



2017

Ramadan Quiz

Answers and Commentary

‘What Surah Am I?’



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FOREWORD

Assalamu ‘alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh,

We pray this reaches you in the best of health and imaan.

Please find attached the answers and tafsir (commentary) for the Ramadan Quiz. All the tafsir (commentary) has been taken from Ma’ariful Qur’an and/or Tafsir Ibn Kathir. It is NOT written by us personally. We read through the commentary and extract whatever is specific to the question of the day and format it. We do not add to the text from ourselves.

Thus, if anyone is interested in further reading, the aforementioned two kitaabs will be useful insha’Allah.

Having said which, if you come across any mistakes or typing errors – then those are from us and we seek forgiveness for it. Please refer the mistake/error to us at: **info@acquiringknowledge.co.uk** referencing the page number and insha’Allah we will amend it.

Note: the lessons **are** from us – again, if you come across any mistakes, please refer the mistake/error to us at the above email so we may amend.

Request for sincere du’as.

ANSWER: Surah Ad-Dukhan

The Merit of the Surah

Sayyidna Abu Hurairah radi'allahu 'anhu reports that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said that whoever recites Surah Dukhan on Friday night, his sins will have been forgiven by the morning. Sayyidna Umamah radi'allahu 'anhu narrates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said anyone who recites Surah Dukhan on Friday, in the night or in the day, Allah will build for him a house in Paradise. (Qurtubi on the authority of Tha'labi).

Commentary of Verses 43-59

Punishment and Reward of the Hereafter

In these verses, according to the style of the Qur'an, Allah describes Hell and the way the unbelievers will be punished, and Paradise and the way the believers will be rewarded.

Punishment of the Dwellers of Hell

“Indeed the tree of zaqqum... (44:43)”. Some necessary information regarding the reality of zaqqum has been given in Surah As-Saffat. Please see under **(37:64-65)**. Here the Qur'an apparently indicates that the infidels will be given zaqqum to eat even before they enter Hell, because in this verse the Qur'an says that after having fed them with zaqqum they will be seized by the keepers of Hell and dragged into the middle of the blazing fire of Hell. According to some commentators, this is the meaning of **(56:56) Surah Al-Waqi'ah (This will be their entertainment on the Day of Requit)**. They argue that the word *nuzul* (entertainment) originally refers to the starter food and provision served to guests to make them feel welcome before the main course of entertainment is served. The main course of food and provision served later on is called *diyafah* or *ma'dubah*. The wordings of the Qur'an do carry the possibility that the feeding of zaqqum could be after the entry into Hell. In this case the word *nuzul* would refer, by extension, to the main course of meals and provisions served. The verse under comment which speaks about 'dragging the dweller of Hell towards the middle of the blazing fire' means, he would already be in Hell but after feeding him zaqqum he will be dragged towards the middle of the fire to expose him to a greater degree of disgrace and torture. Allah knows best! (Condensed from Bayan-ul-Qur'an).

Reward of the Inmates of Paradise

(Indeed the God-fearing will be in a place free from fear, - 44:51). The current set of verses describes the eternal blessings of Paradise. Almost all sorts of blessings have been referred to in these verses, because the following are generally the human needs:

- (1) fine dwelling;
- (2) fine clothing;
- (3) the best life-partner;
- (4) the best food;
- (5) the satisfaction that these blessings will remain available; and
- (6) assurance of total security from grief and affliction.

In these verses all the six kinds of blessings for the inmates of Paradise have been mentioned.

Let us carefully analyze the six verses in this set. The dwelling of the inmates is described as *'amin* "free from fear". The best human dwelling, according to verse **(51)**, is the one that is secure from all kinds of dangers.

(...fine silk and thick silk.... - 44:53) Both the words refer to 'silk'. The word *sundus* refers to "fine silk" and the word *istabraq* refers to "thick silk".

DAY 1

(We will marry them with houris having big dark eyes) - 44:54). The word *tazwij* originally means 'to make one person partner of another'. Later on it came to be utilised abundantly in the sense of 'marrying'. According to the second sense, the men of Paradise will be married technically to houris having big dark eyes. This is the apparent sense of verse (54). Although the inmates of Paradise will not be legally obligated to observe the precepts of Shari'ah, the purpose of marriage will be to honour them. Therefore, this should not raise any objection. If the word is taken in the first sense, houris having big dark eyes will be given as life partners to the men of Paradise. The houris in this case will be granted to them as a gift. There will be no need for a contract of marriage as is done in this world.

(They will not taste death therein, except for the first death (they faced in the world) - 44:56). In other words, they shall suffer no death other than the first death which they had encountered at the end of their lives in this world. The dwellers of Hell as well will suffer only one death at the end of their lives in this world. The latter, however, will suffer a greater degree of torture when they will know that they will remain alive in this miserable state of punishment, whereas for the former the thought that Allah has saved them from the torment of the Hell, that the gardens of Paradise are eternal, that they will enjoy the delights of paradise for ever and its blessings will never cease or be taken away from them, will enhance the degree of their happiness, never to diminish .

LESSONS

This Surah opens with 'Haa Meem' and only Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala knows the meaning of these words.

It is out of Allah's Mercy, that we don't know the meaning of these words.

Surah Al-Baqarah also opens with the words 'Alif Laam Meem' - again we don't know the meaning.

So, what are we being taught here?

Mufti Zaid mentioned yesterday, the fact that Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala opens with the words that we don't understand, only to next say, 'This is a book about which there is no doubt' teaches us:

The method of our approach to the Qur'aan

We don't understand the Qur'aan first. Like in maths class, we have to understand the formula to accept it and apply it.

However, for the Qur'aan, we first accept the message, and then understand it. We first accept it is from Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, and thereafter Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala will open our hearts to understanding insha'Allah.

The example of Surah Al-Baqarah here has been placed for the understanding of why we don't know the meanings of the first few words.

These words whose meanings we don't know are called: Muqatta'at.

First we must make firm and sincere our niyyah: Oh Allah I am asking you to give me beneficial knowledge. Oh Allah I seek refuge from you knowledge that doesn't benefit me. Aameen.

And Allah knows best.

DAY 2

ANSWER: Surah An-Nisaa

The five ayat mentioned in the hadith that Abdullah Bin Mas'ood radiallahu anhu preferred to the life of this world and all that's in it:

- 1. (Surely, Allah wrongs not even the weight of an atom) (4:40)**
- 2. (If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden to do) (4:31)**
- 3. (Verily, Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), but He forgives except that (anything else) to whom He wills) (4:48)**
- 4. (If they (hypocrites), when they had been unjust themselves, had come to you) (4:64)**
- 5. (And whoever does evil or wrongs himself, but afterwards seeks Allah's forgiveness, he will find Allah Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful) (4:110)**

DAY 3

ANSWER: Surah Az-Zalzalah

Regarding the last ayat: (**And whoever does evil (even) to the weight of a particle shall see it**). The word 'evil' here refers to those sins which we have not repented from.

Nabi ﷺ warned Aisha radiallahu anha to beware of the sins that are belittled, for indeed they will be taken into account by Allah. (Nasa'i and Ibn Majah)

In a lengthy narration, Sayyidina Anas radiallahu anhu reports that Nabi ﷺ referred to this verse as 'the unique, most comprehensive verse'. (Muslim)

LESSONS

Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala forgives all sins. We must not lose hope in Allah's Mercy as Allah Himself declares His Mercy overcomes His wrath. This is the month of Mercy, the month to beg to Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala to forgive all those sins we did in the previous 11 months and even those we commit in this month. We must not belittle any small sins, because indeed they breed bigger sins.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala forgive all our sins, those we've committed knowingly and unknowingly, small and big, those we neglected and pushed away thinking they were nothing, and those we accepted as sins. Aameen.

DAY 4

ANSWER: Surah Al-Mu'minoon.

Musnad of Ahmad quotes Sayyidina Umar Al-Faruq radiallahu 'anhū that whenever a wahy was being revealed to Nabi ﷺ, those near him used to hear a sound like the buzz of the bees. One day when they heard such a sound, they all awaited hoping to learn about the revelation.

When Nabi ﷺ returned to his normal state after receiving wahy, he sat down facing the Ka'bah and prayed to Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala in the following words:

O Allah, give us more (bounties) and do not decrease (them for us) and grant us respect and do not put us to humiliation, and give us and do not deprive us and give us preference (on our enemies) and do not give preference (to our enemies) against us and be pleased with us and make us pleased.

Then, Nabi ﷺ said to his companions, "Just now ten verses have been revealed to me and anyone who follows them in letter and spirit will go to heaven." Nabi ﷺ then recited the first ten verses of Surah Al-Mu'minoon. (Ibn Kathir)

The first trait that has been mentioned in this Surah is 'Those who with their salah are Kashi'un'

Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn 'Abbas said: "*(Kashi'un)* means those with fear and tranquility"

It was reported from 'Ali bin Abi Talib radiallahu 'anhū, that Kushu', means the Kushu' of the heart.

Al-Hasan Al-Basri rahimahullah said, "*Their Kushu' was in their hearts.*" So they lowered their gaze and were humble towards others.

Khushu' in prayer is only attained by the one who has emptied his heart totally, who does not pay attention to anything else besides it, and who prefers it above all else. At that point it becomes a delight and a joy for the eyes, as in the Hadith recorded by Imam Ahmad and An-Nasai, that Nabi ﷺ said: "*Fragrance and women have been made dear to me, and Salah was made the joy of my eye*"

LESSONS

It's amazing how the very first characteristic Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala mentions of the Mu'minoon is Khushu'.

Please read the remaining nine too insha'Allah.

As for Khushu, firstly, it can only be attained by the will of Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala. May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala grant it to us, and accept it from us. Aameen.

The second practical step mentioned above by Hasan Al-Basri rahimahullah, Khushu' can be attained by lowering the gaze and humbling ourselves towards others.

The one who has lost the haya of the eyes has lost everything. May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala protect us. Aameen.

Practise with the lowering of our gazes, in a world where we are forced to do anything but, and things are pushed into our eyes forcing our gazes to lift. Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala sees our struggle. If we just try to exercise this, with the intention that we wish to gain Khushu' and protect our hearts so we can focus on Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala alone, and thus become a true Mu'min (believer), If Allah wills, He will make the rest of the path easy for us, and grant us Khushu' in all aspects of our lives, most importantly, in Salah.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala accept this from us, and allow us to do amal on these small drops of knowledge we seek in the month most beloved to Him. May He have mercy on us in the month of Mercy and His mercy has no bounds. Aameen.

DAY 5

ANSWER: Surah Taha.

Musa alayhis salaam said: **O my Lord! Open for me my chest, and ease my task for me.**

This means, “I cannot perform this task if You do not help me, aid me and support me.”

Musa alayhis salaam requested his Lord to expand his chest for his mission. For verily, He was commanding him with a great task and a weighty affair. He was sending him to the mightiest king on the face of the earth at that time. He was the most arrogant and severe of all people in his disbelief, and He had the largest army and the most powerful kingdom. He was the most tyrannical and the most obstinate of rulers. His case was such that he claimed not to know Allah subhanahu wa ta’ala at all, and that he knew of no God for his subjects other than himself. Along with this, Musa alayhis salaam lived in his home for a period of time as a child. He stayed in Fir’awn’s own room and slept on his bed. Then, after this, he killed one of their people and feared that they would retaliate by killing him in return. Thus, he fled from them and remained an outlaw during this entire time. Then, after all of this, His Lord sent him to them as a warner calling them to worship Allah alone, without associating partners with Him.

And loosen the knot from my tongue, that they understand my speech.

This is referring to the lisp that he had. This lisp was a result of an incident when he was presented a date and a hot coal stone and he placed the coal on his tongue instead of the date.

However, Musa alayhis salaam did not ask Allah subhanahu wa ta’ala to remove this affliction all together. Rather, he asked for removal of his stammering so the people would understand what he intended in his speech. **He was only asking for what was necessary to deliver his message.** If he had asked for the removal of his affliction in its entirety, it would have been cured for him.

However, the Prophets do not ask for any more than what is required. Therefore, he was left with the remnants of this accident that took place with his tongue.

LESSONS

We can learn so much regarding making du'a from just this one du'a of Musa alayhis salaam.

One of the many lessons we can take from the above du'a is that whenever we're faced with difficulty; it may be that we need to give da'wah to somebody, we may be going to speak to someone of authority regarding permission for something, we may be having to speak in front of many people, we may want to ask our parents something, or tell them something and we fear their reaction, no matter what it is, recite the above du'a first.

This du'a, although extremely beneficial for exam season as well, **is not solely for exams**, as some of us may think.

Another beautiful point is the fact that Musa alayhis salaam only asked for that which was enough to complete his task.

How many times do we make du'a for something, not knowing whether it is good for us or not? If it is beneficial for our imaan or not?

We're not saying you shouldn't make du'a out of this fear, but rather, when we make du'a, we should add to it, Oh Allah, grant me xyz if it is beneficial for me in both worlds, and if it isn't, then make it beneficial for me.

Or sometimes we want to make du'a but are unsure of how to formulate the du'a? We know what's in our hearts, but we can't bring it to our tongues.

Or sometimes, we just don't know what we want!

Still, make du'a. The One who created you knows what is in your heart. You may not know how to ask, but Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala surely knows how to give. Subhan'Allah!

So make du'a, Ya Allah, I don't know what I want, I'm confused, so help me Ya Allah, and grant me that which is the best for me in both worlds, and best for my imaan.

May Allah safeguard our imaan. Aameen.

DAY 6

ANSWER: Surah At-Takathur.

The word 'Takathur' is derived from the root 'Kathrah' which means to 'amass much wealth'. Sayyidina Abbas radiallahu anhu and Hasan Al Basri rahimahullah have assigned this interpretation to it.

Qatadah radiallahu anhu says that this word is also used in the sense of 'taking pride in the abundance of material goods'.

Nabi ﷺ said: *The son of Adam says; 'My wealth, my wealth.' But you do not reap any benefit from your wealth except for that which you ate and you finished it, or that which you clothed yourself with and you wore it out, or that which you gave as charity and you have spent it.* (Muslim, Tirmidhi, An-Nasai)

And in a narration by Muslim: *Everything else other than that will go away, and he will leave it for the people (i.e. inheritors)*

LESSONS

This Surah warns us against not only a materialistic attitude, but also how this causes a neglect of the hereafter.

Nowadays, all that we are concerned with is running after much wealth. Either by studying in order to obtain a good career, and thus amassing much wealth in order to fulfil our materialistic desires, or for some, marrying our way into wealth.

Note, that wealth in itself is not a bad thing to have. Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala is warning us of *a materialistic attitude* towards life.

Having much wealth is a ni'mat (blessing) from Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala as you can use that wealth in order to build your akhira by giving in way of charity or helping the deen to propagate.

What's dangerous, is when we neglect our hereafter because of that wealth.

Thus, wealth is also a test from Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala.

As far as rizq (provision) is concerned, even the birds leave their nests in the morning hungry, and return in the evening full.

Have tawakkul. Work hard, seek it, but ultimately, know your provision is already written, so don't worry about it: what's meant for you, will come to you.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala make us of those, who have complete tawakkul in Him. May He take our hearts away from materialism, and guide it and make it busy in attaining our akhira, and seeking Him. Aameen thumma aameen!

DAY 7

ANSWER: Surah Al-An'aam.

Virtues

As mentioned in the clues, this Surah descended with 70,000 angels.

This Surah was revealed all at once, except for a few ayahs.

If the first few ayah's are recited regularly, Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala will eradicate doubt,

Abu Ishaq Al-Asfra'ini has said that this Surah consists of all principles and subsidiaries of Tauheed (Oneness of Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala).

This Surah has been prefaced with 'Alhamdulillah' whereby people have been told that all praises belong to Allah. The purpose is to educate and help people get the right perspective - **that Allah needs no praise from anyone, whether or not anyone praises Him, He is, in terms of His own intrinsic perfection, by Himself, the Praised One.**

By bringing in the sentence which follows immediately, which mentions the creation of the heavens and the earth and the darkness and the light, given there is the very proof of His being the Praises One. **Isn't it that the being which holds such Power and Wisdom would have to be the One deserving of all Praise?**

Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala has further mentioned Zulumat (darkness, or layers of darkness), in the plural, and nur (light) in the singular, the indication given may be that nur or light signifies the correct way and the straight path - and that is just one - while zulumat, or many layers of darkness, signifies the path of error - and their number runs in thousands.

