



An Analytical Survey on the Views of Scholars on the First and Last Revealed Verses (Ayat) of the Glorious Qur'an

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<p>Abstract: The Glorious Qur'an is the book of Allah (S.W.T), revealed to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) through Angel Jibril (A.S) over time in a gradual manner. This was done to strengthen the Prophet, aid him, protect him against those who opposed his message, and allow mankind to gradually absorb the laws of Allah (S.W.T). This paper aims to analyze the views of scholars on the first and last Qur'anic revelations to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W). It also presents the divergent opinions of different scholars on this subject. In conclusion, the paper offers some recommendations and suggestions, supported by authentic Ahadith of the Prophet (S.A.W), regarding the first and last revealed verses (Ayat) of the Glorious Qur'an.</p> <p>Keywords: Qur'an, Survey, Verses.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Review Paper</p>
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INTRODUCTION

The Glorious Qur'an is the book of Allah (S.W.T), containing the very words of Allah revealed to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) through Angel Jibril (A.S), just as the earlier books were sent to Dawud, Musa, and Isa (Alayhimus-Salam). It was revealed for the admonition of mankind, as the Glorious Qur'an itself testifies:

ولقد يسرنا القرآن للذكر فهل من مدكر (سورة القمر)

And assuredly we have made the Qur'an easy for admonition; is there then anyone who would be admonished ... (Q54:17).

The Glorious Qur'an is replete with historical discourse and allusions without being a book of history. While the Qur'an is easy for admonition, it is not easy in the absolute sense; it does not lack profundities of thought or subtleties of meaning. Its ease lies in the lessons of meekness, humility, and willing surrender to Allah (S.W.T) that can be deduced from it.

The Prophet (S.A.W) and his *Sahabah* devoted themselves to understanding the Qur'an, including the circumstances of its revelation, the times of its revelation, and other historical events that occurred then. Therefore, it is essential to know the first and last revealed Ayah to appreciate the meticulous attention to

the memorization and preservation of the Glorious Qur'an by the *Sahabah* (A.S). This knowledge also aids in understanding the history of Islamic legislation and in identifying the abrogative *Ayah* from the abrogated ones.

Views of Scholars on the First Revealed Verse of the Glorious Qur'an

The Glorious Qur'an contains 114 suwar (chapters), divided into two major categories: Makkan and Madinan *suwar*. This division is based on where the verses or chapters were revealed to the Prophet (S.A.W). Different scholars hold varying opinions regarding the first verse revealed to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W). According to Al-Hakim (1978), Ubaid bn Amir, Amru bn Dinar, al-Bayhaqi, and Abu-Musa believed that the first revealed verses to the Noble Prophet (S.A.W) were the first five verses of Surah *al-Alaq*.

إقرأ باسم ربك الذى خلق (1) خلق الإنسان من علق (2) إقرأ وربك الأكرم (3) الذى علم بالقلم (4) علم الإنسان ما لم يعلم (5)

Proclaim in the name of thy load who created, man, out of a leech- like clot. Proclaim! And your lord is most bountiful, he who taught (the use of) the pen, Taught man that which he knew no(Q96:1-5).

To bark their view, they quoted a *Hadith* thus:-

It was reported by Aisha (R.A) who said; the first thing which the Noble Prophet observed

was a dream where a bright light was shown unto him on the importance of going to The Cave of Hira, later the Prophet (S.A.W) reflected on what he saw in the dream, then the Prophet devoted himself at the cave for a period of days. As a result the Angel appeared to him where the (Angel) hold his chest and pressed it hard for the first time, second time up to the third time, commanding the Prophet to read. The Prophet (S.A.W) then replied to him: what M'I to read? At last, the Angle recited to him the first five verses of surah 96.

