumma* اَللّٰهُمَّ is read thick as per Rule 23. Where this is done the *alif* there also becomes thick.

Thus, in all, *alif* is to be read thick in these nine situations only; in all other places the *alif* will not be read thick and will have its ordinary sound.

Rule 25

Wherever an *alif* follows any of the *huruf-i isti'la* it shall be read thick. Give a somewhat round shape to the lips – the *alif* along with the preceding letter of *isti'la* will get thickened.

Examples

yukhadi'un-a يُخَادِعُونَ ; saffat صَفَتْ ; dallin-a ضَالِّينَ ; ghasiq-in غَاسِقٍ ;
ta'if-un طَائِفٌ ; qal-a قَالَ ; zalimin-a ظَالِمِينَ

Rule 26

Where the letter ر is to be read thick, if it is followed by an *alif* read thick the *alif* as well.

Examples

al-firaq-u الْفِرَاقُ ; raghibun-a رَاغِبُونَ ; yura'un-a يُرَاغِبُونَ

Rule 27

Where the ل in *Allah* and *Allahumma* is to be read thick, the *alif* following the ل will also become thick.

Examples

Huw-allah-u ahad هُوَ اللهُ أَحَدٌ; *subhan-ak-allahumm-a* سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ;
rasul-u-llah-i رَسُولُ اللهِ

Caution

As per Rules 25 to 27 only an *alif* is to be read thick; and *alif* never has any *harakat* on it. An *alif*-like letter with a *harakat* on it is actually *hamzah* [ء]

Example

In the word *ra'a* the *alif*-like letter with a *madd* on it is a *hamzah* [ء]. Do not read it thick. Read it in two syllables as *ra'a* رَأَى

Lesson 12

Rules of *Madd*

As repeatedly explained earlier, in the Arabic language the letter *alif* is always without any *fathah*, *kasrah*, *dammah* or *jazm*. Look it up into any *Surah* of the Holy Qur'an. For instance, in the *Surah Fatihah* on the *alif* in *malik-i* مَالِكِ, *iiyak-a* إِيَّاكَ and *sirat-a* صِرَاطِ there is no sign ; nor on the *alif* in the word *nas-i* نَاسِ appearing five times in the *Surah al-Nas*.

In the Holy Qur'an frequently appears an *alif*-like letter having a *fathah*, *kasrah*, *dammah* or *jazm* – e.g., the first letter in the words *al-hamd-u* الْحَمْدُ and *ilah-i* إِلَهِ. This is another Arabic letter called *hamzah* – and not an *alif*. The difference between *alif* and *hamzah* must always be kept in mind.

Countless words will be found in the Holy Qur'an having small signs like an *alif* (ا) over, or beneath, or a sign like a small *wau* (و) over, one or another letter. These signs give to the letter to which these are attached the sound of an *alif* (ا), *ya* (ي) and *wau* (و) respectively.

For instance, there are small signs like *alif* and *wau* on ة in the words *bih* and *lah* , due to which these are read as *bih-i* and *lah-u*.

We may call these signs in short the *alif*-sign, the *ya* sign and the *wau*-sign.

What is madd

“*Madd*” is an Arabic word [with *tashdid* on د] which literally means to increase or to spread.

Pronouncing in some special cases an ا, و or ي – or their signs as explained above – by stretching it well [i.e., like four or five *alifs*

together] is called *madd*. Those special cases are mentioned in Rule 28 below.

The duration for uttering a single ا, و or ی – or the sign of any of these – is the time needed to close an open finger or open a closed one. With a *madd* it becomes four or five times of this duration. You have to practise to read a letter with a *madd* up to this duration.

Rule 28

Where there is an *alif* or a letter with an *alif*-sign above it, and where there is a still ی with a *kasrah* on the preceding letter or a letter with a *ya*-sign below it, and where there is a still و with a *dammah* on the preceding letter or a letter with a *wau*-sign on it – followed by *hamzah* in each of these cases – read it with a *madd*, i.e., like four or five ا, و or ی respectively.

Note:– The *madd* will sometimes be on a letter within a single word – and sometimes on the last letter of the first word in between two words. These are being shown separately as A and B in the examples below.

Examples-I [*alif* & its sign]

A. *jaa'a ; shaa'a ; u-laa'ik-a* جَاءَ، شَاءَ، أَوْلَيْكَ

B. *yadaa abi lahab* يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ *innaa a'tainaka* إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ *'ala aal-i Muhammad-in* عَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

Examples-II [ی & its sign]

A. *sii'at* سَيِّئَتْ, *jii'a* جِيئَ

B. *alladhii at'am-a-hum* الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ

Examples-III [و & its sign]

A. *suu'-in* سُوءٍ

B. *mal-u-huu akhladah* مَالُهُ أَخْلَدَهُ

Rule 29

Where the *madd* is not within one word but occurs in between two words and the reader breaks his breath after the first word necessitating a *waqf*, it will not be pronounced.

Example

While reading *illaa ain-yu'min-u* إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا, if you have a *waqf* at *illaa* do not pronounce the *madd* there and stop – then to continue reading repeat the word *illaa* with the sound of *madd* joining it to the next word *ain-yu'min-u* أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا.

Rule 30

Wherever else in the Holy Qur'an there is the sign of *madd* it is to be pronounced by stretching it up to four or five times of the duration of reading a single vowel – ا, و, ي or ي.

Huruf-i muqatta'ah حُرُوفُ مُقَطَّعَةٍ

At the beginning of some *Surahs* there a single letter, or a combination of up to five letters – e.g., *Qaf*, *Nun*, *Ya-Sin*, *Ta Ha*, etc. Called *huruf-i muqatta'ah*, every single letter among these has to be read in full.

Rule 31

On whatever letter in the *huruf-e-muqatta'ah* there is a *madd*, read that letter stretching it up to three vowels.

Note:- You may sometimes be in doubt as to which letter in *huruf-i muqatta'ah* has a *madd* over it so as to be stretched in reading. An easy way to know it is that, while *alif* never has a *madd* over it, names of the rest of the letters in English transliteration have two or three letters, and there may be a *madd* only on a three-lettered one among the *huruf-i muqatta'ah* – e.g., a *lam* (ل), a *mim* (م) or a *sin* (س), etc. Those which in

English are only two-lettered - e.g., a *ya* (ي) (ى) or a *ra* (ر) - never have a *madd* on them.

Caution

In hundreds of verses in the Holy Qur'an the last word ends with an *alif* - e.g. in the last verse of *Surah Nasr* there are the words *afwaj-an* أَفْوَاجًا and *tawwab-an* تَوَّابًا. You have been told in Lesson 2 that in Arabic when there is *tanwin* of *fathah* on any letter an *alif* is added to it and the *tanwin* is put over it. In the examples given here the real words are *afwaj* أَفْوَاجُ and *tawwab* تَوَّابُ - the final *alif* has been added to put *tanwin*.

Most people read this *alif* too stretching it like *madd*. This is against the rule and wholly wrong; rather too much stretching of this *alif* gives it the colour of singing like the singers do, which is a big sin.

When you have a *waqf* on an *alif* in such a situation, read the *alif* as a single *alif* and do not stretch it like in a *madd*.