Surah Al An'aam begins with hamd (the praise of Allah) and concludes on Maghfirah (the seeking of forgiveness from Allah).

LESSONS

No matter how much ibadat we do, no matter how much we obey Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, no matter how much we spend in the way of Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, no matter how much we verbally and physically praise Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, we will *never* be able to praise Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala the way He should be praised, nor obey Him the way He should be obeyed.

Does this mean we should stop, na'uthubillah? No, of course not!

Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala is the embodiment of Praise, and we are weak insaan. However, Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala is Ash-Shakur (one of the 99 names), which has been translated by Imam Ghazali rahimahullah as **The One who rewards the practice of a few pious deeds many-fold, and, in response to the actions of a few days, gives limitless happiness in the life to come.**

What does this mean? It means that we should never become arrogant that we have praised Allah enough, because no matter what we do, it will never be enough.

However, we should also never forget that Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala rewards those that praise Him. When we praise Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, we are humbling ourselves before Him, and showing gratefulness. And Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala says in Surah Ibrahim: **If you are grateful, I will surely increase you.**

Isn't it amazing how even when we praise Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, the benefit is still for ourselves? Subhan'Allah! Everything we do, we only benefit ourselves!

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala bless all of us with the Taufiq (ability bestowed by Allah) of Hamd, and honour us with maghfirah from Him. Aameen!

DAY 8

ANSWER: Surah Hud.

Surah Hud is among the Surahs that describe the coming of several kinds of mass punishments triggered by Divine displeasure as well as the horrendous happenings of the fateful Day of Judgement and its outcome in the form of individual reward and punishment, all in a manner that is unique.

For this reason, when a few strands of hair in the blessed beard of Nabi ﷺ had turned visibly grey, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr radiallahu ‘anhu expressed his concern by saying: ‘Ya Rasulallah, you have become old.’ He said: ‘Yes. Surah Hud has made me old.’

There are reports which also add Surah Al-Waqiah, Surah Al-Mursalat, ‘Amma Ya-tasa’alun (An-Naba) and At-Takwir with Surah Hud.

Out of the instructions given in these verses of the Qur’an, the second one appears in the third verse in the words: **(and that you seek forgiveness from your Lord).**

It means that, in these words of firm and established meaning, Allah Ta’ala has also instructed His servants to ask for forgiveness and pardon from their Lord, and make their Taubah before Him.

Forgiveness (maghfirah) relates to past sins and Taubah (repentance) relates to the resolve of not going near these anymore.

And, in reality, a correct and true Taubah is no more than being ashamed of past sins, praying to Allah that they be forgiven and resolving firmly that they would not be repeated in future.

Therefore, some righteous elders have said that seeking forgiveness from Allah only verbally - without having made a firm resolution, and the necessary arrangements to implement it, in order to remain safe from future sins - is the Taubah (repentance) of liars. (Qurtubi)

Or as it was said poetically:

معصیت را خنده می آید بر استغفار ما

Sin laughs at my style of seeking forgiveness

or that such repentance is itself worth being repented.

LESSONS

Subhan'Allah!

Again, Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala is ordering us with Mercy on top of Mercy on top of Mercy!

Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala Himself is instructing us: Seek forgiveness! Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala wants to forgive us, and thus He orders us to seek forgiveness.

As mentioned above; as well as feeling guilt towards a sin, we must have the firm resolve not to repeat it, **as well as removing all that which causes the sin.**

It's important to leave all those things, which cause us to sin. Whether that be bad company, the fitna surrounding us in terms of technology, or anything else, which pushes us towards that sin.

So how do we know if we've been forgiven? Ustadh Nouman Ali Khan has explained it very well:

How do you know if Allah has forgiven you? When someone sincerely asks for forgiveness, then there is no doubt they are forgiven. It is guaranteed. Never doubt if Allah forgave you. First of all be sincere and genuine, and if you meet that condition then there is no doubt.

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) saying, “*I swear by Allah that I seek Allah’s Pardon and turn to Him in repentance more than seventy times a day.*” [Al-Bukhari].

and:

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, “*By the One in Whose Hand my soul is! If you do not commit sins, Allah would replace you with a people who would commit sins and seek forgiveness from Allah; and Allah will certainly forgive them.*” [Muslim].

This just shows, insaan is created weak, we are created to sin. We don't fail when we sin, we lose when we despair in the Mercy of Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala.

And if Nabi ﷺ would seek repentance more than 70 times a day, how much should we be seeking?! Whilst we are full of sins and Nabi ﷺ has no sins.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala shower us with His mercy in the Month of Mercy, guide us to repentance, accept our repentance, and never make us of those who despair in His mercy.

Aameen thumma aameen!

DAY 9

ANSWER: Surah Al-Imran.

The clues refer to the du'a of Sayyidah Hannah and the child is Sayyidah Maryam.

Nabi ﷺ met both Isa alayhis salaam and Yahya alayhis salaam in the second heaven during mi'raj. Yahya alayhis salaam is the cousin of Maryam alayhis salaam, as Maryam's mother Hannah - her sister was married to Zakarriyah alayhis salaam, whose son is Yahya alayhis salaam.

This Surah is about the family of Imran. Imran, the father of Maryam alayhis salaam, was the Imam of Baitul Maqdis.

In the religious codes of earlier prophets, there was a method of worship through which a child, out of one's children, could be freed from all worldly services and devoted exclusively for Allah. Following this practice, the mother of Sayyidah Maryam made a vow during her pregnancy that she would let the newborn serve Baitul-Maqdis in the way of Allah and that she would not put her child on worldly chores. But, when she delivered a girl, she was full of remorse thinking that a girl would not be able to do this duty. But Allah Almighty, out of His consideration for the sincerity of Sayyidah Maryam's mother, accepted that very girl and thereby made her status distinct from any other girl of the world.

From here we learn that a mother holds a certain measure of guardianship over her child in respect of his or her education and training, for Sayyidah Maryam's mother would have never vowed if the mother had no right of guardianship over her child. Similarly, it proves that a mother too has the right to give a name to her child.

In order to fulfil her vow, Sayyidah Maryam's mother took her to the Mosque of Baitul Maqdis and talked to the care-takers and worshippers at the Mosque, Sayyidna Zakariyya being one of them, and told them that she had vowed to dedicate the child in the service of God and therefore, she could not keep the child with her. She asked them to take her and keep her.

Sayyidna Imran was the Imam of this Mosque. He had died during the pregnancy of Maryam's mother, otherwise he would have been the most deserving person to have taken charge of the child, being the father and the Imam of the Mosque. Therefore, every keeper and worshipper of the Mosque wished to take her in his custody.

In the end, Sayyidna Zakarriyah got custody of Maryam. (Also her uncle).

LESSONS

Some amazing points Mufti Zaid mentioned a few nights ago:

The first thing to note here is how this Surah is called the family of Imran. A family is of great importance in Islam, as we are all branches of one tree, and thus unified. A great part of our faith can be protected if we have a strong family structure - beginning with the du'a of a mother! Subhan'Allah!

There may be some family members of ours who may have also given their child to serve Allah's deen. Even if we have extended family members, it becomes incumbent upon us to support that child and that family's aspiration and see to it that their wish is realised the the best of our ability.

If we become slaves of ourselves, we will become slaves of our own carnal desires, which can never be satiated.

Freedom is when we are under a disciplined law and the most disciplined law is the law of Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala.

Freedom is when we're free enough to establish what is haqq (truth), and proclaim what is haqq.

All we have in this world without Islamic Khilafat, is our family structure! Take care of it!

If the children of our society become rectified, become better, our children will also be part of a good society. We should look after both our own children and other children too. We should look after our own imaan, and the imaan of others too.

Sayyidna Hannah was a righteous woman. A mother has the greatest aspirations for her child. We learn here that if the mother is upright and God-fearing, then her aspirations for her children will also be like so.

When Sayyidna Maryam was born, her mother had made du'a in which she said, the male is not like the female.

She didn't say the female isn't like the male, but rather the male isn't like the female.

A beautiful thing to mention here is the saying:

عورت نبی بنتی نہیں، نبی جنتی ہے

A woman does not become a Prophet, she gives birth to a Prophet

Subhan'Allah! Look at the status of our women in Islam.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala grant us sabr towards our family members, and keep our families united. May He grant love, peace and understanding in our hearts for each other. May He make us pious mothers, to not only our own children, but to the children of the whole ummah, and grant us offspring that will be coolness of our eyes. Aameen thumma aameen!

DAY 10

ANSWER: Surah Al-Furqan.

The gist of the subject matter of the Surah is to describe and define the greatness of the Holy Qur'an and the truth of the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, to which there were doubts expressed by the unbelievers. The Surah contains answers to their objections.

Furqan (Criterion) is a title of the Qur'an and its meaning is to distinguish. The Holy Qur'an by its very nature distinguishes between right and wrong, and differentiates, through miracles between the right people and the wrong ones, hence it is called as Furqan.

In the first ayat, Nabi ﷺ is described as a **warner to the worlds**. This proves that Nabi ﷺ Prophethood was for the entire universe and not just for a certain community or time, as was the case with other prophets. In a Hadith recorded in Sahih Muslim, Nabi ﷺ has pointed out six special features about his prophethood. One of the special features is the universality of his prophethood i.e. it is for all ages and all people.

LESSONS

Note: Anyone interested in the topic of Science in the Qur'an, and the objections of the disbelievers and their answers regarding Nabi ﷺ prophethood and the Qur'an, I highly recommend that the tafseer of this Surah be read insha'Allah.

A lot of the questions, or perhaps in some cases, attacks or excuses, that are used against the Qur'an nowadays, is the fact that the Qur'an was revealed '1400 years ago' and Nabi ﷺ Sunnah is '1400 years old', and the world has advanced since then, thus we have some who argue or question, that the Qur'an is out of date and/or the Sunnah is out of date, na'uthubillah.

The first point to mention, is the fact that the Lord of the Qur'an, the Lord of the worlds, is the Lord of all time and space. Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala has declared this Qur'an as His final message, and Nabi ﷺ as His final Messenger, so would Allah not know what is to come after 1400 years after the Qur'an has been revealed, or even 10,000, or millions of years later?

The One who establishes faith in the Qur'an, and that the Qur'an is the word of Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala and Nabi ﷺ is His final Messenger, should also establish faith in the fact that the Qur'an and Sunnah can never 'be out of date', as the message is just as relevant today, and tomorrow, as it was 1400 years ago, since it is the Final message, and our Lord is Most Merciful, having sent the final Message as such, that its relevancy supercedes all communities, all societies, all people, and all time.

Something to remember here is, which has also been established in the first ayat of this Surah, is the fact that the Qur'an and Sunnah relates to all of us. We may have different personalities, on the opposite ends of the spectrum, or different upbringing, or different families, or completely different lives, or be living in completely opposite countries under completely different circumstances, or have completely different difficulties and trials in life, or you may be 90 years old and lived in a different generation, and I may be 10 years old, yet what unites us all, is the fact that the Qur'an and Sunnah is as relevant to my life, and my circumstances, and my problems, and my happiness, as it is to yours, which may be completely, utterly, and crazily different.

This in itself is a miracle, subhan'Allah.

Don't ever let anyone lure you into thinking that the 'Qur'an is not for me' or the 'Sunnah is not for me' because i'm a sinner, or I don't know anything, or any other reasons. The Qur'an and Sunnah is as much for the worst of the worst sinners, to the most pious of the most pious people.

Regarding, 'I don't know anything, or i'm not knowledgeable, or I don't know Arabic' or other reasons as such, this has been discussed before under the lessons of Surah Ad-Dhukhaan. Put short, we need to know absolutely nothing, in order to come to the Qur'an. We need not understand anything, in order to derive benefit from the Qur'an. We just need to accept and believe, that there's no doubt in its message, and Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala will open the doors.

We're not saying we should not try to understand the Qur'an, of course we should! But that's not an excuse to not come to the Qur'an. Merely looking at the Qur'an with love in our hearts has so much benefit and reward, so what would the reward be of its reciters?

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala make us people of the Qur'an, steadfast upon its message and the Sunnah of His final Messenger, Nabi ﷺ, and open our chests to understanding. Aameen!

DAY 11

ANSWER: Surah Maryam.

The Surah begins with كَهَيِّصْ whose meaning is only known to Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala and people should not even attempt to probe their meanings. (See our message under Surah Dhukhan)

In the third ayat: نِدَاءٌ خَفِيًّا - **a low voice** tells us that it is better to beseech Allah in supplication in undertone.

Sayyidina Sa'ad Ibn Abi Waqqas radiallahu 'anhu narrated that Nabi ﷺ once said: *Surely the best way to make supplication to Allah is in undertone and the best sustenance is that which is sufficient for one's needs (i.e. neither more nor less than required)* (Qurtubi)

In the fourth ayat: **Here I am that bones within me have turned feeble, and the head has flared up with grey and old age**

Mention of one's needs in supplication is desirable

Here, Sayyidina Zakariyyah alayhis salaam before making his supplication, mentioned about his weakness and old age by referring to his bones. One of the reasons for this was, as pointed out in the translation, that in his peculiar circumstances, i.e. his old age and physical weakness, it was not appropriate for him to ask for a child.

Another reason given by Imam Qurtubi in his commentary is, that for possible acceptance of supplication it is better to mention one's weakness, destitution and inadequacy. For this reason religious scholars have emphasized that one should recount Allah Ta'ala's blessings and his own exigency before making supplication.

LESSONS

Here, we can learn the etiquettes of making du'a, as mentioned above, of which one is to mention our own weakness before Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala.

You know how when we **realllllly** want something from our parents, we give them a list of reasons of why we need it, and why we can't get it ourselves because we're weak, poor, etc and thus we ask them for it? And we really bring ourselves down and try so hard to persuade them, and tell them how awesome they are, even if we argued with them yesterday, or got upset with them because they told us off a second ago... but we forget that for a second and tell them how much we love them, and how they're the best parents in the whole wide world?

This rule applies even more so to du'a. When we want something from Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, first we should send blessings upon His beloved Nabi ﷺ.

When we want to reach out to someone, we look after and love those who they love. **In order to reach Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, we have to fall in love with and follow His beloved, Nabi ﷺ.**

How can it be that we praise the beloved of Allah and Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala doesn't answer our du'as? Subhan'Allah!

Then we praise Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala. Remember praising your parents even though they shouted at you just because you want something?

Praise Allah, lots and lots and lots. Then tell Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, Oh Allah, I'm so weak, and You're so strong. Oh Allah, I'm so poor and You're so rich. Oh Allah, I know nothing and You know everything. Oh Allah, You are my Master and I am Your slave. Oh Allah, I am not asking because of who I am, I am asking because of who You are.

Humble yourself before Him, and ask of Him your desires and wishes.

Don't ever let any mistake or sinful habit convince you that your dua's aren't worth it.

Allah knows we're weak, we were created weak. **Never lose faith in your du'a.**

Once you make du'a, **know and believe and accept** that Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala has **definitely** answered it. Remember, we make du'a not because of who we are. We're full of sins. We make du'a because of Who Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala is, the embodiment of Mercy.

Discuss everything with Allah. Whilst your walking, whilst your thinking, constantly be in a state of du'a. Keep that connection with Allah.

Don't tell anyone your du'as if there's no need. Du'a is **your secret** between **you and Allah**. No one needs to, or should know. Keep that private intimacy between yourself and Your Lord.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala make us of those who make abundant du'a to Him and rely upon Him solely for all of our needs. Aameen thumma aameen.

DAY 12

ANSWER: Surah Ar-Rahman.

Linkage of the Surah and the Wisdom of repeating the words, *Which of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

Surah Ar Rahman mainly describes the boons and bounties of Allah, of this world as well as of the Hereafter. Thus when a particular bounty of Allah is described, the verse, **So, which of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?** is used deliberately as a refrain in order to awaken the people and urge them to give thanks to Allah for His favours.

This verse is repeated thirty-one times in the Surah. According to the rules of stylish usage, repetition of an expression serves the deliberate purpose of 'emphasis'. Especially the repetition in these two Surahs of the Qur'an (Qamar and Ar Rahman) is repetition only in apparent form. In reality, the repeated sentence each time is related to a new subject, and having its own significance, cannot be taken as redundant.

In Surah Ar-Rahman, after the repetition of every new bounty, the verse **So, which of the bounties of your Lord will you deny** is repeated, which being related to a new subject is not redundant.