However, some scholars believe that the first Qur'anic verses revealed to the Prophet (S.A.W) were from Surah 96 and Surah 68. Among these scholars are Sufyan bn Naji'ah, Mujahid, and Abdul-Rahman. Another perspective, shared by Abi-Salmah, states that when Jabir bn Abdullah was asked about the first verse revealed to the Prophet (S.A.W), he replied that it was Surah 74 (Q.74), which reads:

يأيتها المدثر (1) قم فأ نزل (2) وربك فكبر (3) ... الأية

Jabir reported to have said: He heard the Prophet (S.A.W) saying:

When I was in the Cave of Hira, I heard a voice and I raised up my head, I then saw Angel, this made me be afraid and be confused, I then quickly went to Khadijah asking her to cover me with a wrapper, from then surah 74 was revealed to me.

But Imam al-SiyutiSiyuti (n.d) opines that the question posed to Jabir was about the revelation of the entire chapter, as Surah 74 was revealed all at once (in bulk) before the completion of Surah 96. The first five verses of Surah 96 were revealed earlier, indicating the start of the Prophet's (S.A.W) prophecy, while Surah 74 was revealed later, signifying the beginning of his messengership.

Similarly, some reliable narrations indicate that the first five verses of Surah 96 were revealed to the Prophet (S.A.W) as a sign of his prophecy, whereas Surah 74 came later, indicating his role as a messenger. Supporting this view, a hadith narrated by Imam Bukhari and Muslim reports that Aisha (R.A) stated the first inspiration received by the Prophet (S.A.W) was the beginning of Surah 96 (اقرأ باسم ربك الذي خلق). Although Imam al-Bukhari recorded the hadith with only the first three verses, Imam Muslim extended it to the first five verses. Both traditions are affirmed as sound hadiths, as related by Bayhaqi and Hakim.

Ali (1998) demonstrated that the first five verses of Surah 96 were the initial direct revelation to the Noble Prophet (S.A.W). After that, there was a period of interruption, extending over several months or perhaps up to a year. Then Surah 68 is generally considered the next revelation in chronological order. The remainder of

Surah 96 was revealed soon after the *Fatrah* (interval) and includes the command to preach, as it elaborates on the primary obstacle to delivering the message: man's own obstinacy, vanity, and insolence.

al-Zamak-Shari (1995) proposed that the majority of expositors believe the first verses revealed were contained in Surah al-Fatiha (Chapter 1). He justified this view with a narration by Imam al-Bayhaqi, where the Prophet (S.A.W) reportedly said to Khadijah:

If I'm isolated and I heard a call then I became afraid form, Khadija then replied that may Allah protect you, since you are honest and trust. After a moment, Abubakar (R.A) entered and found them discussing on the issue in which he advised the Prophet to see Waraqah bn Nawfal, then the Prophet met Waraqah and explained to him. Waraqah then advised the Prophet (S.A.W) not to be afraid and he should wait and listen to what will come unto him. Later, the Prophet (S.A.W) heard a voice saying: Oh Muhammad! Say in the name of your Lord, the Beneficent the Merciful, praise be to Allah the Lord of the universe...

However, many scholars have opposed al-Zamak-Shari's view, including Imam Zurqani (1996). He argued that the tradition suggesting Surah al-Fatiha was the first revelation cannot be relied upon for two reasons:

Firstly, the context of the tradition does not indicate that Surah al-Fatiha was the initial inspiration received by the Prophet (S.A.W) while he was in the cave of Hirah. It is generally understood to have been revealed after the significant event in the cave.

Secondly, the tradition cited by al-Zamak-Shari is considered *mursal*, as its transmission chain is incomplete and does not include the companion who reported it, making it less reliable compared to the sound tradition narrated by Aisha (R.A.).