Examples

In *ghafur-an* غَفُورًا; *shakur-an* شَكُورًا; *alim-an* عَلِيمًا; *hakim-an* حَكِيمًا; *basir-an* بَصِيرًا - and in countless such situations - if you have a *waqf* وَقَفْ and read *ghafura* غَفُورًا, etc., it must be like a single *alif* and should not be stretched.

Lesson 13

Short-Vowel Signs

The *fathah* is pronounced in Arabic and Urdu in the same way; and in English it will be denoted by the letter 'a' [but read it as in English 'but' and 'cut'].

The *kasrah* and *dammah* are not pronounced in Arabic like in Urdu in which language their sounds are like an English 'e' and 'o' described as "*ya-e-majhul*" and "*wao majhul*" respectively. There is no "*ya-e-majhul*" or "*wao majhul*" in the Arabic language.

In Arabic the sound of *kasrah* is like an 'i' [not 'e'] and that of *dammah* like a 'u' [not 'o'] in English.

If a letter with *fathah* is followed by ع it is read, e.g., as *wae/rae* [not as *wae/rae*]. Similarly, if a letter with *fathah* is followed by و it is read, e.g., as *saoo/raoo* [not as *rao/sao*].

Transliteration note:- Sounds like in English words *cat/ban/fat*, *day/say*, *jail/sale*, *more/shore/pour*, have no place in Arabic .

As it is a sin to pronounce the letters of the Holy Qur'an like those of any other language, to read an Arabic *kasrah* and *dammah* like in Urdu is also a mistake and disrespect to the Qur'an. Numerous people in India - including some *qaris*, *imams* and even '*ulama* - mis-pronounce the Arabic *kasrah* and *dammah* as 'e' and 'o' respectively.

This wrong practice is no authority for you. The correct sounds of Arabic *kasrah* and *dammah*, as stated in authentic books, are being mentioned below. Stop misreading these in the Holy Qur'an, in the wordings of all your daily prayers and in every kind of *du'a*.

Rule 32

Read the letters with a *kasrah* beneath these like this: *li-llah-i* لِلّٰهِ; *ihdina* اِهْدِنَا; *rahim-i* رَحِيمِ; *malik-i* مَالِكِ; *bi-llah-i* بِاللّٰهِ; *sall-i* صَلِّ; *bi-hamd-i-ka* بِحَمْدِكَ

Rule 33

Read the letters with a *dammah* over these like this: *Al-hamd-u* اَلْحَمْدُ; *na'bud-u* نَعْبُدُ; *a'udh-u* اَعُوْذُ; *kufuw-an* كُفُوْا; *jaddu-ka* جَدُّكَ; *as-salam-u* اَلْسَلَامُ; *huw-allah-u* هُوَ اللّٰهُ

Rule 34

If an Arabic word has a *ي* in it and the preceding letter is with *fathah*, read it like *'alai-him* عَلَيْهِمْ; *ghair-il-maghdub-i* غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوْبِ; *quraish-in* قُرَيْشٍ; *kaif-a* كَيْفَ; *kaid-u-hum* كَيْدُهُمْ; *tair-an* طَيْرًا

Rule 35

If an Arabic word has a *و* in it and the preceding letter is with a *fathah*, read it like *khauf-in* خَوْفٍ; *tawas-au* تَوَاصَوْا; *sauf-a* سَوْفَ; *qaum-un* قَوْمٌ

Lesson 14

Correct Spelling

In every language words are written separately; and words make sentences. To break the words of a sentence so as to join the last syllable of one word to the first syllable of the next word will be height of ignorance. In the recitation of the Qur'an it amounts to disrespecting the Holy Book, as explained and illustrated in the Foreword to this book.

The Holy Qur'an can be correctly read only if each word of a verse is read separately. You can read each word of a verse fully and separately only if you can spell it separately – and you can properly spell a complete word only if you know where it begins and at what letter it ends and, in the case of a multi-syllable word, also recognise its different syllables.

You can learn to do all this in two ways. One of these is to learn the Arabic language fully before reading the Qur'an. But in this age not every Muslim can be expected to take so much trouble and spend so much time for the sake of religion.

The other way out is to evolve rules for the recognition of a full word or its syllable so that each word could be properly spelt. Such rules have not so far been framed. The result is that it has become a common practice to read the Qur'an by spelling its words wrongly and irregularly and to break or join Qur'anic words unsystematically. Respectable Qur'an-memorisers and reciters – both the teachers and the taught – all are used to all this, so much so that even some *qaris* read the Qur'anic verses by wrongly joining their different words. All these problems are there due to want of correct spelling rules.

The teachers teach the Qur'an to their young pupils without following any rules and with wrong spellings, and the pupils get used to those spellings.

Long ago a learned Arabic-knowing *hafiz* had told this author how in his childhood he was taught by his teacher to spell *wahuwa* وهو as *wahu-wa* and that he had got so accustomed to treating *wahu* as one and *wa* as another syllable that fifty years after memorising the Qur'an, reading it for hundreds of times and even studying Arabic language he would still occasionally read it as *wahu-wa*.

Similarly, some other sincere friends of this author – including scholars and memorisers of the Qur'an – have narrated how they had during childhood picked up wrong spellings from their teachers and had become used to them.

So you can well appreciate how essential it is to correctly spell complete words for properly reading the Qur'an. To the extent it is possible, rules for correct spelling have been framed and given from the next Lesson onwards. Learn them well. By following these rules the teacher and the taught both can correct their numerous mistakes.

The teachers must always keep these rules in mind while teaching spellings to their pupils.

It is hoped that 95% of the mistakes will be eliminated by following these rules.

Lesson 15

Prefix Letters

There are eight letters in Arabic which are used as prefix to some other words. While five of these – *alif*, *sin*, *fa*, *kaf* and *wau* – always have a *fathah* over these; *ba* is always with a *kasrah*; and *lam* can have both a *fathah* or a *kasrah*. So we have prefix letters of two categories as shown below :

A. *a* ; *sa* ; *fa* ; *ka* ; *la* ; *wa* اَ، سَ، فَ، كَ، لَ، وَ

B. *bi* ; *li* بِ، لِ

One or two – and sometimes even three – of these letters may be prefixed to independent words.

In the Arabic language each of these letters when prefixed to a word produces a particular meaning. The *و* among these is rather a complete word having its own meaning. All these have to be read separate from the main word that follows.

Now learn how to spell correctly words having any of these letters as a prefix.

Rule 36

If both the first and the second letters of a word are vowelised and the first of these, having a *fathah* on it, is one of the prefix letters – leave it out, spell the rest of the word, and then add the prefix letter at the beginning. If it is not a prefix letter it will form part of the spelling of that word as a whole.

Note:– While separating the prefix-letter from the rest of the word, do not do so with a jerk.

Caution

There are in the Holy Qur'an thousands of words having a prefix-letter at their beginning. All these are to be spelt as per Rule 36 above. Before seeing examples you must note an important point.