Allamah Suyuti rahimahullah terms this device of repetition as *At-tardid*. Arab masters of eloquence, regard this device as aesthetically beautiful, polished, effective, moving, forceful and persuasive use of language. The device is used in both prose as well as in poetry. It is not used only in Arabic but (almost in all the languages of the world, as for instance) but the most accomplished and consummate of Persian and Urdu have used them.

The opening word of the Surah is Ar-Rahman (The All Merciful). One of the reasons for beginning the Surah with this name of Allah is presumably because the infidels of Makkah were unaware of this name of Allah. They used to say, **What is Ar-Rahman?** (as mentioned in **25:60**). This name has been selected here to let them know.

The second reason could be to indicate that teaching the Qur'an, which has been mentioned in the next verse as Allah's act, was a sheer gift flowing from Allah's beneficence, and not because this or any other act is obligatory on Allah for which He could be held responsible, nor because He is in need of anyone.

In the entire Surah, Allah's bounties - worldly as well spiritual - are continuously recounted. The greatest of all bounties is the knowledge of the Holy Qur'an, because it is an all-comprehensive Book directing man in temporal and spiritual matters and in matters relating to this world and the next. Those who heeded the Holy Qur'an and fulfilled its right, like the blessed Companions, Allah raised their status in the Hereafter, and blessed them with inconceivable bounties and favours. In this world too they are promoted to such high stations as the greatest of kings were not able to attain.

LESSONS

Subhan'Allah, once again, in the Month of Mercy, we are being taught regarding Allah's Mercy on us.

Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala continuously reminds us in this Surah of His bounties, which we often forget.

The Qur'an itself, is Mercy on top of Mercy on top of Mercy. Allah's laws are all out of His Mercy. When Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala orders us to not drink alcohol, or write down the debt, or forgiving is better, all of this, is taught to us out of Allah's Mercy, and His love for us.

Our parents tell us not to go near the fire or it will burn us, or not to put things into our mouth as they're sharp, even though at that age, when we were being taught these things, we probably cried that we're not being allowed to do what we want to, but our parents knew best.

Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala loves us sooooo much more than our parents, so how can *anything* He asks us to do or not to do, not be of benefit or out of love for us?

It is us who need Allah, and Allah does not need us. Yet He continues to shower His love and Mercy upon us.

I once came across a quote that was said to be of Imam Shafi'ee rahimahullah:

If you knew how Allah deals with your affairs, your heart would break out of love for Him.

So don't worry if things aren't going according to **your** plan, because they're most certainly going according to **Allah's plan** and His is the best of all plans, filled with His Love and Mercy for us.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala shower us in His Mercy not only in this month, but all the time, every moment, every second, every day, every year. May we always be under His umbrella of Mercy and Love and may He guide us towards those things which in return, favour us with His Mercy. Aameen thumma aameen!

ANSWER: Surah Al-Hadid (The Iron).

Virtues of Surah Al-Hadid

It is recorded in Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi and Nasai that Sayyidna Irbad Ibn Sariyah radiallahu ‘anhu said that Nabi ﷺ used to recite Al-Musabbihat before he went to sleep and said: *In them is a verse that is more meritorious than a thousand verses.* The collective name of the series Al-Musabbihat refers to the following five Surahs: (1) Al-Hadid, (2) Al-Hashr, (3) As-Saff, (4) Jumu’ah and (5) At-Taghabun.

Having cited this Hadith, Ibn Kathir says that the best verse referred to in Surah Al-Hadid is verse (3) **He is the First and the Last, and the Manifest and the Hidden and He is All-Knowing about every thing...**

Among the five Surahs, the first three, namely Al-Hadid, Al-Hashr and As-Saff commence with the past perfect tense ‘sabbaha’ (purity has been proclaimed), whilst the last two, namely Al-Jumuah and Al-Taghabun commence with the imperfect tense ‘yusabbihu’ (purity is proclaimed). This implies that the purity of Allah should be declared at all times, the past, the present and the future. [Mazhari]

Remedy for diabolical whisperings

Sayyidna Abbas radiallahu ‘anhu said that if the Satan casts an evil scruple in anyone’s heart, and thus causes skepticism about Allah and the religion of truth, he should softly recite the following verse: **He is the First and the Last, and the Manifest and the Hidden and He is All-Knowing about every thing**

What is meant by Allah’s being First and Last, and Manifest and Hidden?

There are more than ten different interpretations of these attributes, and they are not contradictory. The scope is wide enough to accommodate all interpretations. The meaning of the attribute **al-awwal [the First]** is more or less fixed, signifying that ontologically there was nothing before Allah, and that He created everything and He is the First Cause of all existent things.

The attribute **Al-akhir [the Last]** means that He will exist even after everything will perish, as the following verse testifies: **Everything has to perish except His Countenance ... [28:88]** It should be noted that death or perishing covers two possibilities, either actual death or potential death. Therefore the verse means that all existent creatures will either actually perish on the Day of Judgement, or they may not actually perish, but potentially they could perish. They have the inherent capacity for death and destruction. Thus despite their being existent they may still be described as halik or fani [perishing]. As for instance, Paradise and Hell, and the righteous or unrighteous inmates entering them will not actually perish, but potentially they have the inherent capacity to perish. Only the Supreme Being of Allah is such that neither non-existence has ever occurred to Him, nor can death overtake Him. Thus Allah is Al-akhir [the Last].

Imam Ghazali rahimahullah has another explanation. He interprets the attribute **Al-Akhir [the Last]*** from the point of view of ma’rifah [Knowledge] in the sense that knowing Allah Ta’ala is the ultimate goal which man hopes to achieve. He moves in the direction of this goal, passing on the way through all the different stages and stations until he attains the Divine Knowledge. [Ruh-ul-Ma’ani]

The attribute **Az-zahir [the Manifest]** signifies a Being whose manifestation is superior to everything. Since ‘manifestation’ is an offshoot of ‘existence’, and the Existence of Allah is First and superior to all existent entities, the Divine Manifestation surpasses the manifestation of all other beings. Nothing in this universe is more manifest than Him. The manifestation of His wisdom and His power is visible in every particle of this world.

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The attribute **Al-batin [the Hidden]** means that the accurate nature and essence of Allah's Being is hidden in the sense that the Divine Essence [dhat] is beyond human perception. No intellect or thought can ever reach the accurate and Intrinsic Essence of Allah.

اے برتر از قیاس و گمان و خیال و وهم
و زھر چہ دیدہ ایم شنیدہ ایم و خواندہ ایم

*He is far behind any hypothesis, any guess, any, assumption, any imagination
And who is far beyond whatever we have ever seen, heard or read about*

اے بروں از جملہ قال و قیل من
خاک بر فرق من و تمثیل من

*He is beyond all our discussions and debates.
Whatever example I cite to explain Him is no more than sheer failure*

...And He is with you wherever you are, . . . 57:4 No man is able to comprehend the essential nature of Allah's company or His being with us, though it is absolutely true that He is with us, because no man can exist or do any work without it. The Divine Will [mashiyyah] and power is necessary for everything. Therefore, Allah is with every human being in every situation, at every place. Allah knows best!

LESSONS

Many often question, if Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala is all around, if He is here, then why can't we see Him?

As explained above, we can never ever comprehend Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala due to the incapacity of **our** imagination and minds.

When Musa 'alayhis salaam asked Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala to show Himself to him, Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala said you **cannot** see me. It's down to our incapability. Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala is all around, but we can't see Him due to **our** incapability.

We can't face the sun, looking directly into it, so how can we ever see Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, the One who created the sun?!

Rather than focusing our minds on all these things, we should divert our attention to the Hereafter, and doing as much as we can to be of those fortunate ones whom Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala gives the capability to see Him in all His Might and Splendour.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala make us of those fortunate ones. Aameen thumma aameen!

ANSWER: Surah An-Nasr.

Name of the Surah and place of its revelation.

According to the consensus of scholars, this Surah was revealed in Madinah. Its other name is Surah At-Tawdi'. The word Tawdi' means 'to bid farewell'. As this Surah indicates the approach of the demise of the Nabi ﷺ, it bids farewell to him and is thus entitled Surah At-Tawdi'.

Several Prophetic Traditions and statements of the Companions narrate that this Surah indicates that Nabi ﷺ has fulfilled his task, and accomplished his mission of life, and he could look forward to returning to his Lord in full favor as his death was approaching fast. The Surah teaches Nabi ﷺ the beautiful manners of asking Allah's forgiveness and offering constant praise and thanks to his Lord.

It is reported in Muqatil's narration that when this Surah was revealed, Nabi ﷺ recited it in a gathering of the blessed Companions, among whom were Sayyidna Abu Bakr, 'Umar, Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas radiallahu 'anhum. All were happy at the revelation of this Surah, because it contained the glad tidings of the Conquest of Makkah, but Sayyidna Abbas radiallahu 'anhu began to weep. Nabi ﷺ asked him the reason for weeping, and he replied that it covertly conveys the termination of your life and nearness of your death. Nabi ﷺ confirmed this. Sahih of Bukhari records a similar explanation of this Surah given by Sayyidna Ibn 'Abbas radiallahu 'anhu in which there is the addition that when Sayyidna 'Umar radiallahu 'anhu heard this, he concurred with him and said: 'I do not know anything about it other than what you [Ibn Abbas radiallahu 'anhu] have said'. [Transmitted by Tirmidhi who graded it as hasan, sahih vide Qurtubi]

This Surah was also the last Surah to be revealed **completely**. [Qurtubi]

LESSONS

The only celebration that was being made after the Conquest Of Makkah, was the celebration of Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala.

There was no waving the flag, dancing in parades, tanks rolling by, etc. When any other army wins they give credit to themselves and their nation but **when the believers win they give credit to Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala**. This is the time to thank Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala. Even Nabi ﷺ enters in the state of sajdah.

The first message of the Surah is the victory of Islam. The second message of the Surah is Tasbih, Hamd and Istighfar specifically directed Nabi ﷺ.

Allah's house has been cleared of idols following this conquest. Islam has gained victory. But Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala is telling us here, that the idol of arrogance can still breed in our hearts. When the victory comes, it's easy for us to think 'I did it', 'We did it', 'I came number one', 'I came on top.' Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala is teaching us here that our success is only by Him. If that thought ever comes into our hearts, then we should get rid of it immediately. The bigger idol is in our own hearts. Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala is using Nabi ﷺ as a teacher subhan'Allah. So whenever we pass exams, or get a promotion in our jobs, or complete a challenge, or solve a problem; we must always remember **we didn't do anything**, it is only by Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala's Will that we have succeeded.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala humble our hearts and protect us from arrogance and ignorance. Aameen
thumma aameen

ANSWER: Surah Al-Mu'min/Surah Ghafir

The Virtues of the Surahs that begin with Ha Mim

Ibn Abbas radiallahu 'any said, *"Everything has an essence and the essence of the Qur'an is the family of Ha Mim,"* or he said, *"the Ha Mims."*

Mis'ar bin Kidam said, *"They used to be called 'the brides'."* All of this was recorded by the the Imam, great scholar, Abu 'Ubayd Al-Qasim bin Sallam rahimahullah in his book Fada'il Al-Qur'an.

Humayd bin Zanjuyah narrated that 'Abdullah, radiallahu 'anhu, said, *"The parable of the Qur'an is that of a man who sets out to find a place for his family to stay, and he comes to a place where there is evidence of rainfall. While he is walking about, admiring it, he suddenly comes upon beautiful gardens. He says, 'I liked the first traces of rainfall, but this is far better.' It was said to him, 'The first place is like the Qur'an, and these beautiful gardens are like the splendor of family of Ha Mim in relation to the rest of the Qur'an'."* This was recorded by Al-Baghawi.

Ibn Mas'ud radiallahu 'anhu, said, *"When I reach the family of Ha Mim, it is like reaching a beautiful garden, so I take my time."*

In verse seven, it is said: **Those who are bearing the Throne and those who are around it.** The present count of angels who bear the Throne ('arsh) is four and, on the day of Qiyamah (the Day of Judgment), they will be eight, and only Allah knows the number of angels around the 'arsh.

Some Hadith narrations give the number of their rows that reaches several hundred thousands. They are called: **karrubi**. They are angels close to Allah.

In this verse, it has been said that all these angels close to Allah pray for all believers, particularly those who repent from their sins and follow the Shari'ah of Nabi ﷺ. Either Allah Ta'ala has appointed them to perform this task, or their nature is such that they keep praying for the good servants of Allah. Therefore, Sayyidna Mutarrif Ibn 'Abdullah Ibn Shikhkhair said that out of all servants of Allah, the angels of Allah are the foremost among those who wish well for believers.

Firstly, they pray for them. They implore Allah to forgive them, to save them from the punishment of Jahannam and to admit them to the everlasting gardens of Jannah. Along with it, they also pray for: **those as well who did good from among their fathers and wives and children. - 40:8**, that is, also admit anyone from among their fathers and forefathers, and their wives, and their children - who meet the criterion of goodness that makes them deserving of forgiveness, *a criterion that requires that they should have departed from the mortal world while adhering to their 'iman or faith* - yes, admit them too with the same believers into the Jannah.

This tells us that one's 'iman or faith is the basic condition of salvation (najah). After 'iman come other good deeds. The relatives of Muslim believers - fathers, grandfathers or wives and children - even if they are ranked lower than them, such is the munificence of Allah Ta'ala that He would, in deference to them, also let the relatives of a lesser rank be along with them in Jannah, **so that their happiness becomes total and complete** as it has been said in another verse of the Qur'an appearing elsewhere: **... We will join their children with them - At-Tur, 52:21**

Sa'id Ibn Jubayr has said, 'When a believer goes to Jannah, he will ask about his father, son, brother and others, and would want to know where they are. He will be told that their deeds were not like yours

DAY 15

(therefore, they will not be there). He will say, 'whatever good I did (was not for me alone), in fact, it was for me and them both.' Then, the command will come, 'admit them too into the Jannah.' (Ibn Kathir)



LESSONS

Subhan'Allah! Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala is telling us how all the angels close to Him pray for forgiveness for the believers! Particularly those who repent from their sins and follow Nabi ﷺ. Subhan'Allah!

In Sahih Muslim it says: *When a Muslim prays for his brother in his absence, the angel says, 'Amin, and may you have something similar to it.'*

So when we make du'a for others, or others ask us to make du'a for them, don't think of it as a chore. Remember that whatever we ask for our own brothers and sisters, the angels make that same du'a for us. So when we ask Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, to relieve someone from their troubles, the angels are saying 'Amin' that we too are relieved from our troubles. Subhan'Allah!

Everything we do is always to our own benefit, Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala is **constantly** showering us in His Mercy.

We are further being told again, of the Mercy of Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala that with His will, the residents of Jannah will ask about their family and Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala will allow them to meet their family so that **their happiness is complete**.

It's amazing subhan'Allah, how even in the hereafter, after all the toils and troubles of this dunya are over, Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala continues to shower us with His Mercy and allows us to complete **our** happiness! Subhan'Allah!

And the last point, is to send abundant isaal-e-thawaab for our families and the whole ummah. Make an intention today, right now, that Oh Allah, whatever good I do from hereonwards, grant its reward to the whole of the ummah of Nabi ﷺ.

This is unity. This is wanting for others what you want for yourself. When we send reward to the whole ummah, (or a specific person), not only do they get that reward, but nothing decreases from our reward in doing that action.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala make us of those whom the angels are constantly asking for our maghfirah, and saying aameen to all our permissible du'as. Aameen thumma aameen!

ANSWER: Surah Al-Insaan/Surah Ad-Dahr

Surah Ad-Dahr has also been called Surah Al-Insan (Man) and Surah Al-Abrar (The Righteous) [Ruh]. The Surah describes in a very effective, eloquent and elegant style the inception and end of human creation, reward and punishment of deeds, and the conditions of the Hereafter, Paradise and Hell.

Allah informs that He brought man into existence after he was not even a thing worth mentioning, due to his lowliness and weakness.

There has come upon man a period of time in which he was nothing worth mentioning.

The interrogative particle hal is used [linguistically] to introduce an interrogative sentence. Often, however, an interrogative construction is used to emphasise a self-evident truth. Such an interrogative means that whenever this question is put to anyone at anytime, the same answer is likely to come forth. **There can be no other possibility.**

For instance, if a question is posed to anyone in the middle of day ‘Is it not a day?’, it is an interrogative sentence, but the answer is predictable and will emphasise its obviousness. Therefore, some scholars say that the particle hal is used here in the sense of qad ‘indeed’.

