HISTORY OF QUR'ĀN COMPILATION

1. In addition to its memorization in entirety by many of the *ṣaḥābah* (the Prophet's companions), written recording of the Qur'ān began during the Prophet's lifetime. As it was recited by him, his scribes wrote down the revelation on pieces of leather, bone and palm leaves, and its verses were ordered and arranged as Allāh revealed. Initially, the Qur'ān was not compiled in one volume, although some of the *ṣaḥābah* had made personal copies for themselves after memorizing it from the Prophet (ﷺ).

2. Collecting and compiling the Qur'ān followed soon after the Prophet's death, during the caliphate of Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq. Upon the advice of 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb, Abū Bakr charged Zayd bin Thābit to bring all of the Qur'ān together on written sheets (*ṣuḥuf*). These were checked for accuracy against what had been memorized by a great number of the *ṣaḥābah*. After the death of Abū Bakr and then 'Umar, the collection remained with 'Umar's daughter, Ḥafṣah, who was also the Prophet's wife.

3. The standardization of one authentic volume (*muṣḥaf*) took place during the caliphate of 'Uthmān bin 'Affān. The copy kept by Ḥafṣah was obtained and, upon the order of 'Uthmān, it was transcribed with great care by four of the most knowledgeable scribes: Zayd bin Thābit, 'Abdullāh bin az-Zubayr, Sa'eed bin al-'Aaṣ and 'Abdur-Raḥmān bin al-Ḥārith bin Hishām. Copies were sent to each of the various Islamic territories to replace all other collections in circulation. 'Uthmān kept a copy in Madīnah, and the original *ṣuḥuf* were returned to Ḥafṣah. There is consensus by the *ṣaḥābah* that what is contained in this standard copy is the true revelation received by Muḥammad (ﷺ) from Allāh, the Exalted.

4. The *muṣḥaf* of 'Uthmān had no dots or vowel marks, as they were unnecessary for those who knew the pure Arabic tongue. With the spread of Islām among other peoples, there arose a need to guard against incorrect reading and misinterpretation of the Qur'ān. At first, scholars were reluctant about these additions, but it was finally agreed that they did not affect the text itself and

were merely aids to proper pronunciation and understanding. They were introduced in three stages:

- Short vowel sounds were first represented by dots positioned above, below and to the left of the letter. This system was introduced during the caliphate of Muʻāwiyah bin Abī Sufyān by Abul-Aswad ad-Duʼlī after he had heard serious errors in recitation of the Qurʼān.

- Similarly written letters were differentiated by another system of dots above and below them during the caliphate of ʻAbdul-Malik bin Marwān. At the caliph's order, his governor, al-Ḥajjāj, appointed two scholars, Naṣr bin ʻĀṣim and Ḥayy bin Yaʻmūr, to implement this improvement.

- The presently used system of short vowel symbols was devised by al-Khaleel bin Aḥmad al-Farāheedī during the Abbasine period.