

Why should we read the Qur'an with tajweed?

Tajweed linguistically means to master something, and when referring to reading the Qur'an it means mastering the articulation of the letters, and reaching the utmost level in pronouncing it well.

This can only be done by pronouncing each letter from its correct articulation point, giving the letters their rights in inherent characteristics, and dues in conditional characteristics. We also need to make short in timing that which should be short and lengthen that which needs to be lengthened.

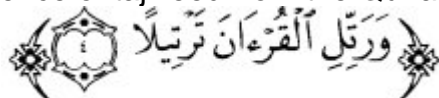
This can be reached only by studying the rules and by exercising the mouth, tongue, and jaw and much practice of reading. It is also necessary to read and study under someone who has mastered tajweed, so you can hear it correctly, and be corrected.

The righteous predecessors did not rely on reading the written aayaat, instead, they took the Qur'an orally from those who had mastered the recitation of the Qur'an and who had an authentic chain of transmission in their recitation back to the Prophet, ﷺ.

The recitation and reading of the Qur'an should stand out over all other speech, as it is the words of Allah; and the science of tajweed contains the rules governing this, so that Muslims can learn it and read it as it was revealed to, and read by the Prophet, ﷺ.

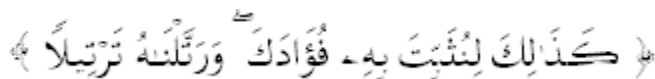
Most of what is known now as tajweed was part of the normal Arabic language, and rules were only written down 300 years after the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah upon him, as more and more non-Arabs entered Islam and the Arabic tongue started becoming corrupted.

Some evidence of tajweed from the Qur'an and sunnah:



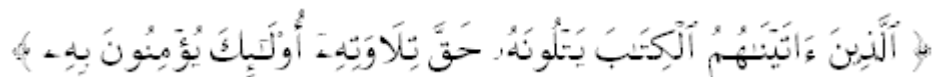
(Al-Muzzammil 4)

And recite the Qur'an (aloud) in a slow, (pleasant tone and) style.



(Al-Furqan 32)

Meaning of "tarteel": Making it clear (Ibn 'Abbaas); reading it letter by letter (Adh-Dhahaak), reading it slowly (Ibn Katheer). This makes easier pondering the meaning.



(Al-Baqarah 121)

Those to whom We gave the Book recite it as it should be recited, they are the ones that believe therein.

One tafseer of this last aayah from surah Al-Baqarah is that Ibn Mas'ood رضي الله عنه

said, "By He who my soul is in His hands, **حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ** verily means: That he allows the halaal in it, that he forbids the haraam in it, **he reads is as it was revealed by Allah...**" [Ibn Katheer].

Reading it as it was revealed by Allah, means reading with tajweed, as the Prophet, ﷺ read with what is now known as tajweed.

The Qur'an was revealed in Arabic:

﴿ إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴾
(Yusuf 2)

Verily, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an in order that you may understand.

﴿ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا غَيْرَ ذِي عِوَجٍ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴾
(Az-Zumar 28)

An Arabic Qur'an, without any crookedness (therein) in order that they may avoid all evil which Allāh has ordered them to avoid, fear Him and keep their duty to Him.

and the Arabs used to pronounce the letters correctly, and used to pronounce in their speech the idghaam and ith-haar, the ghunnah, the medd and absence of it, etc. without having the now known names for it. It was an inherent part of their language.

The Messenger received the Qur'an from Allah, the Mighty and Honored through Jibreel, عليه السلام, who would listen to the Messenger ﷺ recite the Qur'an completely in a special way every Ramadhan, with the special techniques the Messenger taught the Sahabah, then they passed it on to the taabi'een, and they passed it on to the next generation etc. in authentic verified chains.

Imam Ibn Al-Jazaree, died 833 h, one of the most famous scholars of the Qur'an and tajweed wrote the following lines of poetry:

وَالْأَخْذُ بِالتَّجْوِيدِ حَتْمٌ لَازِمٌ مَنْ لَمْ يُصَحِّحِ الْقُرْآنَ آتَمٌ
لَأَنَّهُ بِهِ الْإِلَهُ أَنْزَلَ

And taking tajweed is a absolute necessity, who does not [read] correctly the Qur'an is sinful

Because the Deity revealed it with it [tajweed]

Our worship is taken **تَوْقِيفًا** or restricted, meaning restricted to what the Qur'an and Sunnah tell us to do. Just as we learned wudhu', prayer, hajj and other forms of worship from the Messenger, ﷺ, and his companions, we should also learn from them the characterized way of recitation in which the Qur'an was revealed.

Abdullah bin Masood, **رضي الله عنه**, is reported to have said, "Ali bin Abee Taalib said to us, 'Verily the Messenger of Allah, ﷺ, ordered you to read as were taught.'" Al-Mughnee by Ibn Qadaamah 1/493 and Ibn Jareer in his introduction to tafseer 1/23.

When 'Umar and Hishaam bin Hakeen differed as to the correct recitation of the Qur'an, the Messenger **ﷺ** said, "Read it as you were taught, for verily those before you were destroyed by their differing from their Prophets." Saheeh Al-Jaami' 2/389.

The Messenger **ﷺ**, ordered his companions to take [learn] the Qur'an from four of the sahaba, and these were the best in recitation, so that they could learn from them the correct techniques and how the revelation was pronounced.

