

Yaqīn in the Revealed Books: “Read in the Name of Your Lord” and the Beginning of Revelation

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ○ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ○ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ○ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ○ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ

“Read in the Name of your Lord Who created; created man from a clinging clot. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous—Who taught by the pen, taught man what he knew not.”

(Qur'an 96:1–5)

These were the first words of the final revelation.

In the stillness of the Cave of Ḥirā', Jibrīl (عليه السلام), whose trustworthiness we reflected upon in the previous article, came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ with the command:

“Read.” The Prophet ﷺ replied, **“I am not one who reads.”** Jibrīl embraced him and repeated the command until the opening verses of Sūrah al-‘Alaq were revealed.

It was the beginning of the final revelation sent to mankind.

The first command was not an invitation to worldly knowledge alone, but to receive knowledge in the Name of Allah. The One who created also taught. The One who fashioned mankind also revealed what mankind could never know without Him.

Allah says:

الرَّحْمَنُ ○ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ○ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ○ عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ

“The Most Merciful. He taught the Qur'an. He created man. He taught him speech.”

(Qur'an 55:1–4)

Classical exegetes such as Ibn Kathīr and al-Qurṭubī noted the profound order of these verses: Allah mentions teaching the Qur'an before mentioning the creation of man.

Divine revelation is therefore among the greatest manifestations of Allah's mercy.

وَإِنَّهُ لَهْدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

“And it is guidance and mercy for the believers.”

(Qur'an 27:77)

وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكٌ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

“This is a Book We have sent down, blessed... so that you may receive mercy.”

(Qur'an 6:155)

The believer's yaqīn in the Revealed Books begins with this truth: Allah teaches whom He wills through revelation.

The Qur'an then declares:

ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۚ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

“This is the Book in which there is no doubt, a guidance for the God-conscious.”

(Qur'an 2:2)

The Revealed Book is not speculation. It is not inherited myth. It is not the product of human reflection. It is guidance from Allah, free from doubt, sent to illuminate hearts that seek Him.

Belief in the Revealed Books is therefore an essential article of Imān. Allah says:

أَمَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِن رَّبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۚ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ

“The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord and so have the believers. All of them have believed in Allah, His angels, His Books and His Messengers.”

(Qur'an 2:285)

This verse places the Books within the architecture of faith.

The believer believes in what Allah revealed to His Messengers, while recognizing that the Qur'an is the final, preserved revelation.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا آمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي أَنزَلَ مِن قَبْلُ

“O you who believe, believe in Allah, His Messenger, the Book He sent down upon His Messenger, and the Scripture He sent down before.”

(Qur'an 4:136)

Revelation did not begin with the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, though it reached completion through him. Allah revealed guidance before to Mūsā (عليه السلام), to 'Īsā (عليه السلام), Dāwūd (عليه السلام) and other Prophets.

نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنزَلَ التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ ۚ مِن قَبْلُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَنزَلَ الْفُرْقَانَ

“He has sent down upon you the Book in truth, confirming what came before it, and He sent down the Torah and the Gospel before, as guidance for mankind, and He sent down the Criterion.”

(Qur'an 3:3–4)

Muslims therefore honour the original Tawrah, the original Injil, the original Zabūr, and the scriptures Allah sent before the Qur'an.

إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ

“Indeed, We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light.”

(Qur'an 5:44)

وَأَتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنْجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى وَنُورٌ

“And We gave him (Īsā) the Gospel, in which was guidance and light.”

(Qur’an 5:46)

وَأَتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ زَبُورًا

“And to Dāwūd We gave the Zabūr.”

(Qur’an 17:55)

إِنَّ هَذَا لَفِي الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَى ۝ صُحُفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى

“Indeed, this is in the former scriptures—the scriptures of Ibrāhīm and Mūsā.”

(Qur’an 87:18–19)

Yet the Qur’an also teaches that earlier communities altered, concealed, and disputed what had been entrusted to them. For this reason, the Qur’an is not merely another scripture in sequence. It is the final criterion.

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ

“And We have sent down to you the Book in truth, confirming what came before it of the Scripture and as a guardian over it.”

(Qur’an 5:48)

Ibn Kathīr explains that the Qur’an confirms the truth contained in the earlier revelations while serving as a judge over them. Al-Ṭabarī and al-Qurṭubī similarly emphasize that the Qur’an clarifies, preserves, and governs the understanding of what preceded it.

The final Book is also uniquely preserved by Allah Himself:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

“Indeed, it is We who sent down the Reminder, and indeed We will preserve it.”

(Qur’an 15:9)

لَّا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ

“Falsehood cannot approach it from before it or from behind it.”

(Qur’an 41:42)

This is the foundation of yaqīn in the Qur’an. The believer does not hold the Qur’an as a sacred cultural inheritance only. He holds it as the preserved speech of Allah, recited across generations, guarded by the One who revealed it.

The Qur’an also identifies what unites all true revelation.

First, Tawḥīd:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ

“We did not send before you any messenger except that We revealed to him: There is no deity except Me, so worship Me.”

(Qur’an 21:25)

Second, Guidance:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِلنَّاسِ

“The month of Ramaḍān is the one in which the Qur’an was revealed as guidance for mankind.”

(Qur’an 2:185)

Third, Truth:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ

“Indeed, We have sent down to you the Book in truth.”

(Qur’an 39:2)

Fourth, Justice:

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ

“We certainly sent Our messengers with clear proofs and sent down with them the Book and the Balance so that mankind may uphold justice.”

(Qur’an 57:25)

Thus, revelation calls humanity to worship Allah alone, guides the heart, establishes truth, and commands justice.

The Sunnah then teaches how the believer lives with the Qur’an. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“The best of you are those who learn the Qur’an and teach it.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)

He ﷺ also said:

“Recite the Qur’an, for it will come on the Day of Resurrection as an intercessor for its companions.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)

The Qur'an is therefore not a book to be admired from a distance. It is to be recited, learned, taught, reflected upon, and lived. Imām al-Nawawī emphasized that companionship with the Qur'an is built through recitation, reverence, sincerity, and acting upon its guidance. Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn al-Qayyim repeatedly taught that true certainty is rooted in revelation, not in the shifting opinions of mankind.

The first words were:

“Read in the Name of your Lord.”

The command still speaks.

Every recitation returns the believer to that first moment in Ḥirā'. Every verse reminds him that Allah did not leave mankind without guidance. Every page of the Qur'an calls the heart from uncertainty to Yaqīn.

The angels faithfully conveyed revelation. The books preserved what Allah willed to reveal to His Messengers. The Qur'an stands as the final preserved revelation, confirming what preceded it and remaining under Allah's protection until the Day of Resurrection. Yet revelation did not descend into the world without chosen recipients. Allah entrusted His words to noble servants from among mankind, purified and strengthened to convey His message.

Our next reflection therefore turns to the Messengers and Prophets (عليهم السلام), through whom Divine revelation reached humanity.