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A Study On The Hadith Of Wathila Ibn Al-Asqa: "I Was Given The Seven Long Surahs In Place Of The Torah..."

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Abstract

The Hadith of Wathilah is regarded as one of the fundamental and significant hadiths in Qur'anic studies. Scholars have relied on it to address various issues, including the classification of the Qur'an and its surahs based on specific characteristics. This hadith supports the notion that the arrangement of Qur'anic surahs is divinely ordained (Tawqifi) and highlights the virtues of certain surahs. The study explores key questions such as the identification of the "Seven Long Surahs" and determining the seventh surah that completes the six unanimously agreed upon by scholars. Additionally, it examines whether there is a connection between these surahs and the "Seven Oft-Repeated" (Sab' al-Mathani) mentioned in Surah Al-Hijr, as well as their possible correlation with descriptions found in earlier divine scriptures, particularly the Torah. Beyond this, the research also sheds light on the exegetical significance of this hadith, its usage in hadith criticism, and the perspectives of different schools of thought regarding its interpretation. The research is structured into an introduction, six main chapters, and a conclusion that presents the findings and recommendations. One of the key conclusions is the necessity of distinguishing between the Seven Oft-Repeated verses and the Seven Long Surahs, affirming that the seventh surah in this category is Surah Bara'ah (At-Tawbah). Furthermore, the study emphasizes the originality of revisiting this narration in the broader context of Qur'anic sciences and its comparative relationship with the scriptures of earlier communities.

Research Questions: This study seeks to answer several critical questions: What is the correct identification of the seventh surah among the Seven Long Surahs? Is there a link between the Seven Long Surahs in the hadith and the Seven Oft-Repeated verses mentioned in Surah Al-Hijr? How do the descriptions of these surahs compare with similar concepts in earlier revealed scriptures?

Keywords

Hadith, The Seven Long Surahs, Al Mathani, Wathila bin Al Asqa, Al-Mufassal, Holy Quran.

Highlights

- This study provides a detailed examination of the hadith of Wāthila ibn al-Asqaʿ concerning the "Seven Long Surahs" as a substitute for the Torah.
- It highlights the transmission chains and evaluates the authenticity of the hadith within classical hadith scholarship.
- The research explores the theological and exegetical significance of equating the Seven Long Surahs with earlier divine scriptures.

- Comparative analysis reveals the role of this hadith in shaping Muslim perceptions of scriptural continuity and superiority.
- The study contributes to the broader field of Qur'anic studies by connecting hadith criticism with intertextual analysis of sacred texts.

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Vâsile Bin El-Eska'nın Hadisi Üzerine Bir Araştırma: "Tevrat'ın Yerine Bana Seb'u't-Tıval Verildi..."

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Öz

Vâsile b. Eska' -Allah ondan razı olsun- tarafından rivayet edilen hadis, Kur'an bilimlerinde temel hadislerden biridir ve alimlerin Kur'an ilimleriyle ilgili çeşitli konuları belirlerken başvurduğu usul hadislerden biridir. Bu hadiste, Kur'an ve surelerinin niteliklerine göre sınıflandırılması, Kur'an surelerinin sırasının vahiy ile belirlendiğine dair deliller ve surelerin faziletleri hakkında bilgiler yer almaktadır. Ayrıca, konu, "seb'at-ı tıvâl" ifadesinin anlamının ne olduğunun ve alimler arasında kabul edilen altı sureye eklenen yedinci sure hakkında yapılacak açıklamanın önemini göstermektedir. Araştırma, birkaç bilimsel ve genel soruyu cevaplamaktadır. Bunları iade edecek olursak: - "seb'at-ı tıvâl" arasında kabul edilen yedinci surenin hangi sure olduğu ile ilgili doğrulama nedir? - Hadiste geçen "seb'at-ı tıvâl" ile Hicr suresinde geçen "seb-ı mesânî" arasında bir ilişki var mı? Hadiste geçen surelerin nitelikleri ile önceki semavi kitaplar arasında nasıl bir benzerlik bulunmaktadır? Yani "seb'at-ı tıvâl" ile Tevrat arasındaki benzerlik nedir? Çalışma ayrıca bu hadisin Kur'an'ın diğer sure tasnifleriyle bağlantısını, hadis ilmi kaynaklarındaki değerlendirmeleri ve farklı mezhep alimlerinin yaklaşımlarını da incelemektedir. Bu araştırma, bir giriş bölümü, altı ana bölüm ve bir sonuç kısmından oluşmaktadır. Sonuç bölümünde ulaşılan bulgular ve sunulan öneriler yer almaktadır. En önemli sonuçlardan biri, "seb-ı mesânî" ile "seb'at-ı tıvâl" arasında ayrım yapılması gerektiği ve "tivâl-ı müfassal"in yedinci suresinin Tevbe Suresi olduğu sonucudur. Ayrıca, çalışmanın özgün yönlerinden biri, ilgili rivayetlerin Kur'an'ın tarihî bağlamı ve önceki kutsal kitaplarla irtibatı açısından yeni bir değerlendirmeye tabi tutulmasıdır.

Araştırma Soruları: Bu araştırma şu bilimsel sorulara yanıt vermektedir: Yedi uzun sûreye dâhil olan yedinci sûre hakkında yapılan tahkik nedir? Hadiste geçen yedi uzun sûre ile Hicr Suresi'nde bahsedilen "yedi mesânî" arasında bir ilişki var mı? Hadiste geçen sûrelerin özellikleri ile önceki indirilen kitapların özellikleri arasında nasıl bir karşılaştırma yapılabilir?

Anahtar Kelimeler

Hadis, Seb'at-ı Tıvâl, Seb-ı Mesânîi, Vâsile b. Eska, Kur'an-ı Kerim, Zebur.

Öne Çıkanlar

- Bu çalışma, Vâsile b. el-Eska'ın "Yedi Uzun Sure"nin Tevrat'ın yerine verildiğine dair hadisini ayrıntılı biçimde incelemektedir.
- Hadisin rivayet zincirlerini öne çıkararak klasik hadis ilmi çerçevesinde sıhhatini değerlendirmektedir.
- Yedi Uzun Sûre'nin önceki ilahî kitaplarla ilişkilendirilmesinin teolojik ve tefsirî anlamlarını ele almaktadır.

- Karşılaştırmalı analiz, bu hadisin Müslümanların kutsal metinlerin sürekliliği ve üstünlüğüne dair algılarını şekillendirmedeki rolünü ortaya koymaktadır.
- Çalışma, hadis tenkidi ile kutsal metinler arasındaki metinlerarası analizleri ilişkilendirerek Kur'an araştırmaları alanına özgün bir katkı sunmaktadır.

