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

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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-Haj 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ب</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ت</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ج</td>
<td>J</td>
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<tr>
<td>د</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>ل</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>م</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ن</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ه</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### II. Arabic consonants denoted by two English letters:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ث</td>
<td>TH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>خ</td>
<td>KH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>د</td>
<td>DH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ش</td>
<td>SH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غ</td>
<td>GH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### III. Arabic consonants denoted by underlined English letters:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ح</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>س</td>
<td>S</td>
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<tr>
<td>ض</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ط</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ظ</td>
<td>Z</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Arabic letters denoted by diacritics:

\[ \text{‘AIN} = (‘) \text{ [opening single quote mark]} \]
\[ \text{HAMZAH} = (‘) \text{ [closing single quote mark]} \]

V. Arabic vowels denoted by English letters:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Middle/Terminal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>א</td>
<td>ALIF = A A [sound as English far/jar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ו</td>
<td>WAU = W U [sound as English mood/noon]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>י</td>
<td>YA = Y I [sound as English been/seen]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VI. Arabic *barakat* denoted by English letters:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fathah</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>[sound as English fun/run unlike fan/ran]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kasrah</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>[sound as English bit/sit – unlike bet/set]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhammah</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>[sound as English put/foot]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>madd</td>
<td>A, I, U written double</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

1. The Arabic ت is traditionally denoted in English as T, د 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 fatbah are denoted as \( AI \) if followed by a \( \mathcal{S} \) [to sound like in English \( aee \)], and as \( AU \) if followed by a \( \mathcal{J} \) [to sound as in English \( aoo \)]. Letters with kasrah if followed by a wau 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 \( \text{wa} \) and \( \text{ra'a}ta \). Now, a student who does not know the Arabic language can wrongly read these as “\( \text{wara-a}ta \)” regarding \( \text{wara} \) as one and \( \text{a}ta \) as the next word. He may possibly also read the whole as “\( \text{waraa}ta \)” 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 \( \text{ayat} \). 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 “\( \text{weha vewrit teneve rythin gont wopa pers} \)” the sentence will become absurd and the listeners will laugh at the reader.

\( \text{Juz (Part) IV} \) of the Holy Qur’an begins with the words \( \text{La} \) \( \text{tanalu} \) \( \text{البَرَّ} \) and \( \text{al-birra} \). A reader may think that these are two words – “\( \text{lantana} \)” and “\( \text{lulbirra} \)” – and regarding the last syllable \( \text{lul} \) in \( \text{tanalu} \) as the first syllable of the next word he may make an absurd and meaningless word “\( \text{lulbirra} \)”. While teaching his pupils a teacher may spell \( \text{lantana} \) together and \( \text{lulbirra} \) 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 \( \text{Surah Kafirun} \) people read an expression as “\( \text{Qul}ya \)”, though \( \text{Qul} \) \( \text{قُل} \) is one word and the word \( \text{ya} \) is to be joined to the next word so as to be read and taught as “\( \text{Qul ya ayyub-al kafirun} \)”. 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 \( ا, أ, إ \) are all pronounced like a ‘z’ in English; whereas in the Arabic language each of these letters has a different sound. The Arabic ص is taught to be pronounced as د by some teachers and as ج by others, though no original English letter carries the sound of the Arabic ص. Similarly, we have not been told of the phonetic difference between the letters ح and گ 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 حركات (short vowels), no attention is paid to how these are expressed in Arabic. Some people read as 
الحمدلله – instead of the correct 
الحمد الله.

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 \textit{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 \textit{tajwid} (art of Qur'anic recitation), but before beginning to read the Qur'anic text 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 \textit{tajwid} and \textit{qir'at} and that the two are not inter-dependent. Most readers of the Qur'an think that they are not \textit{qari} and need not therefore learn \textit{tajwid} and \textit{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.
Especially, 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'ân 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'ân tells us and to adhere to its teachings throughout life.

(ii) Whatever blessings Allah has bestowed on us the Qur'ân 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'ân 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'ân. In that case if you find that you make some mistakes in reading and reciting the Qur'ân, do correct the same. A correct reading of the Qur'ân is a form of great 'ibadat (worship).

(iii) Try to read the Qur'ân 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'ân, 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'ân 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 Prophehood, 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 Muhammad [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 Thabit, 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 engrained in their hearts and memorised by their tongues. The buffaz (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 taravib 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 Muhammad 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 نَزَّلْنا الْذُّكَرَ وَإِنَّاهُ 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** حرف: letter [plural: *buruf* بروف]

ii) 
**harakat** حركَتَة: short- vowel sign

\[ \text{fathah} \ फ़ात्मा, \text{kasrah} \ कसर्ता or \text{dammah} \ دَمْمَة \]

[plural: *harakat* حركَتَات]

iii) 
**harf-i mutaharrik** حَرْفٌ مُتَحَرِّرٌ: a letter with any of the **harakat** حركَتَات

iv) 
**harf-i sakin** حَرْفٌ سَاكِنٌ: a still letter, one with none of the **harakat** حركَتَات denoted by a **jazm** جَزْم [small dal دال or circle]

v) 
**jazm** جَزْمُ: a sign like a small dal د or circle denoting a still letter having none of the **harakat** حركَتَات

vi) 
**tanwin** تَوْين: nunnation = sign of two **harakat** حركَات together – i.e., two **fathahs**, **kasrahs** or **dammahs** – giving the sound of nun ن