In both cases, the verse signifies that there has come upon man a period of time in which he was nothing worth mentioning. The word hinun with nunation [which is the sign of ‘indefiniteness’] signifies ‘a long indefinite period of time; The verse mentions that a long period of time came upon man. This indicates that man essentially did exist at that time in one form or another, (but he was not worth mentioning), because time could not have come upon ‘man’ if he was in a state of pure non-existence [Al-’adam-ul- mahdl.

Therefore, most commentators say that the ‘period of time’ here refers to the period when he was conceived in the mother’s womb till his birth, which normally is nine months. This period covers all the stages of his creation, right from his being a sperm-drop up to his having a body and organs, and then his acquiring life and soul. During this time, he is thought existent, neither his gender is known to anyone, nor his name or his shape or size. Therefore, he is unmentionable.

Miracles of nature respecting human joints

Towards the end of the Surah: **We have created them and have made their joints strong. And whenever We will, We would replace them with others like them, a total replacement**

This verse alludes to the fact that even though man’s limbs and organs are perpetually in motion, and the wear and tear on them is phenomenal, they continue to function from birth to death. When machines made of iron or steel wear out and require regular servicing to remain functioning for even a short period, man’s body, made of soft tissues and muscles, functions for decades and scores of years without maintenance. Let us take the joints of the fingers [or other joints of the human body]. They are moved vigorously in different ways in an uncountable number of times. Heavy pressure and force is applied to them for seventy to eighty years [on an average], yet the finger-joints [and other joints] remain intact. It is certainly only Allah Who makes this possible. ‘Glorious is Allah, the Best of Creators!’

LESSONS

Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala reminds us of our origins. There was a time when we were not even a thing worth mentioning.. subhan'Allah! We are reminded here that whenever arrogance overcomes us, to look back and remember what we were.

Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, shows us a miracle, which is us! The human body is so complex in it's system, that we have multiple organs working all at the same time. No matter how advanced technology has gotten, no one can produce one camera lens that can be held in equivalence to the eye, subhan'Allah! Indeed in this a sign for us.

Further, the fact that our bodies, these amazing machines, that work 24/7/365 and have no rest from working, never need 'servicing' or the sorts. From birth until death, our bodies remain intact. This in itself is a miracle.

Look how Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala starts the Surah reminding us we're nothing, only to end with how **He** created us.

We are what we are because of Him. There is no room for arrogance, only humility.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala humble us, protect us from arrogance, and increase our imaan upon reflection of His creation. Aameen thumma aameen!

ANSWER: Surah Al-Hujurat.

Do not proceed ahead of Allah and His Messenger The phrase **بين اليمين** literally, means “between the two hands”, but in Arabic usage it means ‘in front of’ or ‘ahead of’. It means: do not go ahead of or in front of Allah’s Messenger ﷺ.

The Qur’an does not say in what matter they are prohibited from preceding him. It would appear that the general prohibition includes preceding by word or deed. Wait for the Messenger’s reply unless he himself appoints someone to reply. Likewise if he is walking, no one should overtake him. If they are sitting in a dining session, no one should start eating before him. If there is a clear indication or strong evidence that he himself wants to send someone forward, this would be possible, for example some people used to be asked to go on a journey or war ahead of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Respect for Islamic Scholars and Religious Leaders

Some of the scholars have ruled that Muslims should observe the same rule in respect of Islamic scholars and spiritual masters as enjoined by the Qur’an, because they are the heirs of the Holy Prophet’s ﷺ.

Ibn Abbas radiallahu ‘anhu commented: *“Do not say anything that contradicts the Qur’an and Sunnah.”* Qatadah commented, *“We were told that some people used to say, ‘Revelation should be sent down about such and such matters,’ and ‘such and such practices should be rendered allowed.’ Allah the Exalted disliked this attitude.”*

Do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet.

This is another etiquette to be observed while in the presence of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This verse teaches the believers that they should not raise their voices above the voice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ nor speak aloud to him as one speaks aloud to another in general discussions.

Thus when this verse was revealed, the blessed Companions became very apprehensive and very cautious. Sayyidna Abu Bakr radiallahu ‘anhu said: *“By God! O Messenger of Allah, from now till my last breath, I shall speak to you as if someone is whispering.”* (Ad-Durr-ul-Manthur on the authority of Baihaqi)

When this verse was revealed, Sayyidna ‘Umar’s radiallahu ‘anhu voice became so low that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had to ask him to repeat what he said, so that he could understand what he was saying to him (Sihah).

This ruling also applies to the Ulema. When sitting in their assembly, it is impolite to raise voices so loudly that their voices are suppressed. Qurtubi).

Lexical and Technical Analysis of the Concepts Islam and Iman

The foregoing discussion clarifies that the term “Islam” in this verse bears the literal meaning of outward submission and not the technical sense. Therefore, the verse does not show the technical difference between the terms “Islam” and “Iman. The two terms, technically, connote - different senses. “Iman”, in the technical sense of Shari’ah, refers to the belief by heart and thus connotes a firm and unshakable belief in the Oneness of Allah and in His Messenger. “Islam”, on the other hand, stands for complete surrender and obedience to Allah and His Messenger. However, “Islam” and “Iman” of a person need to complement each other. In Shari’ah, the belief of the heart must manifest itself by performing deeds outwardly, the least degree of which is to proclaim the kalimah of Islam verbally.

But the outward performance of deeds is not recognised by Shari’ah unless the faith goes deep down into his heart. Otherwise it would be hypocrisy. Thus in the original and final analysis “Islam” and “Iman” are

different concepts. 'Iman' is the inner quality of the heart and manifests outwardly whilst 'Islam' starts out in outward actions and culminates in the inner sincere affirmation of the heart. But in terms of their goal, they are mutually necessary and complementary in that "Iman" without "Islam" is not possible, nor is "Islam" possible without "Iman".

Hence, it is not true to say that "Muslim" and "Mu'min" are antonyms and mutually contradictory concepts. In Shari'ah, it is not possible for a person to be a "Muslim" but not a "Mu'min" or be a "Mu'min" but not a "Muslim". However, this is possible only lexically, as is the case of all hypocrites who used to be treated like Muslims, because of their outward obedience of Islamic injunctions, but their hearts were devoid of sincere faith, belief and affirmation. They were not believers. Allah, the Pure and Exalted, knows best.

LESSONS

This Surah teaches us manners. Nabi ﷺ may no longer be amongst us, but the heirs of the Prophet ﷺ, the Ulema, are amongst us alhamdulillah.

Thus we learn that we should behave and react in the best of ways. We should not speak loudly in their presence such that it becomes impolite, nor walk ahead of them, nor eat before them, nor speak before them, nor interrupt them in speech, and the likes.

We should portray the best of manners. May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala allow us to encompass the best of manners, and act upon them in the presence of Ulema, and guide us to a good, polite and well-mannered character. Aameen thumma aameen.

ANSWER: Surah An-Naml.

And surely We gave knowledge to Dawud and Sulaiman. (27:15)

The knowledge given to Sayyidna Dawud and Sulaiman alayhis salaam was obviously the special knowledge normally given to the prophets about their functions and obligations as prophets, but at the same time it may also include other sciences and arts, as Sayyidna Dawudd alayhis salaam was given the art of making armors.

Sayyidna Dawud and Sulaiman alayhimus salaam enjoyed a special position among the prophets in that they were also bestowed with the empire along with the prophethood. The empire was of a very special nature in that they ruled over not only the humans but also the Jinns and animals. While relating all these graces, knowledge is mentioned first, which is a clear hint that knowledge is superior and paramount among them all. (Qurtubi)

And Sulaiman inherited Dawud

What is meant here is not wealth, because if that were the case, Sulayman would not have been singled out from among the sons of Dawud, as Dawud had one hundred wives. Rather what is meant is the inheritance of kingship and prophethood, for the wealth of the Prophets cannot be inherited, as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: We Prophets cannot be inherited from; whatever we leave behind is charity.

The inheritance mentioned in this verse is not the inheritance of wealth and property, because Nabi ﷺ has clearly declared that the prophets do neither inherit the property of anyone nor does their property is inherited by anyone. Tirmidhi and Abu Dawud have reported from Sayyidna Abu Darda radiallahu ‘anhu that the Nabi ﷺ has said, ‘Ulama’ (men of knowledge) are the inheritors of prophets, but the prophets did not leave dirhams or dintars (wealth) as their inheritance; instead, they have left knowledge as their heritage.

Birds and animals also have sense and intelligence

There is sense and intelligence to some degree in all animals and birds. However, it is not developed to such an extent that they were made to follow any injunctions of the Shariah. But the humans and jinns are bestowed with such perfected sense and intelligence that they are made the addressee and followers of the injunctions of Allah Ta’ala. Imam Shafi’i rahimahullah has said that dove is the cleverest of all the birds, and Ibn ‘Atiyyah has said that ant is very intelligent animal; its smelling power is very strong. If it gets hold of a grain it breaks it into two, so that it does not germinate, and thus it stock its food for the winters. (Qurtubi)

Sulayman alayhis salaam makes a du’a, from which part of it is: **and that I do the good deeds You like.**

Here رضا (liking) means acceptance. Thus the meaning is ‘Ya Allah! Grace me with Divine help for such righteous deeds which are acceptable to You’.

From this it is argued in Ruh ul-Ma’ani that it is not necessary for the righteous deeds to be accepted, but their acceptance is dependent on certain conditions.

It is further explained that there is no relation between righteousness and acceptance either rationally or in religious law. It is for this reason that the prophets used to pray for the acceptance of their righteous deeds. Sayyidna Ibrahim and Isma’il alayhimus salaam prayed while constructing the House of Allah: **Our Lord accept from us.**

It shows that after doing a good deed, one should not be complacent, but should pray to Allah for its acceptance.

Despite having done good deeds and their acceptance the entry into Paradise will not be possible without the grace of Allah

And admit me, by your mercy, among your righteous slaves. Despite having performed good deeds and their acceptance, the entry into Paradise will depend on the grace and kindness of Allah Ta'ala. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that no one will enter into Paradise relying only on his deeds. So the companions enquired from the Holy Prophet “Even you too?”, and he answered “Yes, me too, but I am surrounded by Allah’s favour and grace”. (Ruh ul-Ma’ani)

Sayyidna Sulaiman alayhis salaam was also praying for the grace of Allah for the entry into Paradise in these words ‘O Allah, grace me also with your favour so that I become entitled to enter Paradise’.

LESSONS

Subhan'Allah! We learn how even the smallest, tiniest of Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala's creation, such as ant, holds so much intellect! Subhan'Allah Subhan'Allah! Indeed when we reflect upon the creation of Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, it fills us with awe and increases our imaan.

The second key lesson to take away, is that we mustn't become complacent after performing good deeds, and constantly ask Allah subhanahu to **accept** them. We don't enter Jannah because we've done good deeds, rather Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala teaches us humility, that we should beg for His acceptance, His Mercy, so that He may enter us into His garden.

Isn't it amazing how we continuously keep witnessing Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala's Mercy? Subhan'Allah.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala fill our hearts with mercy also, and give us the tawfeeq to do good deeds, and beg to Him for the acceptance of them, and may He accept them. Aameen thumma aameen!

ANSWER: Surah Al-Qalam.

Pen and its Significance

In the phrase wal-qalami, the waw is the particle of oath [translated here as ‘by the pen’]. ‘Qalam’ refers to ‘pen’, and there are three types of pen: [1] the pen of destinies; [2] the pen of angels; and [3] the pen of human beings. It could refer to any or all of these types of pen. A pen is an object that is used for writing anything [as is the view of Abu Hatim Al-Busti].

According to Sayyidna Ibn ‘Abbas radiallahu ‘anhu, it specifically refers to the pen of destinies.

Sayyidna ‘Ubadah Ibn Samit radiallahu ‘anhu narrates regarding the pen of destinies that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “*The first thing Allah created was the pen, and He told it to write, and when it asked Him what it should write, He told it to write what was predestined, so it wrote what would take place to all eternity.*” [Transmitted by At-Tirmidhi, saying that this is a Tradition whose chain of narrators is gharib].

Sayyidna ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Umar radiallahu ‘anhu narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “*Allah recorded the destiny of all creatures 50000 years before creating the heavens and the earth.*” [Sahih Muslim].

Qatadah rahimahullah says that pen is a great gift of Allah that He has endowed upon His servants. Some scholars say that Allah first created the pen, and that was the pen of decrees which recorded the destinies of the entire universe and all the creatures. Then He created the second pen that is used by the inhabitants of the earth. The second pen is referred to in Surah Iqra’ in verse [96:4], thus: **{He who) taught by the pen.** And Allah knows best!

If qalam ‘pen’ in the verse under comment refers to the pen of destinies, its greatness and its superiority over everything is quite obvious and swearing by it is quite understandable. If it is taken to refer to all pens in general, including the pen of destinies, the pen of angels, and also the pen of human beings, swearing an oath by it is apt because all great tasks are accomplished by pen. In the conquests of territories, pen play a mighty role: ‘The pen is mightier than the sword’ goes the famous saying. Abu Hatim Al-Busti has encapsulated this idea in two short verses:

إذا قسم الأبطال يوماً بسيفهم.... وعدوه مما يكسب المجد والكرم

*When the brave people swear by their sword some day,
And count it among things that give honour and veneration to men,*

كفى قلم الكتاب عزاً ورفعة.... مدى الدهر إن الله قسم بالقلم

*The writers’ pen is sufficient for their honour and superiority,
For all times to come, because Allah has sworn oath by the pen*

Ibn Kathir says: The apparent meaning is that this refers to the actual pen that is used to write. This is like Allah’s saying, **Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous. Who has taught by the pen. He has taught man that which he knew not (96:3-5)**

Therefore, this statement is Allah’s swearing and alerting His creatures to what He has favored them with by teaching them the skill of writing, through which knowledge is attained.

LESSONS

Here we learn the key to all knowledge - the pen. As mentioned above, all great things are achieved by the pen. All our day-to-day correspondence, our tasks, school work, jobs, all involve the skill of being able to write with a pen.

Alhamdulillah, we're fortunate that we have been given the honour of being literate. Don't let this favour that we have been bestowed with go to waste.

No matter what field you are studying in, secular or deeni; no matter what field you are working in, secular or deeni, **be the best**. It's the sunnah of our beloved Nabi ﷺ to be the best in everything that we do.

Don't let this blessing go to waste. And be grateful. Have we ever thought what would happen if we couldn't write? And we were not literate? How many of the things that we do day-to-day would we no longer be able to achieve?

This includes the usage of technology, as we're only able to use it because we were taught by the pen. What if we couldn't type?

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala allow us to be grateful for the blessing of being able to write, and being literate, and may He use us to the benefit of the Ummah, and allow us to take full advantage of this skill He has favoured us with. Aameen thumma aameen!

ANSWER: Surah An-Najm.

Characteristics of Surah An-Najm

Surah An-Najm is the first chapter that the Holy Prophet ﷺ proclaimed in Makkah ('Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud radiallahu 'anhu has transmitted it - as in Qurtubi) and this is the first Surah in which a verse of sajdah (prostration) is revealed. The Holy Prophet ﷺ recited it and prostrated.

A strange thing happened on this occasion: When the Holy Prophet Nabi ﷺ finished reciting the Surah before a mixed gathering of Muslims and disbelievers, and, along with his followers, he prostrated himself on the ground. The disbelievers too prostrated, except one proud and arrogant man (regarding whose name there is a difference of opinion (Tr.)) who took a handful of soil and, having applied it on his forehead, said, 'this is enough'. 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud radiallahu 'anhu [the transmitter of the Tradition] said that he saw this man lying dead in the state of disbelief [kufr]. (Bukhari, Muslim and other compilers of Sunan - Ibn-Kathir [condensed])

At the outset of this Surah, the truth of the Qur'anic revelation and of the Divine claim is sought to be established. In a very exquisite and forceful style, it is stated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ is a true Messenger of Allah, and there is no room for any doubt about this.

By the star when it goes down to set

The word najm means a star, and as a common noun every star is referred to as najm, and in that case the plural is nujum. There are however occasions when najm specifically refers to 'thurayya'. In this case it is used as a proper noun and it signifies "the Pleiades" which is a loose cluster of many (hundred) stars, (six of which are visible to ordinary sight). In this context, some scholars, taking the word as a proper noun, interpret najm as 'thurayya'. Farra' and Hasan Basri prefer the first interpretation, and take the word as a common noun (Qurtubi). This is the interpretation that is adopted in the translation.