Makale Bilgileri

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Etik Kurul İzni	Bu çalışma, etik kurul izni gerektirmeyen nitelikte olup kullanılan veriler literatür taraması/yayınlanmış kaynaklar üzerinden elde edilmiştir. Çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur.
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Introduction

The profound interconnection between the sciences of the Sunnah and the sciences of the Qur'an is well recognized, as the Prophetic Sunnah serves as an exposition, explanation, and detailed elaboration of the Qur'anic sciences. Among the hadiths that illustrate this relationship is the narration of the Companion Wathila ibn al-Asqa' (may God be pleased with him) from the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him): "I have been given the place of the Torah's Seven Long Surahs, the Psalms' One Hundred, the Gospel's Repeated (Mutanā) Surahs, and I have been honored with the (Qur'anic) Muṣḥaf al-Mufaṣṣal (the detailed book)."

The importance of this hadith lies in its status as a fundamental text within the sciences of the Qur'an. Scholars have relied on it to explore various issues related to the internal classification of the Qur'anic chapters, particularly in discussions about the order of the surahs in the Muṣḥaf and the virtues of certain surahs. Classical scholars such as al-Suyūṭī, al-Baghawī, and Ibn Ḥajar, as well as modern researchers, have touched on the implications of this narration when addressing the organization of the Qur'an and its literary categories. However, most of these studies have either treated the hadith briefly in the context of broader discussions on Qur'anic classifications or limited themselves to citing it as supporting evidence without providing an in-depth textual and analytical examination.

In this respect, the present study seeks to build upon these earlier contributions by offering a focused and comprehensive treatment of Wathila's narration, combining both hadith authentication (takhrīj) and analytical study of the text (matn). Unlike previous research, this study applies a systematic methodology: an inductive approach to identify and classify the chains of transmission, arranged chronologically by narrators' death dates; a historical method to contextualize the narration; and a thematic analysis to explore the meaning and implications of the "Seven Long Surahs" (as-sabʿ al-ṭiwāl). This multi-layered approach allows for a more rigorous evaluation of the hadith's authenticity, interpretation, and relevance to Qur'anic studies.

By integrating these methods, the research makes a distinctive contribution to the field. It not only verifies the narration through its original sources but also clarifies ambiguities in the scholarly discourse regarding the identification of the "Seven Long Surahs." In particular, it highlights the significance of Surah al-Tawbah (al-Barā'ah) as the seventh surah, thus providing a stronger basis for distinguishing between the "Seven Repeated Surahs" (as-sabʿ al-mathānī) and the "Seven Long Surahs." Moreover, the study underscores the unique contribution of Wathila ibn al-Asqa', a Companion who embraced Islam late in the Medinan period, which adds contextual weight to the discussion of surah arrangement and Qur'anic categorization.

The research is structured into an introduction and six chapters, followed by a conclusion that summarizes the main findings and recommendations. Ultimately, this work seeks to fill a noticeable gap in the literature by providing a detailed, methodologically grounded analysis of a single narration that has long been referenced but rarely studied in depth, thereby enriching the broader field of Qur'anic sciences and hadith scholarship.

1. Authentication and Classification of the Ḥadīth

This ḥadīth was transmitted by al-Ṭayālisī (d. 241 AH)[1], Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241 AH)[2], al-

[1] Al-Ṭayālisī, Sulaymān ibn Dāwūd. Musnad Abī Dāwūd al-Ṭayālisī. Edited by Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd al-Sāʿiḥ. Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1999. Vol. 2, p. 351, no. 1105.

[2] Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. Musnad Aḥmad. Edited by Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir. Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1995. Vol. 28, p. 188, no. 16982.

Ṭabarī (d. 310 AH) in his *Tafsīr*[3], and al-Ṭaḥāwī (d. 321 AH) in his *Mushkil al-Āthār*[4], as well as by al-Bayhaqī (d. 458 AH) in *al-Sunan al-Ṣaghīr*[5]. All of them reported it through the chain of transmission: ʿImrān al-Qaṭṭān → Qatāda → Abū al-Milīḥ → Wāthila ibn al-Asqaʿ, who said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "*I was given in place of the Torah the Seven [long sūras], and in place of the Psalms the [chapters of] a hundred verses, and in place of the Gospel the Mathānī; and I was given preference by the Mufaṣṣal.*

Al-Bayhaqī also narrated it in *Shuʿab al-Īmān*[6] through the same chain from ʿImrān al-Qaṭṭān, with the wording: "*I was given in place of the Torah the Seven Long [sūras]...*", where the addition of the word "*long*" (al-ṭiwāl) appears.

Additionally, it was reported by al-Qāsim ibn Sallām (d. 241 AH) in *Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān*[7], al-Ṭabarī in his *Tafsīr*[8], and al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360 AH) in *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*[9], all through the chain: Saʿīd ibn Bashīr → Qatāda → Abū al-Milīḥ → Wāthila — as a marfūʿ narration with the wording: "*I was given the Seven Long [sūras] in place of the Torah, the [chapters of] a hundred verses in place of the Gospel, the Mathānī in place of the Psalms, and I was given preference by the Mufaṣṣal.*" Al-Bayhaqī also narrated it in *Shuʿab al-Īmān*[10] through Saʿīd ibn Bashīr with a similar isnād, but without the word "*long*" (al-ṭiwāl).

Thus, the narration revolves around Qatāda ibn Diʿāma al-Sadūsī — a reliable and well-established transmitter[11] — from the trustworthy tābiʿī Abū al-Milīḥ ibn Usāma al-Hudhalī al-Wāsiṭī[12], who reported it from the Companion Wāthila ibn al-Asqaʿ al-Laythī.

2. Biography of the Narrator

He is Wathilah ibn al-Asqaʿ ibn Kaʿb ibn ʿĀmir al-Laythi, from the tribe of Banū Kināna. Some sources state his name as ibn al-Asqaʿ ibn ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā ibn ʿAbd Yālīl; however, the former version is considered more accurate and widely accepted. He embraced Islam when the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was preparing to march to Tabūk, and he participated in the campaign alongside him. He was among the poor of the Ahl al-Ṣuffah (the People of the Bench).

Wathilah was the last Companion to pass away in Damascus. He died in the year 83 AH at the age of 105. His reliability was affirmed by al-Bukhari and others. Some sources report his death occurred in the year 85 AH, at the age of 98.