Note: In the Arabic script two **harakat** حركَات are put on a letter by adding an **alif** ā to it – except in the case of the letter **hamzah**، في السُّهْب (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 **mushaddad** مَشْدَد (doubled in sound).
viii) ghunnah غُنْثة: twang = nasalised pronunciation of the letters م and ن; there is no other nasal letter in Arabic

ix) huruf-i ʿillah خروف عللة: long vowels
    = letters alif ﺃ, wau و and ya ي

x) waqf وقف: this means to stop and have a breath – e.g., the short-vowel sign on the final nun ن in ʿalamin-a علمين is a fathah فتحة but it may be treated as a still letter in order to have a breath so as to read the word as ʿalamin علمين; where this is done we say we had waqf on ʿalamin-

xi) saktah : pause = to have a break in reciting the Qurʾan but without discontinuing the breath.

xii) makhraj : phonetic issue point
    = part of mouth from which a particular letter is uttered [plural: makharij]

xiii) sifat صفة: peculiarity of each of Arabic letters [plural: sifat صفات]

xiv) huruf-i halaqiah خروف حلقيّة: annular letters
    = six letters uttered from the throat – i.e., , ha ح, kha خ, ʿain ع, ghain غ, hamzah s and ha ه

xv) lahn-i jali لحن جلي and lahn-i khafi لحن خفي: patent and latent misreading; details of these terms may be seen in Lesson 4, infra

xvi) qalqašah قلقنة: thickening of letters in pronunciation; there are only nine such letters –kha خ, sad ص, dad ض, ta ط, za ذ, ghain غ, qaf ق [as per rules given in Lesson 5]; ra ر [Lesson 8] and lam ل in Allah الله and Allabhumma اللهم [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 – ڑ, ذ, ص, and ط – 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 أ and ه do exist in Arabic, but unlike in Urdu in Arabic أ never has a هـ or جـ on it – wherever in the Qur’an there is a هـ or جـ on a letter seeming like an أ, it is ه and not أ.

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 لحن (misreading).

Lahm is of two kinds – lahn-i jali لحن جلي (patent misreading) and lahn-i khafi لحن خفي (latent misreading).

(a) lahn-i jali لحن جلي

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 د 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* لحن خفي

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 *makrub* (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*

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 م. 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 ب. 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، ﺯ ﺤ ﺤ

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 ﺤ join the point of the tongue to the upper front teeth so as to break the breath and speak softly.
To utter ّ 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) ١

The letter ّ in English is uttered by joining the point of tongue to the root of the upper front teeth; but in Arabic ١ is different. Join the middle part of the tongue to the palate to pronounce the Arabic ١. Practise it well by adding alif at the beginning and utter it like that wherever it occurs in the Qur'an.

(iii) ٢، ٣

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 ٢ like an alif and the letter ٣ like ٠ in the Qur'an; that is a sin.

(iv) ٤، ٥

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 ٤ and ٥ come out of the upper part of the throat towards the mouth; ٣ and ٦ out of the middle part; and ٠ and ٧ out of the lower part (towards the chest).

This is why these six letters are called buruf-i halaqiah حُرُوفُ الحَلَقُّ (letters of the throat).
These three letters have the same *makharıj*. 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 *makharıj* of َد and ِج under headings (i) above. Do understand well the difference between the two. َد 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 ِج 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 ًاث and ًج. It is not difficult at all. Do not utter َد like a ج; sounds of these two letters differ a lot from one another. Do learn how to pronounce correctly the Arabic َد.

(vi) ص

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 جُز or َظ. The *makharaj* 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
\textit{dāw} [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 \textit{makḥrajb} of ص as stated above is mentioned in all books of authority; and the \textit{makḫrajd} is wholly different from it. But for one of its characteristics ض is closer to ظ and, when uttered from its correct \textit{makḫraj} and with all its \textit{sifat}, it sounds like a ظ.

(vii) ظ

To utter the Arabic letter ظ join the tongue-point to the root of the upper front teeth in the palate. It may be practised by adding an \textit{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 \textit{alif} before the letter.

Note:- The \textit{makḫraj} مَخْرَج of the letter ك is different. Those who read ك for a ق replace one Arabic letter with another. This is \textit{lahn-i jali} لحن جلي which in the reading of the Qur'an is a big sin.
Lesson 5

Characteristics of Arabic Letters

In the last Lesson the makharij مَخْارِج of many Arabic letters have been explained. Among these there are nine letters which cannot be accurately uttered simply by knowing their makharij مَخْارِج – 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 istila حُرُوف إِسْتِيْلَاء. 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 istila (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 *burūf isti‘la* خُرُوفَ اِسْتِعَلاءَ.

**Rule 1**

While uttering the *burūf mutbiqah* خُرُوف مُطِبَقَة from their true *makharij* مَخْارِج 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 *barakat* حَرَكَات or in a still form, for the readers’ convenience we give below examples of both separately.

Examples-I: [*burūf-i-mutbiqah* خُرُوف مُطِبَقَة with *barakat* حَرَكَات]

-salibin-a صَالِبِينٌ; dallin-a دَالِيْنٌ; a’tainaka أعْطَيْنَاكَ; dalimin-a دَالِيْمِينَ

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

-sa-yasla يُسَلِّى; nasrullah-i نَصْرُ اللَّهِ; wa-l-‘asr-i وَالْعَسْرِ; wa-drib وَادِرِب;

-at’am-a-hum أَطْعَمُهُمْ; mudlimun-a مُدَلِّيمُونَ

**Caution:**- If you do not properly utter the *burūf-i-mutbiqah* خُرُوف مُطِبَقَة 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 *burūf-i isti‘la* خُرُوف اِسْتِعَلاء the tongue is raised towards the palate but it does not cover the palate.
Rule 2

While uttering خ, غ, ع 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 خَرَكٌات] قانتين, غاثين, غاثين, غاثين, قانتين
khasirin-a خاضرین, qanitin-aro

Examples-II [where these letters are still] akhladah إخلدّه, almaghrib المغرِب, iqra’ إقرأ

Note:—Add an alif to any of the seven buruf-i isti’la هُروُف إستِغلالًا 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 سورة الفاتحة there is a three-word verse ihdina-sirat-al-mustaqim إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ. In the middle word, sirat, there are two buruf-i isti’la هُروُف إستِغلالًا—sad ص and ta ط—both of which are also buruf-i mutbiqah هُروُف مُطْبِقَة. Utter both of these from their correct makharij 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 *buruf-i qalqalah* حُرُوف فَقْلَلَة. These are ب, ط, د, ج, and ق.

