

Tafseer Ibn Katheer - Part 30

Juz' Amma

Translated by Sameh Strauch

تفسير ابن كثير
(جزء عم)

IIPH

الدار العالمية للكتاب الإسلامي



IN THE NAME OF

ALLAH

THE ALL-COMPASSIONATE, ALL-MERCIFUL



Tafseer Ibn Katheer
JUZ' 'AMMA

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Arabic honorific symbols used in this book

(ﷻ) : *Subhânahu wa Ta'âla* — “The Exalted”

(ﷺ) : *Şalla-Allâhu 'Alayhi wa Sallam* — “Blessings and peace
be upon him”

(ﷺ) : *'Alayhis-Salâm* — “May peace be upon him”

(ﷻ) : *Rađia-Allâhu 'Anhu* — “May Allah be pleased with him”

(ﷻ) : *Rađia-Allâhu 'Anha* — “May Allah be pleased with her”

About the word ‘Lord’

The word *lord* in English has several related meanings. The original meaning is ‘master’ or ‘ruler’, and in this sense it is often used to refer to human beings: ‘the lord of the mansion’ or ‘Lord So-and-so’ (in the United Kingdom, for example). The word *Lord* with a capital L is used in the lexicon of Islam to refer to the One and Only God — Allah. In Islam, there is no ambiguity about the meaning of this word. While it is true that one may occasionally use the word *lord* (whether capitalized or not) to refer to a human being, in Islamic discourse the reference of this term is always clear from the context. Whereas for Christians, Hindus and other polytheists, the word *Lord* with a capital L may refer to Allah, to Jesus or to some imagined deity, for Muslims, there can be no plurality of meaning. Allah alone is the Lord, and the Lord is Allah — not Jesus, not Rama, not any other being.

The Editor

Transliteration Chart

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Transliterated as:
أ	short 'a', as in <i>cat</i>	a
آ - ع	longer 'a', as in <i>cab</i> (not as in <i>cake</i>)	â
ب	/b/ as in <i>bell, rubber</i> and <i>tab</i>	b
ت	/t/ as in <i>tap, mustard</i> and <i>sit</i>	t
ة	takes the sound of the preceding diacritical mark sometimes ending in h (when in pausal form): ah, ih, or ooh; or atu(n), ati(n) or ata(n) when in uninterrupted speech	h or t (when followed by another Arabic word)
ث	/th/ as in <i>thing, maths</i> and <i>wealth</i>	th
ج	/j/ as in <i>jam, ajar</i> and <i>age</i>	j
ح	a 'harsher' sound than the English initial /h/, and may occur medially and in word-final position as well	ḥ
خ	as in <i>Bach</i> (in German); may occur initially and medially as well	kh
د	/d/ as in <i>do, muddy</i> and <i>red</i>	d
ذ	as in <i>this, father, and with</i>	dh
ر	/r/ as in <i>raw, art</i> and <i>war</i> ; may also be a rolled r, as with Spanish words	r

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Transliterated as:
ز	/z/ as in <i>zoo, easy</i> and <i>gaze</i>	z
س	/s/ as in <i>so, messy</i> and <i>grass</i>	s
ش	as in <i>ship, ashes</i> and <i>rush</i>	sh
ص	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /sw/ or /s/ farther back in the mouth	ṣ
ض	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing /d/ farther back in the mouth	ḍ
ط	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing /t/ farther back in the mouth	ṭ
ظ	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing ‘the’ farther back in the mouth	<u>dh</u>
ع	no close equivalent in English: a guttural sound in the back of the throat	‘
غ	no close equivalent in English, but may be closely approximated by pronouncing it like the French /r/ in ‘rouge’	gh
ف	/f/ as in <i>fill, effort</i> and <i>muff</i>	f

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Transliterated as:
ق	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing /k/ farther back in the mouth	q
ك	/k/ as in <i>king, buckle</i> and <i>tack</i>	k
ل	/l/ as in <i>lap, halo</i> ; in the word <i>Allah</i> , it becomes velarized as in <i>ball</i>	l
م	/m/ as in <i>men, simple</i> and <i>ram</i>	m
ن	/n/ as in <i>net, ant</i> and <i>can</i>	n
ه - ه - ه	/h/ as in <i>hat</i> ; unlike /h/ in English, in Arabic /h/ is pronounced in medial and word-final positions as well	h
و	as in <i>wet</i> and <i>away</i>	w
و (as a vowel)	long u, as in <i>boot</i> and <i>too</i>	oo
ي	as in <i>yet</i> and <i>yard</i>	y
ي (as a vowel)	long e, as in <i>eat, beef</i> and <i>see</i>	ee
ء	glottal stop: may be closely approximated by pronouncing it like 't' in the Cockney English pronunciation of <i>butter: bu'er</i> , or the stop sound in <i>uh - oh!</i>	' (Omitted in initial position)

Diphthongs:

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Transliterated as:
أَ ، و	Long o, as in <i>owe</i> , <i>boat</i> and <i>go</i>	au, aw, ow
أَيَ ، يَ	Long 'a', as in <i>able</i> , <i>rain</i> and <i>say</i>	ay, ai, ei

Diacritical marks (*tashkeel*):

Name of mark	Pronunciation	Transliterated as:
َ fathāh	very short 'a' or schwa (unstressed vowel)	a
ِ kasrah	shorter version of ee or schwa (unstressed vowel)	i
ُ Dammah	shorter version of oo	u
ّ shaddah	a doubled consonant is stressed in the word, and the length of the sound is also doubled	Double letter
◌◌ sukoon	no vowel sound between consonants or at the end of a word	Absence of vowel



Introduction

Verily all praise is due to Allah, we praise Him and seek His aid; we ask His forgiveness and we seek Allah's protection from the wickedness of ourselves and the evil of our deeds. Whomever Allah guides, there is none who can misguide him, and whomever Allah sends astray, there is none who can guide him. I bear witness that none is worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is His slave and His messenger.

May Allah the Almighty be praised, every day that passes sees an ever-increasing number of people embracing Islam, many of them from English speaking countries. And while some of the works of the great Muslim scholars have been translated, such as: *Şaḥeeḥ al-Bukhâri*, *Şaḥeeḥ Muslim*, *Sunan Abi Dawood*, *Riyâḍ aş-Şâliheen*, so far as I am aware, most of the great *tafâseer*¹ have not yet been made available in English. Therefore, I hope that Allah may accept my effort to give English-speaking Muslims the chance to benefit from an abridged translation of Ibn Katheer's *tafseer* of *Juz' 'Amma*.²

I have chosen this *juz'* mindful of the fact that most new Muslims and English-speaking Muslims in general are well acquainted with it.

¹ *tafâseer* (sg. *tafseer*): commentary or explanation of the meaning of the Qur'an
² *Juz' 'Amma*: the thirtieth and last section of the Qur'an which takes its name from the first word in its opening chapter, *Soorat an-Naba'*.

Regarding the translation of the meaning of the verses, I have relied mainly on the *The Glorious Qur'an* by Muhammad M. Pickthall, with occasional reference to the interpretations of M. Khan and Muhammad Taqi ad-Deen al-Hilâli, and of Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

While I have attempted to the utmost of my ability to translate accurately this celebrated work of Ibn Katheer, I am aware that nothing is perfect except Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful. Therefore, should anyone wish to voice criticism or proffer advice, please do not hesitate to contact me via the publisher.

I ask Allah that He guide and maintain us all on the straight path. All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

Sameh Strauch

Ibn Katheer

*H*e was born Ismâ'eel ibn Katheer al-Qurashi ad-Dimashqi, according to the most reliable source (Ibn Katheer himself) in the year 701 H in the city of Basra in Iraq. At the age of seven, following the death of his father (also a renowned scholar), he moved to Damascus with his family. There, he grew up learning and studying from the scholars, memorizing the texts and chains of narrations of many hadiths and learning all related matters pertaining to the study of Hadith, distinguishing himself therein while still a young man. Amongst his teachers were Al-Mizzî, Al-Âmidî, Ibn Taymiyah, Al-Aşfahâni and many other renowned scholars. His students were too numerous to mention since he taught in several schools throughout his lifetime. He was a great scholar of jurisprudence, tafseer, Arabic language and Hadith and was a renowned mufti.

His books were many and included: *Tafseer al-Qur'an al-'Adheem* (Explanation of the Great Qur'an), *al-Ahkâm al-Kubrâ fee al-Hadeeth* (The Major Verdicts in Hadeeth), *al-Ahkâm aş-Şughrâ fee al-Hadeeth* (The Minor Verdicts in Hadeeth), *Sharh Şaheeh al-Bukhâri* (An Explanation of Bukhari's Sound Hadiths), *al-Fuṣool fikhtiṣâr Seerat ar-Rasool* (Chapters in a Brief Biography of the Messenger) and numerous others.

He died (may Allah have mercy on him) in the year 774 H and was buried beside his beloved teacher, Ibn Taymiyah.

Soorat an-Naba' (78)

The Tidings

سُورَةُ النَّبَأِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿١﴾ عَمَّ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿٢﴾ عَنِ النَّبِئِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٣﴾ الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ مُخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٤﴾ كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥﴾ تُو كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦﴾ أَلَمْ تَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ مِهْدًا ﴿٧﴾ وَالْجِبَالَ أَوْتَادًا ﴿٨﴾ وَخَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ﴿٩﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُبَاتًا ﴿١٠﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا أَيْلًا لِيَاسًا ﴿١١﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا النَّهَارَ مَعَاشًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَبَنَيْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعًا شِدَادًا ﴿١٣﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا سِرَاجًا وَهَاجًا ﴿١٤﴾ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْمُعْصِرَاتِ مَاءً ثَجَابًا ﴿١٥﴾ لِنُخْرِجَ بِهِ حَبًّا وَنَبَاتًا ﴿١٦﴾ وَجَنَّاتٍ أَلْفَافًا ﴿١٧﴾

(سورة النبأ: ١-١٦)



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Whereof do they question one another?
2. [It is] of the awful tidings,
3. Concerning which they are in disagreement.
4. No, but they will come to know!
5. No, again, but they will come to know!
6. Have We not made the earth an expanse,
7. And the high hills bulwarks?

8. And We have created you in pairs,
9. And have appointed your sleep for repose,
10. And have appointed the night as a cloak,
11. And have appointed the day for livelihood.
12. And We built above you seven strong [heavens],
13. And have appointed a dazzling lamp,
14. And have sent down from the rainy clouds abundant water,
15. Thereby producing grain and plant,
16. And gardens of thick foliage.

Allah (ﷻ) says about the unbelievers, «Whereof do they question one another?» That is, what exactly are they in disagreement about the Day of Resurrection? It is the awful tidings. According to Qatâdah¹ and Ibn Zayd,² the awful tidings refer to the resurrection of humankind after their death. It was also stated by Mujâhid³ that it referred to the Qur'an; however, the first explanation is more correct, because of the following verse: «Concerning which they are in disagreement», that is, some of them believe in it while others reject it. Then Allah says, referring to those who reject it, «No, but they will come to know!» and, «No, again they will come to know!». This is a strong warning and a promise about which there is no doubt. After this, Allah, the Exalted makes clear His ability to create the most wondrous things, proving that He is able to do as He wills, including resurrecting humankind or anything else that He wills.

¹ Qatâdah ibn Di'âmi as-Sadoosi was a *tâbi'ee* (one of those who had met one or more of the Companions) who studied *tafseer* from the Companion Ibn Mas'ood. Ibn Mas'ood was a native of Basra who was blind from birth and was renowned for his exceptional memory.

² Ibn Zayd: It would appear that Ibn Katheer is referring here to Muhammad ibn Zayd ibn 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar al-Madani, and Allah knows best. He is described as a reliable source of hadiths by Ibn Hajar.

³ Abul Hâjjâj Mujâhid ibn Jabr al-Makki: A *tâbi'ee* and student of the Companion, Ibn 'Abbâs. He died in the year 104 H at the age of 83.

«Have We not made the earth an expanse?» That is, levelled or flattened it to make it manageable for His creations, and settled its continents.

«And the high hills bulwarks?», that is, He made the mountains like tent pegs fixing the earth so that it does not shake and convulse and disturb those who are upon it.

Then He, the Exalted, says, «And We have created you in pairs», that is, male and female, that they may please and comfort one another; and in this way propagation occurs, as in the words of Allah:

﴿وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً...﴾
 (سورة الرُّوم: ٢١)

«And of His signs is this: He created for you helpmates from yourselves that ye might find rest in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy...» (Qur'an 30: 21)

Then He says: «And We have appointed your sleep for repose». Sleep is a break from the activity of the day, from the repetition and toil of life during the working day.

«And have appointed the night as a cloak»: that is, the darkness envelops a person as though wrapping him or her in a black garment, as in His words:

﴿وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا﴾
 (سورة الشمس: ٤)

«And the night when it enshrouds it [the sun].» (Qur'an 91: 4)

«And have appointed the day for livelihood», that is, Allah has caused the day to begin in the east, lighting the sky and enabling people to go about their daily lives, earn their living and conduct their business.

﴿And We have built above you seven strong [heavens]﴾, refers to the seven heavens in their spaciousness, their lofty elevation, their perfection, their excellence, and their beautification with the heavenly bodies. Allah also says, ﴿And have appointed a dazzling lamp,﴾ meaning the illuminating sun, lighting the whole world, shedding its glow upon all the people of the earth.

﴿And have sent down from the rainy clouds abundant water﴾: according to the most reliable sources, the Arabic word: *al-mu'sirât*, used in this verse refers to rain clouds, and not as claimed by some, the wind or the sky. This was the view of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه). Regarding ﴿abundant water﴾, the word used in Arabic is: *thajjâj*, which, according to Aṭ-Ṭabari, means continually pouring rather than abundant as suggested by some commentators. However, in a well known hadith a woman who was describing her menses to the Prophet (ﷺ) said that her blood flow was heavy, and in describing it used the word *thajj* (from the same root as *thajjâj*), which indicates that the word may be used to mean both 'continually pouring' and 'abundant'.

﴿Thereby to produce grain and plant﴾: that is, Allah produces through this abundant water that which is good, beneficial and blessed; ﴿grain﴾ is for livestock and domesticated animals and ﴿plant﴾ refers to greens eaten ripe and fresh. ﴿Gardens﴾ means orchards and gardens that produce fruits of various kinds, colours, tastes and fragrances — all together, even from the same patch of land. This is why Allah said, ﴿And gardens of thick foliage﴾ which means according to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) and others, growing closely together.

﴿إِنَّ يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ كَانَ مِيقَتَنَا ﴿١٧﴾ يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَنَأْتُونَ أَقْوَابًا ﴿١٨﴾ وَفُتِحَتْ
السَّمَاءُ فَكَانَتْ أَبْوَابًا ﴿١٩﴾ وَسُيِّرَتِ الْجِبَالُ فَكَانَتْ سَرَابًا ﴿٢٠﴾ إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا

﴿٢١﴾ لِلطَّغْيِينِ مَآبَا ﴿٢٢﴾ لَيْثِينَ فِيهَا أَحْقَابَا ﴿٢٣﴾ لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا بَرْدًا وَلَا شَرَابًا ﴿٢٤﴾
 إِلَّا حَمِيمًا وَغَسَاقًا ﴿٢٥﴾ جَزَاءً وَفَاقًا ﴿٢٦﴾ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا لَا يَرْجُونَ حِسَابًا ﴿٢٧﴾
 وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا كِذَابًا ﴿٢٨﴾ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ كِتَابًا ﴿٢٩﴾ فَذُوقُوا فَلَنْ نَزِيدَكُمْ
 إِلَّا عَذَابًا ﴿٣٠﴾

(سورة التَّبَا: ١٧-٣٠)

17. Certainly, the Day of Decision is a fixed time,
18. A day when the trumpet is blown, and you come in multitudes,
19. And the heaven is opened and becomes as gates,
20. And the hills are set in motion and become as a mirage.
21. Certainly, Hell lurks in ambush,
22. A home for the rebellious.
23. They will abide therein for ages.
24. Therein they will taste neither coolness nor [any] drink
25. Save boiling water and a paralysing cold:
26. Reward proportioned [to their evil deeds].
27. For indeed, they did not look for a reckoning;
28. They called Our revelations false with strong denial.
29. Everything have We recorded in a book.
30. So taste [of that which you have earned]. No increase do We give you save of torment.

﴿Certainly, the Day of Decision is a fixed time﴾. He, the Exalted, informs us about the Day of Decision; it is a fixed day whose appointment can neither be delayed nor brought forward and its date is not known to anyone except Allah (ﷻ) as in His words:

﴿وَمَا نُؤَخِّرُهُ إِلَّا لِأَجَلٍ مُّعَدَّدٍ﴾ (سورة هُود: ١٠٤)

﴿And We defer it only to a term already reckoned﴾

(Qur'an 11: 104)

﴿A day when the trumpet is blown and you come in multitudes﴾: according to Aṭ-Ṭabari, it means that every community will come forth with its messenger, as in the words of Allah (ﷻ):

(سورة الإسراء: ٧١) ﴿يَوْمَ نَدْعُوا كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِمْعَانِهِمْ...﴾

﴿One Day We shall call together all human beings with their [respective] Imams...﴾
(*Qur'an 17: 71*)

Bukhari reports on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“Between the two blows (of the trumpet) is forty.” They asked, “Forty days?” He replied, “I refuse (to answer).” They asked, “Forty years?” He said, “I refuse.” Then he said, “Then Allah will send down from the heavens water causing humankind to grow like vegetables (from the earth). Nothing remains of man except the coccyx (tail bone) and from it humankind will be created on the Day of Resurrection.”»

﴿And the heaven is opened and becomes as gates﴾ means that it will become a way for the descent of the angels.

﴿And the hills are set in motion and become as a mirage﴾ This is like His words,

(سورة التمل: ٨٨) ﴿وَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبًا جَائِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ...﴾

﴿And you see the hills you deem solid flying with the flight of clouds...﴾
(*Qur'an 27: 88*)

And His words:

(سورة القارعة: ٥) ﴿وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ الْمَنْفُوشِ﴾

﴿And the mountains will become as carded wool.﴾ (*Qur'an 101: 5*)

— ﴿And become as a mirage.﴾ That is, the hills will appear to the onlooker to be something substantial, when in fact they are as nothing; after this, they will disappear entirely, leaving no trace. As Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَسْتَأْذِنُكَ عَنِ الْجِبَالِ فَقُلْ يَنْسِفُهَا رَبِّي نَسْفًا ﴿١٠٥﴾ فَيَذَرُهَا قَاعًا صَفْصَفًا ﴿١٠٦﴾ لَا تَرَى فِيهَا عِوَجًا وَلَا أَمْتًا ﴿١٠٧﴾﴾
(سورة طه: ١٠٥-١٠٧)

﴿And they will ask you about the mountains [on that day]. Say: My Lord will break them into scattered dust and leave it as an empty plain wherein you see neither curve nor ruggedness.﴾

(Qur'an 20: 105-107)

And He, (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَيَوْمَ نُسِطُ الْجِبَالَ وَتَرَى الْأَرْضَ بَارِزَةً ... ﴿٤٧﴾﴾
(سورة الكهف: ٤٧)

﴿One day We shall remove the mountains, and you will see the earth as a level stretch...﴾
(Qur'an 18: 47)

﴿Certainly, Hell lurks in ambush﴾ means that Hell lies in wait for the rebellious; they are the disobedient and the rejectors who oppose the Messenger (ﷻ). According to Al-Ḥasan⁴ and Qatâdah, it means that none shall enter Paradise until he is tried by fire; if he is successful, he will be saved, and if not, he will remain in the Hell. According to Ath-Thawri,⁵ above it are three bridges.

﴿A home for the rebellious.﴾ That is, a place to which they are sent as their eternal abode and their unalterable fate.

⁴ Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri: a *tâbi'ee* and student of the Companion, Ibn Mas'ood

⁵ Sufiyân ibn Sa'eed ibn Masrooq ath-Thawri: known as Abu 'Abdullâh, he was a great scholar of fiqh and Hadith and was a renowned Imam. He died at the age of 64 in the year in 61 H.

﴿They will abide therein for ages.﴾ Scholars have disagreed as to what constitutes ages;⁶ it was said eighty years, each day of which equals a thousand earthly years. Some said seventy years and others said forty years and even three hundred years. It was narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «“It is equivalent to thirty million years.”» However, this is an extremely weak narration. It is also reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said that it is eighty years and more. According to As-Suddi:⁷ ﴿They will abide therein for ages﴾, means seven hundred ages, each one lasting seventy years, each year lasting three hundred and sixty days and each day like a thousand earthly years.

According to Muqâtil ibn Ḥayyân, this verse has been abrogated by the verse: ﴿So taste [of that which you have earned]: No increase do We give you save of torment﴾.