'Uthman **رضي الله عنه**, sent with each copy of the Qur'an that he sent to the different Muslim areas one companion to teach it to the Muslims. This shows that the reading of the Qur'an is restricted, and should be read the way Jibreel took from His Lord and read to the Messenger **ﷺ**, then taken from him and taught to the companions, then passed down to the Imams of recitation in person or with a taabi' in between and this is how it reached us today.

Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr, **رضي الله عنه**, said, "Verily the recitation of the Qur'an is a sunnah of the various sunnan, so recite it as you were taught to.

Al-Bukhari related that Qataadah said, "I ask Anas about the recitation of the Prophet, **ﷺ**, and he said, **كَانَ يُمَدُّ مَدًّا**, meaning: He used to lengthen some sounds a lot, then he read **بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ** and lengthened bismillaah **بِسْمِ اللَّهِ**, and lengthened **الرَّحِيمِ** Ar-Rahmaan, and lengthened **الرَّحِيمِ** Ar-Raheem."

In another hadeeth about lengthenings, Abdullah bin Mas'ood, ﷺ may Allah be pleased with him, was present and a man was reciting the Qur'an, and read the aayah:

﴿إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ﴾ [At-Tawbah 60], and he did not lengthen

the word لِلْفُقَرَاءِ and Ibn Mas'ood said, "This is not how the Messenger ﷺ recited it to me." He said, "How is it that he recited it to you?" He said, "He

recited it to me, ﴿إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ﴾", and he lengthened it. Related by Al-Haafith As-Suyootee, and graded as Saheeh in An-Nashr, and by Ash-Sheikh Muhammed Naasir Albani.

We note that Ibn Mas'ood, may Allah be pleased with him, refuted the shortening of the medd waajib, or required medd [when a hamzah follows a medd letter in the same word].

We also have evidence from the sunnah that the Messenger of Allah, ﷺ, would stop at the end of each aayah. Om Salamah, may Allah be pleased with her, said "The Messenger of Allah, ﷺ, would cut his recitation. He would say

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ then stop; ﴿الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾ then stop...: Abu Dawood, An-Nisaa'ee

Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, was asked about the recitation of the Prophet, ﷺ, and she said, "Not like this way that you are doing! If the listener wished to count his letters, he would have counted them." Al-Fat-h Ar-Rabbaanee.

In another hadeeth the Prophet, ﷺ said, "Who would like to recite the Qur'an fresh as it was revealed, then let him learn his recitation from Ibn Umm Abd [Ibn Mas'ood]. Ahmed [Saheeh]

This hadeeth shows that the Messenger pointed out who the companions should learn the Qur'an from and points to his desire for it to be read as it was revealed. This does not mean though, that if we have difficulty we should despair:

He who is skillful in reciting the Qur'aan is with the unveiled, honorable, and pious. And he who stutters when reading the Qur'aan, (and its recitation) is difficult upon him, will receive two rewards." (Reported by Bukhari)

We have two pictures in this hadeeth, the ultimate goal is to read skillfully, but if we have difficulty, we know we are being rewarded doubly.

Some books on the sciences of the Qur'an state that it is bid'ah (an innovation) not to read the Qur'an with tajweed rules, since it is the way of the recitation of

the Prophet, ﷺ, others say if the recitation changes the make-up of the word, or changes the meaning, then it is sinful recitation.

Ibn Al-Jazaree divided those that recite the Qur'an into three groups:

1. He that is good and rewarded **مُحْسِنٌ مَّأْجُورٌ**; he who learned and recite the Qur'an through a correct chain and his tongue became accustomed to it and he mastered recitation.
2. Stutters (struggles) in recitation finds difficulty or tongue doesn't obey. He is excused and rewarded and should continue to correct his recitation.
3. Sinful-reads according to his opinion, and does not listen to anyone trying to correct him. He hangs on to whatever he thinks is correct and refuses to change his ways.

For those that can't fix a mistake, but try to, or can't find a teacher, Allah does not burden a soul with more than it can bear.

That which is sinful in reading; taking into consideration the three groups just mentioned:

Making apparent mistakes in recitation: اللّٰحْنُ الظَّاهِرُ

The mistakes that strongly enter the recitation of the words, upset the balance in reading, and breaks Arabic language and grammar rules. These mistakes may change the meaning of the aayah, but do not have to change it to be in this serious category. These are mistakes in:

Changing the word make up, such as changing the vowels, no matter whether they are at the beginning, middle, or end of the word.

Changing one letter into another by mispronouncing it. As in changing the

ذال (د) into a زاي (ز), changing the ضاد (ض) into a ظاء (ظ); changing a تاء (ت) into a سين (س).

This type of recitation is haram by the agreement of all Muslims and the reciter will be punished if these mistakes are made on purpose. Ignorance or forgetting are not part of the haram ruling.

Making hidden mistakes in recitation: اللّٰحْنُ الْخَفِيّ

Making tajweed rule mistakes, but not in the Arabic language or meaning. For example reading the ith-haar rule with an idghaam, etc. These mistakes are not punishable, but one making them should fear scolding and threats.

The Qur'an was revealed with tajweed, and in the very least, we should strive to read it with tajweed, and many times if we ignore the recitation, we may be making serious errors, and if we refuse to try and correct, we fall in the most serious of all categories. May Allah protect us from this.