3. The Seven Long Surahs (As-Sabʿ al-Ṭiwāl)

The term *al-ṭiwāl* (with a ḍamma on the ṭāʾ) is the plural of *ṭūlā*, just as *al-kibār* is the plural of

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3 Al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad ibn Jarīr. Jāmiʿ al-Bayān ʿan Taʾwīl Āy al-Qurʾān. Edited by ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Muḥsin al-Turkī. Cairo: Dār Hajr, 2001. Vol. 1, p. 100.

4 Al-Ṭaḥāwī, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad Abū Jaʿfar. Sharḥ Mushkil al-Āthār. Edited by Shuʿayb al-Arnāʾūṭ. Beirut: Dār al-Risālah, 1989. Vol. 3, p. 409, no. 1379.

5 Al-Bayhaqī, Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn. Al-Sunan al-Ṣaghīr. Edited by ʿĀdil Saʿd. Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 2003. Vol. 1, p. 341, no. 962.

6 Al-Bayhaqī, Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn. Shuʿab al-Īmān. Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, n.d. Vol. 5, p. 71, no. 2192.

7 Al-Baghdādī, Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām ibn ʿAbd Allāh. Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān. Edited by Marwān ʿAṭiyyah. Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1995. p. 225.

8 Al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad ibn Jarīr. Jāmiʿ al-Bayān ʿan Taʾwīl Āy al-Qurʾān. Cairo: Dār Hajr, 2001. Vol. 1, p. 100, no. 126.

9 Al-Ṭabarānī, Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad ibn Ayyūb. Al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr. Edited by Ḥamdī ʿAbd al-Majīd. Cairo: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyyah, 1994. Vol. 22, p. 76.

10 Al-Bayhaqī, Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn. Shuʿab al-Īmān. Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, n.d. Vol. 4, p. 108.

11 Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī Abū al-Faḍl. Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb. Edited by Muḥammad ʿAwwāmah. Damascus: Dār al-Rashīd, 1986. p. 453, no. 5518.

12 Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī. Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb. Damascus: Dār al-Rashīd, 1986. p. 675, no. 8390.

kubrā. This designation is applied to the Seven Long Surahs due to their length in comparison to the rest of the Qur'anic chapters.

3.1. The One Hundred (Al-Mu'īn)

Al-Mu'īn refers to the surahs that follow the Seven Long Surahs. They are so named because each of them contains more than one hundred verses or approaches that number. These surahs are understood to be those that come after Surah al-Kahf in the Qur'anic order, characterized by having over one hundred verses, or those that contain narratives and other thematic material. Accordingly, if Surah At-Tawbah (al-Bara'ah) is considered the last of the Seven Long Surahs, then the first of the One Hundred surahs would be Surah Yūnus.

3.2. The Repeated (Al-Muthānī)

Al-Muthānī are the surahs that Instead, follow the miʾa (المئة) in their proper sequence. The One Hundred are regarded as the "first" group, while the Repeated serve as their "second." The name *al-Muthānī* is derived from the dual form, indicating repetition. The Qur'an is called *al-Muthānī* because it repeats parables, stories, admonitions, and lessons that God (Glorified and Exalted be He) mentions therein.

The term *al-Muthānī* is the plural of *muthannā* (dual), which stems from the notion of duality or repetition. The Qur'an is referred to as *al-Muthānī* because it repeats narratives, news, promises, and warnings. It is also said that this name arises because the Qur'an is recited repeatedly without causing boredom. Surah al-Fātiḥah is also called *al-Muthānī* because it is recited at least twice in every prayer and because it contains praise of God (Glory be to Him).

Regarding these groups of surahs, the One Hundred are considered the "beginnings," while the Repeated follow them, acting as their "second."

The term *al-Muthānī* appears in the Qur'an and Islamic tradition with three primary meanings:

The first meaning: *Al-Muthānī* refers to the entire Qur'an. Proponents of this view cite the verse:

"God has sent down the best statement: a Book consistent [in its parts], repeated [muthānī]." (Az-Zumar 39:23)

This is because the stories and reports recur throughout the Qur'an. The verse is also interpreted to mean that the book is repetitive in nature, mentioning reward and punishment multiple times. This interpretation is favored by Abu 'Ubayd, who considered it the strongest explanation of *al-Muthānī*.

The second meaning: *Al-Muthānī* refers to the "Opening of the Book" (i.e., Surah al-Fātiḥah), which God describes in the verse:

"And We have certainly given you, [O Muhammad], seven of the often repeated [verses] and the great Qur'an." (Al-Ḥijr 15:87)

It is named this because it is repeated in every unit (rak'ah) of the prayer or because it contains praise of God through thanksgiving, monotheism, and mention of the Day of Judgment. Thus, it refers to the seven verses by which God is repeatedly praised.

The third meaning: *Al-Muthānī* are the surahs whose verses number less than the One Hundred but are longer than the Muṣḥaf al-Mufaṣṣal (the detailed chapters). The One Hundred were designated as the "firsts," and those following them were called *al-Muthānī* because they immediately succeed them.

Accordingly, *al-Muthānī* in the Qur'an are all surahs with fewer than one hundred verses but

longer than the Muṣḥaf al-Mufaṣṣal. It is narrated in the hadith of ʻAlqamah that when he arrived in Mecca, he circumambulated the Kaʻbah seven times, then prayed two rakʻahs in which he recited from the Seven Long Surahs, then circumambulated seven times again and recited in two rakʻahs from the One Hundred, then circumambulated seven times and recited from the Repeated, and finally circumambulated once more and recited from the detailed chapters.

There are twenty-six *al-Muthānī* surahs, which are:

(al-Ḥajj, al-Qaṣaṣ, an-Naml, an-Nūr, al-Anfāl, Maryam, al-ʻAnkabūt, Yā Sīn, al-Furqān, al-Ḥijr, ar-Raʻd, Saba', al-Malāʼikah, Ibrāhīm, Ṣād, Muḥammad, Luqmān, Az-Zumar, al-Muʼmin, az-Zukhruf, as-Sajdah, al-Aḥqāf, al-Jāthiyah, ad-Dukhān).

These constitute the *al-Muthānī* according to the school of Abdullah. It should be noted that in some manuscripts from which I have taken this list, twenty-five surahs are listed, and it appears that the twenty-sixth is Surah al-Fātiḥah.

