

The Basic Level

TAFSEER

CURRICULUM

The second semester

TAF 112

Written by

Imam Adnan Balihodzic

Bachelor's degree in Sharīa, Al Azhar University
Master of Law degree, University of Zenica, Bosnia
Imam at the Bosnian Islamic Association in Toronto, Canada

First Edition

2021 C.E. – 1442 A.H.

TAFSEER

CURRICULUM

First

Hizb

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy



TAFSEER

JUZ 29

TAFSEER OF SURAH AL-MULK (No. 67)

Name

The Surah takes its name *al-Mulk* (The Sovereignty/Dominion/Kingdom) from the very first sentence.

Period of Revelation

It could not be known from any authentic tradition when this Surah was revealed, but the subject matter and the style indicate that it is one of the earliest Surahs to be revealed at Makkah.

Theme and Subject Matter

In this surah, on the one hand, the teachings of Islam have been introduced briefly, and, on the other, the people living in heedlessness have been aroused from their slumber in a most effective way. A characteristic of the earliest surahs of the Makkan period is that they present the entire teachings of Islam and the object of the Holy Prophet's mission, not in detail, but briefly, so that they are assimilated by the people easily. Moreover, they are particularly directed to make the people shun heedlessness, to make them think, and to arouse their dormant conscience.

Virtues of Surah al-Mulk

Imam Ahmad recorded from Abu Huraira *radhi Allahu 'anhu* that Allah's Messenger *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said,

« إِنَّ سُورَةَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ ثَلَاثِينَ آيَةً شَفَعَتْ لِصَاحِبِهَا حَتَّى غُفِرَ لَهُ » (تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمَلَكُ)

“Verily, there is a chapter in the Qur’an which contains thirty ayaat that will intercede on behalf of its recitor until he is forgiven. (It is) ‘Blessed be He in Whose Hands is the dominion.’”

Tafseer of Surah al-Mulk (The Sovereignty/Dominion/Kingdom) – 30 Ayats

(بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ)¹

Ayaat 1-5 — Glorification of Allah, Exalted is He

(تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)

(67:1) Blessed is the One¹ in Whose Hands rests all authority.² And He is Most Capable of everything.³

1. *Tabaraka* is a superlative from *barakah*. *Barakah* comprehends the meanings of exaltation and greatness, abundance and plentiful, permanence and multiplicity of virtues and excellences. When the superlative *tabaraka* is formed from it, it gives the meaning that Allah is infinitely noble and great. He is superior to everything beside Himself in His essence and attributes and works. His beneficence is infinite, and His excellences are permanent and everlasting.

2. As the word *al-Mulk* has been used, it cannot be taken in any limited meaning. Inevitably, it would imply sovereignty over everything that exists in the universe. In Whose hand is the dominion does not mean that He has physical hands, but that He is possessor of all power and authority and no one else has any share in it.

3. That is, He can do whatever He wills, nothing can frustrate or hinder Him from doing what He pleases.

¹ *Bismillah* (In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful) comes at the beginning of every Surah/Chapter in the Qur’an, except Surah al-Tawbah (No. 9).

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾

(67:2) 'He is the One' Who created death and life in order to test which of you is best in deeds.⁴ And He is the Almighty, All-Forgiving.⁵

4. That is, the object of giving life to man in the world and causing his death is to test him to see which of them is best in deeds. We learn a few things from this *ayah*:

(1) That life and death are given by Allah, no one else can grant life nor cause death.

(2) That neither the life nor the death of a creation like man, which has been given the power to do both good and evil, is purposeless. The Creator has created him in the world for the test. Life is for him the period of the test and death means that the time allotted for the test has come to an end.

(3) That for the sake of this very test the Creator has given every man an opportunity for action, so that he may do good or evil in the world and practically show what kind of a man he is.

(4) That the Creator alone will decide who has done good or evil. It is not for us to propose a criterion for the good and the evil deeds but for Almighty Allah. Therefore, whoever desires to get through the test, will have to find out what is the criterion of a good deed in His sight. Every person will be recompensed according to his deeds, for if there was no reward or punishment the test would be meaningless.

5. This has two meanings and both are implied here:

(1) That He is Almighty, in spite of being dominant over all His creatures, He is Merciful and Forgiving for them, not tyrannous and cruel.

(2) That He has full power to punish the evildoers. No one can escape His punishment. But He is forgiving for him who feels penitent, refrains from evil and asks for His forgiveness.



﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا مَّا تَرَى فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفَوتٍ فَأَرَجِعَ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَى مِن فُتُورٍ﴾

(67:3) 'He is the One' Who created seven heavens, one above the other.⁶ You will never see any imperfection in the creation of the Most Compassionate.⁷ So look again: do you see any flaws?⁸

6. Meaning stacked one on top of the other. They are not connected to each other but are in elevated ascension, some of them being stacked above others, or separated with space between them. A good example is to look at the layers of an onion. They are not connected but rather stacked above others. And Allah knows best.

7. Literally, *tafawut* is disproportion: two things being out of accord and in disagreement with each other. So, the divine words mean: You will not see any indiscipline, any disorder and discordance anywhere in the universe, there is nothing disjointed and out of proportion in this world created by Allah: all its parts are well connected and in perfect harmony and coordination. (Some may point to birth defects, genetic mutations, etc. and say these are flaws. This verse means that, in the grand scheme of creation, everything created has its place, form, and purpose, and that it does exactly what Allah ordained for it.)

8. The word *futoor* means a crack, rift, fissure, or a thing's being split and broken. The verse means to say that the whole universe is so closely well-knit and everything in it, from a particle on the earth to the huge galaxies, so well connected and coherent that the continuity of the system of the universe seems to break nowhere, however hard one may try to probe and investigate.

﴿ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنْقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ﴾

(67:4) Then look again and again—your sight will return frustrated and weary.

﴿وَلَقَدْ زَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيحَ وَجَعَلْنَاهَا رُجُومًا لِلشَّيَاطِينِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابَ السَّعِيرِ﴾





Meaning if one continuously looked, no matter how much he looked, his sight will return to him humiliated and exhausted due to inability to see any flaw or defect in Allah's creation.

(67:5) And indeed, We adorned the lowest heaven⁹ with 'stars like' lamps,¹⁰ and made them 'as missiles' for stoning 'eavesdropping' devils,¹¹ for whom We have also prepared the torment of the Blaze.

9. The world's heaven: the heaven the stars and planets of which can be seen with the naked eye; the objects beyond that which can be seen only through telescopes are the distant heaven; and the heavens still farther away are those which have not yet been seen even with telescopes.

10. The word *masabih* in the original has been used as a common noun, and therefore, automatically gives the meaning of the lamp's being splendid and glorious. It means: We have not created this universe dark, dismal and desolate, but have beautified and decorated it with stars, the glory and grandeur of which at night strike man with amazement.

11. This does not mean that the stars themselves are pelted at the Satans, nor that the meteorites shoot out only to drive away the Satans, but it means that the countless meteorites which originate from the stars and planets and wander in space at tremendous speeds and which also fall to the earth in a continuous shower prevent the Satans of the earth from ascending to the heavens. Even if they try to ascend heavenward these meteorites drive them away. This thing has been mentioned here because the Arabs believed about the soothsayers, and this also was the claim made by the soothsayers themselves, that the Satans were under their control, or that they had a close contact with them, and through them they received news of the unseen, and thus, could foretell the destinies of the people. That is why at several places in



the Qur'an, it has been stated that there is absolutely no possibility for the Satans ascending to the heavens and bringing news of the unseen.

Ayaat 6-11 — The Description of Hell and those who will enter into it

﴿وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَاءَ الْمَصِيرُ﴾

(67:6) Those who disbelieve in their Lord will suffer the punishment of Hell.¹² What an evil destination!

12. That is, the fate of all those, whether men or Satans, who disbelieve in their Lord.

﴿إِذَا أُلْقُوا فِيهَا سَمِعُوا لَهَا شَهِيقًا وَهِيَ تَفُورُ﴾

(67:7) When they are tossed into it, they will hear its roaring as it boils over,¹³

13. The word *shahiq* is used for producing a cry like the donkey's braying. The sentence may also mean that it could be the sound of Hell itself, as well as that it would be the sound coming from Hell, where the people already flung into it would be screaming and crying. This second meaning is supported by (Surah Houd, Ayat 106), where it has been said: *Therein they will pant and hiss (because of thirst)*, and the first meaning is confirmed by (Surah Al- Furqan, Ayat 12), which says: *When the Hell will see them from afar, they will hear the sounds of its raging and roaring*. On this basis, the correct meaning is that it would be the noise made both by Hell and by the dwellers of Hell.

﴿تَكَادُ تَمَيِّزُ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ كُلَّمَا أُلْقِيَ فِيهَا فَوْجٌ سَأَلَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَذِيرٌ﴾

(67:8) almost bursting in fury. Every time a group is cast into it, its keepers will ask them, "Did a warner not come to you?"¹⁴

14. The real nature of this question will not be of a question that the keepers of Hell would like to ask them whether a warner from Allah had come to them or not, but



the object would be to make them realize that no injustice had been done to them by casting them into Hell. They would try to make them confess that Allah had not kept them uninformed and unwarned. He had sent the Prophets to them. He had informed them of the truth and of the right way. He had warned them that if they followed a way other than the right way, it would lead them to Hell, in which they had been cast. But they had not listened to the Prophets. Hence, they rightly deserved the punishment which was being meted out to them at that time.

This thing has been pointed out over and over again in the Qur'an that the test for which Allah has sent man in the world is not being conducted by keeping man absolutely unaware and uninformed of the requirements of the test only to see whether he found the right way by himself or not; but Allah has made the most appropriate arrangements that could possibly be made of guiding him to the right way, and it is that He has raised the Prophets and sent down the Books. Now the test of man lies in this whether he accepts the Prophets and the Books brought by them and adopts the straight way, or turns away from them to follow his own desires, wishes and speculations. Thus, the Prophethood, in fact, is Allah's argument which He has established against man and his entire future life depends on its acceptance or rejection. No one, after the appointment of the Prophets, can present the excuse that he remained unaware of the truth, or that he has been caught and put to the hard test unaware, or that he is being punished while he was innocent. This theme has been presented in many different ways in the Qur'an.

﴿ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ قَدْ جَاءَنَا نَذِيرٌ فَكَذَّبْنَا وَقُلْنَا مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ مِن شَيْءٍ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ كَبِيرٍ ﴾

(67:9) They will reply, “Yes, a warner did come to us, but we denied and said, ‘Allah has revealed nothing. You are extremely astray.’”¹⁵



15. That is, not only you but the people who have believed in and followed you also are misguided and lost in grave error.

﴿ وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِي أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴾

(67:10) And they will lament, “If only we had listened and reasoned,¹⁶ we would not be among the residents of the Blaze!”

16. If we had listened or understood: If we had listened to the Prophets with attention as seekers after truth or used our intellect to understand what actually was the message they were presenting before us. Here listening has been given priority over understanding, the reason being that the pre-requisite of obtaining guidance is to listen to what the Prophet teaches, or to read if it is in the written form, like a seeker after truth. To ponder over it in an attempt to understand the truth is secondary. Without the Prophet’s guidance man cannot by himself reach the truth directly by using his intellect and common sense.

﴿ فَأَعْتَرَفُوا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ فَنَسَخْنَا لِأَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴾

(67:11) And so they will confess their sins.¹⁷ So away with the residents of the Blaze!

17. The word *dhanb* (sin) has been used in the singular. It means that the real sin because of which they became worthy of Hell was to belie the Messengers and refuse to obey them. All other sins are its consequences.

Ayaat 12-15 — The Reward of those who fear their Lord unseen

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴾

(67:12) Indeed, those in awe of their Lord without seeing Him¹⁸ will have forgiveness and a mighty reward.¹⁹



18. (This can also mean that they are in awe of their Lord as much in private as they are in public.) This is the real basis of morality in religion. The person who avoids an evil because he fears the loss that may result from it for himself, cannot keep himself from committing it when there is no fear of incurring such a loss. Likewise, the danger of the punishment by a worldly power also is not something which can turn a person into a gentleman. Many crimes can be committed unseen and unobserved. Then, there are many possible devices by which one can escape the punishment of every worldly power; and the Laws made by a worldly power also do not cover all evils. That is why, the Religion of Truth has raised the edifice of morality on the basis that one should refrain from an evil in fear of the unseen God Who sees man under all conditions, from Whose grasp man cannot escape in any way, Who has given man an all-pervading, universal and everlasting criterion of good and evil. To forsake evil and adopt good only out of fear of Him is the real good which is commendable in religion. Apart from this, if a man refrains from committing evil for any other reason or adopts acts which in view of their external form are regarded as good acts, these moral acts will not be worth any merit and value in the Hereafter, for they are like a building which has been built on sand.

19. That is, there are two inevitable results of fearing God unseen.

(1) That whatever errors and sins one will have committed because of human weaknesses, will be forgiven provided these were not committed because of fearlessness of God.

(2) That whatever good acts a man performs on the basis of this belief, he will be rewarded richly for them.

﴿وَأَسِرُّوا قَوْلَكُمْ أَوِ اجْهَرُوا بِهِ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ﴾





(67:13) Whether you speak secretly or openly—He surely knows best what is 'hidden' in the heart.²⁰

20. The address is to all human beings, whether they are believers or unbelievers. For the believer, it contains the admonition that while living his life in the world he should always remember that not only his open and hidden deeds but even his secret intentions and innermost thoughts are not hidden from Allah. And for the unbeliever, the warning that he may do whatever he may please fearless of God, but nothing that he does can remain un-noticed and unseen by Him.

﴿ أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ ﴾

(67:14) How could He not know His Own creation?²¹ For He 'alone' is the Most Subtle,²² All-Aware.

21. In the original text *khalaqa* has been used, which may mean: Who has created as well as whom He has created. In both cases the meaning remains the same. This is the argument for what has been said in the preceding sentence. That is, how is it possible that the Creator should be unaware of His creation? The creation may remain unaware of itself, but the Creator cannot be unaware of it. He has made every vein of your body, every fiber of your heart and brain. You breathe because He enables you to breathe, your limbs function because He enables them to function, How then can anything of yours remain hidden from Him.

22. The word *Latif* as used in the original means the One Who works in imperceptible ways as well as the One Who knows the hidden truths and realities.

﴿ هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذُلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِن رِّزْقِهِ وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ ﴾

(67:15) He is the One Who smoothed out the earth for you, so move about in its regions and eat from His provisions.²³ And to Him is the resurrection 'of all'.²⁴





23. That is, this earth has not become subdued for you of its own accord, and the provisions also that you are eating have not become available here by themselves, but Allah has so arranged it by His wisdom and power that your life became possible here and this splendid globe became so peaceful that you are moving about on it with full peace of mind, and it has become such a vast table spread with food that it contains endless and limitless provisions for your sustenance. If you are not lost in heedlessness and look about yourself intelligently, you will find how much wisdom underlies in the making of this earth habitable for you and arranging in it immeasurable stores of provisions for you.

24. That is, while you move about on the earth and eat of what Allah has provided for you here, you should not forget that ultimately you have to appear before God one day.

Ayaat 16–19 – He is Able to seize however He wills

(ءَأْمِنْتُمْ مَّنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ أَن يَخْسِفَ بِكُمُ الْأَرْضَ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَمُورُ)

(67:16) Do you feel secure that the One Who is in heaven²⁵ will not cause the earth to swallow you up as it quakes violently?

25. This does not mean that Allah lives in the heavens, but it has been so said because man naturally looks up to the heaven whenever he wants to turn to Allah, raises his hands heavenward in prayer and implores Allah turning his eyes up to heaven whenever he finds himself helpless in an affliction. Then, he calls the Books revealed by Allah as heavenly Books. It is natural with man that whenever he thinks of God, his mind turns to the heaven above and not to the earth below. In view of this very thing the words *man fis-samaa* (He Who is in the heaven) have been used about Allah. There is no room here for any doubt that the Qur'an regards Allah Almighty as living in the heaven. In fact, there cannot be any basis for this doubt, for in the



very beginning of this Surah Al-Mulk, it has been stated: *He Who created seven heavens, one above the other*, and in Surah Al-Baqarah it has been said: *You will face Allah in whatever direction you turn your face* (verse 115).

﴿ أَمْ أَمِنْتُمْ مِّنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ أَنْ يُرْسِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَاصِبًا فَسَتَعْلَمُونَ كَيْفَ نَذِيرِ ﴾

(67:17) Or do you feel secure that the One Who is in heaven will not unleash upon you a storm of stones?²⁶ Only then would you know how 'serious' My warning was!²⁷

26. The object is to impress this: Your very survival and well-being on the earth are at all times dependent upon Allah Almighty's grace and bounty: you are under obligation only to Allah's protection for each moment of your life that you are passing here, otherwise Allah at any moment may cause such an earthquake to occur as may make this very earth to become your grave instead of the cradle that it is, or may cause a windstorm to blow razing all your towns and settlements to the ground.

27. My warning: the warning that was being given through the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the Qur'an to the disbelievers of Makkah to the effect: If you do not refrain from your disbelief and polytheism and do not accept the message of Tawhid being given to you, you will be overtaken by the scourge of God.

﴿ وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴾

(67:18) And certainly those before them denied 'as well', then how severe was My response!²⁸

28. The allusion is to the communities who had belied the Messengers, who had come to them previously and consequently been afflicted with divine punishment.

﴿ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى الطَّيْرِ فَوْقَهُمْ صَافَّاتٍ وَيَقْبِضْنَ مَا يُمَسِّكُهُنَّ إِلَّا الرَّحْمَنُ إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ بَصِيرٌ ﴾



(67:19) Have they not seen the birds above them, spreading and folding their wings? None holds them up except the Most Compassionate.²⁹ Indeed, He is All-Seeing of everything.³⁰

29. That is, each bird that flies in the air, does so in the protection of the All-Merciful God. He it is Who has given to each bird the form and structure by which it became able to fly. He it is Who has taught each bird the method to fly. He it is Who has made the air obey the laws by which it became possible for the heavier than air bodies to fly in it, and He it is Who upholds every bird in the air.

30. That is, this is not confined only to birds, but whatever exists in the world, exists because of Allah's keeping and guardianship. He alone provides the means necessary for the existence of everything, and He alone keeps watch that everything created by Him is provided with the necessities of life.

Ayaat 20–27 – No One can help or grant Sustenance except Allah

﴿ اٰمَنَ هٰذَا الَّذِي هُوَ جُنْدٌ لَّكُمْ يَنْصُرُكُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِ الرَّحْمٰنِ اِنْ الْكٰفِرُوْنَ اِلَّا فِيْ غُرُوْرٍ ﴾

(67:20) Also, which 'powerless' force will come to your help instead of the Most Compassionate?³¹ Indeed, the disbelievers are only 'lost' in delusion.

31. Another translation can be: Which is your army that will come to your aid against the Merciful Lord? This translation has relevance to the following sentence, and this second to the preceding discourse.

﴿ اٰمَنَ هٰذَا الَّذِي يَرْزُقُكُمْ اِنْ اَمْسَكَ رِزْقَهٗۗۙ بَلْ لَّجُوْا فِيْ عُتُوٍّ وَّنُفُوْرٍ ﴾

(67:21) Or who is it that will provide for you if He withholds His provision? In fact, they persist in arrogance and aversion 'to the truth'.

﴿ اَفَمَنْ يَمْشِيْ مُّكْبًا عَلٰى وَّجْهَةٍ اَهْدٰى اَمَّنْ يَمْشِيْ سَوِيًّا عَلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ﴾





(67:22) Who is 'rightly' guided: the one who crawls facedown³² or he who walks upright on a Straight Path?

32. Walking fallen on his face: walking with face turned down like the cattle on the same track on which someone put him.

﴿ قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَكُمْ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴾

(67:23) Say, 'O Prophet,' "He is the One Who brought you into being and gave you hearing, sight, and intellect. 'Yet' you hardly give any thanks."³³

33. That is, Allah had made you men, not cattle. You were not meant to follow blindly whatever error and deviation you found prevailing in the world, without considering for a moment whether the way you had adopted was right or wrong. You have not been given these ears that you may refuse to listen to the one who tries to distinguish the right from the wrong for you, and may persist in whatever false notions you already had in your mind. You have not been given these eyes that you may follow others like the blind and may not bother to see whether the signs scattered around you in the world testified to the unity of God, which the Messenger (peace be upon him) of God is preaching, or whether the system of the universe is Godless, or is being run by many gods simultaneously. Likewise, you have also not been given this knowledge and intelligence that you may give up thinking and understanding to others and may adopt every crooked way that was enforced by somebody in the world, and may not use your own intellect to see whether it was right or wrong. Allah has blessed you with knowledge and intelligence, sight and hearing, so that you may recognize the truth, but you are being ungrateful to Him in that you are employing these faculties for every other object than the one for which these had been granted.

﴿ قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي ذَرَأَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴾





(67:24) 'Also' say, "He is the One Who has dispersed you 'all' over the earth, and to Him you will 'all' be gathered."³⁴

34. That is, after being resurrected from death, you will be gathered together from every corner of the earth and presented before Allah.

﴿ وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴾

(67:25) 'Still' they ask 'the believers', "When will this threat come to pass, if what you say is true?"³⁵

35. They did not ask this question in order to know the time and date of Resurrection so that if they were told the year, the month, the day and time of its occurrence, they would accept it. But, in fact, they thought that Resurrection was impossible, and its occurrence remote from reason, and they asked this question in order to have an excuse for denying it. As for the date of its occurrence only an ignorant person could raise such a question about it, for even if it is told, it does not make any difference. The unbeliever would say: Well, when it does occur on the date you tell, I shall then believe in it; how can I believe today that it will actually occur on that very day?

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَلْغَمْتُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَإِنَّمَا أَنَا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴾

(67:26) Say, 'O Prophet,' "That knowledge is with Allah alone, and I am only sent with a clear warning."³⁶

36. That is, this I know that it will certainly come, and knowing this much only is enough for warning the people before its actual occurrence. As for the question when it will actually come, the knowledge of it is with Allah, not with me, and there is no need of this knowledge for administering the warning. This can be better understood by an example. As to the exact time when a person will die, it is only known to Allah; however, all know that everyone has to die one day. This knowledge is



enough that we may warn a heedless friend of ours that he should look after himself and his interests before death. For this warning it is not necessary to know the exact day on which he will die.

﴿ فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهُ زُلْفَةً سَيِّتَتْ وُجُوهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَقِيلَ هَذَا الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَدَّعُونَ ﴾

(67:27) Then when they see the torment drawing near, the faces of the disbelievers will become gloomy,³⁷ and it will be said 'to them', "This is what you claimed would never come."^{37b}

37. That is, they will be in the same agony as is suffered by the criminal who is being taken to the gallows.

37b. Another possible translation: *"This is what you were calling for."*

Ayaat 28–30 – Let Everyone Reflect upon Their Own Deliverance

﴿ قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَهْلَكْنِي اللَّهُ وَمَنْ مَعِيَ أَوْ رَحِمْنَا فَمَنْ يُجِيرُ الْكَافِرِينَ مِنْ عَذَابِ إِلِيمٍ ﴾

(67:28) Say, 'O Prophet,' "Consider this: whether Allah causes me and those with me to die or shows us mercy, who will save the disbelievers from a painful punishment?"³⁸

38. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) started his mission in Makkah and the members of the different clans of Quraish began to embrace Islam, the people of every house started cursing him and his companions. They started practicing magic and charms on him to cause his death, even devising plots to kill him. At this, it was said: Say to them: What will it profit you whether we perish or we live by the grace of God? You should worry for yourselves as to how you will save yourselves from the punishment of Allah? Or, in other words, whether Allah takes our lives (as you wish) or grants us a long life, it is all good for us. But who will protect you from Allah if you disbelieve in Him.



﴿ قُلْ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ عَامِنًا بِهِ وَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا فَسَتَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴾

(67:29) Say, “He is the Most Compassionate—in Him ‘alone’ we believe, and in Him ‘alone’ we trust.³⁹ You will soon know who is clearly astray.”

39. That is, we have believed in God, and you are denying Him; we have put our trust in Him, and you have put your trust in yourself, your own resources and false deities besides Allah; therefore, only we deserve to be shown mercy by Allah, not you.

﴿ قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَصْبَحَ مَاؤُكُمْ غَوْرًا فَمَنْ يَأْتِيكُمْ بِمَاءٍ مَعِينٍ ﴾

(67:30) Say, “Consider this: if your water were to sink ‘into the earth’, then who ‘else’ could bring you flowing water?”⁴⁰

40. That is, does anyone else another beside Allah have the power to restore these springs of water to you? If none else has this power, and you know well that none has it, then who is worthy of worship: God or your false deities, who do not have the power to restore them? Then ask your own selves as to who is misled and misguided, those who believe in One God or those who believe in many gods.

Discussion:

1. Explain the Reward of those who fear their Lord unseen according to surah al-Mulk.
2. Explain that No One can help or grant Sustenance except Allah according to surah al-Mulk.



TAFSEER OF SURAH AL-QALAM (No. 68)

Name

This Surah is called *Nun* as well as *Al-Qalam* (The Pen), the words with which it begins.

Period of Revelation

This too is one of the earliest surahs to be revealed at Makkah, but its subject matter shows that it was sent down at the time when opposition to the Prophet (upon whom be peace) had grown very harsh and tyrannical.

Theme and Subject Matter

It consists of three themes: Replies to the opponents' objections, then warning and admonition to them, and exhortation to the Prophet (upon whom be peace) to patience and constancy.

Tafseer of Surah al-Qalam (The Pen) – 52 Ayats

Ayaat 1-7 — Your Lord Knows Better who has gone Astray and who is Guided

(ن وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْتُرُونَ)

(68:1) Nūn. By the pen and what everyone writes!¹

1(a). “Nun” is one of *al-huruf al-muqatta’at* (the disjointed/disconnected letters). There are 29 Surahs in the Qur’an that begin with such words. At some places, there is only letter such as Surah *Qaf* and Surah *Saad*. At other places two letters appear for example, Surah *Ya-Seen*, Surah *Ta-Ha* and Surah *Ha-Meem* (also known as Surah *Fussilat*). Some begin with three, four and even five letters but five is the largest amount.



When Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* begins a Surah with a disjointed letter the purpose is to alert the listeners. When they hear disjointed letters as opposed to complete words, they wonder what this is about. While the scholars have tried to interpret these words, the truth is that their meaning is only known to Allah *swt*. Therefore, we should not delve over what it means.

1(b). Other possible translations are: “By the Pen and what they inscribe”, (or) “...by that which the writers are writing”. There are three main opinions about the pen referred here. One opinion is that it refers to the Pen of decree through which destinies of every creation has been written down till the end of times. Another opinion is that it refers to the pen of angels through which they record the deeds of the servants. One more opinion is that this refers to the pen that we use to write with. Elaborating this opinion, Ibn Katheer writes Allah *swt* is alerting His creatures to what He has favored them with by teaching them the skill of writing through which knowledge is attained.

Besides that, the great commentator Mujahid says that by pen here is meant the pen with which the Qur'an was being written down. From this it automatically follows that that which was being written implies the Qur'an itself.

(مَا أَنْتَ بِنِعْمَةٍ رَبِّكَ بِمَجْنُونٍ)

(68:2) By the grace of your Lord, you 'O Prophet' are not insane.²

2. That is, for which an oath has been sworn by the pen and by the Book. It means that this Qur'an which is being inscribed by the hands of the writers of revelation, is by itself enough to refute the slander of the disbelievers who say that the Prophet (peace be upon him) is, God forbid, a madman. Before his claim to the Prophethood, the people of Makkah looked upon him as the best of their men and trusted his honesty, intelligence and sagacity. But when he started reciting the Qur'an before





them, they began to call him a madman. The presentation of this highly eloquent revelation which consists of sublime themes, is an argument which proves that Muhammad (peace be upon him) has been especially favored by Allah, and not an argument which might be used to prove that he has, God forbid, gone mad. *Ni'ma* [نِعْمَةٌ] is commonly translated as a blessing or a favor.

Here, one should remember that although the address apparently is directed to the Prophet (peace be upon him), yet the real object is to nail the calumny of the disbelievers. As if to say: The Qur'an because of which you are calling the one presenting it a madman, is by itself an argument that your accusation is false.

﴿ وَإِنَّ لَكَ لَأَجْرًا غَيْرَ مَمْنُونٍ ﴾

(68:3) You will certainly have a never-ending reward.³

3. That is, you will get an unlimited and continuous reward, for although you have to hear discouraging and disturbing things in response to the efforts that you are making for the instruction and guidance of the people, yet you are steadfastly performing your mission of calling them to the right way.

﴿ وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴾

(68:4) And you are truly 'a man' of outstanding character.⁴

4. Here, this sentence gives two meanings:

(1) That you stand exalted to a high and noble character; that is why you are enduring all these hardships in your mission of guiding the people to the right way, otherwise a man of weak character could not have done so.

(2) That besides the Qur'an, your high and noble character is also a clear proof that the accusation of madness that the disbelievers bring against you is absolutely false, for high morals and madness cannot co-exist in one and the same person.



The best description of the Prophet's character has been given by Aishah ra. in her statement: *Kana khuluqu-hul- Qur'an*: the Qur'an was his character. This means that the Prophet had not merely presented the teaching of the Qur'an before the world but also given its practical demonstration by his personal example. His own self was characterized most of all by the moral qualities which were declared as sublime by it, and his own self was most free from those qualities which were declared as abhorrent and reprehensible by it.

﴿ فَسَتُبْصِرُ وَيُبْصِرُونَ ﴾

(68:5) Soon you and the pagans will see,

﴿ بِأَيِّكُمْ الْمَفْتُونُ ﴾

(68:6) which of you is mad.

Meaning you will know, O Prophet, and those who oppose you and reject you, will know who is insane and misguided among you. The literal meaning of *maftoon* [مَفْتُونٌ] is 'one who has been charmed or lured away from the truth and has strayed from it'. The purpose of these *ayats* was to console the Messenger *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* and the believers that the things will get better soon. Therefore, Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* says next,

﴿ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴾

(68:7) Surely your Lord 'alone' knows best who has strayed from His Way and who is 'rightly' guided.

Ayaat 8-16 — The People not to Befriend

﴿ فَلَا تُطِعِ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴾

(68:8) So do not give in to the deniers.

﴿ وَدُّوا لَوْ تَدَّهْنُ فَيَذَّهِنُونَ ﴾

(68:9) They wish you would compromise so they would yield 'to you'.⁵

5. Compromise here refers to compromising in religion in order to please someone. Such as, permit us idolatry and we will permit you to practice your religion, as Ibn 'Abbas *radhiAllahu 'anhu* commented. That is, if you slackened a little in your propagation of Islam, they also would slacken in their opposition to you.

﴿ وَلَا تُطِيعْ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ ﴾

(68:10) And do not obey the despicable, vain oath-taker,⁶

6. The word *hallaf* [حَلَّاف] means 'one who swears much' while *mahin* [مَّهِين] means 'liar or worthless person'. The word *mahin* is also used for a contemptible, degraded and mean person. This is indeed a necessary quality of a person who swears many oaths. He swears an oath for every minor thing because he himself has the feeling that the people take him for a liar and would not believe him until he swore an oath. For this reason he is not only degraded in his own eyes but commands no respect in society either.

﴿ هَمَّازٍ مَشَّاءٍ بِنَمِيمٍ ﴾

(68:11) slanderer, gossip-monger,

﴿ مَنَّاعٍ لِّلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴾

(68:12) withholder of good,⁷ transgressor, evildoer,

7. *Khayr* in Arabic is used both for wealth and for good. If it is taken in the meaning of wealth, the meaning would be that he is miserly and stingy; he would not even spend a penny on anyone. And if *khayr* is taken in the meaning of goodness and

virtue, it would mean that he creates an obstruction in every good work as well as that he is very active in obstructing the people from accepting Islam.

(عُنْتَلٌ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ زَنِيمٌ)

(68:13) brute,⁸ and—on top of all that—an illegitimate child.⁹

8. The word 'utul [عُنْتَلٌ] is used for a person who is stout and strong and greedy in eating and drinking and is also ill-mannered, quarrelsome and cruel at the same time.

9. The word *zanim* [زَنِيمٌ] is used to describe a person of illegitimate birth, who does not, in fact, belong to a family but has joined it. Saeed bin Jubair and Shabi say that this word is used for a person who is notorious among the people for his evildoing.

The views of the commentators with regard to the person who has been described in these verses are different. But the Qur'an has only described his attributes without naming him. This shows that in Makkah the man concerned was so notorious for his such qualities that there was no need to name him definitely. Hearing his description every person could understand who was being referred to.

(أَنْ كَانَ ذَا مَالٍ وَبَنِينَ)

(68:14) Now, 'simply' because he has been blessed with 'abundant' wealth and children,¹⁰

10. This sentence may be connected with the preceding theme as well as with the following sentence. In the first case, it would mean: Do not yield to the influence of such a person just because he has plenty of wealth and children. In the second: He has become proud because he possesses abundance of wealth and children; so when Our revelations are recited to him, he says: These are tales and legends of ancient times.

(إِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِ آيَاتُنَا قَالَ أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ)



(68:15) whenever Our revelations are recited to him, he says, “Ancient fables!”

﴿سَتَسِمُهُ عَلَى الْخُرْطُومِ﴾

(68:16) We will soon mark his snout.¹¹

11. Because he thought he was a man of high prestige, his nose has been called a snout, and branding him on the snout means disgracing him. That is, We shall so disgrace him in the world and in the Hereafter that his mark of disgrace will become indelible. Here dr. Mustafa Khattab comments that: ‘Like 53:33-35 and 74:11-26, these verses refer to *Al-Walîd ibn Al-Mughîrah*, a leader of the Meccan opposition against Islam. He rejected the Prophet (ﷺ) as a madman, so the Qur’an responded by listing ten of his qualities—two of which were unknown to him: the fact that he was born out of wedlock and that his nose would be chopped off several years later at the Battle of Badr. At least three of his ten sons accepted Islam—including *Khâlîd ibn Al-Walîd*.’

Ayaat 17-33 — The Parable of the Companions of Gardens

﴿إِنَّا بَلَوْنَهُمْ كَمَا بَلَوْنَا أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ إِذْ أَقْسَمُوا لَيَصْرِمُنَّهَا مُصْبِحِينَ﴾

(68:17) Indeed, We have tested those ‘Meccans’ as We tested the owners of the garden¹²—when they swore they would surely harvest ‘all’ its fruit in the early morning,

12. They vowed between themselves during the night that they would pluck the fruit of the garden in the morning so that the poor and the beggars would not know what they were doing. In this way, they would be able to keep its fruits for themselves and not give any of it in charity. Here, one should also keep (*Surah Al-Kahf, Ayat 32-44*) in view, in which the parable of the owners of two gardens has been cited for teaching a lesson.



﴿ وَلَا يَسْتَنْتُونَ ﴾

(68:18) leaving no thought for Allah's Will.¹³

13. That is, they were so sure and confident of their power and authority that they swore they would surely pluck the fruit of their garden next morning, without feeling any need to say: We shall do so if Allah so willed - *InshaAllah*. Another possible translation: "... *without leaving some for the poor.*"

﴿ فَطَافَ عَلَيْهَا طَائِفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ وَهُمْ نَائِمُونَ ﴾

(68:19) Then it was struck by a torment from your Lord while they slept,

﴿ فَأَصْبَحَتْ كَالصَّرِيمِ ﴾

(68:20) so it was reduced to ashes.