According to Aṭ-Ṭabari, it is possible that this verse is connected to the verse: ﴿Therein they will taste neither coolness nor [any] drink﴾, meaning that for a certain period of time (*aḥqâb*) this will be their punishment, then Allah will give them a punishment of another kind. The correct opinion is that it is a punishment without end, as Qatâdah and Rabee'⁸ said; and he quotes Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri who said that *aḥqâb* implies no limit and it means to remain in the Fire. However, it has been said that the *ḥuqub* is seventy years, each one equivalent to a thousand earthly years. According to Sa'eed ibn Qatâdah, it is a period without end, since each *ḥuqub* is followed by

⁶ The word used in Arabic is *aḥqâb* (a plural whose singular is *ḥuqub*, or *ḥuqb*, or *ḥiqbah*), which refers to a period of time. The disagreement of the scholars was over the precise length of that period.

⁷ As-Suddi: Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalâni lists a number of scholars throughout the ages who bear the name As-Suddi and it is unclear to me which of them Ibn Katheer is referring to.

⁸ Ar-Rabee' ibn Anas al-Bakri al-Baṣri al-Khurasâni: a *tâbi'ee* from Madinah who narrated from Anas ibn Mâlik, Abul 'Āliyah and Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri. He later settled in northwestern Iran. He died in 139 H.

another *huqub* without cessation. Rabee' ibn Anas says that no one knows the length of time except Allah.

«Therein they will taste neither coolness nor [any] drink»: that is, they will not find in Hell any coolness for their hearts, nor good drinks to nourish and refresh them; and so Allah says: «Save boiling water and a paralysing cold». As for the paralysing cold, according to Abul 'Âliyah⁹ it refers to a drink composed of the blood, pus, sweat and tears of the inhabitants of the Hell. Aṭ-Ṭabari says that what is meant by the words: «Therein they will taste neither coolness» refers to sleep; that is, they will not even be able to sleep, so that they might be less aware of their pain and of the heat of the fire. This explanation was also mentioned by Ibn Abi Ḥâtim¹⁰ and Al-Baghawi.¹¹

«Reward proportioned [to their evil deeds].» That is, this is the punishment they will meet because of the immoral deeds which they did in this life according to Qatâdah, Mujâhid and others.

Then Allah says: «For indeed, they did not look for a reckoning». They did not believe in an afterlife where they would be held accountable for their deeds in this life.

«They called Our revelations false with strong denial.» They rejected the proofs of Allah sent to His creatures by way of His Messenger (ﷺ), opposing him and accusing him of lying.

⁹ Abul 'Âliyah Rufa'ee ibn Mihrân ar-Riyâhi: a *tâbi'ee* in Madinah who was originally from Basra in Iraq. He heard hadiths from many Companions, including Ibn 'Abbâs, Ibn Mas'ood and Ubayy ibn Ka'b. His students included Qatâdah and Rabee' ibn Anas.

¹⁰ 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn Muhammad ibn Idrees ibn Abi Ḥâtim: a great Muslim scholar of the tenth century CE and a scholar of tafseer.

¹¹ Al-Ḥusayn ibn Mas'ood ibn Muhammad al-Baghawi: a great Muslim scholar whose tafseer was praised by Ibn Katheer. He was a renowned scholar of Hadith, jurisprudence and tafseer. He died in the year 516 H at more than 80 years of age.

﴿Everything have We recorded in a Book.﴾ That is, He knows the actions of all His slaves and has recorded them to be used for or against them; and He will recompense them accordingly; good will be rewarded with good and evil with evil.

﴿So taste [of that which you have earned]. No increase do We give you save of torment.﴾ That is, it will be said to the people in the Hellfire: "Taste the Fire that you have earned; We will not increase for you anything except punishment, with another the same as it, then another similar to that."

According to 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr (ﷺ)¹² no stronger verse has been revealed concerning the people of the Hellfire than this: ﴿So taste [of that which you have earned]. No increase do We give you save of torment﴾. Ibn 'Amr said their punishment is increased forever.

﴿إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَارِزًا ۖ حَدَائِقَ وَأَعْنَابًا ۖ وَكَوَاعِبَ أَتْرَابًا ۖ وَكَأْسًا دِهَاقًا ۖ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا كِدَابًا ۗ جَزَاءً مِّن رَّبِّكَ عَطَاءً حِسَابًا﴾

(سورة النَّبَأِ: ٣١-٣٦)

31. Certainly, for the dutious is achievement —
32. Gardens enclosed and vineyards,
33. And maidens for companions;
34. And a full cup.
35. There they never hear vain discourse, nor lying —
36. Requital from your Lord — a gift in payment —

¹² 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr: the son of 'Amr ibn al-Âṣ. He narrated a large number of hadiths from the Prophet — Abu Hurayrah said that 'Abdullâh knew more hadiths than he did, due to 'Abdullâh's ability to write (Abu Hurayrah was, like most people at that time, illiterate).

Allah (ﷻ) says concerning those who are fortunate and for whom He has prepared honour and bliss. ﴿Certainly, for the duteous is achievement﴾; meaning a place of rest and recreation. According to Mujâhid and Qatâdah, they have succeeded and have been saved from the fire. It is clear, however, that the saying of Ibn 'Abbâs is more correct because Allah says after that: ﴿Gardens enclosed and vineyards﴾. The gardens and orchards are of dates and other fruits.¹³

﴿And maidens for companions﴾: this means beautiful women, having eyes with a marked contrast between the white and black. Ibn 'Abbâs (ﷺ) and others said that the Arabic word used in the verse, *kawâ'ib*, means shapely; that is, they are buxom women, firm of figure because they are virgins, Arab¹⁴ women, all of the same age. It is narrated from Abu Umâmah (ﷺ) that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: «"Surely the garments of the people of Paradise come from the pleasure of Allah, and as surely, the clouds pass over them and call to them, 'O people of Paradise! With what would you like us to shower you?' Then they will shower them with beautiful, buxom maidens."»

﴿And a full cup.﴾ According to Ibn 'Abbâs (ﷺ), it is a cup which is continually full; while 'Ikrimah¹⁵ said it means containing a pure beverage. Mujâhid, Al-Ḥasan, Qatâdah and Ibn Zayd said it means full to overflowing, while Mujâhid and Sa'eed ibn Jubayr¹⁶ said it is constantly refilled.

¹³ These orchards and vineyards are unlike anything in this world and are unimaginable.

¹⁴ The adjective *Arab* most likely refers to the language that they speak and not to any ethnicity in particular, since Arabic is said to be the language that will be spoken in Paradise. (Editor)

¹⁵ 'Ikrimah Abu 'Abdullâh al-Barbari: he was a slave of Ibn 'Abbâs. He died in 105 H at an advanced age.

¹⁶ Abu 'Abdullâh Sa'eed ibn Jubayr al-Asadi al-Koofi: a *tâbi'ee*, he was a student of Ibn 'Abbâs in Makkah. He died in the year 95 H.

«There they never hear vain discourse, nor lying», is like His words:

﴿لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا تَأْتِيهَا﴾ (سورة الواقعة: ٢٥)

«There they hear no vain speaking or recrimination.»

(Qur'an 56: 25)¹⁷

That is, there is no frivolous talk therein without benefit or purpose and no lies. Indeed it is the abode of peace and everything in it is unimpaired by defect.

«Requital from your Lord — a gift in payment»: those things which Allah has mentioned are given as a reward from Him, from His bounty, generosity and mercy.

«A gift in payment» means a gift that is sufficient, complete, unimpaired and bountiful.

﴿رَبِّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الرَّحْمَنُ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ خِطَابًا﴾ (٣٧) يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الرُّوحُ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ صَفًّا لَا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا ﴿٣٨﴾ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ
الْحَقُّ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ مَنَابًا ﴿٣٩﴾ إِنَّا أَنْذَرْنَاكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا يَوْمَ يَنْظُرُ
الْمَرْءُ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ وَيَقُولُ الْكَافِرُ يَلَيْتَنِي يَلَيْتَنِي كُنْتُ تُرَابًا ﴿٤٠﴾ (سورة النبأ: ٣٧-٤٠)

37. Lord of the heavens and the earth and [all] that is in between them, the Beneficent; with Whom none can converse.

38. On the Day when the angels and the Spirit stand arrayed they speak not, saving him whom the Beneficent allows and who speaks right.

¹⁷ About which Ibn Katheer says: “No vain talk, empty of meaning, is heard in Paradise, and no low, base words are heard.”

39. That is the True Day. So whoso will should seek recourse unto his Lord.

40. Truly, We warn you of a doom at hand, a day on whereon a person will look on that his own hands have sent before, and the disbeliever will cry: Would that I were dust!

Allah tells us of His greatness and might, informing us that He is the Lord of the heavens and the earth and all that is in between them and that He is the Beneficent whose beneficence encompasses all things.

«With Whom none can converse.» This means that none can initiate conversation with Him except by His permission.

«On the Day when the Spirit and the angels stand arrayed, they speak not, saving him whom the Beneficent allows and who speaks right.» Scholars of tafseer have differed as to the meaning of «the Spirit» here. Al-'Awfi¹⁸ narrates that according to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), it refers to the souls of the sons of Adam (عليه السلام) — Peace be upon him). It was also said that they *are* the sons of Adam; this was the opinion of Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri and Qatâdah.

Qatâdah is also reported to have said that it is one of those things kept secret by Ibn 'Abbâs. It was also claimed that they are from amongst Allah's creations, they are in the shape of the sons of Adam, they are neither angels nor humankind and they eat and drink. This was said by Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), Mujâhid, Abu Şâliḥ¹⁹ and Al-

¹⁸ 'Atiyyah ibn Sa'd ibn Junâdah al-'Awfi was known as Abul Ḥasan. According to Ibn Ḥajar he was Shi'ah and prone to make mistakes and to commit *tadlees* (i.e., intentionally or unintentionally covering up a weakness in the chain of hadith).

¹⁹ Abu Şâliḥ: There have been several scholars who bore this nickname in the history of Islam and it is not clear to me which one Ibn Katheer was referring to here.

A'mash.²⁰ Others conclude that it is the angel, Jibreel²¹ (جبرئيل); this was according to Ash-Sha'abi²², Sa'eed ibn Jubayr and Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk.²³

This is supported by the words of Allah (ﷻ):

﴿نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ ﴿١٩٣﴾ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾﴾

(سورة الشعراء: ١٩٣-١٩٤)

«Which the True Spirit has brought down upon your heart, that you may be [one] of the warners.» (Qur'an 26: 193-194)

Muqâtil ibn Ḥayyân²⁴ said: "The Spirit is the most honoured from amongst the angels and the nearest to the Lord, the Almighty, the All-Powerful, and the bearer of revelation." It was also said that the Spirit is a reference to the Qur'an. Some said it is an angel who bears the destiny of all creation. According to Aḷ-Ṭabari, the most correct of these sayings is that it refers to the sons of Adam, and Allah knows best.

«Saving him whom the Beneficent allows» is like His words:

²⁰ Sulaymân ibn Mihrân al-Asâdi al-Kâhili al-A'mash was a great scholar of Hadith, knowledgeable in the different styles of Qur'anic recitation, though according to Ibn Ḥajar, he was sometimes guilty of committing *tadlees*. He died in the year 47 H.

²¹ Jibreel is the Arabic name for Gabriel (peace be upon him), the archangel who transmitted the verses of the Qur'an and other communication from Allah to Prophet Muhammad (bpuh). (Editor)

²² 'Âmir ibn Sharâheel ash-Sha'abi was a great scholar of Hadith and fiqh. He died around the year 100 H at about 80 years of age.

²³ Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk ibn Muzâhim al-Hilâli al-Balkhi al-Khurasâni is generally considered to have studied under Sa'eed ibn Jubayr. He died in the year 105 H.

²⁴ Muqâtil ibn Ḥayyân an-Nabati was a great scholar of Hadith who died in the year 49 H in India.

(سورة هود: ١٠٥)

﴿يَوْمَ يَأْتِ لَا تَكَلِّمُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ...﴾

«On the day when it comes no soul will speak except by His permission...»
(Qur'an 11: 105)

It has been reported authentically that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «None shall speak on that Day except the Messengers (of Allah).»

«And who speaks right» meaning the truth; and the Truth includes the saying: *Lâ ilâha illa Allâh* (literally, there is no god but Allah).²⁵ This was said by Abu Şâlih and 'Ikrimah.

«That is the True Day.» That is, it will be a day that cannot be avoided.

«So whoso will should seek recourse unto his Lord.» That is, seek refuge on a straight path by which he may be guided, a path which will lead him to success.

«Truly, We warn you of a doom at hand» refers to the Day of Judgement. Because of its certainty, it is described as near, as everything that is imminent for sure may be described as near.

«A day whereon a person will look on that which his own hands have sent before»: all of a person's actions will be shown to him or her: deeds, bad and good, old and recent; as in the Words of the Exalted:

(سورة الكهف: ٤٩)

﴿... وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا...﴾

«... And they find all that they did confronting them...»

(Qur'an 18: 49)

As well as His words:

²⁵ The correct meaning is that no one is worthy of worship except Allah.

(سورة القيامة: ١٣)

﴿يُبَيِّنُوا الْإِنْسَانَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِمَا قَدَّمَ وَأَخَّرَ﴾

﴿On that Day people are told the tale of that which they have sent before and left behind.﴾
(Qur'an 75: 13)

﴿And the disbeliever will cry; Would that I were dust!﴾ That is, when the unbeliever sees the punishment of Allah and sees the corruption that was recorded against him or her by the honourable recording angels, the unbeliever will wish on that Day that he or she were still dust in the grave and that he or she had never been created, nor brought back to life. It was said that the unbelievers will wish, when they see Allah judging the animals and then ordering them to be dust, that they were also animals so that they might be returned to dust and not suffer the painful consequences of their actions in this world. This has been narrated from the hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ) and from the sayings of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr (رضي الله عنه) and others.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat an-Naba'*.

All praise is due to Allah, and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat an-Nâzi'ât (79)

Those Who Drag Forth

سُوْرَةُ النَّازِعَاتِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿وَالنَّازِعَاتِ غَرْاقًا ﴿١﴾ وَالنَّشِطَاتِ نَشْطًا ﴿٢﴾ وَالسَّيِّحَاتِ سَبْحًا ﴿٣﴾ فَالسَّيِّقَاتِ سَبْقًا ﴿٤﴾ فَالْمُدْبِرَاتِ أَمْرًا ﴿٥﴾ يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الرَّجِفَةُ ﴿٦﴾ تَتَّبِعُهَا الرَّادِفَةُ ﴿٧﴾ قُلُوبٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاجِفَةٌ ﴿٨﴾ أَبْصَرُهَا خَشِيعَةٌ ﴿٩﴾ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّا لَمَرْدُودُونَ فِي الْحَافِرَةِ ﴿١٠﴾ أِذَا كُنَّا عِظْمًا تَخِرَّةً ﴿١١﴾ قَالُوا تِلْكَ إِذًا كَرَّةٌ خَاسِرَةٌ ﴿١٢﴾ فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ زَجْرَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ ﴿١٣﴾ فَإِذَا هُمْ بِالسَّاهِرَةِ ﴿١٤﴾﴾

(سورة النَّازِعَاتِ : ١-١٤)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. By those who drag forth with great violence.
2. By those who [do so] with gentleness.
3. By those who come floating.
4. By those who hasten.
5. And those who implement the commands.
6. On the Day, the earth and the mountains will shake violently,

7. And the second follows it.
8. On that Day hearts beat painfully.
9. While eyes are downcast.
10. They say, 'Shall we indeed be returned to our first state?'
11. 'Even after we are crumbled bones?'
12. They say, 'It would in that case, be a return with loss.'
13. Surely it will need but one shout,
14. And they will find themselves on the face of the earth.¹

﴿By those who drag forth with great violence﴾ Ibn Mas'ood (ؓ), Ibn 'Abbâs (ؓ), Masrooq, Sa'eed ibn Jubayr and others said that this verse refers to the angels who drag forth the souls from the children of Adam (ؑ). Some of them remove the soul with great difficulty, as though the dying person were drowning, while others remove the soul with great ease, as in the words of Allah (in the following verse): ﴿By those who [do so] with gentleness﴾. This is according to Ibn 'Abbâs. Also attributed to Ibn 'Abbâs is the view that ﴿those who drag forth﴾ refers to the souls of the unbelievers that drag themselves forth with force, then with ease, and then are submerged in the fire. This was reported by Ibn Abi Hâtîm. Mujâhid said the verse refers to death and Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri and Qatâdah said it refers to the stars, while 'Aṭâ' ibn Abi Rabâh² said it is like the pain of death in battle. The most correct of all these sayings is the first and that is the view of the majority of the scholars of tafseer.

¹ The translation of the meaning of verses 1-7, 10, 11, & 14 is not that of Pickthall nor of the other two well-known translators relied upon by the author, but reflects the interpretation preferred by the author/translator (discussed below). (Editor)

² 'Aṭâ' ibn Abi Rabâh: a *tâbi'ee*, born in Yemen of Nubian parents. He became a student of Ibn 'Abbâs. Abu Ḥaneefah, the founder of the Ḥanafi School of jurisprudence was said to have studied under him. He died in Makkah in 114-115 H.

﴿By those who come floating﴾ Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) said that it refers to the angels; this view was also attributed 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib (رضي الله عنه), Mujâhid, Sa'eed ibn Jubayr and Abu Şâlih. Also attributed to Abu Şâlih is the interpretation of this verse as referring to death. Qatâdah said they are the stars and 'Aţâ' ibn Abi Rabâh said they are ships.

﴿By those who hasten﴾ It was narrated according to 'Ali, Masrooq, Mujâhid, Abu Şâlih and Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri that it refers to angels. Al-Ḥasan said that they were the first to believe and testify to the truth. Mujâhid said it refers to death and Qatâdah said it is the stars. 'Aţâ' said it means the horses ridden during battle in the way of Allah.

﴿And those who implement the commands﴾ According to the majority of commentators, this refers to the angels rushing to carry out the orders of their Lord from above. There is no disagreement on any point in connection with this verse, except that Ibn Jareer at-Ṭabari mentioned the agreed meaning of the verse without confirming or refuting it.

﴿On the Day, the earth and the mountains will shake violently, and the second follows it﴾ According to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), on the day when the first trumpet sounds, the earth and the mountains will shake violently and this will be followed by the second trumpet call. Mujâhid, Al-Ḥasan, Qatâdah and Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and others agree with this. However, Mujâhid also said that the first verse is like Allah's words:

﴿يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ وَكَانَتِ الْجِبَالُ كَثِيبًا مَّهِيلًا﴾ (سورة المزمل: ١٤)

﴿On the Day, the earth and the hills rock, and the hills become a heap of running sand.﴾ (Qur'an 73: 14)

As for the second verse, he said it is like Allah's words:

(سورة الحاقة: ١٤) ﴿وَجُمِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ فَدُكَّتَا دَكَّةً وَاحِدَةً﴾

﴿And the earth and the mountains will be lifted up and crushed with one crash.﴾
(*Qur'an 69: 14*)

Imam Aḥmad narrates that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“The trumpet call comes and is followed by the second: death comes with all it entails.” A man asked, “O Messenger of Allah! What if I made all my supplications for you?” He replied, “Then Allah would suffice you in all that is important to you in this world and the next.”» At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Abi Ḥâtim and Ibn Jareer have narrated something similar from the hadith of Sufiyân ath-Thawri, although the wording in that of At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Abi Ḥâtim is: «“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to stand in prayer in the last third of the night and say, ‘O you people! Remember Allah; the trumpet sounds and is followed by the second, (Then) death comes with all that it entails.’”»

﴿On that day hearts beat painfully﴾ Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) says that it means the hearts are fearful; Mujâhid and Qatâdah concurred with this.

﴿While eyes are downcast﴾ that is, the eyes of those who have fearful hearts. Those people will be humbled and wretched after seeing the terror that awaits them.

﴿They say, ‘Shall we really be returned to our first state?’﴾ This question will be asked by the polytheists of Quraysh and those who disbelieved in the resurrection — those who regarded as remote the possibility of being called forth, after they have been laid in their graves, their bodies already rotted and their bones crumbled; and so Allah says that the polytheists will say, ﴿Even after we are crumbled bones?﴾

﴿They say, 'It would, in that case, be a return with loss.'﴾ That is, the unbelievers say: "If we are resurrected by Allah after we die, we will surely lose by it."

﴿Surely it will need but one shout, and lo! they will be awakened﴾ That is, it is merely one order from Allah, not more than that, and it is not known to any but Allah when it will be. The order will be given to the angel Isrâfeel to blow the trumpet which will call forth humankind, and the people will stand before their Lord, the Almighty, the All-Powerful as in His words:

﴿يَوْمَ يَدْعُوكُمْ فَتَسْتَجِيبُونَ بِحَمْدِهِ وَتَظُنُّونَ إِن لِّيتَهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٥٢﴾﴾

(سورة الإسراء: ٥٢)

﴿A day when He will call you and you will answer by His praise, and ye will think that you have tarried but a little while.﴾

(Qur'an 17: 52)

And His words:

﴿وَمَا أَمْرُنَا إِلَّا وَاحِدَةٌ كَلَمْحٍ بِالْبَصَرِ ﴿٥٠﴾﴾

(سورة القمر: ٥٠)

﴿And Our command is but one [commandment], twinkling of an eye.﴾

(Qur'an 54: 50)

And also His words:

﴿... وَمَا أَمْرُ السَّاعَةِ إِلَّا كَلَمْحِ الْبَصَرِ أَوْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ ... ﴿٧٧﴾﴾

(سورة التحل: ٧٧)

﴿... And the matter of the Hour [of Doom] is but as a twinkling of an eye, or it is nearer still...﴾

(Qur'an 16: 77)

﴿Surely it will need but one shout﴾ According to Ibrâheem at-Taymi³ it is a shout of anger from Allah over His Creation on the day when they are sent forth. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri also said it is a shout of anger. Abu Mâlik⁴ and Ar-Rabee' ibn Anas said the ﴿shout﴾ refers to the second trumpet call.