3.3. Al-Mufaṣṣal

The term Al-Mufaṣṣal derives its name from the numerous divisions it contains, particularly between its surahs, many of which begin with the verse Bismillāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm ("In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate") .There are multiple scholarly opinions regarding the starting point of Al-Mufaṣṣal, although there is consensus that its end corresponds to the final portion of the Qurʼan. Scholars differ on which surah marks the beginning of Al-Mufaṣṣal, with various positions including: Surah aṣ-Ṣāffāt, al-Jāthiyah, al-Qiṭāl (Muḥammad), al-Fatḥ, al-Ḥujurāt, Qāf, aṣ-Ṣaff, Ṭā-Bāraḳ, Sabaḥ, aḍ-Ḍuḥā, and continuing to the end of the Qurʼan.

Most of these opinions are subject to scrutiny, as *al-Sharḥ al-Muhadhab* limited the definition of Al-Mufaṣṣal to four of the earliest surahs excluding the first and fourth. Ibn Abī al-Ṣayf al-Yamani mentioned the first, seventh, and eighth surahs; al-Dazamārī in *Sharḥ al-Tanbīh* referred to the fourth and eighth; al-Marzūqī supported the ninth view; al-Khaṭṭābī and al-Māwardī upheld the tenth. Imam Nawawī considered the beginning of Al-Mufaṣṣal to be Surah al-Ḥujurāt. Al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī transmitted a rare opinion that Al-Mufaṣṣal encompasses the entire Qurʼan.

The report in al-Ṭaḥāwī from the hadith of Zarārah ibn Awfā regarding Abū Mūsā — "Recite in the Maghrib prayer the last part of Al-Mufaṣṣal" — is not taken as defining its beginning but rather its end, indicating that the start of Al-Mufaṣṣal precedes this passage.

Al-Zarkashī in *Al-Burhān* asserted that the first surah of Al-Mufaṣṣal is *Qāf*[13] (Surah 50). Al-Māwardī (d. 450 AH) cited ʻĪsā ibn ʻUmar, who narrated from many Companions that this is the case[14]. He supported this view with a hadith from Aws ibn Ḥudhayfah, who said:

"I was among the delegation from Ṭāʼif of Banī Mālik who came to the Prophet ﷺ to embrace Islam. We were settled in a dome for him, and he would come to us from his homes and the mosque. After the ʻIshāʼ prayer, he would stay with us telling us about the hardships of Quraysh and the people of Mecca and say: 'There was no way out; we were humiliated and oppressed in Mecca. When we emigrated to Medina, the war was evenly matched between us and them.' One night he stayed away from us after ʻIshāʼ longer than usual. We asked: 'Why do you delay, O Messenger of God?' He said: 'A Hizb (part) of the Qurʼan came to me, and I wished not to go out until I completed it.' We asked the Prophet's Companions: 'Do you divide the Qurʼan into Hizb?' They said: 'We divide it into six, five, seven, nine, eleven, thirteen surahs, and the Hizb of Al-

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13 al-Zarkashī, Badr al-Dīn. al-Burhān fī ʿUlūm al-Qurʾān, 1/246.

14 al-Māwardī, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb al-Baṣrī al-Baghdādī, Abū al-Ḥasan. al-Nukat wa-al-ʿUyūn. Ed. al-Sayyid b. ʿAbd al-Maqṣūd. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1988, 1/27.

Mufaṣṣal from *Qāf* to the end.[15]"

Ibn Ḥajar, commenting on this hadith and affirming his preference, concluded that the most sound opinion is that Al-Mufaṣṣal begins from the start of Surah *Qāf* to the end of the Qur'an. This, however, is based on the assumption that al-Fātiḥah is not counted among the first third of the Qur'an; if it is included, then the beginning of Al-Mufaṣṣal would be from al-Ḥujurāt, a position endorsed by several Imams[16].

Elsewhere in *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, Ibn Ḥajar reaffirmed that Al-Mufaṣṣal begins with Surah al-Ḥujurāt, stating:

"Al-Mufaṣṣal refers to the surahs with many divisions, starting from al-Ḥujurāt to the end of the Qur'an according to the correct view[17]."

From Ibn Ḥajar's remarks, it is clear that the dispute over the beginning of Al-Mufaṣṣal partly arises from differing interpretations regarding the status of Surah al-Fātiḥah. Al-Zarkashī's view also indicates that al-Fātiḥah is excluded from Al-Mufaṣṣal in such classifications. The preference for starting Al-Mufaṣṣal from al-Ḥujurāt may derive from the practical approach observed in the Prophet's (peace be upon him) and the Companions' recitations during prayers.

4. The Seven Repeated (Al-Sab' al-Muthānī) in Surah Al-Ḥijr

What draws attention when examining the various opinions regarding the Seven Long Surahs is that the *Seven Repeated* are mentioned explicitly in the Qur'anic verse:

"And We have certainly given you, [O Muhammad], seven of the often repeated [verses] and the great Qur'an." (Al-Ḥijr 15:87).

When consulting interpretations of the *Seven Repeated* in Surah Al-Ḥijr, some opinions identify them with the Seven Long Surahs, despite the fact that the hadith concerning the Seven Long Surahs was narrated late in the Medinan period, while the verse is Meccan, and the Seven Long Surahs include both Meccan and Medinan chapters. This prompted a review of the opinions on the Seven Repeated and a clarification of the most sound view to dispel ambiguity, before proceeding to discuss the Seven Long Surahs.

The exegetes' opinions regarding the Seven Repeated can be summarized as follows:

First Opinion: It is reported from ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Ibn Masʿūd (in one narration), Ibn ʿAbbās (in the majority of narrations), Abū Hurayrah, Ubai ibn Kaʿb, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Saʿīd ibn Jubayr (in one narration), Mujāhid (in one narration), ʿAṭāʾ, Qatādah, and others, that they considered Surah al-Fātiḥah as *Umm al-Kitāb*[18] (the Mother of the Book).

The evidence supporting this view comes from several hadiths, including that of Abū ibn Kaʿb (may God be pleased with him), who reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "*Nothing has been revealed in the Torah or the Gospel like Umm al-Kitāb, which is the Seven Repeated, and it is divided between Me and My servant; My servant will have whatever he asks for.*"

This hadith confirms that Surah al-Fātiḥah is Umm al-Kitāb and that it constitutes the Seven Repeated which God has favored by dividing it between Himself and His servant, emphasizing the greatness and virtue of this surah.