Most Arabic words are derivatives from some roots which are at least three-lettered – sometimes four-lettered – and from each such root we may have a large number of derivatives. For instance :

from *alif / mim / ra* = *amara* أَمَرَ ;

amirun-a أَمِيرُونَ ; *amar-na* أَمَرْنَا

from *fa / sin / dal* = *fasada* فَسَدَ ; *fasada* فَسَادَ *fasadata* فَسَدَتَا

from *sin / jim / dal* = *sajada* سَجَدَ ; *sajdat-un* سَجْدَةٌ ; *sajidin-a* سَاجِدِينَ

from *kaf / fa / ra* = *kafaru* كَفَرُوا ; *kafirun-a* كَافِرُونَ *kafartu-m* كَفَرْتُمْ

In the derivatives from each of these roots given above the first letter – *a*, *fa*, *sa* and *ka* respectively – is part of the root, and not a prefix-letter. This may be identified by noting that if it is separated from the root, the root will be left with two letters only, whereas every root has at least three letters.

Besides this, in some other ways also certain words may have at their beginning an *alif* which is not a prefix-letter – e.g., in *a'udh-u* أَعُوذُ , *arad-a* أَرَادَ and *akhaf-a* أَخَافَ the initial *alif* is part of the root.

Thus in the Holy Qur'an you will find numerous words beginning with any of the letters shown above as prefix-letters

but in which those letters are not prefix. These cases may be regarded as exceptions to Rule 36 above. Along with the examples of prefix-letters – which are to be uttered separately – we will also give below conspicuously some such exceptions.

There are more words in the Holy Qur'an beginning with a non-prefix *alif* than those beginning with a non-prefix ل، ف، س، و. If any such word is not found in our exceptions to Rule 36, do consult some expert.

Do not be annoyed by the large number of examples of and exceptions to Rule 36. For some days to begin with carefully read the exceptions and apply Rule 36 to the rest of the words. Gradually you will yourself be able to distinguish between prefix-letters and root-letters. This is also a miracle of the Qur'an which this author has personally experienced while teaching the Qur'an to his children.

Examples-I [ا as prefix]

a-ra'ait-a أَرَأَيْتَ ; *a-lam tara* أَلَمْ تَرَ ; *a-lam yaj'al* أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ ; *a-ja'alt-um* أَجَعَلْتُمْ

Exceptions:– *abad-an* أَبَدًا ; *aba* أَبِي ; *abi lahab* أَبِي لَهَبْ ; *ajal-un* أَجَلْ ; *ahad-un* أَحَدٌ ; *ahall-a* أَحَلَّ ; *ahat-a* أَحَاطَ ; *akhadh-a* أَخَذَ ; *arada* أَرَادَ ; *afa'a* أَفَاءَ ; *asab-a* أَصَابَ ; *ata'na* أَطْعَمَنَا ; *a'add-a* أَعَدَّ ; *a'udh-u* أَعُوذُ ; *amadd-a* أَمَدَّ ; *ahya* أَحْيَى ; *amat-a* أَمَاتَ ; *ana* أَنَا

Examples-II [س as prefix]

sa-yasla سَيَصْلِي ; *sa-ya'lamun-a* سَيَعْلَمُونَ ; *sa-nuqri'uk-a* سَنُقْرِئُكَ

Exceptions : – *sajad-a* سَجَدَ ; *sabaq-a* سَبَقَ ; *s'al-a* سَأَلَ ; *salaf-a* سَلَفَ ; *saqar-a* سَقَرَ ; *salak-a* سَلَكَ ; *sakan-a* سَكَنَ ; *sahab-an* سَحَابًا ; *sawa'u-n* سَوَاءٌ

Examples-III [ف as prefix]

fa-aba فَأَبَى ; *fa-athar-na* فَأَثَرْنَ ; *fa-sabbih* فَسَبِّحْ ; *fa-sall-i* فَصَلِّ ; *fa-wail-un* فَوَيْلٌ ; *fa-idha* فَإِذَا ; *fa-ja'al-a-hum* فَجَعَلَهُمْ ; *fa-dhalik-a* فَذَٰلِكَ ; *fa-nada* فَنَادَى ; *fa-qal-a* فَقَالَ ; *fa-hu-wa* فَهُوَ

Exceptions:- *fatah-a* فَتَحَ ; *farad-a* فَرَضَ ; *f'al-a* فَعَلَ ; *fasad-a* فَسَدَ ; *falaq-a* فَلَقَ ; *fata-ra* فَطَرَ ; *fatan-u* فَتَنُوا

Examples-IV [ل as prefix]

la-fi-khusr-in لَفِي خُسْرٍ ; *la-tarawunn-a* لَتَرَوُنَّ ; *la-tus'alunn-a* لَتُسْأَلُنَّ ; *la-yumbadhann-a* لَيُؤْبَدَنَّ

Exceptions:- *ladai-na* لَدَيْنَ ; *la'all-a* لَعَلِّيَ ; *laban-un* لَبَنٌ ; *laza* لَظِي ; *laqiya* لَقِيَ ; *lamas-na* لَمَسْنَا

Examples-V [ك as prefix]

ka-'asf-in ; *ka-lamh-in* ; *ka-ma'in* كَمَاءٍ ; *ka-mathal-i* كَمَثَلِ

Exceptions:- *katab-a* كَتَبَ ; *katam-a* كَتَمَ ; *kasab-a* كَسَبَ ; *kafar-a* كَفَرَ ; *kafa* كَفَى ; *kashaf-a* كَشَفَ ; *kawa'ib-a* كَوَاعِبَ

Examples-VI [و as prefix]

wa-iyyak-a وَإِيَّاكَ ; *wa-min-sharr-i* وَمِنْ شَرِّ ; *wa-lam-yulad* وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ; *wa-lam-yakull-a-hu* وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ ; *wa-tabb* وَتَبَّ ; *wa-ma kasab-a* وَمَا كَسَبَ ; *wa-ma-ra'ait-a* وَمَا رَأَيْتَ ; *wa-la'ana* وَلَكِنَّ ; *wa-liy-a din* وَلِي دِينٍ ; *wa-qina* وَقِنَا

Exceptions:- *wajad-a* وَجَدَ ; *warad-a* وَرَدَ ; *wasaq-a* وَسَقَ ; *watar-an* وَطَرَ ; *wa'ad-a* وَعَدَ ; *waqab-a* وَقَبَ ; *wahab-a* وَهَبَ ; *wabal* وَبَالَ

In the examples given above the prefix *wa* و means "and". Besides these, in the wordings of the prayers too read the prefix *wa* separate.

In *Surah al-Duha* سُورَةُ الضُّحَى in *wa-wajad-a-ka* the first وَ is a prefix and the next وَ is part of the root. Yet many read it as “*wawa-jadaka*”. This is wholly wrong. Read it as *wa-wajad-a-ka*.

Rule 37

Where two prefix-letters together precede a word the first letter of which is also vowelled, spell the word first and then add the two prefix- letters at the beginning.

Examples

a-fa-im-mat-a أَفْإِمَاتٌ ; *a-fa-tu'minun-a* أَفْتَوْمُنُونَ ; *fa-sa-yakfik-a-hum* فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمْ
a-wa-lais-a أَوْلَيْسَ ; *fa-sa-ya'lamun-a* فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ

Rule 38

If a word in which the first two letters are vowelled is preceded by the prefix ب or ل, spell the word first and then add the said prefix at the beginning.

