

The Contradictions

These reports are self-contradictory on many points, making them totally unreliable. Here, in the form of questions and answers, we examine the contradictions.

When was the Qur'an compiled as a book?

The second report says it was compiled during the rule of Uthman. The first, third, fourth and some of the later reports explain that it was in the era of Abu Bakr. And the seventh and twelfth report indicate that it was during Umar's caliphate.

Who undertook to compile the Qur'an during the era of Abu Bakr?

The first two traditions and the twenty second say that it was Zaid b. Thabit, but the fourth report says it was Abu Bakr himself; and that he only asked Zaid to go through what he himself had collected. And the fifth report together with the others indicate that the task was undertaken by Umar and Zaid.

Was Zaid given sole authority to compile the Qur'an?

The first tradition clearly states that Abu Bakr gave him sole authority. He told Zaid: "*You are a young, intelligent man, and we find no fault in you. You were also a scribe, writing down the revelations for the Messenger of Allah (s). So attend to the Qur'an and compile it*". These words are explicit. But the fifth and other traditions reveal that the writing was substantiated by two witnesses, so much so that when Umar came with the verse of *rajm*, it was rejected.

Were there some verses which remained unrecorded till the time of Uthman?

Most of the traditions say that no verses remained unrecorded, but the second report says that some of the verses remained unwritten.

Did Uthman omit any thing from what was compiled before him?

Most of the traditions quoted above say that he did not exclude or omit anything. But the fourteenth report tells us that he struck off some parts from the previous compilation, and ordered the Muslim to do

the same.

From what sources did Uthman prepare a book copy of the Qur'an?

The second and fourth report say: he relied upon the notes and pages collected by Abu Bakr. Then the eighth, fourteenth and fifteenth traditions reveal that he relied upon two witnesses, and upon those who claimed to have heard the *ayah* from the Prophet ('s).

Who asked Abu Bakr to compile the Qur'an?

The first report says that Umar did it, and that Abu Bakr conceded after having first refused. Then he sent for Zaid who also conceded after having declined. But the tenth report tells us that Zaid and Umar jointly asked Abu Bakr to undertake the work, and he conceded after having consulted the Muslims.

Who prepared the master copy and sent its editions to various cities?

The second report says it was Uthman, while the twelfth tells us it was Umar.

When were the two verses added to the Surah of Bara'ah?

The first, eleventh and twenty second reports reveal that this happened during the time of Abu Bakr, and the eighth report together with others say that it happened in the era of Umar.

Who came up with those two verses?

The first and twenty second reports say they were brought in by Abu Khuzaimah, while the eighth and eleventh reports say it was Khuzaimah. These are two gentlemen who had no relationship with each other at all, as reported by Ibn Abd al Barr.¹

How were they accepted as being parts of the Qur'an?

By a sole witness, as mentioned in the first, ninth and twenty second report. By the accompanying witness by Uthman, as shown in the eighth; and by the supporting witness by Umar as shown in the eleventh.

Who did Uthman appoint for dictating and writing of the Qur'an?

(i) Uthman appointed Zaid, Ibn az Zubair, Saeed and Abdu Rahman as writers (see Report n. 2)

(ii) He appointed Zaid for writing, and Saeed for dictating, (see Report n. 15)

(iii) He appointed a person from *Thaqif* to write down, and a person from *Huzad* to dictate; (see Report n. 16)

(iv) The writer was not from *Thaqif* and the one who dictated was not from *Huzad*. (see Report n. 18)

(v) The dictation was by Ubay b. Kaab, and Saeed gave grammatical inflections to what Zaid wrote down (see Report n. 19)

(vi) The twenty second report adds the name of Abd ar Rahman together with Saeed.

1. Tafsir, al Qurtubi, v1, p.56

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