﴿And they will find themselves on the face of the earth﴾ It was said by Ibn 'Abbâs that the Arabic word *sâhirah* at the end of the verse means all of the earth. 'Ikrimah, Al-Ḥasan, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and Ibn Zayd said that it means the face of the earth. Mujâhid says that *sâhirah* refers to the levelling and flattening of the earth after the people having been interred in the ground, are brought forth to the surface. Ath-Thawri said it is the land of *ash-Shâm*⁵ 'Uthmân ibn Abi al-Âtikah⁶ said that it means *Bayt al-Maqdis*.⁷ It is also narrated from Qatâdah that he said it means the Hell-fire. However all these interpretations are far-fetched; the correct meaning is the face of the earth.

﴿هَلْ أُنْتَلِكُ حَدِيثُ مُوسَى﴾ إِذْ نَادَاهُ رَبُّهُ بِالْوَادِ الْقُدْسِ طُوًى ﴿١٦﴾ أَذْهَبَ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ

³ Ibrâheem ibn Yazeed ibn Shurayk at-Taymi was known as Abu Asmâ'. He was a pious man although, according to Ibn Ḥajar, the renowned scholar of Hadith, he sometimes related *mursal* narrations and sometimes committed tadlees. [A *mursal* narration is one in which the name of the Companion who heard it directly from the Prophet (bpuh) is omitted. (Editor)] At-Taymi died in the year 92 H at the age of forty.

⁴ Abu Mâlik: it is unclear to me whom Ibn Katheer is referring to since only the nickname is given.

⁵ *Ash-Shâm*: the area of land covering present-day Syria, Jordan, Palestine and Lebanon

⁶ 'Uthmân ibn Abi al-Âtikah ad-Dimashqi was a scholar of Hadith from the first century after the Hijra. He died in the year 52 H. Bukhari and Abu Dawood, amongst others, reported his narrations.

⁷ *Bayt al-Maqdis*: Jerusalem

إِنَّهُ طَعَنَ ﴿١٧﴾ فَقُلْ هَلْ لَكَ إِلَهٌ إِلَّا أَن تَزُكَّ ﴿١٨﴾ وَأَهْدِيكَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَنَحْسَبُ ﴿١٩﴾ فَأَرْسَلْنَا
 آيَةَ الْكُبْرَىٰ ﴿٢٠﴾ فَكَذَّبَ وَعَصَىٰ ﴿٢١﴾ ثُمَّ أَذْبَرَ يَسْعَىٰ ﴿٢٢﴾ فَحَشَرَ فَنَادَىٰ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَقَالَ
 أَنَا رَبُّكُمُ الْأَعْلَىٰ ﴿٢٤﴾ فَأَخَذَهُ اللَّهُ نَكَالَ الْآخِرَةِ وَالْأُولَىٰ ﴿٢٥﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّمَن يَخْشَىٰ ﴿٢٦﴾

(سورة التازعات: ١٥-٢٦)

15. Has there come to you the story of Moosâ?⁸
16. How his Lord called to him in the holy valley of Ṭuwâ,
17. [Saying], ‘Go unto Pharaoh — he has indeed rebelled —
18. And say [unto him], ‘Have you [will] to grow [in grace]?’
19. Then I will guide you to your Lord and you shall fear [Him].
20. And so he showed him the tremendous token.
21. But he denied and disobeyed,
22. Then he turned away in haste,
23. Then he gathered and summoned,
24. And proclaimed: I [Pharaoh] am your lord, the highest.
25. So Allah seized him [and made him] an example for the after [life] and for the former.
26. Herein is indeed a lesson for one who fears.

Allah, the Exalted informs the Messenger, Muhammad (ﷺ), concerning his messenger and slave, Moses (ﷺ) whom He commanded to confront Pharaoh and strengthened him (Moses) with miracles. In spite of this, Pharaoh remained unconvinced and an unbelieving tyrant until Allah destroyed him. This is the reward of all those who reject Allah’s messengers (peace be upon them all) and the message of pure Islamic Monotheism that they brought. And so Allah says at the end: ﴿Herein is indeed a lesson for one who fears﴾.

⁸ Moosâ is the Arabic name for Moses (peace be upon him).

«Has there come to you the story of Moses?» Have you heard the news about Moses?

«How his Lord called to him» That is, He actually spoke to him, calling out his name.

«In the holy valley» That is, in the purified valley.

«Of Ṭuwâ» This is the name of the valley, according to the most correct opinions. Allah said to him: «Go unto Pharaoh — he has indeed rebelled» That is, he was tyrannical, disobedient and unjust.

«And say [unto him]: Have you [will] to grow [in grace]?» That is, are you (O Pharaoh) able to respond positively to a way that will cause you to grow in grace and that will make you submissive and obedient [to Allah]?

«Then I will guide you to your Lord and you shall fear [Him]» That is, ‘I will tell you how to worship your Lord and your heart will become humble, obedient and fearful towards Him, having previously been wicked, cruel and far from goodness.’

«And he showed him the tremendous token» That is, Moses (ﷺ) made plain to Pharaoh most clearly and conclusively the truth of the message that he brought from Allah, a message that he brought with the strongest of proofs.⁹

«But he denied and disobeyed» That is, Pharaoh denied the truth and rejected the order of obedience to Allah. His heart was filled with disbelief and he did not obey Moses either in his heart or by his actions. The fact that he knew that Moses spoke the truth does not mean that Pharaoh believed in him, since true knowledge is

⁹ Allah said: «[Pharaoh] said, ‘If you come with a token, then produce it, if you are of those who speak the truth? Then he flung down his staff and behold! It was a serpent, manifest! And he drew forth his hand [from his bosom], and behold! It was white for the beholders!» (Qur’an 7: 106-108)

knowledge of the heart, while faith and belief are demonstrated by action, and that entails following the truth in humility.

﴿Then he turned away in haste﴾ That is, to arrange for a battle between truth and falsehood, to which he called upon his sorcerers that they may confront that which was brought by Moses from His miracles.

﴿Then he gathered and summoned﴾ That is, he gathered and summoned his people.

﴿And proclaimed, 'I [Pharaoh] am your lord, the highest.'﴾ According to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) and Mujâhid, Pharaoh said these words forty years after telling them, "I did not inform you of another deity besides me."¹⁰

﴿So Allah seized him and made him an example for the after [life] and for the former﴾ That is, Allah's retribution overtook him and He made him a lesson for those of humankind who are like Pharaoh and who are rebellious in this world. In the words of Allah (ﷻ):

﴿يَقْدُمُ قَوْمَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَأَوْرَدَهُمُ النَّارَ وَيَشْسُ الْوَرْدُ الْمَوْرُودُ﴾

(سورة هود: ٩٨)

﴿He will go before his people on the Day of Resurrection, and will lead them into the fire for a watering-place. Ah, hapless is the watering-place whither they are led!﴾ (Qur'an 11: 98)

And:

¹⁰ How colossal must have been the pride, arrogance and self-satisfaction of Pharaoh that for forty years he clung to the delusion that he was the One True Deity and the Lord, Most High!

﴿وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَيْمَةً يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْكُفْرِ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا يُنصُرُونَ﴾ (٤١)

(سورة القصص: ٤١)

﴿And We made them leaders that invite to the Fire, and on the Day of Resurrection they will not be helped.﴾ (Qur'an 28: 41)

So the correct interpretation of the verse is that it refers to this earthly life and the Hereafter. It was also said that it means His two words, the first and the second; and it has been said that it refers to Pharaoh's disbelief and his disobedience. However, the correct interpretation, as stated above, is the first.

﴿Lo! Herein is indeed a lesson for him who fears﴾ That is, for the person who takes heed, learns a lesson and whose fear or consciousness of Allah (ﷻ) keeps him or her from committing grave sins.

﴿أَأَنْتُمْ أَشَدُّ خَلْقًا أَمْ السَّمَاءُ بَنَاهَا﴾ (٢٧) ﴿رَفَعَ سَعَتَهَا فَسَوَّاهَا﴾ (٢٨) ﴿وَأَعْيَشَ لَيْلَهَا وَأَخْرَجَ ضَعْفَهَا﴾ (٢٩) ﴿وَالْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ دَحَاهَا﴾ (٣٠) ﴿أَخْرَجَ مِنْهَا مَاءَهَا وَمَرْعَاهَا﴾ (٣١) ﴿وَالْجِبَالَ أَرْسَاهَا﴾ (٣٢) ﴿مَنْعًا لَكُمْ وَلِأَنْعِمَ كُرُّ﴾ (٣٣)

(سورة التازعات: ٢٧-٣٣)

27. Are you the harder to create or is the heaven that He built?
28. He raised the height thereof and ordered it;
29. And He made dark the night thereof, and He brought forth the morn thereof.
30. And after that He spread the earth,
31. He produced its water and its pasture from it.
32. And He made fast the hills,
33. A provision for you and for your cattle.

He, the Exalted says in rebuttal to those who deny the resurrection: ﴿Are you﴾ — O people — ﴿the harder to create, or is the heaven that he built?﴾ This means of course that the heaven is harder to create; the question is rhetorical. He says:

﴿لَخَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ خَلْقِ النَّاسِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ (سورة غافر: ٥٧)

﴿Assuredly the creation of the heavens and the earth is greater than the creation of humankind; but the most people do not know.﴾

(Qur'an 40: 57)

And:

﴿أَوَلَيْسَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِقَدِيرٍ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ بَلَىٰ وَهُوَ الْخَلَّاقُ الْعَلِيمُ﴾ (سورة يس: ٨١)

﴿Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like of them? Of course He is! For He is the All-Wise Creator.﴾

(Qur'an 36: 81)

His words: ﴿that He built﴾ are explained by His subsequent words: ﴿He raised the height thereof and ordered it﴾ That is, He made it an exalted edifice whose structure is without limits, and whose vastness is unending, adorned by the heavenly bodies in the darkness of night.

﴿And He made dark the night thereof, and He brought forth the morn thereof﴾ That is, We have made the night pitch-black and the day illuminated, emanating from the east. This meaning was agreed upon by Ibn 'Abbâs, Mujâhid, 'Ikrimah, Sa'eed ibn Jubayr and many others.

﴿And after that He spread the earth﴾ Allah has made plain the meaning of this verse with the following verse: ﴿He produced its

water and its pasture from it) as was also made clear in the fourth verse of *Soorat as-Sajdah*.¹¹ Allah created the heavens after the earth and He only mentions the spreading out of the earth after the creation of the heavens. This means that He released that which was in the universe by force, and this is the meaning of the saying of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) and others, which was preferred by Ibn Jareer.

﴿He spread the earth﴾ Spreading it means He produced from it water and pasture, splitting open the earth to produce rivers and placing them in the mountains and sands, channels and hills.

﴿And He made fast the hills﴾ That is, He fixed them and made them immovable in their places, and He is the Wise, the All-Knowing, the Most Kind in His merciful creation. Imam Aḥmad narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «“When Allah created the earth it began to convulse and then He created mountains and He cast them upon the earth and it became fixed and the angels were amazed by the creation of the mountains and they said, ‘O Lord! Is there anything from amongst Your creations stronger than the mountains?’ He replied, ‘Yes, iron.’ They asked, ‘O Lord! Is there anything from amongst Your creations stronger than iron?’ He replied, ‘Yes, fire.’ They asked, ‘O Lord! Is there anything from amongst Your creations stronger than fire?’ He answered, ‘Yes, water.’ They asked, ‘O Lord! Is there anything from amongst Your creations stronger than water?’ He replied, ‘Yes, the wind.’ They asked, ‘O Lord! Is there anything

¹¹ Allah, the Exalted says:

﴿Allah it is Who has created the heavens and the earth, and that which is between them, in six days. Then He mounted the Throne.﴾ (Qur'an 32: 4)

Ibn Katheer explains that the tafseer of this verse is the same as that of His words:

﴿It is He Who created for you all that is in the earth. Then He turned to the heaven and fashioned it as seven heavens.﴾ (Qur'an 2: 29),

thus making it clear that the creation of the earth preceded the creation of the heavens.

from amongst Your creations stronger than the wind?' He answered, 'Yes, the son of Adam¹² — he gives charity with his right hand and keeps it secret from his left.'»

﴿A provision for you and for your cattle﴾ That is, He spread the earth and brought forth its springs and that which was concealed in it, made its rivers to flow, produced from it bountiful harvests and trees and fruits, and fixed its mountains so that its people may reside on it — all of this as a provision for His creation. He also provided all that they need of livestock, which they eat and use as beasts of burden and to ride whenever they need to, until their time on this earth is done.

﴿فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الطَّامَّةُ الْكُبْرَىٰ ﴿٣٤﴾ يَوْمَ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا سَعَىٰ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَبُرْزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِمَن يَرَىٰ ﴿٣٦﴾ فَأَمَّا مَنْ طَغَىٰ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَآثَرَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ﴿٣٨﴾ فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَىٰ النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾ فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾ يَسْتَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَاهَا ﴿٤٢﴾ فِيمَ أَنْتَ مِنْ ذِكْرهَا ﴿٤٣﴾ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ مُنْهَلَهَا ﴿٤٤﴾ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنذِرٌ مَّن يَخْشَاهَا ﴿٤٥﴾ كَانَتْهُمْ يَوْمَ يُرَوَّنَهَا لَوْ يَلْبَسُوا إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ ضُحَاهَا ﴿٤٦﴾﴾

(سورة التازعات : ٣٤-٤٦)

34. But when the great disaster comes,
35. The day when the human being will call to mind his [whole] endeavour.
36. And Hell will stand forth visible to one who sees,
37. Then as for the one who rebelled,
38. And chose the life of the world,
39. Certainly, Hell will be his home.

¹² The expression 'the son of Adam' refers to the human being. (Editor)

40. But as for the one who feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from lust,
 41. Certainly, the Garden will be his home.
 42. They ask you about the Hour; when will it come to port?
 43. Why? [They ask.] What have you to tell thereof?
 44. To your Lord belongs [knowledge of] its term.
 45. You are but a warner unto him who fears it.
 46. On the day when they behold it, it will be as if they had but tarried for an evening or the morn thereof.

Allah says: ﴿But when the great disaster comes﴾ This refers to the Day of Resurrection according to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه); it was so called because on that day, everything will be inundated and destroyed as if by a terrible calamity, as in His words:

(سورة القمر : ٤٦)

﴿... وَالسَّاعَةُ أَدهَى وَأَمْرٌ ﴿٤٦﴾﴾

﴿... And the Hour will be more wretched and more bitter [than their earthly failure].﴾
 (Qur'an 54: 46)

﴿The day when a person will call to mind his [whole] endeavour﴾ That is, on this day the son of Adam will recall all of his actions, good and bad, as in the words of Allah:

(سورة الفجر : ٢٣)

﴿... يَوْمَئِذٍ يَنْدَكُرُ الْإِنْسَانُ وَأَنَّى لَهُ الذِّكْرَى ﴿٢٣﴾﴾

﴿... On that day people will remember, but how will the remembrance [then avail them]?﴾
 (Qur'an 89: 23)

﴿And Hell will stand forth visible to one who sees﴾ It will be made clear to all humankind and they will see it with their own eyes.

﴿Then as for the one who rebelled﴾ That is, for those who were disobedient and unjust.

﴿And chose the life of the world﴾ and who considered worldly matters more important than the matter of their religion and the Hereafter.

﴿Certainly, Hell will be his home﴾ That is, the end for such people will be in the Hellfire where they will assuredly find no food except *zaqqoom*¹³ and no drink but *hameem*.¹⁴

﴿But as for the one who feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from lust﴾ That is, they feared to stand before their Lord, the Almighty, the All-Powerful, feared His judgement upon them, abstained from lustful desires, and rejected them in favour of obedience to their Protector.

﴿Certainly, the Garden will be his home﴾ That is, their final abode, their destiny will be Paradise, a wide and expansive garden.

﴿They ask you about the Hour: when will it come to port? Why [do they ask]? What have you to tell thereof? Unto your Lord belongs [knowledge of] the term thereof﴾ Allah is addressing the Prophet, saying that he has no knowledge of the Hour in which the events of the Day of Judgement will begin, nor does any other member of Allah's creation. Indeed it is known only to Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful and He alone knows the precise moment of its occurrence.

﴿You are but a warner unto him who fears it﴾ That is, Allah sent His Messenger (ﷺ) only to warn the people of His punishment, and so whoever fears Allah, and His greatness, His exalted position

¹³ *Zaqqoom*: Allah says, addressing the disbelievers whose ultimate abode is the Hell-fire: ﴿You verily will eat of the trees of *zaqqoom*.﴾ (Qur'an 56: 52) This is the food which the inhabitants of Hell will eat because of their hunger. It will boil in their stomachs.

¹⁴ *Hameem*: A boiling, scalding drink given to the inhabitants of Hell; Allah says: ﴿And thereon you will drink boiling water.﴾ (Qur'an 56: 54)

and the promise of His Retribution will follow Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and will be successful. Whoever denies or opposes the Messenger (ﷺ) will suffer failure and loss.

﴿On the Day when they behold it, it will be as if they had but tarried for an evening or the morn thereof﴾ That is, when they rise from their graves and find themselves at the place of assembly they will feel that the life of this world was extremely short, as if it were only the evening or the morning of one day. It is narrated from Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that he said: “(The word) *'ashiyyah* means the time from just after midday until the setting of the sun, while (the word) *duḥâha* means from sunrise until midmorning.” Qatâdah said it refers to the timespan of this world in the eyes of the people when they compare it to the Hereafter.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat an-Nâzi'ât*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat 'Abasa (80)

He Frowned

سُورَةُ عَبَسَ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿١﴾ عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى ﴿٢﴾ أَنْ جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَى ﴿٣﴾ وَمَا يَدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّهُ يَزْكِي ﴿٤﴾ أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ
فَنَنْفَعَهُ الْذِّكْرَى ﴿٥﴾ أَمَا مِنْ أَسْتَفْنَى ﴿٦﴾ فَأَنْتَ لَهُ تَصَدَّى ﴿٧﴾ وَمَا عَلَيْكَ أَلَّا يَرْكَبُ ﴿٨﴾
وَأَمَا مِنْ جَاءَكَ يَسْعَى ﴿٩﴾ وَهُوَ يَخْشَى ﴿١٠﴾ فَأَنْتَ عَنْهُ لَهْفَى ﴿١١﴾ كَلَّا إِنَّهَا تَذْكِرَةٌ ﴿١٢﴾
فَنْ شَاءَ ذَكَرَهُ ﴿١٣﴾ فِي صُحُفٍ مُكَرَّمَةٍ ﴿١٤﴾ مَرْفُوعَةٍ مُطَهَّرَةٍ ﴿١٥﴾ بِأَيْدِي سَفَرَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾ كِرَامٍ
بَرَرَةٍ ﴿١٧﴾

(سورة عَبَسَ: ١-١٦)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. He frowned and turned away,
2. Because the blind man came unto him.
3. What could inform you but that he might grow [in grace]?
4. Or take heed and so the reminder might avail him?
5. As for him who thinks himself independent,
6. Unto him you pay regard.
7. Yet it is not your concern if he grows not [in grace].
8. But as for him who comes to you with earnest purpose

9. And has fear,
10. From him you are distracted.
11. No! But verily it is an Admonishment.
12. So let whosoever will pay heed to it,
13. On honoured leaves,
14. Exalted, purified,
15. [Set down] by scribes
16. Noble and righteous.

It has been mentioned by several scholars of tafseer that one day the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was addressing one of the notables of Quraysh. He was deeply involved in calling him to Islam and informing him about the religion of Allah, when a blind man named 'Abdullâh ibn Umm Maktoom (رضي الله عنه), one of the earliest converts to Islam, came along and attempted to ask something of the Prophet (ﷺ). He became insistent, while the Prophet (ﷺ) wanted very much to seize the moment and put all his efforts into calling the pagan man to Islam. Carried away by his desire to guide this man, he frowned at Ibn Umm Maktoom and turned away from him, turning towards the other man. Allah, therefore, revealed the verses: ﴿He frowned and turned away, the blind man came unto him. What could inform you but that he might grow [in grace]?﴾ That is, that he might become purified in spirit.

﴿Or take heed and so the reminder might avail him?﴾ That is, that he might be warned away from evil and guided away from sin.