Examples-I [ب]

bi-rabb-i-nnas-i بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ; *bi-rabb-il-falaq-i* بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ; *bi-hijarat-in* بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ
bi-ashab-il-fil بِحِجَارَةٍ

Exceptions:— *bitanah* بِطَانَةٍ ; *bida'ah* بِدَاعَةٍ

Examples-II [ل]

li-rabb-ik-a لِرَبِّكَ ; *li-rabb-ih-i* لِرَبِّهِ ; *li-ilaf-i* لِإِلَافٍ ; *li-yurau* لِيُرَوْ

Exceptions:— *lisan-in* لِلسَّانِ ; *lizam-an* لِزَامًا ; *libas-un* لِبَاسٍ *liqa'a* لِقَاءَ

Rule 39

Unlike the prefix-letters with a *fathah*, the prefix *bi* and *li* are never found together; but either of these may be seen with any of the prefix-letters with a *fathah*.

Example

In *bi-lisan-in* the ل is part of the root; it cannot be a prefix-letter since *bi* is a prefix and *bi* and *li* as prefix never appear together. Find *lisan-in* among the exceptions under Rule 38

Rule 40

When in any word two prefix-letters are found together – one with a *fathah* over it and the other with a *kasrah* beneath it – read both separate from the rest of the word.

Examples

a-li- rabbik-a أَلِرَّبِّكَ ; *la-bi-imam-in* لِيَامَامِ

Rule 41

Rarely when you find together two prefix-letters both with a *fathah*, and a third prefix-letter with a *kasrah*, read all three separate from the rest of the word.

Example

a-fa-bi-'adhab-i-na أَفَبَعَذَابِنَا

Lesson 16

Miscellaneous Spelling Rules

There is an Arabic word “*ana*” اَنَا which means “I” [single first person]. You will often find this word in the Qur’an. The final *alif* included in this word is never pronounced.

Rule 42

While spelling the word *ana* leave out its final *alif*; do not pronounce it after the ا and read it as if it were a ا with *fathah* over it.

Exception

There is only one exception where the final *alif* of *ana* is pronounced. For that see Rule 57 in Lesson 19.

The expressions “*lam*” لَمْ and “*lan*” لَنْ in Arabic mean “no”. But these are not independent words and are prefixed to other words to give a negative meaning. These are neither read nor spoken independently.

Rule 43

Whenever in the Qur’an you find the word لَمْ or لَنْ read it along with the following main word; do not read it separate.

Examples

lam-yalid لَمْ يَلِدْ ; *lam-yulad* لَمْ يُولَدْ ; *lan-tara* لَنْ تَرَى ; *lan-nu'min* لَنْ تُؤْمِنَ ; *lan-nasbir* لَنْ نَصْبِرَ ;

lan-taf'alu لَنْ تَفْعَلُوا

Caution

In *Surah al-Ikhlās* سُورَةُ الْإِخْلَاصِ, the expression *wa-lam-yulad* وَلَمْ يُولَدْ should never be read as “*walam-yulad*”. Here the initial و is a

prefix; leave it out and join the *lam* to *yulad*. In *Surah Fil* we find *a-lam-tara* اَلَمْ تَرَى and *a-lam-yaj'al* اَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ - in both of which the *alif* is a prefix-letter. Leave it out and join *lam* to *tara* and *yaj'al*. Never read "*alam*" in these words.

Rule 44

Wherever in the Qur'an you find any of the following short words, never join any of these to the preceding word - always read them along with the word that follows these.

ma مَا, *la* لَا, *ya* يَا, *in* إِنَّ, *an* أَنْ, *fi* فِي, *'an* عَنْ, *'am* أَمْ, *min* مِنْ, *'ala* عَلَى, *ila* إِلَى, *dh* ذُو, *dhi* ذِي, *dha* ذَا, *ulu* أُولُو, *uli* أُولِي, *'inda* عِنْدَ, *idh* إِذْ, *idha* إِذَا, *ya* يَا, *aiyuba* أَيُّهَا, *ya-aiyuba* يَا أَيُّهَا

Example-I

In *Surah al-Falaq* الفَلَق we find *min sharr-i ma-khalaq-a* مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ. This consists of four words. *Min* and *ma* among these are found in the above list. So read *min* with *sharr-i* and *ma* with *kalaq-a* - so as to read the whole as *min-sharr-i ma-khalaq-a*. Never read "*sharrima*."

Example-II

In *Surah Lahab* لَهَبْ we find *wa-ma-kasab-a* وَمَا كَسَبَ. This consists of three words. The initial *و* is a prefix, read it **separate**. Join *ma* to *kasab-a* spelling them separately and then add *wa* at the beginning. Read the whole as *wa-ma-kasab-a*.

In this very *Surah* there is *habl-un min-masad* [read as *habl-um mim-masad* حَبْلٌ مِّنْ مَّسَد]. Here *min* - which is covered by Rule 44 above - is not to be joined to *habl*; join it to *masad*. Reading it as "*hablummin - masad*" is quite wrong.

Lesson 17

Recognising Full Word

In the Introduction to this book you have read that unlike in English in Arabic it is not possible to join together all the letters of every word. So, without learning Arabic you cannot know where in the Holy Qur'an one word ends and another begins. Therefore you may join the last syllable of one word to the first of the following word. This will be quite wrong.

To save you from this folly Rules are being given below. Read these carefully and keep them in mind in order to avoid such mistakes.

Rule 45

Wherever you find two letters written separate from each other though these could have been easily joined together, you may conclude that a fresh word begins with the second of these letters – which has been deliberately not joined to the first. So read it as part of the next word.

Example-I

In *malik-i yaum-i-ddin* مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ the words *malik-i* and *yaum* could have been written as مَالِكِيَوْمِ الدِّينِ. But this has not been done in the Qur'an. It means that with the letter ي begins a new word [*yaum*]. Similarly, the م of *yaum* has not been joined to the *alif* of *al-din*, which means that *yaum* is one word and *al-din* another.

So, *malik-i yaum-i-ddin* مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ actually consists of three words – *malik* مَالِكِ, *yaum* يَوْم and *al-din* الدِّينِ.

Example-II

In *Surah Fatihah*, note the expressions *iiyak-a na'bud-u* إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ, *iiyak-a nasta'in* and *an'amt-a 'alai-him*. These could have been

written as اِيَّاكَعْبُدُ , اِيَّاكَنَسْتَعِينُ and اَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ; but this has not been done. Instead the ك in *iiyak-a* and the ت in *an'amt-a* are written in full. This means that *iiyak-a* and *an'amt-a* are complete words, separate from the next words. Read each of these words separately.

Note

If you keep this rule in mind, at numerous places in the Holy Qur'an you can yourself identify where one word ends and another begins.

In *Surah Zilzal* زُلْزَالِ we find the expression *auha laha*. A *qari* once told this author on inquiry that these were two words – “*au*” and “*halaha*”; whereas these are actually “*auha*” and “*laha*”. Note that the last letter of the first word could have been joined to the first letter of the second word; but it is not so. This is how we come to know these are two separate words.