The verb *hawa* means to fall or plunge. When stars fall, they set. In this verse Allah swears an oath to show that the Messenger ﷺ is true, and his words are a revelation from Allah, in which there is no room for any doubt. In Surah As-Saffat it has been explained in detail that the Creator, for various wise reasons, swears by whatever He wills among His creation, but His created beings only swear by the Creator. They are not allowed to swear by anything else. Here Allah has sworn an oath by the stars. Probably, the underlying wisdom in this is that as the Arabs are used to determine the course and direction of, and are guided in their travels by the movements of the stars in the sandy waste of Arabia, so they would now be led to the goal and end of their spiritual journey by the star par excellence, that is, by the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The Holy Prophet's ﷺ Words are a Revelation from Allah

And he does not speak out of (his own) desire. It is not but revelation revealed [to him]

The verses tell us that it is absolutely impossible for the Messenger ﷺ to forge lies and impute them to Allah. Nothing he utters is of his own wish or desire. He only conveys to the people what he was commanded to convey, in its entirety, without additions or deletions.

Imam Ahmad recorded that 'Abdullah bin 'Amr said, *"I used to record everything I heard from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ so it would be preserved. The Quraysh discouraged me from this, saying, 'You record everything you hear from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ even though he is human and sometimes speaks when he is angry' I stopped recording the Hadiths for a while, but later mentioned what they said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who said, Write! By He in Whose Hand is my soul, every word that comes out of me is the Truth.*

LESSONS

Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala affirms that every single word spoken by Nabi ﷺ is the truth. The Qur'aan is the truth, and the hadith is also the truth. Every single letter, every word, every phrase and every sentence that left the mouth of the beloved Messenger ﷺ is the truth.

This Surah is such a beautiful Surah subhan'Allah, where Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala guides us to love Nabi ﷺ. Just the relationship and love that we see Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala has for His Messenger, how He comforts Nabi ﷺ through His words, and us, is just beautiful subhan'Allah. This pure, pure love, this affection, this consoling, it just leaves the heart wanting to cry. Not the eyes (albeit they shed tears too) but the heart. And to be able to witness such a love is a blessing in itself, alhamdulillah.

Isn't it amazing that Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala's name is never mentioned, except that Nabi ﷺ is also mentioned, or you immediately think of Nabi ﷺ? Subhan'Allah!

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala allow us to reach Him and His love, and the way unto Him is to follow and fall in love with His beloved, Nabi ﷺ.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala grant us immense love in our hearts for His beloved ﷺ, and accept it from us. Aameen thumma aameen!

ANSWER: Surah Al-Muzzammil.

O you wrapped up in clothes

The word muzzammil literally means ‘one wrapped up in clothes’ and its near-synonym ‘muddaththir’ comes in the next Surah. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is addressed in this verse with reference to a particular style of wrapping himself in his clothes. The first event of this kind occurred when the Holy Prophet ﷺ received first revelation in the cave of Hira. Being his first experience, he felt it very hard, and was caught by a shivery cold, and once he reached home, he asked his blessed wife Khadijah radiallahu ‘anha to wrap him in a blanket which she did. A detailed account of this event is reported by Bukhari in the very first chapter of his book. Then the revelation stopped for some time. Speaking of this temporary break in the revelation [termed as fatrat-ul-wahy], Sayyidna Jubir radiallahu ‘anhu reports that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said in his narrative:

“Whilst I was walking along, I heard a voice from heaven and I raised up my eyes. Lo! The Angel that had appeared to me in Hira was sitting on a chair between heaven and earth, and I was struck with awe on account of him and returned home and said, Wrap me up, wrap me up. Then Allah revealed the first five verses of Surah Al-Muddaththir (chapter 74).” [Bukhari and Muslim]

According to this narrative, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is affectionately addressed as ‘O you, enveloped in a mantle,’ whereas in this Surah he is addressed as ‘O you wrapped up in clothes’. Both forms of address are used affectionately and endearingly to console him. The latter title of address ‘muzzammil’ as it appears in this Surah could probably be connected to another incident, but it, nonetheless, shows deep love and affection for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. [Ruh-ul-Ma’ani].

Having addressed him with this special title, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is told in the following verses that praying to Allah in the stillness of night [salat-ut-Tahajjud] will prepare him for the heavy task entrusted to him. Some details of the night-prayer have also been set out.

Injunctions Pertaining to Salut-ut-Tahajjud and its Abrogation

Reading into the titles muzzammil and muddaththir a consensus of scholarly opinion assigns the revelation of this Surah to the earliest period when the five daily prayers had not become obligatory. They were prescribed on the night of Holy Prophet’s ﷺ Ascent to heavens. [mi’raj].

Imam Baghawi rahimahullah says, on the basis of Ahadith reported by Sayyidah Aishah Siddiqah radiallahu ‘anha and others, that ‘night-prayer’ was compulsory for the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the entire Muslim community until the five prayers were not prescribed. This verse not only prescribes the night-prayer but it also prescribes to stand up in prayer from at least one quarter of the night, because the verse under comment basically commanded to stand up all night to pray except a little portion of it.

Imam Baghawi rahimahullah says, on the basis of narration of Ahadith, that the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the noble Companions radiallahu ‘anhum, in compliance with this command, spent the major portion of the night in tahajjud, so much so that their feet would swell and this exertion caused hardship and difficulty to them. This situation continued for a year. After that, towards the end of the Surah, the following injunction was revealed:

Therefore, recite as much of it as is easy

DAY 21

It repealed the obligation of staying up for a long time, and granted them concession and permission to stay up for prayer as much as they could easily manage. This is transmitted by Abu Dawud and Nasa'i on the authority of Sayyidah 'Aishah radiallahu 'anha. Sayyidna Ibn 'Abbas radiallahu 'anhu says that when the five prescribed prayers became obligatory on the night of mi'raj, the obligatory nature of tahajjud was abrogated. It was, however, retained as sunnah, because the Holy Prophet ﷺ performed it most regularly. Most of the blessed Companions radiallahu 'anhum were regular with their tahajjud as well. [Mazhari]

LESSONS

We learn here regarding Tahajjud Salah. Although it is not a fardh salah, it is the most highest-ranking nafl salah.

Praying Tahajjud salah allows us to become accustomed to the difficulty of waking up at night. This is a struggle against excess sleep and comfort of the carnal self. **This exercise will make it easier to abide by the injunctions contained in the ‘weighty discourse’, that is, the Holy Qur’an.**

The word Tahajjud, itself, literally means **to sleep at night and then wake up to perform the prayer.**

Although one can pray Tahajjud salah at any time after Isha, it is best to sleep, and then wake up to perform Tahajjud salah. That is true, true sacrifice. The constant practice of Nabi ﷺ, and that of the overwhelming majority of the Companions and their pupils, and that of the righteous predecessors of the ‘Ummah, was that they performed this prayer in the later part of the night after waking up from sleep, and therefore **it is more virtuous, more meritorious and attracts more blessings.**

Ibn Zaid radiallahu ‘anhu said that getting up in the night for prayer is **the most effective means of making the heart, eye, ear and tongue to mutually correspond and conform.**

At nighttime when the tongue recites the Qur’an, the ears will be conducive to listening to the recitation with due concentration, and the heart will be conducive to understanding and considering its meaning and message.

Tahajjud salah also has the characteristic of bringing peace of mind - making it easier to recite the Qur’an.

Especially in these last 10 days of Ramadan, exert yourself in Tahajjud salah. Do you **really** want something if you can’t wake up and sacrifice your sleep and desires to beg to Allah subhanahu wa ta’ala for it? At a time when He descends to the lowest heaven when one-third of the night remains, so He may answer our du’as?

May Allah subhanahu wa ta’ala make us steadfast and firm upon Tahajjud Salah, and accept all our permissible du’as, bringing us forever closer to Him. Aameen thumma aameen!

ANSWER: Surah Al-Baqarah.

This Surah enjoys, with regard to its contents as well, a special distinction. Ibn al-Arabi reports from his elders that in this Surah there are one thousand injunctions, one thousand prohibitions, one thousand subtle points of wisdom, and one thousand parables and references to historical events (Qurtubi and Ibn Kathir). That is why the great Caliph ‘Umar radiallahu ‘anhu spent twelve years in learning and meditating over this Surah, and the blessed Companion Abdullah ibn ‘Umar spent eight years to learn it. (Qurtubi)

Qualities that make the Qur’an a miracle

(1) The Holy Qur’an is incomparable for its comprehensiveness even among the Sacred Books of the world; on the one hand, it brings to man the ultimate knowledge of a metaphysical order, and, on the other, provides guidance for all the spheres of human life, spiritual or physical, individual or collective.

Those who suspect the Book to have been the product of a human agency should remind themselves of the simple fact that it appeared at a time and in a place which offered no facilities for acquiring the kind of education which is necessary for composing such a book - in fact, the Arabs were in those days known as the Ummiyyiin, ‘the illiterates’, and that the Book came through the Holy Prophet Nabi ﷺ who could not even read or write, and who had not tried to learn even the arts of poetry and rhetoric on which the Arabs prided themselves. This fact, in itself, is nothing short of a miracle.

(2) The Holy Qur’an made many predictions about future events, and things turned out to be exactly as it had declared. For example, the infidels of Makkah were not prepared to believe the prophecy that the people of Rum, or the Byzantians, would finally rout the Persians after having suffered an initial defeat. The infidels made it a point of honour, and put a wager on it, but were humiliated to see the prophecy come true before the stipulated period of ten years was over.

(3) The Holy Qur’an gives a clear account of some of the earlier prophets, of their Shar’iah and of their peoples, and of many historical events since the beginning of the world. Even the best scholars among the Jews and the Christians did not possess such exact information. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, who had never attended a school nor been in the company of a learned man, could not have provided all these details for himself without having received the knowledge from Allah.

(4) Several verses of the Holy Qur’an disclosed what certain people had tried to keep concealed in their hearts, and they had to confess that this was just what they had been thinking. We shall cite only two instances.

“When two of your battalions thought of falling away. . .” (3:122) and, “They say in their hearts, Why does Allah not punish us for what we say?”

(5) The Holy Qur’an predicted that such and such men would not be able to do such and such things, and then it turned out that, in spite of having the power, they could not do these things. The Jews claimed to be the ‘Chosen of God’ and His friends. Since one is always eager to meet one’s friends, the Holy Qur’an asked them to substantiate their claim by wishing for death and for going back to Allah, but at the same time declared: **And they shall never wish for it (62:7).**

Now, expressing a wish for death should not be difficult for anyone, if he wishes to establish his bonafides; for the Jews in particular, it would have been an easy way of refuting the Holy Qur’an. But, in spite of all their

hatred for the Holy Prophet ﷺ, they knew in their hearts that the Holy Qur'an was the Book of Allah, and feared that if they told a lie in this matter, they would actually die. And they kept quiet.

(6) When the Holy Qur'an is recited (in Arabic, of course), it affects in a strange and indefinable way the heart of even a casual listener, Muslim or non-Muslim. History reports many instances of people accepting Islam merely because they happened to be passing by when the Holy Prophet ﷺ was reciting the Holy Qur'an - such was the case, for example, of the blessed Companion Jubair ibn Mut'im radiallahu 'anhu.

(7) The best book in the world, if read four or five times, begins to lose its charm even for the most fervent admirer. But the peculiar quality of the Holy Qur'an, and of it alone, is that the more one reads or recites it, the more eager one becomes to do so again and again. Even among the sacred books of the world, the Holy Qur'an is unique in this respect.

(8) The sacred books of many religions have been lost or no longer exist in an integral and authentic form. But Allah has promised in the Holy Qur'an that He Himself will protect this Book, and preserve it against the slightest change upto the end of time. During the fourteen centuries of the history of Islam, millions of copies, written by hand or printed, have been spread all over the globe as no other sacred book has been. But in this respect the greatest miracle of the Holy Qur'an is that in all the ages and in all the places where Muslims have lived, there have been millions of people who have known the Book by heart without the alteration of a single consonant or vowel. So, Allah has preserved His Last Book not merely in the shape of written words, but, above all in the hearts of men. Allah is Ever-Living, so will His Word live for ever beyond the interference of created beings.

(9) There is no other book which should comprehend all the forms of knowledge and wisdom in so short a space as does the Holy Qur'an, fulfilling all possible spiritual needs of man, and providing him with guidance for all the spheres of his internal or external, individual or social activity.

(10)) It is not merely a theoretical guidance that the Holy Qur'an has offered. Which other book, sacred or otherwise, has had such a vast and deep impact on the history of mankind in such a short time? Which other book has brought about such a radical change in the individual and collective life of millions of men within the space of a few years? For when the Holy Prophet ﷺ departed from this world, Islam had, in spite of all opposition and without the modern media of communication, already established a new order of life all over the Arabian peninsula, and within the next few decades the message of the Holy Qur'an had reached India on one side, and Spain on the other. Can such pervasiveness be anything but a miracle?

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The above miracles of the Qur'an have been mentioned here for the following reason:

In Surah Al-Fatihah, we make a du'a, Oh Allah, guide us to the straight path. Surah Al-Baqarah opens with 'That Book has no doubt in it'. The word 'That' is referring back to the prayer for the straight path made in Surah Al-Fatihah, implying that the **prayer has been granted and the Holy Qur'an is the answer to the request**, which gives a detailed account of the straight path to those who seek guidance and are willing to follow it.

Thus, we have placed the above Miracles of the Qur'an here, to eradicate any doubt regarding it, so that we may **accept it and follow it, even if we don't understand it**. As mentioned earlier, yes one should try and understand the Qur'an, but don't worry if you can't. Accept the message, accept it's from Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, bring belief into it, and Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala will make easy the path to understanding and open doors.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala allow us to take lessons from the Qur'an, understand them, apply them, and reflect upon them. Aameen thumma aameen.

ANSWER: Surah Al-Mursalat.

Occasion of revelation

Sahih of Bukhari records from Sayyidna ‘Abdullah Ibn Mas’ud radiallahu ‘anhū that he said: “While we were with Allah’s Messenger in a cave at Mina, the Surah ‘*wal-Mursalat*’ was revealed to him. He was reciting it, and I was learning it from his mouth. Verily, his mouth was moist with it, when a snake leaped out at us. The Holy Prophet said, ‘Kill it!’ So we quickly went after it, but it got away. Then the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, ‘It was saved from your harm, just as you all were saved from its harm.’” [Ibn Kathir].

Allah swears oaths in this Surah by various phenomena to assert that the Resurrection will certainly take place. The names of the phenomena are not mentioned in the Qur’an, but their five attributes are given in the following manner (The translation is given below without explanatory brackets for a better understanding of the point):

- [1] (I swear) by those that are sent one after the other, (77:1)**
- [2] and by those that blow violently, (77:2)**
- [3] and by those that spread all over, (77:3)**
- [4] and by those who differentiate (between right and wrong) distinctly, (77:4)**
- [5] then bring down the advice, (77:5)**

There is no traceable Hadith that gives the exact interpretation of the phenomena described. Therefore, the interpretation assigned to them by the Companions and their pupils differ.

Some scholars say that all five attributes refer to angels. Others say that possibly different groups of angels are bearers of the attributes. Yet other scholars say that they refer to various types of winds. Some authorities on Tafsir say that they refer to Allah’s Prophets and Messengers. Ibn Jarir Tabari says that, in this matter, it is safer to observe silence. He says that both possibilities exist, but he prefers not to side with any particular interpretation.

This is a day when they will not speak, nor will they be allowed to offer excuses

In other words, this is the Day in which they will not be able to talk, nor will they be permitted to offer pleas for their misdeeds. However, other verses of the Qur’an inform us that they will speak and will be permitted to offer excuses. There is no discrepancy between the two verses, because there will be various stages on the Plain of Gathering (Mahshar) through which people will have to pass. Sometimes they will pass through a stage where it would be forbidden for them to speak or offer excuses; and at another stage they will be permitted. [Ruh]

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Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala in this Surah tells us how possible it is for Him to make the Day of Judgement take place.

For today, I've attached a small clip from Nouman Ali Khan, that explains the opening verses.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala protect us on the Day there is no protection but His, and guide us onto the path of those whom He has favoured, and grant us His shade. Aameen thumma aameen.

ANSWER: Surah Yusuf.

