

1.6 Makki vs. Madani Qur'an

Main Topics Covered

- **Introduction** (0:00 to 1:00)
- **The Difference Between Makki & Madani Quran: Makki Quran** (1:00 to 3:00)
- **The Madinah Society** (3:00 to 3:45)
- **Main Focus in Madani Quran** (3:34 to 7:00)
- **Abrogation in the Quran?** (7:00 to 10:00)

Often times, people ask about what is written beside the name of the chapter (surah) in the Quran: Makki or Madani. Which means whether a chapter is revealed in Makkah or in Madinah.

What is the significance of the revelation in Makkah or Madinah?

This is one of the themes that is studied in what's called "ulum Al-Quran" or the sciences of the history of the Quran. Scholars studied what is Makki (what was revealed in Makkah) and what is Madani (what was revealed in Madinah).

What is the Difference Between the Makki and the Madani?

Makki Quran

What is actually the difference is that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in Makkah was trying to guide his people to the truth and was trying to coexists with them in a pluralistic society; a society in which some people are disbelievers and some are believers.

The Kabah at that time had idols around it, and he (peace be upon him) was just telling them, "Let me speak to people, just don't obstruct my message, don't torture my companions. Let me speak to people only."

At that time, Prophet Muhammad's message was the basics of Islam that Allah is one, the idols are falsehood, the Kabah was built by Adam at the beginning, and then Abraham and Ishmael eventually, and that people worshiped idols and that was wrong. How Prophet Muhammad started with the prayer, the basic rules of slaughtering animals and so on.

Many rules of the basic rules of Islam and the basic articles of faith were revealed in the Makki Quran. And because the Quran was revealed to the Prophet bit by bit, piece by piece, depending on the circumstances, the Quran that is Makki is actually dealing with that circumstance.

This is the lesson that we learn when we live in similar circumstances of persecution, similar circumstances of a multi faith kind of society, we seek peace, we seek to co-live with others, and so on.

Madinan Quran

The Madinah society was a different society, because when Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) migrated to Madinah and most people in Madinah converted to Islam. Some of them were hypocrites, yes, but most of them claimed that they were Muslim.

Actually, this became a different phase of Islam, a different kind of existence of a Muslim society. That's why the Madani kind of Quran that was revealed in Madinah is talking about the rules, the do's and the don'ts, talking about war and peace. War and peace were not part of the Makkah struggle, because it was a struggle of coexistence; he (peace be upon him) did not fight with them.

Main Focus in Madinan Quran

But in Madinah, Allah revealed that people around the Prophet were oppressed. And, therefore, they had to start to fight to defend themselves. That's why the Madinah Quran has a lot about war and peace, about defending the faith and defending the community inside, from the hypocrites and outside from the invaders and how to deal with them.

The society in Madinah started to be more organized and, therefore, we find more laws about the family, the community, neighborhood. How they should deal with the wives of the Prophet, and the house of Prophet Muhammad, how to deal with the mosque.

The revelation about the horizons of the Islamic civilization that started in Madinah, about science and the importance of reflection, travel and looking in heavens and earth, and so forth.

This is all revealed in Madinah because the Madinan society was a different society, and the Quran is supposed to deal in both cases and in every case: a society that is pluralistic and multi-religious society.

It is a society that is mostly believers' society where the institution of the mosque is central and a society is trying to defend itself. Situations in families where people are living in peace and harmony. Situations where people start to have issues and the family law will have to start to organize this.

Wealth in Makkah was the usual trade, but then in Madinah people started to have different kinds of wealth and different ways of paying their charity, and so on.

So, the difference between the Makki and the Madani Quran is actually in the history of the revelation, and therefore is important in the application of the revelation in today's world as we live in different societies that have different circumstances.

This does not mean that the Makki Quran doesn't have rules: Chapter Al An'am is revealed in Makkah and is talking about rules of food. And it doesn't mean that the chapters revealed in Madinah didn't have the articles of faith: Chapter Al Baqarah and other chapters are actually talking about the articles of faith.

Yet the articles of faith in Al Imran, At Tawbah, etc. is dealing a lot with the People of the Book because back in Makkah they were very few People of the Book and therefore, the talk about Jesus and Moses was not prominent in the Makki Quran because they were dealing with other issues of worshipping idols...

But, then in Madinah, there was a lot of interaction with the people of the Book and the relationships with the previous scriptures had to be detailed.

Abrogation in the Quran?

It's very important as well to know that the Madinan Quran had changed some of the previous legislations. It did not abrogate, in fact, the theory of abrogation is an abrogation of previous revelations, not the abrogation of the Quran canceling itself. The Quran does not contradict itself and doesn't cancel itself.

Yes, the Quran takes people gradually, and therefore, in Makkah, there was no prohibition of alcohol, not that because alcohol is not prohibited, it is, and every intoxicant is. But in Makkah it was taking people gradually. And then in Madinah it started to be prohibited in three stages as we know.

In Makkah, usury was a major part of the economy, so the prohibition of usury was just by disliking it in Makkah. Eventually, in Madinah it was prohibited, also in stages.

So, the issue of abrogation is an issue of gradualism in application of certain rules that are fixed rules, and there is no change in the rules that Allah set.

Yet there are abrogations in the Madinan Quran for things that were part of the law of the Jews or the Gospel before Islam, but then eventually Allah brought Prophet Muhammad to make the law more facilitating, and to remove some of the chains and some of the punishments that Allah had sent on people because of their sins.

Therefore, for example, the Madinan Quran, chapter Nur is referring to the abrogation of stoning, for example. Therefore, some of the companions believed that the revelation of chapter An Nur which is talking about lashing as a public kind of punishment for public adultery, is actually an abrogation of the previous laws that talked about stoning. There is no stoning in the Madinan sense because it was abrogated. The Islamic law has a different punishment of adultery.

Therefore, the laws in Madinah are starting to shape in order to shape the society in a particular way and build a foundation of the Islamic civilization.

And that understanding of the difference between the Makki and Madani kind of Quran is part of the Islamic knowledge that is important for a sound jurisprudence and a sound fiqh of Islam.

We ask Allah to guide us and forgive us.