Rule 46

Where at the end of a word a still و is followed by an *alif* which is never pronounced, note that the word ends there and the next word begins right thereafter.

Examples

qalu قَالُوا ; *fa-ya'bud-u* فَلْيَعْبُدُوا ; *aaman-u* آمَنُوا , *tawasau* تَوَاصَوْا

In *Surah al-'Asr* الْعَصْرِ there is *tawasau bil-haqq-i* تَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ. Since the final still و in *tawasau* is followed by a silent *alif*, note that the word ends there and *bil-haqq-i* is a separate word.

Note:– By a “silent” *alif* we mean here an *alif* which is written in a word but is never pronounced.

Rule 47

When on a certain letter there is *tanwin* of *fathah*, *kasrah* or *dammah*, the word ends there and the next word begins thereafter.

Examples

afwaj-an أَفْوَاجًا ; *habl-un* حَبْلٌ ; *ghasiq-in* غَاسِقٍ ; *hasid-in* حَاسِدٍ ; *kufurw-an* كُفْرًا ; *wail-un* وَيْلٌ ; *dhat-a lahab-in* ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ

Adjectival Prefix "Al"

The expression "al" is often prefixed to Arabic words. In many *Surahs* of the Qur'an you will find that *al-* is prefixed to the first word of a verse, its *alif* has a *fathah*, and it is pronounced in full – e.g., in *al-hamd-u* الْحَمْدُ. But, if *al-* is found in a word that appears in the middle of a verse the *alif* will have no *harakat* on it and will remain silent. The ل of *al-* in the latter case may be either still or silent, but it will never have a *harakat* on it.

Note that in *rabb-il-'alamin* رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ the ل of *al-* is still and is pronounced – but not so in *yaum-i-ddin* يَوْمَ الدِّينِ and in *ihdi-nassirat-a* إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ. In the latter expressions, the ل of *al-* being silent, the م of *yaum* in the first and the ن of *ihdina* in the other are joined straight to the د of *din* and the ص of *sirat-a* respectively.

In order to fully recognise the silent ل in an *al-*, take another example. In the names 'Abd-ul-Ghaffar عَبْدُ الْغَفَّارِ, 'Abd-ul-Jabbar عَبْدُ الْجَبَّارِ, 'Abd-ul-Karim عَبْدُ الْكَرِيمِ and 'Abd-ul-Majid عَبْدُ الْمَجِيدِ the lam of *al-* is pronounced – but not in the names 'Abdu-ur-Rahim عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ, 'Abd-us-Sattar عَبْدُ السَّتَّارِ, Nur-ud-Din نُورُ الدِّينِ and 'Abd-us-Samad عَبْدُ الصَّمَدِ. In the latter names the ل of *al-* is silent.

Rule 48

Wherever an adjectival *al-* is found, it means that a fresh word begins there, the word preceding it being complete in itself.

Examples

Allah-u al-ṣamad اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ; *rabb-i al-‘alamin* رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ; *ihdi-na al-sirat-a* اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ ; *ghair al-maghdub-i* غَيْرَ الْمَغْضُوبِ

[pronounced respectively as *Allah-u-ssamad* ; *rabb-il-‘alamin* ; *ihdi-na-ssirat-a* and *ghair-il-maghdub-i*]

Rule 49

Wherever you find the word لَمْ or لَنْ as explained under Rule 43 above, it means that a new word begins with it and the preceding word is complete in itself.

Lesson 18

The Script

As the script of the Qur'an is also special its ignorance will cause mistakes in its recitation. Therefore, some important points regarding this script are being given below.

In Lesson 12 on Rules of *Madd* you have already read about the small *alif*-signs appearing over or beneath, and a reverse *wau*-sign over, some letters. You will learn here how such letters are to be spelt and pronounced

Rule 50

Wherever an *alif*-sign is found over any letter, add the sound of *alif* to that letter.

Examples-I

In *Surah al-Fatihah* سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ, a small *alif*-sign appears four times – over the second ل in *lillāh-i*, on the ع in *‘alamin*, on the م in the word *a-rrahman* and also on the م in *malik-i*. Read all these letters with an *alif* sound [as *lā* لَا, *‘a* عَا, *ma* مَا]

Examples-II

a-nnaffasat-i أَلَنَفَّسَتْ ; *ya-aiyuha* يَا أَيُّهَا ; *a'taina-ka* أَعْطَيْنَاكَ ; *ashab-il-fil* أَصْحَابُ الْفِيلِ ; *a-ssalihah-i* أَلَصَّحَتْ ; *ilaf-i* إِيْلَفَ ; *dhalik-a* ذَلِكَ ; *ula'ik-a* هَؤُلَاءِ ; *hadha* هَذَا ; *khalidun-a* خَلِدُونَ ; *mala'ikat-u* مَلَائِكَةُ ; *haulā-i* هَؤُلَاءِ

In these, and in all other similar words, letters having a small *alif* over them are to be pronounced with the sound of a final *alif*.

Rule 51

Wherever an *alif*-sign is found beneath any letter add the sound of *ya* to that letter.

Example

In هـ there is a small *alif* beneath the letter ه ; this is why it is read as *bi-hi*.

Rule 52

Wherever there is a small reverse *wau*-sign on any letter, add the sound of و to that letter.

Examples

The words *mal-u-hu* مَالُهُ and 'ind-a-hu عِنْدَهُ are so read since there is the sign of a small reverse *wau* on the letter ه in both these words.

Rule 53

In some words a *wau* is written but not pronounced – e.g., in *ṣalū* صَلُوة and *zako* زَكُوَة. Note that in these words there is an *alif*-sign on the ل in the first and on the ك in the other, while the letter و in either of these has no *harakat* or *jazm* over it. Never pronounce such a و and read the letters having the *alif*-signs as per Rule 50 above.

Rule 54

Where a silent *alif* is preceded by a و, join the letter before the و, in accordance with its *harakat*, to that و and never utter the *alif* – whether you have to stop on that word or not.

Examples

qalu قَالُوا ; *amanu* آمَنُوا ; *tubu* تَوْبُوا ; *kanu* كَانُوا ; *fal-ya'bud-u* فَلْيَعْبُدُوا ; *la-tufsid-u* لَا تُفْسِدُوا ; *khalau* خَلَوْا ; *da'au* دَعَاوُا ; *tawasau* تَوَاصَوْا ; *li-yurau* لِيُؤْرُوا

Note that in all these words an *alif* appears at the end but is silent and the و preceding it is to be joined to the letters appearing immediately before it – which has a *dammah* in the first six and a *fathah* in the last four words.

Rule 55

Where the letter **ی** appears without any sign and the letter preceding it has the *alif*-sign over it, do not utter the sound of **ی** and read the letter having the *alif*-sign over it with the sound of a final *alif*.

Examples

In *Musa* مُوسَى; *adna* أَدْنَى and *a'la* أَعْلَى the letter **ی** is ignored in pronunciation since there is an *alif*-sign on the letters **س**, **ن** and **ل** respectively.

Lesson 19

Waqf and Wasl

Waqf means to stop for taking a breath; and *wasl* means to continue reading without so stopping.