In this Surah, the story of Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam has been described with continuity and order. Then, the story of Sayyidna Yusuf appears in this Surah alone. It has not been repeated anywhere else in the whole Qur’an as such (with the exception of **Surah Al-An’am - 6:84** - and **Surah Al-Mu’min** or **Ghafir - 40:34** - where only the name of Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam has been mentioned as a Messenger of Allah, in appropriate context). This is particular with the story of Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam, otherwise the stories and events concerning all blessed prophets have been introduced in the entire Qur’an with great wisdom, part by part, and repeatedly too.

The truth of the matter is that world history and past experiences teach human beings what to do with their lives in the future. These have a natural effect of their own which acts better on minds and hearts as compared to the pull of formal education. This effect is deeper and fairly effortless. Therefore, in the Holy Qur’an, which has been sent for all peoples of the world as their last testament, a marked portion of the entire history of the peoples of the world - a portion that serves as the master prescription for the betterment of the present and ultimate human condition - has been taken up electively and pragmatically. Furthermore, even this portion of world history has been introduced by the Holy Qur’an, with its unique and unimitable style, in a manner that its reader simply does not get the impression that he or she was reading some book of history. In fact, whatever part of a certain story serves the need of driving home a lesson or tendering a good counsel on any given occasion, it is just that part which finds mention in that setting. And should there be the need to allude to that particular part once again on some other occasion, it was repeated. Therefore, consideration was not given to sequential order in the narration of events in the story. At some places the earlier part of the story comes later, and the later part finds mention earlier. This special style of the Qur’an carries a standing rule of guidance that reading or remembering world history and its past events is not an end by itself. Instead of that, the purpose of every human being should be to draw some lesson from every story and to cull and deduce some good advice from every information.

It is well-known that the human speech is classified into two forms: Descriptive (khabar) and imperative (insha’). According to the knowledgeable scholars, it is the later form (i.e. imperative) that is the essential objective. Description in itself is not an end. A wise man ought to learn an imperative from every description, and make use of it for correcting and reforming himself.

That the story of Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam has been narrated in a sequence could be because historiography is a discipline. It has particular rules of guidance for its practitioners. For instance, the narration should not be so brief as to make its understanding impossible, nor should it be so long as would make reading and remembering it difficult - which becomes clear from the Qur’anic treatment of this story.

According to some narrations, another reason for this could lie in what the Jews had said to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. To test him, they had asked him: If you are a true prophet, tell us why did the family of Ya’qub move from Syria to Egypt and what had actually happened to Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam? It was in answer to that that this whole story was revealed. It was a miracle of the Holy Prophet Nabi ﷺ, and certainly a great proof of his prophethood - for he was simply an Ummiyy, one who was not taught by anyone, who had never read a book and who had lived in Makkah practically his whole life, yet, he narrated all events mentioned in the Torah correctly. In fact, he told them of what was not mentioned in the Torah. There are many injunctions and instructions which emerge from these narrations which will appear later in this commentary.

The statement made in verse 2 following immediately is: **Surely, We have sent it down, an Arabic Qur’an, so that you may understand**. It is indicative of the situation that those who had asked to

be informed of what had happened to Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam were the Jews of Arabia. So, Allah Ta’ala revealed this story in their language so that they may ponder over it and attest to the veracity of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and tune their lives in the light of the injunctions and instructions which emerge from this story. This is the reason why the word: **la’alla** has been brought in here in the sense of ‘so that’ because the mindset of these addressees was already known - that they would, despite having the benefit of very clear verses before them, still doubt and delay their acceptance of truth.

In the third verse, it was said: **We narrate to you the best narrative by revealing this Qur’an to you, and surely before this, you were among the unaware.** This is to chasten the Jews that they had tried to test the Messenger of Allah ﷺ which proved to be in vain, for its effect turned out to be just the reverse of what they had intended. It only went on to prove the excellence and authenticity of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in a far more evident manner. From this it became clear that he was already an Ummiyy and had no knowledge of world history. Now that he came to know of this needs an explanation and there can be no explanation for this except that he was Divinely educated and blessed with revelation as a prophet of Allah Ta’ala.

Moving on the verse 4, the text takes up the story of Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam, which opens with the following words: **(It happened) [when Yusuf said to his father, ‘My father, I have seen eleven stars and the Sun and the Moon; I have seen them all prostrating to me.’]**

This was the dream seen by Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam interpreting which Sayyidna ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbas radiallahu ‘anhu said: ‘The eleven stars meant the eleven brothers of Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam; and the Sun and the Moon meant his father and mother.’

According to al-Qurtubi, though the mother of Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam had passed away from this mortal world before this event, but in her place, his father was wedded to her sister. A maternal aunt already has love and concern for her sister’s children as their natural mother would normally have. Now when she, after the death of her sister, comes to be the wife of the father, she would customarily be referred to as the mother.

The response given by Sayyidna Ya’qub ‘alayhis salaam appears in verses 5 and 6 in the following words: **‘He said, ‘My son, do not relate your dream to your brothers lest they [by finding out your greatness to come] should devise against you a plan. Surely, Satan is an open enemy for mankind ...’ [for He seduces people to take such action for the sake of worldly wealth and power].’**

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There are three kinds of dreams. The three kinds of dreams mentioned here have been reported from the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He said that there are three kinds of dreams.

- (1) The Satanic in which the mind sees forms and shapes released by the Shaytan.**
- (2) That which one keeps seeing while awake. These present themselves before one in a dream.**
- (3) The third kind, which is correct and true, is the forty-sixth part of the ingredients of prophethood (Nubuwwah), that is, it is an 'Ilham (inspiration) from Allah Ta'ala.**

True dreams, as expressly explained in Hadith, are, without any doubt, a part of Nubuwwah - **but not Nubuwwah itself**. What we know as Nubuwwah or prophethood has already ended with the Last of Prophets, Sayyidna Muhammad al-Mustafa ﷺ. It appears in the Sahih of Al-Bukhari that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: **That is, (in future) no part of the Nubuwwah will remain except Al-Mubashshirat.** When the noble Sahabah asked for the meaning of Al-Mubashshirat, he said: 'True dreams.'

This proves that there is no Nubuwwah or prophethood of any kind or form for anyone anymore. What remains of it is only a small part which is called Al-Mubashshirat or true dreams.

Relating Dreams to Everyone is not Correct:

1. In verse 5: **He said, 'O my son ...** Sayyidna Ya'qub has prohibited Sayyidna Yusuf from relating his dream to his brothers. This tells us that **a dream should not be related before a person who is not a well-wisher, nor before a person who is no expert in the interpretation of dreams.**

According to Jami' al-Tirmidhi, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: *A true dream is one of the forty parts of Nubuwwah. And a dream stays in suspension until related to someone.* When related, and interpreted by the listener, it actualizes as interpreted. Therefore, one should not relate the dream to anyone, except to a person who is knowing and wise, or is, at least, a friend and a well-wisher.

As also referred to earlier, it appears in Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: A dream is of three kinds: (1) Glad tidings from Allah; (2) self-suggestions; (3) Satanic inputs. **Therefore, should a person see a certain dream about which he feels good, then, he can relate it to others, if he wishes to do so. And, should he see something bad in it, let him not tell anyone about it. Instead, he should rise and offer Salah.**

The Hadith of Sahih Muslim also says: **If one sees a bad dream, he should blow his breath three times towards his left side and seek the protection of Allah against its evil and tell no one about it.** If this is done, the dream will not cause any harm. The reason is that some dreams are composed of Satanic seductions. They will stand removed with this action. And, if the dream is true, the evil part of it - it can be hoped - will also be eliminated through this action.

As for the sense of the interpretation of a dream remaining hinged to it, Tafsir Mazhari explains it by saying that some matters of destiny are not absolutely pre-decided, instead, they remain in a state of suspension, that is, if something was done, the impending misfortune will go away - and if it was not done, it will come. This is known as contingent or conditional destiny. In a situation like that giving a bad interpretation makes things turn bad while a good interpretation makes it come out good. Therefore, in the Hadith from Tirmidhi mentioned above, relating a dream to a person who is not wise, or a well-wisher, has been prohibited. And there could also be another reason for this. When someone hears a bad interpretation of the dream seen, one finds himself overwhelmed by the thought that he is going to be hit by some misfortune. And it appears

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in Hadith that Allah Ta'ala said: **I am with the opinion of My servant about Me.** In other words, **whatever a servant of Mine believes Me to be, just that I become for him.** So, when one ends up believing that misfortune is going to come from Allah Ta'ala, then, true to the customary practice of Allah, the coming of that misfortune becomes due against him.

Regarding the instruction given in the verse that something suggesting pain and misfortune seen in a dream should not be related to anyone, Hadith narrations seem to indicate that this is not a legal prohibition. It is only an advice based on affection and sympathy. This should not be taken as something made unlawful by the Shari'ah. Therefore, if related to someone, this will be no sin - because it appears in authentic Hadith that the Holy Prophet ﷺ at the time of the Battle of Uhud - said: I have seen in a dream that my sword, Zulfaqr, has broken and I saw some cows being slaughtered, the interpretation of which was the Shahadah of Sayyidna Hamzah & many other Muslim Mujahidin, a grave misfortune indeed. But, he had related this dream before the Sahabah. (Qurtubi)

This verse also tells us that **it is permissible to disclose the evil trait or intention of a person about to cause harm to a Muslim.** Being an effort to offset an evil design, this action is not included under Ghibah or backbiting. For example, if a person finds out that A is planning to commit theft in the house of B, or intends to kill him, then, he should forewarn B. This does not fall under the purview of Ghibah which is Haram. This is what was done by Sayyidna Ya'qub 'alayhis salaam when he had disclosed to Sayyidna Yusuf that there was a danger to his life at the hands of his brothers.

If a person is blessed by Allah, and he apprehends that his addressee will be jealous against him, **he should not mention the blessings of wealth, status, and things like that before that person.** The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said: *To make your objectives succeed, seek help from keeping them secret - because, every holder of blessing is envied in this world.*

Interpreting dreams

Allah Ta'ala taught Yusuf 'alayhis salaam how to interpret dreams. This also tells us that **interpreting dreams is a standing area of expertise which is bestowed by Allah Ta'ala on a chosen few - everyone is not fit to have it.**

It appears in Tafsir al-Qurtubi that 'Abdullah ibn Shaddad ibn al-Had said that the interpretation of this dream of Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam actualized after forty years. This tells us that an instant actualization of an interpretation is not necessary either.

In short, as explained by our amazing teachers, one should not relate their dream to anyone. Even if it is a good dream, it is best not to relate it to anyone, because even the one whom you think is your well-wisher, may not be so behind you.

Further, don't look to interpret dreams, as mentioned above, once interpreted, this actualizes. Even if you think it is a good a dream and want to interpret it, leave it be. It may not be a good interpretation in the long run.

Don't dwell so much on dreams, and **never be scared of dreams/bad dreams.** Seek refuge in Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala forgive us our shortcomings, and guide us to Him in the best of ways. Aameen thumma aameen.

ANSWER: Surah At-Teen.

I swear by the Fig and the Olive.

This verse takes an oath by four objects. Two of them are trees, the fig tree and the olive tree. [The third object] is Tur, the mount of Sinai, and the fourth object is the City of Makkah. The two trees have been specified because they possess abundant blessings and advantages in the same way as Tur and the City of Makkah possess abundant blessings. Some authorities say that the 'fig' and the 'olive' symbolise, in this context, the lands in which these trees predominate: that is, the countries bordering on the eastern part of the Mediterranean, especially Palestine and Syria. Most of the Prophets lived and preached in these lands, including Holy Prophet Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam.

The latter Prophet 'alayhis salaam was made to migrate from here to Makkah. The oaths, in this way, comprehend all the holy places where Allah-inspired men were born and raised as Prophets 'alayhimus salaam. Syria was the land and home of all the Prophets.

Mount Sinai stresses specifically the messengership of Musa 'alayhis salaam where Allah spoke to him. 'Peaceful City' refers to Makkah, the birth-place and residence of the Final Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

The subject of the four oaths is:

We have created man in the best composition.

The word taqwm literally denotes 'to set a thing aright or lay the foundation straight or even; or to form something into an appropriate shape in a moderate regulation'. The verse signifies that man has been endowed with the best natural powers and qualities which other creatures have not been endowed with. Physically too he is cast in the best composition - having no parallel in other creatures.

Man is the Most Beautiful of Allah's Creation

Allah has created man the most beautiful of all His creation. Ibn 'Arabi asserts that there is no creature of Allah more beautiful than man, because Allah, besides granting him life, he gave him knowledge, power, speech, hearing, sight, planning and wisdom. All these, in fact, are the qualities of Allah. It is mentioned in a hadith of Bukhari and Muslim:

Allah has created Adam in His image

It could only mean that man has been characterised by some of the qualities of Allah, because Allah is beyond any [physical] shape or image. [Qurtubi].

A Wonderful Story of Human Beauty

Qurtubi, on this occasion, cites a story of Isa Ibn Musa Hashimi. He was a high ranking officer in the royal court of Caliph Abu Ja'far Mansur. The officer loved his wife very much. Once he was sitting with his wife in a moonlit night and suddenly cried out: 'You are divorced thrice if you are not more beautiful than the moon.' As soon as the wife heard this, she went into seclusion and veiled herself, on the grounds that the husband has pronounced three express divorce on her. It was said in joke. However, the law of express divorce is that it becomes effective whether uttered jokingly or seriously. Isa Ibn Musa spent the night restlessly and in grief. The next morning, he paid a visit to Caliph Abu Ja'far Mansur and recounted to him the whole story. Caliph Abu Ja'far Mansur invited all the jurists of the city and put the case before them. All the jurists unanimously agreed that the divorce has become effective, because no human being can possibly be more beautiful than the moon. There was, however, one scholar, a student of Imam Abu

Hanifah, who remained silent. Mansur asked him: “Why are you so quiet?” He recited ‘Bismillah to the end’ and then recited Surah Tin and explained: “Ruler of the Faithful, Allah says that He has created man in the best composition or in the finest mould. Nothing can be more beautiful than man.” Having heard this, all the scholars and jurists were perplexed. None of them opposed him. Mansur ordered that the divorce is not effective.

This indicates that man is the most beautiful creation of Allah outwardly and inwardly, in terms of elegance and attractiveness and in terms of bodily structure. Every limb of the human body is able to move in many different ways. He is able to hold, move and lift various things by moving his hands and arms. *The thumb alone is a masterpiece of creation without which man will not be able to hold things.* The functioning of the ears, the eyes, the mouth, the teeth, the nose, the chest and the stomach are all wonders in their own right. Gathered together on his head, they form a beautiful and coherent assortment, each one complementing the other. The flexibility of the tongue, the arrangement of the teeth and the mastery of the vocal cords allow him to roar like a lion and sing as beautifully as a nightingale. All this makes human body look like a sophisticated factory where automatic machines are able to accomplish the delicate work. This is the reason why philosophers call man ‘microcosm’ [a miniature universe as opposed to ‘macrocosm’ {a large universe}]. The microcosm epitomises the macrocosm. [Qurtubi]

Then We turned him into the lowest of the low.

In the preceding sentence, it was stated that man is created in the best composition and is the most beautiful being. In the prime of his life, man is brimming with strength and vigour and all his faculties are functioning at their best. As opposed to that, this sentence states that when man ages, he physically grows weaker and his health deteriorates all the time. He even begins to lose his physical beauty. He no longer has a good-looking and attractive face. He begins to look uglier. He becomes useless and a burden to others. Other animals, on the contrary, are useful to the end of their lives. Man utilises them for milk, for mounting, for luggage-loading and for myriad of other things. When they are slaughtered or dead, man still utilises their hide, hair, bones and every other part or fibre of theirs usefully. Man, on the other hand, becomes useless when he falls ill or grows old. From the worldly point of view he is unable to do anything. Even when he dies, no part of his body is of any benefit to any man or animal. In short, the phrase ‘the lowest of the low’ refers to bodily condition. His body bends over and legs can barely carry him. The man who was once supporting others now needs others to support him. [Dahhak and others vide Qurtubi].

except those who believed and did righteous deeds, because for them there is a reward never ending.

The foregoing interpretation of the preceding verse should not be misunderstood. The exceptive sentence does not mean that the believers will not attain to decrepit old age. It would not be correct to exclude the believers from this, because some of them are also overcome by the senility of old age. The sense, however, is that they do not suffer a big harm due to their physical or mental deterioration in old age. Only those will suffer from it who spent their entire energy on improving their physical condition that has now ended. They shall have no portion of it in the Hereafter. The righteous believers will have an unfailing reward. This verse makes it clear that even after reaching old age, a believer never becomes useless. Even in decrepitude he can accumulate rewards - comfort and high positions - for the Hereafter that are eternal.