﴿ فَتَنَادَوْا مُصْبِحِينَ ﴾

(68:21) Then by daybreak they called out to each other,

﴿ أَنْ أَعْدُوا عَلَىٰ حَرْتِكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴾

(68:22) 'saying,' "Go early to your harvest,¹⁴ if you want to pick 'all' the fruit."

14. The word tilth probably has been used because in the garden there were also fields of crops in between the trees.

﴿ فَانطَلَقُوا وَهُمْ يَتَخَفَتُونَ ﴾

(68:23) So they went off, whispering to one another,

﴿ أَنْ لَا يَدْخُلَنَّهَا الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَسْكِينٌ ﴾

(68:24) "Do not let any poor person enter your garden today."

﴿ وَغَدُوا عَلَىٰ حَرْدٍ قَدِيرِينَ ﴾



(68:25) And they proceeded early, totally fixated on their purpose.¹⁵

15. The word *hard* [حَرِيءٌ] in Arabic is used for hindering and withholding for a purpose and resolution and for making haste.

﴿ فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهَا قَالُوا إِنَّا لَضَالُّونَ ﴾

(68:26) But when they saw it 'devastated', they cried, "We must have lost 'our' way!

﴿ بَلْ نَحْنُ مَحْرُومُونَ ﴾

(68:27) In fact, we have been deprived 'of our livelihood'."¹⁶

16. That is, on seeing the garden they didn't believe it was their own garden, and they said: Perhaps we have lost our way and come to another place. But, when they considered it seriously and found it was their own garden, they cried out: Alas we are deprived.

﴿ قَالَ أَوْسَطُهُمْ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ لَوْلَا تُسَبِّحُونَ ﴾

(68:28) The most sensible of them said, "Did I not urge you to say, 'Allah willing.'?"¹⁷

17. Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid, Sa'eed ibn Jubair, 'Ikrimah, Muhammad ibn Ka'ab and others said that the *awsat* [أَوْسَطُهُمْ] among them means 'the most just of them and the best of them.' It can be translated also like this: *The best among them said: "Did I not say to you: why do you not give glory to (your Lord)?"* This means that when they were saying on oath: We shall surely pluck the fruit of our garden tomorrow, this person had warned them at that time, saying: Have you forgotten God? Why don't you say: If Allah so will? But they did not listen to him. Then, while they were making up their mind not to give away anything to the needy, he again advised



them to remember Allah and to desist from their evil intention, but they persisted in what they had resolved.

﴿ قَالُوا سُبْحَانَ رَبِّنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ ﴾

(68:29) They replied, “Glory be to our Lord! We have truly been wrongdoers.”

﴿ فَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَلَوَّمُونَ ﴾

(68:30) Then they turned on each other, throwing blame.¹⁸

18. They became obedient when it was of no benefit to them, and they were remorseful and confessed when it was not of any use. Then they turned against one another blaming each other for what they had resolved to do, forgetting God and preventing the poor people from receiving their right of the harvest and fruit. Thus, their response to each other was only to confess their error and sin. This is the attitude of a person who is at fault, he blames other people for his mistakes.

﴿ قَالُوا يَوَيْلَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ ﴾

(68:31) They said, “Woe to us! We have certainly been transgressors.

﴿ عَسَىٰ رَبُّنَا أَنْ يُبَدِّلَنَا خَيْرًا مِنْهَا إِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا رَاغِبُونَ ﴾

(68:32) We trust our Lord will give us a better garden than this, ‘for’ we are indeed turning to our Lord with hope.”

﴿ كَذَٰلِكَ الْعَذَابُ ۗ وَالْعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةُ أَكْبَرُ ۗ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

(68:33) That is the ‘way of Our’ punishment ‘in this world’. But the punishment of the Hereafter is certainly far worse, if only they knew.

They repented to Allah *subhanahu wa ta’ala* and hoped for something better in exchange to their garden either in this life or in the abode of the Hereafter. (It is



believed that Allah accepted their repentance and replaced their garden with a better one.)

Some of the Salaf mentioned that these people were from Yemen. It has also been said, “They were from the people of Ethiopia whose father had left them this garden, and they were from the People of the Book. Their father used to handle the garden in a good way. Whatever he reaped from it he would put it back into the garden as it needed, and he would save some of it as food for his dependants for the year, and he would give away the excess in charity. Then, when he died, and his children inherited the garden they said, ‘Verily, our father was foolish for giving some of this garden’s harvest to the poor. If we prevent them from it, then we will have more.’ So when they made up their minds to do this they were punished with what was contrary to their plan. Allah took away all of what they possessed of wealth, gain and charity. Nothing remained for them.”

Allah *swt* ends the address by saying, “**Such is the punishment,**” (68:33) of whoever opposes the command of Allah, is stingy with what Allah has given him and favored him with, withholds the right of the poor and needy, and responds to Allah’s blessings upon him with ungratefulness (or disbelief). “**And the punishment of the Hereafter is greater, if they (the Meccan pagans) only knew,**” (68:33) meaning the withering of their fruitful garden was the punishment of this life. There is another punishment in the Hereafter which will be harder.

Ayaat 34–45 – Those who Do Not Prostrate in this World, will be Unable to Do So in the Hereafter too

﴿ إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٍ النَّعِيمِ ﴾

(68:34) Indeed,¹⁹ the righteous will have the Gardens of Bliss with their Lord.



19. This is a rejoinder to the chiefs of Makkah who argued with the Muslims. The *Mushrikeen* claimed that since they had wealth and blessings in this life it was an indication that they were the favorites of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* as opposed to the believers who were poor and lived miserable lives. And if there was a Hereafter as the believers claimed then they will definitely have even better things there whereas the torment would be on the Muslims.

﴿ أَفَجَعَلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ كَالْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴾

(68:35) Should We then treat those who have submitted like the wicked?

﴿ مَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ ﴾

(68:36) What is the matter with you? How do you judge?²⁰

20. That is, it is against reason that God should not differentiate between the obedient servant and the guilty. How can the obedient be treated as a culprit while the guilty enters Paradise? How do you regard this as reasonable that the Creator of the universe should, like a blind ruler, not judge which people in the world obeyed His commands and refrained from evildoing, and which people committed every sin and crime and perpetrated every cruelty fearless of His punishment?

﴿ أَمْ لَكُمْ كِتَابٌ فِيهِ تَدْرُسُونَ ﴾

(68:37) Or do you have a scripture,²¹ in which you read

﴿ إِنَّ لَكُمْ فِيهِ لَمَا تَخَيَّرُونَ ﴾

(68:38) that you will have whatever you choose?

﴿ أَمْ لَكُمْ أَيْمَانٌ عَلَيْنَا بَلِغَةَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّ لَكُمْ لَمَا تَحْكُمُونَ ﴾

(68:39) Or do you have oaths binding on Us until the Day of Judgment that you will have whatever you decide?²¹



21. Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* asks if they have received a Scripture (the Book sent down by Allah) that tells them in the Hereafter they will have whatever they want. Or if they made Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* promise them that they will have in the Hereafter whatever they choose for themselves regardless of what they do in this world. There is no evidence to back their claim. Then on what basis do they say this?

﴿سَلِّمْ إِلَيْهِمْ بِذَلِكَ زَعِيمٌ﴾

(68:40) Ask them 'O Prophet' which of them can guarantee all that.²²

22. *Za'eem* [زَعِيم] in Arabic is used for a person who stands a surety on behalf of another, or is a spokesman of others. Thus, the verse means to ask: Which of you will come forward and say that he has made such and such a covenant with Allah on your behalf.

﴿أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ فَلْيَأْتُوا بِشُرَكَائِهِمْ إِنْ كَانُوا صَادِقِينَ﴾

(68:41) Or do they have associate-gods 'supporting this claim'? Then let them bring forth their associate-gods, if what they say is true.²³

23. That is, the judgment you are passing concerning yourselves has no basis whatever. It is against reason and you cannot show any such thing written in any divine Book either. No one can make the claim that he has made Allah promise some such thing, and you cannot make any of your deities vouch that they would take the responsibility of securing Paradise for you from God. How then have you been involved in such a misunderstanding!?

﴿يَوْمَ يُكْشَفُ عَن سَاقٍ وَيُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى السُّجُودِ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ﴾

(68:42) 'Beware of' the Day the Shin 'of Allah' will be bared,²⁴ and the wicked will be asked to prostrate, but they will not be able to do so,





24. Literally: *On the Day the Shin shall be uncovered*. Like the Face and the Hands, the Shin is believed by many to be one of the qualities of Allah, in a way befitting His Majesty and Greatness. Since *baring the shin* in the Arab culture is associated with the heat of battle, or befalling of an affliction, some of the companions and their successors interpret the verse metaphorically, so the meaning would be: “‘Beware of’ the Day when horror sets in.” Abdullah bin Abbas has also given this same meaning of this and has supported it by evidence from Arabic poetry. According to another saying that has been cited from Ibn Abbas and Rabi’ bin Anas, *kashf-i-saq* implies uncovering the facts and truths. In view of this interpretation, the meaning would be: *The Day when all truths shall be bared and the people’s deeds shall become open and manifest*.

(خَشِيعَةً أَبْصَرُ هُمْ تَرَهْفُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ وَقَدْ كَانُوا يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى السُّجُودِ وَهُمْ سَلِيمُونَ)

(68:43) with eyes downcast, totally covered with disgrace. For they were ‘always’ called to prostrate ‘in the world’ when they were fully capable ‘but they chose not to’.²⁵

25. It means: On the Resurrection Day it will be openly and publicly demonstrated as to who in the world had actually worshiped Allah and who was disinclined to do so. For this purpose the people will be called upon to prostrate themselves before Allah. Then, those who had been sincerely worshipping Allah in the world would prostrate themselves, and those who had declined to bow before Him in the world would be unable to do so. It will become impossible for them to put up a false show of being worshipers. Therefore, they will remain standing, degraded and downcast with shame.

(فَذَرْنِي وَمَنْ يُكَدِّبُ بِهِذَا الْأَحْدِيثِ سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِمَّنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ)





(68:44) So leave to Me 'O Prophet' those who reject this message.²⁶ We will gradually draw them to destruction in ways they cannot comprehend.²⁷

26. That is, do not worry yourself as to how to deal with them, it is for Me to see how to chastise them.

27. A form of leading somebody to ruin in imperceptible ways is that an enemy of the truth and wicked person may be blessed in the world, and be granted health, wealth, children and worldly successes, by which he may be deluded into believing that whatever he is doing, he is doing well and right. There is nothing wrong with his acts and deeds. Thus, he may go on getting more and more deeply involved in enmity of the truth and wickedness and rebellious conduct and may not realize that the blessings he is being favored with are not a reward but, in fact, a means of his own ruin.

﴿ وَأَمْلِي لَهُمْ إِنْ كَيْدِي مَتِينٌ ﴾

(68:45) I 'only' delay their end for a while, but My planning is flawless.²⁸

28. The word *kayd* [كَيْدٍ] in the original means to devise a secret scheme against another. It is an evil only in case it is devised to harm somebody unjustly, otherwise there is nothing wrong with it, especially when such a scheme is adopted against a person who has made himself worthy of it. In the two *Saheehs* it is recorded from the Messenger of Allah *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* that he said, “*Verily Allah the Exalted gives respite to the wrongdoers until He seizes him and he will not be able to escape Him.*”

Ayaat 46-52 — And Indeed those who Disbelieve would Almost Make You Slip

﴿ أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ أَجْرًا فَهُمْ مِنْ مَعْرَمٍ مَّنْقَلُونَ ﴾





(68:46) Or are you asking them for a reward 'for the message' so that they are overburdened by debt? ²⁹

29. The question apparently is being asked of the Prophet (peace be upon him), but its real audience are the people, who were crossing all limits in their opposition to him. They are being asked: Is Our Messenger asking you for a reward which makes you feel so upset. You know that he is absolutely selfless in his invitation and is exerting himself only for your own benefit and well-being. If you do not want to believe in what he says, you may not, but why are you feeling so enraged at his this invitation to you.

﴿ أَمْ عِنْدَهُمُ الْغَيْبُ فَهُمْ يَكْتُمُونَ ﴾

(68:47) Or do they have access to 'the Record in' the unseen, so they copy it 'for all to see'?³⁰

30. This second question also appears to be directed to the Prophet (peace be upon him), but, in fact, its audience are his opponents. It means: Have you, O people, peered behind the unseen and found that the Messenger, in fact, is not a Messenger sent by God, and the truth that he is presenting before you is also false. That is why you are being so stubborn in belying what he says.

﴿ فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تَكُنْ كَصَاحِبِ الْحُوتِ إِذْ نَادَىٰ وَهُوَ مَكْظُومٌ ﴾

(68:48) So be patient with your Lord's decree,³¹ and do not be like 'Jonah,'³² the Man of the Whale, who cried out 'to Allah', in total distress.³³

31. That is, the time when Allah will issue His decree about your success and victory and your opponents' defeat, is yet far off. Till then you should go on enduring with patience whatever hardships and afflictions you may have to face in the way of preaching the faith.





32. That is, do not behave impatiently as did the Prophet Yunus/Jonah (peace be on him), who as account of his impatience was driven into the fish's belly. Immediately after exhorting the Prophet (peace be upon him) to have patience until Allah issued forth His decree, to tell him not to behave like the Prophet Yunus/Jonah (peace be upon him) by itself gives the meaning that the latter had shown some kind of impatience before Allah gave His decision and thus had incurred His wrath.

33. In Surah *Al-Anbiya* it has been explained thus: From inside the fish's belly and the darkness of the sea, the Prophet Yunus/Jonah (peace be upon him) invoked Allah, saying: *La ilaha illa anta subhanaka inni kuntu min-az-zalimin: There is no god but You; glory be to You: I had indeed committed a wrong.* Thereupon Allah heard his prayer and delivered him from this affliction (verses 87-88).

﴿لَوْلَا أَنْ تَدَارَكَهُ نِعْمَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ لَنُبِذَ بِالْعَرَاءِ وَهُوَ مَذْمُومٌ﴾

(68:49) Had he not been shown grace by his Lord, he would have certainly been cast onto the open 'shore', still blameworthy.³⁴

34. When this verse is read with (Surah *As-Saaffat*, Ayats 142-146), one learns that at the time the Prophet Yunus/Jonah (peace be upon him) was caused to be swallowed by the fish, he was blameworthy. But when he glorified Allah and confessed his fault, although he was thrown out from the belly of the fish on a bare beach in a state of sickness, he was not blameworthy at that time. Allah by His mercy caused a creeper to grow over him so that its leaves should provide him shade and its fruit food and drink.

﴿فَأَجْتَبَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَجَعَلَهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ﴾

(68:50) Then his Lord chose him, making him one of the righteous.

﴿وَإِنْ يَكَادُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَيُزْلِقُونَكَ بِأَبْصَرِهِمْ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا الذِّكْرَ وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُ لَمَجْنُونٌ﴾





(68:51) The disbelievers would almost cut you down with their eyes when they hear 'you recite' the Reminder, and say, "He is certainly a madman."³⁵

35. Would make you slip: Would eat you up with their eyes. For a similar expression of the Makkan disbelievers' rage and fury against the Prophet (peace be upon him), see also Surah Al-Isra, Ayat 73-77. (*Al-Dhikr*/The Reminder is one of the names of the Qur'an.)

(وَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ)

(68:52) But it is simply a reminder to the whole world.

Discussion:

1. Explain the first verse of this sura: 'Nūn. By the pen and what everyone writes!'
2. Explain the Parable of the Companions of Gardens in surah al-Qalam.

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy



TAFSEER OF SURAH AL-HAQQAH (No. 69)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *al-Haaqqah* with which it opens.

Period of Revelation

This too is one of the earliest surahs to be revealed at Makkah. Its subject matter shows that it was sent down at the time when opposition to the Prophet (upon whom be peace) had started but had not yet become tyrannical. Musnad Ahmad contains a tradition from ‘Umar, *radhiAllahu ‘anhu*, saying: "Before embracing Islam one day I came out of my house with a view to causing trouble to the Prophet, but he had entered the *Masjid al-Haram* before me. When I arrived I found that he was reciting surah Al-Haaqqah in the Prayer. I stood behind him and listened. As he recited the Qur'an I wondered at its literary charm and beauty. Then suddenly an idea came to my mind that he must be a poet as the Quraish alleged. Just at that moment he recited the words: "*This is the Word of an honorable Messenger: it is not the word of a poet.*" I said to myself: Then, he must be a soothsayer, if not a poet. Thereupon he recited the words: "*Nor is it the word of a soothsayer: little it is that you reflect. It is a Revelation from the Lord and Sustainer of the worlds.*" On hearing this Islam entered deep into my heart." This tradition of ‘Umar, *ra*, shows that this surah had been sent down long before his acceptance of Islam, for even after this event he did not believe for a long time, and he continued to be influenced in favor of Islam by different incidents from time to time, till at last in the house of his own sister he came by the experience that made him surrender and submit to the Faith completely.

Theme and Subject Matter

The first section (*ayaat* 1-37) of this Surah carries a strong description of the Hereafter while the second section (*ayaat* 38-52) is about Qur'an being a revelation

of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* and the Prophet *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* being a true Messenger of Allah.

Tafseer of Surah Al-Haqqah (The Inevitable/Reality) – 52 Ayaats

Ayaat 1-12 — Punishment is according to the Sin

(الْحَاقَّةُ)

(69:1) The Inevitable Hour!¹

1. The word *al-Haqqah* is from the word *haq* which means truth. *Haq* is something that is firmly established. The *ta marboota* [ة] at the end signifies it is an event or incident. The word *al-Haaqqah* as used in the text means an event which has inevitably to take place and the occurrence of which in the future is so certain as to admit of no doubt or suspicion. To use this word for Resurrection and to begin the discourse with it by itself shows that the people were denying its occurrence. They are being told: That which you are denying is inevitable: your denial will not prevent its occurrence.

(مَا الْحَاقَّةُ)

(69:2) What is the Inevitable Hour?

(وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحَاقَّةُ)

(69:3) And what will make you realize what the Inevitable Hour is?²

2. These two questions, one after the other, have been put to arouse the listeners, to make them understand the importance of the theme and listen to what follows with full attention. Repeating the word thrice indicates its importance and warning to the deniers of Resurrection.

(كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ وَعَادُ بِالْقَارِعَةِ)



(69:4) 'Both' Thamûd³ and 'Âd denied the Striking Disaster.⁴

3. As the disbelievers of Makkah denied Resurrection and took the news of its coming lightly, they have been warned at the outset, as if to say: Resurrection is inevitable: whether you believe in it or not, it will in any case take place. Then, they are told: It is not a simple and ordinary thing that a person accepts the news of the coming of an event or not, but it has a deep relationship with the morals of the nations and with their future. The history of the nations, which lived before you, testifies that the nation which refused to believe in the Hereafter and thought this worldly life only to be the real life and denied that man would have ultimately to render an account of his deeds before God, corrupted itself morally until the punishment of God overtook it and eliminated it from the world.

4. The word *al-qariah* (الْقَارِعَةُ) is derived from *qar*’, which means to hammer, to beat, to knock and to strike one thing upon the other. This other word for Resurrection (Day of Judgment) has been used to give an idea of its terror and dread.

(فَأَمَّا تَمُودُ فَأَهْلِكُوا بِطَآغِيَةٍ)

(69:5) As for Thamûd, they were destroyed by an overwhelming blast.⁵

5. In Surah (Al-Aaraf, Ayah 78), it has been called *ar-rajfah* [الرَّجْفَةُ], a terrible earthquake; in Surah (Hud, Ayah 67) *as-sayhah* [الصَّيْحَةُ], a violent blast; in Surah (Fussilat, Ayah 17), it has been said: They were overtaken by *saiqa-tul-adhab* [صَاعِقَةُ الْعَذَابِ], a humiliating scourge; and here the same punishment has been described as *at-taghiyah* [الطَّاعِيَةِ], a violent catastrophe. These words describe different aspects of the same calamity.

(وَأَمَّا عَادُ فَأَهْلِكُوا بَرِيحٍ صَرْصَرٍ عَاتِيَةٍ)

(69:6) And as for 'Âd, they were destroyed by a furious, bitter wind^{5b}



5b. *Sarsar* [صَرْصَر] is a harsh, cold and bitter wind which chills down to the bones. *Sarsar* is a repeated word which means it is a wind which continuously repeats itself. The word *aatiyah* [عَاتِيَةٌ] is used for someone who harms others and deals with them in a harsh manner out of arrogance.

One point worth mentioning here is that Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* uses similar word for their punishment as their sins. The people of Thamud were rebellious and transgressed their limits and so was their punishment. The sound (or the punishment) transgressed its limits. The People of 'Ad were destroyed by a harsh and arrogant wind because they were arrogant people themselves, as it appears in Surah Fussilat.

﴿ سَخَّرَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعَ لَيَالٍ وَثَمَنِيَةَ أَيَّامٍ حُسُومًا فَتَرَى الْقَوْمَ فِيهَا صَرْعَى كَأَنَّهُمْ أُعِجَازُ نَخْلٍ خَاوِيَةٍ ﴾

(69:7) which Allah unleashed on them non-stop for seven nights and eight days, so that you would have seen its people lying dead like trunks of uprooted palm trees.

﴿ فَهَلْ تَرَى لَهُم مِّنْ بَاقِيَةٍ ﴾

(69:8) Do you see any of them left alive?^{5c}

5c. Or: *Do you now see any trace of them?* Meaning do you find any one of them left or anyone who even attributes himself to being from them. Rather they are all gone, right down to the last of them, and Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* did not make for them any successors.

﴿ وَجَاءَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَنْ قَبْلَهُ وَالْمُؤْتَفِكَاتُ بِالْخَاطِئَةِ ﴾

(69:9) Also, Pharaoh and those before him, and 'the people of' the overturned cities 'of Lot' indulged in sin,⁶

6. *Mu'tafikatu* means 'to take something, lift it, turn it over, change its position and then slam it down'. The reference is to the towns and settlements (Sodom and

Gamorah) of the people of the Prophet Lot (peace upon be him), about which it has been said in (Surah Hud, Ayah 82) and (Surah Al-Hijr, Ayah 74), *We turned them upside down.*

All of these nations were destroyed because of *khaati'ah* [الْخَاطِئَةُ] is from the word *khata'a* which means 'error or sin'. Their sin was transgression and rejection or denial of the Messengers (peace be upon them all) and the Message that they had brought. And that is being confirmed with the *ayah* that follows.

(فَعَصَوْا رَسُولَ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَخَذَهُمْ أَخْذَةً رَابِيَةً)

(69:10) each disobeying their Lord's messenger, so He seized them with a crushing grip.

(إِنَّا لَمَّا طَغَا الْمَاءُ حَمَلْنَاكُمْ فِي الْجَارِيَةِ)

(69:11) Indeed, when the floodwater had overflowed,⁷ We carried you in the floating Ark 'with Noah',⁸

7. The reference is to the deluge (severe flood) of the Prophet Nuh/Noah (peace be upon him), in which a whole nation was drowned because of this very crime, and only those people were saved, who had listened to and obeyed the Messenger of Allah.

8. We carried you, i.e., your ancestors: Because the whole human race that exists today has descended from the people who were boarded in the Ark thousands of years ago and thus saved from the flood. It means: You exist in the world today because in that severe flood Allah had caused only the infidels to be drowned and had saved the believers.

(لِنَجْعَلَهَا لَكُمْ تَذْكِرَةً وَتَعِيهَا أُنُثَىٰ وَأَعْيَةُ)



(69:12) so that We may make this a reminder to you, and that attentive ears may grasp it.⁹

9. The conscious ears: the ears which may hear it consciously and take it in. Although the word ear has been used, it implies the hearers who may hear the event and always remember it, take heed from it, and may never forget what dreadful fate the deniers of the Hereafter and the disbelievers of the Messenger of God would ultimately suffer.

Ayaat 13-17 — A Mention of the Horrors of the Day of Judgment

﴿فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ نَفْخَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ﴾

(69:13) At last,¹⁰ when the Trumpet will be blown with one blast,

10. While reading the following verses one should keep in mind that at some places in the Qur'an the three stages of Resurrection (Day of Judgement) which will occur one after the other at different times have been mentioned separately, and at others all the three have been combined and mentioned as a single event. Here and at many other places in the Qur'an all the events of Resurrection, from the blowing of the first Trumpet till the people's entry into Heaven and Hell have been described as a single event. It is emphasized here that it is one blowing because the command of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* cannot be opposed or prevented, and it does not need to be repeated or stressed.

﴿وَحُمِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ فَدُكَّتَا دَكَّةً وَاحِدَةً﴾

(69:14) and the earth and mountains will be lifted up and crushed with one blow,

﴿فَيَوْمَئِذٍ وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ﴾

(69:15) on that Day the Inevitable Event will have come to pass.



﴿ وَأَنْشَقَّتِ السَّمَاءُ فَهِيَ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاهِيَةٌ ﴾

(69:16) The sky will then be so torn that it will be frail,

﴿ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ عَلَىٰ أَرْجَائِهَا وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَنِيَةٌ ﴾

(69:17) with the angels on its sides. On that Day eight 'mighty angels' will bear the Throne¹¹ of your Lord above them.

11. This is an ambiguous verse the meaning of which is difficult to determine. We can neither know what the Throne is nor can understand what will be the nature of the eight angels upholding it on the Day of Resurrection. It is, however inconceivable that Allah Almighty would be sitting on the Throne and the eight angels would be upholding it along with Him. The verse also does not say that Allah at that time would be sitting on the Throne. Besides, the conception of God that the Qur'an gives also prevents one from imagining that the Being Who is free from physical existence as to body, direction and place, should be residing somewhere and His creatures should sustain Him. Therefore, pursuing any research to determine its meaning would be tantamount to disbelief. However, one should understand that in order to give an idea of Allah Almighty's rule and sovereignty, and of the matters associated with it, the same scene has been depicted by the Qur'an as of worldly kingship and the same terms have been used for it as are common for kingship and its accompaniments in order to enable us to understand matters pertaining to sovereignty of the universe to some extent only by means of this very scene and terms. All this is meant to bring the real Truth within human understanding; it is not, therefore, right to take it literally.

Ayaat 18-37 — The Children of Adam being Presented before Allah

﴿ يَوْمَئِذٍ تُعْرَضُونَ لَا تَخْفَىٰ مِنْكُمْ خَافِيَةٌ ﴾



(69:18) You will then be presented 'before Him for judgment', and none of your secrets will stay hidden.

(فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَيَقُولُ هَؤُلَاءِ أَفْرَعُوا كِتَابِيَةَ)

(69:19) As for those given their records in their right hand,¹² they will cry 'happily', "Here 'everyone'! Read my record!"¹³

12. The record's being given in the right hand will by itself show that the concerned person's account is clear and settled and he is appearing in the divine court as a righteous man and not as a culprit. It is probable that at the time the records are distributed the righteous man himself will extend his right hand forward to receive his record. For on account of the good treatment that he would have received right from the moment of death till his appearance in the Plain of Assembly at Resurrection would have given him the satisfaction that he was there to be blessed and not to be punished. At many places in the Qur'an it has been explicitly stated that right at death itself it becomes clear to every man whether he is entering the next world in a blessed or wretched state. Then from the moment of death till Resurrection the righteous man is treated like a guest and the evil man as a culprit under custody. After this, from the time the second life starts on the Day of Resurrection, the condition and state of the righteous is entirely different from the condition and state of the disbelievers, hypocrites and culprits.

13. That is, he will be overjoyed as soon as he receives his record and will show it to his companions. In (Surah Al-Inshiqaq, Ayat 9), it has been said: *He will return to his kinsfolk rejoicing.*

(إِنِّي ظَنَنْتُ أَنِّي مُلْقٍ حِسَابِيَةَ)

(69:20) I surely knew I would face my reckoning."¹⁴



14. Or: “*Verily I was sure that I would be handed over my account.*” That is, he was fortunate because he had been conscious of the Hereafter in the world and had lived his life with the belief that he would have to appear before God one day and render his account to Him.

(فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَّاضِيَةٍ)

(69:21) They will be in a life of bliss,

(فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ)

(69:22) in an elevated Garden,

(قُطُوفُهَا دَانِيَةٌ)

(69:23) whose fruit will hang within reach.

(كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْخَالِيَةِ)

(69:24) They will be told, “Eat and drink joyfully for what you did in the days gone by.”

(وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِشِمَالِهِ فَيَقُولُ يُلَيِّنُنِي لَمْ أُوتِ كِتَابِيَةَ)

(69:25) And as for those given their record in their left hand,¹⁵ they will cry ‘bitterly’, “I wish I had not been given my record,¹⁶

15. In Surah *Al-Inshiqaq* it has been said: *And the one whose record is given him behind his back.* Probably it will be like this: As the culprit would already be knowing that he was a culprit, and would be aware of what his record contained, he would dejectedly extend his left hand forward to receive it, and then would immediately hide it behind his back so that no one else saw what he had received. And Allah knows best.

16. That is, I should not have been given this record in the Plain of Assembly and thus publicly disgraced before all mankind, but should have been awarded secretly whatever punishment I deserved.

(وَلَمْ أَدْرِ مَا حِسَابِيَّةٌ)

(69:26) nor known anything of my reckoning!¹⁷

17. Or: "... and had not known my account." That is, I should not have been told what I had done in the world. Another meaning of this verse can also be: I never knew what an account was: I never had imagined that one day I would also have to render my account and that all my deeds would be presented before me."

(يَلَيْتَنِي كَانَتْ أَفْضِيَّةٌ)

(69:27) I wish death was the end!¹⁸

18. That is, I should have become extinct after death in the world and should have experienced no other life after death.

(مَا أَغْنَى عَنِّي مَالِيَّةٌ)

(69:28) My wealth has not benefited me!

(هَلَكَ عَنِّي سُلْطَانِيَّةٌ)

(69:29) My authority has been stripped from me."¹⁹

19. The word *sultan* (سُلْطَن) of the text is used both for an argument and for power and authority. If it is taken in the sense of an argument, the meaning would be: The arguments that I used to give would not work here. Here, I have no argument which I can present in self-defense. And if it is taken in the sense of power, it would imply: The power of which I was so proud in the world is no more. I have no army here and

there is none to obey me. I stand as a miserable helpless creature, who can do nothing to defend himself.

﴿ خُدُوهُ فَغُلُّوهُ ﴾

(69:30) 'It will be said,' "Seize and shackle them,

﴿ ثُمَّ أَجْزِمِ صَلْوَهُ ﴾

(69:31) then burn them in Hell,

﴿ ثُمَّ فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَاسْلُكُوهُ ﴾

(69:32) then tie them up with chains seventy arms long.

﴿ إِنَّهُ كَانَ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴾

(69:33) For they never had faith in Allah, the Greatest,

﴿ وَلَا يَحِضُّ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ الْمَسْكِينِ ﴾

(69:34) nor encouraged the feeding of the poor.²⁰

20. That is, not to speak of feeding a poor man himself, he did not even like to say to others that they should feed the hungry.

﴿ فَلَيْسَ لَهُ الْيَوْمَ هَاهُنَا حَمِيمٌ ﴾

(69:35) So this Day they will have no close friend here,

﴿ وَلَا طَعَامٍ إِلَّا مِنْ غَسَلِينَ ﴾

(69:36) nor any food except 'oozing' pus,

﴿ لَا يَأْكُلُهُ إِلَّا الْخَاطِئُونَ ﴾

(69:37) which none will eat except the evildoers.”

Ayaat 38-52 — The Qur'an is the Speech of Allah

﴿ فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِمَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴾

(69:38) Now,²¹ I do swear by whatever you see,

21. That is, the truth is not as you think it to be.

﴿ وَمَا لَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴾

(69:39) and whatever you cannot see!

﴿ إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴾

(69:40) Indeed, this 'Qur'an' is the recitation of a noble Messenger.²²

22. Here, "a noble Messenger" implies the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and in (Surah At-Takweer, Ayah 19) the angel Jibreel/Gabriel. The argument being that after describing the Qur'an as the word of an honorable Messenger, it has been said: It is not the word of a poet nor of a soothsayer, and obviously the disbelievers of Makkah branded the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and not Gabriel as a poet and soothsayer. On the contrary, in Surah At-Takweer, after describing the Qur'an as the word of "a noble messenger" it has been said: That Messenger has great power, and has high ranks with the Owner of the Throne: there he is obeyed and held as trustworthy. And Muhammad (peace be upon him) has seen him on the bright horizon (verses 20-23). Almost the same thing has been stated in (Surah An-Najm, Ayats 5-10) about Gabriel.

Here, the question arises; In what sense has the Qur'an been described as the word of Muhammad (peace be upon him) and of Gabriel. The answer is: the people were hearing it being recited by the tongue of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the Prophet (peace be upon him) by the tongue of Gabriel. Thereupon, in one way it was the word of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and in another way of Gabriel, but a little below it has been explicitly stated: It is indeed a Revelation from the Lord of



the worlds, which is being presented before Muhammad (peace be upon him) by the tongue of Gabriel and before the people by the tongue of Muhammad (peace be upon him). The word Messenger itself points to the truth that the word belongs to neither of them but they have presented it as Messengers of the One Who has sent it down.

(وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَاعِرٍ قَلِيلًا مَّا تُوْمِنُوْنَ)

(69:41) It is not the prose of a poet 'as you claim', 'yet' you hardly have any faith.²³

23. One meaning of “you hardly have any faith” or “little it is that you believe”, according to Arabic idiom, can be: You do not believe it at all. Another meaning also can be: Hearing the Qur’an your heart sometimes itself cries out: This cannot be mortal word. Yet you behave stubbornly and refuse to believe in it.

(وَلَا بِقَوْلِ كَاهِنٍ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُوْنَ)

(69:42) Nor is it the mumbling of a fortune-teller, 'yet' you are hardly mindful. (Little do you reflect!)

(تَنْزِيلٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(69:43) 'It is' a revelation from the Lord of all worlds.²⁴

24. In short: I swear by whatever you see and by whatever you do not see that this Qur’an is not the word of a poet or a soothsayer, but it is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds, which is being presented by the Messenger (peace be upon him) who is noble and gentle. Let us now consider in what sense this oath has been sworn. That which was visible to the people was:

(1) This Word was being presented by a person who being noble and gentle was not hidden from anybody in the society of Makkah. Everyone knew that he was the best





man of their nation in conduct. It could not be expected of such a man that he would forge a lie and attribute it to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

(2) They also saw clearly that he had no selfish motive in presenting that word before the people, but had rather sacrificed all His personal interests to it. He had ruined his business, he had abandoned every ease and comfort, he was being cursed and abused by the same people who had shown him the highest veneration and esteem and had caused even his family and children to be subjected to these agonies besides himself. A person having selfish motives could not have submitted himself to such tribulations.

(3) They could also see that the lives of the people in their own society, who believed in him, underwent a sudden transformation. The word of no poet or soothsayer has been known to have brought about such a wonderful moral change in the people that his follower should become ready to face every hardship and bear up against every persecution for his sake.

(4) They were also not unaware of the language of poetry and the diction of the soothsayers. Apart from stubborn disbelievers, no one could say that the language of the Qur'an was the language of poetry or sorcery.

(5) This also was before their eyes that no one in entire Arabia was so eloquent of speech that his word could be brought to match with the Qur'an. Not to speak of equaling it, not even the greatest poet's eloquence could even approach anywhere near that of Qur'an.

(6) This was also not hidden from them that the language used by Muhammad (peace be upon him) himself was very different in its literary beauty and merit from the language of the Qur'an. No Arabic speaking person could, after hearing the





Prophet's (peace be upon him) own speech, and the Qur'an, say that both emanated from one and the same person.