Also relevant is the hadith of Abū Saʿīd al-Maʿlā narrated in al-Bukhārī:

"*Shall I not teach you the greatest surah in the Qur'an before I leave the mosque?*" The Prophet ﷺ

[15] Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. al-Musnad, 31/362, no. 19021.
[16] Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, Aḥmad b. ʿAlī. Fatḥ al-Bārī, 9/43.
[17] Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, Aḥmad b. ʿAlī. Fatḥ al-Bārī, 9/84.
[18] al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad b. Jarīr. Jāmiʿ al-Bayān, 17/132

then recited: "*Al-ḥamdulillāhi rabbil-'ālamīn*[19]" (The Opening), stating it is the Seven Repeated and the Great Qur'an that he was given.

Abū Hurayrah also narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

"*The Umm al-Qur'ān is the Seven Repeated and the Great Qur'an.*[20]"

Second Opinion: That the Seven Repeated are the Seven Long Surahs (*al-Sab' al-Ṭiwāl*). This was stated by Ibn Mas'ūd (in one narration), Ibn 'Abbās (in one narration), Sa'īd ibn Jubayr (in one narration), Mujāhid (in one narration), and al-Ḍaḥḥāk[21].

The evidence for this view is that laws, obligations, and parables are doubled in these surahs, and because they exceed the first hundred verses into the second hundred.

Third Opinion: The Seven Repeated are seven general themes revealed in the Qur'an, as mentioned by al-Qurṭubī in his *Tafsīr*. This interpretation places the Seven Repeated within the Qur'an's broad thematic categories such as commands, prohibitions, glad tidings, warnings, parables, enumeration of blessings, and reports of previous nations.

However, this opinion can be critiqued similarly to the claim that the Seven Long Surahs are simply the longest chapters, since the Qur'an had not yet been completed, especially as commands and prohibitions—an essential part of legislation—had not yet been fully revealed during the Meccan period, where the focus was on monotheism and faith.

Moreover, these seven themes mentioned by al-Qurṭubī recur throughout the Qur'an, raising the question of why the phrase "and the great Qur'an" is conjoined with the Seven Repeated if these themes merely represent general recurring motifs. This implies these seven surahs hold a distinctive character that sets them apart from the rest.

Fourth Opinion: There are four interpretations of *al-Muthānī* in the Qur'an:

First: The *Muthānī* refers to the entire Qur'an because some verses follow others in a paired (dual) manner, where the last verse of one follows the first of the next, separating the surahs until their completion. Abu 'Ubayd supported this view.

Second: The Qur'an is called *al-Muthānī* because it repeatedly praises God Almighty.

Third: *Al-Muthānī* refers to the frequent mention of Paradise and Hell, reward and punishment throughout the Qur'an.

Fourth: *Al-Muthānī* means repeated narratives, reports, admonitions, and ethical instructions, as noted by Ibn al-Anbārī.

Ibn Qutaybah said:

"*The Muthānī may refer to the entire Qur'an, whether its surahs are short or long,*" explaining that the name arises because the Prophets and stories are repeated therein. Based on this, *al-Sab'* could mean seven parts (sevenths) of the Qur'an, implying the phrase means "the great Qur'an."[22]

Fifth Opinion: That the Seven Repeated are the surahs that are shorter than the Long and One Hundred, but longer than the detailed chapters (*Al-Mufaṣṣal*). This view was chosen by some scholars and is supported by the hadith of Wathilah ibn al-Asqa', which is under study.

Al-Rāzī mentioned this opinion and said:

"*If this interpretation is authentically attributed to the Prophet ﷺ, then there is no objection to it. But*

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[19] al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. Ed. Muṣṭafā al-Bughā. Damascus: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 5th ed., 1993, Kitāb al-Tafsīr, Bāb Qawlihi Ta'ālā: "Wa-laqad Ātaynāka Sab'an min al-Mathānī", no. 4703.

[20] al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Kitāb al-Tafsīr, Bāb Qawlihi Ta'ālā: "Wa-laqad Ātaynāka Sab'an min al-Mathānī", no. 3704.

[21] al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad b. Jarīr. Jāmi' al-Bayān, 17/129.

[22] Ibn al-Jawzī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Alī b. Muḥammad. Zād al-Masīr fī 'Ilm al-Tafsīr, 2/543.

if it is not authentic, then this opinion remains problematic, since it has been shown that the surahs called al-Muthānī are not necessarily superior to others, making it difficult to identify the Seven Repeated with those surahs.[23]"

After reviewing the various opinions and examining their evidences, the first opinion appears most sound, identifying the Seven Repeated as Umm al-Kitāb (Surah al-Fātiḥah), for the following reasons:

First, there exist authentic and explicit hadiths supporting this, such as those narrated by Saʿīd ibn al-Maʿlā and Abū Hurayrah. Al-Ṭabarī stated:

"*The strongest view on this matter is the one that identifies the Seven Repeated as the seven verses of Umm al-Kitāb, based on authentic prophetic narration.*"

Second, Surah al-Fātiḥah was revealed in Mecca, aligning with the Meccan context of the verse, and God bestowed it upon the believers after its revelation. In contrast, the Seven Long Surahs include many chapters that were revealed later. Also, the commands and prohibitions referenced in the third opinion had not been fully revealed at that time.

Does preferring the view that the Seven Repeated are al-Fātiḥah invalidate the other opinions?

In reality, this text clarifies that Surah al-Fātiḥah is the Seven Repeated and the Great Qur'an. This does not contradict attributing this characteristic to the Seven Long Surahs, which share similar features. Nor does it conflict with describing the entire Qur'an as perfect, which includes these longer surahs as well. As God says:

"*God has sent down the best statement: a Book consistent [in its parts], repeated [muthānī], causing the skins of those who fear their Lord to shiver.*" (Az-Zumar 39:23) — Here, the Qur'an is *muthānī* in one aspect, *mutashābih* (similar) in another, and also the Great Qur'an.

Similarly, when the Prophet ﷺ was asked about the mosque established on piety, he indicated his mosque, although the verse was revealed concerning Masjid Quba. Thus, there is no contradiction in mentioning one thing without negating another if they share the same attribute.

The researcher's view is that if the attribute were general and not specifically tied to a number or conjoined with a name to signify the Book of God (the Great Qur'an), this interpretation would harmonize the opinions. The term *al-Muthānī* can be said of al-Fātiḥah and also the entire Qur'an, as explained earlier. However, it is incorrect to derive the Qur'an's description solely by linking it to the Seven from *al-Muthānī*, since *min* (from) here is distributive, also applying when following a number. The Seven Repeated refer to parts of the Qur'an—whether verses or chapters—with a special distinction making them specifically mentioned among the Qur'an.

