Arabic Calligraphy | The Holy Qur’an

‘Verses referring to Old Testament prophets appeared in books dedicated to individual prophets.’

The importance given to the proper reading and verbal recitation of the Qur’an prompted the addition of supplements that included explanatory notes on the meaning of particular verses and guidelines for their proper recitation. These notes were either written within the outer margins of the page or added as a supplement at the end of the volume. While appropriate extracts from the Qur’an were combined with selected prayers and prophetic quotes from the Hadith (‘Sayings of the Prophet’), and published in separate books and pamphlets for use in prayers and supplications, verses referring to Old Testament prophets appeared in highly decorated and illustrated story books that were dedicated to individual prophets.



Name:
Half of the Holy Qur'an

Dynasty:
Hegira 8th–9th century / AD 14th–15th century Mamluk

Details:
National Museum of Damascus
Damascus, Syria

Justification:
Surrounding the main text there are marginal notes scripted in blue, red and black ink; these guide the reader on vocal recitation, interpretation and grammar.



Name:
Prayer book

Dynasty:
Hegira 12th century / AD 18th century Ottoman

Details:
Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities (Medelhavsmuseet)
Stockholm, Sweden

Justification:
A prayer book that includes a selection of chapters from the Qur'an and popular religious texts illuminated by miniature paintings and Islamic talismans.



Name:
Page of manuscript with Moses, Muhammad and the Archangel Gabriel

Dynasty:
Hegira end of 10th century / AD end of 16th century; probably during the reign of Sultan Murad III (AH 982-1003 / AD 1574–95) Ottoman

Details:
Museum of Islamic Art at the Pergamon Museum
Berlin, Germany

Justification:
From a Biography of the Prophet Muhammad. Moses advises Muhammad to request from God that Islamic prayers should be reduced to five a day.