(7) The people of Makkah had never heard, even until a day before Muhammad (peace be upon him) made the claim to Prophethood, anything relating to the themes that the Qur'an consisted of, nor they knew that he had any means of obtaining that knowledge and information. That is why even if his opponents alleged that he obtained that information secretly from somewhere, no one in Makkah was prepared to believe it.

(8) They could also see the wonderful workshop of existence, from the earth to the heavens, which was functioning before their eyes, and in which they could see a supreme, wise law and an all-pervading order and system at work. In it they could see no sign and evidence of the polytheism and denial of the Hereafter, which the Arabs had adopted as their creed, but there were signs and proofs of the existence of One God and of the truth of the Hereafter which the Qur'an was presenting.

All this they could see, and what they did not see was: Allah Almighty alone is the Creator and Master and Ruler of this universe: all others are only creatures: none beside Him is God. Resurrection has to take place inevitably; Muhammad (peace be upon him) has really been appointed a Messenger by Allah Himself Who is sending down the Qur'an to him. An oath has been sworn by both truths to affirm that which has been stated in the preceding verses.

(وَلَوْ تَقَوَّلَ عَلَيْنَا بَعْضَ الْأَقَاوِيلِ)

(69:44) Had the Messenger made up something in Our Name,

(لَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُ بِالْيَمِينِ)

(69:45) We would have certainly seized him by his right hand,





﴿ ثُمَّ لَقَطَعْنَا مِنْهُ الْوَتِينَ ﴾

(69:46) then severed his aorta,

﴿ فَمَا مِنْكُمْ مِّنْ أَحَدٍ عَنْهُ حَاجِزِينَ ﴾

(69:47) and none of you could have shielded him 'from Us'!²⁵

25. The object is to impress the point that the Prophet (peace be upon him) has no authority whatsoever to make any change in the revelation. If he did so, he would be severely punished. The style depicts the prompt and quick action of a king who strikes off the head of an official, holding him by the hand, if he commits a forgery in his name.

﴿ وَإِنَّهُ لَتَذِكْرَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴾

(69:48) Indeed, this 'Qur'an' is a reminder to those mindful 'of Allah'.²⁶

26. That is, the Qur'an is an admonition (authoritative counsel or warning) for those who wish to avoid wrongdoing and its evil consequences.

﴿ وَإِنَّا لَنَعْلَمُ أَنَّ مِنْكُمْ مُّكَذِّبِينَ ﴾

(69:49) And We certainly know that some of you will persist in denial,

﴿ وَإِنَّهُ لَحَسْرَةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴾

(69:50) and it will surely be a source of regret for the disbelievers.²⁷

27. That is, they will ultimately have to despair and regret as to why they had rejected this Qur'an.

﴿ وَإِنَّهُ لِحَقُّ الْيَقِينِ ﴾

(69:51) And indeed, this 'Qur'an' is the absolute truth.

﴿ فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ ﴾

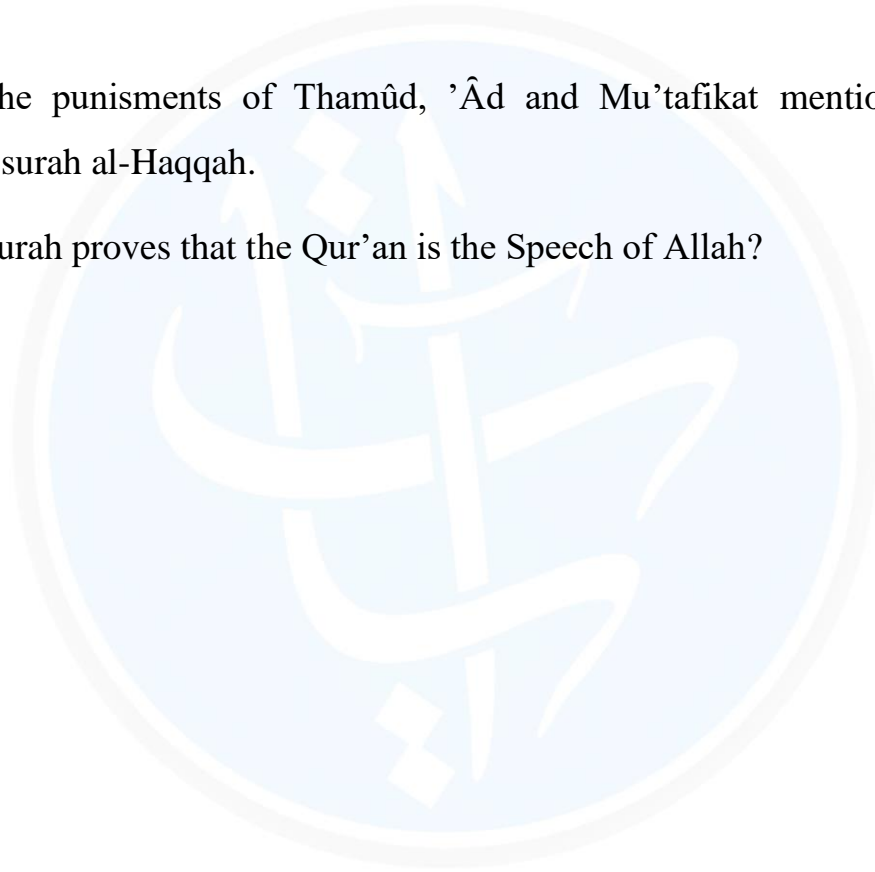




(69:52) So glorify the Name of your Lord, the Greatest.

Discussion:

1. Explain the punishments of Thamûd, 'Âd and Mu'tafikat mentioned at the beginning of surah al-Haqqah.
2. How this surah proves that the Qur'an is the Speech of Allah?



أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy



TAFSEER OF SURAH AL- MA'ARIJ (No. 70)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *dhil-Ma'arij* (The Ascending Stairways) in verse 3.

Period of Revelation

The subject matter bears evidence that this Surah too was sent down in conditions closely resembling those under which Surah *Al Haaqqah* was sent down.

Theme and Subject Matter

It admonishes and gives warning to the disbelievers who made fun of the news about Resurrection and the Hereafter, and Hell and Heaven, and challenged the Prophet (upon whom be peace) to cause Resurrection with which he threatened them to take place if what he said was true and they had become worthy of the punishment in Hell by denying it. The whole Surah is meant to answer this denial.

Tafseer of Surah Al- Ma'arij (The Ascending Stairways/Steps) – 44 ayat

Ayaat 1-5 — Be Patient with a Beautiful Patience

(سَأَلَ سَائِلٌ بِعَذَابٍ وَاقِعٍ)

(70:1) A challenger has demanded a punishment bound to come¹

1. Some commentators have taken the verb *sa'ala* (سَأَلَ) in the text in the meaning of asking, and have interpreted the verse to mean: The asker has asked: whom will the torment with which we are being threatened befall. And Allah has answered it, saying: It will befall the disbelievers. But most of the commentators have taken *sa'ala* here in the meaning of demanding. *Nasai* and other traditionists have related a *hadith*/tradition from Ibn Abbas, and Hakim hold it as authentic, that *Nadr bin al-*

Harith had said: *O God, if it is really the truth sent down by You, then rain down stones on us from the heavens, or send down any other painful torment on us* (Surah Al-Anfaal, Ayat 32). Apart from this, at several places in the Qur'an the disbelievers' this challenge has been related: *Why don't you bring down on us the torment that you threaten us with?*

(تَلْكَفِرِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُ دَافِعٌ)

(70:2) for the disbelievers—to be averted by none—

(مِنْ اللَّهِ ذِي الْمَعَارِجِ)

(70:3) from Allah, Lord of pathways of 'heavenly' ascent,²

2. The word *ma'arij* [المَعَارِجِ] is the plural of the word *mi'raj*, which means a stairway, or a ladder, or something by which one may go up. To call Allah *dhil-Maarij* (Owner of the ways of ascent, or the Lord of loftiness and abundance as interpreted by ibn 'Abbas *radhiAllahu 'anhu*) means that He is Most High and in order to go up into His Presence the angels have to ascend many heights, one above the other, as has been stated in the following verses.

(تَعْرُجُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ)

(70:4) 'through which' the angels and the 'holy' spirit³ will ascend to Him⁴ on a Day fifty thousand years in length.⁵

3. "*Al-Ruh/The Spirit*": the Angel Gabriel, who has been mentioned separately from the angels in order to impress his unique glory and greatness. In Surah *Ash-Shu'ara* it has been said: *The trustworthy Spirit has come down with this Qur'an upon your heart*, (verse 193), and in Surah *Al-Baqarah*, *Say to them: Whoever is an enemy to Gabriel, should understand that he has, by Allah's command, revealed upon your*



heart this Qur'an (verse 97). These verses when read together show that *Ar-Rooh* (the Spirit) implies the Angel Gabriel.

4. This is an ambiguous theme the meaning of which cannot be determined precisely. We neither have any knowledge of the reality of the angels, nor can understand the nature of their ascent, nor can conceive the stairways on which they ascend. Besides, about Allah also it cannot be imagined that He lives in a particular place, for He is exalted and free from the restrictions of space and time.

5. In (Surah Al-Hajj, Ayat 47), it has been said: *These people are demanding of you to hasten the torment. Allah will never fail to fulfill His threat, but a day with your Lord is equal to a thousand years as you reckon.* In (Surah As-Sajdah, Ayat 5), it has been said: *He administers the affairs of the world from the heavens to the earth, and the report of this administration ascends (to be presented) before Him in a Day whose length, according to your reckoning, is a thousand years.* And here, in response to the demand for the torment, the measure of Allah's one day has been stated to be fifty thousand years. Then the Prophet (peace be upon him) has been consoled, saying: *Have patience at the demand for the torment which the people make out of jest and fun,* and then it is said: *They think it is far off, but We see it as near at hand.* When all these verses are read together, what becomes obvious is: The people, because of their narrow and restricted outlook, measure the time of Allah's decrees by their own scales of time and, therefore, consider a hundred years or so to be a very lengthy period, whereas in the divine conduct of affairs there are schemes spreading over a thousand years each, or fifty thousand years each, as you reckon, and this measure also is only by way of example; otherwise schemes in the universe may extend over millions and billions of years as well. Of these one is the scheme under which mankind has been created on the earth, and a time limit has been set during which it has been allowed to function here. No man can know when this





scheme began, what time-limit has been decreed for its completion, what hour has been appointed for bringing it to an end, when Resurrection will take place, and what time has been fixed for raising all men, born since the beginning of creation till Resurrection, from death simultaneously and calling them to account for their deeds. We only know to some extent that part of the scheme which is passing before us, or a partial history of the past ages which exists with us. As for its beginning and end, to say nothing of knowing it, we do not even have the power to understand it, not to speak of understanding the wisdom which works behind and underlies it. Now the people who demand that the scheme be cut short and its conclusion be brought immediately before them, and if this is not done, they use it for an argument to prove that the universe has no end and conclusion. They, in fact, present a proof of their own ignorance and folly.

(فَأَصْبِرْ صَبْرًا جَمِيلًا)

(70:5) So endure 'this denial, O Prophet,' with beautiful patience.⁶

6. *A gracious patience*: A kind of patience that befits a magnanimous person like you. One kind of patience is where you are weak and helpless and have no other option but to be patient. The other kind is where you are capable and strong and in a position to take action but you choose to let go and not react. This is the 'beautiful patience'.

A person who is doing *sabrun jameel* will neither be scornful nor have resentment. He will neither complain to others nor talk about his pain or anger. He watches his tongue, is careful of his behavior and his heart is at rest. People might be criticizing, accusing or mocking at him but he does not react through words, actions or gestures. He remains calm and is filled with grace.



It was this beautiful patience of the Prophet *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* that some of the early opponents of Islam who fought against him in battles accepted Islam after a long of opposition.

Ayaat 6-18 — Terrors of the Day of Judgment

(إِنَّهُمْ يَرَوْنَهُ بَعِيدًا)

(70:6) They truly see this 'Day' as impossible (far off),

(وَنَرْنَاهُ قَرِيبًا)

(70:7) but We see it as inevitable (near at hand).⁷

7. This can have two meanings:

- (1) That these people think it cannot possibly take place, and in Our view it is going to take place very soon.
- (2) That these people think Resurrection is yet remote and far off, and in Our sight it is close at hand and may occur any moment.

(يَوْمَ تَكُونُ السَّمَاءُ كَالْمُهْلِ)

(70:8) On that Day⁸ the sky will be like molten brass⁹

8. A section of the commentators regard this sentence as related to “a day whose measure is fifty thousand years”; they say that the day whose measure has been stated to be fifty thousand years is the Day of Resurrection. The Prophet (ﷺ) is reported in a ḥadīth (although with weak transmitters) collected by Imām Aḥmed (and in the Tafsir by Ibn Jarir), to have said (when wonder was expressed about the length of this Day with reference to this verse) that, for the believer, this long period will be like the time they took to perform a single prayer in the world.

9. That is, it will change its color over and over again.

﴿ وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ ﴾

(70:9) and the mountains like 'tufts of' wool.¹⁰

10. As the colors of the mountains are different, when they are uprooted and they drift about weightless, they will appear like flakes of carded wool of different colors.

﴿ وَلَا يَسْأَلُ حَمِيمٌ حَمِيمًا ﴾

(70:10) And no close friend will ask 'about' their friends,

﴿ يُبْصِرُونَهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَلَمْ جَرَّمُ لَوْ يَفْتَدِي مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمِئِذٍ بِنَبِيِّهِ ﴾

(70:11) 'although' they will be made to see each other.¹¹ The wicked will wish to ransom themselves from the punishment of that Day by their children,

11. Not so that they will not see each other, therefore they will not ask after each other's welfare, but each will be seeing the other in agony and distress, yet will ignore him, being wholly preoccupied with his own torment.

﴿ وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَأَخِيهِ ﴾

(70:12) their spouses, their siblings,

﴿ وَفَصِيلَتِهِ الَّتِي تُؤْوِيهِ ﴾

(70:13) their clan that sheltered them,

﴿ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا نَحْمِئُهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ﴾

(70:14) and everyone on earth altogether, just to save themselves.

﴿ كَلَّا إِنَّهَا لَأَطْفَى ﴾

(70:15) But no! There will certainly be a raging Flame

﴿ نَزَّاعَةٌ لِّلشَّوْىِ ۗ ﴾

(70:16) ripping off scalps.

﴿ تَدْعُوا مَنْ أَدْبَرَ وَتَوَلَّى ﴾

(70:17) It will summon whoever turned their backs 'on Allah' and turned away 'from the truth',

﴿ وَجَمَعَ فَأَوْعَى ﴾

(70:18) and gathered and hoarded 'wealth'.¹²

12. Here also, as in (Surah Al-Haqqah, Ayats 33-34), two causes have been mentioned of a person's evil end in the Hereafter:

- (1) His repudiation of the truth and refusal to affirm faith.
- (2) His worship of the world and stinginess because of which he amasses wealth and refuses to spend it on any good cause.

Ayaat 19-35 - Man is Impatient

﴿ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا ﴾

(70:19) Indeed, humankind was created impatient.¹³

13. "*Man is impatient by nature*": It is man's nature or his natural weakness to be impatient. Here, one should keep in view that at many places in the Qur'an, after making mention of mankind's common moral weaknesses, those who believe and adopted righteousness have been made an exception; the same theme is being expressed in the following verses. This by itself explains the truth that these hereditary weaknesses are not unalterable. If man accepts the guidance sent down by God and tries to reform himself practically, he can remove them, and if he gives a free rope to his self, these become ingrained in him deeply.

﴿ إِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ جَزُوعًا ﴾



(70:20) distressed when touched with evil,

﴿وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الْخَيْرُ مَنُوعًا﴾

(70:21) and withholding when touched with good—

﴿إِلَّا الْمُصَلِّينَ﴾

(70:22) except those who pray,¹⁴

14. A person's performing the *salat* necessarily implies that he believes in Allah, His Messenger (peace be upon him), His Book and the Hereafter as well as tries to act according to his belief.

﴿الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ دَائِمُونَ﴾

(70:23) consistently performing their prayers;¹⁵

15. That is, no laziness or love of ease and comfort, no occupation or interest hinders them from being punctual and regular at the prayer. When the Prayer time comes, they abandon every occupation and activity and stand up to perform worship of their God. Another meaning which *Uqbah bin Amir* has given of *ala salat-i-him daaimun* is that they perform the Prayer with full peace of mind, tranquility and humility; they do not try to offer the Prayer in a hurry in order to get rid of it somehow, nor think irrelevant things during the Prayer.

﴿وَالَّذِينَ فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ مَّعْلُومٌ﴾

(70:24) and who give the rightful share of their wealth

﴿لِّلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ﴾

(70:25) to the beggar and the poor;¹⁶





16. In (Surah Adh-Dhariyat, Ayat 19), it has been said: *In their wealth there is a right of the beggar and the needy*, and here: *In their wealth there is a due share of the beggar and the needy*. Some people have understood this to mean that the due share implies the obligatory zakat, for in the zakat both the exemption limit and the rate have been fixed. But this commentary cannot be accepted on the ground that the Surah Al-Maarij is unanimously a Makkan Revelation, and the zakat with its specific exemption limit and rate was enjoined at Al-Madinah. Therefore, the correct meaning of the due share is that they have of their own accord set aside a share in their possessions of the beggar and needy, which they discharge regularly and honestly. This same meaning of this verse has been given by Abdullah bin Abbas, Abdullah bin Umar, Mujahid, Shabi and Ibrahim Nakhai.

Here, *saail* imply a needy person, who asks someone for help, and *mahroom* implies a person who is jobless, or the one who tries to earn a living but does not earn enough to meet his needs, or the one who has become disabled because of an accident or calamity, and is unable to make a living. About such people when it becomes known that they are destitute, a God-worshipper does not wait that they should ask for help, but helps them of his own accord as soon as he comes to know that they are needy and stand in need of help.

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ يُصَدِّقُونَ بِيَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴾

(70:26) and who 'firmly' believe in the Day of Judgment;¹⁷

17. "Who believe in the Day of Recompense": Who do not think they are irresponsible but believe that one Day they will have to appear before their God and render to Him an account of their deeds.

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابِ رَبِّهِمْ مُّشْفِقُونَ ﴾

(70:27) and those who fear the punishment of their Lord—¹⁸



18. In other words, they are not like the disbelievers, who do not fear God even after they have committed every heinous sin and crime and perpetrated every cruelty in the world, but they, in spite of having adopted a righteous attitude in morals and deeds as best as they could, fear God and continue to remain in constant awe lest their shortcomings should exceed their good works before Him and they should be declared as worthy of punishment.

﴿ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّهِمْ غَيْرُ مَأْمُونٍ ﴾

(70:28) 'knowing that' none should feel secure from their Lord's punishment—

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَفْوَاجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ ﴾

(70:29) and those who guard their chastity¹⁹

19. "Who guard their private parts": Who abstain from adultery as well as from nudity and exposing their private parts before others.

﴿ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ﴾

(70:30) except with their wives or those 'bondwomen' in their possession,²⁰ for then they are free from blame,

20. A bondwoman is a female slave that a man owned either through purchase or taking her captive in war—a common ancient practice in many parts of the world. Islam opened the door for ending slavery by making it an act of charity to free slaves. Many sins (such as breaking one's oath, unintentional killing, and intercourse with one's wife during the day of fasting in Ramaḍân) can be atoned by freeing a slave. According to Islamic teachings, no free person can be enslaved. Islam also improved the condition of slaves. It was unlawful to separate a mother from her child. Children born to a slave-master were deemed free, and their mother would gain her freedom upon the death of her master. With regards to slaves, Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) says,

“Feed them from what you eat, clothe them from what you wear, and do not overwhelm them with work unless you assist them.” He (ﷺ) also says, “Whoever kills his slave will be killed and whoever injures his slave will be injured.” In recent times, slavery has been outlawed in all countries—including the Muslim world.

﴿فَمَنْ أَتَعَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ﴾

(70:31) but whoever seeks beyond that are the transgressors.

﴿وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمْتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ﴾

(70:32) ‘The faithful are’ also those who are true to their trusts and covenants;²¹

21. “Trusts” imply those trusts which Allah has entrusted to men as well as those which one man entrusts to another because of faith and confidence. Likewise, “covenants/promises” imply those promises which man makes with his God as well as those which one man makes with another. Keeping and fulfilling both these kinds of trusts and promises is a necessary characteristic of a believer. In a Hadith Anas has reported that whenever the Prophet (peace be upon him) addressed his companions, he would always give them the instruction: *Beware, the one who does not keep his trust has no faith, and one who does not fulfill his pledges, has no religion.* (Baihaqi, *Shu’ab al-Iman*).

﴿وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِشَهَادَاتِهِمْ قَائِمُونَ﴾

(70:33) and who are honest in their testimony;²²

22. That is, they neither conceal evidence nor change it in any way for selfish motives.

﴿وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ﴾

(70:34) and who are ‘properly’ observant of their prayers.²³

23. This gives an idea of the importance of the Prayer (*salat*). The description of the merits of the high and sublime character of those who have been declared as worthy of Paradise, began with the Prayer and has been concluded with it. To be a performer of the Prayer is their first characteristic, to be steadfast and ever constant with regard to the Prayer is their second characteristic, and to guard their Prayer is their last characteristic. Guarding the Prayer implies many things: to perform the Prayer at its right time, to make sure before the Prayer that one's body and clothes are clean and pure, to have performed the ablutions and to have washed the limbs well, to perform the basic elements of the Prayer with its obligatory and desirable parts with due care and attention, to observe the requisite rites of the Prayer carefully, to avoid disobedience of God, which is destructive of the Prayer. All these are included in the guarding of the Prayer.

﴿أُولَئِكَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ مُّكْرَمُونَ﴾

(70:35) These will be in Gardens, held in honour.

Ayaat 36-44 — Does Every Man Hope to Enter Paradise?

﴿فَمَالِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا قِبَلَكَ مُهْطِعِينَ﴾

(70:36) So what is the matter with the disbelievers that they rush 'head-long' towards you 'O Prophet',

﴿عَنِ الِّيمِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ عَرِيْنَ﴾

(70:37) from the right and the left, in groups 'to mock you'?²⁴

24. This refers to those disbelievers who would rush in towards the Prophet (peace be upon him) from every side to mock and ridicule him when they heard him preach Islam and recite the Qur'an. Some Meccan pagans used to gather around the Prophet

(ﷺ) to mock him and the believers, saying that if there is in fact a Hereafter, they are better entitled to Paradise than the poor believers.

(أَيَطْمَعُ كُلُّ أُمَّرٍ مِّنْهُمْ أَنْ يُدْخَلَ جَنَّةَ نَعِيمٍ)

(70:38) Does every one of them expect to be admitted into a Garden of Bliss?²⁵

25. It means that God's Paradise is only for those righteous people whose characteristics have just been described above. Now, can these people who are not at all inclined to listen to the truth and who are rushing in towards the Prophet (peace be upon him) in order to suppress every invitation to the truth, be the candidates for Paradise? Has God prepared His Paradise only for such people as these. Here again, one should also keep in view (verses 34-41 of Surah Al-Qalam) in which an answer has been given to this saying of the disbelievers of Makkah: Even if there is any life after death, we shall have good time there too, as we are having in the world, and the torment would befall Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his followers and not us.

(كَلَّا إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُمْ مِمَّا يَعْلَمُونَ)

(70:39) But no! Indeed, they 'already' know what We created them from.²⁶

26. Here, this sentence can have two meanings:

(1) If it is taken to be related to the preceding theme, it will mean: As for the substance these people have been created from, all men are equal. For if the substance itself be the cause of man's entry into Paradise, then the good and the bad, the wicked and the just, the guilty and the innocent, all should go to Paradise. But a little common sense is enough to decide that man's qualifications for Paradise are created not on the basis of the substance of his creation but only on the basis of his merit and excellence.

(2) If this sentence is regarded as an introduction to the following theme, it would mean: These people think they are secure from Our torment and mock the one who warns them of Our punishment, whereas We can punish them even in this world as and when We please, as well as resurrect them after death as and when We like. They themselves know that We began their creation from a humble fluid, an insignificant sperm-drop and developed them into a living man. If they had only considered this mode of their creation, they would never have been involved in the misunderstanding that they now have escaped Our grasp, or that We have no power to create them over again.

(فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِرَبِّ الْمَشَارِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ إِنَّا لَقَادِرُونَ)

(70:40) So, I do swear²⁷ by the Lord of 'all' the points of sunrise and sunset²⁸ that We are truly capable

27. That is, the truth is not that which these people think it is.

28. Here, Allah has sworn an oath by Himself. The words Easts and Wests have been used because the sun rises and sets at a new angle every day during the year, and goes on rising and setting successively at different times around the globe. Thus considered the Easts and the Wests are not one but many. From another point of view as against the north and the south there is a direction of east and a direction of west. From still another view-point the earth has two easts and two wests, for when the sun sets on one hemisphere, it rises on the other. On this basis the words *Rabb-ul-mashriqayn wa Rabb-ulmaghribayn* (Lord of two easts and two wests) have been used in (Surah Ar-Rahman, Ayat 17).

(عَلَىٰ أَنْ نُبَدِّلَ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْبُوقِينَ)

(70:41) of replacing them with 'others' better than them, and We cannot be prevented 'from doing so'.²⁹

29. This is that for which Allah Almighty has sworn an oath of His being Lord of the Easts and Wests. It means: As We are Owners of the Easts and Wests, the whole earth is under Our control and power, and you have no power to escape Our punishment: We can destroy you as and when We like and can create another people that may be better than you.

﴿ فَذَرَهُمْ يَخُوضُوا وَيَلْعَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يُلَاقُوا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِي يُوْعَدُونَ ﴾

(70:42) So let them indulge 'in falsehood' and amuse 'themselves' until they face their Day, which they have been threatened with—

﴿ يَوْمَ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ سِرَاعًا كَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ نُصُبٍ يُوفِضُونَ ﴾

(70:43) the Day they will come forth from the graves swiftly, as if racing to an idol 'for a blessing',³⁰

30. There is a difference of opinion among the commentators about the meaning of the word *nusub*. Some have interpreted it to mean idols, according to which the meaning would be: They would be racing towards the place appointed by the Lord of Resurrection as they race today towards the shrines of their idols; and some others have taken *nusub* to mean the goal signs which are set for the competitors in a race, so that each tries to reach and touch the appointed post before the other.

﴿ خَاشِعَةً أَبْصَارُهُمْ تَرْهُفُهُمْ ذِلَّةً ذَلِكُ الْيَوْمِ الَّذِي كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ ﴾

(70:44) with eyes downcast, utterly covered with disgrace. That is the Day they have 'always' been warned of.

Discussion:

1. What is 'sabrun jameel' mentioned at the beginning of surah al-Ma'arij?
2. How this surah explains the Humans as being Impatient?

TAFSEER OF SURAH NUH (No. 71)

Name

"Nuh" is the name of this Surah as well as the title of its subject matter, for in it, from beginning to the end, the story of the Prophet Noah has been related.

Period of Revelation

This also is one of the earliest Surahs to be revealed at Makkah, but the internal evidence of its subject matter shows that it was sent down in the period when opposition to the Prophet's message of Islam by the disbelievers of Makkah had grown very strong and active.

Theme and Subject Matter

In this surah the story of the Prophet Noah has not been related only for the sake of story telling, but its object is to warn the disbelievers of Makkah, so as to say: "You, O people of Makkah, are adopting towards Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) the same attitude as the people of the Prophet Noah had adopted towards him; if you do not change this attitude, you too would meet with the same end." This had not been said in so many words anywhere in the Surah, but in the background of the conditions under which this story was narrated to the people of Makkah, this subject itself became obvious.

Tafseer of Surah Nuh (Noah) – 28 Ayats

Ayaat 1-4 — Prophet Nuh's Invitation to His People

(إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ أَنْ أَنْذِرْ قَوْمَكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ)

(71:1) Indeed, We sent Noah to his people 'saying to him', "Warn your people before a painful punishment comes to them."¹

1. “Warn your people”: Warn them that the errors and moral evils that they were involved in would only earn them Allah’s punishment if they did not desist from them, and tell them what way they should adopt in order to ward off that punishment.

﴿ قَالَ يَقَوْمِ إِنِّي لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴾

(71:2) Noah proclaimed, “O my people! I am truly sent to you with a clear warning:

﴿ أَنْ أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاتَّقُوهُ وَأَطِيعُونَ ﴾

(71:3) worship Allah ‘alone’, fear Him, and obey me.²

2. The three things which the Prophet Noah presented before his people at the outset of his mission of Prophethood were:

- (1) Worship of Allah.
- (2) Adoption of piety (*taqwa*).
- (3) Obedience of the Messenger.

Worship of Allah meant that they should give up worship and service of all others and should acknowledge Allah alone as their Deity and should worship and carry out His commands alone. *Taqwa* (piety) meant that they should refrain from all those works which caused Allah’s anger and displeasure, and should instead adopt such attitude in their lives as the God fearing people should adopt. As for “obey me”, it meant that they should obey the commands that he gave them as Allah’s Messenger.

﴿ يَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُؤَخِّرْكُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ إِنَّ أَجَلَ اللَّهِ إِذَا جَاءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

(71:4) He will forgive your sins,³ and delay your end until the appointed time.⁴ Indeed, when the time set by Allah comes, it cannot be delayed,⁵ if only you knew!”⁶



3. The sentence *yaghfir la-kum min dhunub-i-kum* in the original does not mean that Allah will forgive some of their sins, but its correct meaning is: If you accept and acknowledge the three things which are being presented before you, He will forgive all the sins that you have committed in the past.

4. That is, if you accepted these three things, you would be given respite to live in the world until the time that Allah has appointed for your natural death. Meaning, it is out of Allah's mercy that He does not hasten your punishment but allows you more time to repent.

5. "A term appointed": The time fixed by Allah for sending down a torment on a people. In this regard the Qur'an has at several places stated explicitly that when Allah's torment has been decreed for a certain people, they are not pardoned even if they affirm the faith after it.

6. That is, if you come to know that the time which is now passing after you have received Allah's message through me is, in fact, a period of respite that has been granted to you for affirming the faith and there is no chance of escape from Allah's torment after the term of respite has elapsed, you would testify to the faith without delay and would not like to postpone it until the torment actually started descending on you.

Ayaat 5-20 — Prophet Nuh Complains about His Encounter with His People

﴿ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُ قَوْمِي لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا ﴾

(71:5) He cried,⁷ "My Lord! I have surely called my people day and night,

7. Omitting the history of a long period of preaching, now the Prophet Noah's petition that he made to Allah in the last stage of his worldly mission is being related.

﴿ فَلَمْ يَزِدْهُمْ دُعَائِي إِلَّا فِرَارًا ﴾





(71:6) but my calls only made them run farther away.⁸

8. That is, as I went on calling them towards You, they went on fleeing farther and farther away from You.

﴿ وَإِنِّي كُلَّمَا دَعَوْتُهُمْ لِتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ جَعَلُوا أَصْلَابَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ وَأَسْتَغْشَوْا ثِيَابَهُمْ وَأَصْرُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا اسْتِكْبَارًا ﴾

(71:7) And whenever I invite them to be forgiven by You,⁹ they press their fingers into their ears, cover themselves with their clothes,¹⁰ persist 'in denial', and act very arrogantly.¹¹

9. "That you may forgive them": That they might give up their attitude of disobedience and beg forgiveness of Allah, for in that way alone they could be forgiven by Allah.

10. They covered their faces either because they did not even like to have a look at Prophet Noah's (peace be upon him) face, not to speak of listening to what he said, or they did so in order to hide their own faces from him as they passed by him so that he could not recognize and address them. This precisely was the attitude and conduct which the disbelievers of Makkah were adopting towards the Prophet (peace be upon him). In (Surah Houd, Ayah 5), their attitude has been described thus: *Behold, they turn aside their chests in order to hide themselves from him: Beware, even when they cover themselves up with their garments, Allah knows alike what they hide and what they show. He indeed knows even the secrets they conceal in their breasts.*

11. Arrogance implies that they thought it was below their dignity to bow before the truth and accept the admonition of Allah's Messenger. As for example, if a gentleman admonishes a perverted person and he, in response, shakes his head and walks away haughtily, this would amount to rejecting the admonition with arrogance.



﴿ ثُمَّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُهُمْ جَهْرًا ﴾

(71:8) Then I certainly called them openly,

﴿ ثُمَّ إِنِّي أَعْلَنْتُ لَهُمْ وَأَسْرَرْتُ لَهُمْ إِسْرَارًا ﴾

(71:9) then I surely preached to them publicly and privately,

﴿ فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا ﴾

(71:10) saying, ‘Seek your Lord’s forgiveness, ‘for’ He is truly Most Forgiving.

﴿ يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا ﴾

(71:11) He will shower you with abundant rain,

﴿ وَيُمِدِّدْكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ أَنْهَارًا ﴾

(71:12) supply you with wealth and children, and give you gardens as well as rivers.¹²

12. This theme has been expressed at several places in the Qur’an that the rebellious attitude against God causes man to lead a wretched life not only in the Hereafter but also in this world. Contrary to this, if a nation adopts the way of faith and piety and obedience to divine commands, instead of disobedience, it benefits it not only in the Hereafter but also in the world; it is favored with every kind of blessing.

Acting on this same instruction from the Qur’an, once during a famine Umar came out to invoke Allah for the rain and begged only forgiveness of Him. The people said: O commander of the faithful, you have not prayed for the rain. He replied: *I have knocked at the doors of heaven wherefrom the rain is sent down, and then he recited these verses of Surah Nooh to them* (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

﴿ مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا ﴾



(71:13) What is the matter with you that you are not in awe of the Majesty of Allah,¹³

13. It means: as for the petty chiefs of the world, you think it would be dangerous to do anything against their dignity, but as for the Creator and Lord of the universe, you do not expect that He would also be a Being endowed with dignity. You rebel against Him, associate others in His Divinity, disobey His commands, and yet you are not at all afraid that He would punish you for your misconduct.

(وَقَدْ خَلَقَكُمْ أَطْوَارًا)

(71:14) when He truly created you in stages 'of development'?¹⁴

14. That is, He has brought you to the present stage after passing you through different stages of creation and phases of development. In the beginning you lay in the form of sperm and ovum separately in the loins of your father and mother. Then the two were combined by the power of Allah and you were conceived. Then for nine months in the womb of the mother you were gradually formed into a perfect human form and were endowed with all those capabilities which you needed to function as a man in the world. Then you came out as a child from the mother's womb, and you were developed from one state to another constantly until you attained to full youth and then old age. While passing through all these stages you lay wholly in the power of Allah at all times. Had He so willed, He would not have allowed you to be conceived but allowed another person to be conceived in your place. Had He so pleased, He would have made you blind, deaf, dumb, or a cripple in the mother's womb itself, or made you mentally deficient. Had He so liked, you would not have been born as a living child. Even after your birth He could have destroyed you any time by causing you to fall a victim to one or other accident suddenly. About that God under Whose power you are so powerless, how could you



have taken it into your head that you could commit any insolence against Him, could regard Him with every treachery and ingratitude, could rebel against Him as and when you pleased, and could do all this with impunity?

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَوْا كَيْفَ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا ﴾

(71:15) Do you not see how Allah created seven heavens, one above the other,

﴿ وَجَعَلَ الْقَمَرَ فِيهِنَّ نُورًا وَجَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ سِرَاجًا ﴾

(71:16) placing the moon within them as a 'reflected' light, and the sun as a 'radiant' lamp?