During the period of senility when he is unable to do righteous deeds, the good deeds will be recorded in his Record Book which he used to do in good health. Sayyidna Anas radiallahu ‘anhu narrates that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said that when a Muslim falls ill Allah instructs the recording angels to record the good deeds he used to perform in good health. [Al-Baghawi transmitted it in Sharh-us-Suunah from Abu Musa, and

Bukhari has reported the same rewards for a traveller and a person suffering from a disease.)

Here instead of mentioning the rewards and blessings of Paradise for the righteous believers, the verse reads: **for them there is a reward never ending.**

This could signify that their reward starts in this mortal world [and continues in the Hereafter eternally]. Allah gathers around them in their decrepit old age such sincere companions who benefit from them spiritually until the last moment of their life. They serve them in every possible way. The righteous servants of Allah in decrepitude are productive while generally the senile and people in bad health are thought to be unproductive.

Some commentators say that the statement **We turned him into the lowest of the low** does not refer to human beings in general. It refers specifically to unbelievers who destroyed the God-given best composition, human perfection, honour and intellect by pursuing physical pleasures. As a result of their ingratitude, they will be turned into the lowest of the low. In this interpretation, the exception - **except those who believed and did righteous deeds, because for them there is a reward never ending** will carry its basic interpretation, in that they will not be turned into the lowest of the low. For those who believed and did righteous deeds, there is a reward that is unending. [Thus in al-Mazhari]

So, what can make you, after all this, to deny the Requit?

In the preceding verses man is made to realise that Allah created him, He bestowed on him special favours and the revolution that He brought about in his old age. Man will move from stage to stage, finally reaching the grave and the Hereafter. But he rejects the Hereafter, as a result he is warned. He has seen the scenes of Divine omnipotence and revolutions - how dare he denies and rejects the Hereafter! Is Allah not the Greatest Ruler of all the rulers?

Ruling

Sayyidna Abu Hurairah radiallahu ‘anhu narrates that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said that while reciting Surah At-Tin, when one reaches the end of it: **Is Allah not the Greatest Ruler of all the rulers? [81]** one should recite: **Yes, indeed, Allah is the Ruler of the rulers, and I bear witness to it.**

The jurists have ruled that it is mustahab (preferable/desirable) to recite the word.

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We're not only being taught in this Surah that physically, **we are the most beautiful** of Allah's creation, but also humility, since this 'physical' beauty will one day wither, but what remains is the the **beauty of the heart**

The first thing to mention here, as both advice and encouragement, is that **you are beautiful**. Especially to our sisters, since there always seems to be an overhanging pressure, never let the media, or anything else, ever let you think or tell you otherwise. Allah says He created Adam in His image! Subhan'Allah! How can it be that we're not beautiful?! Or we even think that we're not beautiful?!

There are two things to consider: Manmade flaws, and those 'flaws' we think are 'flaws' but in reality they are not. The first of which is what we afflict upon ourself, perhaps because of poor diet, poor hygiene, or the likes, which can be taken away by following a healthy lifestyle. As for the latter, never compare yourself to anyone else. Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala created **YOU** as you are, He chose **YOUR** composition, so don't ever think otherwise.

And finally, we are taught humility. All this physical beauty will perish one day, but what remains is a pure heart, so focus on beautifying the heart, and Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala will take care of the rest.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala never make us of those who are ungrateful, and may we be constantly reminded that our beauty is because of Him, and only Him. Aameen thumma aameen!

ANSWER: Surah Al-Inshiqaq.

The present Surah depicts the conditions that will prevail on the Day of Judgement, such as reckoning and accountability, reward of good and torment of evil. The heedless man is asked to look into himself and his environs, which will lead him to believe in Allah and the Qur'an. [The powerful opening of the Surah sketches some of the scenes of universal upheaval].

First, it speaks about the sky that will split apart.

Then it goes on to speak about the earth that will be stretched and will throw up whatever it contains - whether natural treasures, or buried treasures, or dead human bodies, and then it will become empty. A new earth will be prepared for Hashr (Gathering of the Day of Requital). It will have neither caves nor mountains, neither buildings nor trees. It will be flat and smooth. It will be stretched so that there is ample room for the former as well as the latter generations to gather on the plain. This description has been given in other Surahs with different styles, but in the present verses, there is an addition. About what Allah will demonstrate about the heaven and earth on the Day of Judgement, the following comment is made:

and will listen to (the command of) its Lord, and it ought to

The verb *adhinat* means 'it will listen'. Here listening includes obedience. The verb *huqqat* may be interpreted as 'It had an obligation to listen and obey Allah's command'.

Two Categories of Divine Commands

The obedience of the heaven and the earth, referred to here, may have two meanings, because the Divine commands are of two kinds: [1] the Divinely legislated [tashri'i] injunctions; and [2] the cosmic and destined [takwini and taqdiri] commands.

In the former case, the command appears as a law the violation of which is punishable. However, men are not practically coerced in the sense that they become practically unable to violate it. Instead, they have their free will to choose whether to abide by the law or to violate it. Such laws are imposed upon those who are endowed with intellect like humans and Jinn. This divides them into believers and non-believers, obedient and disobedient. In the former case, the commands are implemented by force. No one can deviate from them in the least. The entire universe, including humans and Jinn, follow them by force. The cosmic commands [which Allah has decreed] are applied forcefully and all the creatures, whether believers or unbelievers, pious or impious, have no choice or will but to do according to that command.

It is possible that Allah will, on that day, endow the sky and the earth with special sense and perception like humans and Jinn. When they receive a command from Allah, they, of their own volition choose to act upon it.

Alternatively, the command may refer to the second kind, that is, the cosmic command that no one can violate. But the words, **and will listen to [the command of] its Lord, and it ought to**, are closer to the first meaning of command, while the second one is possible, if these words are taken in their figurative sense.

and when the earth will be stretched [to give room to more people

The word *madda* means 'to stretch, spread, expand out'. Sayyidna Jabir ibn 'Abdullah radiallahu 'anhu narrates that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said that on the Day of Judgement the earth will be stretched out like

leather (or rubber) and expanded into a smooth plain, and there will be just enough space on it for all individuals of human race to keep their feet. To understand this tradition, it is necessary to keep in mind that on the Day of Resurrection all individuals who will have been born from the inception of creation till resurrection will be brought back to life simultaneously. Thus each individual will have just enough space on the earth where he could place his feet. [Transmitted by Hakim with a good chain of authorities - Mazhari].

and it will throw up whatever it contains, and will become empty

The earth will, with one convulsion, throw up whatever it contains in its belly, whether natural treasures or buried treasures, or mines, or dead human bodies and their remains and particles.

O man, you have to work hard constantly to reach your Lord, then you have to meet Him

The word *kadh* means to 'exert one's efforts fully', and 'to your Lord' means 'to meet your Lord'. In other words, every effort of man would end at his Lord.

Return to Allah

Mankind is addressed in this verse and shown a road that if he were to think about it carefully, and use his sense and intelligence, he could exert his efforts in the right direction that will ensure for him welfare, well-being and safety in this world, as well as in the Hereafter.

First, it has been pointed out that man, whether he is good or bad, believer or non-believer, has the natural tendency to exert himself in order to achieve his goal. A good-natured person will work hard and adopt lawful means to acquire his livelihood and necessities of life. A bad person cannot obtain his needs and objective without working hard. Thieves, robbers, rouses, cheats and looters apply their minds and exert their physical strength in order to achieve their objective.

Secondly, it has been pointed out that if the intelligent man were to think carefully, all his movements and pauses are stations of a long journey he is going through, though unconsciously. This journey will end at his presence before Allah, that is, at death. This is stated in the phrase *ila rabbika* 'to your Lord'. This is a statement of reality which none can deny. All efforts, [good or bad], must end with death.

The third point is that after death, in the presence of his Lord, he will have to give an account of his movements and deeds, and of his efforts. This is rationally necessary and justified, so that the consequences of good and bad may be separately known, because such distinction is not known in this life. A good person may work hard for a month or so in order to obtain his livelihood and necessities of life, but thieves and looters may obtain them overnight. If there is no time of reckoning or punishment, both of them [the good and the bad] will be equal, which is contrary to reason and justice.

At the end, the verse says: **then you have to meet Him.**

The translation given above is based on the assumption that the attached pronoun (hu) refers to Allah. The sense is that every person has to meet his Lord and to present himself before him to give the account of his deeds. Another possible interpretation is that the attached pronoun (hi) refers to 'kadh' (working hard). Given this interpretation, the translation of the verse would be: "O man, you have to work hard constantly to reach your Lord, then you have to meet it." And the sense would be: 'you have to meet the good or bad consequences of your working hard.'

So, I swear by the twilight [after sunset], and by the night and what it envelops, and by the moon when it develops at the full

In these verses Allah takes oath by four phenomena and reinforces what was asserted in:

you have to work hard constantly to reach your Lord

If we consider the four phenomena by which oath is taken, it bears evidence to the subject which is forthcoming in the complement of the oath, that is, the condition of man never remains the same at all times. He undergoes changes and unexpected phases all the time.

The first phenomenon that brings about a change in his life is the twilight after the sunset, or the red glow that remains on the west side of the sky after the sunset in the evening. This is the beginning of the night. This is the harbinger of a massive change in human conditions, that is, the light is disappearing and a flood of darkness is setting in.

The second phenomenon by which oath is taken is night itself which completes the change in his life.

The third phenomenon by which oath is taken includes all things that night envelops or shrouds. The primitive sense of the word *wasaga* means to 'pile, gather, heap up the thing'. If it is taken in general sense, it embraces every member of the entire universe which the darkness of night covers, such as animals, vegetation, minerals and inorganic matter, mountains and oceans. By extension, the word would comprehend all things that normally disperse in the light of day and retreat to their own places at night. Human beings return to their homes, animals to their habitats and birds to their nests. Business goods and merchandise are or piled up in one place. This massive change is related to man himself.

The fourth phenomenon by which oath is taken is in the following verse: **and by the moon when it develops at the full**. The word *ittisaq* is also derived from *wasaga* and it means 'to gather'. The 'gathering of moon' signifies that it gathered its light, and it became complete and full [badr] the moon of the 14th night. The phrase **idhat-tasaqa** in relation to moon points to the phenomenon that it goes through various phases. First, it appears as a very fine semicircle. Then its light grows progressively night after night, until it becomes *badr kamil* [full moon of the 14th night].

Having taken oath by the vicissitudes of the four phenomena, the Surah asserts the subject: **you shall certainly ascend from stage to stage**

The word *tabaq* or *tabqah* refers to a 'stage'. Its plural is *tabaqat*. The verb *latarkabunna* is derived from *rukub* which means 'to mount or mount up'. The verse purports to say that mankind from the inception to the end of his life will continue to mount up stage by stage, or will pass through all the conditions, gradually and in stages referred to in the preceding verses, that is, periods of light and darkness and other phenomena. He never remains in one condition all the time. He gradually goes through the vicissitudes of life.

LESSONS

Life is not one long, smooth road, and nor is our imaan always hanging on cloud nine. We will always have ups and downs, but what's important is that we **try**.

As humans, we are always changing. Our experiences, our trials, they always make us change as a person.

Sometimes our imaan is so high, that we feel this is it, this is the peak. And at other times it is so low, that we feel there can be no worst sinner than us in the entire world.

But that's ok. It's normal. What we mean to say is, we can never attain perfection, and we think we have mentioned earlier, how it is in our fitrah (nature) to sin. What's important is that **we keep trying**.

If we sin, we should follow it up with repentance. Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala **loves us when we sin and repent to Him**. It shows how low our status is, and how Majestic and High He subhanahu wa ta'ala is. It becomes an act of worship; to repent.

We don't fail when we sin, we fail when we despair in Allah's Mercy.

Further, we are told **we have to work hard**. In the advice of my beloved father, Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala never lets the effort of a man go to waste. To the extent, even a thief, after putting in the effort and planning to steal, leaves with something. So how can our effort go to waste?

We will meet Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala one day, and the most important thing, is to be able to sincerely say, our bodies, the earth, to comply and bear witness, that we **sincerely tried our best**. As for our end, we seek Allah's Mercy, and we leave it to Allah to see to it that our efforts do not go to waste, **and they will not go to waste!**

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'a'a make us of those who receive their book in their right hand, and those who are not questioned about their deeds. May He allow us to exert our energy in His way, and work hard for the meeting that is certain with Him, and may we not be of those who wish that the ground opens up and swallow them, out of the shame of facing Our Lord with such despicable deeds. Aameen thumma aameen!

ANSWER: Surah Al-Qari'ah.

Human Deeds, Good or Bad, will be Weighed

This Surah mentions the weighing of human deeds. He whose scales are heavy will be led to Paradise, and he whose scales are light will be led to Hell.

Human deeds, good or bad, have no body or mass which could be weighed. How, then, would deeds be weighed?

First of all, the reason is that the authority of Allah is absolute. He is powerful over everything. Why then, would it be necessary that something we cannot weigh could not be weighed by Allah Almighty as well? Then, other than that, we have before us, in our time, countless new instruments which claim to weigh or measure anything in the world. They no more need the traditional balance or scales or rod or tip. Modern instruments can weigh what nobody ever thought could be weighed, air, electric current, heat, cold, and so many other things. A meter is all you need.

Now, if Allah Almighty, the Maker of makers, in His perfect power, could weigh or measure human deeds - with or without a device - what is there in it which would make it to be something far out to believe? Leaving this aside for a moment, the Creator of the Universe does have the power to transform our deeds at some time into a material presence, even give it some shape or form (interesting that people would believe something like this happening in a Spielberg movie, yet squirm at the religious view of things as would come to pass).

There are many Ahadith from the Holy Prophet ﷺ which confirm that human deeds will appear in particular shapes and forms during Barzakh (the post-death - pre-resurrection state) and Mahshar (Resurrection). Good deeds of a person will, in forms beautified become the companions of the grave - and evil deeds would crawl all over in the form of snakes and scorpions. A Hadith says that a person who has not paid the Zakah due against his wealth, that wealth will reach his grave in the shape of a poisonous snake to bite him and say: I am your wealth, I am your treasure.

It is said in a Sahih Hadith that Al-Baqarah and 'Al-'Imran, the two Surahs of the Holy Qur'an will come on the plains of Resurrection in the form of two dense clouds and cast their shade over those who used to recite these Surahs.

Similarly, there are countless narrations from Hadith, all authentic and reported reliably, which indicate that once these good and bad deeds of ours pass away from this mortal world, they will transform into particular shapes and forms and be there on the plains of Resurrection in a material presence.

There are even verses of the Qur'an which confirm it. It is said: what people had done in the world, they would find that present there.

In a verse of Surah Az-Zalzalah, it is said: **whoever does good even the weight of a particle shall see it on the day of Qiyamah, and whoever does evil even the weight of a particle shall see that too in Qiyamah**.

Things as described here obviously lend to the possibility that human deeds will come in some nuclear form of existence. This is something which needs no further interpretations as what is crucial is the compensation of deeds which will exist and be perceptible.

Under these circumstances, weighing deeds does not remain something difficult or far out. But, human beings are what they are. Given their limited framework of reasoning, they take everything on the analogy of their own present state of being and this is the criterion they have to judge things around them. So used to it they are that they just cannot act otherwise. It is this state of being of theirs which the Qur'an has put in words which appear in Surah Ar-Rum: **these people know an obvious aspect of mortal life (and that too, not the whole of it) and about the Hereafter they are totally heedless**

In their onslaught on the obvious and the perceptible, they will shake the earth and the space to find out the unfound, but the great field of the reality of things the unfolding of which has to take place in the 'Aakhirah is something they are totally unaware of.

We have also explained there that it appears from reconciliation of conflicting narrations and Qur'anic verses that the weighing on Plain of Resurrection will take place twice. The first weighing will be to separate the believers from the non-believers.

Anyone whose Book of Deeds is put on the scale and contains the belief ('Iman) will be heavy, and the scale of anyone whose Ledger of Deeds does not contain 'Iman will be light.

At this stage, the believers will be separated from the non-believers. Weighing on the second time will be to distinguish between good and evil deeds of the believers. The reference, in the present Surah, is probably to the first weighing in which the scale of every believer will be heavy regardless of his other deeds, while the scale of an unbeliever will be light, even though he might have performed some good acts.