Since the *al-Muthānī* distinct from the Seven vary significantly in terms of whole versus part, this clarifies the correct conjunction between them.

Thus, the shared characteristic applies both to al-Fātiḥah and the Seven Long Surahs. Since the text explicitly mentions al-Fātiḥah, can the Seven Long Surahs also fall under this description expansively?

The answer: This is unlikely even when interpreting it as the repetition of stories and lessons within, because the hadith of Wathilah ibn al-Asqa' states that the Prophet ﷺ was given *al-Muthānī* in place of the Psalms, making it difficult to equate the Seven Repeated with the Seven Long Surahs or consider the latter as the former in the verse. Therefore, there must be a clear distinction between them.

[23] al-Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn. Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb (al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr), 19/160.

5. The Seven Long Surahs (Al-Sab' al-Ṭiwāl)

There are various opinions regarding the meaning of the Seven Long Surahs, which I will mention along with their discussion:

5.1. The Seven Long Surahs are the Seven Repeated mentioned in the verse:

"And We have certainly given you, [O Muhammad], seven of the often repeated [verses] and the great Qur'an."

The interpretations regarding the *Seven Repeated* were discussed in the previous chapter, where several views were presented, including the prominent one that equates them with the Seven Long Surahs. It appears that the hadith commentators considered the interpretation of the Seven Repeated in Surah Al-Ḥijr as one of the meanings of the Seven Long Surahs.

This opinion is famously attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās, as mentioned by al-Nasā'ī in *al-Sunan al-Kubrā* when explaining the verse *"And We have certainly given you seven of the often repeated"*. Ibn Ḥajar stated in his commentary:

"Al-Nasā'ī has narrated with an authentic chain from Ibn ʿAbbās that the Seven Repeated are the Seven Long Surahs, meaning the chapters from the beginning of Al-Baqarah to the end of Al-Aʿrāf, then Al-Bara'ah (At-Tawbah), and it is also said Yūnus."

The same was reported from Mujāhid. Ibn Kathīr also transmitted this view from many followers of the Successors (*Tābiʿīn*), stating:

"Abū ʿUbayd said: Hishām told us, and Abū Bishr told us from Saʿīd ibn Jubayr regarding the verse 'And We have certainly given you seven of the often repeated,' that they are the Seven Long Surahs: Al-Baqarah, Āl ʿImrān, An-Nisā', Al-Mā'idah, Al-Anʿām, Al-Aʿrāf, and Yūsuf. Mujāhid said the same, as did Makḥūl, ʿUṭayyah ibn Qays, Abū Muḥammad al-Fārisī, Shaddād ibn ʿUbayd Allāh, and Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥārith al-Dhimārī."

However, considering that Surah Al-Ḥijr is Meccan, while the Seven Long Surahs were revealed later, a question arises regarding how God granted His Prophet what had not yet been revealed. Al-Qurṭubī's statement that what will be revealed is counted as already revealed was challenged by al-Rāzī, who argued it contradicts the apparent meaning.

Certain reports support al-Rāzī's view, such as what was narrated from Abū Jaʿfar al-Rāzī from al-Rubayʿ ibn Anas from Abū al-ʿĀliyah regarding the interpretation of *"And We have certainly given you seven of the often repeated":*

"The Opening of the Book is seven verses. I asked al-Rubayʿ about the claim that the Seven Long Surahs are meant, and he replied: This verse had already been revealed, and nothing of the long ones had been revealed yet."

If someone says that the verse refers to God's favor upon the Prophet ﷺ with the entire great Qur'an that had not yet been fully revealed, then why is it not plausible that the Seven Long Surahs were also granted favor before their full revelation? The answer is that God favored His Prophet ﷺ with two different things:

- The first was specific in number and description: *seven* and *often repeated*, which was clear and known.
- The second was the Great Qur'an, which was being revealed gradually. The Seven Long Surahs were part of it, some already revealed in Mecca and some in Medina, making it a general favor.

5.2. The Seven Long Surahs are Seven Lengthy Chapters Distinguished by Their Length Exceeding that of the *One Hundred* Chapters (*al-Mi'īn*), as They Contrast with the *One Hundred* and the *Detailed* Chapters (*al-Mufaṣṣal*). They are Mentioned First in the Prophetic Tradition.

There is consensus on six of these surahs; disagreement exists about the seventh. The six agreed-upon are: Al-Baqarah, Āl ʿImrān, An-Nisā', Al-Mā'idah, Al-Anʿām, Al-Aʿrāf.

Regarding the seventh, there are several opinions:

First Opinion: That it is Yūnus, as stated by al-Ṭabarī in his *Tafsīr*:

"*The Seven Long Surahs are Al-Baqarah, Āl ʿImrān, An-Nisā', Al-Mā'idah, Al-Anʿām, Al-Aʿrāf, and Yūnus*.[24]" Ibn Ḥajar favored this in his *Fatḥ al-Bārī*.

Second Opinion: That it is Al-Bara'ah (At-Tawbah) along with Al-Anfāl, considering them as one surah due to their thematic connection and absence of *Bismillāh* separating them. Proponents of this opinion cite the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās regarding ʿUthmān's question about the reason for placing Al-Anfāl before Al-Bara'ah and joining them. According to this, those who consider Al-Anfāl and Al-Bara'ah as one surah include ʿAṭā[25]' and Qatādah[26].

Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ explained in his commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that the reason for not separating Al-Anfāl and Al-Bara'ah in the *Muṣḥaf* was that the ʿUthmānic codex combined them without separation. Al-Zarkashī supported this in *Al-Burhān*, stating:

"*The Seven Long Surahs begin with Al-Baqarah and end with Al-Bara'ah because the Companions considered Al-Anfāl and Al-Bara'ah as one surah and thus did not separate them, as both were revealed in the Prophet's campaigns*.[27]"

Al-Munāwī in *Fayḍ al-Qadīr* and al-Zamaksharī in his *Tafsīr* also adopted this view, noting that the combined verses amount to 206, making them equivalent to one long surah.

Ibn ʿAṭīyah noted that the scribes of the Qur'an during ʿUthmān's caliphate differed on whether Al-Anfāl and Al-Bara'ah were one surah or two, so they left a gap between them to accommodate both views but omitted *Bismillāh* between them, respecting the view that they were one surah. Eventually, consensus was reached[28].

However, the researcher argues that the claim that Al-Anfāl and Al-Bara'ah are one surah contradicts the consensus of the Companions on the Qur'an's arrangement, which has been transmitted with mass transmission (*tawātur*). Therefore, this should not be opposed by the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās or unsupported narrations, like those Ibn ʿAṭīyah mentioned but later refuted.