﴿ وَاللَّهُ أَنْبَتَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ نَبَاتًا ﴾

(71:17) Allah 'alone' caused you to grow from the earth like a plant.¹⁵

15. I.e., your father Adam, who was created from clay. Here, the creation of man out of the substances of the earth has been compared to the growth of vegetation. Just as at one time there was no vegetation on the earth, then Allah caused it to grow, so at one time man did not exist, then Allah created him.

﴿ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُكُمْ فِيهَا وَيُخْرِجُكُمْ إِخْرَاجًا ﴾

(71:18) Then He will return you to it, and then simply bring you forth 'again'.

﴿ وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الْأَرْضَ بِسَاطًا ﴾

(71:19) And Allah 'alone' spread out the earth for you

﴿ لَتَسْلُكُوا مِنْهَا سُبُلًا فِجَاجًا ﴾

(71:20) to walk along its spacious pathways.'"

Ayaat 21-24 — Prophet Nuh Complains about His People's Response

﴿ قَالَ نُوحُ رَبِّ إِنَّهُمْ عَصَوْنِي وَاتَّبَعُوا مَنْ لَمْ يَزِدْهُ مَالَهُ وَوَلَدَهُ إِلَّا خَسَارًا ﴾

(71:21) 'Eventually,' Noah cried, "My Lord! They have certainly persisted in disobeying me, and followed 'instead' those 'elite' whose 'abundant' wealth and children only increase them in loss,

(وَمَكَرُوا مَكْرًا كَبِيرًا)

(71:22) and who have devised a tremendous plot,¹⁶

16. "Mighty plot": All those deceits, deceptions and frauds which the chiefs and religious guides were employing in an attempt to mislead the common people against the teachings of the Prophet Noah. For example, they said: *Noah is no more than a mere man like yourselves. How can one believe that Allah sends down Revelations to him?* (Surah Al-Aaraf, Ayat 63); (Surah Hud, Ayat 27) *We also see that only the meanest of us have become his followers without due thought. Had there been some weight in what he says, the elders of the people would have believed in him* (Surah Hud, Ayat 27). *Had Allah willed, He would have sent down angels* (Surah Al-Mu'minin, Ayat 24). *Had he been sent by Allah, he would possess treasures, he would know the unseen, and he would be free from all human needs, like the angels* (Surah Houd, Ayat 31). *We find nothing in him that might give him superiority over us* (Surah Hud, Ayat 27). *He merely intends to obtain superiority over you* (Surah Al-Mu'minin, Ayat 24). *Obviously, this man is possessed* (Surah Al-Mu'minin, Ayat 25). Similar were the things that the Quraish chiefs said to mislead the people against the Prophet (peace be upon him).

(وَقَالُوا لَا تَدْرُنَّ ءَالِهَتَكُمْ وَلَا تَذَرُنَّ وَدًّا وَلَا سُوَاعًا وَلَا يَغُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ وَنَسْرًا)

(71:23) urging 'their followers', 'Do not abandon your idols—especially Wadd, Suwâ', Yaghûth, Ya'ûq, and Nasr.'¹⁷

17. Of the gods of the Prophet Noah's people only those gods have been mentioned whom later the people of Arabia had also started worshipping and whose shrines

were found all over the country at the advent of Islam. It is not impossible that the later generations heard the names of the ancient gods of Noah's people from the people who were saved from the flood, and when ignorance once again spread among their children, they made idols of the same gods and started worshipping them again.

﴿ وَقَدْ أَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا ضَلَالًا ﴾

(71:24) Those 'elite' have already led many astray. So 'O Lord', only allow the wrongdoers to stray farther away.'¹⁸

18. The Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) did not invoke this curse out of impatience but he invoked it when, after doing full justice to the preaching of his mission for many centuries, he became totally despaired of any success with his people. Similar were the conditions under which the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) had also cursed Pharaoh and his people, thus: *Lord, destroy their wealth and harden their hearts in a manner so that they do not believe until they see the painful torment.* And Allah, in response, had said: *The prayer of you both has been granted* (Surah Yunus, Ayats 88-89). Like the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him), the Prophet Noah's (peace be upon him) curse was also in complete conformity with divine will. Thus, in Surah Hud, it has been said: *And it was revealed to Noah (peace be upon him): No more of your people will believe in you now than those who have already believed. So, do not grieve at their misdeeds* (verse 36).

﴿ مِمَّا خَطَبْتَهُمْ أَغْرَقُوا فَأَدْخَلُوا نَارًا فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْصَارًا ﴾

(71:25) So because of their sins, they were drowned, then admitted into the Fire.¹⁹ And they found none to help them against Allah.²⁰

19. That is, drowning was not their end, but after death their souls were immediately subjected to the punishment of the Fire. This precisely was the treatment that was



meted out to Pharaoh and his people, as has been stated in (Surah Al-Mu'min, Ayats 45-46). This verse also is of those verses which prove the punishment of *Barzakh* (intermediary stage between death and Resurrection).

20. That is, none of the gods whom they looked upon as their supporters and helpers came to their rescue. This, in fact, was a warning to the people of Makkah, as if to say: If you too are subjected to the torment of Allah, these gods on whom you have placed all your reliance, will avail you absolutely nothing.

Ayaat 26-28 — Prophet Nuh's Supplication against His People

﴿ وَقَالَ نُوحٌ رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ دَيَّارًا ﴾

(71:26) Noah had prayed, “My Lord! Do not leave a single disbeliever on earth.

﴿ إِنَّكَ إِنْ تَذَرَهُمْ يُضِلُّوا عِبَادَكَ وَلَا يَلِدُوا إِلَّا فَاجِرًا كَفَّارًا ﴾

(71:27) or if You spare ‘any of’ them, they will certainly mislead Your servants, and give birth only to ‘wicked’ sinners, staunch disbelievers.

﴿ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِمَنْ دَخَلَ بَيْتِي مُؤْمِنًا وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا تَبَارًا ﴾

(71:28) My Lord! Forgive me, my parents, and whoever enters my house in faith, and ‘all’ believing men and women. And increase the wrongdoers only in destruction.”²¹

21. In *ayaat* 21-24, Prophet Nuh shares his utter disappointment about his people with Allah. And invokes Him to send His punishment because he tried for 950 years but they did not budge. This reveals to us the amount of patience that Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* and a Prophet have for people. They remained adamant in their stubbornness but he continued to preach for nine centuries until he had enough.





When no chance of their acceptance or coming to the Right Path was left, eventually Allah's punishment descended and they were wiped out.

The Surah ends with Prophet Nuh's *du'a* against his people and forgiveness for himself and his parents and the believing men and women.

Prophet Nuh asked Allah to not leave a single soul on earth because they will further mislead other people and give birth to wicked and disbelieving ones. He said this because he had lived among them for nine hundred and fifty years and knew them well. Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* answered his prayer and destroyed all who were unbelievers including Prophet Nuh's biological son who refused to accept the Message that his father had brought.

Allah saved the people of the ship who believed with Nuh *'alayhi salaam*, and they were those whom Allah had commanded him to carry with him.

Prophet Nuh supplicated for his and his parents' forgiveness and everyone who entered his house. He also prayed for the believing men and women. Ibn Katheer writes that this includes those of them who were living and those of them who were dead. Here, we learn another tip. When we are making *du'a* sometimes in our anger we pray against someone and leave out to ask any goodness from Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*. Prophet Nuh *'alayhi salaam* was angry at his people because he tried a lot to help them save themselves but they were rebellious. Out of despair he prayed against them but he did not forget the righteous believing servants of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* as well as his own parents.

Discussion:

1. Explain the Theme and Subject Matter of surah Nuh.
2. Explain Prophet Nuh's Complaint and Supplication against His People.



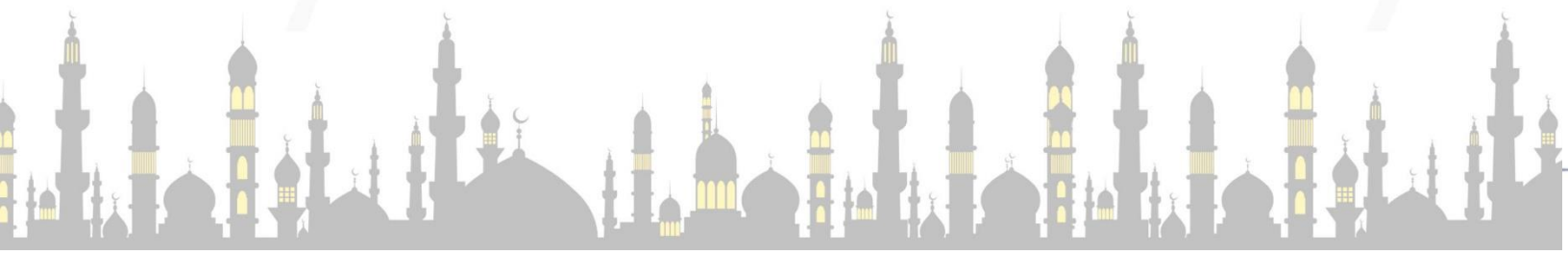
TAFSEER

CURRICULUM

Second

Hizb

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy



TAFSEER OF SURAH AL-JINN (No. 72)

Name

"*Al-Jinn*" is the name of this Surah as well as the title of its subject matter, for in it the event of the Jinn's hearing the Qur'an and returning to their people to preach Islam to them, has been related in detail.

Period of Revelation

About this Surah it has been recorded in Saheeh Bukhari and Muslim, on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas that once the Prophet *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* was visiting the Fair of Ukaz with some of his Companions *radhiAllahu 'anhum* when the time for Fajr arrived, the Prophet *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* led the prayer. This was a moment when a company of jinns was passing by. When they heard the recitation of the Qur'an, they tarried and listened to it attentively. This very event has been described in this Surah.

Theme and Subject Matter

The Qur'an was revealed for the guidance of mankind. We read this Book every day, once a month or at least once in a lifetime but we do not consider it a major thing. Our reading is more like that of a habit. By revealing this Surah, Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* gives a jolt to mankind that: You take this Book for granted, look at the impact it had on My another creation.

Tafseer of Surah Al-Jinn (The Jinn) – 28 Ayats

Ayaat 1-5 — The Jinns listening to the Qur'an and their Belief in it

(قُلْ أَوْحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّهُ اسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْءَانًا عَجَبًا)



(72:1) Say, 'O Prophet,' "It has been revealed to me that a group of jinn listened to the Qur'an," and said to their fellow jinn':¹ 'Indeed, we have heard a wondrous recitation.'²

1. This shows that the jinn at that time were not visible to the Prophet (peace be upon him), nor he knew that they were hearing the Qur'an being recited, but Allah informed him of the incident afterwards by revelation. Abdullah bin Abbas has also, in connection with this incident, stated: The Messenger (peace be upon him) of Allah had not recited the Qur'an before the jinn, nor did he see them. (Muslim, Tirmidhi, Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Jarir).

2. The words in the original are: *Qur'an-an-ajaba*, which means "something which is read again and again", and the jinn probably used this word in this very meaning, for they were introduced to this divine revelation for the first time, and they did not perhaps know then that what they were hearing, was the Qur'an itself. *Ajab* is a superlative, which is used in Arabic for a wonderful thing. So, what the jinn said means: We have heard such a wonderful recital which is unique both in its language and in its subject-matter.

This also shows that the jinn not only hear what human beings say but also understand their language, although it is not necessary that all the jinn might know all the human languages. It is possible that those of them who live in a particular region of the earth might know the language of the people of that region. But in any case this statement of the Qur'an clearly shows that the jinn who listened to the Qur'an at that time were so conversant with the Arabic language that they not only appreciated the matchless eloquence of the divine word but also understood its sublime subject-matter.

(يَهْدِي إِلَى الرُّشْدِ فَآمَنَّا بِهِ وَلَنْ نُشْرِكَ بِرَبِّنَا أَحَدًا)





(72:2) It leads to Right Guidance so we believed in it, and we will never associate anyone with our Lord 'in worship'.³

3. This throws light on several things:

- (1) That the jinn do not deny Allah's existence and His being Lord and Sustainer.
- (2) That among them there are polytheists also, who like polytheistic human beings ascribe divinity to others than Allah: thus, the community of the jinn whose members heard the Qur'an was polytheistic.
- (3) That the Prophethood and revelation of divine scriptures does not exist among the jinn, but whoever of them believe, they believe in the Prophets raised among human beings and in the Books brought by them. This same thing is confirmed by (Surah Al-Ahqaf, Ayats 29-30), where it has been stated that the jinn who had then heard the Qur'an, were from among the followers of the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him), and they after having heard the Qur'an, had invited their people to believe in the revelation that had been sent down by God confirming the previous scriptures. Surah Ar-Rahman also points to the same, for its whole subject-matter shows that the audience of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) invitation are both the men and the jinn.

﴿وَأَنَّهُ تَعَالَىٰ جَدُّ رَبِّنَا مَا اتَّخَذَ صَاحِبَةً وَلَا وَلَدًا﴾

(72:3) 'Now, we believe that' our Lord—Exalted is His Majesty—has neither taken a mate nor offspring,⁴

4. From this we know two things:

- (1) That these jinn were either from among the Christian jinn, or they were followers of a different religion in which Allah was regarded as having children and families.



(2) That at that time the Prophet (peace be upon him) was reciting some such part of the Qur'an hearing which they realized the error of their creed and knew that it was sheer ignorance and impudence to ascribe wife and children to the High and Exalted Being of Allah.

(وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ يَفْقُونَ سَفِيهِنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ شَطَطًا)

(72:4) and that the foolish of us⁵ used to utter 'outrageous' falsehoods about Allah.

5. The word *safihuna* as used in the text can be spoken for an individual as well as for a group. If it is taken for a foolish individual, it would imply Iblis and if for a group, it would imply a group of foolish jinn who said such things. Or, evil jinn tempted some pagan Arabs to believe that the angels are Allah's daughters through female jinn.

(وَأَنَا ظَنْنَا أَنْ لَنْ تَقُولَ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا)

(72:5) We certainly thought that humans and jinn would never speak lies about Allah.⁶

6. That is, we were misled by those falsehoods because we could never think that the men or the jinn could ever dare forge a lie about Allah, but having heard this Qur'an we now know that they were, in fact, liars.

Ayaat 6-7 — Man Seeking Protection from the Jinns

(وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ يَعُوذُونَ بِرِجَالٍ مِنَ الْجِنِّ فَزَادُوهُمْ رَهَقًا)

(72:6) And some men used to seek refuge with some jinn—so they increased each other in wickedness.¹



7. Ibn Abbas says that in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance when the Arabs had to spend a night in some uninhabited, desolate valley, they would shout out: We seek refuge of the jinn, who is owner of this valley. In other traditions of the pre-Islamic ignorance also the same thing has been reported frequently. For example, if in a place they ran short of water and fodder, the wandering Bedouins would send one of their men to some other place to see if water and fodder were available; and when they reached the new site under his direction, they would shout out before they halted to pitch the camp: We seek refuge of the sustainer of this valley so that we may live here in peace from every calamity. They believed that every un-inhabited place was under the control of one or another jinn and if someone stayed there without seeking his refuge, the jinn would either himself trouble the settlers, or would let others trouble them. These believing jinn are referring to this very thing. They meant that when man, the vicegerent of the earth, started fearing them without any reason, and started seeking their refuge instead of God's, it caused their people to become even more arrogant, haughty and wicked, and they became even more fearless and bold in adopting error and disbelief. Furthermore, the jinn helped humans with magic, while the jinn had a feeling of importance when they had a human following.

﴿ وَأَنَّهُمْ ظَنُّوا كَمَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَن لَّن يَبْعَثَ اللَّهُ أَحَدًا ﴾

(72:7) And those 'humans' thought, just like you 'jinn', that Allah would not resurrect anyone 'for judgment'.⁸

8. I.e. *Allah will not resurrect anyone after death.* As the words are comprehensive, they can be taken to mean that, as among human beings, so among the jinn were those who denied both the Prophethood and the Hereafter.

Another meaning of this sentence can be: “*that Allah would never raise anyone (as a Messenger)*”. In view of the theme that follows, this meaning could be preferable,



for according to it these believing jinn tell the people of their community: *Your view is proved wrong that Allah will not appoint anyone as a Messenger. In fact, the gates of heavens have been closed on us only because Allah has already appointed a Messenger.* That's because some jinn used to eavesdrop on the heaven, then pass on what they heard to fortune-tellers. They used to sit in the path of the angels to steal news from the heavens. But this practice came to an end once Muḥammad (ﷺ) was sent as a messenger with the Qur'an. When Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* decided to send His Messenger and reveal the Qur'an to him, He protected the communication of the Qur'an. That's the theme of the following ayats.

Ayaat 8-10 — Jinns Stealing Information and the Protection of the Qur'an

﴿ وَأَنَا لَمَسْنَا السَّمَاءَ فَوَجَدْنَاهَا مُلْتَأَتْ حَرَسًا شَدِيدًا وَشُهُبًا ﴾

(72:8) 'Earlier' we tried to reach heaven 'for news', only to find it filled with stern guards and shooting stars.

﴿ وَأَنَا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقَاعِدَ لِلسَّمْعِ فَمَنْ يَسْتَمِعِ الْآنَ يَجِدْ لَهُ شِهَابًا رَصَدًا ﴾

(72:9) We used to take up positions there for eavesdropping, but whoever dares eavesdrop now will find a flare lying in wait for them.⁹

9. This is the reason why these jinn were now out searching as to what particularly had happened or was going to happen on the earth, which had necessitated strict security measures against eavesdropping so that they were driven away from wherever they tried to eavesdrop in any way.

﴿ وَأَنَا لَا نَدْرِي أَشَرٌّ أُرِيدُ بِمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا ﴾

(72:10) Now, we have no clue whether evil is intended for those on earth, or their Lord intends for them what is right.¹⁰



10. This shows that such extraordinary measures were adopted in the heavens only on two kinds of occasions. First, when Allah might decide to inflict the dwellers of the earth with a torment, and the divine will might be that before it was actually inflicted the jinn might not know and convey its news to warn their friendly human beings of the impending disaster. Second, that Allah might appoint a Messenger on the earth, and strict security measures might be adopted so that neither the messages being conveyed to him be interfered with by the satans nor should they be able to know beforehand what instructions were being given to the Messenger. Thus, the saying of the jinn means: *When we noticed that strict security measures had been adopted in the heavens for the safeguard of the news, and the meteorites were being showered profusely, we wanted to know which of the two things had happened: Whether Allah had caused a torment to descend suddenly on some people of the earth, or a Messenger had been raised somewhere on the earth. We were on the lookout for the same when we heard the wonderful revelation, which guides to the right path, and we came to know that Allah had not sent down a torment but had raised a Messenger to show the right way to the people.*

Ayaat 11-13 — Jinns Testify that among Them are Believers and Unbelievers, the Guided and the Misguided

(وَأَنَا مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ وَمِنَّا دُونَ ذَلِكَ كُنَّا طَرَائِقَ قِدْدًا)

(72:11) Among us are those who are righteous and those who are less so. We have been of different factions.¹¹

11. That is, morally there are also good and bad jinn among us, and from the viewpoint of creed as well, all do not follow one and the same religion, but we are divided into different groups. With these words the believing jinn want to convince



the other jinn of their community that they certainly stood in need of finding out the right way and could not dispense with this need.

﴿وَأَنَا ظَنَنَّا أَنْ لَنْ نُعْجِزَ اللَّهَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَنْ نُعْجِزَهُ هَرَبًا﴾

(72:12) 'Now,' we truly know that we cannot frustrate Allah on earth, nor can we escape from Him 'into heaven'.¹²

12. That is, we were led by this very idea to the way of success. As we were not fearless of Allah and we believed that we would not be able to avoid His punishment if we disobeyed Him. So when we heard the divine revelation that had been sent to show the right way, we could not have the courage and boldness to persist in the beliefs that our foolish people had spread among us after we have known the truth.

﴿وَأَنَا لَمَّا سَمِعْنَا الْهُدَىٰ ءَامَنَّا بِهِ فَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِرَبِّهِ فَلَا يَخَافُ بَخْسًا وَلَا رَهَقًا﴾

(72:13) When we heard the guidance 'of the Qur'an', we 'readily' believed in it. For whoever believes in their Lord will have no fear of being denied 'a reward' or wronged.¹³

13. *Fear of deprivation*: Fear of being given a lesser reward than what one actually deserves for one's good deeds. *Injustice*: That one may be deprived of the reward for the good deeds done but duly punished for the errors committed or punished innocent; no believer has any fear of such an injustice from Allah.

Ayaat 14-16 — The Different Groups

﴿وَأَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَمِنَّا الْقَلَسِطُونَ فَمَنْ أَسْلَمَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ تَحَرَّوْا رَشَدًا﴾

(72:14) And among us are those who have submitted 'to Allah' (Muslims) and those who are deviant. So 'as for' those who submitted, it is they who have attained Right Guidance.

﴿وَأَمَّا أَلْقَسَطُونَ فَكَانُوا لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا﴾

(72:15) And as for the deviant, they will be fuel for Hell.”¹⁴

14. Here, one may ask: When, according to the Qur’an, the jinn have been created from the fire, what harm can the fire of Hell do them? The answer is: Even according to the Qur’an, man has been created out of the earth; why does then man feel hurt when a clod of earth is thrown at him? The truth is that although the whole body of man has been made from the earthly substances, when a living man of flesh and blood is molded from them he becomes an entirely different thing from those substances; then other things made from the same substances become a means of causing harm to him. Likewise, although the jinn have also been created from the fire, when a living and sentient creation has been made from it, the same fire becomes a means of causing harm and hurt for it.

﴿وَأَلَّوْا اسْتَقَامُوا عَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسْقِيَنَّهُمْ مَاءً غَدَقًا﴾

(72:16) Had¹⁵ the deniers followed the Right Way, We would have certainly granted them abundant rain to drink—¹⁶

15. The conversation of the jinn having come to an end, with this begins the speech of Allah.

16. This is the same thing as has been said in (Surah Nuh, Ayats 10-11). *Seek forgiveness of Allah. He will send abundant rains for you from heaven.* Abundance of water has been used for abundance of blessings metaphorically for human life, and habitations also depend on water. Without water there can be no human settlement, nor can man’s basic needs be fulfilled, nor his industries work and prosper.

Ayaat 17-20 — Remember Allah and Shun Shirk

﴿لَنُفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ وَمَنْ يُعْرِضْ عَن ذِكْرِ رَبِّهِ يَسْلُكْهُ عَذَابًا صَعَدًا﴾

(72:17) as a test for them.¹⁷ And whoever turns away from the remembrance of their Lord¹⁸ will be admitted by Him into an overwhelming punishment.

17. We might try them by that blessing: We might see whether they remain grateful after having received the blessing or not, and whether they put Our blessing to right use or not.

18. Turns away from the remembrance of his Lord, means that one may reject the advice and admonition sent down by Allah, or one may disdain giving ear to Allah's remembrance, or one may turn away from His worship.

﴿وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا﴾

(72:18) The places of worship (mosques) are 'only' for Allah, so do not invoke anyone besides Him.¹⁹

19. The commentators generally have taken *mosques* to mean the places of worship. Accordingly, the verse means: *None should be associated in the worship of Allah in the places of worship.* Hasan Basri says: 'The entire earth is a place of worship, and the verse means to say: Polytheism ought not to be committed anywhere on God's earth.' He has reasoned out this meaning from the Prophet's (peace be upon him) Hadith: "For me the entire earth has been made a place of worship and a means of obtaining purity." Saeed bin Jubair has interpreted *masajid* to imply the parts of the body on which one prostrates oneself, i.e. the hands, the knees, toes and forehead. According to this explanation, the verse means: *These limbs have been made by Allah; no one should prostrate oneself on these before anyone other than Allah.*

﴿وَأَنَّهُ لَمَّا قَامَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ يَدْعُوهُ كَادُوا يَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِ لِبَدًا﴾

(72:19) Yet when the servant of Allah²⁰ stood up calling upon Him 'alone', the pagans almost swarmed over him.

20. Servant of Allah: Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), peace be upon him.

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَدْعُوا رَبِّي وَلَا أُشْرِكُ بِهِ أَحَدًا ﴾

(72:20) Say, 'O Prophet,' "I call only upon my Lord, associating none with Him 'in worship'."²¹

21. That is, to call upon Allah is no objectionable thing, which may so provoke the people. The evil thing, however, is that one should associate another with Allah in His divinity, and this I never do; this is done by those who mob and surround me when they hear God mentioned by me.

Ayaat 21-24 — It is Only Obligatory on the Messenger to Convey the Message

﴿ قُلْ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا رَشَدًا ﴾

(72:21) Say, "It is not in my power to harm or benefit you (to bring you to the Right Way)."

﴿ قُلْ إِنِّي لَنْ يُجِيرَنِي مِنَ اللَّهِ أَحَدٌ وَلَنْ أَجِدَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مُنْتَحَدًا ﴾

(72:22) Say, "No one can protect me from Allah 'if I were to disobey Him', nor can I find any refuge other than Him.

﴿ إِلَّا بَلَاغًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِسَالَةً وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّ لَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا ﴾

(72:23) 'My duty is' only to convey 'the truth' from Allah and 'deliver' His messages."²² And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger will certainly be in the Fire of Hell, to stay there for ever and ever.²³

22. Meaning I am only a man like you all and a servant among the servants of Allah. I have no control over the affairs of your guidance or misguidance. The power to guide



or the power to misguide is with Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* only. I am only a Messenger and the mission that has been entrusted to me is no more than that I should convey the messages of Allah to you. Not to speak of benefiting or harming others, I do not have the power to cause good or harm even to myself. If I disobey Allah, I cannot seek and have refuge anywhere from His punishment, and I have no helper and protector beside Allah.

23. This does not mean that every sin and act of disobedience will cause one to live in Hell forever, but in view of the context in which this thing has been said, the verse means: the one who does not accept the invitation to Tawhid given by Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) and does not refrain from polytheism will suffer in Hell forever.

﴿ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا يُوعَدُونَ فَيَسْئَلُونَ مَنْ أَضَعَفَ نَاصِرًا وَأَقَلَّ عَدَدًا ﴾

(72:24) Only when they see what they have been threatened with will they know who is weaker in helpers and inferior in manpower.²⁴

24. The background of this verse is that those of the Quraish who used to mob and surround the Prophet (peace be upon him) as soon as they heard his invitation calling to Allah were under the delusion that they had a strong band at their back and that the Prophet (peace be upon him) had only a handful of men with him, and therefore, they would easily overwhelm him. At this it is being said: Today these people find the Messenger (peace be upon him) helpless and friendless and they themselves supported and strengthened by great hosts and, therefore, feel encouraged and emboldened to suppress the invitation to the truth. But when the evil time with which they are being threatened comes, they will know who in fact is helpless and friendless.

Ayaat 25-28 — The Messenger Does Not Know the Unseen



﴿ قُلْ إِنْ أَدْرِيٓ أَقْرِبُٓ مَا تُوعَدُونَ أَمْ يَجْعَلُ لَهُ رَبِّيٓ أَمَدًا ۖ ﴾

(72:25) Say, “I do not know if what you are promised is near or my Lord has set a distant time for it.²⁵

25. The style itself shows that this is an answer which has been given without citing the question. Probably, hearing what has been said above, the opponents might have asked mockingly and tauntingly: When will the time come with which you are threatening us. In response, the Prophet (peace be upon him) was commanded to say: The time will certainly come, but I have not been told the date of its coming. Allah alone knows whether it will come soon or whether a distant term has been set for it.

﴿ عَلَّمَ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا ۖ ﴾

(72:26) ‘He is the’ Knower of the unseen, disclosing none of it to anyone,²⁶

26. That is, the knowledge of the unseen entirely rests with Allah: He does not give the whole of this knowledge to anyone.

﴿ إِلَّا مَنْ أَرْتَضَىٰ مِنْ رَّسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُ يَسْتَلْكَ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ رَصَدًا ۖ ﴾

(72:27) except messengers of His choice.²⁷ Then He appoints angel-guards before and behind them²⁸

27. That is, the Messenger (peace be upon him) by himself is no knower of the unseen, but when Allah chooses him to perform the mission of Prophethood, He grants him the knowledge of those of the unseen truths which He is pleased to grant.

28. Guards: Angels, that is, when Allah sends down the knowledge of the unseen realities to the Messenger (peace be upon him) by revelation, He appoints angels on every side to safeguard it so that the knowledge reaches the Messenger in a safe condition, free from any kind of adulteration. This is the same thing which has been expressed in verses 8-9 above, saying: *After the appointment of the Messenger*



(peace be upon him) the jinn found that all the doors to the heavens had been closed, and they noticed that strict security measures had been adopted because of which no room had been left for them to eavesdrop.

﴿لَيَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ أَبْلَغُوا رَسُولَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَحَاطَ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ وَأَحْصَىٰ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عَدَدًا﴾

(72:28) to ensure that the messengers fully deliver the messages of their Lord²⁹—though He ‘already’ knows all about them, and keeps account of everything.”³⁰

29. This can have three meanings: (1) That the Messenger (peace be upon him) may know that the angels have delivered the messages of Allah to him precisely and accurately. (2) That Allah may know that the angels have conveyed the messages of their Lord to His Messenger (peace be upon him) precisely and accurately. (3) That Allah may know that the Messenger (peace be upon him) has conveyed the messages of his Lord to His servants precisely and accurately. The words of the verse are comprehensive and may possibly imply all the three meanings. Besides, the verse also points out two other things. First, that the Messenger (peace be upon him) is given that knowledge of the unseen which is necessary for him to perform his mission of Prophethood. Second, that the angels keep watch that the revelation reaches the Messenger (peace be upon him) safely and also that the Messenger (peace be upon him) conveys the messages of his Lord to His servants precisely and accurately.

30. That is, Allah’s power so encompasses the Messenger (peace be upon him) as well as the angels that if they swerve even a little from His will, they can be detected immediately. Moreover, a complete record has been kept of each letter of the messages sent down by Allah. The Messengers (peace be upon him) and the angels cannot dare add or subtract even a letter from them.



**Discussion:**

1. Explain the Theme and Subject Matter of surah al-Jinn.
2. How is it explained in this surah that is Only Obligatory on the Messenger to Convey the Message?



أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy





TAFSEER OF SURAH AL-MUZZAMMIL (No. 73)

Name

The Surah has been so designated after the word *al-muzzammil* (The Enshrouded One/Covered Up/Wrapped In Garments) occurring in the very first verse. This is only a name and not a title of its subject matter.

Period of Revelation

There is a difference of opinion regarding this Surah's revelation. The first nineteen *ayaat* are unanimously believed to be revealed in the Makkan period. However, the last *ayah* due to its subject matter and length is said to be revealed during the Madinan period because it calls for fighting in the way of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* and paying the obligatory Zakat. In Makkah, the Muslims were a minority hence there could be no command of fighting in the way of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* when the Muslims were only a handful, and it is fully confirmed that the *zakat* at a specific rate and with an exemption limit (*nisab*) was enjoined in Madinah.

Theme and Subject Matter

In the first seven *ayaat* the Prophet *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* has been commanded to prepare himself for the great mission entrusted to him. The Surah then lays down the steps to achieve this goal. The first step is to wake up at Tahajjud and recite the Qur'an in a slow, pleasant voice. Then, Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* commands the Prophet *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* and after him all the believers to patiently bear whatever adversities they may face in accomplishing their goal.





Ayaat 15-19 warn the people of Makkah – the opponents of Rasoolullah *salAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* that recall the fate of Fir’aun (Pharaoh). Prophet Musa (Moses) *‘alayhi salaam* was sent to him as a Messenger but Fir’aun denied him and then faced the consequences of his choice.

The Surah ends with a second reminder to stand up at night. This time the command is to recite the Qur’an as much as one easily can. This last ayah, according to a tradition from Sa'id bin Jubair, was sent down ten years later, and in it the initial Command given in connection with the Tahajjud Prayer, in the beginning of the first section, was curtailed. The new Command enjoined, "Offer as much of the Tahajjud Prayer as you easily can, but what the Muslims should particularly mind and attend to is the five times obligatory Prayer a day: they should establish it regularly and punctually; they should discharge their *zakat* dues accurately; and they should spend their wealth with sincere intentions for the sake of Allah.

Tafseer of Surah Al-Muzzammil (The Enshrouded One) – 20 Ayats

Ayaat 1-4 — Spend Your Night in Prayer with the Qur’an

(يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُزَّمِّلُ)

(73:1) O you wrapped 'in your clothes'!¹

1. To address the Prophet (peace be upon him) with these words and then to command him to rise and keep standing in the Prayer at night, shows that at the time he either lay asleep, or had wrapped himself up in a sheet in order to go to sleep. Here, to address him with: O you who sleeps wrapped up instead of with: O Prophet, or O Messenger, is a fine way of address, which by itself gives the meaning: Gone is the time when you used to enjoy peaceful sleep at will; now you lie under the burden of a great mission, whose demands and duties are different as well as onerous.



﴿ قُمْ اللَّيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴾

(73:2) Stand all night 'in prayer' except a little—²

2. This can have two meanings:

(1) Pass the night standing up in the Prayer and spend only a little of it in sleep.

(2) There is no demand from you to pass the whole night in the Prayer, but have rest as well and spend a little part of the night in worship too.

But in view of the theme that follows the first meaning seems to be more relevant, and the same is supported by (Surah Ad-Dahr, Ayat 26), in which it has been said: *Prostrate yourself before Him in the night and glorify Him during the long hours of night.*

﴿ نِصْفَهُ أَوْ أَنْقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا ﴾

(73:3) 'pray' half the night, or a little less,

﴿ أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا ﴾

(73:4) or a little more³—and recite the Qur'an 'properly' in a measured way.⁴

3. This is an explanation of the duration of time commanded to be spent in worship. In it the Prophet (peace be upon him) was given the option to spend half of the night in the Prayer, or a little less than that, or a little more than that. But the style shows that half the night has been regarded as preferable, for the measure is the same, which may be decreased or increased, as the people may like and choose.

4. Recite the Qur'an: Do not recite it quickly and in haste, but slowly and distinctly: pause at every verse so that the mind understands the meaning and purport of divine revelation well and takes effect from it. In short, the recital does not only consist in uttering the words with the tongue, but it should involve thoughtful consideration of



the meaning. When Anas was asked about the Prophet's (peace be upon him) method of reciting the Qur'an, he replied: *The Messenger (peace be upon him) stretched the words when reciting them. For example, when he recited Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Rahim, he would stretch and prolong the sound of Allah, Rahman and Rahim* (Bukhari). When Umm Salamah was asked the same question, she replied that the Prophet (peace be upon him) recited every verse separately and distinctly and observed a pause at the end of every verse. For instance, he recited *Al-hamdu-lillahi Rabbil-amin, and paused, then recited ar-Rahmanir-Rahim, and paused, and then recited Maliki-yawmid-din* (Musnad Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi). In another tradition, Umm Salamah has stated that *the Prophet (peace be upon him) recited each word distinctly and clearly* (Tirmidhi, Nasai).

Ayaat 5-9 — The Magnificence of the Qur'an

(إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا)

(73:5) 'For' We will soon send upon you a weighty revelation.⁵

5. That is, you are being commanded to stand up in the night Prayer because We are going to send down on you a weighty word, to bear the burden of which you must develop necessary power in yourself, and you can develop this power only by abandoning your ease and comfort of the night and by standing up in the Prayer and passing half the night or thereabout in the worship of your Lord. The Qur'an has also been called a weighty word for the reason that acting on its commands, demonstrating its teaching practically, extending its invitation in the face of the whole world, and bringing about a revolution in the entire system of belief and thought, morals and manners, civilization and social life, according to it, is indeed the weightiest task any human being ever has been charged with. It has also been called a weighty word because bearing the burden of its revelation was a difficult



and heavy duty. Zaid bin Thabit says: *Once revelation came down upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) in a state when he was resting his head upon my knee. I felt such a pressure of the weight on my knee that I thought it would break.* Aishah says: *I have seen the state of the Prophet's receiving revelation during intense cold, drops of perspiration started falling from his forehead* (Bukhari, Muslim, Malik, Tirmidhi, Nasai). In another tradition Aishah has stated: *Whenever revelation came down on the Prophet (peace be upon him) while he was riding on his she-camel, the she-camel would be forced to rest her chest on the ground and could not move until the revelation was over* (Musnad Ahmad, Hakim, Ibn Jarir).

(إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْأً وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلاً)

(73:6) Indeed, worship in the night⁶ is more impactful⁷ and suitable for recitation.⁸

6. Or: *Surely getting up at night is the best means of subduing the self and is more suitable for uprightness in speech.* About the meaning of the word *nashiat allail*, as used in the original, the commentators and lexicographers have expressed four different viewpoints: (1) That *nashiat* implies the person himself who rises at night. (2) That it implies the hours of night. (3) That it means the rising by night. (4) That it does not only apply to the rising in the night but rising after having had some sleep. Aishah and Mujahid have adopted this fourth viewpoint.

7. The word *ashaddu wat-an* as used in the text is so vast in meaning that it cannot be explained in any one sentence. Its one meaning is: As the rising for worship by night and standing up for a long time in the Prayer is against human nature and the self of man seeks ease and comfort at that time, this act is an exercise which is most effective in controlling and disciplining the self. The person who governs himself by this method and gains dominance over his body and mind becomes able to use his

power in the way of God, can work more efficiently and firmly to make the message of true faith prevail in the world. The second meaning is: This is a very effective means of producing harmony and concord between the heart and the tongue, for during these hours of the night none else intervenes between the servant and his God, and whatever man utters with his tongue in this state, is the very voice of his heart. The third meaning is: This is a very efficacious means of bringing about conformity between the exterior and the interior of man, for the person who in the solitude of the night would abandon his comfort and ease and arise for worship, would do so only out of sincerity: there can be no tinge of display and hypocrisy in this. The fourth meaning is: As this worship is harder on man than the worship of the daytime, it develops steadfastness in him: he is enabled to walk in the path of God more firmly and can face and endure the hardships of that way with greater constancy and determination.

8. Literally, *Makes the speech most upright and sound*. But the purport is to say that at that time man can read the Qur'an with greater peace of mind, attention and understanding. Ibn Abbas has explained it thus: *That it is the most suitable time for man to ponder over the Qur'an well* (Abu Dawud).

﴿ إِنَّ لَكَ فِي النَّهَارِ سَبْحًا طَوِيلًا ﴾

(73:7) For during the day you are over-occupied 'with worldly duties'.

﴿ وَادْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا ﴾

(73:8) 'Always' remember the Name of your Lord,⁹ and devote yourself to Him wholeheartedly.

9. After making mention of the occupation of the daytime, the exhortation to remember the name of your Lord by itself gives the meaning: Never be heedless of the remembrance of your Lord even when you are deeply involved in your worldly



occupations, and continue to commemorate His name in one way or another at all times.

﴿ رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا ﴾

(73:9) 'He is the' Lord of the east and the west. There is no god 'worthy of worship' except Him, so take Him 'alone' as a Trustee of Affairs.¹⁰

10. *Wakil* is a person in whom one has complete faith; so much so that one can entrust all his affairs to him with full satisfaction of the heart. Thus, the verse means: Do not feel distressed at the hardships that you are experiencing at the storm of opposition that has been provoked by your invitation to the faith. Your Lord is He Who is the Owner of the East and the West, (i.e. of the whole universe) besides Whom no one else possesses the powers of Divinity. Entrust your affair to Him and be satisfied that He will fight your case, He will deal with your opponents, and He will look after all your interests well.

Ayaat 10-14 — Be Patient and Keep Away from the Evil Doers

﴿ وَأَصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَأَهْجِرْهُمْ هَجْرًا جَمِيلًا ﴾

(73:10) Be patient 'O Prophet' with what they say, and depart from them courteously.¹¹

11. Depart from them does not mean break off all ties with them and stop preaching to them, but it means: Do not have intimate and friendly relations with them, disregard their foolish behavior and their nonsense. However, you should do so without showing any grief, anger or temper but gracefully like a noble person, who would disregard the abusive remarks of a mean person without minding them at all. This should not create the misunderstanding that the Prophet's (peace be upon him) conduct was any different from it, therefore, Allah gave him this instruction. As a



matter of fact, the Prophet (peace be upon him) was already following this very mode of conduct. This instruction was given in the Qur'an so as to tell the disbelievers: It is not due to any weakness on the part of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he is not responding to what you are saying against him, but Allah Himself has taught His Messenger (peace be upon him) to adopt this noble way of conduct in response to your foolish behavior.

﴿ وَذَرْنِي وَالْمُكَذِّبِينَ أُولَى النَّعْمَةِ وَمَهَلْهُمْ قَلِيلًا ﴾

(73:11) And leave to Me the deniers—the people of luxury¹²—and bear with them for a little while.

12. These words clearly contain the sense that the people, who were actually denying the Prophet (peace be upon him) in Makkah and were inciting the common people to oppose and resist him by stirring up prejudices and by deceit and fraud, were the well-to-do, prosperous and affluent people, for it was their interests, which were being hit by the reforming message of Islam. The Qur'an tells us that this was not peculiar only to the Prophet's case but in every age this very class of the people have been the main obstacle to every movement of reform.

﴿ إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا وَجَحِيمًا ﴾

(73:12) 'For' We certainly have shackles,¹³ a 'raging' Fire,

13. Heavy shackles in Hell will not be put on the criminals' feet to stop them from escape but in order that they are not able to stand up and move; these will not be used to prevent their escape but as an instrument of their torment.

﴿ وَطَعَامًا ذَا غُصَّةٍ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴾

(73:13) choking food, and a painful punishment 'in store for them'

﴿ يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ وَكَانَتِ الْجِبَالُ كَثِيبًا مَهِيلًا ﴾



(73:14) on the Day the earth and mountains will shake 'violently', and mountains will be 'reduced to' dunes of shifting sand.¹⁴

14. Since at that time the cohesive force to bind the parts of the mountains together will cease to work, first they will become like crumbling dunes of fine sand, then because of the earthquake which will be shaking the earth the sand will scatter and shift and the whole earth will turn into an empty level plain. This last state has been described in (Surah TaHa, Ayats 105-107), thus: *They ask you, where will the mountains go on that Day. Say: My Lord will reduce them to fine dust and scatter it away. He will turn the earth into an empty level plain, wherein you will neither see any curve no crease.*

Ayaat 15-19 — Take Heed before it's too Late

﴿ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ رَسُولًا شَاهِدًا عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ رَسُولًا ﴾

(73:15) Indeed,¹⁵ We have sent to you a messenger as a witness over you,¹⁶ just as We sent a messenger to Pharaoh.

15. The address now turns to the disbelievers of Makkah, who were denying the Prophet (peace be upon him) and persecuting him relentlessly.

16. Sending the Prophet (peace be upon him) to be a witness over the people also means that he should testify to the truth by his word and deed before them in the world and also that in the Hereafter when Allah's court is established, he will testify that he had presented the whole truth before the people in the world.

﴿ فَعَصَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ الرَّسُولَ فَأَخَذْنَاهُ أَخْذًا وَبِيلاً ﴾

(73:16) But Pharaoh disobeyed the messenger, so We seized him with a stern grip.

﴿ فَكَيْفَ تَتَفَوَّنَ إِن كَفَرْتُمْ يَوْمًا يَجْعَلُ الْوِلْدَانَ شِيبًا ﴾



(73:17) If you 'pagans' persist in disbelief, then how will you guard yourselves against 'the horrors of' a Day which will turn children's hair grey?¹⁷

17. That is, in the first place, you should be afraid that if you do not accept the invitation of the Messenger (peace be upon him) sent by Us, you will have to meet the same evil end in this world, which the Pharaoh has already met in consequence of this very crime. But even if no torment is sent on you in the world, how will you save yourselves from the punishment of the Day of Resurrection.

﴿الَسَّمَآءُ مُنْفَطِرٌ بِهِ كَانَ وَعْدُهُ مَفْعُولًا﴾

(73:18) It will 'even' cause the sky to split apart. His promise 'of judgment' must be fulfilled.

﴿إِنَّ هَذِهِ تَذْكِرَةٌ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا﴾

(73:19) Surely this is a reminder. So let whoever wills take the 'Right' Way to their Lord.

Ayah 20 — What You Send Ahead is Better

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَقُومُ أَدْنَىٰ مِنْ ثُلُثِي اللَّيْلِ وَنِصْفَهُ وَثُلُثَهُ وَطَائِفَةٌ مِنَ الَّذِينَ مَعَكَ وَاللَّهُ يُقَدِّرُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ عَلِمَ أَنْ لَنْ تُحْصُوهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاقْرَءُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ عَلِمَ أَنْ سَيَكُونُ مِنْكُمْ مَرْضَىٰ وَعَاخِرُونَ يَضْرِبُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَبْتَغُونَ مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَعَاخِرُونَ يُقْتَلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَاقْرَءُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنْهُ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَقْرِضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا وَأَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلَّذِينَ يَسَّرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ إِذْ أَخْرَجْتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ بِالْمُقْسِمِينَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾

(73:20) Surely your Lord knows that you 'O Prophet'¹⁸ stand 'in prayer' for nearly two-thirds of the night, or 'sometimes' half of it, or a third,¹⁹ as do some of those with you.²⁰ Allah 'alone' keeps a 'precise' measure of the day and night. He knows that you 'believers' are unable to endure this, and has turned to you in mercy. So recite 'in prayer' whatever you can from the Qur'an.²¹ He knows



that some of you will be sick, some will be travelling throughout the land seeking Allah's bounty,²² and some fighting in the cause of Allah.²³ So recite whatever you can from it. And 'continue to' perform 'regular' prayers, pay alms-tax (Zakah),²⁴ and lend to Allah a good loan.²⁵ Whatever good you send forth for yourselves, you will find it with Allah far better and more rewarding.³ And seek Allah's forgiveness. Surely Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.²⁶

18. About this verse in which reduction has been made in the injunction concerning the Tahajjud Prayer, there are different traditions. Musnad Ahmad, Muslim and Abu Dawud have related a tradition, on the authority of Aishah, saying that this second command was sent down one year after the first command, and the standing up in the Prayer at night was made voluntary instead of obligatory. Abu Dawud, Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abi Hatim have cited the period of one year from Abdullah bin Abbas. But Saeed bin Jubair has stated that it was sent down ten years later (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim). According to the opinion of *Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi in his tafsir Tafhim al-Qur'an*, this last view is most sound, for the subject matter of the first section clearly shows that it was sent down in Makkah and that too in the earliest stage when at the most four years might have passed since the advent of Prophethood. Contrary to this, this second section, in view of the express evidence of its subject matter, seems to have been revealed at Madinah when fighting had started with the disbelievers and the Zakat also had been enjoined as an obligatory duty. On this basis inevitably the two sections should have been sent down at an interval of at least ten years between them.

19. Although the initial command to the Prophet (peace be upon him) was to keep standing up in the Prayer for half the night, or thereabout, it was difficult to compute the time precisely in the absorption of the Prayer, especially when there were no





watches either to measure time accurately; therefore, sometimes two thirds of the night passed in the prayer and sometimes only one-third of it.

20. In the initial command only the Prophet (peace be upon him) was addressed and only he was instructed to stand up in the Prayer by night. But since the Muslims at that time were ardently desirous of following him in everything he did and of earning more and more good and virtues, many of the companions also performed this night Prayer regularly.

21. As the Prayer is prolonged due mainly to a lengthy recital of the Qur'an, it is said: You may recite as much of the Qur'an as you easily can in the Tahajjud Prayer. This would automatically cause the Prayer to be shortened. Although the words here are apparently in the imperative mood, it is agreed by all that Tahajjud is not an obligatory but a voluntary Prayer. In the Hadith, it has also been explained that on an enquiry by a person the Prophet (peace be upon him) replied: *Five times Prayer in the day and night is obligatory on you.* He asked: *Is anything besides this is also binding on me.* The Prophet said: *No, unless you may like to offer something of your own accord.* (Bukhari, Muslim).

This verse also shows another thing. Just as the bowing (ruku') and prostration (sajdah) are obligatory in the Prayer, so is the recital of the Qur'an. For just as Allah at other places has used the words *ruku'* and *sajdah* for the prayer, so here He has mentioned recital of the Qur'an, which implies its recital in the Prayer.

22. Travelling to earn one's living by lawful and permissible methods has been described in many places in the Qur'an as the seeking of Allah's bounty.

23. Here, the way Allah has made mention of seeking pure livelihood and fighting in the way of Allah together and declared these two, besides the compulsion on account of illness, as reasons for exemption from the Tahajjud Prayer, or concession





in it, shows how meritorious it is in Islam to earn one's livelihood by lawful methods. In the Hadith, Abdullah bin Masud has reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *The person who came to a city of the Muslims with food grains and sold it at the rate of the day, will attain to a place nearest to Allah, and then the Prophet (peace be upon him) recited this very verse (Ibn Marduyah).*

24. Commentators agree that this implies observance of the obligatory Prayer five times a day and giving away of the obligatory Zakat.

25. Ibn Zaid says this implies spending one's wealth in the cause of Allah besides the Zakat, whether it is in the cause of fighting in the way of Allah, or for helping the needy, or for public utilities, or other good works. The meaning of giving to Allah a good loan is, in general, giving for charity and good causes.

26. It means: Whatever you have sent forward for the good of your Hereafter is more beneficial for you than what you withheld in the world and did not spend in any good cause for the pleasure of Allah. The reward for your charity will be far better than what you left behind or what you have given in charity because it will be rewarded ten-fold, or even 700-fold, and Allah gives more to whomever He wills (See 2:261).

Discussion:

1. How was The Magnificence of the Qur'an explained at the beginning of surah al-Muzzammil?
2. What's the meaning of 'What You Send Ahead is Better' stated in the last ayah of surah al-Muzzammil?





TAFSEER OF SURAH AL-MUDDATHHIR (No. 74)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *al-muddaththir* (The Cloaked One) in the first verse. This also is only a name, not a title of its subject matter.

Period of Revelation

Surah al-Muddathir is one of the first Surahs to be revealed. The first seven verses of this Surah belong to the earliest period at Makkah. We learn through authentic *ahadeeth* that revelation (after that very first Revelation of the first five verses of Surah Al-‘Alaq) was suspended for quite some time. This period of temporary cessation of revelation is termed as *fatrat-ul-wahi*. It was a time of intense depression and grief for the Prophet *salAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*. He would go on top of the mountains to throw himself down. But whenever he stood on the edge of a peak, Angel Jibreel *‘alayhi salaam* would appear and tell him that he was a Prophet of Allah. This affirmation would console him and restore peace in his mind. [Imam Zuhri, Ibn Jareer]

Towards the end of *fatrat-ul-wahi*, an incident took place that is narrated by Jabir ibn ‘Abdullah *radhiAllahu ‘anhu* that the Prophet *salAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said: *“One day while I was walking, I heard a voice from the sky. I lifted my gaze towards the sky and saw the same angel who had come to me in the cave of Hira. He was sitting on a chair between the sky and the earth. I was struck with awe until I fell down to the ground. Then, I went to my family and said, ‘Cover me up, cover me up!’ So, they covered me up with a quilt (or blanket). At that time Allah (subhanahu wa ta’ala) revealed the initial ayaat of Surah al-Muddathir (Ya ayyuhal-Muddaththiru). From then on revelation became intense and continuous.”* [Bukhari, Muslim, Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Jareer]





The rest of the Surah (vv. 8-56) was revealed when the first Hajj season came after public preaching of Islam had begun in Makkah. This has been fully well described in the *Seerah* by Ibn Hisham.

Theme and Subject Matter

We know that the first *ayaat* to be revealed to the Prophet *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* were that of Surah 'Alaq. In those *ayaat*, the Prophet *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* was not given any injunctions rather he was only informed about the creation of man and a brief introduction of his Creator. This was the first experience of the Prophet with revelation. There was a need to leave him alone for sometime so that the message could sit in and he could prepare himself for several similar experiences in the future.

After this intermission when revelation was resumed, the first seven *ayaat* of this Surah were revealed. These *ayaat* brought along six commandments. This was the first time that he was commanded to arise and warn the people of the consequences of the way of life they were following and to proclaim the greatness of God in the world where others were being magnified without any right. It was an honorable mission that he had to perform. Therefore, it demanded that he purified himself and his life from every kind of impurity. He was to carry out his duty of reforming himself and the people sincerely irrespective of any worldly gain. Because all that he was instructed to do was intimidating he was exhorted to endure with patience, for the sake of his Lord; all the hardships and troubles that he might have to face while performing his mission.

When the Messenger of Allah began to preach Islam and recite the Qur'anic Surahs revealed successively, the people of Makkah felt alarmed, and it provoked a great storm of opposition and hostility. A few months passed in this state until the Hajj





season approached. The people of Makkah feared that if Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) started visiting the caravans of the pilgrims coming from all over Arabia at their halting places and reciting the spell binding and unique Revelations of the Qur'an in their assemblies on the occasion of Hajj, his message would reach every part of Arabia and influence countless people. Therefore, the Quraish chiefs, led by Walid bin al-Mughirah, held a conference and settled that they would start a propaganda campaign against the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) among the pilgrims as soon as they arrived.

They all agreed on what Walid had proposed: "To tell the Arabs that he is a sorcerer, who has brought a message by which he separates a man from his father; and from his brother, and from his wife and children, and from his family." Then, according to a scheme the men of Quraish spread among the pilgrims in the Hajj season and they warned everyone they met of the sorcery of Muhammad (upon whom be peace) and of his stirring up divisions in the families by it. But the result was that by this plan the Quraish chiefs themselves made the name of the Messenger known throughout Arabia (Ibn Hisham).

After laying down the pre-requisites of da'wah in first seven ayats, in *ayaat* 8-10 Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* describes the fate of those who deny the Message. In *ayaat* 11-26, without naming Waleed bin al-Mugheerah, Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* narrates that He had blessed him with abundant resources yet how inimical he proved to be. We then read about the dreadfulness of the Hell, and the character of people who deserve it.

In *ayaat* 49-53, the root cause of the disbelievers' aversion has been pointed out. They are fearless of the Hereafter, and look upon this worldly life as an end in itself. The Surah ends with Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* explicitly stating that He does not



stand in need of anybody's faith. The Qur'an is an admonition that has been presented before the people openly; now whoever wills may accept it.

Tafseer of Surah Al-Muddaththir (The Cloaked One) – 56 Ayats

Ayaat 1-3 — Arise and Warn

(يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ)

(74:1) O you covered up 'in your clothes'!¹

1. A study of the background of the revelation of these verses given in the introduction above can help one understand why the Prophet (peace be upon him) on this occasion has been addressed with *Ya ayyuhal-Muddaththiru* instead of *Ya ayyuhal-Rasulu* (O Messenger), or *Ya ayyuhan-Nabiyyu* (O Prophet). As the Prophet (peace be upon him) had been terrified when he had suddenly seen the Angel Gabriel, sitting on a throne between heaven and earth, and had returned hastily home and asked the people of the house to cover him up, so Allah addressed him with *Ya ayyuhal-Muddaththiru*. From this fine way of address the meaning which automatically follows is: O My dear servant, why have you lain down thus enwrapped? You have been put under the burden of a great mission: you must now arise from your solitude to perform this mission with resolution and courage.

(فُمْ فَأَنْذِرْ)

(74:2) Arise and warn 'all'.²

2. A command of this very nature had been given to the prophet Noah (peace be upon him) while appointing him to the office of Prophethood: *Warn the people of your nation before they are overtaken by a painful torment* (Surah Nuh, Ayat 1). The verse means: O you who lays enwrapped, stand up and arouse the people who live in heedlessness around you. Warn them of the fate which would certainly overtake

them if they remained involved in the same heedlessness. Warn them that they are not living in a lawless kingdom where they are free to conduct themselves as they like and where they can do wherever they please without any fear or being called to account for it.

(وَرَبِّكَ فَكْبِّرْ)

(74:3) Revere your Lord 'alone'.³

3. This is the primary duty of a Prophet (peace be upon him), which he has to perform in this world. His foremost duty is to refute the greatness of all those whom the ignorant people might be holding as great, and publicly proclaim that the greatness in this universe belongs to none but Allah alone. For this very reason the phrase *Allahu Akbar* has been held as of supreme importance in Islam. The *adhan* (call to prayer) begins with the proclamation of *Allahu Akbar*. The Muslim enters the Prayer itself with *Allahu Akbar* and repeats *Allahu Akbar* every time he sits or stands, He also pronounces *Bismillahi Allahu Akbar* when slaughtering an animal. The slogan of *Allahu Akbar* has become a most distinctive and prominent emblem of Muslims throughout the world today, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) of this ummah himself had embarked on his mission with the magnification and glorification of Almighty Allah.

Here, there is another fine point, which must be understood well. As we have learned from the background of the revelation of these verses, this was the first occasion when the Prophet (peace be upon him) had been commanded to arise for performing the duties of the great mission of Prophethood, and it was obvious that the city and society in which he was commanded to perform this mission, was the centre of polytheism. Not only were the people around him polytheistic like the common Arabs but, more than that, the city of Makkah had become the most sacred place of



pilgrimage for the polytheistic Arabs, and the Quraish were its attendants. Arising of a person in such a place all by himself and proclaiming the Oneness of God in the face of polytheism was full of risks. That is why the exhortation to proclaim the greatness of your Lord just after arise and warn contains this meaning also: Do not at all mind the terrifying and dreadful forces that seem to be obstructing and impeding your work and proclaim publicly that your Lord is the greatest of all those who can hinder and resist you from giving your message. This is indeed the greatest encouragement for a person who embarks on a divine mission. The one who has Allah's greatness and majesty deeply embedded in his heart will feel no hesitation at all in facing and fighting the entire world by himself for the sake of Allah.

Ayaat 4-7 — Be Patient for the Sake of Your Lord

(وَتِيَابَكَ فَطَهِّرْ)

(74:4) Purify your garments.⁴

4. These are very comprehensive words, which are full of meaning. They mean this:

(1) *Keep your garments free from every filth and impurity*, for the purity of the body and garments and the purity of the spirit are inter-linked and inter-dependent. A pure spirit and an impure body with impure garments cannot live together. The society in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) had arisen with the invitation to Islam, was not only steeped in the evils of unbelief and immorality but was also devoid of even the most elementary concepts of purity and cleanliness, and the Prophet's (peace be upon him) task was to teach its members cleanliness in every way of life. Therefore, he was instructed to establish and present a high standard of purity in his external life as well. Thus, it is the result of the same instruction that the Prophet (peace be upon him) gave mankind such detailed teaching about the cleanliness of the body and garments as is not possessed even by the most civilized nations of today, not to





speak of the Arabs of the pre-Islamic days of ignorance. So much so that in most of the languages of the world there is no word synonymous with *taharat*. On the contrary, in Islam every book of the Hadith and Fiqh begins with injunctions and instructions on *taharat* (purity), which distinguishes between purity and impurity and gives minute details about the methods and means of obtaining purity.

(2) *Keep your garments neat and clean.* The criterion of religiosity given to the world by the monastic concepts was that a man was holy to the extent he was unclean. If a person happened to put on neat clothes, he was looked upon as a worldly man, whereas the fact is that human nature abhors filth and uncleanness and even a person of ordinary fine taste loves to be associated only with a neat and clean person. On this very basis, for the one calling the people to Allah it was made imperative that externally he should also look so neat and clean that the people should regard him with esteem and his personality should not be stained in any way so as to repel others.

(3) *Keep your garments free from moral evils:* your dress should be neat and clean but it should bear no tinge of vanity and pride, display and exhibition, pomp and show. The dress is the first thing that introduces the personality of a person to others. The kind of dress a person wears makes the people judge at first sight what kind of a man he is. The dresses of the rulers and princes, the dresses of the religious functionaries, the dresses of the vain and conceited people, the dresses of the mean and shallow people, the dresses of the evil-natured and characterless people, all represent the tastes and tempers of those who wear them. The temper of the one calling to Allah is naturally different from all such people. Therefore, his dress should also necessarily be different from all of them. He should wear such a dress as should make everyone else feel that he is a noble and refined person, who is not involved in any evil of the self.



(4) *Keep away from moral evils.* Ibn Abbas, Ibrahim Nakhai, Shabi, Ata, Mujahid. Qatadah, Saeed bin Jubair, Hasan Basri and other major commentators have given this very meaning to this verse: keep yourself morally pure and avoid all that is blameworthy. Also, in Arabic usage when it is said: So and so is clean in his garments, it implies that he is morally good and pure; on the contrary, when it is said: He is filthy in his garments, it means that he is dishonest and fraudulent in his dealings: he is unreliable.

(وَالرُّجْزَ فَأَهْجُرْ)

(74:5) 'Continue to' shun idols.⁵

5. Or literally: “*And keep away from filth/uncleanness*”. The word *Rujz* means “uncleanliness, filth or dirt”. It can be used both in the tangible and intangible sense such as every kind of filth, whether of belief and thought, of morals and deeds, of the body, dress or mode of life. The verse means: Keep yourself free from the filth of evils which are prevalent in society around you: no one should ever impute to you the blame that your own life itself is stained in some degree with the evils that you tell others to avoid.

Here, the Prophet *salAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* was being told to keep away from the idols. We know that he never indulged in idolatry at any time in his life, therefore, the command here was for the future. He was instructed to abstain from the filth of idolatry and immoralities in the future as well as he has kept away from them in the past. The *mufasssireen* have also interpreted this *ayah* to be as a direct command towards the idolaters. If the Prophet *salAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* is being commanded to keep away from filth this means this is the message that he will convey to others. This highlights the importance of abstaining from idol-worship.

(وَلَا تَمُنُّنَ تَسْتَكْتَبِرُ)



(74:6) Do not do a favour expecting more 'in return'.⁶

6. It was a common practice to give someone a gift, hoping to receive a more valuable gift in return. This practice is disliked in Islam. However, the words *wala tamnun tastakthir* in the original are so vast in meaning that no one sentence can convey their full sense in translation. Their meanings are:

(1) Whomever you favor, you should favor him without any selfish motive. Your bestowal of an endowment and donation, your generosity and good treatment should be only for the sake of Allah: there should be no trace in it of the desire that you should receive any worldly gains in return for the favor done. In other words, do good to others for the sake of Allah, not for seeking any benefits.

(2) Although the mission of Prophethood that you are performing is a great favor in itself, for the people are obtaining true guidance because of it, do not remind the people of this favor, nor try to obtain any personal benefits from it.

(3) Although you are performing a great service, you should never gloat over it, nor should ever have the idea that by performing your prophetic duties, at the risk of life, you are doing any favor to your Lord.

(وَلِرَبِّكَ فَاصْبِرْ)

(74:7) And persevere for 'the sake of' your Lord.⁷

7. That is, the task that is being entrusted to you is full of hazards: you will meet with great hardships and difficulties and troubles on this way: even your own people will turn hostile against you and the whole of Arabia will become your enemy. Yet you should endure with patience, for the sake of your Lord, whatever you may have to face in this way, and carry out all your duties firmly and resolutely. Fear, greed,





friendship, enmity, love, all these will hinder your way, but you should stand your ground firmly and steadfastly.

These were the very preliminary instructions which Allah gave His Messenger (peace be upon him) at the time when He commanded him to arise and start the work of Prophethood. If a person ponders over these brief sentences and their meaning his heart will testify that no better instructions could be given to a Prophet at the commencement of his prophetic mission. In these he was told what he was required to do, what kind of life, morals and dealings he should adopt, and taught with what intention, mentality and mode of thought he should go about his mission and also forewarned what kind of conditions he would meet with in the performance of his mission and how he would have to face and overcome them.

Ayaat 8-10 — That Day will be a Hard Day

(فَإِذَا نُقِرَ فِي النَّاقُورِ)

(74:8) 'For' when the Trumpet will be sounded,

(فَذَٰلِكَ يَوْمًا يَّوْمًا عَسِيرًا)

(74:9) that will 'truly' be a difficult Day—⁸

8. As already explained in the introduction, this part of the Surah was sent down a few months after the initial verses when at the beginning of the first ever Hajj season, after the advent of Islam, the Quraish chiefs decided in a conference to start a powerful propaganda campaign to dissuade the outsiders, who came to visit the Ka'bah, from the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). In these verses, this very scheming of the Quraish has been reviewed, and the review has begun with the words, as if to say: You may act as you please, but even if you succeed in achieving your object by these devices in the world, how will you save



yourselves from your evil end on the Day when the Trumpet will be sounded and Resurrection will be established. (This is when the Trumpet will be blown for the second time, causing everyone to rise from the dead for judgment.)

(عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ يَسِيرٌ)

(74:10) far from easy for the disbelievers.⁹

9. These words by themselves support the conclusion that that Day will be light for the believers, and its hardships will be specially intended only for the deniers of the truth. Moreover, these words also contain the meaning that the severity of that Day will be of an enduring and permanent nature for disbelievers, it will not be a severity which might be expected to become mild with the passage of time.

Tafseer Ayaat 11-26 — Man's Ungratefulness Despite Allah's Favors

(ذَرْنِي وَمَنْ خَلَقْتُ وَحِيدًا)

(74:11) And leave to me 'O Prophet' the one¹⁰ I created all by Myself,¹¹

10. The address is directed to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and it means: O Prophet, leave the case of the person (Walid bin al-Mughirah) to Me, who in the disbelievers' conference proposed that you should be branded as a sorcerer among the pilgrims coming from different parts of Arabia; it is now for Me to deal with him; you need not bother yourself about it at all.

11. This sentence can have two meanings, and both are correct:

(1) That when I created him, he was not at that time born with any wealth and children and position of authority and chieftainship.

(2) That I alone was his Creator: those other gods whose divinity he is so ardently trying to keep established and is opposing your invitation to One God for the same object, were not My associates in creating him.

﴿ وَجَعَلْتُ لَهُ مَالًا مَمْدُودًا ﴾

(74:12) and granted him abundant wealth,

﴿ وَبَيْنَ شُهُودًا ﴾

(74:13) and children (sons) always by his side,¹²

12. Walid bin al-Mughirah had ten or twelve sons of whom Khalid bin Walid became most famous. For these sons the word *shuhud* has been used, which can have several meanings:

(1) That they do not have to run about and go abroad in search of their livelihood: they have enough provisions at home; therefore, they can always remain at the beck and call of their father.

(2) That all his sons are prominent and influential people: they sit in assemblies and conferences with him.

(3) That they are the people of high rank and position and their testimony is accepted in all matters of life.

﴿ وَمَهَّدْتُ لَهُ تَمْهِيدًا ﴾

(74:14) and made life very easy for him.

﴿ ثُمَّ يَطْمَعُ أَنْ أَزِيدَ ﴾

(74:15) Yet he is hungry for more.¹³

13. Its one meaning is that there is still no end to his greed. In spite of having all this he still desires that he should be granted every good thing of the world. Another meaning which Hasan Basri, and some other scholars have given is: He used to say: If what Muhammad (peace be upon him) says is really true that there is another life after death, and there will be a Paradise also in it, then that Paradise too has been prepared for me.

﴿ كَلَّا إِنَّهُ كَانَ لِآيَاتِنَا عَنِيدًا ﴾

(74:16) But no! 'For' he has been truly stubborn with Our revelations.

﴿ سَأَزْهِفُهُ صَعُودًا ﴾

(74:17) I will make his fate unbearable,

﴿ إِنَّهُ فَكَّرَ وَقَدَّرَ ﴾

(74:18) for he contemplated and determined 'a degrading label for the Qur'an'.

﴿ فَفُتِنَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ﴾

(74:19) May he be condemned! How evil was what he determined!

﴿ ثُمَّ فُتِنَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ﴾

(74:20) May he be condemned even more! How evil was what he determined!

﴿ ثُمَّ نَظَرَ ﴾

(74:21) Then he re-contemplated 'in frustration',

﴿ ثُمَّ عَبَسَ وَبَسَرَ ﴾

(74:22) then frowned and scowled,

﴿ ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ ﴾



(74:23) then turned his back 'on the truth' and acted arrogantly,

﴿ فَقَالَ إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ يُؤْتَرُ ﴾

(74:24) saying, “This 'Qur'an' is nothing but magic from the ancients.

﴿ إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ ﴾

(74:25) This is no more than the word of a man.”¹⁴

14. The reference is to what happened in the conference of the disbelievers of Makkah. From the details of it that we have given in the introduction, it becomes obvious that this man in his heart had become fully convinced of the Qur'an's being divine word, but in order to save his position as a chief of his people, he was not prepared to affirm faith. When in the conference he himself turned down all the accusations that the Quraish chiefs were proposing against the Prophet (peace be upon him), he was compelled to devise an accusation from himself, which could be spread among the Arabs in order to bring a bad name to the Prophet (peace be upon him). Then, the way he struggled against his conscience, and the way he devised an accusation at last after a prolonged mental conflict, has been vividly depicted here.

﴿ سَأُصَلِّيهِ سَقَرَ ﴾

(74:26) Soon I will burn him in Hell!

Ayaat 27-31 – The Dreadfulness of Hellfire described

﴿ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا سَقَرُ ﴾

(74:27) And what will make you realize what Hell is?

﴿ لَا تَبْقَى وَلَا تَذُرُ ﴾

(74:28) It does not let anyone live or die,¹⁵



15. Or: *"It spares none and leaves nothing."*. So this can have two meanings: First, that it will burn to ashes whoever is cast into it, but even after death he will not escape from punishment: he will be given life once again and burnt once again. This very subject has been treated at another place thus: *He will neither die in it nor live* (Surah Al-Aala, Ayah 13). Another meaning can also be: It will leave none who has deserved the punishment and it will spare none from being punished.

(لَوَاحَةٌ لِلْبَشَرِ)

(74:29) scorching the skin.¹⁶

16. After saying that it will leave nothing of the body unconsumed, making mention of scorching of the skin separately seems to be somewhat unnecessary. But this form of the punishment has been mentioned separately in particular because it is the skin of a man's face and body which actually makes his personality prominent, and it is its ugliness which makes him feel most ill at ease. He is not so grieved at the internal troubles of his body as, for instance, at his face being ugly, or that there should be spots on the skin of the exposed parts of his body, abhorrent to others. That is why it has been said: If the people who feel proud of their personalities in the world because of having handsome faces and splendid bodies, treat the revelations of Allah mockingly, as did Walid bin al-Mughirah, their faces will be scorched and their skins will be burned black.

(عَلَيْهَا تِسْعَةَ عَشَرَ)

(74:30) It is overseen by nineteen 'keepers'.

(وَمَا جَعَلْنَا أَصْحَابَ النَّارِ إِلَّا مَلَائِكَةً وَمَا جَعَلْنَا عِدَّتَهُمْ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيَسْتَيَقِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَيَزِدَّادَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِيمَانًا وَلَا يَرْتَابَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَلِيَقُولَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ وَالْكَافِرُونَ مَاذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِهَذَا مَثَلًا كَذَلِكَ يُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَن يَشَاءُ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ جُنُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَمَا هِيَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْبَشَرِ)



(74:31) We¹⁷ have appointed only 'stern' angels as wardens of the Fire.¹⁸ And We have made their number only as a test for the disbelievers,¹⁹ so that the People of the Book will be certain,²⁰ and the believers will increase in faith,²¹ and neither the People of the Book nor the believers will have any doubts, and so that those 'hypocrites' with sickness in their hearts²² and the disbelievers will argue, "What does Allah mean by such a number?"²³ In this way Allah leaves whoever He wills to stray and guides whoever He wills.²⁴ And none knows the forces of your Lord except He.²⁵ And this 'description of Hell' is only a reminder to humanity.²⁶

17. The whole passage from here to "none knows the forces of your Lord except He Himself", is a parenthetical sentence, which has been inserted here to answer an objection of the disbelievers, who had started mocking it when they heard the Prophet (peace be upon him) say that 19 keepers had been appointed over Hell.