﴿As for him who thinks himself independent, unto him you pay regard﴾ That is, as for the rich man, you, Muhammad, take great pains to deal with him in the hope that he may be guided.

﴿Yet it is not your concern if he grows not [in grace]?﴾ That is, the Prophet (ﷺ) will not be asked about him if he does not become purified and guided.

﴿But as for him who comes to you with earnest purpose and has fear﴾ That is, a Muslim who is dedicated to Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), believes in him and is guided by what he says.

﴿From him you are distracted﴾ That is the Prophet (ﷺ) was too busy to attend to him. It was from this time that Allah (ﷻ) ordered His Messenger (ﷺ) not to call to Islam any particular person in preference to another; instead, he should consider of equal importance the nobleman and the weak person, the poor man and the rich man, the freeman and the slave, the man and the woman, the child and the adult. Then Allah, the Exalted will guide whom He wills to the straight path and to Him belongs complete wisdom and the irrefutable evidence. It is narrated on the authority of Anas (رضي الله عنه) that he said: "Ibn Umm Maktoom (رضي الله عنه) came to the Prophet (ﷺ) when he was speaking to Ubayy ibn Khalaf and he (ﷺ) turned away from him and so Allah revealed, ﴿He frowned and turned away, because the blind man came unto him﴾. Ever after this, the Prophet (ﷺ) used to honour him." Qatâdah said: "Anas ibn Mâlik (رضي الله عنه) told me, 'I saw him ('Abdullâh ibn Umm Maktoom) on the day of the Battle of Qâdisiyah wearing a coat of mail and he was carrying a black flag.'" Mujâhid, Qatâdah, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and others are all agreed that these verses were revealed in connection with the above-mentioned incident.

﴿No! But verily it is an Admonishment﴾ The 'Admonishment' may refer to these verses, or to the advice to treat all people whom one calls to Islam in the same way, without favouring the noble over the weak. Qatâdah said that the 'Admonishment' means the Qur'an.

﴿So let whosoever will pay heed to it﴾ That is, if people have the inclination, they should remember Allah (ﷻ) in all their affairs, although it is possible that it means that one must listen with attention to this revelation.

﴿On honoured leaves, exalted, purified﴾ That is, this chapter of the Qur'an, and/or the warning contained therein — and both of these meanings must necessarily be understood from this verse — are written down in this way. Indeed, the whole Qur'an is exaltedly esteemed, most elevated and pure (from all impurity and from superfluity or deficiency).

﴿[Set down] by scribes﴾ Ibn 'Abbâs, Mujâhid, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and Ibn Zayd said it refers to the angels. Wahb ibn Munabbih¹ said that it refers to the Companions of the Prophet while Qatâdah said it means the reciters of the Qur'an. Ibn Jurayj² also said, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs, that it refers to the reciters. However, Ibn Jareer says that the correct interpretation is that it refers to the angels, who stand between Allah and His creatures. This is why it is said that a *safeer* (from the same root as *safarah*, the word used in the verse to describe the angels) is an ambassador; one who acts as a mediator and peace-maker between the people. As the poet says:

*And I leave not the act of mediation between my people,
Nor will I walk in deception when I walk.*

Bukhari says that the embassy of the angels involves mediating between humankind in their disputes, and also bringing Allah's revelation to them like the ambassador who makes peace between the people by bringing to them messages of goodwill.

﴿Noble and righteous﴾ That is, their behaviour is honourable, good, noble, and they are obedient and pure in their deeds. They

¹ Abu 'Abdullâh Wahb ibn Munabbih ibn Kâmil al-Yamâni was a great scholar of Hadith from the first century of Islam. Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi and others reported his narrations. He died sometime between the years 100 and 109 H.

² 'Abdul Malik ibn 'Abdul 'Azeez ibn Jurayj al-Umawi was a great scholar of fiqh and Hadith. He died in or around the year 50 H.

perform their deeds perfectly and completely, therefore it is incumbent upon every bearer of the Qur'an (that is every Muslim) to be noble and honourable in word and deed. It is narrated from 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) that she said: «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'Whoever reads the Qur'an and is proficient in it, will be with the honourable and obedient ambassadors (the angels); as for one who reads it and it is difficult for him, he will have two rewards.'»³

﴿قُلِ لِلْإِنْسَانِ مَا أَكْفَرُهُ ﴿١٧﴾ مِنْ أَيِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ ﴿١٨﴾ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ خَلَقَهُ فَقَدَرَهُ ﴿١٩﴾ ثُمَّ
السَّبِيلَ يَسِّرُهُ ﴿٢٠﴾ ثُمَّ أَمَانَهُ فَأَقْبَرَهُ ﴿٢١﴾ ثُمَّ إِذَا شَاءَ أَنْشَرَهُ ﴿٢٢﴾ كَلَّا لَمَّا يُقِضْ مَا أَمَرَهُ
﴿٢٣﴾ فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ ﴿٢٤﴾ أَنَا صَبَبْنَا الْمَاءَ صَبًّا ﴿٢٥﴾ ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْأَرْضَ شَقًّا
﴿٢٦﴾ فَأَبْتَأْنَا فِيهَا بَآءًا ﴿٢٧﴾ وَعِنَبًا وَقَضْبًا ﴿٢٨﴾ وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا ﴿٢٩﴾ وَحَدَائِقَ غُلَبًا ﴿٣٠﴾
وَفَكْهَةً وَأَبَاً ﴿٣١﴾ مَتَلَعَا لَكْرًا ﴿٣٢﴾﴾ (سورة عَبَسَ : ١٧-٣٢)

17. Woe to the human being! How he rejects!
18. From what thing does He create him?
19. From a drop of seed. He creates him and proportions him,
20. Then makes the way easy for him,
21. Then causes him to die, and buries him;
22. Then, when He will, He brings him again to life.
23. Nay! But [the human] has not done what He commanded him.
24. Let people consider their food:
25. How We pour water in showers
26. Then split the earth in clefts,
27. And cause the grain to grow therein.
28. And grapes and green fodder,

³ Narrated by Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad and others.

29. And olive-trees and palm-trees,
30. And garden-closes of thick foliage
31. And fruits and grasses:
32. Provision for you and your cattle.

﴿Woe to the human being! How he rejects!﴾ Allah rebukes those who reject the prophets whom He has chosen from amongst the sons of Adam. Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk said, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه): ﴿Woe to the human being!﴾ means that Allah has cursed humankind. Abu Mâlik also said this. It refers to those who lack knowledge and reject without cause or reason, other than their own doubts. Ibn Jurayj said that ﴿How he rejects!﴾ means, 'how great is his disbelief!' Aṭ-Ṭabari said it could also mean, 'what has made him reject? What causes him to deny the hereafter?' Al-Baghawi relates this from Muqâtil and Al-Kalbi.⁴ Qatâdah said that this verse means, 'how cursed is he!'

Then Allah makes it clear how He created him from an insignificant thing and that He is fully able to recreate him the first time, saying: ﴿From what thing does He create him? From a drop of seed. He creates him and proportions him﴾ That is, He determined his lifespan, his provision, his deeds and whether he will be miserable or happy, among other things.

﴿Then makes the way easy for him﴾ Al-'Awfi said, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه), that it means that Allah made easy his delivery from his mother's womb. 'Ikrimah, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk, Abu Şâlih, Qatâdah and As-Suddi agreed with this interpretation and it was the preferred explanation of Aṭ-Ṭabari. Mujâhid said it is like the saying of Allah:

⁴ Muhammad ibn as-Sai'b ibn Bishr al-Kalbi was a scholar of tafseer. Ibn Ḥajar says that he was accused of lying and was suspected of being a Shi'ah. He died in the year 46 H.

﴿إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا﴾ (سورة الإنسان: ٣)

﴿We have shown him the way, whether he be grateful or disbelieving.﴾ (Qur'an 76: 3)

That is, Allah showed the way to him, made it clear to him and made his deeds easy along the way. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri and Ibn Zayd agreed with this; it is the most correct interpretation, and Allah knows best.

﴿Then causes him to die, and buries him﴾ That is, after creating him, Allah causes him to die and places him in his grave, making him one of the inhabitants of the graves.

﴿Then, when He will, He brings him again to life﴾ That is, He resurrects him after his death, as in His words:

﴿وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ إِذَا أَنْتُمْ بَشَرٌ تَنْشُرُونَ﴾ (سورة الرُّوم: ٢٠)

(سورة الرُّوم: ٢٠)

﴿And of His signs is this: He created you of dust, and behold you human beings, ranging widely.﴾ (Qur'an 30: 20)

And:

﴿... وَأَنْظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا...﴾ (سورة البَقَرَة: ٢٥٩)

(سورة البَقَرَة: ٢٥٩)

﴿... Look at the bones, how We adjust them together and then clothe them with flesh...﴾ (Qur'an 2: 259)

It is narrated from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri⁵ that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

⁵ Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri was a Companion of the Prophet. His full name was Sa'd ibn Mâlik ibn Sinân ibn 'Ubayd al-Anṣârî. He took part in the Battle of Uḥud while a youth, and in many other battles. He related numerous sayings of the Prophet. He died in Madinah between the years 63-65 H.

«The dust eats everything of a person except his coccyx; from it he was created and upon it he is constructed.» (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim)

﴿Nay! But [the human] has not done what He commanded him﴾ Ibn Jareer says that man has not performed those acts that Allah has made obligatory for him. It is narrated on the authority of Wahn ibn Munabbih (رضي الله عنه) that he said: 'Uzayr⁶ (رضي الله عنه) said: The angel who came to me said: Verily, the graves are the belly of the earth, and the earth is the origin of creation; so when Allah has created all that He wants, and the graves are complete, (full) as Allah wills, the world will end and the earth will speak, telling what is hidden in it, and the graves will expel their contents. (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim) This is in accordance with what we have said concerning this verse and Allah, Most Glorified, the Exalted knows best.

﴿Let people consider their food﴾. In it there is both blessing and evidence in the way that He gives life to the plants in the dead earth and of how He is likewise able to give life to the dead bodies after they have become old bones and scattered dust.

﴿How We pour water in showers﴾ That is, Allah sends it down from the heavens to the earth.

﴿Then split the earth in clefts﴾ That is, Allah made people live on it and He causes seeds to germinate in it, and it is their growth into plants that splits the earth.

﴿And cause the grain to grow therein and grapes and green fodder﴾. Grain includes every kind of grains; cereals, pulses and granules; while grapes are well known, of course. 'Green fodder' refers to those plants that are eaten by grazing animals, such as alfalfa, bean sprouts, and so on. This was said by Ibn 'Abbâs,

⁶ 'Uzayr: the Prophet Ezra (may Allah's peace be upon him).

Qatâdah, Adh-Dhahabi, and As-Suddi. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri said that the green fodder are all varieties of animal fodder.

﴿And olive-trees﴾ Olives are well known as a food, as is their oil. They are eaten for breakfast (in parts of the world where they are cultivated) and their oil is consumed raw or used for cooking.

﴿and palm-trees﴾ Dates are eaten ripe and unripe, moist and dried, fresh and cooked, and juice and vinegar can be made from them.

﴿And garden-closes of thick foliage﴾ That is, orchards, according to Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri, while Qatâdah said it means orchards of lofty date-palms with thick branches. Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) and Mujâhid said it includes all kinds of trees that grow closely together in tangled masses. He also said that ﴿thick foliage﴾ means those trees that give abundant shade.

﴿And fruits and grasses﴾ As for ﴿fruits﴾, it includes every kind of fruit produced by trees, bushes, and all sorts of plants. Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said it means everything that is eaten fresh and ripe, while ﴿grasses﴾ (*abb* in Arabic) means everything that is eaten by grazing animals and that humans do not eat. In another narration, he said it is hay or grass that is eaten by animals. Mujâhid, Sa'eed ibn Jubayr and Abu Mâlik said that ﴿abb﴾ means pasture. It is also narrated from Mujâhid, Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri, Qatâdah and Ibn Zayd that ﴿abb﴾ is to animals what fruit is to the children of Adam. 'Aṭâ' said that every kind of plant on the face of the earth is *abb*. Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk said that it is everything produced by the earth except fruit. Ibn Idrees⁷ said, on the

⁷ Ibn Idrees: Abu 'Abdullâh Muhammad ibn Idrees ash-Shâfi'ee was born in the year 150 H. in Gaza, Palestine. He travelled to Makkah and to Egypt where he died in the year 204 H. He was a great scholar of fiqh, Hadith, Arabic and all branches of Islamic science and was described as the *Mujaddid* (renewer/revivalist) of his time. He was the first scholar to pen the rules of=

authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), that the *abb* is the produce of the earth that is eaten by grazing animals and not eaten by human beings. Ibn Jareer narrated the same thing by three different routes from Ash-Shâfi'ee.

﴿Provision for you and your cattle﴾ That is, as a means of sustenance for you and for your grazing animals in this life, until the Day of Resurrection.

﴿إِذَا جَاءَتِ الصَّاعَةُ﴾ ٣٣ ﴿يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ﴾ ٣٤ ﴿وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبِيهِ﴾ ٣٥ ﴿وَصَاحِبِهِ وَبَنِيهِ﴾ ٣٦ ﴿لِكُلِّ أَمْرٍ مِنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ﴾ ٣٧ ﴿وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُسْفِرَةٌ﴾ ٣٨ ﴿صَاحِكَةٌ مُسْتَبْشِرَةٌ﴾ ٣٩ ﴿وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَلَيْهَا غَبَرَةٌ﴾ ٤٠ ﴿تَرْهَقُهَا قَتَرَةٌ﴾ ٤١ ﴿أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكٰفِرَةُ الْفَجْرَةُ﴾ ٤٢ ﴿

(سورة عَبَسَ : ٣٣-٤٢)

33. But when the Shout comes
34. On the day when a man flees from his brother
35. And his mother and his father
36. And his wife and his children,
37. Every person that day will have concern enough to make him heedless [of others].
38. On that day faces will be bright as dawn,
39. Laughing, rejoicing at good news;
40. And other faces, on that day, with dust upon them,
41. Veiled in darkness,
42. Those are the disbelievers, the wicked.

=*Uşool al-Fiqh* (the principles of fiqh, or Islamic jurisprudence). He was the founder of the Shâfi'ee school of fiqh.

﴿But when the Shout comes﴾ Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said that ﴿the Shout — *aṣ-Ṣâkhhah* — in Arabic﴾ is one of the names of the Day of Resurrection. Allah exalts it and warns His slaves of it. Ibn Jareer says it is likely that it is a name for the blowing of the trumpet, according to Al-Baghawi, because it will almost deafen the people who hear it.⁸

﴿On the day when a man flees from his brother, and his mother and his father, and his wife and his children﴾ That is, he will see them but he will flee from them because his terror will be so great — a matter of enormous concern. It is narrated in an authentic hadith that when it is asked of the prophets to intercede with Allah on behalf of the believers, they will say: “Myself! Myself! I will not ask You today except (for) myself.” Even Jesus the son of Mary will say: “I will not ask Him today except (for) myself, not even for Mary who bore me.” (Narrated by Bukhari) This is why Allah says: ﴿On the day when a man flees from his brother﴾.

﴿Every person that day will have concern enough to make him heedless [of others]﴾ That is, he or she will be engrossed in his or her own concern to the exclusion of all others. On the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), it is narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «“You will be gathered barefoot, naked and uncircumcised.” His wife asked, “O Messenger of Allah! Will we see, or will some of us see the nakedness of others?” In reply, he recited: “﴿Every person that day will have concern enough to make him heedless [of others]﴾.”» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim)

﴿On that day faces will be bright as dawn, laughing, rejoicing at good news﴾ That is, people on that day will be divided into two groups. The first are those with bright, smiling faces who will be

⁸ *Aṣ-Ṣâkhhah* is the feminine continuous form of the verb *ṣakhhah* — to deafen.

gloriously happy because of the joy in their hearts. The glad tidings will be evident on their faces, and they are the people of Paradise.

﴿And other faces, on that day, with dust upon them, veiled in darkness﴾ That is, they are overwhelmed, their faces enveloped by blackness. Ibn Abi Hâtim narrates, on the authority of Ja'far ibn Muhammad (رضي الله عنه),⁹ from his father, from his grandfather that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“Sweat will cover the faces of the disbelievers like a bridle, then dust will fall upon them.” Then he said: “This is the word of Allah: ﴿And other faces, on that day, with dust upon them﴾.”»

﴿Veiled in darkness﴾ That is, according to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), their faces will be blackened.

﴿Those are the disbelievers, the wicked﴾ They have disbelief in their hearts and their deeds are evil, as Allah says:

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

(سورة توح: ٢٧)

﴿If you should leave them, they will mislead your slaves and will beget none but save lewd ingrates.﴾ (Qur'an 71: 27)

This is the end of the tafseer of Soorat 'Abasa.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

⁹ Ja'far ibn Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib was the great-grandson of 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib (who was the cousin of the Prophet and the fourth caliph to rule after the demise of the Prophet). Ja'far was a great scholar of fiqh and an Imam. He died in the year 48 H.

Soorat at-Takweer (81)

The Folding Up

سُورَةُ التَّكْوِيْرِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ﴿١﴾ وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انْكَدَرَتْ ﴿٢﴾ وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ ﴿٣﴾ وَإِذَا الْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ ﴿٤﴾ وَإِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ ﴿٥﴾ وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ ﴿٦﴾ وَإِذَا النُّفُوسُ زُوِّجَتْ ﴿٧﴾ وَإِذَا الْمَوْءِدَةُ سِيلَتْ ﴿٨﴾ بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُنِلَتْ ﴿٩﴾ وَإِذَا الصُّحُفُ نُشِرَتْ ﴿١٠﴾ وَإِذَا السَّمَاءُ كُشِطَتْ ﴿١١﴾ وَإِذَا الْجَحِيمُ سُعِّرَتْ ﴿١٢﴾ وَإِذَا الْجَنَّةُ أُزْلِفَتْ ﴿١٣﴾ عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا أَحْضَرَتْ ﴿١٤﴾﴾

(سورة التكوير: ١-١٤)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. When the sun is overthrown,
2. And when the stars fall,
3. And when the hills are moved,
4. And when the camels big with young are abandoned,
5. And when the wild beasts are herded together,
6. And when the seas rise,

7. And when the souls are reunited,
8. And when the girl-child that was buried alive is asked:
9. For what sin she was slain,
10. And when the pages are laid open,
11. And when the sky is torn away,
12. And when Hell is lighted,
13. And when the Garden is brought near,
14. [Then] every soul will know what it has made ready.


'Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah¹ said that the Arabic word *kuwwirat* ﴿When the sun is overthrown﴾ means when the sun becomes dark. Al-'Awfi said it means when the sun goes away. Mujâhid said it means when the sun melts away and disappears, and Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk agreed with this. Qatâdah said: when its light goes. Sa'eed ibn Jubayr said: when the sun collapses. Ar-Rabee' ibn Khuthaym² said it means when the sun is thrown away. Abu Şâliḥ said: when the sun is thrown. It is also narrated from Abu Şâliḥ that he said: when the sun is inverted. Zayd ibn Aslam³ said: when it crashes to earth. Ibn Jareer said that the correct interpretation is: when the sun is folded up, like the folding of one's headdress and the folding of one's clothing. So when the sun is folded up, then it will be thrown, and when that happens, its light will cease to shine. It is narrated from Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «The sun and the moon will be folded up on the Day of Resurrection.» (Narrated by Bukhari)

¹ 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah was a *tâbi'ee* who died in the year 43 H. Muslim, Abu Dawood and Nasâ'i used to report his hadiths.

² Ar-Rabee' ibn Khuthaym ibn 'Â'idh ibn 'Abdullâh ath-Thawri was a *tâbi'ee*. He was a very pious man and a scholar. Ibn Mas'ood is reported to have told him: "If the Messenger of Allah had met you, he would have loved you." He died around 61-63 H. Bukhari and Muslim have narrated from him.

³ Zayd ibn Aslam al-'Adawi was a *tâbi'ee* from Madinah. He was a famous scholar of fiqh and tafseer. He heard narrations from 'Â'ishah and Anas among others. He died in the year 136 H.

﴿And when the stars fall﴾ That is, they are scattered about, as in the words of Allah (ﷻ):

(سورة الانفطار: ٢)  وَإِذَا الْكَوَاكِبُ اُنْتَرَتْ ﴿٢﴾
 ﴿When the planets are dispersed.﴾ (Qur'an 82: 2)

﴿And when the hills are moved﴾ That is, they will vanish from their places, scattered, levelled and laid waste.

﴿And when the camels big with young are abandoned﴾ 'Ikrimah and Mujâhid said: "It is the young, pregnant, female camel." 'Ikrimah said that the Arabic word *'uṭṭillat* indeed means abandoned. Ubayy ibn Ka'b⁴ and Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk said it means that their owners will neglect them. Ar-Rabee' ibn Khuthaym said they are not milked or tied up, as their owners have abandoned them. Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk said they are left without a herdsman. All these meanings are similar to each other. What is meant are the young she-camels, the choicest ones, in the tenth month of their pregnancy. Such is the terror of the Day of Resurrection that will descend upon them that those things which were formerly so important to them will be abandoned by them and they will cease to profit from them.