In his explanation, Ibn Hajar (1996) also opposed al-Zamak-Shari's view. He asserted that the majority of scholars agree that the first Qur'anic revelation occurred in the cave of Hirah, where the first five verses of Surah al-'Alaq were revealed. Only a minority of scholars hold a different opinion. Narrated by Imam Ahmad, Aisha (R.A) is reported to have said:

The first inspiration the Prophet (S.A.W) received was at the Cave of Hirah when the Angel came to him and said: Read! The Prophet (S.A.W) replied: I'm not a reciter. Then the Prophet (S.A.W) said: the angel then hold me and pressed me hard, he then released me and said: recite! I then replied to him I'm not a reciter. The angel then pressed me hard for the second time up to third time and then released me and said: recite in the name of your Lord, he

recited up to "علم الإنسان ما لم يعلم" Imam Ibn Kathir (1990).

In 1977, Doi, maintained that, the first revelation of the Glorious Qur'an began on the 15th night of the month of *Ramadan* in the 41st year after the birth of the Prophet (S.A.W). Its first *surah* was revealed in the cave of *Hirah* when the verse "اقرأ باسم ربك الذي خلق" (*Recite in the name of thy lord who created*) was revealed.

In a journal of El-Khanemi College of Islamic Theology (2002), it is indicated that the first Qur'anic revelation took place at the cave of *Hirah* where the first five verses of Q: 96 were revealed, and it reads:

اقرأ باسم ربك الذي خلق (1) خلق الإنسان من علق (2) اقرأ وأمر بك الأكرم (3) الذي علم بالقلم (4) علم الإنسان ما لم يعلم (5)

In his explanation, Philips (1997) stated that sections of the Qur'an were taken down from the lowest heaven by the angel Jibril to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W). This process of revelation continued over the twenty-three years of his prophethood. It began with the first five verses of Surah al-'Alaq, which were revealed to the Prophet (S.A.W) while he was on a spiritual retreat in the cave of *Hirah*.

Views of Scholars on the Last Revealed Verse of the Glorious Qur'an

As scholars differ on the first Qur'anic revelation, there is also a diversity of opinion regarding the last revealed Ayah of the Qur'an. As-Sabuni (2003) explained that the majority of scholars believe Q.2:281 is the last Qur'anic revelation. Among these scholars is Imam Siyuti, who maintained that the last revealed Ayah was "واتقوا يوماً ترجعون فيه إلى الله..." "And fear a Day when you will be returned to Allah...". Imam al-Siyuti supported his view by quoting the following *Hadith*:

Abdullahi ibn Abbas (R.A) reported that the last revealed verse of the Qur'an was Surah 2:281:

"واتقوا يوماً ترجعون فيه إلى الله ثم توفى كل نفس ما كسبت وهم لا يظلمون"

("And fear the day when you shall be brought back to Allah. Then every soul will be paid what it earned, and none shall be dealt with unjustly.")

This was transmitted by Imam Nasa'i. Imam Siyuti expressed that the Prophet (S.A.W) survived only for nine nights after the revelation of this Ayah and then died on Monday night on the 3rd of Rabi-Awwal. However, some scholars believe that the last revealed Ayah was Surah Al-Ma'ida (Q5:3), which states:

"اليوم أكملت لكم دينكم وأتممت عنايتكم بغيري ورضيت لكم الإسلام ديناً"

("This day I have perfected for you your religion, completed My favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion...")

Doi (1970) noted that this verse was revealed on the 9th of Dhul-Hijjah in the 10th year of Hijrah, during the Prophet's (S.A.W) lifetime.

Imam Siyuti (n.d) criticized this view, arguing that this verse was revealed during the Prophet's (S.A.W) farewell pilgrimage at Arafat. He noted that the Prophet (S.A.W) lived for eighty-one days after this event and passed away nine days after the revelation of Q2:281, which is therefore the last verse revealed. He emphasized that while Q5:3 marked the completion of religious laws, Q2:281 was a final exhortation for Muslims to strengthen their faith and prepare for accountability before Allah.

Other opinions include the view that Q2:279 was the last verse, dealing with usury:

"يا أيها الذين آمنوا اتقوا الله وذروا ما بقي من الربا إن كنتم مؤمنين"

("O you who believe! Fear Allah, and give up what remains of your demand for usury, if you are indeed believers.")