Precaution demands that all Qur'an-readers should, while reading the Holy Book, have a *waqf* (stop) only where some sign of *waqf* is found and not to break the breath unnecessarily.

Often the *qaris*, *imams* and *hafizs* are however found having a stop in the middle of a verse, wherever they want, in order to take a breath – and they then repeat the word on which they took a breath, or the preceding word, to complete the verse. Not knowing Arabic or understanding the meaning of the verse, they some times make mistakes in so continuing the recitation.

Therefore, to avoid making a mistake in continuing the recitation an easy way is to inculcate the habit of having a stop to take a breath only where any stop sign is found in the Holy Qur'an.

If you keep on having *waqf* at all the prescribed stops like this, usually you will not need to take a breath in the middle of a verse ; and the risk of making a mistake in having a stop will be minimum.

Even after so much precaution if you must take a breath in the middle of a verse, you should complete the verse after repeating two or three words preceding the word on which the breath has broken.

Punctuation Signs

In the speech of every language the speakers stop at some and do not stop at some other places. Sometimes they stop shortly, and

sometimes for a longer duration. This is helpful in clearly understanding the speaker's meaning.

To make the true meaning of the Holy Qur'an properly understood, our learned men of the past have determined certain signs for stopping or not stopping during the recitation and for the different durations of permissible stops.

These signs are called *rumuz-i auqaf* رُمُوزِ اَوْقَاف (punctuation signs). The number of these signs as mentioned in authentic books is 16 to 17, or more, with some minor differences.

To follow all these signs may perhaps be difficult for you – and if you do not read the Holy Qur'an in accordance with each and every sign among these, probably there will be no harm.

Only those signs are therefore being given below which it is necessary for you to keep in mind and follow. If you do wish to learn also the signs left out here, you may consult some expert

1. Sign of a circle or the numeral five

Where a verse is complete the sign of a small circle [this is called end-circle] – or of the numeral five in Arabic – is given there. This sign indicates that the verse is complete. So wherever you find this sign, you should stop and take a breath.

2. Sign of the letter م [or half م]

This is the sign of an obligatory stop. Wherever you find a م or half م, you must stop.

If you do not stop at this sign there is a grave risk that the meaning of the verse may be distorted. You must therefore break your breath and stop on such a sign.

3. Sign of the letter ط

This is the sign of an absolute stop. Not stopping at this sign causes the risk of some times changing the meaning. Therefore at the sign of the letter ط too you should stop.

4. Sign of the letter ج

This is the sign of a permissible stop. Not stopping at this sign is allowed, but stopping is better.

5. Sign of the letters لا

This sign may be either found at the end of a verse on or inside an end-circle or over the Arabic numeral five, or may be standing by itself with no other sign with it.

Wherever there is a لا sign at the end of a verse on or inside an end-circle or over a numeral five, you have the option of stopping or not stopping there.

Where without any other sign a small لا sign appears a little after any word, you must never stop there; if you do, there is a risk of the meaning being changed.

6. Saktah, sin س or waqfah

Where the word *saktah* سَكْتَه or *waqfah* وَقْفَه is written, or a small letter س is found, you should have a pause there – but do not break the breath. Some experts say that the pause on a *waqfah* should be longer than on the *saktah*, without breaking the breath in either case.

7. Mu'anaqah

Three triangular dots are sometimes given on two different words in the same verse. These are called *mu'anaqah* مُعَانَقَه – and

this word or its abbreviation [مع] may be found written on the margin. This means that you have to stop at one or the other of these two points – but not on both.

Example

In *Surah al-Qadr* الْقَدْر are found three triangular dots after *amr-in* أَمْرٍ , and then again after *salam-un* سَلَامٌ. Here, one option is to stop at *amr-in* and read “*min kull-i amr. Salam-un hiya hatta ...*”

The other option here is to stop not at *amr-in* but at *salam-un* so as to read “*min kull-i amr-in salam. Hiya hatta*”

8. Qif

This sign قِفْ means that stopping here is preferable. You should better have a stop at this sign.

Rule 56

If there is a *harakat* – *fathah* , *kasrah*, *dammah* -- on the last letter of the word at which you want to have a stop, treat that letter as still and do not utter the *harakat*.

Example

In *Surah al-Fatihah* الْفَاتِحَةِ there are seven verses. The first verse ends at ‘*alamin-a* عَلَمِينَ. The second verse ends at *rahim-i* رَحِيمٍ. After both ‘*alamin-a* عَلَمِينَ and *rahim-i* is found a لا sign with a circle. If you have to stop at ‘*alamin-a* and *rahim-i*, do not utter the *fathah* on the ن in ‘*alamin-a* and on the *kasrah* of م in *rahim-i* ; treat these letters as still so as to read ‘*alamin* and *rahim*, and break the breath.

In the third verse on the last word *din-i* is found the absolute-stop sign ط – where one must stop. So, you should make the ن of *din-i* still so as to read it as *din*, stop there and break your breath.

If you do not want to stop at 'alamin-a in the first verse and at rahim-i in the second verse, and wish to join both these verses with the third verse, you have to join the fathah of u in 'alamin-a to the j of ar-rahman so as to read 'alamin-a-rrahman-i, and should clearly utter the kasrah of r in rahim-i in the second verse. Then read the third verse, dropping the kasrah on u in din-i and having a waqf there, i.e., stopping and taking a breath. Thus you have read three verses together.

After this, the fourth verse ends with iyyak-a nasta 'in-u اِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِيْنُ. Have a waqf at nasta 'in-u – i.e., treat u of nasta 'in-u as still, stop and take a breath.

The fifth verse begins with ihdina. Never try to join the fourth verse to the fifth verse, as there is a risk that you may make a mistake.

Caution

You have read above that stopping and taking a breath is called waqf – there is no waqf without taking a breath. But the imams leading obligatory prayers, especially the hafizs in the taravih, are often found making the last letter in the last word of a verse still and reading the next verse without taking a breath. This is wrong and quite against the rule.

If there is a hurry, the easier way will be to utter the harakat of the last letter in a word and join it to the next word of the next verse. But, for this the hafizs will have to remember what haarkat is there on the last letter of the last word in a verse and utter it clearly ; otherwise there may be a mistake.

Similarly, whoever does not stop at the sign ۞ with an end-circle or the numeral five and proceeds – i.e., wishes to read in

continuation – must clearly utter the *harakat* of the last letter of the verse.

Some *hafizs* and Qur'an-readers have developed the bad habit of making the last letter of the last word of any verse still and begin reading the next verse without taking a breath. This should not be done.

Note:- While reading *Surah Ikhlas* some *imams* make still the *ā* of *Allah-u-ssamad-u* and then, without breaking breath, proceed to read *lam-yalid*. This is against the rule. You should either stop at *samad* by treating its *ā* as still and have a pause, or pronounce the *dammah* of *ā* and without break read *lam-yalid*.

Rule 57

If by compulsion of a break in the breath you have to stop in the middle of a verse, read the word on which you stop exactly as it is written in the Qur'an; and then to continue the recitation read that word again as it is to be properly read.