﴿And when the wild beasts are herded together﴾ That is, when they are gathered, as in the words of Him, the Exalted,

﴿وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ مَا فَرَطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ﴾
 (سورة الأنعام: ٣٨)

⁴ Ubayy ibn Ka'b Qays ibn 'Ubayd: Known as Abul Munzir, he was a Jewish rabbi before embracing Islam. He was a literate man who became one of the scribes of the Prophet. He fought in the battles of Badr and Uḥud, and was said to have accompanied 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb when he took al-Quds (Jerusalem). Various dates are given for his demise ranging from 19-32 H.

﴿There is not an animal in earth, nor a flying creature flying on two wings, that does not form communities like you do. We have neglected nothing in the Book [of Our decrees]. Then unto their Lord they will be gathered.﴾
(Qur'an 6: 38)

Ibn Abi Hâtim reports that Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said it means every creature will be gathered, even the flies. Ar-Rabee' ibn Khuthaym, As-Suddi and others agreed with this interpretation. Qatâdah also said this in his tafseer of this verse: "Verily, all these creatures will come forward and Allah will do with them what He wills." 'Ikrimah said that their gathering means their death. Ibn Jareer also narrates this on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), adding that the gathering of all living things means their death, except humankind and the jinn, for they will remain to be judged on the Day of Resurrection.

﴿And when the seas rise﴾ Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) and others said that Allah will send a wind upon the seas that will kindle a raging fire. Mujâhid said that the verse means: "When the seas are kindled into flame." Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and Qatâdah said it means the waters of the sea will ebb away until not a drop remains. Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk also said that they will overflow and pour forth. As-Suddi said they will open and pour forth. Ar-Rabee' ibn Khuthaym said it means the seas will inundate the land.

﴿And when souls are reunited﴾ That is, when every type of person is joined with their like, as in the words of Allah (ﷻ):

﴿أَحْشُرُوا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا وَأَزْوَاجَهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ﴾ (سورة الصافات: ٢٢)

﴿[And it is said to the angels], 'Assemble those who did wrong, together with their spouses and what they used to worship.'﴾

(Qur'an 37: 22)

It is narrated on the authority of An-Nu'mân ibn Basheer⁵ that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «﴿And when souls are reunited﴾ Those who are alike. Every man will be joined with the kind of people whom he resembles in deeds.» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim)

This is because Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَكُنْتُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ثَلَاثَةً ۖ فَأَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ ۗ وَأَصْحَابُ
الْمَشْأَمَةِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ ۗ وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ ۗ﴾ (سورة الواقعة: ٧-١٠)

﴿And you will be three kinds: [First] those on the right hand; what of those on the right hand? And [then] those on the left hand; what of those on the left hand? And the foremost in the race [in faith, piety and good deeds], the foremost in the race [in Paradise].﴾

(Qur'an 56: 7-10)

Then he said: "These are those who resemble each other."

Ibn Abi Hâtim also narrated from 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (رضي الله عنه) that he addressed the people during the Friday prayer and recited: ﴿And when souls are reunited﴾ That means that every party will be joined with their like." It was also said that the dwellers of Paradise will be with their like, as will the inhabitants of Hell. Other sayings include one attributed to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), which states: "A river will flow from beneath the Throne during the time between the two shouts, the time of which will be equivalent to forty years, and every member of creation, be it human, bird or beast, will be brought forth... then the souls will reunited with their bodies."

⁵ An-Nu'mân ibn Basheer ibn Sa'd ibn Tha'labah al-Anṣârî al-Khazraji was a Companion who eventually moved to Syria and later was appointed ruler of Kufa, in present-day Iraq. He was murdered in Homs, Syria in the year 65 H at the age of 64 years.

It was also said that it means that the true believers will be joined with the beautiful maidens of Paradise who have lovely eyes, and the disbelievers will be joined with devils. It is narrated from Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri that he said they will be joined to each other physically. According to Ibn Jareer at-Ṭabari, Ar-Rabee‘ ibn Khuthaym, Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri and Qatâdah, it refers to the time when the people will be united with their like, and this is the correct interpretation.

﴿And when the girl-child that was buried alive is asked for what sin she was slain﴾ This refers to the practice of the pagan Arabs of burying their daughters alive, because it was considered detestable to have daughters. On the Day of Resurrection, these female infants will be asked for what sin they were murdered, as a warning to the murderers: for when the victim is asked, what will the murderer say in defense?

‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah said that Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said the verse should be read as: “When she who was buried alive asks for what sin she was killed.”⁶ Abu aḍ-Ḍuhâ⁷ gave the same interpretation, saying that she will ask, demanding retribution for her blood. As-Suddi and Qatâdah agreed with this. Imam Aḥmad reports, on the authority of Jadâmah bint Wahb⁸ that she came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) with some people and he was saying: “I had intended to prohibit sexual intercourse during breast feeding but I considered the Romans and the Persians and saw that they had intercourse while breast

⁶ It should be noted here that, according to Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalâni, ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah did not meet Ibn ‘Abbâs, therefore any narrations on his authority must be considered *mursal*, and cannot be cited as a proof.

⁷ Abu aḍ-Ḍuhâ was Muslim ibn Ṣubayh al-Koofi. He was a great scholar of Hadith. He died in the year 100 H.

⁸ Judâmah bint Wahb al-Asadiyah was a Companion; she was the sister of ‘Ukâshah ibn Miḥsan.

feeding without any injury being caused to them thereby.” Then they asked him about coitus interruptus and he replied, “That is the secret burying alive.”» (Narrated by Muslim) According to Aḥmad, it is the child who would have been conceived but for this practice who will be asked. Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) was reported to have said: “The children of the polytheists are in Paradise and whoever claims that they are in the Hellfire has lied — Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿And when the girl-child that was buried alive is asked for what sin she was slain﴾.

﴿And when the pages are laid open﴾ Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk said that every person will be given his book in his right or his left hand. Qatâdah said: “O son of Adam! First it is written, then it is folded up, then it is unfolded for you; then let each man see what was written for him in his book.”

﴿And when the sky is torn away﴾ Mujâhid said this means when the heaven is drawn aside (like a curtain). As-Suddi said it means when the heaven is pulled away. Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk said it means when the heaven is uncovered and departs.

﴿And when the Hell is lighted﴾ As-Suddi said this means when the Hell-fire is heated. Qatâdah said it means when the Hell-fire is kindled, and nothing kindles it but Allah’s anger and the sins of the children of Adam.

﴿And when the Garden is brought near﴾ Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk, Abu Mâlik, Qatâdah and Ar-Rabee‘ ibn Khaytham said it means when Paradise is brought near to the believers.

﴿Each soul shall know what it has put forward﴾ This is what will happen when all of the events mentioned in the previous verses have occurred. At that moment, every soul shall know its deeds, as its record of deeds will be shown to it, as in Allah’s words:

﴿يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ حَيْرٍ مُّحْضَرًا وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ

﴿أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا وَيَحْرُرَكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ﴾ (٣٠)

(سورة آل عمران: ٣٠)

﴿On the Day when every soul will be confronted with all that it has done of good and all that it has done of evil [every soul] will long that there might be a mighty space of distance between it and that [evil]. Allah bids you beware of Him. And Allah is full of pity for [His] bondmen.﴾
(*Qur'an* 3: 30)

And His words:

﴿يُنَبِّئُوا الْإِنْسَانَ بِمَا قَدَّمَ وَأَخَّرَ﴾ (١٣)

(سورة القيامة: ١٣)

﴿On that day people are told the tale of that which they have sent before and left behind.﴾
(*Qur'an* 75: 13)

Ibn Abi Hâtim relates, on the authority of Zayd ibn Aslam, from his father that he said: “When this *soorah* was revealed: ﴿When the sun is overthrown﴾, ‘Umar said, “﴿Each soul shall know what it has put forward﴾.”

﴿فَلَا أُقِيمُ بِالْحَنَسِ﴾ (١٥) ﴿الْجَوَارِ الْكُنَّسِ﴾ (١٦) ﴿وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا عَسْعَسَ﴾ (١٧) ﴿وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا نَفَسَ﴾ (١٨) ﴿إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ﴾ (١٩) ﴿ذِي قُوَّةٍ عِنْدَ ذِي الْعَرْشِ مَكِينٍ﴾ (٢٠) ﴿مُطَاعٍ ثَمَّ أَمِينٍ﴾ (٢١) ﴿وَمَا صَاحِبُكُمْ بِمَجْنُونٍ﴾ (٢٢) ﴿وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ بِالْأَفْقِ الْمُبِينِ﴾ (٢٣) ﴿وَمَا هُوَ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ بِضَنِينٍ﴾ (٢٤) ﴿وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَيْطَانٍ رَجِيمٍ﴾ (٢٥) ﴿فَأَن تَذَهَبُونَ﴾ (٢٦) ﴿إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ﴾ (٢٧) ﴿لِمَن شَاءَ مِنْكُمْ أَن يَسْتَقِيمَ﴾ (٢٨) ﴿وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَن يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ (٢٩)

(سورة التكاوير: ١٥-٢٩)

15. Oh, but I call to witness the planets,

16. The stars which rise and set,

17. And the close of night,
18. And the breath of morning,
19. That this is in truth the word of an honoured messenger.
20. Mighty, established in the presence of the Lord of the Throne.
21. [One] to be obeyed, and trustworthy;
22. And your comrade is not mad.
23. Surely he beheld Him on the clear horizon.
24. And he is not avid of the Unseen.
25. Nor is this the utterance of a devil worthy to be stoned.
26. Where then do you go?
27. This is naught else than a reminder unto creation,
28. Unto whomsoever of you will to walk straight.
29. And you will not, unless [it be] that Allah wills, the Lord of Creation.

It is narrated on the authority of 'Amr ibn Hāreeth (رضي الله عنه) that he said: «I prayed *fajr*⁹ prayer with the Prophet (ﷺ) and I heard him recite, ﴿So verily, I swear by the receding heavenly bodies, and those that move swiftly and hide, and the close of night, and by the breath of morning﴾.» (Narrated by Muslim and Nasā'i) It is also narrated on the authority of 'Ali: «﴿So verily, I swear by the receding heavenly bodies﴾, they are the stars, which recede with the approach of daybreak and return with the approach of night.» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hātim) Ibn Jareer reports, on the authority of Ibn 'Ar'arah that he said: "I heard 'Ali being asked about the verses, ﴿So verily, I swear by the receding heavenly bodies, and those that move swiftly and hide﴾. He said, 'They are the stars.'"¹⁰ That these verses refer to the

⁹ *fajr*: dawn; the obligatory prayer at that time

¹⁰ This *chain* is good and authentic up to Khālid ibn 'Ar'arah — He is As-Sahmi al-Koofi. Abu Hātim ar-Rāzi says that a number of scholars narrated from him on the authority of 'Ali and they make no criticism of him, and Allah knows best.

stars was also narrated from Ibn ‘Abbâs (ﷺ), Mujâhid, Al-Ḥasan, Qatâdah, As-Suddi and others. Ibn Jareer narrated, on the authority of Bakr ibn ‘Abdullâh, concerning the words of Allah: ﴿So verily, I swear by the receding heavenly bodies, that move swiftly and hide﴾, that he said: “They are the shining stars that move (in their courses), meeting the east.”

Some scholars said that the stars were referred to as *al-khunnas* (as in verse 15) only at the time of their appearance, and that they are referred to as *al-jawâr* (as in verse 16) when they move, and as *al-kunnas* (also in verse 16) when they disappear. Al-A‘mash said that verse 15 refers to antelope and Ath-Thawri agreed with this. Abu Dawood at-Tayâlisi¹¹ said, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (ﷺ), that it refers to the antelope when they seek shade, and Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr said likewise. ‘Awfi said, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (ﷺ), that it refers to the gazelles, and Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr, Mujâhid and Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk mentioned the same thing. Abu ash-Sh’athâ‘ Jâbir ibn Zayd¹² said it refers to the gazelles and the antelope.

Ibn Jareer says that Ibrâheem said to Mujâhid: “Tell me what you know about it.” Mujâhid said, “We used to hear something about it, but the people said it refers to the stars.” Ibrâheem said, “Tell me what you heard.” Mujâhid said, “We used to say that it refers to the antelope when they retire to their sleeping place.” Ibrâheem said, “They are lying about ‘Ali (attributing this saying to him).” Ibn Jareer did not, however, mention whether his preferred explanation

¹¹ Sulaymân ibn Dawood ibn al-Jârood Abu Dawood at-Tayâlisi al-Baṣri was described as reliable by Ibn Ḥajar, although he sometimes made mistakes in reporting hadiths. Bukhari, Tirmidhi and Muslim all reported from him. He died in the year 204 H.

¹² Jâbir ibn Zayd Abu ash-Sh’athâ‘ al-Azadi. According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a scholar of jurisprudence and a reliable reporter of hadiths. He died either in 93 or 103 H.

was the stars or the gazelles and antelope. He said it could be that both meanings are intended.

﴿And the close of night﴾ There are two sayings regarding this verse; the first that it means the approach of night with its accompanying darkness. Mujâhid said it refers to the night when it darkens. Sa'eed ibn Jubayr said it was when it appears. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri said when it envelops the people, as did 'Ātiyah and Al-'Awfi. 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah and Al-'Awfi said, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), when it slips away; this is the second saying. Mujâhid concurred with this as did Qatâdah, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk, Zayd ibn Aslam and his son, 'Abdur-Raḥmân. This was the choice of Ibn Jareer, and he said: “﴿And the breath of morning﴾, that is, when it sheds its light.” To me, the meaning of His words: ﴿and the close of night﴾ refers to when it approaches. Even though its usage to mean go away is correct, the former is more suitable, as if Allah swears by the night and its darkness as it approaches and by the dawn and its light when it appears, like His words:

(سورة الليل: ٢-١) ﴿وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَىٰ وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّىٰ﴾

﴿By the night enshrouding and the day resplendent.﴾ (Qur'an 92: 1-2)
And:

(سورة الضحى: ١-٢) ﴿وَالضُّحَىٰ وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَىٰ﴾

﴿By the morning hours and by the night when it is stillest.﴾
(Qur'an 93: 1-2)

Also:

(سورة الأنعام: ٩٦) ﴿فَالِقُ الْإِصْبَاحِ وَجَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ سَكَنًا ...﴾

﴿He is the Cleaver of the Daybreak, and He has appointed the night for stillness [resting]...﴾
(Qur'an 6: 96)

— and other verses. A great number of scholars have said that both meanings are possible, and Allah knows best.

﴿And the breath of morning﴾ Ad-Dahhâk said as the morning rises. Qatâdah said, as it approaches, illuminating. Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr said as it rises, and this is what is related from ‘Ali. Ibn Jareer said it means the light of day as it approaches and becomes apparent.

﴿That this is in truth the word of an honoured messenger﴾ It means, verily, this Qur’an is communicated by an honourable messenger, Jibreel (ﷺ); this was said by Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), Ash-Sha‘abi, Maymoon ibn Mihrân¹³, Al-Ḥasan, Qatâdah, Ar-Rabee‘ ibn Anas, Ad-Dahhâk and others.

﴿Mighty, established﴾ This is like His words:

(سورة التَّجْمِ : 5-6) ﴿عَلَّمَهُ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَىٰ ذُو مِرَّةٍ فَاسْتَوَىٰ﴾

﴿Which one of mighty powers has taught him, one vigorous; and he grew clear to view.﴾ (Qur’an 53: 5-6)

— that is, a strong character, strong in power and action.

﴿In the presence of the Lord of the Throne﴾ That is, Jibreel enters through seventy veils of light without having to ask permission.

﴿[One] to be obeyed, and trustworthy﴾ That is, he is held in high esteem and his words are listened to and he is obeyed by the angels. Qatâdah said, ﴿[One] to be obeyed﴾ that is, in the heavens. There is no dispute with him from the angels; indeed he is a noble and caring head of the angels, chosen by Allah for this great

¹³ Maymoon ibn Mihrân al-Jazari Abu Ayyoob al-Koofi was described by Ibn Ḥajar as a reliable narrator of hadiths and a scholar of jurisprudence. He held office as a governor under ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul-‘Azeez. Some of his hadiths have been designated as *mursal*.

messengership. ﴿And trustworthy﴾ An attribute of Jibreel is his trustworthiness. It is a great thing that the Lord, the Almighty, the All-Powerful bears witness to the trustworthiness of His angelic slave and messenger, as He bears witness to His human messenger, Muhammad (ﷺ) in His words: ﴿And your comrade is not mad﴾.

﴿Surely he beheld Him on the clear horizon﴾ That is, indeed Muhammad (ﷺ) saw Jibreel (ﷺ) who comes to him with the message from Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful in the form in which Allah created him — with six hundred wings. ﴿On the clear horizon﴾ that is, he beheld him clearly; it was the first time that the Prophet (ﷺ) saw him and it was in the valley of Al-Bathâ'. This incident was mentioned in the words of Allah:

﴿ذُو مِرَّةٍ فَاسْتَوَىٰ ۖ وَهُوَ بِالْأُفُقِ الْأَعْلَىٰ ۚ ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّىٰ ۖ فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ ۖ فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ مَا أَوْحَىٰ﴾
(سورة التجم: ٦-١٠)

﴿Which one of mighty in powers has taught him, one vigorous; and he grew clear to view when he was on the uppermost horizon. Then he drew near and came down till he was [distant] two bows' length or even nearer, and He revealed unto His slave that which He revealed.﴾

(Qur'an 53: 5-10)

It seems clear that this *soorah* was revealed before the Night of Ascension and Allah knows best, because there is no mention in it of any other vision, so this was the first. As for the second vision, it was mentioned in Allah's words:

﴿وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ ۖ عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ ۖ عِنْدَهَا جَنَّةُ الْمَأْوَىٰ ۖ إِذْ يَغْشَى السِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَىٰ﴾
(سورة التجم: ١٣-١٦)

﴿And verily he saw him yet another time by the lote-tree of the utmost boundary, near unto which is the Garden of Abode. When that which shrouds did enshroud the lote-tree.﴾ (Qur'an 53: 13-16)

— and this was revealed in *Soorat an-Najm* which was revealed after *Soorat al-Isrâ’*.

﴿And he is not avid of the Unseen﴾ That is, Muhammad (Blessings and peace be upon him) is never suspected of withholding any part of the revelation given to him from Allah. Some scholars read the word *dhaneen* (ظنين) — which means untrustworthy — as *ḍaneen* (ضنين) which means stingy;¹⁴ on the contrary, he (ﷺ) is the most generous of men towards all. Sufiyân ibn ‘Uyainah¹⁵ said, *Dhaneen* and *ḍaneen* are the same; that is, he is not a liar nor is he profligate. The *dhaneen* is suspected of dishonesty and the *ḍaneen* is a miser.” Qatâdah said that the Qur’an was unseen, then Allah revealed it to Muhammad (ﷺ) and he did not hold back anything of it from people. I say that both of these are well-reported and both of them are correct.

﴿Nor is this the utterance of a devil worthy to be stoned﴾ That is, this Qur’an is not the word of a cursed devil. This devil, cannot touch it, does not want to, nor is it fitting for him to do so; as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَمَا نَزَّلَتْ بِهِ الشَّيَاطِينُ ﴿٢١٠﴾ وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُمْ وَمَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ﴿٢١١﴾ إِنَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّمْعِ لَمَعْرُولُونَ ﴿٢١٢﴾﴾

(سورة الشعراء: ٢١٠-٢١٢)

﴿The devils did not bring it down. It is not meet for them, nor is it in

¹⁴ This shows that the most correct reading in Ibn Katheer’s opinion was *dhaneen* (ظنين) rather than *ḍaneen* (ضنين), although most copies of the Qur’an show the latter reading.

¹⁵ Sufiyân ibn ‘Uyainah ibn Abi ‘Imrân was described by Ibn Ḥajar as a reliable narrator of hadiths and a scholar of jurisprudence. He may have committed *tadlees* but from reliable narrators. He died at the age of 90 in the year 98 H.

their power. Lo! verily they are banished from the hearing.﴾

(*Qur'an* 26: 210-212)

﴿Where then do you go?﴾ That is, 'Where do your sense and your understanding go such that you reject this Qur'an, even though it is clear and evident that it is a revelation and the truth from Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful?' As in the case when a delegation from Bani Haneefah came as Muslims. Aş-Şiddeeq¹⁶ ordered them to recite something from the Noble Qur'an and they recited to him from the 'Qur'an' of Musaylamah the Liar¹⁷ which is the most irrational nonsense. He said: "Woe to you! Where have your senses gone? By Allah! Assuredly this talk did not come from a deity!" Qatâdah said: "﴿Where then do you go?﴾ that is, away from the book of Allah and obedience to Him."

﴿This is naught else than a reminder unto creation﴾ That is, this Qur'an is a reminder for all humankind and they remember (Him) by it and take heed of its warnings.

﴿Unto whomsoever of you will to walk straight﴾ That is, whoever wishes to be guided, then let him follow this Qur'an, for in it lies salvation and guidance and there is no guidance other than it.