The hadith about Ibn ʿAbbās merely indicates some Companions saw the two surahs as one due to their related content, unaware they were distinct. It is natural that some Companions lacked knowledge of such details, but once it became clear that they were separate and that *Bismillāh* was not revealed with Bara'ah, consensus was achieved.

Ibn Rushd summarized in *Al-Bayān wa al-Taḥṣīl* that Mālik's view on omitting *Bismillāh* at the

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[24] al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad b. Jarīr. Jāmiʿ al-Bayān, 1/101–102

[25] al-Ṣanʿānī, ʿAbd al-Razzāq b. Ḥammām b. Nāfiʿ al-Ḥimyarī al-Yamānī. Tafsīr ʿAbd al-Razzāq. Ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad ʿAbduh. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1419 AH, 2/129.

[26] Ibn al-Jawzī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad. Zād al-Masīr fī ʿIlm al-Tafsīr, 2/542

[27] al-Zamakhsharī, Maḥmūd b. ʿUmar b. Aḥmad. al-Kashshāf ʿan Ḥaqāʾiq Ghawāmiḍ al-Tanzīl wa-ʿUyūn al-Aqāwīl fī Wujūh al-Taʿwīl. Cairo: Dār al-Rayyān, 1987, 2/242.

[28] Ibn ʿAṭiyyah, ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq b. Ghālib. al-Muḥarrar al-Wajīz, 3/3.

start of Bara'ah follows the precedent of the sheets compiled by Abū Bakr and kept by Ḥafṣah. ʿUthmān and the Companions compiling the Qur'an followed this tradition, not recording *Bismillāh* between Al-Anfāl and Al-Bara'ah.

Since Bara'ah was the last revealed chapter and Al-Anfāl was revealed in the fourth year of Hijrah at Badr, this indicates they are two separate surahs. The arrangement reflects what was found in the sheets without Mālik having any differing opinion.

Imām Mālik's position is highly important because of his adherence to the practice of the people of Medina and the early Companions, close in time to the Prophetic era. He received the Qur'an from Companions and shows that the first compilation by Abū Bakr contained Al-Anfāl before Bara'ah separately. The Companions were aware they were distinct due to their different revelation times and the absence of *Bismillāh* in Bara'ah.

When the ambiguity was resolved, the *Muṣḥaf* was revised, reviewed, and consensus reached, then distributed.

Additionally, al-Bāqlānī in *Al-Intiṣār*[29] stated that ʿUthmān knew each surah had its own name and signs, and the Companions learned one but not the other. Some memorized Al-Anfāl but not Bara'ah, but rather the chapters following it. This supports rejecting the view that Al-Anfāl and Bara'ah together form one of the Seven Long Surahs.

Third Opinion: That the seventh surah is Bara'ah alone. Ibn Ḥajar narrated from Ibn ʿAbbās that the seventh is Bara'ah alone, without Al-Anfāl. He wrote in *Fatḥ al-Bārī*:

"*Al-Nasā'ī narrated with an authentic chain from Ibn ʿAbbās that the Seven Repeated are the Seven Long Surahs, from Al-Baqarah to the end of Al-Aʿrāf, then Bara'ah. Yūnus is also mentioned.*"

He did not mention Al-Anfāl but moved directly to Bara'ah[30].

Fourth Opinion: That the seventh surah is Al-Kahf. Ibn ʿAbbās, in explaining the Seven Repeated as the Seven Long Surahs, included Al-Kahf instead of Bara'ah. Al-Ḥākim narrated from Ibn ʿAbbās regarding the verse:

"*The Seven Repeated are Al-Baqarah, Āl ʿImrān, An-Nisā', Al-Mā'idah, Al-Anʿām, Al-Aʿrāf, and Al-Kahf.*[31]"

This is rejected by the researcher because Al-Kahf does not share the characteristics of the Long Surahs like Al-Baqarah, Āl ʿImrān, and An-Nisā', and its number of verses is less than Bara'ah alone. Moreover, it belongs to the *One Hundred* group (*al-Mi'īn*), which is more accurate based on its number and structure.

Fifth Opinion: That it includes Al-Fātiḥah, counted among them despite its shortness due to the abundance of its meanings[32].

This is very strange and does not align with the literal meaning of the hadith. Abundance differs from length, and the measure is the length of the surah and its verses, not the richness of its meanings. And God knows best.

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[29] al-Bāqillānī, Muḥammad b. al-Ṭayyib, al-Qāḍī Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī al-Mālikī. al-Intiṣār li-l-Qurʾān. Ed. Muḥammad ʿIṣām al-Qaḍāh. Amman: Dār al-Fatḥ, 2001, 1/282.

[30] Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, Aḥmad b. ʿAlī. Fatḥ al-Bārī, 4/466.

[31] al-Nīsābūrī, Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Nīsābūrī. al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn. Ed. ʿĀdil Murshid. Beirut: Dār al-Risālah al-ʿĀlamiyyah, 2018, 2/386. Al-Ḥākim said: "Hādhā ḥadīth ṣaḥīḥ ʿalā shart al-shaykhayn wa-lam yukhrijūhu."

[32] al-Qārī, ʿAlī b. (Sulṭān) Muḥammad, Abū al-Ḥasan Nūr al-Dīn al-Harawī al-Qārī. Mirqāt al-Mafātīḥ Sharḥ Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2002, 7/333.

5.3. Preference (Al-Tarjīḥ)

After presenting the various opinions on identifying the seventh surah of the Seven Long Surahs and discussing some of them, the determination and preference for the seventh surah depend on knowing the general characteristics that distinguish the six known long surahs, so that the seventh may be aligned with what is closest to their features.

These considerations include:

- Number of verses
- Number of words
- Number of letters
- Verse characteristics such as breaks and punctuation
- The content of the surahs and the issues they discuss

The six long surahs are distinguished by their number of verses, words, and letters. The details are as follows:

Surah	Verses	Words	Letters
Al-Baqarah	286	6,121	25,500
Āl ʿImrān	200	—	—
An-Nisā’	176	—	—
Al-Mā’idah	120	2,804	11,733
Al-Anʿām	165	—	—
Al-Aʿrāf	206	—	—

Among these, Al-Baqarah is the longest with 286 verses, 6,121 words, and 25,500 letters. The shortest is Al-Mā’idah, with 120 verses, 2,804 words, and 11,733 letters.