Their objection was: How strange that, on the one hand, we are told that all human beings, from the time of the Prophet Adam till Resurrection, who disbelieved and committed evil, will be cast into Hell, and, on the other hand, that there will be only 19 keepers, who will administer punishment to the countless numbers of men in such a huge Hell.

This caused a huge laughter among the chiefs of Quraish. Abu Jahl said: Brothers, are you so powerless that even as many as ten of you at a time will not be able to overpower a single policeman of Hell. At this a wrestler of the Bani Jumha said: Well I will deal with and overpower at least 17 of them by myself; as for the remaining two, you all together can tackle them. In response these sentences have been inserted as a parenthetical clause.





18. That is, it is foolish on your part to compare the angelic powers to human powers. They will be angels, not men, and you cannot imagine what tremendous powers Allah has granted to the angels He has created.

19. That is, although apparently there was no need to mention the number of the keepers of Hell, yet We have mentioned it so that it becomes a trial for every such person who may be concealing any kind of unbelief in his heart. Such a man may be making a great display of his faith but if he conceals even a tinge of the doubt about the Divinity and supreme powers of God, or about revelation and Prophethood, anywhere in his heart, his disbelief would immediately be exposed as soon as he would hear that only 19 policemen would control countless numbers of the culprits from among the jinn and men in such a huge jail and would also administer punishment to each of them individually.

20. Some commentators have explained it that this number was specified because the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) were informed of this number in their books too, so they could recognize it being truly from Allah as soon as they heard it. But, according to the opinion of Maududi, the correct meaning of this statement is: The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) knew that he would be ridiculed as soon as the disbelievers heard that 19 angels had been appointed over Hell, but in spite of this, he presented without the least hesitation and fear publicly before the people what had been revealed to him from Allah, and did not at all mind the jesting and mocking by the people. The pagans of Arabia were unaware of the unique distinction of the Prophets, but the followers of the earlier scriptures were fully aware that the Prophets in every age used to convey to their people intact whatever they received from God, whether it pleased them or displeased them. On this very basis it was to be expected of the Jews and the Christians that they would be convinced of the Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) truth for only a





Prophet could present an apparently strange thing without any hesitation before the people in an environment charged with antagonism and hostility. This is also evident that such a thing was shown by the Prophet (peace be upon him) on many other occasions. Its most prominent example is the event of the *Mi'raj* (ascension) which he related openly before a general assembly of the disbelievers and did not at all care how his opponents would behave and react after they had heard the story of the wonderful event.

21. It has been explained at several places in the Qur'an that on the occasion of every trial when a believer remains steadfast to his faith, and forsaking the way of doubt and denial, disobedience or disloyalty to the faith, adopts the way of faith, obedience and loyalty to it, it increases and strengthens him all the more in faith and resignation.

22. As sickness of the heart in the Qur'an is generally understood to imply hypocrisy, seeing this word here some commentators have expressed the view that this verse was revealed at Madinah, for the hypocrites appeared at Madinah. But this view is not correct, according to Maududi, for several reasons. The historical background of this part of Surah Al-Muddaththir is well known to us from authentic traditions. This was revealed in connection with a particular event of the early period of the life at Makkah. The whole context bears full relevance to that very event.

As for the question what is implied by the disease of the heart here, its answer is that it implies the disease of doubt. Not only in Makkah but in the entire world there have been, and are, very few such people, who might deny God, Hereafter, Revelation, Prophethood, Heaven, Hell, etc. absolutely. In every age the greater majority by far has been of those people, who have been involved in the doubt whether there is God, or no God, Hereafter or no Hereafter, whether Heaven and Hell really exist, or are mere figments of the imagination, and whether the Messengers did really come and receive revelation or not. This same doubt has led most people to unbelief, otherwise





the number of such people in the world who denied these truths absolutely has never been great. For a person who has any common sense knows that there is no rational ground whatever for denying the possibility of the existence of these things, or of declaring them absolutely impossible.

23. This does not mean that they accepted it as divine word but wondered why Allah had said such a thing. But what they actually meant was: A discourse which contained such an irrational and impossible thing could not be a revelation from Allah.

24. That is, Allah in this very way sometimes sends down in the course of His revelations and commandments such things as become a means of test and trial for the people. It is one and the same thing which a truth-loving, good-natured and right-minded person hears and understanding its right meaning in the right way and adopts the straight path. But when heard by an obstinate, perverse and willful wrongdoer, makes him to misconstrue it and make it a new excuse for fleeing from the truth. Since the first man is himself a lover of the truth, Allah grants him guidance, for it is not the way of Allah to lead the seekers after truth forcibly astray. And since the second man himself does not want guidance, but chooses only error for himself, Allah also pushes him on to the way of error and deviation, for it is also not the way of Allah to forcibly pull to the way of the truth him who has an aversion to the truth.

25. That is, none knows but Allah what different kinds and how many of the creatures He has created in the universe, what powers He has granted them, and what services He is taking from them. If the man clinging to the tiny globe of the earth seeing the tiny world around himself with his limited sight, is involved in the misunderstanding that the universe of God contains nothing but what he can perceive by his senses or by his instruments, this would only be his own shortsightedness, otherwise this universe is so vast and limitless that it is not in the power of man to



obtain full knowledge about any of the things here, not to speak of comprehending mentally the concept of all its vastnesses.

26. *A Reminder to Humanity/The people may take heed*: the people may recover their senses and wake up before they make themselves worthy of Hell and suffer its punishment and should think of saving themselves from it.

Ayaat 32-48 – “What has caused you to enter Hellfire?”

﴿كَلَّا وَالْقَمَرَ﴾

(74:32) But no!²⁷ By the moon,

27. That is, it is not a hollow thing which may be mocked like that.

﴿وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا أَدْبَرَ﴾

(74:33) and the night as it retreats,

﴿وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا أَسْفَرَ﴾

(74:34) and the day as it breaks!

﴿إِنَّهَا لِأَحَدَى الْكُبْرِ﴾

(74:35) Surely Hell is one of the mightiest catastrophes—²⁸

28. Or: *Surely (Hell) is one of the greatest Signs*. That is, just as the moon and the night and the day are the great signs of the powers of Allah, so also is Hell a great sign of His powers. If the existence of the moon and the alternation of the night and day so regularly were not impossible, why should the existence of Hell be impossible as you think it is. You see these phenomena day and night; therefore, they do not surprise you: otherwise these things in themselves also are great marvels of the powers of Allah. If you had not observed them and somebody were to tell you that there is also such a thing as the moon in the world, or, there is a sun which leaves

the world dark when it hides and makes the world shine forth with light when it appears, then the people like you would have made fun of it too as you make fun of Hell.

﴿ نَذِيرًا لِلْبَشَرِ ﴾

(74:36) a warning to humankind,

﴿ لِمَنْ شَاءَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَتَقَدَّمَ أَوْ يَتَأَخَّرَ ﴾

(74:37) to whichever of you chooses to take the lead or lag behind.²⁹

29. Meaning, the people have been warned to this effect. Now, let him who heeds the warning go forward on the right way, and let him who wills still lag behind.

﴿ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةٌ ﴾

(74:38) Every soul will be detained for what it has done,³⁰

30. Or: *Each one is a hostage to one's deeds.* Every person on the Day of Judgment will be detained in lieu of his sins, except those who will be given their Book of Deeds in their right hands. The People of the Right are those who repaid their debt that is they have fulfilled their obligations in this world towards Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* and other human beings.

﴿ إِلَّا أَصْحَابَ الْيَمِينِ ﴾

(74:39) except the people of the right,

﴿ فِي جَنَّاتٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴾

(74:40) who will be in Gardens,³¹ asking one another

31. In other words, the people of the left hand will be seized in consequence of their misdeeds, but the people of the right hand will have their debts settled.

﴿عَنِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ﴾

(74:41) about the wicked 'who will then be asked':³²

32. At several places in the Qur'an, it has been stated that the dwellers of Paradise and the dwellers of Hell will be able to see and communicate with each other directly without the agency of any instrument whenever they will so desire, although they will be living hundreds of thousands of miles away from each other. For instance, (Surah Al- Aaraf, Ayats 44-50; Surah As-Saaffat, Ayats 50-57)

﴿مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ﴾

(74:42) "What has landed you in Hell?"

﴿قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ﴾

(74:43) They will reply, "We were not of those who prayed,³³

33. That is, we were not of those who after having believed in Allah and His Messenger and His Book, performed the foremost duty imposed by Allah, i.e. the Prayer. Here, it should be understood well that unless a person has believed he cannot offer the Prayer at all. Therefore, one's being of those who performed the Prayer, by itself implies that one is a believer. But by attributing one's going to Hell to his not being of those who performed their Prayer, it has been made explicit that one cannot escape Hell even after having believed if he does not perform his Prayers regularly.

﴿وَلَمْ نَكُ نَطْعِمُ الْمِسْكِينَ﴾

(74:44) nor did we feed the poor.³⁴

34. This shows how grave a sin it is in Islam to see a hungry man and fail to feed him even if one can, for this has been particularly mentioned as one of the causes of going to Hell.

﴿ وَكُنَّا نَخُوضُ مَعَ الْخَابِثِينَ ﴾

(74:45) We used to indulge 'in falsehood' along with others,

﴿ وَكُنَّا نَكْذِبُ بِيَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴾

(74:46) and deny the Day of Judgment,

﴿ حَتَّىٰ أَتَيْنَا الْيَقِينَ ﴾

(74:47) until the inevitable came to us.”³⁵

35. Until the inevitable certainty overtakes: Until death came upon us. Here, the inevitable implies death as well as the Hereafter.

﴿ فَمَا تَنْفَعُهُمْ شَفَاعَةُ الشَّافِعِينَ ﴾

(74:48) So the pleas of intercessors will be of no benefit to them.³⁶

36. That is, even if an intercessor interceded for a person who persisted in this way of life till death, he would not be forgiven. The question of intercession has been fully explained at many places in the Qur'an that no one can have any difficulty in knowing and understanding as to who can intercede and who cannot, when one can intercede and when one cannot, for whom one can intercede and for whom one cannot, and for whom intercession is beneficial and for whom it is not. As one of the major causes of the people's deviation in the world is their false concept about intercession, it has been explained at such length in the Qur'an as to leave no room for any doubt and ambiguity.

Ayaat 49-56 — What Makes One Turn Away from the Reminder

(فَمَا لَهُمْ عَنِ التَّذْكَرَةِ مُعْرِضِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾)

(74:49) Now, what is the matter with them that they are turning away from the reminder,

(كَأَنَّهُمْ حُمُرٌ مُّسْتَنْفِرَةٌ ﴿٧٥﴾)

(74:50) as if they were spooked zebras

(فَرَّتْ مِنْ قَسْوَرَةٍ ﴿٧٦﴾)

(74:51) fleeing from a lion?³⁷

37. This is an idiomatic expression in Arabic which depicts the character of wild donkeys (or zebras) who flee stupefied and stunned as soon as they smell a lion or hear a hunter.

(بَلْ يَرِيدُ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ أَنْ يُؤْتَىٰ صُحُفًا مُّنشَرَةً ﴿٧٧﴾)

(74:52) In fact, each one of them wishes to be given a 'personal' letter 'from Allah' for all 'to read'.³⁸

38. That is, they desire that if Allah really has appointed Muhammad (peace be upon him) as His Prophet, He should send a letter to each one of the chiefs and elders of Makkah telling him that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is Allah's Prophet; therefore he should obey and follow him. And these letters should be such as may convince them that they have been written by Allah Himself. At another place in the Qur'an, this saying of the disbelievers of Makkah has been cited: *We will not believe in it unless we are given the like of what has been given to the Messengers of Allah.* (Al-Ana'am, Ayah 124). At still another place their this demand has been cited: *Or you ascend the sky ... and bring down to us a writing that we may read.* (Surah Bani Israil, Ayah 93).

(كَلَّا بَلْ لَا يَخَافُونَ الْآخِرَةَ)

(74:53) But no! In fact, they do not fear the Hereafter.³⁹

39. That is, the real cause of their failure to affirm the faith is not that their demands are not fulfilled, but the real cause is that they are fearless of the Hereafter. They think that this world is an end in itself and they do not have any idea that there is another life after this worldly life in which they will have to render an account of their deeds. This very thing has made them careless and irresponsible in the world. They regard the question of truth and falsehood as utterly meaningless, for they do not see any truth following which may have necessarily led to a good result in the world, nor do they see any falsehood which might have always led to an evil result in the world. Therefore, they think it is useless merely to consider as to what is really true and what is false. This question can be worthy of serious consideration only for the person who regards the present life of the world as transitory and admits that the real and everlasting life is the life hereafter, where the truth will necessarily lead to a good result and falsehood necessarily to an evil result. Such a person will certainly believe when he sees the rational arguments and the pure teachings presented in the Qur'an and will use his common sense to understand what is actually wrong with the beliefs and deeds which the Qur'an calls wrong. But the denier of the Hereafter who is not at all serious in his search for the truth, will present ever new demands every day for not believing, and will present a new excuse for his denial even if all his demands are fulfilled. This same thing has been expressed in (Surah Al-Ana'am, Ayah 7) thus: *O Prophet, even if We had sent down to you a Book written on paper, and even if they had touched it with their own hands, the disbelievers would have said: This is nothing but manifest sorcery.*

(كَلَّا إِنَّهُ تَذَكَّرٌ)



(74:54) Enough!⁴⁰ Surely this 'Qur'an' is a reminder.

40. Meaning, no such demand of theirs will ever be fulfilled.

(فَمَنْ شَاءَ ذَكَرْهُ ﴿

(74:55) So let whoever wills be mindful of it.

(وَمَا يَذْكُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ هُوَ أَهْلُ التَّقْوَى وَأَهْلُ الْمَعْرِفَةِ ﴿

(74:56) But they cannot do so unless Allah wills.⁴¹ He 'alone' is worthy to be feared⁴² and entitled to forgive.⁴³

41. That is, a person's taking heed does not wholly depend upon his own will, but he takes heed only when Allah also wills to grant him the grace to take heed. In other words, the truth that has been expressed here is that no act of man takes a concrete shape solely by his own will, but each act is implemented only when the will of God combines with the will of the man. This is a very delicate question, failure to understand which has often made human thought falter. Briefly it can be understood thus: If in this world every man had the power to accomplish whatever he wanted to accomplish, the system of the world would be disturbed. This system continues to hold only because the will of Allah is dominant over all other wills. Man can accomplish whatever he wants to accomplish only when Allah also wills that he be allowed to accomplish it. The same is also the case with guidance and error. Only man's own desiring to have guidance is not enough for him to have guidance; he receives guidance only when Allah also takes a decision to fulfill his desire. Likewise, only man's desiring to go astray by itself is also not enough, but when Allah in view of his desire decides that he be allowed to wander into evil ways, then he wanders into the evil ways in which Allah allows him to wander. As for example, if a person wants to become a thief, only his desire is not enough that he may enter into any house he likes and walk away with whatever he likes, but he can fulfill his





desire only at the time and to the extent and in the form that Allah allows him to fulfill it, according to His supreme wisdom and expedience.

42. That is, the admonition being given to you to avoid Allah's displeasure is not for the reason that Allah needs it, and if you did not take it, Allah would be harmed. But you are being so admonished because it is Allah's right that His servants should seek His pleasure and good will and should avoid doing anything against His will.

43. That is, it befits only Allah that He should receive into His mercy whoever desists from evil no matter how many acts of disobedience he might have committed in the past. Allah is not vengeful to His servants so that He may refuse to forgive their errors and be bent upon punishing them in any case.

Discussion:

1. Explain the Theme and Subject Matter in connection with the Period of Revelation of surah al-Muddaththir.
2. Explain responses to the question "What has caused you to enter Hellfire?"

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy





TAFSEER OF SURAH AL-QIYAMAH (No. 75)

Name

The Surah has been so named after the word *al-Qiyamah* (The Resurrection) in the first verse. This is not only the name but also the title of this Surah, for it is devoted to Resurrection itself.

Period of Revelation

Although there is no hadith to indicate its period of revelation, yet there is in the subject matter of this Surah an internal evidence, which shows that it is one of the earliest Surahs to be sent down at Makkah. After verse 15 the discourse is suddenly interrupted and the Prophet (upon whom be peace) told: "*Do not move your tongue to remember this Revelation hastily. It is Our responsibility to have it remembered and read. Therefore, when We are reciting it, listen to its recital carefully. Again, it is Our responsibility to explain its meaning.*" Then, from verse 20 onward the same theme which was interrupted at verse 15, is resumed. This parenthetical passage, according to both the context and the traditions, has been interposed here for the reason that when the Angel Jibreel was reciting this Surah to the Prophet, the Prophet, lest he should forget its words later, was repeating them at the same moment. This in fact happened at the time when the coming down and receipt of Revelation was yet a new experience for him and he was not yet fully used to receiving it calmly.

There are two other instances also of this in the Qur'an. First, in *Surah Ta Ha* the Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been told: "*And see that you do not hasten to recite the Qur'an before its revelation is completed to you.*" (v. 114). Then, in *Surah Al-A'la*, it has been said: "*We shall enable you to recite, then you shall never forget.*" (v. 6). Later, when the Holy Prophet became fully used to receiving the Revelation





well, there remained no need to give him any such instruction. That is why except for these, three, there is no other instance of this in the Qur'an.

Theme and Subject Matter

Most of the Surahs, from here till the end of the Qur'an, in view of their content and style, seem to have been sent down in the period when after the first seven verses of Surah Al-Muddaththir, revelation of the Qur'an began like a shower of rain. Thus, in the successively revealed Surahs Islam and its fundamental concepts and moral teachings were presented so forcefully and effectively in pithy, brief sentences and the people of Makkah warned so vehemently on their errors and deviations that the Quraish chiefs were utterly confounded. Therefore, before the next Hajj season came they held the conference for devising schemes to defeat the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) as has been mentioned in the Introduction to the Surah Al-Muddaththir above.

In this Surah, addressing the deniers of the Hereafter, replies have been given to each of their doubts and objections, strong arguments have been given to prove the possibility, occurrence and necessity of the Resurrection and Hereafter, and also it has been pointed out clearly that the actual reason of the people's denying the Hereafter is not that they regard it as impossible rationally but because their selfish motives do not allow them to affirm it. At the same time, the people have been warned, as if to say: "The event, the occurrence of which you deny, will inevitably come: all your deeds will be brought and placed before you. As a matter of fact, even before any of you sees his record, he will be knowing fully well what he has done in the world, for no man is unaware of himself, no matter what excuses and pretenses he may offer to deceive the world and deceive himself in respect of his misdeeds."





Tafseer of Surah Al-Qiyamah (The Resurrection) – 40 Ayats

Ayaat 1-15 – Man is a Witness against Himself

﴿ لَا أَقْسِمُ بِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ﴾

(75:1) I do¹ swear by the Day of Judgment!

1. Literally: *Nay, I swear by the Day of Resurrection.* To begin the discourse with ‘Nay’, i.e. ‘No’, by itself indicates that the Surah was sent down to refute some argument which was already in progress. The theme that follows shows that the argument was about Resurrection and life after death, which the people of Makkah were denying and also mocking at it at the same time. This can be understood by an example. If a person only wants to affirm the truth of the Messenger, he will say: By God, the Messenger has come with the truth. But if some people might be denying the truth of the Messenger, he in response would rejoin, thus: No, by God, the Messenger has come with the truth. It would mean: That which you say is not true. I swear that the truth is this and this.

﴿ وَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ ﴾

(75:2) And I do swear by the self-reproaching soul!²

2. Literally: *And nay, I swear by the self-reproaching soul!* The Qur’an has mentioned three kinds of human self:

(1) *Ammarah*: the self that urges man to evil.

(2) *Lawwamah*: the self that feels repentant at doing wrong, thinking wrong and willing wrong and reproaches man for this; and the same is called conscience in modern terminology.





(3) *Mumtmainnah*: the self that feels full satisfaction at following the right path and abandoning the wrong path.

Here the thing for which Allah has sworn an oath by the Resurrection (al-Qiyamah) and the self-reproaching self, has not been mentioned, for the following sentence itself points it out. The oath has been sworn to stress the truth that Allah will certainly resurrect man after death, and He has full power to do so. Now, the question arises: What is the relevance of swearing an oath by these two truths to this thing?

As for the Day of Resurrection, the reason of swearing by it is certainty. The whole system of the universe testifies that it is neither eternal nor everlasting. Its own nature tells that it has neither existed since eternity nor can last till eternity. Human intellect has never had any strong argument to support the baseless view that this ever-changing world could have existed since ever and would last forever. But as the knowledge of man about this world goes on increasing, it goes on becoming more and more certain for man himself that this workhouse of life had a beginning in time before which it was not, and necessarily it has also an end in time after which it will not be. For this reason, Allah has sworn an oath by Resurrection itself on the occurrence of Resurrection, and this is an oath of the kind that we might swear addressing a skeptical person, who may be skeptical about his own existence, saying: By you yourself, you exist, i.e., your own being itself testifies that you exist.

But an oath by the Day of Resurrection is only an argument for the truth that this system will one day be upset. As for the truth that after that man shall be resurrected and called upon to account for his deeds and made to see the good or evil results thereof, another oath has been sworn by the self-reproaching soul. No man exists in the world who may not have a faculty called conscience in him. This conscience is necessarily conscious of the good and evil, and no matter how perverted and degraded a man might be, his conscience always checks him on doing evil and for





not doing good irrespective of the fact whether the criterion of good and evil that he had set for himself might in itself be right or wrong. This is an express pointer that man is not merely an animal but a moral being. He naturally can distinguish good from evil; he regards himself as responsible for the good or the evil he does; and even if he might feel pleased suppressing the reproaches of his conscience over the evil he has done to another, he, on the contrary, feels and demands from within that the other one who has done the same evil to him, must deserve punishment. Now, if the existence of a self-reproaching soul of this kind in man himself is an undeniable truth, then this truth too is undeniable that the same self-reproaching soul is an evidence of the life hereafter, which exists in man's own nature itself. For this demand of nature that man must be rewarded or punished for his good or evil deeds for which he himself is responsible, cannot be met in any other way than in the life hereafter. No sensible man can deny that if man becomes nonexistent after death, he will certainly be deprived of the rewards of his good deeds and escape the just and lawful punishment of many of his evil deeds. Therefore, unless one comes to believe in the absurd idea that a rational being like man has stumbled into an irrational system of the universe and a moral being like man has happened to be born in a world which basically has nothing to do with morality, he cannot deny the life hereafter. Likewise, the philosophy of the transmigration of souls also is no reply to this demand of nature, for if man goes on being born and reborn in this very world for the sake of being rewarded and punished for his moral acts, in every cycle of life he will perform some additional moral acts, which again will need to be rewarded and punished, thus making his account more and more lengthy and complicated in an endless way instead of being settled finally and for good. Therefore, this demand of nature is fulfilled only in case man in this world should have only one life and then, after the whole human race has been brought to an end, there should be another



life in which all acts of man should be judged and assessed rightly and justly and he should be fully rewarded or punished in consequence thereof.

﴿ أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ نَجْمَعَ عِظَامَهُ ۗ ﴾

(75:3) Do people think We cannot reassemble their bones?³

3. The above two arguments, which have been presented in the form of the oaths, only prove two things. First, that the end of the world (i.e. the first stage of Resurrection) is a certainty; and second, that another life after death is necessary, for without it the logical and natural demands of man's being a moral being cannot be fulfilled; and this will certainly happen, for the existence of the conscience in man testifies to it. Now, this third argument has been given to prove that life after death is possible. The people of Makkah who denied it, said again and again: How can it be that the people who died hundreds of thousands of years ago, whose bodies have disintegrated into particles and mixed in the dust, whose bones decayed and were scattered away by the winds, some of whom were burnt to ashes, others devoured by the beasts of prey, still others drowned in the seas and swallowed by fish, the material constituents of their bodies should re-assemble and every man should rise up as the same person that he once was ten or twenty thousand years before? Allah has given its very rational and highly forceful reply in the form of this brief question: *Does man think that We shall not be able to put his bones together?* That is, if you had been told that the scattered particles of your body would reunite of their own accord some time in the future, and you would come back to life by yourself with this very body, you would no doubt have been justified in regarding it as impossible. But what you have actually been told is that such a thing will not happen by itself, but Allah Almighty will do this. Now, do you really think that the Creator of the universe, Whom you yourself also regard as the Creator, would be powerless to do so? This was such a question in answer to which nobody who believed in God to be

the Creator of the universe could say, neither then nor today, that even God Himself could not do this even if He so willed. And if a disbeliever says such a thing, he can be asked: How did God in the first instance make the body in which you at present exist, by gathering its countless particles together from the air, water and earth and many other places you do not know. How, then, can you say that the same God cannot gather its constituent parts together once again.

﴿بَلَىٰ قَدِيرِينَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ نُسَوِّيَ بَنَانَهُ﴾

(75:4) Yes 'indeed'! We are 'most' capable of restoring 'even' their very fingertips.⁴

4. That is, not to speak of building up your skeleton once again by gathering together the major bones? We are able to make whole the most delicate parts of your body, even your fingertips, as they used to be before. This refers to the fact that every human has a unique set of fingerprints.

﴿بَلْ يُرِيدُ الْإِنْسَانُ لِيَفْجُرَ أَمَامَهُ﴾

(75:5) Still people want to deny what is yet to come,⁵

5. Or: '*But man desires to persist in his evil ways.*' In this brief sentence the real disease of the deniers of the Hereafter has been clearly diagnosed. What makes them deny the Hereafter is not, in fact, their regarding the Resurrection and Hereafter as impossible but they deny it because acceptance of the Hereafter inevitably imposes certain moral restrictions on them, which they detest. They desire that they should continue roaming in the world at will as they have been roaming before. They should have full freedom to go on committing whatever injustice, dishonesty, sin and wickedness that they have been committing before, and there should be no deterrent to obstruct their freedom and to warn them that one day they will have to appear and

render an account of their deeds before their God. Therefore, it is not their intellect which is hindering them from believing in the Hereafter but their desires of the self.

﴿ يَسْأَلُ أَيَّانَ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ﴾

(75:6) asking 'mockingly', "When is this Day of Judgment?"⁶

6. This question was not put as a question but derisively and to deny Resurrection. That is, they did not want to ask when Resurrection would take place but asked mockingly: What has happened to the day with which you are threatening us? When will it come?

﴿ فَإِذَا بَرِقَ الْبَصَرُ ﴾

(75:7) But when the sight is stunned,⁷

7. Literally, the words *bariq al-basar* mean dazzling of the eyes by lightning, but in the Arabic idiom these words do not specifically carry this meaning only but are also used for man's being terror-stricken and amazed, or his being confounded on meeting with an accident suddenly and his eyes being dazed at some distressing sight before him. This subject has been expressed at another place in the Qur'an: *Allah is only deferring their case to the Day when the eyes shall stare with consternation.* (Surah Ibrahim, Ayat 42).

﴿ وَخَسَفَ الْقَمَرُ ﴾

(75:8) and the moon is dimmed (eclipsed),

﴿ وَجُمِعَ الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ ﴾

(75:9) and the sun and the moon are brought together,⁸

8. This is a brief description of the chaotic condition of the system of the universe that will prevail in the first stage of Resurrection. The darkening of the moon and

the joining of the moon and the sun together can also mean that not only will the moon lose its light, which is borrowed from the sun, but the sun itself will become dark and both will become devoid of light similarly. Another meaning can be that the earth will suddenly start rotating in the reverse order and on that day both the moon and the sun will rise simultaneously in the west. And a third meaning can be that the moon will suddenly shoot out of the earth's sphere of influence and will fall into the sun. There may possibly be some other meaning also of this which we cannot understand today.

﴿ يَقُولُ الْإِنْسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَيْنَ الْمَفْرُ ۙ ﴾

(75:10) on that Day one will cry, “Where is the escape?”

﴿ كَلَّا لَا وَزَرَ ۙ ﴾

(75:11) But no! There will be no refuge.

﴿ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمُسْتَقَرُّ ۙ ﴾

(75:12) On that Day all will end up before your Lord.

﴿ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمُسْتَقَرُّ ۙ ﴾

(75:13) All will then be informed of what they have sent forth and left behind.⁹

9. *Bima qaddama wa akhkhara* is a very comprehensive sentence, which can have several meanings and probably all are implied:

(1) That man on that Day will be told what good or evil he had earned in his worldly life before death and sent forward for his hereafter, and also informed what effects of his good or evil acts he had left behind in the world, which continued to work and to influence the coming generations for ages after him.



(2) That he will be told everything he ought to have done but which he did not do, and did what he ought not to have done.

(3) That the full date wise account of what he did before and what he did afterwards will be placed before him.

(4) That he will be told whatever good or evil he had done as well as informed of the good or the evil that he had left undone.

﴿ بَلِ الْإِنْسَانُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦٓ بَصِيرَةٌ ﴾

(75:14) In fact, people will testify against their own souls,

﴿ وَلَوْ أَلْقَىٰ مَعَاذِيرَهُ ﴾

(75:15) despite the excuses they come up with.¹⁰

10. That is, the object of placing man's record before him will not be to inform the culprit of his crimes, but this will be done because the demands of justice are not fulfilled unless the proof of the crime is produced before the court; otherwise everyman fully knows what he actually is. For the sake of self-knowledge he does not need that another one should tell him what he is. A liar can deceive the whole world but he himself knows that he lies. A thief can devise a thousand devices to conceal his crime but he himself is aware that he is a thief. A person involved in error can present a thousand arguments to assure the people that he is honestly convinced of the disbelief, atheism or polytheism, which he professes and follows, but his own conscience is never unaware of why he persists in that creed and what, in fact, prevents him from understanding and admitting its error and falsity. An unjust, wicked, dishonest, unmoral and corrupt person can even suppress the voice of his own conscience by inventing one or another excuse so that it may stop reproaching him and should be satisfied that he is doing whatever he is doing only





because of certain compulsions, expediencies and genuine needs, but despite this he has in any case the knowledge of what wrong he has committed against a certain person, how he has deprived another of his rights, how he deceived still another and that unlawful methods he used to gain what he has gained. Therefore, at the time when one appears in the court of the Hereafter, every disbeliever, every hypocrite, every wicked person and culprit will himself be knowing what he has done in the world and for what crime he stands before his God. (Also, everyone's organs will testify against him. See 41:19-24.)

Ayaat 16-19 – Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* teaches the Qur'an

﴿ لَا تُحْرَكْ بِهِ لِسَانُكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ ﴾

(75:16) (O Prophet),¹¹ Do not rush your tongue trying to memorize a revelation of the Qur'an.

11. The whole passage from here to “*Then, indeed, it is upon Us its clarification*” is a parenthesis, which has been interposed here as an address to the Prophet (peace be upon him). As we have explained in the introduction above, in the initial stages of the Prophethood when the Prophet (peace be upon him) was not yet fully used to receiving the revelation, he was afraid when revelation came down to him whether he would be able to remember exactly what the Angel Jibreel was reciting to him or not. Therefore, he would try to commit to memory rapidly what he heard from the Angel simultaneously. The same thing happened when Jibreel was reciting these verses of Surah Al- Qiyamah. Therefore, interrupting what was being revealed, the Prophet (peace be upon him) was instructed to the effect: *Do not try to memorize the words of the revelation, but listen to it attentively and carefully. It is Our responsibility to enable you to remember it by heart and then to recite it accurately.*





Rest assured that you will not forget even a word of this revelation, nor ever commit a mistake in reciting it.

After this instruction the original theme is resumed with: *Nay, but you love the worldly life.* The people who are not aware of this background regard these sentences as entirely unconnected with the context when they see them interposed here. But one does not see any irrelevance when he has understood their background. This can be understood by an example. A teacher seeing the inattentiveness of a student in the course of the lesson might interrupt the lesson to tell him: ‘Listen to me carefully’, and then resume his speech. This sentence will certainly seem to be irrelevant to those who might be unaware of the incident and might read the lesson when it is printed and published word for word. But the one who is aware of the incident because of which this sentence was interposed, will feel satisfied that the lesson has been reproduced verbatim and nothing has been increased or decreased in it in the process of reproduction.

Imam Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Nasai, Tirmidhi Ibn Jarir, Tabarani, Baihaqi and other traditionists have related with authentic chains of transmitters a tradition from Abdullah bin Abbas, saying that *when the Qur’an was revealed to the Prophet (peace be upon him), he would start repeating the words of the revelation rapidly as the Angel Gabriel recited them, fearing lest he should forget some part of it later. Thereupon, he was instructed: Do not move your tongue to remember this revelation hastily.* The same thing has been related from Shabi, Ibn Zaid, Dahhak, Hasan Basri, Qatadah, Mujahid and other early commentators.

﴿ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْءَانَهُ ﴾

(75:17) It is certainly upon Us to ‘make you’ memorize and recite it.

﴿ فَإِذَا قَرَأْنَاهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْءَانَهُ ﴾





(75:18) So once We have recited a revelation 'through Gabriel',¹³ follow its recitation 'closely'.

12. Although it was Angel Gabriel who recited the Qur'an to the Prophet (peace be upon him), since he recited it on behalf of Allah and not on his own behalf, Allah said: When *We* have recited it.

﴿ تَمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ ﴾

(75:19) Then it is surely upon Us to make it clear 'to you'.¹³

13. This gives the feeling, and some early commentators have also given expression to the same, that probably in the beginning the Messenger (peace be upon him) of Allah used to ask of the Angel Gabriel the meaning of a verse or a word or a command of the Qur'an even in the very midst of the revelation itself. Therefore, the Prophet (peace be upon him) was not only given the instruction that he should listen quietly to revelation when it came down to him, and assured that its each word would be preserved in his memory precisely, and he would be enabled to recite the Qur'an exactly as it was revealed, but at the same time it was also promised that he would be made to understand the meaning and intention of each command and each instruction of Divine revelation.

The explanation of the meaning and intention of the Qur'an and of its commandments that was given by Allah to the Prophet (peace be upon him), was given for the purpose that he should make the people understand the Qur'an by his word and deed according to it and teach them to act on its commands. The means of knowing the explanation of the words of the Qur'an that Allah taught His Messenger (peace be upon him) and the Messenger (peace be upon him) his Ummah by word and deed, is none but the Hadith and the Sunnah.



After this, how can a believer of the Qur'an deny that the Qur'an's correct and authoritative, as a matter of fact official, explanation is only that which the Prophet (peace be upon him) has given by his word and deed, for it is not his personal explanation but the explanation given by the God Who sent down the Qur'an to him. Apart from this, or leaving this aside any person who explains a verse, or a word, of the Qur'an according to his personal whim and desire, commits a boldness which no true believer could ever commit.

Ayaat 20-25 – But You Love the Present Life

﴿كَلَّا بَلْ تُحِبُّونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ﴾

(75:20) But no!¹⁴ In fact, you love this fleeting world,

14. The theme is again resumed from where it was interrupted by the parenthesis. 'No' implies: You deny the Hereafter not because you regard the Creator of the universe as helpless to bring about Resurrection and raise the dead, but because of this and this other reason.