﴿And you will not, except as Allah wills, the Lord of the worlds﴾ It is not by your will, so whoever wishes, will be guided and whoever wishes, will go astray. Indeed all of this is dependent on the will of Allah, the Exalted, the Lord of the worlds. Sufiyân ath-Thawri said: "When this verse was revealed: ﴿Unto whomsoever of you will to walk straight﴾, Abu Jahl said, 'The matter is left to us, if we wish,

¹⁶ Abu Bakr aş-Şiddeeq (may Allah be pleased with him): the friend and Companion of the Prophet (bpuh).

¹⁷ Musaylamah was an arch liar who was a contemporary of the Prophet. His 'Qur'an' was, in the main, unintelligible gibberish. He was branded Musaylamah the Liar by the Prophet (bpuh).

we shall walk straight and if we wish, we shall not.’ So Allah revealed this verse: ﴿and you will not, except as Allah wills, the Lord of the worlds﴾.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat at-Takweer*.

All praise is due to Allah, and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-Infitâr (82)

The Cleaving

سُورَةُ الْإِنْفِطَارِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿١﴾ إِذَا السَّمَاءُ أَنْفَطَرَتْ ﴿١﴾ وَإِذَا الْكَوَاكِبُ انْتَرَتْ ﴿٢﴾ وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ فُجِرَتْ ﴿٣﴾
وَإِذَا الْقُبُورُ بُعْثِرَتْ ﴿٤﴾ عَلِمْتَ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ وَأَخَّرَتْ ﴿٥﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّكَ
رَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ ﴿٦﴾ الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّاكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ﴿٧﴾ فِي أَيِّ صُورَةٍ مَّا شَاءَ
رَبُّكَ ﴿٨﴾ كَلَّا بَلْ تُكْذِبُونَ بِالَّذِينَ ﴿٩﴾ وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَافِظِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ كِرَامًا كَنِينِينَ
﴿١١﴾ يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

(سورة الانفطار: ١-١٢)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. When the heaven is cleft asunder,
2. When the planets are dispersed,
3. When the seas are poured forth,
4. And the graves are overturned,
5. A soul will know what it has sent before [it] and what it left behind.
6. O human! What has made you careless concerning your Lord, the Bountiful,

7. Who created you, then fashioned, then proportioned you?
8. Into whatsoever form He will, He casts you.
9. No! But you deny the Judgement.
10. Certainly, there are above you guardians,
11. Generous and recording,
12. Who know [all] that you do.

﴿When the heaven is cleft asunder﴾ That is, it is split apart, like His words:

(سورة المزلزل: ١٨) ﴿السَّمَاءُ مُنْفِطِرَةٌ بِدَاءِ ...﴾
 ﴿The very heaven being then rent asunder...﴾ (*Qur'an* 73: 18)

﴿When the planets are dispersed﴾ That is, the stars and planets will have fallen.

﴿And when the seas have burst forth﴾ ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah said, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه),¹ that it means Allah will pour some of the seas into others. Al-Ḥasan said Allah will pour some of them into others and their water will depart. Qatâdah said the fresh water will mix with the salt water. Al-Kalbi said it means when the seas are filled.

﴿And when the graves are overturned﴾ Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said it means when the graves are investigated. As-Suddi said it means when they are shaken and empty out their contents.

﴿A soul will know what it has sent before [it] and what it left behind﴾ That is, when the heaven is torn apart, when the stars have scattered, when the seas have burst forth and when the graves are emptied, then every person will know which of their deeds have been accepted by Allah, and which rejected.

¹ It should be noted here that, according to Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalâni, ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah did not meet Ibn ‘Abbâs, therefore any narrations on his authority must be considered *mursal*, and cannot be cited as a proof.

﴿O human! What has made you careless concerning your Lord, the Bountiful﴾ This is a warning, not, as some people imagine, that Allah's generosity has beguiled them; but Allah is asking people, 'What has beguiled you from your Lord, the Most Generous, the Most Exalted, O children of Adam, that you commit acts of disobedience and you meet Him with that which is not befitting?' (It is not befitting for a person to present his sins to Allah, of course.) This concurs with what is mentioned in the hadith: «"Allah, the Exalted will say, on the Day of Resurrection, 'O children of Adam! What has beguiled you from Me? O children of Adam, what did you reply to the messengers?' "» It is narrated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaţţâb (ؓ) heard a man reciting: "﴿O human! What has made you careless concerning your Lord, the Bountiful﴾. 'Umar replied, 'Ignorance.' " (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim) The same incident is narrated from Ibn 'Umar (ؓ) and also from Ibn 'Abbâs (ؓ), Ar-Rabee' ibn Khaytham and Al-Ḥasan. Qatâdah said: "... nothing has beguiled man except this enemy, Satan." Al-Baghawi relates that Al-Kalbi and Muqâtil said that this verse was revealed concerning Al-Aswad ibn Shareeq who struck the Prophet (ﷺ) and who was not punished at the time, so Allah revealed: ﴿O human! What has made you careless concerning your Lord, the Bountiful﴾.

﴿Who created you, then fashioned, then proportioned you?﴾ That is, what has beguiled you from your Lord, the Most Generous, Who created you, fashioned you perfectly and gave you due proportion? That is, He made you straight, of even, upright stature, in the best form and the best shape.

﴿Into whatsoever form He will, He casts you﴾ Mujâhid said this means in whatever likeness, whether of one's father or mother, maternal uncle or paternal uncle. It is narrated by Bukhari and Muslim, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (ؓ) that a man came to the Messenger of Allah (Blessings and peace be upon him) and said:

«“O Messenger of Allah! My wife has given birth to a black (dark-complexioned) boy.” He (ﷺ) asked, “Do you have any camels?” The man replied, “Yes.” He (ﷺ) asked, “And what colour are they?” He replied, “Red.” The Prophet (ﷺ) asked, “And is there a grey one among them?” He answered, “Yes.” “Then from where did it come?” asked the Prophet (ﷺ). “Probably they inherited it from previous generations,” said the man. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “And likewise this (child) probably inherited his dark complexion.”»

‘Ikrimah said, concerning the words of Him, the Exalted: ﴿Into whatsoever form He will, He casts you﴾ means that if He wills, he can shape you in the form of a monkey, and if He wills, in the shape of a pig. Abu Şâlih said likewise that ﴿Into whatsoever form He will, He casts you﴾ means that if He wills, he can cast you in the shape of a dog, and if He wills, in the shape of a donkey, and if He wills, in the shape of a pig. Qatâdah said regarding ﴿Into whatsoever form He will, He casts you﴾, “By Allah! Our Lord is able to do this.” The meaning of these sayings is that Allah, the Almighty the All-Powerful is able to create that human embryo as an ugly animal, one of the most despised members of creation; but through His ability, His kindness, and His gentleness, He creates us in beautiful form: erect, upright, and a perfectly fine form and shape to behold.

﴿No! But you deny the Judgement﴾ That is, you are induced to meet your Lord and face Him in a state of disobedience, with disbelief in your hearts about the reckoning, the recompense and the accounting.

﴿Certainly, there are above you guardians, generous and recording, who know [all] that you do﴾ That is, verily, over you are indeed angels, honourable recorders. So do not meet them with wicked deeds, because they will write down all of your actions, which may then be used against you. Ibn Abi Hâtim said, on the authority of Mujâhid, «“Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said, ‘Treat the

recording angels with honour and respect: they do not leave you except on two occasions: when you answer the call of nature and when you are in a state of *janâbah*.² So when any of you performs *ghusl*,³ let it be in the cover of a wall or his riding beast or let his brother shield him.' » Something similar to this was recorded in a connected form (meaning that it was traced all the way back to the Prophet) on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه).

﴿إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ ﴿١٣﴾ وَإِنَّ الْفُجَّارَ لَفِي جَحِيمٍ ﴿١٤﴾ يَصَلُّونَهَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ﴿١٥﴾ وَمَا هُمْ عَنْهَا بِغَائِبِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ﴿١٧﴾ ثُمَّ مَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ﴿١٨﴾ يَوْمَ لَا تَمَلِكُ نَفْسٌ لِنَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَالْأَمْرُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلَّهِ ﴿١٩﴾﴾

(سورة الانفطار: ١٣-١٩)

13. Certainly, the righteous verily will be in delight.
14. And certainly, the wicked verily will be in Hell.
15. They will burn therein on the Day of Judgement.
16. And will not be absent from it.
17. Ah, what will convey unto you what the Day of Judgement is!
18. Again, what will convey unto you what the Day of Judgement is!
19. A day on which no soul has power at all for any [other] soul. The [absolute] command on that day is Allah's.

² *janâbah*: a state of ritual impurity caused by coitus or nocturnal emission. A Muslim in such a state is not allowed to pray until he/she performs *ghusl* (complete bodily ablution) or *tayammum* (dry ablution), if water is not available.

³ *ghusl*: ritual shower necessary after a major impurity, e.g., after sexual intercourse or at the end of the menstrual period or after post-natal bleeding

Allah informs us about the delights the righteous will encounter, and they are those who are obedient to Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful, and they do not meet Him as sinners. It is narrated on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: «“Allah called them righteous (literally, innocents) because they have declared themselves innocent of the sins of their fathers and sons.” (Narrated by Ibn ‘Asâkir) Then Allah tells us of the burning fire and everlasting punishment which await the wicked. This is why Allah says: ﴿They will burn therein on the Day of Judgement﴾ that is, the day of reckoning, requital and resurrection.

﴿And will not be absent from it﴾ That is, they will not be relieved of their punishment for even an hour, nor will their punishment be lightened, nor will their requests be granted, whether it be for death or relief from the punishment — not even for one day.

﴿Ah, what will convey unto you what the Day of Judgement is!﴾ Allah makes plain for us the greatness of the matter of the Day of Resurrection, then He reinforces it with His words: ﴿Again, what will convey unto you what the Day of Judgement is!﴾, then He explains it with His Words: ﴿A day on which no soul has power at all for any [other] soul. The [absolute] command on that day is Allah’s﴾ That is, no person will be able to benefit another, or save him from the awful situation in which he finds himself, except those whom Allah permits, as He wills and pleases. We may mention here the hadith: «O Bani Hâshim! Save yourselves from the fire! I possess naught (of salvation) for you from Allah.» ﴿The [absolute] command on that day is Allah’s﴾ — is like His words:

(سورة غافر: ١٦)

﴿... لِمَنِ الْمُلْكُ الْيَوْمَ لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ﴾

﴿... Whose is the Sovereignty this day? It is Allah’s, the One, the Almighty.﴾

(Qur’an 40: 16)

And His words:

(سورة الفرقان : ٢٦) ﴿الْمَلِكُ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ لِلرَّحْمَنِ ...﴾

«The Sovereignty on that day will be the True [Sovereignty] belonging to the Beneficent One...» • (Qur'an 25: 26)

And also His words:

(سورة الفاتحة : ٤) ﴿مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ﴾

«Master of the Day of Judgement.» (Qur'an 1: 4).

Qatâdah said: “«The [absolute] command on that day is Allah's» — and the Day — by Allah! — belongs to Allah: none may contend with Him on that Day.”

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Infîâtâr*.

All praise is due to Allah, and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-Mutaffifeen (83)

Those Who Deal in Fraud

سُورَةُ الْمُطَفِّفِينَ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِينَ ﴿١﴾ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَكَالُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَوْ
وَزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ ﴿٣﴾ أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَبْعُوثُونَ ﴿٤﴾ لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٥﴾ يَوْمَ
يَقُومُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٦﴾﴾

(سورة المطففين: ١-٦)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Woe unto the defrauders:
2. Those who when they take the measure from humankind demand it full,
3. But if they measure unto them or weigh for them, they cause them loss.
4. Do such [people] not consider that they will be raised again
5. Unto an awful Day,
6. The day when [all] humankind will stand before the Lord of the Worlds?

﴿Woe unto the defrauders﴾ It is reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), that he said: «“When the Prophet (ﷺ) came to Madinah, they were the most wicked of people regarding weights and measures, and so Allah revealed: ﴿Woe unto the defrauders﴾, after which they corrected their weights and measures.”» (Narrated by Nasâ'i and Ibn Mâjah) *Tatfeef* from which the word *mutaffifeen* (the name of this *soorah*) is derived means here to give incorrect weight or measure; either more, when it is for oneself, or less, when it is for other people. This is why Allah describes *al-mutaffifeen* as those to whom He has promised loss and destruction, which is the meaning of ﴿Woe﴾.

﴿Those who when they take the measure from humankind demand it full﴾ That is, they take their right in full, or even more.

﴿But if they measure unto them or weigh for them, they cause them loss﴾ That is, they decrease it the amount. Allah, the Exalted, has commanded us to give full measure and weight, saying:

﴿وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ إِذَا كِلْتُمْ وَزِنُوا بِالْقِسْطِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا﴾

(سورة الإسراء: ٣٥)



﴿Fill the measure when you measure, and weigh with a right balance; that is proper, and better in the end.﴾ (Qur'an 17: 35)

And:

﴿... وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ بِالْقِسْطِ لَا تُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ...﴾

(سورة الأنعام: ١٥٢)



﴿... Give full measure and full weight, in justice. We do not task any soul beyond its scope...﴾ (Qur'an 6: 152)

Also:

﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ﴾ (سورة الرّحمن: 9)

﴿But observe the measure strictly, do not fall short thereof.﴾

(*Qur'an* 55: 9).

Allah destroyed the people of Prophet Shu‘ayb because of their practice of giving the people short weight and measure.

Then Allah promises them, ﴿Do such [people] not consider that they will be raised again﴾ That is, do they not fear the sending forth from the graves and standing before the One Who knows all their secrets and their innermost thoughts on a day of great terror and fear; a day of momentous concern for those who are the losers and who will be placed in a blazing fire?

﴿The Day when [all] humankind will stand before the Lord of the worlds﴾ That is, they will stand barefoot, naked and uncircumcised. The evil-doers will be in a hard place, hard pressed, and in dire straits. They will be covered by the order of Allah and they will become weakened, shivering. It is related, on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar, that he said: «“The Prophet (ﷺ) said, concerning the words of Allah, ﴿The Day when [all] humankind stand before the Lord of the Worlds?﴾, ‘Until some of them are covered by their sweat even up to the middle of their ears.’» (Narrated by Imam Mâlik)¹

Imam Aḥmad narrates, on the authority of Abu Umâmah (رضي الله عنه), that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“On the Day of Resurrection, the sun will approach to within a mile and its heat will increase more and more. The crowns of their heads will boil like cooking pots and they will be covered in sweat (more or less) according to their sins. Some of them will be in sweat up to their

¹ Bukhari narrated the same hadith with slightly different wording. Muslim also narrated it from two other sources.

ankles, and others up to their calves, while others will be covered up to their middles and still others will wear bridles of sweat (it will come up to their faces).” (Narrated by Imam Aḥmad)

According to Imam Muslim, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), it is a day that will last the equivalent of fifty thousand earthly years. Ibn Abi Ḥâtim relates, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), that, «The Prophet (ﷺ) said to Basheer al-Ghifâri: “What will you do on the day when people will stand for the equivalent of three hundred earthly years for the Lord of the worlds, during which no word comes to them from heaven nor is any of them commanded to do anything?” Basheer said, “Allah is the One from Whom we seek help.” He (ﷺ) said, “When you go to bed, seek Allah’s protection from the trial of the Day of Resurrection and the evil of the reckoning.” This was also narrated by Ibn Jareer.

Abu Dawood narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to seek Allah’s protection from the severe difficulties of the Day of Resurrection. Ibn Mas‘ood (رضي الله عنه) relates that both the pious and the impious will remain on that day for the equivalent of forty years, while they are bridled in sweat, looking up to the heavens; but none shall speak to them. From Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه), it is related that they will remain standing for one hundred years. Ibn Jareer narrated both of these latter sayings. It is also narrated from ‘Â’ishah that, «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to begin his night prayers by saying: “Allah is Great (*Allâhu Akbar*)” ten times, then, “Praise be to Allah (*al-Ḥamdu lillâh*)” ten times, then, “Glory be to Allah (*Subḥân Allâh*)” ten times. Then he would ask Allah’s forgiveness ten times and say, “O Allah! Forgive me, guide me, bless me and save me.” Then he would ask Allah’s protection from the severity of the Day of Resurrection.» (Narrated by Abu Dawood, Nasâ’i and Ibn Mâjah)

﴿ كَلَّا إِنَّ كِتَابَ الْفَجَارِ لَفِي سِجِّينٍ ﴿٧﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا سِجِّينٌ ﴿٨﴾ كِتَابٌ مَرْمُومٌ ﴿٩﴾
 وَيَلُّ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ الَّذِينَ يَكْذِبُونَ يَوْمَ الَّذِينَ ﴿١١﴾ وَمَا يَكْذِبُ بِهِ إِلَّا كُلُّ مُعْتَدٍ
 أَثِيمٍ ﴿١٢﴾ إِذَا نُتِيَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَاتُنَا قَالَ أَسْطِطِرُ الْآوَلِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُوا
 يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَمَّحْجُوبُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّهُمْ لَصَالُوا الْجَحِيمِ ﴿١٦﴾ ثُمَّ
 يُقَالُ هَذَا الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَكْذِبُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ ﴾

(سورة المطففين: ٧-١٧)

7. No, but the record of the vile is in *Sijjeen*.
8. Ah! What will convey unto you what *Sijjeen* is?
9. A written record.
10. Woe unto the repudiators on that day!
11. Those who deny the Day of Judgement.
12. Which none denies save each criminal transgressor,
13. Who, when you read unto him Our revelations, says, [Mere] fables of the folk of old.
14. No, but that which they have earned is rust upon their hearts.
15. No, but surely on that day they will be covered from [the mercy of] their Lord.
16. Then certainly, they verily will burn in Hell,
17. And it be said [unto them]: This is that which you used to deny.

Allah speaks the Truth: ﴿No, but the record of the vile is in *Sijjeen*﴾ That is, their end and their dwelling place is assuredly in *Sijjeen*, a word derived from the Arabic word *sjjn* which means jail. It also means dire straits.

Then Allah makes clear the greatness of the matter, saying: ﴿Ah! What will convey unto you what *Sijjeen* is?﴾ That is, it is a

matter of momentous importance and a jail in which there is a painful punishment and from which there is no release. Some have said that it is below 'the seventh earth'. It is mentioned in the hadith of Al-Barâ' ibn 'Âzib, which is a long hadith, that Allah, the Exalted says, concerning the soul of the disbeliever: "Write for him [in] his book [that he will be] in *Sijjeen*. And *Sijjeen* is under the seventh earth." It was also said that it is a rock under the seventh earth. And it has also been said that it is a pit in Hell. But the correct saying is that *Sijjeen* is derived from *sijn*, and it means dire straits. For all created things, the more they are debased, the more they are straitened, and the more they are elevated, the more liberated they become. For every one of the seven celestial abodes is wider and more spacious than the one below it; likewise the earth: every one is narrower and more crowded than the one above it. The final abode of the evil-doers is the lowest level, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ ﴿٥﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٦﴾﴾
 (سورة التين: ٥-٦)

﴿Then We reduce him to the lowest of the low, save those who believe and do good works, and there is a reward unfailing [Paradise].﴾
 (Qur'an 95: 5-6).

In this *soorah*, Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿No, but the record of the vile is in *Sijjeen*. Ah! What will convey unto you what *Sijjeen* is?﴾ This includes their being in dire straits and their abasement, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَإِذَا أُلْقُوا مِنْهَا مَكَانًا ضَيِّقًا مُقَرَّبِينَ دَعَوْا هُنَالِكَ ثُبُورًا ﴿١٣﴾﴾

(سورة الفرقان: ١٣)

﴿And when they are flung into a narrow place thereof, chained together, they pray for destruction there.﴾
 (Qur'an 25: 13)

«A written record» This is not an explanation of His words: «Ah! What will convey unto you what *Sijjeen* is?»). Rather, it is a description of what is written for them concerning their ultimate end in *Sijjeen*; that is, it is written, it is a matter beyond dispute, none will be added to it and none will be removed from it. This was said by Muhammad ibn Ka‘b al-Qurazi.²

«Woe unto the repudiators on that day!» That is, when they come forth on the Day of Resurrection, they will receive the confinement and the terrible punishment that was promised to them. We have previously spoken at great length about the meaning of «Woe» and there is no need to repeat it here. Suffice to say that it means destruction, as it is said: “Woe to so-and-so!” (may he be destroyed), and as it is confirmed in the collections of Hadith that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «Woe to him who lies when he speaks in order to make people laugh! Woe to him, woe to him!» (Narrated by Bukhari)

Then Allah (ﷻ) says, describing the rebellious, disbelieving rejecters, «Those who deny the Day of Judgement». That is, they do not believe that it will happen nor do they believe in its existence, or else they set it aside as unlikely.

«Which none denies save each criminal transgressor». That is, he exceeds all bounds in committing sins and in taking the permissible (for example, excessive eating and drinking), and is wicked in his speech. When he speaks, he lies; when he promises, he breaks his promise and when he argues, he does so violently, and excessively.