The word *qalqalah* فَقْلَلَة 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* فَقْلَلَة. No letter in English has this particular characteristic.

**Rule 4**

When any of the five *buruf-i qalqalah* حُرُوف فَقْلَلَة is still – or has to be treated as still in order to have a *waqf* وَقَف – 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 الْفَلَق 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* فَقْلَلَة as has been explained above.

**Example-II [د]**

In *huw-allahu abad-un* هُوَ عَلَى أَحَد there is *tanwin* تَنْوِين on the د of *abad* أَحَد. If in order to stop at this you have to treat the د as still, utter it with a *qalqalah* فَقْلَلَة in the same way. Practise this with some expert of the subject in respect of each of the *buruf-i-qalqalah* حُرُوف فَقْلَلَة.
Lesson 6

Still Nun and Tanwin

In Lesson 2 on the Terminology you have learned that tanwin تُون٥٥ (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 تُون٥٥ is followed by one of the huruf-i halaqiah حُرُوفُ الحَلَائِقَة, read it clearly as a final ن [like in "run", "sun" in English].

Examples-I [ن]

wa-in-bakamt-a man-khaffat an'am-t-a; min-ghill-in

Examples-II [tanwin تُوت٥٥]

kufuw-an abad salam-un biya

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 of min من بَعْذ the ن of min من بَعْذ 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 تُوت٥٥]

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

The next rule applies to 15 Arabic letters – ت، ث، ج، ذ، ز، س، ظ، ف، ق، ك.
Rule 7

When a still ن or tanwin تَوْئِين is followed by any of the letters given above and it has a barakat, utter the ن or tanwin تَوْئِين with ghunnah غَنْتَه (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 juʿin مَنْ جُوِع the ن of min مَن is followed by a ج which is one of the fifteen letters covered by Rule 7. So, read the ن of min مَن with ghunnah غَنْتَه.

In this very Surah later comes min khauf-in مَنْ خَوَف where the ن is followed by a خ. Since خ is not covered by Rule 7 and is a barf-i halaqiah, as per Rule 5 above the ن of this min مَن will not be read with ghunnah غَنْتَه.

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 barakat 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 تَوْئِين to the one following it.

Example-I [ ra ر following nun ن ]

In min rabbi-him مَنْ رَبِّيْهُم the still ن of min مَن is followed by the ن of the next word, so it will become silent and the م of min مَن
will be joined to the ر of rabbi-him رَبِّهِمْ so as to read the two words as mir-rabbi-him.

Example-II [ل following ن]

In lam yakun-lahu لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهْ the ن of yakun يَكُنْ – being followed by the ل of lahu لَهْ will become silent and the ل of yakun يَكُنْ will be joined to the ل of lahu لَهْ 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 ill-allah. This is wholly wrong. As the still ن of an أَن 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 ashab-u al-la ilaha illallah.

Rule 9

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

Example-1 [still ن followed by ی]

In man yasha’u مَنْ يُشَاءُ the still ن of man مَنْ is followed by the ی of yasha’u مَنْ يُشَاءُ and will therefore be read as main-yasha’u مَمَنْ يُشَاءُ with ghunnah in both ن and ی read together.

Example-II [tanwin followed by م]

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

Example-III [still ن followed by و]

In min waq-in مَنْ وَاقِ 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 بَنْيَانَ, sinwan-un شَيْءٌ وَا ن, and qinwan-un ْقَيْنِوْانَ.

In the first two of these words the nun ن is followed by a ى, and in the other two by a و. Yet Rule 9 will not apply to these words – and so the ن will not be joined to the ى or و and there will be no ghunnah.
Lesson 7

Letters Mim and Nun

Rule 10

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

Examples-I [ double م]

lamma لَمَّا; Muhammad-in مُحْمَّدٌ

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

Examples-II [ double ن]

bi-rabb-i-nnas-i بِرَبِّ الْنَّاسِ; ilah-i-nnas-i إِلَهِ الْنَّاسِ; inna إِنَّ; anna أَن

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 mimṣ 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 nunṣ to be read as double ن and read with ghunnah.

Example-I [ م followed by م]

ilaikum mursalun-a إِلَيْكُمْ مُرْسَلُونَ

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

Example-II [ ن followed by ن]

in-nasha' إِنْ نُشَا
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*

*ma hum bi-mu’minin-a* مَا هُم بِمُؤْمِنِينَ

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 قَلْ رَبّ of qul قَلْ 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 قَلْ 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., بَلّ رَأَنَ We will find the pause sign س over the ل of بَلّ. So, you have to make a pause on بَلّ without breaking your breath and then proceed to say رَأَنَ.
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 رَبّ الْعَلَمِينَ 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 غَفُورُ رَحْمَٰم there is tanwin of dammah over the ر of ghafur and also a fathah on the ر of rabim. 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 وَالْحَرُ; abtar أَبْتَرُ; mursalin-a مُرْسَلِينَ; Qur’an-un قُرْآنَ
In the first two examples here there is a *fatḥah* 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 *fatḥah* 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* غَفُور 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 الْقَدْر if 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 *fatḥah* on it, the ر will be thickened.