Example

You have been told under Rule 46 in Lesson 16 that the ending *alif* in *ana* is never pronounced. But, if you break your breath at an *ana* read it in full including the sound of the *alif*, then to continue repeat *ana* without pronouncing *alif* and read on.

Caution

As an exception, never pronounce – not even under Rule 57—the *alif* in those words of the Qur'an which are listed in Lesson 20.

Rule 58

Where you have to stop at a round *ō* – which is written like a *o* but with two dots over it – read this *ō* like a *o*.

Example

In *Surah al-Humazah* هُمَزَةُ the last word in the first verse is *lumazat-i* لَمَزَةٌ. To stop at this word make the ending ة still and read *lumazah* لَمَزَةٌ.

Rule 59

If the last letter of the word at which you have to stop has a *tanwin* over it, make that letter still and do not utter the *tanwin*.

Rule 60

If the word on which you have to stop has the *tanwin* of *fathah* over it but is not followed by an *alif*, replace the *tanwin* with an *alif*.

Note

In Lesson 2 on Terminology you have read that in the Arabic script after a letter having the *tanwin* of *fathah* ordinarily an *alif* is written. But, if a letter ends with *hamzah* and the *hamzah* has a *tanwin* of *fathah*, no *alif* is written after such a *hamzah*.

Example

If you have to stop at *nisa'a-n* نِسَاءٌ, replace the *tanwin* of *hamzah* with *alif* and read *nisa'a-a* نِسَاءٌ ا.

Caution

In the famous marriage-sermon there is a verse having the word *nisa'a-n* نِسَاءٌ. Some *qaris* are found making the *hamzah* still to stop and read it as *nisa'* نِسَاء'. This is wrong. The *hamzah* here has the *tanwin* of *fathah*; so to stop at it an *alif* should be added to the *hamzah* so as to read it as *nisa'a-a* نِسَاءٌ ا.

Rule 61

Where following a لا sign with an end-circle or the numeral five the next word is prefixed with an adjectival *al-* – or there is a word like *alladh-i* الَّذِي, *alladhin-a* الَّذِينَ, *allat-i* الَّتِي, etc. – and you have to stop at the said sign, read the still *alif* of *al-* or *alladhi*, etc. with a *fathah* and join it to the next verse.

Example-I [*al-*]

In *Surah al-Fatihah* سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ the first verse ends with '*alamin-a* and a لا sign with an end-circle is found there. Thereafter, in the next verse the first word is *a-rrahman-i* in which the *alif* of the adjectival *al-* is still. So, if you stop at the first verse, the ن of '*alamin-a* will have to be treated as still. Now pronounce a *fathah* over the *alif* of *a-rrahman-i* and read the second verse as *A-rrahman-ir-rahim*.

Example-II [*alladhi*, etc.]

The fourth verse in *Surah al-Nas* سُورَةُ النَّاسِ ends with *khannas-i* خَنَاسٍ and a لا sign with an end-circle is found there. Thereafter, the fifth verse begins with *alladhi* الَّذِي. So, if you have to stop at the fourth verse, make the س of *khannas-i* still, stop and take a breath – and then utter a *fathah* on the *alif* of *alladhi* so as to read it as *khannas* خَنَاسٌ..... *Alladhi*.

Rule 62

Where at the end of a verse below an end-circle with a لا sign is found a small ن with *kasrah* that joins it to the next verse, but you stop at the first verse, ignore the ن and in the first word in the next verse utter a *fathah* on the still *alif* of the adjectival *al-* or *alladhi*.

Example

In *Surah al-Humazah* سُورَةُ الْهُمَزَةِ the first verse ends with the word *lumazah* لُمَزَةٌ. There is a لا sign with an end-circle after it, and near it is a small ن with *kasrah* joining the first verse to the next. There, if you do not join the two verses and stop at the first verse by reading *lumazah*, ignore that small ن and read *Alladhi* by uttering a *fathah* on the still *alif* of *alladhi*, so as to begin the next verse with *Alladhi* الَّذِي.

Lesson 20

Be Careful :

Where *Alif* is Never Read

In the Holy Qur'an at different places there are some such words which have an *alif* that is never pronounced – neither while having a *waqf* nor otherwise.

A Table showing these words is being given below with proper references to the Chapters and verses of the Qur'an.

While reading the Qur'an, when you reach these particular words keep it in mind that you must not pronounce the said *alif* in any of these.

It is better for you to find out each of these words with the help of the Table and put a mark on the margins in your copy of the Holy Qur'an, in order to be careful that you do not have to pronounce an *alif* there.

In some copies of the Holy Qur'an you will find a small circle-mark over the silent *alif* in all such places.

You have already read under Rule 46 in Lesson 17 about the silent *alifs* that are never to be pronounced. Remember that the *alifs* in the places given in this Table – each one of which is also silent and is not to be pronounced – are in addition to those other silent *alifs*.

Note: In the Table below the sequence in each entry is Chapter [*Surah*] of the Qur'an, its verse number and the correct expression in English and Arabic scripts – in the latter with a small circle sign on each silent *alif*.

TABLE

1.	2:237	<i>au-ya'fuwa</i>	أَوْ يَغْفُورًا
2.	3:144	<i>afa-im-mata</i>	أَفَا بِن مَّاتَ
3.	3:158	<i>la-ilallah-i</i>	لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
4.	5:29	<i>an-tabu'a</i>	أَنْ تَبُوءَ أ
5.	7:103	<i>mala'ih-i</i>	مَلَائِكُهُ
6.	9:47	<i>la-auda'u</i>	وَلَا أَوْضَعُوا
7.	11:68	<i>thamud-a</i>	ثَمُودًا
8.	13:30	<i>li-tatluw-a</i>	لِيَتْلُوا
9.	18:14	<i>lan-nad'uw-a</i>	لَنْ نَدْعُوا
10.	18:23	<i>li-shai-in</i>	لِشَيْءٍ
11.	18:38	<i>lakinn-a</i>	لَكِنَّ
12.	27:21	<i>la-adhbahann-a-hu</i>	لَا أَذْبَحْنَهُ
13.	25:38	<i>thamud-a</i>	ثَمُودًا
14.	29:38	<i>thamud-a</i>	ثَمُودًا
15.	30:39	<i>li-yarbuw-a</i>	لِيَرْبُوا
16.	36:68	<i>la-ila-l-jahim</i>	لَا إِلَى الْجَحِيمِ
17.	40:4	<i>li-yablu-wa</i>	لِيَبْلُوا
18.	47:31	<i>wa-nabluw-a</i>	وَنَبْلُوا

19.	49:11	bi's-al-ism-u	بِسْمِ الْإِسْمِ
20.	77:16	qawarir-a	قَوَارِيرًا

The Section (*ruku'*) in the Qur'an

Wherever a *ruku'* ends, on the margin is found a big letter ع with one figure on top of it, another inside and a third below it. The figure on top of the ع indicates the serial number of the *ruku'* of the *Surah*. The figure below the ع shows the serial number of the *ruku'* of the *Juz*. The figure inside the ع indicates the total number of verses in the *ruku'*.