﴿وَتَذَرُونَ الْآخِرَةَ﴾

(75:21) and neglect the Hereafter.¹⁵

15. This is the second reason for denying the Hereafter, the first being the one mentioned in verse 5 above, saying: Since man wants to avoid the moral restrictions which are inevitably imposed by the belief in the Hereafter, his selfish motives, in fact, urge him to deny the Hereafter, and then he tries to present arguments in order to rationalize his denial. Now, the second reason being presented is that the deniers of the Hereafter are narrow-minded and shortsighted; for them only those results which appear in this world are all important, and they do not give any importance to those effects which will appear in the Hereafter. They think that they should spend

all their labor and effort in attaining whatever benefits, pleasures or joys they can attain here, for if one attained this, one attained everything, no matter what evil end this might lead to in the Hereafter. Likewise, they think that the loss or trouble or grief that can afflict one here is a thing that one must avoid, no matter how great a reward it might earn one in the Hereafter if one endured it here. They are only interested in the cash bargain. For the sake of as remote a thing as the Hereafter they can neither abandon a profit nor suffer a loss today. With this mode of thought when they discuss the question of the Hereafter rationally, it is not true rationalism but a mode of thinking because of which they are resolved not to acknowledge the Hereafter in any case even if their conscience might be crying froth within that the arguments for the possible occurrence and necessity of the Hereafter given in the Qur'an are highly rational and their own reasoning against it is very weak.

﴿ وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاصِرَةٌ ﴾

(75:22) On that Day 'some' faces will be bright,¹⁶

16. Some faces shall be radiant; will be beaming with joy and delight, for the Hereafter which they had believed in, will be before them precisely accordingly to their belief. Thus, when they see the Hereafter for the sake of which they had given up the unlawful benefits of the world and suffered the lawful losses, actually established before their very eyes, they will have the satisfaction that they had made the correct decision about their way of life, and the time had come when they would enjoy its best and plentiful fruits.

﴿ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ ﴾

(75:23) looking at their Lord.¹⁷

17. Some commentators have understood this allegorically. They say that the words looking towards someone are used idiomatically for having expectations from some



one, awaiting his decision and hoping for his mercy and kindness: so much so that even a blind person also says that he is looking towards some one in the hope to see how he helps him. But in a large number of the *Ahadith* the commentary that has been reported of it from the Prophet (peace be upon him) is that in the Hereafter the righteous servants of Allah will be blessed with the vision of their Lord. According to a hadith in Bukhari: *You will openly see your Lord*. Another hadith has been reported in Bukhari and Muslim from Jarir bin Abdullah (Imam Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Daraqutni, Ibn Jarir, Ibn AlMundhir, Tabarani, Baihaqi, Ibn Abi Shaibah and some other traditionists have related, with a little variation in wordings a hadith from Abdullah bin Umar) saying: *“The man of the lowest rank among the dwellers of Paradise will see the vastness of his kingdom up to a distance covered in two thousand years, and the people of the highest rank among them will see their Lord twice daily. Then, the Prophet (peace be upon him) recited this verse: ‘On that Day some faces shall be radiant, looking towards their Lord.’”*

On the basis of this and many other traditions, the followers of the Sunnah almost unanimously understand this verse in the meaning that in the Hereafter the dwellers of Paradise will be blessed with the vision of Allah, and this is supported by this verse of the Qur’an too: *Nay, surely on that Day they (the sinners) shall be kept away from their Lord's vision.* (Surah Al-Mutaffifin, Ayah 15). From this one can automatically conclude that this deprivation will be the lot of the sinners, not of the righteous. Obviously, we ought to understand that in the Hereafter the dwellers of Paradise will not see Allah in the specific form in which man sees something in the world, but their nature of seeing will be different, which we cannot comprehend here.

﴿ وَوُجُوهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِآسِرَةٍ ﴾

(75:24) And ‘other’ faces will be gloomy,



﴿ تَنْظُنُّ أَنْ يُفْعَلَ بِهَا فَاقِرَةٌ ﴾

(75:25) anticipating something devastating to befall them.

Ayaat 26-35 – Man will realize the Reality at the Time of Death

﴿ كَلَّا إِذَا بَلَغَتِ النَّرَاقِي ﴾

(75:26) But no!¹⁸ Beware of the day⁷ when the soul reaches the collar bone ⁷as it leaves⁷,

18. The word ‘No’ relates to the context, and means: You are wrong in thinking that you will be annihilated after death and you will not return to your Lord.

﴿ وَقِيلَ مَنْ رَاقِي ﴾

(75:27) and it will be said, “Is there any healer ⁷who can save this life⁷?”¹⁹

19. The word *raqin* in the original may be derived from *ruqayyah*, which means resort to charming, enchanting and exercising, and also from *raqi*, which means ascending. In the first case, the meaning would be: At last, when the attendants of the patient are disappointed with every remedy and cure, they will say: Let us at least call in an enchanter, who may save him. In the second case, the meaning would be: At that time the angels will say: which angels are to take his soul: the angels of punishment or the angels of mercy? In other words, at that very time the question will be decided in what capacity the dying one is entering the Hereafter; if he is a righteous person, the angels of mercy will take him, and if he is wicked, the angels of mercy will keep away and the angels of punishment will seize him and take him away.

﴿ وَظَنَّ أَنَّهُ الْفِرَاقُ ﴾

(75:28) And the dying person realizes it is ⁷their⁷ time to depart,

﴿وَأَلْتَفَتِ السَّاقُ بِالسَّاقِ﴾

(75:29) and 'then' their feet are tied together 'in a shroud'.²⁰

20. Some commentators have taken the word *saq* (leg, shank) in its literal meaning, thereby implying that at death one lean leg will join the other lean leg; some others have taken it metaphorically in the sense of difficulty, vehemence and hardship so as to mean: At that time one affliction will be joined with another affliction, one of being separated from the world and all its enjoyments, and the other of being seized and taken to the Hereafter as a culprit, and this will be experienced by every disbeliever, hypocrite and sinner.

﴿إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمَسَاقُ﴾

(75:30) On that day they will be driven to your Lord 'alone'.

﴿فَلَا صَدَقَ وَلَا صَلَّىٰ﴾

(75:31) This denier neither believed nor prayed,

﴿وَلَكِن كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ﴾

(75:32) but persisted in denial and turned away,

﴿ثُمَّ ذَهَبَ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِۦٓ يَتَمَطَّىٰ﴾

(75:33) then went to their own people, walking boastfully.²¹

21. It means that the one who was not prepared to believe in the Hereafter, heard all that has been described in the above verses; yet he persisted in his denial, and hearing these verses went back to his household, arrogantly. Mujahid, Qatadah and Ibn Zaid say that this person was Abu Jahl. The words of the verse also indicate that it was some particular person, who adopted such a conduct after having heard the above-mentioned verse of Surah Al-Qiyamah. The words, *He neither affirmed the truth nor*

offered the Prayer, are particularly noteworthy. They clearly show that the first and necessary demand of acknowledging the truth about Allah and His Messenger and Book is that one should perform the Prayer. The occasion and time to carry out the other injunctions of the divine Shariah come later but the Prayer time approaches soon after one has affirmed the faith, and then it becomes known whether what one has affirmed with the tongue was really the voice of his heart, or it was only a puff of the wind which one sent out from his mouth in the form of words.

﴿أُولَىٰ لَكَ فَأُولَىٰ﴾

(75:34) Woe to you, and more woe!

﴿ثُمَّ أُولَىٰ لَكَ فَأُولَىٰ﴾

(75:35) Again, woe to you, and even more woe!²²

22. The commentators have given several meanings of the word *awla laka*: shame on you, may you perish, woe to you, may you hasten to your doom. In Maududi's opinion, in view of the context, the most appropriate meaning is that which Hafiz Ibn Kathir has given in his commentary: When you have had the boldness to disown your Creator, then it only befits a person like you to persist in the sort of conduct you display ('This (attitude) is worthy of you, altogether worthy'). This is the same sort of sarcastic remark as occurred in (Surah Ad-Dukhan, Ayat 49): While meting out punishment to the culprit in Hell, it will be said: *Taste this, a mighty and honorable man that you are.*

﴿أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى﴾

(75:36) Do people²³ think they will be left without purpose?²⁴



23. Or: *'Does man think that he will be left alone, unquestioned?'* Now, in conclusion, the same theme is being repeated with which the discourse began: life-after-death is necessary as well as possible.

24. The word *suda* when used with regard to a camel implies a camel who is wandering aimlessly, grazing at will, without there being anybody to look after him. Thus, the verse means: Does man think that he has been left to himself to wander at will as if his Creator had laid no responsibility on him, had imposed no duty on him, had forbidden nothing to him, that at no time in future he would be required to account for his deeds. This same theme has been expressed in (Surah Al-Mominoon, Ayat 115) thus: *'On the Day of Resurrection, Allah will ask the disbelievers: Did you think that We had created you without any purpose, and that you would never be brought back to Us.'* At both these places the argument for the necessity of the life hereafter has been presented as a question. The question means: Do you really think that you are no more than mere animals? Don't you see the manifest difference between yourself and the animal. The animal has been created without the power of choice and authority, but you have been blessed with the power of choice and authority; there is no question of morality about what the animal does, but your acts are necessarily characterized by good and evil. Then, how did you take it into your head that you had been created irresponsible and unanswerable as the animal has been? Why the animal will not be resurrected, is quite understandable. The animal only fulfilled the fixed demands of its instinct, it did not use its intellect to propound a philosophy; it did not invent a religion; it did not take anyone its god nor became a god for others; it did nothing that could be called good or bad; it did not enforce a good or bad way of life, which would influence others, generation after generation, so that it should deserve a reward or punishment for it. Hence, if it perished to annihilation, it would be understandable, for it could not be held responsible for any



of its acts to account for which it might need to be resurrected. But how could you be excused from life-after-death when right till the time of your death you continued to perform moral acts, which your own intellect judged as good or bad and worthy of reward or punishment? Should a man who killed an innocent person, and then fell a victim to a sudden accident immediately after it, go off free and should never be punished for the crime of murder he committed? Do you really feel satisfied that a man, who sowed corruption and iniquity in the world, which entailed evil consequences for mankind for centuries after him, should himself perish like an insect; or a grasshopper, and should never be resurrected to account for his misdeeds, which corrupted the lives of hundreds of thousands of human beings after him? Do you think that the man, who struggled throughout his life for the cause of truth and justice, goodness and peace, and suffered hardships for their sake, was a creation of the kind of an insect, and had no right to be rewarded for his good acts.

﴿ أَلَمْ يَكُ نُطْفَةً مِّن مَّنِيِّ يُمْنَىٰ ﴾

(75:37) Were they not 'once' a sperm-drop emitted (ejaculated semen),

﴿ ثُمَّ كَانَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقَ فَسَوَّىٰ ﴾

(75:38) Then they became a clinging clot 'of blood', then He developed and perfected their form,

﴿ فَجَعَلَ مِنْهُ الزَّوْجَيْنِ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَىٰ ﴾

(75:39) producing from it both sexes, male and female.

﴿ أَلَيْسَ ذَٰلِكَ بِقَدِيرٍ عَلَىٰ أَن يُحْيِيَ الْمَوْتَىٰ ﴾

(75:40) Is such 'a Creator' unable to bring the dead back to life?²⁵

25. This is an argument for the possibility of life-afterdeath. As for the people who believe that the whole act of creation, starting from the emission of a sperm-drop till



its development into a perfect man, is only a manifestation of the power and wisdom of Allah, they cannot in fact refute this argument in any way, for their intellect however shamelessly and stubbornly they might behave, cannot refuse to admit that the God Who thus brings about man in the world, also has the power to bring the same man into being once again. As for those who regard this expressly wise act only as a result of accident, do not in fact have any explanation to offer, unless they are bent upon stubbornness, how in every part and in every nation of the world, from the beginning of creation till today, the birth of boys and girls has continuously been taking place in such proportion that at no time it has so happened that in some human population only males or only females might have been born and there might be no possibility of the continuation of the human race. Has this also been happening just accidentally. To make such an absurd claim one should at least be so shameless as to come out one day with the claim that London and New York, Moscow and Peking, have come into existence just accidentally.

There are several traditions to show that whenever the Prophet (peace be upon him) recited this verse, he would sometimes respond with *bala* (why not, but off course), sometimes with *Subhanaka (Allahumma) fa-bala* (Glorified are You, O Allah, why not) (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Abu Dawud).

Discussion:

1. Explain the Theme and Subject Matter in connection with the Period of Revelation of surah al-Qiyamah.
2. Explain “And I do swear by the self-reproaching soul!”





TAFSEER OF SURAH AL-INSAN (No. 76)

Name

This Surah is called *Ad-Dahr* (The Time) as well as *Al-Insan* (The Man) after the words occurring in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

Most of the commentators, including Allama Zamakhshari, Imam Razi, Qadi, Baidawi, Allama Nizam ad-Din Nisaburi, Hafiz Ibn Kathir and many others, regard it as a Makki Surah, and, according to Allama Alusi, the same is the opinion of the majority of scholars. However, some commentators hold the view that the Surah was revealed at Madinah, and some others say that it was revealed at Makkah but vv. 8-10 of it were sent down at Madinah.

As far as the subject matter and the style of the Surah are concerned, these are very different from those of the Madani Surahs. A little study of it rather shown that it is not only a Makki Surah but it was revealed during the earliest period at Makkah, which began just after the revelation of the first seven verses of Surah Al-Muddaththir.

Theme and Subject Matter

The theme of this Surah is to inform man of his true position in the world and to tell him that if he understood his true position rightly and adopted the attitude of gratefulness, he would meet with such and such good end, and if he adopted the way of disbelief, he would meet with such and such evil ends. In the longer Surahs of the Qur'an this same theme has been presented at length, but a special characteristic of the style of the earliest Surahs revealed at Makkah is that the subjects dealt with at length in the later period have been presented in a brief but highly effective way in



this period in such concise, elegant sentences as may automatically be preserved in the memory of the hearers.

The Virtue of Surah al-Insaan/ad-Dahr:

It has been recorded in Saheeh Muslim from Ibn ‘Abbas *radhiAllahu ‘anhu* that the Prophet *salAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* used to recite this Surah (alongside with Surah As-Sajdah) in the Fajr prayer on Fridays.

Tafseer of Surah Al-Insan (The Man) – 31 Ayats

Ayaat 1-4 – The Humble Beginning of Man

﴿ هَلْ أَتَى عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ حِينٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُن شَيْئًا مَّذْكُورًا ﴾

(76:1) Is there not a period of time when each human is nothing yet worth mentioning?¹

1. Or: ‘*Was there a period of time when man was not even worthy of a mention?*’ Most of the commentators and translators have taken *hal* [هَلْ] in the first sentence *hal ata alal-insan-i*, in the meaning of *qad* [قَدْ]. Accordingly, they interpret this sentence to mean; “No doubt, there has indeed passed on man a time.” But, in fact, the word *hal* in Arabic is used only as an interrogative particle [حرف استفهام], and its object is not to ask a question in every case, but this apparently interrogative particle is used in different meanings on different occasions. Sometimes, we do not intend to have something just affirmed but we put a question in order to make the addressee pay particular attention to something which follows his affirmation as a sequel. For example, we ask someone: “Have I harmed you in any way?” The object is not only to make him affirm that one has not done him any harm, but also to make him think how far one is justified to harm somebody who has not harmed him in any way. The interrogative sentence in the verse before us illustrates this last meaning. The object



is not only to make man affirm that there has indeed passed on him such a time but also to make him think that the God Who developed and shaped him into a perfect man from an insignificant, humble beginning, would not be helpless to create him once again.

In the second sentence, *hin um-min ad-dahr* the word *dahr* [الدَّهْر] implies the endless time, the beginning and end of which are unknown to man and this is the particular period of time which might at some time have passed during this endless period. What is meant to be said is that in this immensely long span of time there has passed a long period when human race was altogether non-existent. Then a time came in it when a species called man was created, and in the same period a time has passed on every person when a beginning was made to bring him into existence from nothingness.

The third sentence, “*When he was not a thing (even) to be mentioned*” implies that a part of him existed in the form of a microscopic gene in the sperm drop of the father and a part in the form of a microscopic ovum in the mother. For long ages man did not even know that he comes into being when the sperm gene and the ovum combined. Then, the initial cell that comes into being by the combination of the two at the time of conception is such an insignificant thing that it can be seen only through highly powerful microscopes, and seeing it also no one at first sight can claim that it is a man taking shape, nor that even if a man emerges from this humble beginning, what will be his size and stature, what will be his form and figure, and what will be his capabilities and personality like. This is the meaning of the sentence that at that time he was not yet a thing worthy of any mention although a beginning of his being as a man had been made.

(إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ نَبْتَلِيهِ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا)





(76:2) 'For' indeed, We 'alone' created humans from a drop of mixed fluids,² 'in order' to test them,³ so We made them hear and see.⁴

2. "From a drop of mixed fluids": From the intermingling of the male sperm with the female ovum and not separately from the sperm or the ovum, i.e., the mixture of male and female gametes (sperm and egg) which form the zygote after fertilization. During sexual intercourse normally 200-500 million sperms are deposited into the female birth canal. Usually, only one sperm is allowed to fuse and mix with the ovum.

3. This shows man's real position in the world and the position of the world for man. He is not like the trees and animals that the object of his creation be fulfilled on the earth itself, and he should die and perish here after he has played his appointed role over a period of time according to the law of nature. Furthermore, this world is neither a place of punishment for him, as the monks think, nor a place of rewards as the believers of the law of transmigration think, nor a place of entertainment and enjoyment, as the materialists think, nor a battlefield, as the followers of atheists think, but in fact it is a place of test and trial for him. That which he regards as his age, is in fact the time given to him for the test. Whatever powers and capabilities he has been given in the world, the things that have been placed under his control and authority, the various positions and capacities in which he functions, and the relationships that he enjoys with other people, all these are the countless manners of the test and this test continues till the last breath of his life. The result is not to be announced in this world but in the Hereafter when all his answer books will have been assessed, decision will be given whether he has come out successful or failed. And his success or failure wholly depends on what he thought of himself while he functioned here and how he answered the questions that were given to him here. If he believed that he had no God, or that he was the slave of many gods, and while





answering the questions he thought that he was not to be held accountable before his Creator in the Hereafter, his whole lifework went wrong. And if he regarded himself as the slave of One God and worked in the way approved by God, with the accountability of the Hereafter always in view, he stood successful in the test. This theme has occurred at many places in the Qur'an.

4. The words *sami'* (hearing) and *baseer* (seeing) in the original text actually imply being "sensible and intelligent". These words of the Arabic language are never used in respect of the animal although it also hears and sees. Thus, hearing and seeing here do not imply the powers of hearing and seeing which have been given to the animals too, but those means through which man obtains knowledge and then draws conclusions from it. Besides, since hearing and seeing are among the most important means of knowledge for man, only these two have been mentioned briefly; otherwise it actually implies giving man all those senses of the body by which he gathers information. Then the senses given to man are quite different in their nature from those given to animals, for at the back of every sense he has a thinking brain, which collects information gained through the senses; arranges it, draws conclusions from it, forms opinions, and then takes some decisions which become the basis of his attitude and conduct in life. Hence, after saying, "We created man in order to try him," to say, "therefore, We made him capable of hearing and seeing" actually contains the meaning that Allah gave him the faculties of knowledge and reason to enable him to take the test. Obviously, if this were not the meaning and the meaning of making man hearing and seeing just implied the one who could hear and see, then a blind and deaf person would stand exempted from the test, whereas unless a person is utterly devoid of knowledge and reason, there can be no question of his being exempted from the test.

(إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا ﴿٤﴾)





(76:3) We already showed them the Way, whether they 'choose to' be grateful or ungrateful.⁵

5. That is, We did not just leave him to himself after giving him the powers of knowledge and reason, but We also guided him so that he knows which is the path of gratefulness and which of ungratefulness, so that whichever path he chooses in his later life, he himself is responsible for it. In Surah *Al-Balad*, the same subject has been expressed, thus “*And We showed him both the conspicuous ways (of good and evil).*” And in Surah *Ash-Shams*, thus: “*By the human self, and by Him Who balanced it (with all the external and internal powers), then inspired it with its wickedness and its piety.*” When all these explanations are kept in view, and also those detailed statements of the Qur’an in which it has been stated what arrangements Allah has made for man’s guidance in the world, it becomes evident that in this verse “*We guided him to the way*” does not imply any one form of guidance but many forms of it which are limitless and countless. For example:

(1) Along with the faculties of knowledge and reason, man has also been endowed with a moral sense by which he discerns between good and evil, regards some acts and qualities as evil even if he himself is involved in them, and regards some other acts and qualities as good even if he himself is avoiding them.

(2) In every man Allah has placed the faculty of conscience (*al-lawwamah*), which checks and pricks him every time he is about to commit an evil, or is in the process of committing it, or has already committed it. However hard man may try to silence his conscience or make it insensitive; he does not have the power to destroy it completely (See commentary of Surah *Al-Qiyamah*, ayah 2).

(3) In man’s own self and outside of him, from the earth to the heavens, there lie scattered in the universe countless such signs which clearly show that all this could





not happen without a God, nor could there be many gods to create this life and control and administer it. Likewise, these very signs, inside man and outside him, clearly point also to the Resurrection and Hereafter.

(4) Man does come across in his own life, and in the contemporary world and in the experiences of past history, countless such incidents which prove that a supreme power is ruling over him and the entire universe, before Whom he is absolutely powerless, whose Will is dominant over everything and whose help he needs at every moment.

(5) Man's intellect and his nature assert positively that crime ought to be punished and good deeds ought to be rewarded. On this very basis in every society of the world a system of the courts is established in one form or another. The services and works which are regarded as commendable are also rewarded in one way or another. This is a clear proof of the fact that there is a necessary relationship between morality and the law of retribution, which man cannot possibly deny. Now, if it is admitted that in this world there are countless such crimes which cannot be punished at all to say nothing of punishing them fully and adequately, and there are also countless such virtues, which cannot be rewarded at all, to say nothing of rewarding them fully and adequately, there is no alternative but to acknowledge the Hereafter.

To reinforce these means of guidance Allah sent Messengers and revealed Books in the world for the purpose of giving clear and definite guidance to man. In these Books it was clearly explained what is the way of gratefulness and what is the way of ungratefulness and unbelief and what will be the consequences of following either way. The teaching brought by the Prophets and the Books has spread throughout the world in countless perceptible, and imperceptible ways, on such a large scale that no section of human population has remained unaware of the concept of God and the Hereafter, of the distinction between good and evil, and of the moral principles and



legal rulings presented by them, whether it knows or does not know that it has obtained this knowledge only through the teachings of the Prophets and the Books they brought. Even those who disbelieve in the Prophets and the Books today, or are unaware of them, also are following many of those things which have reached to them actually through their teachings while they do not know what is the real source of these teachings.

Then whoever does not follow the Right Path there is a warning for him:

﴿ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ سَلَاسِلًا وَأَغْلَالًا وَسَعِيرًا ﴾

(76:4) Indeed, We have prepared for the disbelievers chains, shackles, and a blazing Fire.

Ayaat 5-12 – A Tour of Jannah and Attributes of Righteous Servants

﴿ إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا ﴾

(76:5) Indeed, the virtuous⁶ will have a drink 'of pure wine'—flavoured with camphor—

6. The word *abrar* as used in the original implies the people who have done full justice to their Lord's obedience, have carried out the duties enjoined by Him and abstained from the things forbidden by Him.

﴿ عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ اللَّهِ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا تَفْجِيرًا ﴾

(76:6) 'from' a spring⁷ where Allah's servants⁸ will drink, flowing at their will.⁹

7. That is, it will not be camphor-mixed water but a natural fountain, the purity, coolness and agreeable odor of its water will resemble camphor.

8. Although the words '*ibad Allah* (servants of Allah), or '*ibad ar-Rahman* (servants of *Ar-Rahman*), can be used for all men literally, for every human being is God's

servant, yet wherever these words occur in the Qur'an they only imply the righteous men. In other words, the wicked ones who have excused themselves from Allah's servitude do not deserve that Allah should honor them with the honorable title of *'ibad-Allah* or *'ibad ar-Rahman*, attributing them to His own Holy Name.

9. It does not mean that they will use spades and picks to dig out its channels and will take out its branches whithersoever they please, but that their one single command and desire will be enough to cause a fountain to gush forth from wherever they please in Paradise.

﴿يُوفُونَ بِالنَّذْرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ مُسْتَطِيرًا﴾

(76:7) They 'are those who' fulfil 'their' vows¹⁰ and fear a Day of sweeping horror,

10. One meaning of fulfilling the vow is that one should fulfill. The second, that one should fulfill what one has pledged oneself to do. The third, that one should fulfill what one has been enjoined; what is obligatory for one to do, whether one has been enjoined it, or is self imposed. Of these three the second meaning is the best known and generally the same is implied by fulfilling the vow. In any case, these righteous people have been regarded as praiseworthy either because they carry out the duties enjoined by Allah, or because if they vow to Allah to perform certain good deeds which Allah has not enjoined on them, they fulfill even those self imposed vows, not to speak of showing any negligence in carrying out the duties which Allah has actually enjoined on them.

﴿وَيُطْعَمُونَ أَلْطَعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا﴾

(76:8) and give food—despite their desire for it¹¹—to the poor, the orphan, and the captive,¹²



11. Most of the commentators hold the view that the pronoun in *hubbi-hi* refers to food. Accordingly, they interpret the sentence to mean: “In spite of the food’s being agreeable and tasty and that they need it, they give it away to others.” Ibn Abbas and Mujahid say: They do so because of their fondness for feeding the poor (*ala hubb-il-it’am*); and Fudail bin Iyad and Abu Sulayman ad-Darani say: They do so out of love for Allah. In Maududi’s opinion the sentence in the next Ayah “*We feed you only for the sake of Allah*” supports the last meaning.

12. The custom in the ancient days was that the prisoners were put in fetters and shackles and taken out daily to go about the streets begging food. Later the Islamic government abolished this custom. In this verse, the captive implies every such person who is in bondage, whether he is an unbeliever, a Muslim, a war prisoner, or imprisoned in consequence of a crime, and whether he is provided food in that state, or made to beg for it. In any case, to feed a helpless person who cannot do anything to earn a living is an act of great virtue.

﴿ إِنَّمَا نَطْعِمُكُمْ لَوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا ﴾

(76:9) ‘saying to themselves,’¹³ “We feed you only for the sake of Allah, seeking neither reward nor thanks from you.”¹⁴

13. Although feeding a poor man is in itself a great virtue, yet fulfilling the other needs of an indigent (needy) person is no less virtuous. For example, to clothe a poor man, to arrange treatment for a sick person, or to help a debtor who is harassed by his creditor, is an act of equally great virtue. Here, a particular kind of virtue in view of its importance has been presented only as an example, but the real object is to stress giving help to the needy.

14. It is not necessary that this may be said in so many words while feeding the poor man. It may be said in the heart; in the sight of Allah this is as meritorious as saying



it with the tongue. But saying these words with the tongue has been particularly mentioned so as to set the person being helped at ease that no thanks or recompense is due from him, so that he eats with full satisfaction and peace of mind.

﴿ إِنَّا نَخَافُ مِنْ رَبِّنَا يَوْمًا غُيُوبًا قَمَطِرِيرًا ﴾

(76:10) We fear from our Lord a horribly distressful Day.”

﴿ فَوَقَّعَهُمُ اللَّهُ شَرَّ ذَٰلِكَ الْيَوْمِ وَلَقَّاهُمْ نَضْرَةً وَسُرُورًا ﴾

(76:11) So Allah will deliver them from the horror of that Day, and grant them radiance and joy,¹⁵

15. *Radiance and joy*: radiance of the face and joy of the heart. In other words, all the severities and terrors of the Day of Resurrection will be meant only for the disbelievers and the culprits. The righteous will on that Day remain immune from every hardship and will be well pleased with their lot. The same theme has been expressed in (Surah Al-Anbiya: Ayah 103): *The time of great fright will not trouble them at all; the angels will rush forth to receive them, saying: this is the Day that you were promised*; and in (Surah An-Naml: Ayah 89): *He who brings good deeds, will have a reward better than that, and such people shall be secure from the terror of that Day.*

﴿ وَجَزَّاهُمْ بِمَا صَبَرُوا جَنَّةً وَحَرِيرًا ﴾

(76:12) and reward them for their perseverance¹⁵ with a Garden 'in Paradise' and 'garments of' silk.

16. Here the word *sabr* (patience) has been used in a very comprehensive sense. The whole worldly life of the righteous believers in fact has been described as a life of patience. From the time a man attains discretion, or believes, till death; his suppressing of unlawful desires, adhering to the bounds set by Allah, carrying out

the duties enjoined by Him, sacrificing his time, his wealth, his effort, powers and abilities, even his life if so required, ignoring every greed and temptation, which might turn him away from Allah's way, meeting every danger and enduring every hardship faced on the way of the truth, giving up every gain and pleasure accruing from unlawful ways and means, bearing every loss and suffering and affliction incurred on account of his love for truth, and doing all this with full faith in the promise of Allah that He will bless the doer with the fruits of this righteous conduct not in this world but in the second life after death, turns the whole life of a believer into a life of patience, eternal and perpetual patience, all pervasive and life long patience.

Ayaat 13-22 – A Tour of Jannah and Attributes of Righteous Servants

﴿ مُتَّكِنِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ لَا يَرَوْنَ فِيهَا شَمْسًا وَلَا زَمْهَرِيرًا ﴾

(76:13) There they will be reclining on 'canopied' couches, never seeing scorching heat or bitter cold.

﴿ وَدَانِيَةً عَلَيْهِمْ ظِلُّهَا وَذُلَّتْ قُطُوفُهَا تَدْلِيًا ﴾

(76:14) The Garden's shade will be right above them, and its fruit will be made very easy to reach.

﴿ وَيُطَافُ عَلَيْهِم بِآنِيَةٍ مِّن فِضَّةٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ كَانَتْ قَوَارِيرًا ﴾

(76:15) They will be waited on with silver vessels¹⁷ and cups of crystal—¹⁸

17. According to (Surah Az-Zukhruf: Ayah 71), vessels of gold shall be passed round to them, but here of silver. This shows that vessels of gold as well as of silver shall be passed round to them as required by the occasion.

18. That is, though silver, it will be as transparent as glass, vessels of this kind of transparent, crystal like silver will be the special characteristic of the vessels in which drinks will be served to the people of Paradise.

﴿ قَوَارِيرًا مِنْ فِضَّةٍ قَدَّرُوهَا تَقْدِيرًا ﴾

(76:16) crystalline silver, filled precisely as desired.¹⁹

19. I.e. “*In due measure*”: filled accurately according to the desire of every person, neither over-filled nor under-filled. In other words, the attendants of the dwellers of Paradise will be so judicious and discerning that they will have accurate judgment about everybody whom they serve wine as to how much of it he wishes to drink.

﴿ وَيُسْقَوْنَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنْجَبِيلًا ﴾

(76:17) And they will be given a drink 'of pure wine' flavoured with ginger

﴿ عَيْنًا فِيهَا تُسَمَّى سَلْسَبِيلًا ﴾

(76:18) from a spring there, called Salsabil.²⁰

20. This is to suit the taste of the Arabs who liked the wine flavored with ginger mixed water. But this flavoring will not be achieved by adding ginger mixed water to it: it will be a natural fountain which will have the flavor of ginger but without its bitterness. Therefore, it will be called *Salsabil*, which implies such water as flows gently and pleasantly down the throat on account of its being sweet, light and palatable. Most commentators think that the word *salsabil* has been used here as an adjective of the fountain and not as a name for it.

﴿ وَيَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُخَلَّدُونَ إِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ حَسِبْتَهُمْ لُؤْلُؤًا مَنثورًا ﴾

(76:19) They will be waited on by eternal youths. If you saw them, you would think they were scattered pearls.²¹

21. This implies boys who will ever remain boys and stay young. Ali and Hasan Basri say that these will be those children who died before reaching their maturity; therefore, they will neither have any good works to their credit for which they may be rewarded, nor any evil deeds for which they may be punished. But obviously, this could imply those people who would not deserve Paradise. For, as for the true believers, about them Allah has guaranteed in the Qur'an that their children will be joined with them in Paradise (Surah At-Toor, Ayah 21). This is also supported by the Hadith, which Abu Dawud, Tayalisi, Tabarani and Bazzar have related on the authority of Anas and Samurah bin Jundub, according to which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said that the children of the polytheists will be attendants of the people of Paradise.

(وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ ثَمَّ رَأَيْتَ نَعِيمًا وَمُلْكًا كَبِيرًا)

(76:20) And if you looked around, you would see 'indescribable' bliss and a vast kingdom.²²

22. Even if a person might have lived a pauper (very poor person) in the world, in the Hereafter when he is admitted to Paradise, on the basis of his good deeds, he will live as though he were the owner of a splendid kingdom.

(عَلَيْهِمْ نِيَابُ سُنْدُسٍ خُضْرٌ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٌ وَحُلُوعُ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ فِضَّةٍ وَسَقَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُورًا)

(76:21) The virtuous will be 'dressed' in garments of fine green silk and rich brocade,²³ and adorned with bracelets of silver,²⁴ and their Lord will give them a purifying drink.²⁵

23. The same theme has been expressed in (Surah Al-Kahf: Ayah 31), thus: “*They (the dwellers of Paradise) will wear colored robes of silk and rich brocade and will be reclining upon raised thrones.*”



24. In (Surah Al-Kahf: Ayah 31), it has been said: “*They will be adorned with bracelets of gold.*” This same theme has also occurred in (Surah Al-Hajj: Ayah 23) and (Surah Fatir: Ayah 33). When all these verses are read together, three possibilities become obvious: (1) That sometimes they would like to wear bracelets of gold and sometimes bracelets of silver, both being available for use as and when required; (2) that they will wear bracelets of both gold and silver at the same time; (3) that whosoever desires will wear bracelets of gold and whosoever desires will wear bracelets of silver.

As for the question, why will the men be adorned with the ornaments when these are usually worn by the women? The answer is that in the ancient times the custom was that the kings and their nobles used to adorn their hands and necks and the crowns of their heads with different kinds of ornaments (See Surah Az-Zukhruf: Ayah 53).

25. Two kinds of the wine have been mentioned above, first that to which water will be added from the fountain of camphor; second that to which water will be added from the fountain of ginger. After these, making mention of another wine, with the remark that their Lord shall give them a pure wine to drink, gives the meaning that this will be some superior kind of wine, which they will be given to drink as a special favor from Allah. The word *tahûr* implies that once the believers take that pure drink, there will be no bad feelings in their hearts or ailments in their bodies.

(إِنَّ هَذَا كَانَ لَكُمْ جَزَاءً وَكَانَ سَعْيَكُمْ مَشْكُورًا)

(76:22) **‘And they will be told,’ “All this is surely a reward for you. Your striving has been appreciated.”**²⁶

26. In the original, *kana sa’yukum mashkura*: “your endeavors have been accepted and recognized.” Sa’y implies the entire lifework that a person accomplished in the world, the works and objectives to which he applied his energies and abilities; and



its being *mashkur* means that Allah has appreciated it. *Shukr* when expressed by the servant to God implies his gratefulness to Him for His blessings, and when it is expressed by God for the servant, it means that He has appreciated his services. It is indeed the kindness of the Master that He should appreciate the endeavors of the servant when the servant has only carried out his duties according to the Master's will.