Example-II [ر not to be thick ]

In *dhikr-un* ذَكْر 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* اللَّيْلَةُ الْقَدْر or *dhikr-un* ذَكْر, 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 ِ is still – or is treated to be still for the purpose of a stop – and it is preceded by a still َ, never thicken the ِ even if there be a fatb̄ah on the letter َ.

Example

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

Rule 18

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

Example

In ghair-il-maghdub-i غَيْرُ الْمَغْدُوبٍ and sudur-i-nnas-i صَدْورُ النَّاسِ the ِ in ghair and sudur has a kasrab; so do not thicken it.

Rule 19

Where ِ 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 kasrab under it do not read a thick ِ.

Examples

fa-shir فَاضِبٍ; shirk شِرِكٌ

In the first word ِ will not be read thick since it is still and the preceding َ has a kasrab below it. In the second word if you want to have a waqf and have therefore to treat َ as still, since the preceding letter has a kasrab, the ِ will not be read thick.
Rule 20

Rule 19 too has an exception. Where a still ر is preceded by a letter having a kasrəh 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

قیرطاس qirtas ;  بِیل-مِرْسَاد bil-mirsad ; ِیِرِسادَان irsad-an ; ِفِرِقْعَتْن firqat-un

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 kasrəh 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 ْاِم-یِرَتَابَو am-i-rtabu occurs ْاِمْ اِرْتَابَو اَیْرَتَابَو ا. 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 barakat over the tashdid. If there is a fathah or a dammah over it, read a thick ر; but not if it has kasrəh under it.

Example-I

In بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَانِ الرَّحِیْمِ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم there is a tashdid on the ر in both ۶-رَحْمَانَ ۶-رَحْمَانَ and ۶-رَحْیْمَ ۶-رَحْیْمَ,
and there is a *fathah* on both. So the َّ in both words will be read thick ignoring that the preceding vowelled letters in both words have a *kasrah* below.

**Example-II**

In *min sharr-il-waswas-i* ُشْرُ الْوُسْوَاس the preceding the َّ has a *fathah* over it, but َّ 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*” – which means that the *alif* has to be uttered in a depresed 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 َّ there.
Lesson 10

Allah and Allahumma

The letter lam ل is generally not thickened in utterance. In the words Allah الله and Allahu-ummah الله-هم 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 Allahu-ummah الله-هم has a fatbah 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 حَوَّلَ الله أَحَدٌ rasul-u-llah-1 رَسُولُ اللهٌ subhan-ak-ullahu-ummah سُبْحَانَ آلِ ﻋُلَىٰ ﻟُهُمْ

In huwa حَوَّلَ the ل has a fatbah over it, the ل in rasul رَسُولٌ was a dammah and the ل in subhan-aka سُبْحَانَ آلِ also a fatbah. In all three the ل will therefore be read thick.

Rule 24

When the vowelled letter preceding the ل of Allah الله or Allahu-ummah الله-هم has a kasrah below it, do not read a thick ل.
Examples

A‘udhu billah-i بِس۪مِ اللّٰهِ یَع۪وُدُّ بِاللّٰهِ ۡبِس۪مِ اللّٰهِ
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 ashab-u al-la ilaha ill-allah أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ لَا إِلَـّهَ إِلَّا اللّٰهَ. This is wholly wrong.

The ل is read thick only in Allah اللّٰهِ and Allabumma اللّٰهُمْ 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 *buruf-i isti‘laَ خَرُوجَة فِبِسْتِعَالَةَ* 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 اللهّم* 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 *buruf-i isti‘laَ* it shall be read thick. Give a somewhat round shape to the lips – the alif along with the preceding letter of *isti‘laَ* will get thickened.

Examples

*yukhadi’un-a بَحَتَّادُ عَوْنُ; saffat صَفْتُ; dallin-a قَلاَّئِينِ; ghasiq-in غَاصِقٌ; ta’if-un طَالِبِينِ; qal-a قالَ; zalimina طَالِبِينَِاءِ*

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 بِفْرَاقَ; raghibun-a رَاغِبُوْنَ; yura’un-a يَرَاغِفُوْنَ*
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 abad*  
*Subhan-ak-allahumm-a*  
*Rasul-u-llah-i*

Caution

As per Rules 25 to 27 only an *alif* is to be read thick; and *alif* never has any *barakat* on it. An *alif*-like letter with a *barakat* 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* زر
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 مالك, iyyak-a إياك and sirat-a صراط there is no sign; nor on the alif in the word nas-i ناس 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 أَلْحَمْدُ and ilah-i اَلله. 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 (اً) 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 (اً), ya (ي) and wau (و) respectively.

For instance, there are small signs like alif and wau on ّ in the words bih and lab, due to which these are read as bihi and labu. 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 tashdīd 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 ١، or ١ – 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 ١ with a kasrah on the preceding letter or a letter with a ya-sign below it, and where there is a still ١ 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 ١، or ١ 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; sha’a; u-la’ik-a َجاء، ُشاءاء، أُلْك
B. yadaa abi labab َيدا أَبا لَباب innaa a’rainaka َإنا أَغْتَبِب أَرَّى ’ala aal-i Muhammad-in ْعَلَى الْمُحْمَد َ

Examples-II [١ & its sign ]
A. sii’at سَينت Jِجِي
B. alladhii at’am-a-hum َالذِي أَطْعُمْهُم

Examples-III [٢ & its sign]
A. suu’-in سُوَء
B. mal-u-huu akhladah َمَالُه أَخْلَدَهَ
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’m-in-u*, 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’m-in-u*.

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 – َ،ِ or َٰ،ِّ،ِّ.