² Muhammad ibn Ka‘b ibn Saleem ibn Asad Abu Ḥamzah al-Qurazi was born in the year 49 H according to the most reliable accounts, and not during the life of the Prophet (bpuh) as claimed by some scholars, according to Ibn Ḥajar, who described him as a reliable transmitter of hadiths.

«Who, when you read unto him Our revelations, says: [Mere] fables of the folk of old.» That is, when he hears the words of Allah, the Exalted, from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) he rejects and thinks only evil of it, saying that it is a collection of invented stories from ancient times. As Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ مَآذَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ قَالُوا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ﴾

(سورة التحل: ٢٤)

«And when it is said to them: What has your Lord revealed?, they say: [Mere] fables of the folk of old!» (Qur'an 16: 24)

And:

﴿وَقَالُوا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ اكْتَتَبَهَا فَهِيَ تُمْلَى عَلَيْهِ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا﴾

(سورة الفرقان: ٥)



«And they say: Fables of the folk of old, which he [Muhammad] had written down, and they are dictated to him morn and evening.»

(Qur'an 25: 5)

But Allah says in reply to them, «No, but that which they have earned is rust upon their hearts.» That is, the matter is not as they claim, that this Qur'an is a collection of tales of the ancients. Indeed, it is the Word of Allah, His divine revelation, sent down to His Messenger (ﷺ), but their hearts are closed to belief in it because of the covering of many sins which is upon them. This is why Allah says: «No, but that which they have earned is rust upon their hearts», and this affliction seizes the hearts of the unbelievers. It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «Verily, when the slave (of Allah) commits a sin it causes a black spot to appear on his heart. If he repents of it, his heart becomes smooth (clean) once more, but if he continues, it spreads.» (Narrated

by Tirmidhi and Nasâ'î) That is the meaning of Allah's words: ﴿No, but that which they have earned is rust upon their hearts﴾ Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri said that the Arabic word *rân* (translated as *rust*) is sin piled upon sin until the heart becomes blind and then it dies. Mujâhid, Qatâdah, Ibn Zayd and others agreed with this.

﴿No, but surely on that day they will be covered from [the Mercy of] their Lord﴾ That is, on the Day of Resurrection, they will be imprisoned in *Sijjeen* and they will be prevented from seeing their Lord and Creator. Abu 'Abdullâh ash-Shâfi'ee said: "In this verse is proof that the believers will see Him, the Almighty, the All-Powerful on that day." Likewise, His words:

(سورة القيامة : ٢٢-٢٣) ﴿وُجُوهُ يُومِئِدُ تَاَضِرَةً ۖ تَأْتِيهَا نَاطِرَةٌ﴾

﴿That day will faces be resplendent, looking towards their Lord.﴾
(*Qur'an* 75: 22-23)

Another proof of this are the authentic, well-reported hadiths that they will see their Lord, the Almighty, the All-Powerful in the abode of the hereafter. They will actually see Him with their own eyes, in the bliss of having their faith and their good deeds accepted on the Day of Judgement and the Gardens of Paradise. Ibn Jarer reported on the authority of Al-Ḥasan, concerning the words of Allah, ﴿No, but surely on that day they will be covered from [the Mercy of] their Lord﴾: the veil will be raised and the believers and the disbelievers will see Him. Then He will be veiled from the disbelievers, while the believers will continue to see Him every day, morning and night.

﴿Then certainly, they verily will burn in Hell﴾ That is, the disbelievers, in addition to being forbidden from seeing the Most Beneficent, are amongst the inhabitants of the Hellfire.

﴿And it be said [unto them]: This is that which you used to deny.﴾ This will be said to them in a tone of rebuke and scorn.

﴿كَلَّا إِنَّ كِتَابَ الْأَبْرَارِ لَفِي عَلَيِّنَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا عَلَيْنَ مَا عَلَيْنَ ﴿١٩﴾ كِتَابٌ مَرْقُومٌ ﴿٢٠﴾ يَشْهَدُهُ الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ يَنْظُرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ تَعْرِفُ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٢٤﴾ يُسْقَوْنَ مِنْ رَحِيقٍ مَخْتُومٍ ﴿٢٥﴾ خِتْمُهُ مِسْكٌ وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَمُرَاجُهُمْ مِنْ تَسْنِيمٍ ﴿٢٧﴾ عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾﴾

(سورة المطففين: ١٩-٢٨)

18. No, but the record of the righteous is in 'Illiyeen.
19. Ah! What will convey to you what 'Illiyoon is?
20. A written record,
21. Attested by those who are brought near [unto their Lord].
22. Certainly, the righteous verily are in delight,
23. On couches, gazing,
24. You will know in their faces the radiance of delight.
25. They are given to drink of a pure wine, sealed,
26. Whose seal is musk — for this let [all] those strive, who strive for bliss —
27. And mixed with water of *Tasneem*,
28. A spring from where those brought near [to Allah] drink.

He, the Exalted, the Almighty, speaks the truth, ﴿No, but the record of the righteous﴾ — and they are in contrast to the wicked — ﴿is in 'Illiyeen﴾, and that is the opposite of *Sijjeen*, which is the seventh earth. Al-A'mash reported, on the authority of Hilâl ibn Yisâf³ that he said: "Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) asked Ka'b (رضي الله عنه) in my

³ Hilâl ibn Yisâf al-Ashja'ee: According to Ibn Hajar, he was a reliable transmitter of hadiths.

presence about *Sijjeen*, and he said, “It is the seventh earth and in it are the souls of the unbelievers.” Then he asked him about *‘Illiyeen* and he said: “It is the seventh heaven and in it are the souls of the believers.” This was said by more than one person. ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه),⁴ that he said, concerning the words of Allah: ﴿No, but the record of the righteous is in ‘*Illiyoon*﴾ that is, Paradise. Al-‘Awfi said that it means that their deeds are in heaven with Allah, and Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk agreed with this. Qatâdah said that *‘Illiyoon* means the right leg of the Throne. Others said that *‘Illiyoon* is near the lote-tree of the utmost boundary (*Sidrat al-Muntahâ*). But it is obvious that *‘Illiyoon* is taken from the word *‘uloo* which refers to highness and exaltedness; and everything that is elevated is glorified and mighty.

This is why Allah glorifies the matter saying, ﴿Ah! What will convey to you what *‘Illiyoon* is?﴾.

Then Allah says, in confirmation of what is written for them, ﴿A written record, attested by those who are brought near [unto their Lord]﴾. According to Qatâdah, the ones brought near are the angels. Al-‘Awfi said that every one of those angels in every heaven witness that written record.

﴿Certainly, the righteous verily are in delight﴾ That is, on the Day of Resurrection, the believers will be in eternal delight and gardens in which there is untold bounty.

﴿On couches, gazing﴾ These are screened couches on which they recline, looking. It was said that they are looking in wonder at their possessions and that which Allah has given them from (His)

⁴ It should be noted here that, according to Ibn Hajr al-‘Asqalâni, ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah did not meet Ibn ‘Abbâs, therefore any narrations on his authority must be considered *mursal*, and cannot be cited as a proof.

goodness and bounty that will never end or perish. It was also said that they will be looking at Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful, and this is in contrast to His description of the wicked people, «No, but surely on that day they will be covered from [the Mercy of] their Lord». It is said concerning the dwellers of Paradise, that they will be allowed to see Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful while they are reclining on their couches and sofas. «You will know in their faces the radiance of delight»: when you look at their faces you will see the characteristics of modesty, dignity, ease, happiness, equanimity and leadership that led them to the delight in which they find themselves.

«They are given to drink of a pure wine, sealed» That is, they will be given wine from Paradise to drink. The Arabic word *raḥeeq* means 'nectar', but in this verse it is a kind of wine, according to Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه), Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), Mujâhid, Al-Ḥasan, Qatâdah and Ibn Zayd. Imam Aḥmad narrates, on the authority of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri — I believe that he attributed it to the Prophet (ﷺ) — that he said: «If a believer gives another believer water to drink, quenching his thirst, Allah will give him to drink on the Day of Resurrection from sealed a sealed *raḥeeq* (nectar), and if a believer feeds another believer, relieving his hunger, Allah will feed him from the fruits of Paradise, and if a believer clothes another believer, covering his nakedness, Allah will clothe him in the green of Paradise.»

«Whose seal is musk»: Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) said it means the wine is mixed with musk. Al-'Awfi said that Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said, "Allah will make the wine delicious for them and lastly will place musk in it, sealing it with musk." This was also said by Qatâdah and Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk. Ibrâheem and Al-Ḥasan said it means the last of it will be musk. Ibn Jareer reported, on the authority of Abu ad-Dardâ', ««Whose seal is musk»: it is a white drink, like silver, with which their drinks are sealed. And if a man from the people of earth were to dip his finger in it and then remove it, not a single soul would be left

without tasting it.” Ibn Abi Najeeh⁵ reported, on the authority of Mujāhid that he said it means its scent is musk.

﴿For this let [all] those strive, who strive for bliss﴾ That is, let them struggle and compete for Allah’s favours, as in Allah, the Exalted’s words:

﴿لِمِثْلِ هَذَا فَلْيَعْمَلِ الْعَامِلُونَ﴾ (سورة الصافات: ٦١)

﴿For the like of this then, let the workers work.﴾ (Qur’an 37: 61)

﴿And mixed with water of *Tasneem*﴾ That is, the above-described *raheeq* will be mixed with a drink which is known as *Tasneem*, which is the finest drink given to the people of Paradise. This was said by Abu Ṣāliḥ, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk. This is why Allah says, ﴿A spring from where those brought near [to Allah] drink.﴾ That is, those nearest to Allah drink a pure drink and it is mixed for those of the right. This was said by Ibn Mas‘ood (رضي الله عنه), Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه), Masrooq, Qatādah and others.

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أَتْرَمُوا كَانُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا يَضْحَكُونَ﴾ (٢٩) وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِهِمْ يَتَغَامِرُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَإِذَا أُنْقِلَبُوا إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِمْ أُنْقِلَبُوا فِيكِهِمِ ﴿٣١﴾ وَإِذَا رَأَوْهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّ هَٰؤُلَاءِ لَضَالُّونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَمَا أُرْسِلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ حَافِظِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ فَالْيَوْمَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ يَضْحَكُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ عَلَىٰ الْأَرَائِكِ يَنْظُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ هَلْ تُؤِيبُ الْكُفَّارَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

(سورة المطففين: ٢٩-٣٦)

⁵ ‘Abdullāh ibn Abi Najeeh: His name was Yasār al-Makki. According to Ibn Ḥajar, he is a reliable reporter of hadiths, although it was said that he might have committed *tadlees*. He died around 31 H.

29. Indeed, the guilty used to laugh at those who believed,
 30. And wink one to another when they passed by them;
 31. And when they returned to their own folk, they returned jesting;
 32. And when they saw them, they said: Surely, these have gone astray.
 33. Yet they were not sent as guardians over them.
 34. This day it is those who believe who laugh at the disbelievers,
 35. On high couches, gazing.
 36. Are not the disbelievers paid for what they used to do?

Allah, the Exalted informs us about the evil-doers, that during their earthly lives they used to laugh at the believers, make fun of them and despise them; and when they passed by them, they would show their contempt for them.

﴿And when they returned to their own folk, they returned jesting﴾ That is, when those evil-doers return to their homes, they find whatever they want, but they are not grateful to Allah for the grace that He bestows upon them. Instead, they occupy themselves with mocking the believing people, hating them and being envious of them.

﴿And when they saw them, they said: Surely, these have gone astray.﴾ They accused the believers of being astray because the believers did not follow their religion.

﴿Yet they were not sent as guardians over them﴾ That is, the evil-doers were not sent as watchers over the believers' actions or their words. So why did they concern themselves with them, opposing them, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿قَالَ أَخْسَأُ فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِي يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا ءَامَنَّا فَأَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّاحِمِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾ فَأَتَّخَذْتُمُوهُمْ سَخِرِيًّا حَتَّىٰ أَنْسَوَكُمُ

ذَكَرَىٰ وَكُنْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ تَضْحَكُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾ إِنِّي جَزَيْتَهُمُ الْيَوْمَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا أَنَّهُمْ هُمُ
الْفَائِزُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

(سورة المؤمنون: ١٠٨-١١١)

«He [Allah] says: Begone therein, and do not speak to Me. Indeed, there was a party of My slaves who said: Our Lord! We believe, therefore forgive us and have mercy on us, for You are the Best of all Who show mercy. But you chose them for a laughing-stock until they caused you to forget remembrance of Me, while you laughed at them! Verily I have rewarded them this Day for their patience: they are indeed the ones that are triumphant.» (Qur'an 23: 108-111)

This is why Allah says: «This day it is» that is, the Day of Resurrection, «those who believe who laugh at the disbelievers» that is, in contrast to the disbelievers, who laughed at them in this world.

«On high couches, gazing» That is, looking at Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful. This is in contrast to those who claimed that the believers were astray. They are not astray; indeed, they are the appointed ones of Allah, close to Him, looking at their Lord in the abode of His Generosity.

«Are not the disbelievers paid for what they used to do?» That is, are they not given what they deserve for their scoffing at the believers and their belittling of them? Of course, they paid a full and complete recompense.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Mutaffifeen*.
All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorah al-Inshiqâq (84)

The Splitting Asunder

سُورَةُ الْإِنْشِقَاقِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿١﴾ إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انشَقَّتْ ﴿١﴾ وَأَذْنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ ﴿٢﴾ وَإِذَا الْأَرْضُ مُدَّتْ ﴿٣﴾ وَأَلْقَتْ
مَا فِيهَا وَتَخَلَّتْ ﴿٤﴾ وَأَذْنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ ﴿٥﴾ يَتَأْتِيهَا الْإِنْسُنُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَى رَبِّكَ
كَدْحًا فَمَلْقِيهِ ﴿٦﴾ فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوِّيَ كِتْبَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ ﴿٧﴾ فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا ﴿٨﴾
وَيَنْقَلِبُ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا ﴿٩﴾ وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوِّيَ كِتْبَهُ وَرَاءَ ظَهْرِهِ ﴿١٠﴾ فَسَوْفَ
يَدْعُوا بُرُورًا ﴿١١﴾ وَيَصَلِّي سَعِيرًا ﴿١٢﴾ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فِي أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا ﴿١٣﴾ إِنَّهُ ظَنَّ أَن لَّنْ
يَحُورَ ﴿١٤﴾ بَلَىٰ إِنَّ رَبَّهُ كَانَ بِهِ بَصِيرًا ﴿١٥﴾

(سورة الانشقاق: ١-١٥)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. When the heaven is split asunder,
2. And attentive to her Lord in fear,
3. And when the earth is spread out
4. And has cast out all that was in her, and is empty
5. And attentive to her Lord in fear!
6. You, verily, O humankind! are working toward your Lord a work which you will meet [in His presence].
7. Then whoever is given his account in his right hand,

8. He truly will receive an easy reckoning.
9. And will return unto his folk in joy.
10. But whoso is given his account behind his back,
11. He surely will invoke destruction
12. And be thrown to scorching fire.
13. He verily lived joyous with his folk,
14. He verily deemed that he would never return [unto Allah].
15. No, but certainly his Lord is always looking on him!

Allah (ﷻ) says: «When the heaven is split asunder», and that will be on the Day of Resurrection.

«And attentive to her Lord in fear» That is, listens and obeys His commands when He orders it to split asunder, and that is also on the Day of Resurrection. The Arabic expression *wa huqqat* at the end of this verse means that it is obligatory for the heaven to obey His commands because He is the Supreme, Whose command none can gainsay nor deny. All are subservient to Him and all are humbled before Him.

«And when the earth is spread out» That is, flattened, spread out and stretched. Ibn Jareer narrates, on the authority of ‘Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «“When the Day of Resurrection comes Allah will flatten out the earth, stretching its surface until there is no place for any person except where he stands. Then I will be the first one to be called, and Jibreel (ﷺ) will be on the right of the Most Merciful, and by Allah, he will not have seen Him before that and I will say, ‘O my Lord! Verily, this one (Jibreel) told me that You had sent him to me.’ And Allah will say, ‘He spoke the Truth.’ Then I will intercede, saying, ‘O my Lord! Your slaves have worshipped You in all corners of the earth.’”» And that is the most commended standing.¹

¹ Most likely this refers to standing in prayer. (Editor)

﴿And has cast out all that was in her, and is empty﴾ That is, expelled the dead that were interred within it, until none remains. This was said by Mujâhid, Sa'eed and Qatâdah.

﴿And attentive to her Lord in fear!﴾ The *tafseer* of this verse is as mentioned above for verse 2.

﴿You, verily, O humankind! are working toward your Lord a work which you will meet [in His presence]﴾ That is, you are returning quickly to your Lord, with your deeds. ﴿Which you will meet﴾ That is, you will be brought face-to-face with your deeds, both good and evil. A proof of this is what was narrated by Abu Dawood at-Tayâlisi, on the authority of Jâbir, who said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «“Jibreel said, ‘O Muhammad! Live as you will, for you will die, and love whom you will, for you will depart from them, and do as you will, for you will meet (your deeds).’ ”» Some people say that the verse means that you will meet your Lord and He will recompense you according to your deeds. If this is the meaning, then necessarily, the other meaning must be intended also. Al-'Awfi narrates, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه): ﴿You, verily, O humankind! are working toward your Lord a work which you will meet [in His presence]﴾ You do deeds with which you will meet Allah, both good and evil. Qatâdah said, ﴿You, verily, O man! are working toward your Lord a work which you will meet [in His presence]﴾ Verily, your return, O son of Adam, is in weakness. So whoever was able to ensure that his return was in obedience to Allah, then let him do so, and there is no power except with Allah.

﴿Then who is given his account in his right hand, he truly will receive an easy reckoning﴾ That is, easy, without difficulty. He will not be held accountable for every small action, for whoever was held thus accountable, would surely be destroyed. It is narrated from 'Â'ishah (رضي الله عنها) that she said: «“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘Whoever is questioned concerning his account will be punished.’

She asked, ‘Does not Allah say, ﴿He truly will receive an easy reckoning﴾?’ He replied, ‘That does not refer to the accounting, but to the showing of the account. Whoever is questioned concerning his account will be punished.’ » (Narrated by Aḥmad) This was also narrated by Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Nasâ’i, and Ibn Jareer.

﴿And will return unto his folk in joy﴾ That is, he will return to his people in Paradise, according to Qatâdah and Ad-Ḍaḥḥâk: “He will be happy, overjoyed and delighted with what Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful has given him.”

﴿But whoso is given his account behind his back﴾ That is, in his left hand, from behind his back. He will be given his record with his left hand twisted behind his back.

﴿He surely will invoke destruction﴾ That is, his or her life spent in search of other than Allah’s pleasure has earned him or her only perdition and loss — a place in Hell.

﴿And be thrown to scorching fire. He verily lived joyous with his folk﴾ That is, he was happy, without a thought for his punishment and without fear of what awaited him; and so his state of happiness was succeeded by eternal grief.

﴿He verily deemed that he would never return [unto Allah]﴾ That is, he believed that he would not return to Allah after his death. This was said by Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), Qatâdah and others.

﴿No, but certainly his Lord is always looking on him!﴾ That is, on the contrary, Allah will return him to life and recompense him in accordance with his deeds, both good and bad; for He is All-Seeing, All-Knowing and Well-Acquainted with all that we do.

﴿فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِالشَّفَقِ ﴿١٦﴾ وَاللَّيْلِ وَمَا وَسَقَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا اتَّسَقَ ﴿١٨﴾ لَتَرْكَبُنَّ طَبَقًا عَنْ طَبِقِ ﴿١٩﴾ فَمَا لَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَإِذَا قُرِئَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقُرْآنُ لَا يَسْجُدُونَ

بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَكْذِبُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُوعُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ فَلَيْسَ لَهُمْ
 بَعْدَآبِ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٢٣﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

(سورة الانشقاق: ١٦-٢٥)

16. Oh, I swear by the afterglow of sunset,
17. And by the night and all that it enshrouds,
18. And by the moon when she is at the full,
19. That you shall journey on from plane to plane.
20. What ails them, then, that they do not believe?
21. And when the Qur'an is recited unto them, do not prostrate [in worship of Allah]?²
22. No, but those who disbelieve will deny;
23. And Allah knows best what they are hiding.
24. So give them tidings of a painful doom,
25. Save those who believe and do good works, for theirs is a reward unailing.