Ayaat 23-26 – The Revelation of Qur'an, Patience and Remembrance of Allah

(إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ تَنْزِيلًا)

(76:23) Indeed, it is We Who have revealed the Qur'an to you 'O Prophet' in stages.²⁷

27. Though the addressee here apparently is the Prophet (peace be upon him), the discourse is directed to the disbelievers who said, "Muhammad (peace be upon him) composes the Qur'an deliberately by himself piece by piece; had it been from Allah, it would be revealed all at once. At some places of the Qur'an this objection has been cited and answered (Surah An-Nahl, 101-102, and Surah Bani Israil, 106-107), but here Allah has answered it without citing it, saying emphatically: "*It is We Who are sending it down, it is not the composition of Muhammad, and it is We Who are sending it gradually. That is, it is the requirement of Our wisdom that We should not send down Our message all together in a book form but should send it piece by piece.*"

(فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تُطِعْ مِنْهُمْ ءَائِمًا أَوْ كَفُورًا)

(76:24) So be patient with your Lord's decree,²⁸ and do not yield to any evildoer or 'staunch' disbeliever from among them.²⁹



28. “Be patient”: Face patiently the hardships and difficulties of the great Mission your Lord has entrusted to upon you; endure firmly and steadfastly whatever comes to pass, without showing any weakness in this regard.

29. “Do not obey”: Do not yield to any one of them so as to give up preaching of the true faith; do not be inclined to make even the least change in the religious beliefs for the sake of any denier of the truth, or in the moral teachings for the sake of a wicked person. Proclaim whatever is unlawful and forbidden to be so openly even if an immoral person might press you hard to show some lenience in this condemnation, and proclaim whatever is false as false and whatever is true as true publicly even if the disbelievers might use all their influence to silence you, or to make you adopt a little lenience in this regard.

﴿وَأَذْكُرِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلاً﴾

(76:25) ‘Always’ remember the Name of your Lord morning and evening,

﴿وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَاسْجُدْ لَهُ وَسَبِّحْهُ لَيْلاً طَوِيلاً﴾

(76:26) and prostrate before Him during part of the night and glorify Him long at night.³⁰

30. The rule followed in the Qur’an is that wherever the Muslims have been exhorted to show patience against the disbelievers, immediately after it they have been commanded to remember Allah much and to observe the Prayer, which automatically implies that the power needed to meet the resistance of the enemies of the truth in the way of true faith can be obtained only by this means. To remember Allah morning and evening may also imply remembering Allah always but when the command to remember Allah at specific times is given, it implies the salat (Prayer, i.e., the five daily prayers). In this verse, *bukrah* means the morning (Fajr (Dawn) Prayer) and *aseel* the time from the sun’s decline till sunset, which obviously covers





the Zuhr (Noon) and the Asr (Afternoon) times. Night starts after sunset; therefore, the command “to prostrate yourself in the night” would apply to both the Maghrib and the Isha Prayers. Then, the command “to glorify Allah in the long hours of night”, clearly points to the time of the (Extra) Tahajjud Prayer. This also shows that these have been the Prayer times in Islam from the beginning. However, the command making the Prayer obligatory five times a day with fixed times and number of *rak'ats* was given on the occasion of *Mi'raj* (ascension).

Ayaat 27-31 – The Censure of Love for the World

﴿ إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ يُحِبُّونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ وَيَذُرُونَ وَرَاءَهُمْ يَوْمًا ثَقِيلًا ﴾

(76:27 Surely those 'pagans' love this fleeting world, 'totally' neglecting a weighty Day ahead of them.³¹

31. That is, the reason why the disbelieving Quraish still persist in the errors and deviations of belief and morality and why they turn a deaf ear to your invitation to the truth is, in fact, their worship of the world and their heedlessness of the Hereafter. Therefore, the way being followed by a true God-worshipper is so different from and opposed to their way that there can be no question of any compromise between them.

﴿ نَحْنُ خَلَقْنَاهُمْ وَشَدَدْنَا أَسْرَهُمْ وَإِذَا شِئْنَا بَدَّلْنَا أَمْثَلَهُمْ تَبْدِيلًا ﴾

(76:28) It is We Who created them and perfected their 'physical' form. But if We will, We can easily replace them with others.³²

32. The sentence, “*And when We will, We can replace them with others like them with a complete replacement*” can have several meanings:

(1) That whenever We please, We can destroy them and replace them by other people of their own kind, who will be different from them in conduct;





(2) That whenever We please, We can change their forms; that is, just as We can make someone healthy and sound in body, so also We have the power to make somebody a paralytic, cause someone to be struck with facial paralysis and other to fall a victim to some disease or accident and become a cripple permanently;

(3) That whenever We will, We can recreate them in some other form after death.

﴿ إِنَّ هَذِهِ تَذْكَرَةٌ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا ﴾

(76:29) Surely this is a reminder. So let whoever wills take the 'Right' Way to their Lord.

﴿ وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴾

(76:30) But you cannot will 'to do so' unless Allah wills.³² Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

33. Three things have been said in these verses:

(1) That whoever wills may adopt the way to his Lord;

(2) That one's willing to do a thing is not enough unless Allah so wills;

(3) That Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. If one considers these three things deeply one can fully understand the relationship between man's freedom of choice and Allah's Will, and it helps to remove all the confusions from the people's minds about the question of destiny.

The first verse shows that in this world the authority granted to man is only to the extent that he may decide to adopt any one of the different courses available for passing life here. This is the freedom of choice that Allah has given to him. For example, when a man confronts the question of earning a living for himself, he finds many ways before him of which some are lawful, as for example lawful kinds of





labor, service, trade and business, industry, or agriculture, and some are unlawful as thievery, robbery, picking pockets, prostitution, trading in money (on interest), gambling, bribery and unlawful kinds of services and business, etc. The decision to adopt any one of these ways has been left to man's own free choice as to how he would like to earn his living. Likewise, there are different modes of morality. On the one side, there are the good qualities, like honesty, nobility, decency, justice, pity, sympathy and chastity, and on the other, the evil traits like wickedness, meanness, tyranny, dishonesty, and frivolity. Man has full freedom to adopt any mode of morality he likes. The same is the case with religion; man has many ways open before him in this regard also; atheism and denial of God, polytheism and idol worship, different combinations of monotheism and polytheism, and the unalloyed creed of God worship which is taught by the Qur'an. In these also, the decision to choose has been left to man as to which of them he wants to adopt. Allah does not impose on him any decision of His own. If man may like to choose a lawful means of earning his living, Allah will not force him to adopt an unlawful means for it. Or that man may like to follow the Qur'an, Allah will not force him to become an atheist, polytheist or disbeliever. Or that man may like to become a good man, Allah will not force him to become an evil man.

But after man has exercised this freedom of choice whether can he practically also do the same which he wants to do, depends on Allah's Will, His leave and His grace. If the Will of Allah be to let the man do what he has willed or decided to do, then alone can he do it; otherwise he cannot do anything without Allah's Will and His leave, however hard and seriously he may try to do it. This same thing has been said in the second verse. This can be explained by an example. If man had been delegated all the powers in the world and permitted to do whatever he pleased, the system of the world would have been disrupted. One murderer was enough to murder all the





people in the world if he were given the freedom to kill anybody he liked. One thief was enough to steal whatever he liked; one adulterer to commit rape on every woman, one robber to plunder every house, if each one of these had full powers to act as he desired. Therefore, Allah has kept this in His own power whether He may allow or disallow the man to follow the right or the wrong path that he chooses to follow or not. The person who, giving up error, wants to adopt the right way is also granted righteousness only by Allah's leave and will. However, the condition is that the decision to give up error and choose guidance should have been taken by the man himself; otherwise just as Allah does not make anybody a thief or murderer or atheist or polytheist forcibly, so also He does not make anybody a believer forcibly.

After this, the third verse removes the misunderstanding whether Allah's willing may not be arbitrary. That is why it has been said that "*Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.*" That is whatever He does, He does it on the basis of knowledge and wisdom; therefore, there can be no possibility of any error in His decisions. He decided with full knowledge and wisdom as to who should be given a particular kind of help and who should not be given it, who should be allowed to do a particular work and who should not be allowed to do it. To the extent that Allah provides opportunities to man and makes the conditions favorable for him, he can work according to his desire, whether it be good or evil. The question of guidance also is no exception to it. Allah alone knows on the basis of His knowledge and He alone determines on the basis of His wisdom as to who deserves to be guided and who does not (See the ending of Surah *Al-Muddaththir*, Ayat 55-56).

﴿ يُدْخِلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ وَالظَّالِمِينَ أَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴾

(76:31) He admits whoever He wills into His mercy. As for the wrongdoers, He has prepared for them a painful punishment.³⁴





34. In this verse “wrongdoers” imply the people whom the revelations of Allah and the teachings of His Prophet (peace be upon him) may reach, yet they deliberately and consciously decide that they would not obey and follow them. This also includes those unjust people who may plainly say that they do not accept the revelation as God’s revelation and the Prophet as God’s Prophet, or that they do not believe in God at all, and also those wicked people who may not refuse to believe in God and the Prophet and the Qur’an, but they are resolved not to obey and follow them. As a matter of fact, both these groups are unjust and wicked. As regards the first group, their case is clear and obvious; but the second group is no less wicked; it is also hypocritical and treacherous. Verbally, they say that they believe in God and the Messenger and the Qur’an, but in their hearts and minds they are resolved not to follow them, and their practical conduct of life is also opposed to it. About both Allah has declared that He has prepared for them a painful torment. They might strut about in the world, enjoy life as they like, boast and brag of their superiority, but ultimately they will be subjected to a disgraceful punishment; they cannot enter and enjoy Allah’s mercy in any way.

Discussion:

1. How is the Humble Beginning of Man explained at the beginning of surah al-Insan?
2. What has been said about The Revelation of Qur’an, Patience and Remembrance of Allah in sura al-Insan?



TAFSEER OF SURAH AL-MURSALAT (No. 77)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *wal-mursalat* (The Emissaries/Those Sent Forth/The Winds Which Are Sent) in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

Its subject matter bears full evidence that it was revealed in the earliest period at Makkah. If this Surah is read together with the two Surahs preceding it, namely Al-Qiyamah and Ad-Dahr, and the two Surahs following it, namely An-Naba' and An-Nazi'at, it becomes obvious that all these Surahs are the Revelations of the same period, and they deal with one and the same theme, which has been impressed on the people of Makkah in different ways.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is to affirm the Resurrection and Hereafter and to warn the people of the consequences which will ultimately follow the denial and the affirmation of these truths.

Virtue of Surah Al-Mursalat:

Ibn 'Abbas *radhiAllahu 'anhu* narrated that his mother (Umm al-Fadl) heard him reciting Surah Mursalat so she said, "O my son! You reminded me with your recitation of this Surah. Verily, it is the last thing I heard from the Messenger of Allah (*salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). He recited it in the Maghrib prayer (before he died)." [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim]

Tafseer of Surah Al-Mursalat (The Emissaries) – 50 Ayats

Ayaat 1-15 - Allah's swearing by Different Creatures about the Occurrence of the Hereafter

﴿ وَالْمُرْسَلَاتِ عُرْفًا ﴾

(77:1) By those 'winds' sent forth successively,

﴿ فَأَلْعَلِّفَاتِ عَصْفًا ﴾

(77:2) and those blowing violently,

﴿ وَالنَّشِيرَاتِ شَجْرًا ﴾

(77:3) and those scattering 'rainclouds' widely!

﴿ فَأَلْفَرَقَاتِ فَرَقًا ﴾

(77:4) And 'by' those 'angels' fully distinguishing 'truth from falsehood',

﴿ فَأَلْمَلِكِيَّتِ زَكْرًا ﴾

(77:5) and those delivering revelation, [/and then cast (Allah's) remembrance (in people's hearts)],

﴿ عُدْرًا أَوْ نُذْرًا ﴾

(77:6) ending excuses and giving warnings.¹

1. In these ayaat Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* swears oaths by 'those that have been sent'. What has been sent? That has not been explicitly mentioned, however, five attributes have been given:

1. "by those that are sent one after the other (in succession, or for a good cause),"

(77:1)

2. "by those that blow violently," (77:2)



3. “by those that scatter (disperse) all over,” (77:3)
4. “by those that differentiate (between right and wrong), [or: those which split and separate]” (77:4)
5. “by those that bring down the Reminder [or: inspire the remembrance].” (77:5)

The scholars have interpreted these differently. Some say that these refer to the winds. Others are of the opinion that these refer to the angels. While some others say that these refer to the Messengers. Ibn Katheer is of the opinion that in the first three *ayaat* Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* swears oaths by various types of winds. In the fourth and the fifth *ayaat*, He swears oaths by the angels.

According to Ibn Katheer, the *ayaat* signify ‘(I swear) by those (winds) that are sent one after the other’. The word ‘*urfan* [عُرْفَانًا] from *ma'roof* could signify ‘beneficial and useful’. The winds that bring rain are both beneficial and useful. The word ‘*asifat* [عَصِيفَاتٍ] is derived from ‘*asf* that literally means ‘winds that blow violently or vehemently’. The word *nashirat* [نَشْرَاتٍ] means “to spread out” and it refers to the winds that spread clouds all over after the rain is over.

Ayah 4 begins with the word *fariqati* [فَرَّقَاتٍ] which means “to separate, to distinguish, to divide or to split”. Now, the winds cannot distinguish between right and wrong. This is the attribute of the angels as they differentiate between right and wrong by bringing down the Divine revelation. *Ayah* 5 also refers to the angels. The word *dhikr* (reminder) refers to the Qur’an or revelation in general. The angels bring down revelation by which truth and falsehood, right and wrong, and the lawful and the forbidden is distinguished.

This *dhikr* or reminder serves two purposes ‘*udh'ran aw nud'ran* [أَوْ نُذْرًا] meaning to provide excuses or to give warnings. In the case of the believers, it persuades them to seek excuse from Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* for their





shortcomings, and pray for forgiveness; and in the case of disbelievers, it contains a warning for them of Allah's torment, if they oppose His command.

The purpose of sending this Reminder is that on the Day of Judgment people have no excuse that 'O Allah we didn't know'. Moreover, it also serves the purpose of warning those who do not pay heed. Some people take the lesson and change their course of action while others ignore them and do not change.

Or, according to Maududi, these ayats refer completely to the winds: "*to serve as an excuse or a warning.*" That is, sometimes the failure of winds causes the people to be alarmed at the prospect of a famine, and they turn to Allah to repent of their sins. Sometimes they bring a lot of rain and the people turn to Allah in gratitude, and sometimes their blowing violently causes dread in the hearts and the people turn to Allah from fear of destruction.

In these verses initially the order of rain-bringing winds has been stated, which is thus: first, winds start blowing in succession; then they assume the proportions of a storm; then they raise the clouds and spread them; then they split and separate them. After this, instead of making mention of the rainfall, it is said that the winds infuse the hearts with the remembrance of Allah, as an excuse or as a warning. That is, it is an occasion when either because of fear man is compelled to remember Allah, or else he confesses his errors and invokes Allah to protect and save him from ruin and bless him with rain. If it has not rained for a long time, and the people are thirsty for rain, even the most hardened disbeliever sometimes begins to remember God when he sees the winds blowing and the clouds advancing.

Thus, after describing the blowing of winds in their succession to say that they infuse the hearts with Allah's remembrance as an excuse or as a warning, is meant to impress the truth that the system working in the world keeps on reminding man that





everything on the earth has not been placed under his control but there is a Supreme Power above him, which rules his destiny. That Power is so supreme and mighty that it can use the elements for the sustenance and nourishment of man when it so wills and can use the same elements for his destruction when it so wills.

After this the same system of winds has been proffered as an argument to prove that the Resurrection which is being promised to man, must come to pass. This system has not been devised accidentally by some blind and deaf nature, but it is a well-considered and well-designed plan, which is functioning regularly according to a law. The same law has been at work since millions and millions of years under which this system is functioning. Had it not been so our coming into existence on the earth and survival here would not be possible.

Now, when this world and everything in it has meaning, and if there is a law working in this world and in everything it contains, and if it has been functioning with the same purpose and regularity since millions and millions of years, then a stubborn person only could refuse to accept that an All-Knowing, All-Mighty God has made it, and about that God it would be foolish to assume that although He could make and cause it to function but cannot break it, and after breaking it, cannot reconstruct it in any other form if He so wills.

Intellect can go only so far as to convince man that the Hereafter is possible and it should come about. As for the truth that it will surely come about, the knowledge of it can be obtained only through revelation, and revelation has given us the news that that which you are being promised must happen. We cannot attain this knowledge by intellectual reasoning; however, we can attain the certainty of its being true on the basis that the thing of which we are being informed by revelation is both possible and necessary.



(إِنَّمَا تُوعَدُونَ لَوَاقِعٌ)

(77:7) Surely, what you are promised² will come to pass.³

2. Another meaning can be: That which you are being threatened with, i.e. the Resurrection and Hereafter.
3. Here an oath has been sworn by aforementioned five things on the inevitability of the Resurrection.

Now, let us consider as to how these different states of winds point to the occurrence of the Resurrection. One of the most important factor which has made animal and vegetable life possible on the earth is the air. The relationship its qualities bear with every kind of life testify that there is an All-Powerful, All-Wise Creator, Who willed to create life on this earth and for this purpose created here a thing whose qualities exactly and precisely correspond to the requirements of the existence of living beings. Then, He did not only wrap up the earth in the air and left it alone, but by His power and wisdom characterized this air with countless different states, which are being regulated since millions and millions of years in such a way that they cause the change of seasons and weather: sometimes it is hot and sometimes cold; sometimes it brings clouds and sometimes it drives away clouds; sometimes it causes pleasant gusts to blow and sometimes disastrous windstorms; sometimes it brings beneficial rains and sometimes there is drought; in short, there are different kinds of winds which blow in their own time, and every kind serves one or the other purpose. This arrangement is the proof of a dominant Power, for which neither it can be impossible to bring life into existence, nor to obliterate it, nor to re-create it after having annihilated it. Likewise, this arrangement is also a proof of a supreme wisdom about which only a foolish man could think that all this was being done for fun, without any higher object in view. As against this wonderful system man is so

helpless that he can neither cause a favorable wind to blow for himself, nor can prevent a disastrous cyclone from blowing on himself. However shameless, obstinate and stubborn he may be, the wind does at one time or another remind him that a Mighty Sovereign is ruling over him, Who can turn this principal means of his life into a cause of blessing for him or into a cause of ruin for him whenever He so likes, and man does not have the power to prevent or avert any of His decisions.

(فَإِذَا النُّجُومُ طُمِسَتْ)

(77:8) So when the stars are put out,⁴

4. Or: 'extinguished'. That is, when they lose their light and luster.

(وَإِذَا السَّمَاءُ فُرِجَتْ)

(77:9) and the sky is torn apart,⁵

5. Meaning: When the system and discipline of the heavens under which every star and planet is established and moving in its orbit and everything in the universe is adhering to the bounds set for it, is broken.

(وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ نُسِفَتْ)

(77:10) and the mountains are blown away,

(وَإِذَا الرُّسُلُ أُقْتَتَتْ)

(77:11) and the messengers' time 'to testify' comes up—⁶

6. At several places in the Qur'an it has been stated that when the case of mankind will be presented before Allah on the Day of Resurrection, the Messenger of every nation will be called upon to testify that he had conveyed Allah's messages intact to his people. This will be Allah's first and major argument against the culprits and the wicked people to prove that they were themselves responsible for their wrong

attitude and conduct in life, for there had been no negligence on the part of Allah to show guidance and administer warnings.

﴿لَأَيَّ يَوْمٍ أُجِّلَتْ﴾

(77:12) for which Day has all this been set?

﴿لِيَوْمِ الْفَصْلِ﴾

(77:13) For the Day of 'Final' Decision (Day of Judgement)!

﴿وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ﴾

(77:14) And what will make you realize what the Day of Decision is?

﴿وَيَلُّ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ﴾

(77:15) Woe on that Day to the deniers!⁷

7. Deniers: those people who took the news of the coming of Resurrection as a lie, and spent their lives in the world under the delusion that the time would never come when they would have to present themselves before their God and render an account of their deeds.

Ayaat 16-28 - The Call to contemplate the various Manifestations of Allah's Power

﴿أَلَمْ نُهْلِكِ الْأَوَّلِينَ﴾

(77:16) Did We not destroy earlier disbelievers?⁸

8. This is an argument from history for the Hereafter. It means: Consider your own history in the world. Whichever nations denied the Hereafter and took this worldly life to be real life and based their moral attitude on the results appearing here regarding them as the criterion of good and evil, ultimately went to their doom

without exception. This is a proof of the fact that the Hereafter is a reality overlooking and ignoring which causes the same kind of harm to a person which is caused when he chooses to close his eyes to the hard facts of life.

﴿ ثُمَّ نَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْآخِرِينَ ﴾

(77:17) And We will make the later disbelievers follow them.⁹

9. That is, this is a permanent law with Us. Just as denial of the Hereafter has proved disastrous for the nations of the past so it will always prove disastrous also for the nations of the future. No nation has been an exception to it before nor will any be so in the future.

﴿ كَذَلِكَ نَفْعَلُ بِالْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴾

(77:18) This is how We deal with the wicked.

﴿ وَيَلَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴾

(77:19) Woe on that Day to the deniers!¹⁰

10. This sentence in the present context means: The fate they have met or will meet in the world, is not their real punishment; their real doom will descend on them on the Day of Decision. The punishment here is only in the nature of a person's being arrested when he commits one crime after the other fearlessly and is not inclined to mend and change his ways. The court where his case is to be decided and he is to be punished for all his misdeeds, will not be established in this world but in the Hereafter, and that indeed will be the real day of his ruin and disaster.

﴿ أَلَمْ نَخْلُقْكُمْ مِّن مَّاءٍ مَّهِينٍ ﴾

(77:20) Did We not create you from a humble fluid,

﴿ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ ﴾



(77:21) placing it in a secure place¹¹

11. A secure place: The mother's womb in which the child is so firmly lodged as soon as it has been conceived and where such arrangements are made for its security and nourishment that abortion cannot take place unless there is a disaster, and even for artificial abortion extraordinary devices have to be adopted, which are both risky and harmful in spite of modern developments in medical science.

﴿إِلَىٰ قَدَرٍ مَّعْلُومٍ﴾

(77:22) until an appointed time?¹²

12. The words *qadar in-malum* do not only mean that the term is appointed and fixed but they also contain the sense that it is known to Allah alone. About child, no one knows by any means how many months, days, hours, minutes and seconds it will remain in the mother's womb and what will be its exact and precise time of birth. Allah alone has fixed a specific term for every child and He alone knows it.

﴿فَقَدَرْنَا فَنِعْمَ الْقَادِرُونَ﴾

(77:23) We 'perfectly' ordained 'its development'. How excellent are We in doing so!¹³

13. This is an express argument for the possibility of the life-after-death. What is meant to be said is: When We had the power to shape and develop you into a perfect and complete man from an insignificant sperm-drop, how shall We be helpless to re-create you in some other way? Our this creation in consequence of which you exist as a living being, is a proof that We are excellent Possessors of power; We cannot be so helpless as to be unable to re-create you after having created you in the first instance.

﴿وَيَلُّ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ﴾





(77:24) Woe on that Day to the deniers!¹⁴

14. This sentence here gives the meaning that in spite of the express argument for the possibility of life-after-death, the people who are denying it, may mock it as they may and look down upon its believers as people of antiquated ideas and whims, but when the Day comes which they are denying today, they will themselves know that it is a day of their own ruin and disaster.

﴿ أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ كِفَاتًا ﴾

(77:25) Have We not made the earth a lodging

﴿ أَحْيَاءُ وَأَمْوَاتًا ﴾

(77:26) for the living and the dead,

﴿ وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا رِوَاسِيَ شَلْخَانٍ وَأَسْقَيْنَاكُمْ مَاءً فُرَاتًا ﴾

(77:27) and placed upon it towering, firm mountains, and given you fresh water to drink?¹⁵

15. This is yet another argument for the possibility and reasonableness of the Hereafter. It is this very earth which since millions and millions of years has been sustaining and providing for countless different kinds of creatures. Every kind of vegetation and every kind of animal and man are living on it. To meet the requirements of all unmeasureable treasures of provisions of different kinds are coming out of its belly. Then it is on this very earth that countless members of all kinds of creatures die every day, but there exists a wonderful arrangement in that the dead bodies of all creatures are deposited in the same earth, and it again becomes ready for sustaining life and providing home to the new members of every species. This earth has not been shaped like a smooth-surfaced ball either, but here and there on it there have been set high mountains and mountain-ranges, which play an



important role in causing the change of seasons and rainfall, the birth of rivers, creation of fertile valleys, growth of trees which supply timber, and provisions of a variety of minerals and stones. Then in the interior of this very earth, sweet water has been stored and on its surface rivers of sweet water have been arranged and also from the saline waters of the sea vapors of pure water are raised and caused to fall as rain from the sky. Is not all this an argument to prove that an All- Powerful Sovereign has created all this and He is not only All-Powerful but All-Knowing and All-Wise as well? Now, if this earth has been thus equipped and provisioned only by His power and wisdom, why should an intelligent man find it difficult to understand that the same Sovereign by His power can wind up this world and create another world on a new pattern, and the demand of His wisdom is that he should create another world after it so that He may call man to account for the deeds he has done in this world?

(وَيَلَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ)

(77:28) Woe on that Day to the deniers!¹⁶

16. Here, this sentence signifies that the people who deny the coming of the Hereafter and regard it as impossible and irrational in spite of seeing these manifest signs of Allah's power and wisdom, may remain lost in their vain imaginations if they so like. But the day when all this takes place against their expectations, they will realize that they have earned ruin on account of their own folly.

Ayaat 29-34 – The driving of the Criminals to their Final Abode

(أَنْطَلِقُوا إِلَىٰ مَا كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَكْذِبُونَ)

(77:29) 'The disbelievers will be told,' "Proceed into that 'Fire' which you used to deny!¹⁷

17. After giving proofs of the coming of the Hereafter, now it is being stated how the deniers will be dealt with when it has actually taken place.

﴿ أَنْظِفُوا إِلَىٰ ظِلِّ ذِي تَلَاثِ شُعَبٍ ﴾

(77:30) Proceed into the shade 'of smoke' which rises in three columns,¹⁸

18. Shadow: Shadow of smoke; three columns: Because when a big smoke arises, it is divided into several parts at the top.

﴿ لَا ظِلِّينَ وَلَا يَعْغِي مِنَ النَّارِ ﴾

(77:31) providing neither coolness nor shelter from the flames.

﴿ إِنَّهَا تَرْمِي بِشَرَرٍ كَالْقَصْرِ ﴾

(77:32) Indeed, it hurls sparks 'as big' as huge castles,

﴿ كَأَنَّهُ جِمَالَتٌ صُفْرٌ ﴾

(77:33) and 'as dark' as black camels."¹⁹

19. Lit., yellow camels. Black camels' hair glistens yellow in sunlight. That is, each spark will be like a castle, and when these huge sparks will rise and burst and fly about in all directions it will seem as though they were yellow camels running and jumping about ceaselessly.

﴿ وَيَلَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴾

(77:34) Woe on that Day to the deniers!

Ayaat 35-40 – The Inability of the Disbelievers to speak or make Excuses

﴿ هَذَا يَوْمٌ لَا يَنْطِقُونَ ﴾

(77:35) On that Day they will not 'be in a position to' speak,

﴿ وَلَا يُؤْذَنُ لَهُمْ فَيَعْتَذِرُونَ ﴾

(77:36) nor will they be permitted to offer excuses.²⁰

20. This will be their ultimate state at the time they will be entering Hell. Before this in the plain of Resurrection they will be offering all sorts of excuses, blaming others for their errors and proving their own selves to be innocent, abusing their leaders and guides who led them astray; so much so that some of them will even disown their crimes shamelessly, as has been stated at several places in the Qur'an. But when their being criminals will have been established by every kind of evidence, and when their own hands and feet and limbs will have borne witness against them to prove their guilt fully, and when after fulfilling all requirements of justice rightly and truly, the sentence will be passed on them, they will be dumbfounded and no room will be left for them to offer any excuse. To refuse an opportunity or permission to offer an excuse, does not mean that judgment will be passed against them without giving them a chance for self defense, but it means that their guilt and crime will be proved to the fullest and they will not be able to offer any excuse after it.

﴿ وَيَلُومُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمَكْذِبِينَ ﴾

(77:37) Woe on that Day to the deniers!

﴿ هَذَا يَوْمُ الْفَصْلِ جَمَعْنَاكُمْ وَالْأَوَّلِينَ ﴾

(77:38) 'They will be told by Allah,' "This is the Day of 'Final' Decision: We have gathered you along with earlier disbelievers 'for punishment'.

﴿ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ كَيْدٌ فَكِيدُوا ﴾

(77:39) So if you have a scheme 'to save yourselves', then use it against Me."²¹

21. That is, in the world you used every kind of deception and trick in self-interest. Now, if you have any trick to escape My punishment, you may use it to defeat Me and My plan.

﴿ وَيَلُومُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴾

(77:40) Woe on that Day to the deniers!

Ayaat 41-45 – The Final Abode for Those Who have Taqwa

﴿ إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي ظِلِّ وَعُيُونٍ ﴾

(77:41) Indeed, the righteous²² will be amid 'cool' shade and springs

22. As this world has been used here in contrast to the deniers; the righteous here implies the people who refrained from denying the Hereafter and accepted it and passed their life in the world with the belief that in the Hereafter they would have to render an account of their word and deed and their conduct and character.

﴿ وَفَوَاقِهِ مِمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴾

(77:42) and any fruit they desire.

﴿ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

(77:43) 'They will be told,' "Eat and drink happily for what you used to do."

﴿ إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴾

(77:44) Surely this is how We reward the good-doers.

﴿ وَيَلُومُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴾

(77:45) 'But' woe on that Day to the deniers!²³

23. Here this sentence means that one of their afflictions. as mentioned above, will be that they will be standing as culprits in the plain of Resurrection. Their crimes

will have been proved and established openly and they will not be in a position even to open their mouths to put forward a plea in self-defense, and shall ultimately become fuel of Hell. Their other affliction, and by far the worse will be that they will see the same believers enjoying themselves in Paradise, whom they had been opposing and resisting and mocking throughout their lives as foolish, narrow-minded, mean and old fashioned people.

﴿ كُلُوا وَتَمَتَّعُوا قَلِيلًا إِنَّكُمْ مُّجْرِمُونَ ﴾

(77:46) “Eat and enjoy yourselves²⁴ for a little while,²⁵ ‘for’ you are truly wicked.”

24. In conclusion, these words are being addressed not only to the disbelievers of Makkah but to all disbelievers of the world.

25. For a while: In their brief life of the world.

﴿ وَيَلُومُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴾

(77:47) Woe on that Day to the deniers!

﴿ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ارْكَعُوا لَا يَرْكَعُونَ ﴾

(77:48) When it is said to them, “Bow down ‘before Allah,” they do not bow.²⁶

26. Bowing before Allah: does not only imply worshipping Him but also means believing in the Messenger (peace be upon him) sent by Allah and in the Book revealed by Him and following and obeying His commands.

﴿ وَيَلُومُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴾

(77:49) Woe on that Day to the deniers!

﴿ فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾



(77:50) So what message after this 'Qur'an' would they believe in?²⁷

27. That is, the greatest message that could distinguish the truth from falsehood for man and show him right guidance, has been sent down in the shape of the Qur'an. If a person does not believe even after reading it or hearing it read, what else after this can show him the correct guidance?

Discussion:

1. Explain the meaning and different interpretations of the word *al-Mursalat*.
2. Explain the Inability of the Disbelievers to speak or make Excuses in accordance to surah al-Mursalat.

The above was a commentary of the 29th Juz of the Qur'an al-Kareem.

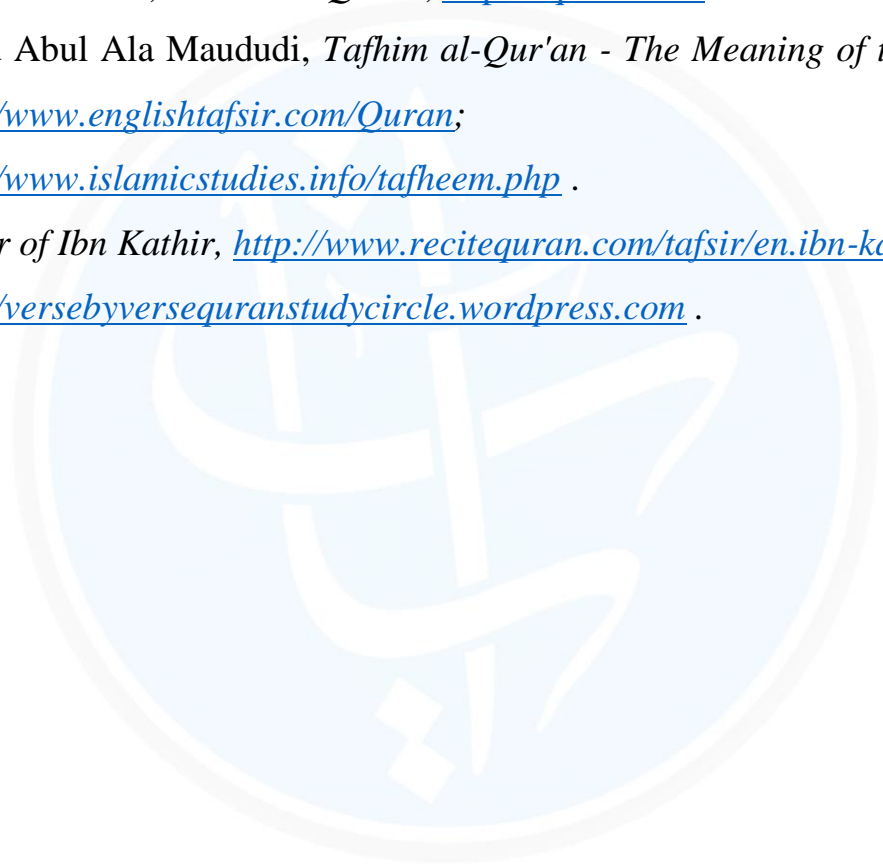
Imam Adnan Balihodzic

Toronto, February 2021/Rajab 1442H



**SOURCES:**

1. Al-Qur'an al-Kareem
2. Mustafa Khattab, *The Clear Quran*, <https://quran.com> .
3. Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi, *Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an*,
<https://www.englishtafsir.com/Quran>;
<https://www.islamicstudies.info/tafheem.php> .
4. *Tafseer of Ibn Kathir*, <http://www.recitequran.com/tafsir/en.ibn-kathir> .
5. <https://versebyversequranstudycircle.wordpress.com> .



أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy





Contents:

Tafseer of Surah Al-Mulk	3
Tafseer of Surah Al-Qalam	20
Tafseer of Surah Al-Haqqah	38
Tafseer of Surah Al-Ma'arij	55
Tafseer of Surah Nuh	70
Tafseer of Surah Al-Jinn	82
Tafseer of Surah Al-Muzzammil	97
Tafseer of Surah Al-Muddaththir	110
Tafseer of Surah Al-Qiyamah	137
Tafseer of Surah Al-Insan	159
Tafseer of Surah Al-Mursalat	181
Sources	198
Contents	199

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy



THIS BOOK

- This book presents an interpretation of the twenty-ninth juz' of the Holy Qur'an (Juz' Tabarak), in which the ease and brevity was taken into consideration as a top priority.
- It is a general introduction to this juz' in terms of meanings, objectives, and some benefits.
- The main source of the words' translation is the book of Dr. Mustafa Khattab "The Clear Quran".

THE AUTHOR

Bachelor's degree in Sharia, Al Azhar University
Master of Law degree, University of Zenica, Bosnia
Imam at the Bosnian Islamic Association in Toronto, Canada