*Huruf-i muqatta‘ah*

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 *buruf-i muqatta‘ah*, every single letter among these has to be read in full.

Rule 31

On whatever letter in the *buruf-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 *buruf-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 *buruf-i muqatta‘ah* – e.g., *lam* (ل), *mim* (م) or a *sin* (س), etc. Those which in
English are only two-lettered – e.g., a ya (ي) 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 and tawwab-an. 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 and tawwab – 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 غفرة, shakur-an شكر, ‘alim-an علم, hakim-an حكيم, basir-an بيصر – and in countless such situations – if you have a waqf وقف and read ghafura غفرة, etc., it must be like a single alif and should not be stretched.
Lesson 13

Short-Vowel Signs

The fatkah 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 fatkah is followed by Ẹ it is read, e.g., as waee/raee [ not as wae/rae ]. Similarly, if a letter with fatkah is followed by ę 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: َلِلَّهِ ّيُنَبِّيَكَ; ihdina إِنْذَٰلَ مُالِكَ َبِلَّلَهِ سَلْلَٰٓا; bi-l-lah-i بِيَحْمَدِيَكَ;

Rule 33

Read the letters with a dammah over these like this: Al-ham-d-u َالْحَمْدُ; nabud-u َنُعِبِّدُ; a‘udh-u أَعُوذُ; kufuw-an ُكُفَوْا; jaddu-ka يُدْعَا; as-salam-u َالسَّلَامُ; huw-allah-u ُهَوَّاللَّهُ;

Rule 34

If an Arabic word has a ى in it and the preceding letter is with fathah, read it like ‘alai-him َعَلَّى هُمُ; ghair-il-maghdub-i غَيْرُ ْمَغْضُوبٍ; quraish-in قُرَيْشٍ; kaif-a َكِيْفَ; kaid-u-hum ْكِدَّهُمْ; tair-an طَيْراً;

Rule 35

If an Arabic word has a ِ in it and the preceding letter is with a fathah, read it like khauf-in ْخَوْفَ; tawas-au تَوَاصَوْا; sauf-a َسَوْفَ; qaum-un ْقُومُ.
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 qarīs 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 *wa-huwa* وُهُوْا 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 memorises 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. $a\,;\,sa\,;\,fa\,;\,ka\,;\,la\,;\,wa$

B. $bi\,;\,li$

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 $j$ 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 vowelled 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 \( \text{alif/mim/ra} = \text{amara} \); 
\( \text{amirun-a} \); \( \text{amar-na} \)

from \( \text{fa/sin/dal} = \text{fasada} \); \( \text{fasada} \)

from \( \text{sin/jim/dal} = \text{sajada} \); \( \text{sajdat-un} \); \( \text{sajdin-a} \)

from \( \text{kaf/fa/ra} = \text{kafaru} \); \( \text{kafirun-a} \); \( \text{kafartu-m} \)

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 \( \text{alif} \) which is not a prefix-letter—e.g., in \( a\text{‘udh-u} \), \( a\text{rad-a} \), \( a\text{khaf-a} \) the initial \( \text{alif} \) 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 *lam*. 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 [l as prefix ]

\[ \text{a-ra’ait-a; a-lam tara; a-lam yaj’al; a-ja’altum} \]

Exceptions:– *abad-an; aba; abî lahab; ajal-un; ahad-an; ahall-a; abat-a; akhadh-a; arada; asa’a; asab-a; ata’na; a’add-a; a’udh-u; amadd-a; abya; amat-a; ana*

Examples-II [s as prefix ]

\[ \text{sa-yasla; sa-ya’lamun-a; sa-nuqri’uk-a} \]

Exceptions: – *sajad-a; sabaq-a; s’al-a; salaf-a; saqar-a; salak-a; sakan-a; sabab-an; saha’u-n*
Examples-III [ف as prefix ]

\( \text{fa-aba} \); \( \text{fa-athar-na} \); \( \text{fa-sabbih} \); \( \text{fa-sall-i} \); \( \text{fa-wail-un} \); \( \text{fa-idha} \); \( \text{fa-ja’al-a-hum} \); \( \text{fa-dhalik-a} \); \( \text{fa-nada} \); \( \text{fa-qal-a} \); \( \text{fa-hu-wa} \)

Exceptions:- \( \text{fatab-a} \); \( \text{farad-a} \); \( \text{f’al-a} \); \( \text{fasad-a} \); \( \text{falaq-a} \); \( \text{fata-ra} \); \( \text{fatan-a} \)

Examples-IV [ ل as prefix ]

\( \text{la-fi-khusr-in} \); \( \text{la-tarawunn-a} \); \( \text{la-tus’alunn-a} \); \( \text{la-yumbadbhann-a} \)

Exceptions:- \( \text{ladai-na} \); \( \text{la’all-a} \); \( \text{laban-un} \); \( \text{laza} \); \( \text{laqiya-a} \); \( \text{lamas-na} \)

Examples-V [ ك as prefix ]

\( \text{ka-‘asf-in} \); \( \text{ka-lamb-in} \); \( \text{ka-ma’-in} \); \( \text{ka-mathal-i} \)

Exceptions:- \( \text{katab-a} \); \( \text{katam-a} \); \( \text{kasab-a} \); \( \text{kafar-a} \); \( \text{kafa} \); \( \text{kashaf-a} \); \( \text{kawa’ib-a} \)

Examples-VI [ و as prefix ]

\( \text{wa-iyyak-a} \); \( \text{wa-min-sharr-i} \); \( \text{wa-lam- yulad} \); \( \text{wa-lam- yakull-a-hu} \); \( \text{wa-tabb} \); \( \text{wa-mar kasab-a} \); \( \text{wa-ma-ra’ait-a} \); \( \text{wa-la’ana} \); \( \text{wa-liy-a din} \); \( \text{wa-qina} \)