It is explained in Mazhari that the Holy Qur'an generally contrasts the unbelievers and righteous believers, when speaking of retribution [reward or punishment], because the latter are the perfect believers. As for the believers who have performed righteous as well as unrighteous deeds, the Qur'an is generally silent on the issue. However, the principle may be noted that on the Day of Judgement human deeds will not be counted, but weighed.

Fewer good deeds with high degree of faith and sincerity, and in accordance with Sunnah will be heavier than many good deeds - prayers, fasting, charity and pilgrimage with lesser degree of faith and sincerity, or not completely in accordance with Sunnah.

LESSONS

Out of the details on the weighing of deeds appearing in the Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the first to ponder about is the oft-narrated statement that, on the day of Resurrection, the heaviest in weight shall be the Kalimah: **There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.**

The scalepan which holds this Kalimah shall outweigh the rest.

Also, as noted above, our deeds will be weighed, dependant upon things such as **sincerity**. Majority of the month of Ramadan has now passed, and only a few days remain. If we have not done *many* good deeds, that is ok. What is important is that we do just **one** good deed, with complete and utter sincerity, that it **outweighs all other deeds.**

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala accept the little we have done, and guide us to continue to perform these deeds that bring us closer to Him, after the month of Ramadan, and throughout the rest of our life. Aameen thumma aameen!

ANSWER: Surah Al-Asr.

Virtue of [Studying] Surah al-'Asr

Sayyidna 'Ubaidullah Ibn Hisn radiallahu 'anhu reports that whenever two Companions of the Holy Prophet met, they would not part company until one of them had recited Surah Al-'Asr in its entirety to the other. [Transmitted by At-Tabarani].

Imam Shafi'i says that if people thought about Surah Al-'Asr carefully, it would be enough for their guidance.

It is a concise but comprehensive Surah, which in three verses, outlines a complete way of human life based on the Islamic worldview. In this Surah, Allah swears an oath by the 'Time' and says that mankind is in a state of loss; exception, however, is made of people who are characterized by four qualities: [1] faith; [2] righteous deeds; [3] advising each other for Truth; and [4] advising each other for patience. This is the only path to salvation in this world, as well as in the next world.

The Qur'anic prescription comprises, as we have just seen, of four elements. The first two of them relate to man's own personal betterment, and the other two relate to other people's guidance and reform. [Ibn Kathir].

Relationship between 'Time' and 'Human Loss'

The first point we need to analyze here is the relationship between the 'oath of time' and 'its subject' because there needs to be a relationship between an 'oath' and its 'subject'. The commentators, generally, state that all conditions of man, his growth and development, his movements, his actions and morality - all take place within the space of 'Time'. Man will lose the capital of his existence. Hours, days, months, and years of life pass quickly, spiritual and material potentialities decline, and abilities fade. Man is like a person who possesses great capital and, without his permission and will, every day, a portion of that capital is taken away. This is the nature of life in this world; the nature of continual loss. How well this has been put poetically:

Your life comprises a few breaths that can be counted; when one of them is sent out, a part of your life has diminished

Allah has granted man the invaluable capital of his life, so that he may invest it in profitable business venture. If he invests his capital of life sensibly in good works, there will be no limit to the profitable returns; but if he invests it unwisely in evil works, then, let alone attracting profitable returns, he will even lose his capital, and, in addition, he will incur the dreadful scourge of committing numerous sins. If however a person did not invest his life-capital in good deeds or in evil deeds, then he, at least, loses both the profit, as well as the capital. This is not merely a poetic imagery, but is supported by a Prophetic Hadith, according to which the Messenger of Allah is reported to have said: *When a person wakes up in the morning, he invests his soul or life in a business enterprise: some of the investors free or save the capital from loss and others destroy it*

The Qur'an itself has used the word *tijarah* in relation to 'faith' and 'righteous deed', thus: **..shall I tell you about a trade that saves you from a painful punishment?**

Since 'Time' is man's capital of life, the man himself is the trader. Under normal circumstances, his capital is not a frozen thing that may be kept for a while and used up later when the need arises. The capital is fluid or flowing all the time, every minute and every second. The man who invests it needs to be very wise, intelligent and agile, so that he is able to swiftly and readily reap the profit from a flowing capital. One of the old scholars said that he had learnt the meaning of this verse from an ice-seller whose trade required utmost

diligence, and if he were neglectful for a moment, his entire capital would melt away. That is why this verse has sworn an oath by the ‘time’ to indicate that it is a melting capital, and the only way to escape loss is to take every moment of his life as valuable, and use it for the four acts mentioned in the Surah.

Another possible reason for swearing by ‘Time’ may be that the ‘Time’ (in the sense of history) bears testimony to the fact mentioned in the Surah. If one thinks on the causes of the rise and decline of individuals and nations, he would certainly believe that it is only these four acts (mentioned in the forthcoming verses) that may ensure the real success and betterment of mankind. Whoever has ever abandoned them has suffered a great loss, as is evident from numerous events recorded by history.

Let us now study the ‘four principles’ mentioned in the Surah. As pointed out earlier, faith and righteous deeds are related to man’s moral and spiritual growth and development. They are not in need of elaboration. However, the last two principles [‘advising each other for truth’] and [‘advising each other for patience’] require some elaboration.

The infinitive *tawasi* derived from *wasiyyah* which means ‘to advise somebody strongly and effectively about the best thing to do in a particular situation’. The term *wasiyyah* also refers to a ‘will or testament’ where a testator advises his executor regarding the disposal of his estate on his death.

The two parts are in fact two chapters of the same testament: [1] advice to truth; and [2] advice to patience and fortitude. These two concepts may be explained in different ways. One way to explain them is that haqq (‘truth’) refers to the package of ‘correct faith’ and ‘good deeds’, and sabr (‘patience’) refers to abstinence from all sins and evil deeds. Thus the first concept refers to ‘enjoining good actions’ and the second concept refers to ‘forbidding evil actions’.

The cumulative sense of the Surah is that believers have been enjoined not only to adopt right faith and good deeds themselves, but to advise others strongly and effectively to adopt them, and thus help in the creation of a healthy atmosphere around them.

It is also possible to interpret ‘Truth’ as referring to articles of faith, and to interpret ‘patience’ as referring to all good actions and abstinence from evil deeds. The word sabr, originally meaning ‘to withhold oneself and to bind oneself’, encompasses binding oneself down to the performance of righteous deeds and abstaining from sins.

Hafiz Ibn Taimiyyah has stated in one of his monographs that there are normally two factors that restrain a person from faith and righteous deeds: The first cause is some doubts about the true faith. When such doubts arise in the mind of people, it destroys their faith and leaves them confused and confounded. As a result, it adversely affects their righteous deeds.

The second cause is the selfish desires that stop man from doing good, and involve him in evil deeds. In this situation, he theoretically believes that he should do good and abstain from sins, but his selfish desires lead him to stray from the right path. The current verse indicates to remove both causes of one’s distraction. By stressing upon ‘advice of truth’ it has catered to the first cause, and that it should be removed by reforming others on theoretical and academic level, and by emphasizing on ‘advice of patience’ it has taken care of the second cause by enjoining upon the Muslims to advise others to give up the base desires and remain firm against their evil demands.

Put differently, ‘enjoining the truth’ means ‘improving the knowledge of Muslims or their intellectual

development' and 'enjoining patience' means 'improving the practical life of Muslims'.

Need to Salvage the Entire Muslim Society

This Surah lays down the important principle of guidance for the Muslims that inviting other Muslims to keep to the true faith and good deeds is as much necessary as their own submission to the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah. Without sincere efforts, to the best of one's ability, to invite others to the right path, one's own good deeds are not enough to one's salvation. Especially, if a person does not take care of the spiritual and moral welfare of his wife, children and family and turns a blind eye to their unrighteous deeds, he is blocking his way to salvation - no matter how pious he himself might be. Therefore, the Qur'an and the Sunnah make it obligatory upon every Muslim to do his best to invite others to the good deeds, and warn them against the evil acts. Unfortunately, let alone the general public, many learned people are lax in this matter. They think it is sufficient for them to be concerned about their own moral and spiritual well-being. They are not concerned about the well-being of their family and children. May Allah grant us the ability to act upon this verse.

LESSONS

Life is time, and time is all we have.

Time is an investment, which can either lead to profits or complete destruction.

Although Ramadan has almost passed, and the barakah in time during Ramadan, is incomparable to the rest of the year, we can still continue these deeds throughout the year.

Quoting, *Ramadan is not a temporary increase of piety, it's a glimpse of what we're capable of doing every day.*

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala allow us to take utmost care and protect our capital, time, just as we would protect monetary capitals, and invest our time in that which multiplies our profits. Aameen thumma aameen!

ANSWER: Surah Al-Fatihah.

This Surah is called Al-Fatihah, that is, the Opener of the Book, the Surah with which prayers are begun.

It is also called, Umm Al-Kitab (the Mother of the Book), according to the majority of the scholars. In an authentic Hadith recorded by At-Tirmidhi, who graded it Sahih, Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, *Al-Hamdu lillahi Rabbil-'Alamin is the Mother of the Qur'an, the Mother of the Book, and the seven repeated Ayat of the Glorious Qur'an.*

It is also called Al-Hamd and As-Salah, because the Prophet ﷺ said that his Lord said, *'The prayer (i.e., Al-Fatihah) is divided into two halves between Me and My servants.'* When the servant says, *'All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of existence,' Allah says, 'My servant has praised Me.'*

Al-Fatihah was called the Salah, because reciting it is a condition for the correctness of Salah - the prayer.

Al-Fatihah was also called Ash-Shifa' (the Cure).

It is also called Ar-Ruqyah (remedy), since in the Sahih, there is the narration of Abu Sa'id telling the story of the Companion who used Al-Fatihah as a remedy for the tribal chief who was poisoned.

In the beginning of the Book of Tafsir, in his Sahih, Al-Bukhari said; *"It is called Umm Al-Kitab, because the Qur'an starts with it and because the prayer is started by reciting it."*

It was also said that it is called Umm Al-Kitab, because it contains the meanings of the entire Qur'an.

Ibn Jarir said, *"The Arabs call every comprehensive matter that contains several specific areas an Umm. For instance, they call the skin that surrounds the brain, Umm Ar-Ra's. They also call the flag that gathers the ranks of the army an Umm."* He also said, *"Makkah was called Umm Al-Qura, (the Mother of the Villages) because it is the grandest and the leader of all villages. It was also said that the earth was made starting from Makkah."*

Further, Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Hurayrah narrated about Umm Al-Qur'an that the Prophet ﷺ said, *It is Umm Al-Qur'an, the seven repeated (verses) and the Glorious Qur'an.*

It is the greatest Surah in the Qur'an.

Nothing has been revealed in the Torah, Injil, Zabur or Furqan (Qur'an) as the likes of this Surah.

The other important peculiarity of the Surah is that it is, so to say, the quintessence of the Holy Qur'an, and the rest of the Qur'an is its elaboration.

This Surah gives a special instruction to the man who begins the recitation or the study of the Qur'an - that he should approach this book with a mind cleansed of all his previous thoughts and opinions, seeking nothing but the Truth and the right path, praying to Allah for being guided in the right path. The Surah begins with the praise of Him before whom the request is to be submitted, and ends with the request for guidance. The whole of the Qur'an is the answer to this request. The answer begins with the words: **"Alif Lam Mim. This is the Book"**, which is an indication that the guidance man had prayed for has been provided in this Book.

DAY 29

This Surah comprises seven verses. Of these, the first three are in praise of Allah, while the last three contain a request or a prayer on the part of man, which Allah himself has in His infinite mercy, taught him. The verse in between the two sets has both the features -- there is an aspect of praise, and another of prayer.

The Sahih of Muslim reports from the blessed Companion Abu Hurayrah a hadith (Tradition) of the Holy Prophet ﷺ: *‘Allah has said, ‘The salah (i.e., the Surah Al-Fatihah) is equally divided between Me and My servant. And My servant shall be given what he prays for.’ The Holy Prophet continued: ‘When the servant says: Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds. Allah says: ‘My servant has paid his homage to Me.’ When he says: The All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful. Allah says: ‘My servant has praised Me.’ When the servant says: The Master of the Day of Judgement. Allah says, ‘My servant has proclaimed my greatness.’ When the servant says: You alone we worship, and to You alone we pray for help. Allah says, ‘This verse is common to Me and My servant. He shall be given what he has prayed for.’ When the servant says: Guide us in the straight path ... Allah says: ‘All this is there for My servant. He shall be given what he prays for.’* (Mazhari)

LESSONS

The tafsir of Surah Fatihah is extremely lengthy, which just shows how many lessons we can derive from this one Surah.

The sum of the Qur'an is in Surah Fatihah, the sum of Surah Fatihah is in Bismillah, and the sum of Bismillah is in the letter *baa*.

We learn at the beginning of Surah Fatihah, that **all praise belongs to Allah**. Every single praise in the world belongs to Allah, and praise **itself** belongs to Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala.

Thus, we learn, that even when we praise our parents, or anyone else, we are in effect praising Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala.

When someone praises us, they are in effect, praising Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala.

And the amazing thing is, Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala uses the word **hamd** as opposed to **shukr**.

Hamd means to be grateful without getting anything in exchange. **Even if Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala gave us nothing, He is still worthy of all Praise.**

The month of Ramadan draws to an end, and we have much to be grateful for. We may not have done as much as we wanted, but just the little that we were able to do; all praise is for Allah.

The ability to recite one ayat, the ability to go to the Masjid for taraweeh, the ability to just Fast! Subhan'Allah, we have so much to be grateful for! The simple act of fasting, which Allah allowed us to perform, shows His love for us and His **wanting to forgive us**.

May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala accept it from all of us. No matter how much we worship Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, we can never worship Him in the manner He is most worthy of being worshipped. We pray that He accepts it from us and from you. Aameen thumma aameen.

Remember, Ramadan is only the beginning, the real test begins now. May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala continue to bless us and bestow His Mercy on us. Ameen.

ANSWER: Surah Al-Ikhlaas

One of the causes of it's revelation:

Tirmidhi, Hakim and others have recorded that the pagans of Makkah asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: "O Muhammad! Tell us about the ancestry of your Lord." So Allah revealed this Surah.

Virtues

Imam Ahmad has recorded a narration in his Musnad that a person came up to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, *"I love this Surah [Al-Ikhlās] immensely."* The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied: *"Your love for it will cause you to enter Paradise."* [Ibn Kathir].

Tirmidhi has recorded on the authority of Sayyidna Abu Hurairah radiallahu anhu that once the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked the people to gather and said: *"I shall recite to you a third of the Qur'an."* When the people had congregated, he recited Surah Al-Ikhlās and said: *"This is equal to a third of the Qur'an."* [Muslim].

In a lengthy Hadith, Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi and Nasa'i have recorded that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: *"Anyone who recites Surah Al-Ikhlās and the mu'awwadhatāin (i.e. the last two surahs of the Holy Qur'an) morning and evening, they shall be sufficient for him."* In another narration, the wordings are: *"They will suffice him against every affliction."* [Ibn Kathir]

In this Surah, Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala mentions He is above having children and pro-creating.

Verse 112:3: He neither begot anyone, nor was begotten.

This verse responds to those who had questioned about the ancestry of Allah. There is no analogy between Allah, the Creator, and His creation. While His creation comes into being through the biological process of procreation, Allah Himself has no children, nor is He the child of anyone.

Surah Al-Ikhlās - a comprehensive Concept of Allah's Oneness and a complete Negation of Shirk

There were many types of people who denied the Divine Oneness, and set up partners or rivals to Allah. Surah Al-Ikhlās negates all types of such wrong belief systems, and imparts a comprehensive lesson of Divine Oneness.

LESSONS

This Surah teaches us regarding the oneness of Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala.

The greatest state and stage one can reach is that of being an *abd*, a servant of Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala.

In the state of taking Allah as our Master, as our God, we find ourselves in a position of respect and honour.

Let us not be slaves to our own whims and desires, and let us take control of our nafs against all that prevents us from reaching the state of being an *abd*.

In the urdu language, there is a word, dushman (دشمن), which means enemy. It is composed of four letters; daal, sheen, meem and nun.

Daal stands for dunya (worldly things)

Sheen stands for shaytaan (devil)

Meem stands for makhluq (creation)

Nun stands for nafs

A form of dua to say is, **Oh Allah, just like you prevent the sky from falling to the earth, also prevent the dunya, the makhluq, the shaytaan and my nafs from overpowering me and making me a slave unto it.**

Aameen thumma aameen!