Another perspective comes from some scholars who suggest that the last revealed Ayah was Q4:175, which addresses legal decisions about inheritance:

"...يَسْتَفْتُونَكَ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِي الْكَلَالَةِ"

("They ask you for a legal decision. Say: Allah directs (thus) about those who leave no descendants or ascendants as heirs...")

Others consider Q18:109, which emphasizes worship and the anticipation of meeting the Lord, as the final revelation:

"...فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا"

("So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work...")

Imam Az-Zuhuri (n.d) believed that Q2:282, dealing with debt transactions, was the last revelation:

"...يا أيها الذين آمنوا إذا تداينتم بدين إلى أجل مسمى فاكتبوه"

("O you who have believed, when you contract a debt for a specified term, write it down...")

Some scholars argue that verses 128 and 129 of Surah At-Taubah were the last:

"...لقد جاءكم رسول من أنفسكم"

("There has certainly come to you a Messenger from among yourselves...")

Philips (1997) suggested that the last revealed verses are found in Q110:1-4:

"إذا جاء نصر الله والفتح"

("When the victory of Allah has come and the conquest...")

Imam Zurqani (1996) explained that these verses signaled the Prophet's (S.A.W) impending departure, causing Umar (R.A) to weep, stating that "anything that reaches its peak will decline."

Other scholars propose that Q4:93, concerning the punishment for intentionally killing a believer, was the final verse:

"...وَمَنْ يَتَّكِلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا"

("And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell, wherein he will abide eternally...")

Some also argue that Q9:11 was among the last revealed verses:

"...فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ"

("But if they repent, establish prayer, and give zakah, then they are your brothers in religion...")

Finally, some claim that Q3:195 was the last verse:

"...فَمَا سَتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِّنْكُمْ"

("So their Lord responded to them, 'Never will I allow to be lost the work of [any] worker among you, whether male or female...")

As reported by Ummu Salamah.

According to the journal of El-Kanemi College of Islamic Theology (2002), this verse is specifically focused on women.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, we observe that various views have been analyzed by different scholars regarding the first and last revealed verses of the Qur'an. The majority opinion holds that the first revealed verses to the Prophet (S.A.W) were Q96:1-5. This is supported by the fact that if "اقرأ باسم ربك الذي خلق" ("Read in the name of your Lord who created") were not the first revealed verses, the Prophet (S.A.W) would have recited what had been revealed to him earlier instead of insisting, "I am not a reciter." Additionally, the tradition reported by Aisha (R.A) about the beginning of his inspiration indicates that the Prophet (S.A.W) had not seen the angel before this incident. The narration clearly shows that Aisha (R.A) directly heard this from the Prophet (S.A.W).

Regarding the last revealed verses, scholars, including Qur'anic exegetes and Hadith narrators, hold different opinions. However, most scholars agree that the first Qur'anic revelation was Q96:1-5 ("اقرأ") and the last verse was Q2:281:

"وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ"

("And fear the Day when you will be returned to Allah, and every soul will be fully compensated for what it earned, and they will not be wronged.")

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the views presented, the predominant scholarly consensus affirms that the first Qur'anic verses

revealed to the Prophet (S.A.W) were the first five verses of Surah al-Alaq, and the last verse was Q2:281 from Surah al-Baqara. The revelation of "اقرأ" marked the beginning of the Prophet's (S.A.W) inspiration, and if this had not been the first revelation, the Prophet (S.A.W) would have recited earlier revelations.

The first verses of Surah al-Alaq confirm the prophethood of the Prophet (S.A.W). Q2:281 is considered the last verse because reliable narrations state that the Prophet (S.A.W) lived only nine days after its revelation, passing away on Monday, 3rd Rabi-Awwal. No subsequent revelation followed this verse. Furthermore, this final verse serves as a reminder for Muslims to reaffirm their faith before the last hour.

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