Exceptions:- \( \text{wajad-a} \); \( \text{warad-a} \); \( \text{wasaq-a} \); \( \text{watar-an} \); \( \text{wa’ad-a} \); \( \text{waqab-a} \); \( \text{wahab-a} \); \( \text{wabab-a} \); \( \text{wabal} \)

In the examples given above the prefix \( \text{wa} \) means “and”. Besides these, in the wordings of the prayers too read the prefix \( \text{wa} \) separate.
In Surah al-Duha سورة الضحى in wa-wajad-a-ka the first و is a prefix and the next و 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
afa-im-mat-a أَفَايَمَاتُ; afa-tu'minun-a أَفُوْمُنُونْ; fa-sa-yakfik-a-hum فَسَيْعَمُّونُ; a-wa-lais-a أَوْلِيْسَ; fa-sa-ya'lamun-a فَسَيْعَلَمُونَا

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 بِرِّبِ النَّاسِ; bi-rabb-il-falaq-i بِرَّبِ الفَلَاقِ; bi-hijarat-in بِحِجَارَةٍ;

Exceptions:— bitanah بَطَانَةٌ; bida‘ah بِدَايَةٌ

Examples-II [ل ]
li-rabb-ik-a لِرَبِّ الْكَبْرَى; li-rabb-ih-i لِرَبِّ الْهَيْبَةٍ; li-ilaf-i لِلْإِلَافِ; li-yurau لِيُوْرَأَ

Exceptions:— lisan-in لِبَاسِ; lizam-an لِزَامَا; libas-un لِبَاسٍ; liqa’a لِقَاءً

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

*al-riyāḥ* ; *la-bi-imām-in*

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-adhāb-i-na*
Lesson 16

Miscellaneous Spelling Rules

There is an Arabic word “ana” آنا 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 ن and read it as if it were a ن 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” لام and “lan” لن 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 لن or لام read it along with the following main word; do not read it separate.

Examples

lam-yalid لام ياليد ; lam-yulad لام يولد ; lan-tara لن ترى ; lan-nu’min لن نؤمن ; lan-nasbir لن نصبر ; lan-taf’alu لن تفعلوا

Caution

In Surah al-Ikbas سورة الإخلاص, the expression wa-lam-yulad ولام يولد 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* and *a-lam-yaj’al* - 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*، *la* لا، *ya* يا، *in* إن، *an* أن، *fi* في، *‘an* عن، *‘am* أم، *min* من، *‘ala* على، *ila* إلي، *dbu* ذو، *dbi* ذي، *dba* ذا، *ulu* علَّ، *uli* علي، *ind* إنَّد، *idh* إذ، *idba* إذا، *ya* يا، *aiya* أَيْها، *ya-aiya* أَيْهَا.

**Example-I**

In Surah al-Falaq سُورَةَ الفَلَاقَ we find *min sharr-i ma-khalaq-a* من شَرِّ مَخَلَقٍ. 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 Labab سُورَةَ لَهَبِ we find *wa-ma-kasab-a* وَمَا كَسَبَ. This consists of three words. The initial *wa* 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*]. Here *min* - which is covered by Rule 44 above – is not to be joined to *habl*; join it to *masad*. Reading it as “*hablummim – 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 the words malik-i and yaum could have been written as Malik-ib Yaum-ib. But this has not been done in the Qur’an. It means that with the letter ی 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 Malik ib Yaum ib Al-din actually consists of three words – Malik, Yaum and Al-din.

Example-II

In Surah Fatihah, note the expressions iyyak-a na‘bud-u إياك تعبد, iyyak-a nasta‘in and an‘amt-a ‘alai-him. These could have been
written as أَضْعَفْتُهُمْ إِيَّاكُمْ إِيَّا كَنْتَيْنِ إِيَّا كَنْغَبَدُ; but this has not been done. Instead the كُ in iyyak-a and the تُ in anamt-a are written in full. This means that iyyak-a and anamt-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 سُورَةُ زِلْزال we find the expression auba laba. A qari once told this author on inquiry that these were two words—“au” and “halaba”; whereas these are actually “auba” and “laba”. 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 ج 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 ; fal-ya’bud-u فَلِيَعْبُدُوا ; aaman-u آمَنُوا , tawasau تَوَاصَوْا

In Surah al-’Asr سُورَةُ العَصْر there is tawasau bil-haqq-i تَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ. Since the final ج 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; habl-un; ghasiq-in; basid-in; kufw-an; wail-un; dbat-a lahab-in

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. 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 ل رَبُّ الْعَالِمِينُ the ل of al- is still and is pronounced - but not so in yaum-i-ddin يَوْمُ الْيَومِ and in ibdi-nassirat-a إِبْدِنَا الصَّرْاطُ. In the latter expressions, the ل of al- being silent, the م of yaum in the first and the ن of ibdna in the other are joined straight to the د of din and the ص of sirat-a respectively.