A *ruku'* always ends at the end of a verse; and to indicate this the end-circle following that verse will have a small letter ع on it. The number of verses given inside this ع shows the total verses in a *Surah* – not in a Part (*Juz*) of the Qur'an.

Note:

In the original Urdu work the references in this Table, as also in that in the next lesson, are to the *Ruku'* (Section) of the relevant *Juz* (Part) of the Qur'an and its verse nos. These have been replaced in the English version with references to *Surahs* and their verse nos— which method is much simpler. Yet the information given above in the original work about the Sections in the Qur'an is useful and has been retained here.

Lesson 21

Beware :

Harakat Change may cause Blasphemy

In the Arabic language the harakat - fathah, kasrah, dammah - are of great importance.

A particular harakat on a letter may give one meaning, but a different harakat on the same letter may give another.

Certain propositions found in some other languages have no parallels in Arabic; the purpose of those propositions is served in this language by using a proper harakat on the last letter in a particular word.

Also, the pronouns - *ana* أَنَا (I), *nahn-u* نَحْنُ (we), *ant-a* أَنْتَ (you), *huw-a* هُوَ (he), etc. - are not always necessarily used; their purpose may also be served in Arabic by using the proper harakat on particular letters in a sentence.

For these reasons, in the Arabic change of a harakat may change the very meaning of a sentence or clause.

For example, in *Surah Fatihah* the words *an'amt-a 'alai-him* أُنْعِمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ mean "thou [God] rewarded them". Here if some one puts a dammah in the place of fathah over the ت in the first word and reads it as "*an'amtu*", it will mean "I rewarded them" - and to say this will be blasphemy.

Similarly, there are other situations too where a little change in the harakat will twist the meaning - and the difference may be of *iman* (belief in religion) and *kufr* (disbelief in religion = blasphemy).

Therefore, while reading the Qur'an it is very necessary to ensure that all letters and words are read fully correctly -

otherwise instead of spiritual reward the reader might face the risk of committing a sin.

In the Holy Qur'an many situations are so delicate that a change in a *harkat* there – or other similar small mistakes – may produce a meaning to utter which will amount to *kufr*. All such situations are being mentioned in the Table below with proper references.

After locating these situations you may put some indicative word – e.g., *ma'adhallah* مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ (God save) – on the margins in your copy of the Qur'an. The advantage of this will be that when you reach such a situation the expression *ma'adhallah* مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ written by you will caution you and you will not commit a mistake.

Note:- The sequence in each entry in the table is: *Surah* no., *ayat* no., correct Arabic expression and the mistake that may cause blasphemy.

TABLE

1.	1: 5	إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ reading <i>iyak-a</i> [without <i>tashdid</i> on ي]
2.	1:5	أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ reading <i>an'amtu</i> [<i>dammah</i> on ت]
3.	2:124	إِذَا ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبَّهُ reading <i>Ibrahim-u rabba-hu</i>
4.	2:251	قَتَلَ دَاوُدُ جَالُوتَ reading <i>Da'ud-a Jalut-u</i>
5.	2:255	اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ reading <i>madd</i> on the <i>alif</i> of اللَّهُ

6. 2: 261 وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ
reading *fathah* over ع of يُضَاعِفُ
7. 4:165 مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ
reading *fathah* on ش and ذ
8. 9: 3 بَرِيءٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَرَسُولُهُ
reading *kasrah* on ل in *rasul-u-hu*
9. 17:15 وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ
reading *fathah* on ذ
10. 20:121 وَعَصَىٰ آدَمُ رَبَّهُ
reading *Adam-a rabb-u-hu*
11. 21:87 إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ
reading *kunt-a* [*fathah* on ت]
12. 26:194 لَتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ
reading *mundharin-a* [*fathah* on ذ]
13. 37:72 وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا فِيهِمْ مُنذِرِينَ
reading *mundharin-a* [*fathah* on ذ]
14. 48:27 لَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ
reading *sadaqallah-a rasul-u-hu*
15. 59:24 هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ
reading *musauwar-u* [*fathah* on و of الْمُصَوِّرُ]
16. 69:37 لَا يَأْكُلُهُ إِلَّا الْخَاطِئُونَ
reading *khata'un* [*fathah* on ط]
17. 73:16 فَعَصَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ الرَّسُولَ
reading *fir'aun-ar-rasul-u*
18. 77:41 إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي ضَلَالٍ وَعَيُونٍ
reading *zalal-in* [*fathah* on ض]
19. 79: 45 إِنَّمَا أَلَتْ مُنْذِرٍ
reading *mundhar-u* [*fathah* on ذ]

Lesson 22

Prefatory Invocations

1. Before beginning to recite the Holy Qur'an say :

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

A'udh-u billah-i min-shshaitan-ir-rajim

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Bismillah-i-rrahman-ir-rahim

2. While reciting the Qur'an if a new *Surah* begins, say only *Bismillah-ir-rahman-ir-rahim* ; do not say *a'udh-u billah*.
3. During the recitation of Part 10 of the Qur'an [that begins with *Wa'lamu*] before *Surah Taubah* do not say even *Bismillah-ir-rahman-ir-rahim*. Some '*ulama* have said that if recitation is started with the *Surah Taubah* itself, then *A'udh-u billah-i min-a-shshaitan-i-rrajim* and *Bismillah-i-rrahman-i-rrahim* both will be said.
4. If you have to unavoidably talk during the recitation of the Qur'an, have a pause where there is an end-circle of some verse, or the numeral five, and then talk. Do not talk by abruptly stopping in between a verse. After you finish talking, before resuming the recitation it is necessary to say *A'udh-u billah-i min-a-shshaitan-i-rrajim* - while in such cases *Bismillah-i-rrahman-ir-rahim* may or may not be said.

Lesson 23

Touching and Reading the Holy Book

1. For a man or woman who is unclean – i.e., for whom it is obligatory under religious rules to take a bath – it is not permissible to either touch or read the Holy Qur'an, nor even reading it from memory without touching it. Reading even one verse is not permissible; it is wholly prohibited and sinful.

Note: Consult someone educated in religious rules as to the situations in which taking a bath becomes obligatory.

2. It is not permissible for any man or woman, or a boy or girl who has attained puberty, to touch the Holy Qur'an without taking wudu (ablution).

Those learning the Qur'an are however allowed by the 'ulama to hold the Qur'an for the sake of learning even without taking wudu.

3. For a person for whom it is not obligatory by religious rules to take a bath it is permissible to recite the Qur'an or its verses from memory even without ablution. It is however better to recite them after having ablution.
4. If somebody says hello to a person who is busy reading the Holy Qur'an, the reader should respond by a sign and not by speech.

5. It is very essential that the Qur'an be recited with the Arabic *makharij* of letters, Arabic *harakat* and the Arabic way of delivery. *Lahn-i-jali* (patent misreading) in reciting the Qur'an is *haram* (absolutely prohibited and therefore sinful), and *lahn-i-khafi* (latent misreading) is reprehensible. *Lahn-e-jali* and *lahn-e-khafi* have both been explained in Lesson 4.
6. It is appreciable to recite the Holy Qur'an in a good voice and nice accent, but do not sing or give it a musical colour. That is a great sin.