5.4. Based on Characteristics

The hadith states that the Prophet ﷺ was given the Seven Long Surahs in place of the Torah—that is, as a replacement[33]. The Qur’an contains many verses describing the Torah with various attributes, chiefly that it contains guidance (*hudā*) and light (*nūr*), that it includes God's laws which the Israelites (Jews) and the prophets were commanded to judge by, and that it contains laws of retribution (*qiṣāṣ*). For example:

"*Indeed, We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light. The prophets who submitted judged by it for the Jews...*" (Al-Mā’idah 5:44)

Here, *guidance* and *light* are conditions of the Torah. What it contains of laws and rulings as guidance for humans to the truth is the *hudā*, while revealing and clarifying the previously obscure rulings and related matters covered by the darkness of ignorance is the *nūr*.

Hudā refers here to clarifying the legal rulings and duties imposed on people, while *nūr* pertains to unveiling monotheism, prophecy, and the afterlife.

The Torah also contains statements about jihad, emphasizing its importance, and detailing the virtue of those who fight and are martyred in God's cause. As stated:

"*Indeed, Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their wealth [in exchange] for that they will have Paradise...*" (At-Tawbah 9:111)

Additionally, the Torah mentions the Prophet and his companions:

"*Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and those with him are forceful against the disbelievers, merciful among themselves...*" (Al-Fath 48:29)

Furthermore, God indicates the Torah includes detailed commandments and admonitions:

[33] al-Manāwī, ʿAbd al-Raʿūf. Fayḍ al-Qadīr, 1/350.

"*And We wrote for him on the tablets [something] of all things – instruction and explanation for all things...*" (Al-Aʿrāf 7:145)

Examining the six long surahs, Al-Baqarah, Āl ʿImrān, An-Nisā', and Al-Mā'idah are *Medinan* surahs, predominantly legislative, organizing internal state affairs such as justice (retribution and hudūd), civil and personal matters, worship, transactions, and also external relations.

Al-Anʿām and Al-Aʿrāf are *Meccan* surahs dealing with theological issues, prophecy, resurrection, and general metaphysical doctrines alongside stories and admonitions.

All these surahs generally share considerable length.

Among possible candidates for the seventh surah, Al-Tawbah (Al-Bara'ah) is closest in length, with 129 verses and 2,479 words, longer than Al-Mā'idah. It is also a Medinan surah addressing legislative topics regulating external state affairs, war, jihad, treaties, security, some financial matters, emphasizing governance and legislation as God's prerogative, and including matters of faith such as signs of hypocrisy and exaltation of Islamic rites.

All these attributes closely resemble those of the other six long surahs.

Therefore, the researcher prefers to identify Al-Tawbah (Al-Bara'ah) as the seventh of the Seven Long Surahs, consistent with Ibn ʿAbbās's authentic narration previously mentioned.

The researcher next addresses the opinion that the seventh surah is Yūnus, which is plausible and favored by some. Their main argument is that Yūnus is the first long surah after Al-Anfāl and Al-Bara'ah. However, Yūnus lacks the length feature: it has 109 verses, 1,832 words, and 9,099 letters, shorter than other candidates like Al-Kahf.

Additionally, many verses in Yūnus are shorter than those in Al-Bara'ah or the other six surahs.

Al-Kahf is also distant from the Seven Long Surahs in its features: it is Meccan, has 111 verses, 1,577 words, and 6,360 letters, and lacks the length characteristics of Al-Baqarah, Āl ʿImrān, An-Nisā', etc.

Conclusion

Al-Bara'ah is the seventh surah completing the Seven Long Surahs because it is longer than Al-Kahf and Yūnus and closest to the characteristics of the previous six.

One may object that this position separates Al-Tawbah from the other six by the inclusion of Al-Anfāl between them, and that the Seven Long Surahs are not contiguous.

The answer is that the prophetic hadith mentions the Seven Long Surahs without implying they are the first seven consecutively. Hence, it is not required that the surahs be arranged consecutively in the Qur'an.

The important factor is the shared characteristics among the seven surahs, not their chronological or sequential order.

This is similar to the group known as *Al-Musabbihāt*, which are not arranged in chronological order either. For example, between *Ṭā Sīn Mīm* in Ash-Shuʿarā' and *Ṭā Sīn Mīm* in Al-Qasas, there is *Ṭā Sīn* in Al-Furqān, despite the difference in surah length.

If the order were strictly based on chronological sequence or location of revelation, the *Musabbihāt* would have been listed consecutively, and *Ṭā Sīn* would have been postponed.

The reality does not support that assumption.

- The hadith narrated by Wāthilah ibn al-Asqaʿ (may Allah be pleased with him) is considered *ḥasan* (good) in its own chain and *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) when combined with other

supporting narrations. This hadith was reported by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) during the final period of the Medinan phase of revelation, which grants it significant importance in evidencing the compilation and ordering of the Mushaf (Qur'anic codex). The hadith strengthens the proof that the arrangement of the Mushaf and its surahs is not a matter of scholarly opinion (*ijtihād*) but rather a divinely guided arrangement (*tawqīfī*), as it occurs within a prophetic directive related specifically to this issue. This reflects the precision and clarity of the process of collecting the Qur'an and arranging its surahs in accordance with the Prophet's guidance.

• The Seven Long Surahs (*al-sab' al-ṭiwāl*) differ from the Seven Repeatedly Recited Surahs (*al-sab' al-muthānī*), and caution must be exercised to avoid conflating the two categories.

• The surah that completes the Seven Long Surahs is only Surah At-Tawbah (Al-Bara'ah), due to its alignment in characteristics and attributes with the other six surahs, as well as explicit indications in the prophetic hadith and its verse count and distinctive features.

• The hadith of Wāthilah ibn al-Asqa' (may Allah be pleased with him) is narrated by a companion who embraced Islam late—specifically in the seventh year of Hijra, during the final stage of the Medinan period. He heard the Prophet (peace be upon him) after the majority of the Qur'an had already been revealed. Therefore, this hadith is not abrogated (*mansūkh*), but rather reflects an established legal reality concurrent with the Qur'an's revelation. Given the late conversion of Wāthilah, this hadith's use as evidence is not affected by concerns over abrogation or possible alterations in the Qur'anic rulings, since the companion transmitted it directly from the Prophet (peace be upon him) after the revelation had mostly been completed. Hence, its use as evidence concerning the order of the surahs and the Mushaf is reliable and robust.

• Understanding and studying the hadith of Wāthilah ibn al-Asqa' offers numerous benefits in Qur'anic sciences generally and particularly regarding the issue of the Qur'an's arrangement and compilation.

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