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

\textit{Allah-u al-\text{\textam{samad}}} رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ; \textit{rabb-i al-\text{\textam{alamin}}} إِلْهِيِّنَا ; \textit{ihdi-na al-sirat-a} إِلْهِيِّنَا الصِّرَاطُ ; \textit{ghair al-maghdub-i} غَيْرُ المَغْضُوبِ [pronounced respectively as All\text{\textam{ah-u ssamad}} ; rabb-il-\text{\textam{alamin}} ; ihdi-na-ssirat-a and ghair-il-maghdub-i]

Rule 49

Wherever you find the word لَمِ 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 سورة الفاتحة, a small alif-sign appears four times – over the second ل in lillab-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 la, ‘a, عa, ma ]

Examples-II

a-nnaffasat-i أَنْفَسَتَ; ya-aicyha يَا اَيَّهَا; a’taina-ka أَتَائِنَكَ; ashab-il-fil أَشَابُ الْفِيلَ; a-ssalibat-i أَصْلَبَتْ; ilaf-i إِلَفْ; dhalik-a ذِلْكَ; ula’ik-a عُلَا’ُكَ; badha بَذَا; khalidun-a خَلِيدُنَا; mala’ikat-u مَلَائِكَةٌ; haula’-i هُؤُلاءٌ

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 ك to that letter.
Example

In ٤٥٤٥ there is a small alif beneath the letter ٤; 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 ٤ to that letter.

Examples

The words mal-u-hu مَالِعْهُ and ʻind-a-hu عِنْدَهُ are so read since there is the sign of a small reverse wau on the letter ٤ in both these words.

Rule 53

In some words a wau is written but not pronounced - e.g., in صلُو and زَكُو. 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 ٤ in either of these has no barakat or jazm over it. Never pronounce such a ٤ and read the letters having the alif-signs as per Rule 50 above.

Rule 54

Where a silent alif is preceded by a ٤, join the letter before the ٤, in accordance with its barakat, to that ٤ and never utter the alif - whether you have to stop on that word or not.

Examples

q̣aḷu قَالُوا; ạṃaṇu آمَنُوا; tụḅu تُوبُوا; ḳạnu كَانُوا; fạḷ-yạbuḍu لَتَفْسِدُوا; lạ-ṭụfṣiḍu فَلْيُبَدِّوا
ḳḥaḷu خَلُو; dạʻau دَعُوا; taẉaẉṣau تَوَاصُوا; li-ỵụṛau لِيُرُوا

Note that in all these words an alif appears at the end but is silent and the ٤ 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 ى appears without any sign and the letter preceding it has the alif-sign over it, do not utter the sound of ى and read the letter having the alif-sign over it with the sound of a final alif.

Examples

In Musa موسى; adna أدنا and a’la أغلي the letter ى 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 aqaf* (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 ب**

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 ب 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 ل**

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 ل 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 ل 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 سكته or waqfah وقفه 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 معاَناَقَة - 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 سورة الفاتحة are found three triangular dots after amr-in ﻋِـْـٌـٌر, and then again after salam-un ﺍًـمـاًــٌـٌ. 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 قفت means that stopping here is preferable. You should better have a stop at this sign.

Rule 56

If there is a harakat - fathah ﺏ, kasrah ﻯ, dammah ﻯ - 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 سورة الفاتحة there are seven verses. The first verse ends at ‘alamin-a ﺛَـٰـٰٰٰٰٰ. The second verse ends at rahim-i ﺮَـٰـٰٰٰٰ. After both ‘alamin-a ﺛَـٰـٰٰٰٰٰ and rahim-i is found a ل sign with a circle. If you have to stop at ‘alamin-a and rahim-i, do not utter the fathah on the ﻰ in ‘alamin-a and on the kasrah of ﻰ 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 ﺪ - where one must stop. So, you should make the ﻰ 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 ُ in ‘alamin-a to the ۶ of ar-rahman so as to read ‘alamin-a-rrahman-i, and should clearly utter the kasrah of ٰ in rahim-i in the second verse. Then read the third verse, dropping the kasrah on ُ 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 إِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ. Have a waqf at nasta‘in-u – i.e., treat ُ of nasta‘in-u as still, stop and take a breath.

The fifth verse begins with ibdina. 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 baarkat 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 ْ 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 ْ as still and have a pause, or pronounce the dammah of ْ 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 ٍ—which is written like a ٍ but with two dots over it – read this َ like a ٍ.
Example

In Surah al-Humazah the last word in the first verse is lumazat-i لَمْزَةٌ. To stop at this word make the ending ٨ still and read lumazah لَمْزَه.

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 نِسَا’s, replace the tanwin of hamzah with alif and read nisa’a-a نِسَا’s.

Caution

In the famous marriage-sermon there is a verse having the word nisa’a-n نِسَا’s. Some qaris are found making the hamzah still to stop and read it as nisa’a نِسَا’. 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 نِسَا’s.
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"، "alladin-a"، "allat-i"، etc. – and you have to stop at the said sign, read the still "alif" of "al-" or "alladhi", etc. with a "fatbah" and join it to the next verse.

Example-I [ "al-" ]

In Surah al-Fatihah سورة الفاتحة 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 "arrahman-i" in which the "alif" of the adjectival "al-" is still. So, if you stop at the first verse, the ال of "alamin-a" will have to be treated as still. Now pronounce a "fatbah" over the "alif" of "arrahman-i" and read the second verse as "Arrahman-ir-rahim".

Example-II [ "alladhi", etc. ]

The fourth verse in Surah al-Nas سورة الناس ends with "khannas-i خناس" and a لا sign with an end-circle is found there. Thereafter, the fifth verse begins with "alladhi اللذي". 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 "fatbah" on the "alif" of "alladhi" so as to read it as "khannas خناس..... Alladhi".

Rule 62

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

In Surah al-Humazah the first verse ends with the word lumazah. There is a la sign with an end-circle after it, and near it is a small н 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 н and read Alladhi by uttering a fathah on the still alif of alladhi, so as to begin the next verse with Alladhi.
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>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Surah</th>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.  | 2:237 | au-ya'fuwa | أو يعفوا | The Arabic reads: أو يعفوا.
| 2.  | 3:144 | asa-im-mata | أفأ أنت مات | The Arabic reads: أفأ أنت مات.
| 3.  | 3:158 | la-ilallahi | لا إلٰه الله | The Arabic reads: لا إلٰه الله.
| 4.  | 5:29  | an-tabu'a | أن تبوء أ | The Arabic reads: أن تبوء أ.
| 5.  | 7:103 | mala'ib-i | ملاّئه | The Arabic reads: ملاّئه.
| 6.  | 9:47  | la-auda'ru | ولا أوضعوا | The Arabic reads: ولا أوضعوا.
| 7.  | 11:68 | thamud-a | تمودا | The Arabic reads: تمودا.
| 11. | 18:38 | lakinn-a | لَكِنْ | The Arabic reads: لَكِنْ.
| 12. | 27:21 | la-adhbahannahu | لا أذبحه | The Arabic reads: لا أذبحه.
| 15. | 30:39 | li-yarbuw-a | لِيَرَبَّوا | The Arabic reads: لِيَرَبَّوا.
| 17. | 40:4  | li-yablu-wa | لِيَبَلُوْا | The Arabic reads: لِيَبَلُوْا.
| 18. | 47:31 | wa-nabluw-a | وَبَلُوْا | The Arabic reads: وَبَلُوْا.
19.  49:11  bi's-al-ism-u
20.  77:16  qawarir-a

The Section (ruku') in the Qur'an

Wherever a ruku' ends, on the margin is found a big letter ﻓ with one figure on top of it, another inside and a third below it. The figure on top of the ﻓ indicates the serial number of the ruku' of the Surah. The figure below the ﻓ shows the serial number of the ruku' of the Juz. The figure inside the ﻓ 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 ﻓ on it. The number of verses given inside this ﻓ 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), nahm-u نَحْمُ (we), ant-a أَلْتُ (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’amta ‘alai-him أَلْعَمْتَ 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* مُعَاذَ اللّه (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* مُعَاذَ اللّه 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Ayat</th>
<th>Arabic Expression</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1:5</td>
<td>إِيَّاكَ نُشَبَدُ reading iyak-a [without <em>tashdid</em> on ى]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>1:5</td>
<td>أَلْعَبِتْ عَلَيْهِمْ reading <em>an'amtu</em> [dammah on ت]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>2:124</td>
<td>إِذَا ابْتَلَيْتَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبَّهُ reading <em>Ibrahim-u rabba-hu</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>2:251</td>
<td>قَالَ دَاوُدُ جَالِلُوت reading <em>Da'ud-a Jalut-u</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>2:255</td>
<td>اللّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ reading <em>madd</em> on the <em>alif</em> of اللّه</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. 2: 261

وَاللهُ يُضاعِفُ

reading fatihah over يُضاعِفُ ع

7. 4:165

مُنذَرُونَ وَ مُتذَرُونَ

reading fatihah on ه and ذ

8. 9: 3

بَرَاءَةُ مُنذَرِينَ وَ رَسُولَتُهُ

reading kasrah on ل in rasul-u-hu

9. 17:15

وَ مَا كَانَ مُعَلِّبِينَ

reading fatihah on ذ

10. 20:121

وَغَصَّـيَّ آدمُ رَبَّهُ

reading Adam-a rabb-u-hu

11. 21:87

إِلَيْكَ كُنْتُ مِنَ الْقَلَامِيِّينَ

reading kunta [fatihah on ت]

12. 26:194

إِنَّكَ بِمِنَ الضَّلَالِيْنَ

reading mundhharin-a [fatihah on ذ]

13. 37:72

وَ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا فِي هُمْ مُنذَرِيْنَ

reading mundhharin-a [fatihah on ذ]

14. 48:27

لَقَدْ صَدَّقَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ

reading sadaqallah-a rasul-u-hu

15. 59:24

هُوَ الَّذِي أَحْيَى الْبَارِئَ الْمُصْوَرُ

reading musawwar-u [fatihah on و of the мусвр of]

16. 69:37

لَا يَأْكُلُهَا إِلَّا الْمَخَاطِرُ

reading khata'un [fatihah on ط]

17. 73:16

فَعْصِي فِرْعَوْنَ الرَّسُولُ

reading fir'aun-ar-rasul-u

18. 77:41

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي صِيَامٍ وَ غَيْبَانَ

reading zalal-in [fatihah on ض]

19. 79: 45

إِنَّمَا أَلْتَ مُنذِرٌ

reading mundhar-u [fatihah on ذ]
Lesson 22

Prefatory Invocations

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

أعوذ بِاللهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

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

بِسْمِ اللّهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Bismillah-i-rrahman-ir-rahim

2. While reciting the Qur’an if a new Surah begins, say only Bismillah-i-rrahman-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-i-rrahman-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. Labn-i-jali (patent misreading) in reciting the Qur'an is haram (absolutely prohibited and therefore sinful), and labn-i-khafi (latent misreading) is reprehensible. Labn-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.
The Blessings of Ramadan
Javed Ali

Tell Me About Muhammad

Tell Me About Musa

Tell Me About Creation

The Story of the Prophet Yusuf
Samira Fayyad Khawaldeh

The Most Beautiful Names of Allah

The Travels of Ibn Battuta
H.A.R. Gibb

Humayun Nama
Gul Radia Begum

The Story of Islamic Spain
Syed Azizur Rahman

Islam at the Crossroads
Muhammad Asad

Decisive Moments in the History of Islam
Muhammad Abdullah Shab

Islamic Medicine
Edward G. Browne

Spanish Islam
A History of the Muslims in Spain
Reinhart Dozy

The Arabs in History
Prof. Bernard Lewis

Arabic English Dictionary
J.C. Hare

How Greek Science Passed to the Arabs
De Lacy O'Leary