﴿Oh, I swear by the afterglow of sunset﴾ It is narrated on the authority of 'Ali, Ibn 'Abbâs, Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with them) and several others that they all said that the Arabic word *ash-shafaq* in this verse means the reddening of the horizon, although it was narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that he said it means whiteness. However, *ash-shafaq* is the reddening of the skyline, either before the rising of the sun (as Mujâhid said), or after its setting. This is what is well-known to the scholars of Arabic language. Al-Khaleel ibn Aḥmad³ said that *ash-shafaq* is the

² Upon reciting or hearing recited this verse in Arabic, the Prophet (bpuh) used to prostrate and praise Allah. This is one of the the fifteen 'verses of prostration' found in the Qur'an. (Editor)

³ Al-Khaleel ibn Aḥmad: Ibn Katheer is referring either to Al-Khaleel ibn Aḥmad al-Azdi al-Farâheedi, who was a renowned scholar of Arabic=

reddening of the sky between sunset and the time of ‘*Ishâ*’ prayer, and that when it has gone, it is said that *ash-shafaq* is gone. In Muslim’s *Ṣaḥeeḥ* it is reported on the authority of ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه), from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) that he said: «“The time of *Maghrib* (prayer) lasts so long as *ash-shafaq* has not departed.”» Although it is authentically reported from Mujâhid that he said that *ash-shafaq* means the whole of the daylight period (and in another narration that it means the sun), obviously what brought him to this conclusion was the following verse of Allah’s words: ﴿And by the night and all that it enshrouds﴾ which led him to suppose that Allah was swearing first by the light of day, then by the darkness of night. Ibn Jareer said: “Allah swears by the daylight as it departs and the night as it arrives.” Ibn Jareer also mentioned that some said *ash-shafaq* is a name for the redness and the whiteness and they said also that it is a word with two opposite meanings. Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), Mujâhid, Al-Ḥasan and Qatâdah said that ﴿And by the night and all that it enshrouds﴾ means whatever it gathers. Qatâdah added that it means whatever it gathers of the stars and beasts (that walk upon the earth). ‘Ikrimah said it means whatever goes forth from the shadows when the night comes and other creatures returns to their homes.

﴿And by the moon when she is at full﴾: according to Ibn ‘Abbâs, when it is full and risen. This was also said by ‘Ikrimah, Mujâhid, Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr, Masrooq, Abu Ṣâlih, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and Ibn Zayd — when it is rises. Al-Ḥasan said it means, when it is full. Qatâdah said, when it orbits. What all these sayings refer to is when the moon is full and gives all its light, and in this way it is in contrast to the night and what it gathers (as mentioned in the previous verse).

=grammar, an honest narrator of hadiths and a pious man, according to Ibn Ḥajar (d. 60-70 H), or to Khaleel ibn Aḥmad al-Mazani or As-Sulami, who was also described by Ibn Ḥajar as an honest narrator of hadiths, and was sometimes confused with the former.

﴿That you shall journey on from plane to plane.﴾ Bukhari relates, on the authority of Mujâhid that Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said, «"... from one state to another — this is your Prophet (ﷺ).”» This is the wording in Bukhari's narration, and it is most likely that Ibn 'Abbâs was relating this tafseer from the Prophet (ﷺ), as if he said: "I heard this from your Prophet (ﷺ)." In that case, "your Prophet" would be a nominative noun, meaning: "Your Prophet (ﷺ) said this." — this is the most apparent meaning, and Allah knows best. For example, Anas said, «"There is no year that passes without being followed by evil — I heard it from your Prophet (ﷺ).”» Ibn Jareer reports, on the authority of Mujâhid, that he said: I heard Ibn 'Abbâs say: ﴿That you shall journey on from plane to plane﴾: that is, your Prophet (ﷺ) said (it means), 'from one state to another.' 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah reports, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه)⁴ that he said from one state to another. 'Ikrimah agreed with this, as did Murrah at-Tayyib,⁵ Mujâhid, Al-Ḥasan, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk, Masrooq and Abu Ṣâliḥ.

Ibn Abi Ḥâtim relates, on the authority of Ash-Sha'abi: ﴿That you shall journey on from plane to plane.﴾ Allah is informing the Prophet Muhammad will certainly travel from heaven to heaven. This was also attributed to Ibn Mas'ood, Masrooq and Abul 'Âliyah. I say: "Do they mean the Night Journey (al-Isrâ')?" It was attributed to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that he said it means from one stopping place to another. Al-'Awfi also said this is from Ibn 'Abbâs, but he added: from one matter to another and from one state to another. As-Suddi agreed with this, as though he understood the verse to be a confirmation of the authentic hadith that says: «"You will surely

⁴ It should be noted here that, according to Ibn Hajr al-'Asqalâni, 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah did not meet Ibn 'Abbâs, therefore any narrations on his authority must be considered *mursal*, and cannot be cited as a proof.

⁵ Murrah ibn Sharâheel Abu Ismâ'eel al-Hamdâni was known as Murrah at-Tayyib (Murrah, the good), According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a reliable transmitter of hadiths and was a pious man. He died in the year 76 H or later.

adopt the ways of those before you identically, until, if they were to enter the hole of a lizard, you would follow them.” They said, “(Are those people) the Jews and Christians, O Messenger of Allah?” He said, “Who else?”» And this is quite possible.

Ibn Abi Hâtim narrates that Makhool said it means that every twenty years you will be in a different state than you were before. Al-A‘mash relates that the verse follows on from the previous verses and therefore means, when the sky changes from one colour to another. Ath-Thawri related something similar, on the authority of Ibn Mas‘ood. Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr said that it means those people who were humbled in this world, will be elevated in the hereafter, while others who were elevated in this world will be humbled in the hereafter. ‘Ikrimah said it means that we start as babies and then we become children, then youths, then old men. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri said it means from one state to another, that is weakness after vigour, then vigour after weakness, and wealth after poverty and poverty after wealth, and health after illness and illness after health.

Ibn Abi Hâtim narrates, on the authority of Jâbir ibn ‘Abdullâh (رضي الله عنه) that he said: «I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, ‘Verily, the son of Adam is in ignorance concerning what was created for him. Verily, Allah, when He created him, said to the angel, ‘Record his livelihood; record his lifespan; record his end; write whether he is to be sad or happy.’ Then this angel leaves and Allah sends another angel after the first and he protects him (the son of Adam) until he reaches maturity. Once that angel leaves, Allah appoints for him two angels, one who writes his good deeds and one who records his bad deeds. When death visits him, those two angels depart and the angel of death comes to him and seizes his soul. When he enters his grave, the angel returns his soul to his body. Then the angel of death departs and the two angels of the grave come to him and examine him, then they depart. When the hour comes, the angels of good deeds and bad

deeds descend to him and they tie his record around his neck. Then they accompany him, one in front and one behind. Then Allah (ﷻ) says to him,

(سورة ق: ٢٢) ﴿لَقَدْ كُنْتَ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَذَا...﴾

﴿You were in heedlessness of this...﴾ (Qur'an 50: 22).

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) then said, «That you shall journey on from plane to plane». He said, '(That is,) from one state to another.' Then the Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'Verily, before you is an order of momentous concern, over which you have no power, so seek the aid of Allah, the Most Exalted.' '» While this hadith is *munkar*⁶, and some of its narrators are weak, its meaning is correct, and Allah, Most Sublime, the Exalted, knows best.

After mentioning what the Qur'anic scholars and the learned men of tafseer have said about this verse, Ibn Jareer said, "And the correct interpretation is, 'And you [O Muhammad] shall certainly travel from one state to another and from one difficult situation to another.' And if it is the case that the Messenger (ﷺ) is the one who is addressed here, then it applies equally to all humankind who will encounter hardship on the Day of Resurrection, with all its terror."

«What ails them, then, that they believe not? And when the Qur'an is recited unto them, do not prostrate [in worship of Allah]?» That is, what prevents them from believing in Allah and His Messenger and the Last Day; and what is wrong with them that when Allah's verses and His words are recited to them, they do not prostrate before its (the Qur'an's) grandeur, nor do they honour it or respect it?

⁶ *munkar*: a category of hadith which is related by only one narrator, who is neither upright nor precise.

﴿No, but those who disbelieve will deny﴾. That is, it is in their nature to deny and to be obstinate and disobedient when faced with the truth.

﴿And Allah knows best what they are hiding﴾ That is, according to Qatâdah and Mujâhid, what they hide in their hearts.

﴿So give them tidings of a painful doom,﴾ meaning, ‘inform them, O Muhammad, that Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful has prepared for them a painful punishment.’

﴿Save those who believe and do good works, for theirs is a reward unfailing﴾ Those who believe with their hearts and do good works are excluded from this; for them is a great reward in the abode of the hereafter, which, according to Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), is without any deficiency. Mujâhid and Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk said it means a reward without limit. Taking their two sayings together, we may say, a reward without end. As Allah (ﷻ) says:

(سورة هود: ١٠٨)

﴿... عَطَاءٌ غَيْرٌ مَّجْذُورٌ ﴾

﴿A gift unfailing...﴾

(*Qur'an 11: 108*).

As-Suddi said that some say it means without deficiency and without end, while others say, it means without any obligation upon them. However this last saying has been disparaged by more than one person, for verily, Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful is the provider of all grace to the people of Paradise at all times and in all situations. They only enter it by His favour and mercy, not because of their deeds. He bestows His grace upon them eternally, without end. All praise is due to Allah, alone, eternally. The dwellers of Paradise are unceasing in praising and glorifying Him and their last supplication is always: “Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.”

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Inshiqâq*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-Burooj (85)

The Constellations

سُورَةُ الْبُرُوجِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿وَالسَّمَاءَ ذَاتِ الْبُرُوجِ ﴿١﴾ وَالْيَوْمِ الْمَوْعُودِ ﴿٢﴾ وَشَاهِدٍ وَمَشْهُودٍ ﴿٣﴾ قُلْ أَصْحَابُ
الْأُخْدُودِ ﴿٤﴾ النَّارِ ذَاتِ الْوُقُودِ ﴿٥﴾ إِذْ هُمْ عَلَيْهَا قُعُودٌ ﴿٦﴾ وَهُمْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَفْعَلُونَ
بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ شُهُودٌ ﴿٧﴾ وَمَا نَقَمُوا مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَن يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ ﴿٨﴾ الَّذِي
لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٩﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَنَوُوا
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَتُوبُوا فَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ جَهَنَّمَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ الْحَرِيقِ ﴿١٠﴾﴾

(سورة البُرُوج: ١-١٠)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. By the heaven, holding the constellations,
2. And by the Promised Day.
3. And by the witness and that to which he bears testimony,
4. [Self-]destroyed were the owners of the ditch
5. Of the fuel-fed fire,

6. When they sat by it,
7. And were themselves the witnesses of what they did to the believers.
8. They had nothing against them save that they believed in Allah, the Almighty, the Owner of Praise.
9. Him unto Whom belongs the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth; and Allah is of all things the Witness.
10. Certainly, they who persecute believing men and believing women and do not repent, theirs verily will be the doom of Hell, and theirs the doom of burning.

In the first verse of this chapter, Allah (ﷻ) swears by the heaven and its constellations, as in His words:

﴿نَبَارَكَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ فِي السَّمَاءِ بُرُوجًا وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا سِرَاجًا وَقَمَرًا مُنِيرًا ﴿٦١﴾﴾

(سورة الفرقان: ٦١)

﴿Blessed be He Who has placed in the heaven constellations, and has placed therein a great lamp [the sun] and a moon, giving light.﴾

(Qur'an 25: 61)

Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), Mujâhid, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk, Al-Ḥasan, Qatâdah and As-Suddi said: "The constellations are the stars." It is also narrated from Mujâhid that they are guard towers. Yaḥyâh ibn Râfi' said that they are palaces in the heaven. Al-Minhâl ibn 'Amr¹ said: "﴿By the heaven, holding the constellations﴾. They are the excellent creation." Ibn Jareer said it means the phases of the sun and the moon. There are twelve *bueroj* or stations, through which the sun passes once every month and the moon once every two and one-third days. That is twenty eight phases, then it is covered for two days.

¹ Al-Minhâl ibn 'Amr al-Asadi was said by Ibn Ḥajar to be truthful, although he was said to have been guilty of giving a false impression.

﴿And by the Promised Day, and by the witness and that to which he bears testimony﴾ The scholars of tafseer have disagreed over this. Ibn Abi Ḥâtim reports, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, that he said, «“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘﴿And by the Promised Day﴾ is the Day of Resurrection; and ﴿the witness﴾ is Friday, and the sun does not rise or set on a better day than Friday. In it is an hour which is without equal. Never does a believing slave ask Allah on that day, except that he is given that which he asked for, nor does he seek Allah’s protection on it, except that He protects him. And ﴿that to which he bears testimony﴾ is the day of ‘Arafah.’”» Ibn Khuzaymah narrated this also, but it is a weak narration. It was also narrated in a *mawqoof*² form from Abu Hurayrah, and this is probably more likely. Imam Aḥmad narrated the same thing from Abu Hurayrah.

It is also narrated from Abu Hurayrah that he said that ﴿the Promised Day﴾ is the Day of Resurrection. Al-Ḥasan, Qatâdah and Ibn Zayd agreed with this and I do not think they disagreed on any point in this regard. Ibn Jareer narrates on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), that he said: “﴿the witness﴾ is Muhammad (ﷺ) and ﴿that to which he bears testimony﴾ is the Day of Resurrection.” Then he recited:

﴿... ذَلِكَ يَوْمٌ جَمَعُوا لَهُ النَّاسَ وَذَلِكَ يَوْمٌ مَّشْهُودٌ﴾ (سورة هود: ١٠٣)

﴿... That is a day unto which humankind will be gathered, and that is a day that will be witnessed.﴾ (Qur’an 11: 103)

Mujâhid, ‘Ikrimah and Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk said that ﴿the witness﴾ is the son of Adam and ﴿that to which he bears testimony﴾ is the Day of Resurrection. ‘Ikrimah is also reported to have said that ﴿the witness﴾

² *mawqoof*: an incomplete chain of narrators, not reaching to the Prophet

is Muhammad (ﷺ) and ﴿that to which he bears testimony﴾ is the Day of Resurrection. ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah narrates from Ibn ‘Abbâs³ that ﴿the witness﴾ is Allah, and ﴿that to which he bears testimony﴾ is the Day of Resurrection. Ibn Abi Hâtim says, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), that he said that ﴿the witness﴾ is humankind and ﴿that to which he bears testimony﴾ is Friday. Ibn Jareer also narrated on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs, that he said that ﴿the witness﴾ is the day of ‘Arafah, and ﴿that to which he bears testimony﴾ is the Day of Resurrection. It was also said that the two were the day of slaughter and the day of ‘Arafah respectively. Ibn Jareer says that amongst other sayings are that ﴿that to which he bears testimony﴾ is Friday, based upon the narration attributed to Abu ad-Dardâ: «“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘Increase the blessings which you send upon me on Friday, for verily Friday is a day witnessed by the angels.’”» (Narrated by Ibn Jareer) Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr said that ﴿the witness﴾ is Allah, then he recited:

(سورة التيساء: ٧٩)

﴿... وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٧٩﴾﴾

﴿... And Allah is Sufficient as witness.﴾

(Qur’an 4: 79)

— adding: “and ﴿that to which he bears testimony﴾ refers to us (humankind).” This was narrated by Al-Baghawi, who said: “The majority of scholars are of the opinion that the ﴿witness﴾ is Friday, while ﴿that to which he bears testimony﴾ is the Day of ‘Arafah.”

﴿[Self-]destroyed were the owners of the ditch﴾ This concerns the story of a group of unbelievers who set upon those who believed in Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful, attempting to force them to renounce their faith, but the believers refused. The unbelievers dug a

³ It should be noted here that, according to Ibn Hajr al-‘Asqalâni, ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah did not meet Ibn ‘Abbâs, therefore any narrations on his authority must be considered *mursal*, and cannot be cited as a proof.

ditch, placed fuel in it and kindled in it a blazing fire. Then they demanded that the believers renounce their faith. They refused and so the unbelievers threw the believers into the flames, burning them alive. So Allah says: ﴿[Self-]destroyed were the owners of the ditch, of the fuel-fed fire, when they sat by it, and were themselves the witnesses of what they did to the believers﴾ That is, they watched what was done to the believers.

﴿They had nothing against them save that they believed in Allah, the Almighty, Owner of Praise﴾ That is, the believers were not guilty of anything except their faith in Allah, the Almighty, Most Worthy of praise in all His words and all His deeds, and in His law and His divine decree, Who never wrongs those who seek protection with Him, even though He decreed for His slaves that which befell them at the hands of the unbelievers. Verily, He is the Almighty, Most Worthy of praise, even if the reason behind their own suffering is unknown to most people.

﴿Him unto Whom belongs the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth; and Allah is of all things the Witness﴾ Among His most perfect attributes is that He is the ruler of all the heavens and the earth and nothing is hidden from Him. The scholars of tafseer have differed regarding the identity of the people mentioned in this story: who were they?

It is narrated from 'Ali (ﷺ) that they were the people of Persia and that their king wished that it be made permissible to marry women who were forbidden to them. When the religious scholars would not allow it, he determined to have a trench dug and had those who were against him flung into it. Making the forbidden permissible still continues amongst them to this day. It is also narrated from 'Ali (ﷺ) that they were a people from Yemen and that the believers and the polytheists fought each other and the believers won. They fought again and the unbelievers won. They placed the believers in trenches

and burnt them. It is also narrated from ‘Ali that they were from Abyssinia. Al-‘Awfi narrates from Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that he said: “«[Self-]destroyed were the owners of the ditch, of the fuel-fed fire» Some people from the children Israel dug a trench in the ground and then kindled a fire in it. They then placed in it men and women and they (the Jews) claimed that the victims were Daniel and his people.” Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk ibn Mazâḥim⁴ narrated this also.

It was narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «“Amongst the people who came before you, there was a king who had a sorcerer. When that sorcerer became old, he said to the king, ‘I have become old and my time is nearly over, so please send me a boy to whom I can teach magic.’ So the king sent him a boy and the sorcerer taught him magic. Whenever the boy went to the sorcerer, he sat with a monk whom he found on the way and listened to his talks, and he used to admire them. So when he went to the sorcerer, he passed by the monk and sat there with him. On visiting the sorcerer, the latter would thrash him. So the boy complained about this to the monk. The monk said to him, ‘Whenever you are afraid of the sorcerer, say to him, ‘My people kept me busy,’ and whenever you are afraid of your people, say to them, ‘The sorcerer kept me busy.’ So the boy carried on like that for some time. Then there came on the road a huge creature and the people were unable to pass by. The boy said, ‘Today I shall know whether the sorcerer is better or the monk is better.’ So he took a stone and said, ‘O Allah! If the deeds and actions of the monk are liked by You better than those of the sorcerer, then kill this creature so that the people can cross (the road).’ Then he hit (it) with a stone and it was killed and the people passed by on the road. The boy came to the monk and informed him about it. The monk said to him,

⁴ Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk ibn Mazâḥim al-Hilâli was known as Abul Qâsim or Abu Muhammad. According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was truthful, but many of his hadiths were *mursal*. He died around 100 H or later.

'O my son! Today you are better than I; you have achieved what I see! And you will be put to trial. And in case you are put to trial, do not inform (them) about me. The boy used to treat the people suffering from congenital blindness, leprosy, leucodermia and other diseases. A blind courtier of the king heard about the boy. He came and brought a number of gifts for the boy and said, 'All these gifts are for you on condition that you cure me.' The boy said, 'I do not cure anybody; it is only Allah (Alone) Who cures people. So if you believe in Allah and invoke Allah, He will cure you.' He then believed in Allah. Later, the courtier came to the king and sat at the place where he used to sit before. The king said, 'Who gave you back your sight?' The courtier replied, 'My Lord.' The king asked him: 'I (did)?' The courtier said, 'No, my Lord and your Lord, Allah.' The king said, 'Do you have another lord than I?' He said, 'Yes, your Lord and my Lord is Allah.' The king kept torturing him until he told about the boy. So the boy was brought to the king and he said to him, 'O boy! Has your magic reached to the extent that you cure congenital blindness, leprosy and other diseases?' He said, 'I do not cure anyone. Only Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful can cure.' The king said, 'I?' The boy replied, 'No.' The king asked, 'Do you have another lord than I?' The boy answered, 'My Lord and your Lord is Allah.' So he tortured him also until he told about the monk. Then the monk was brought to him and the king said to him, 'Abandon your religion.' The monk refused and so the king ordered a saw to be drawn down through the middle of his scalp and he fell, sawn in two. Then it was said to the (former) blind man, 'Abandon your religion.' He refused to do so and so a saw was brought and placed in the middle of his scalp and he fell, sawn in two.' Then the boy was brought and it was said to him, 'Abandon your religion.' He refused and so the king sent him to the top of a certain mountain with some people, saying, 'Then ascend up the mountain with him till you reach its peak, then see if he abandons his religion; otherwise throw

him from the top.' They took him and when they had ascended to the top, he said, 'O Allah! Save me from them by any means You wish.' So the mountain shook and they all fell down and the boy came walking to the king. The king said, 'What did your companions do?' The boy said, 'Allah, the Exalted saved me from them.' So the king ordered some people to take the boy into a boat in the middle of the sea, saying, 'If he renounces his religion (well and good) but if he refuses, drown him.' So they took him out to sea and he said, 'O Allah! Save me from them by any means You wish.' So they were all drowned in the sea. Then the boy returned to the king and the king said, 'What did your companions do?' The boy replied, 'Allah, the Exalted saved me from them.' Then he said to the king, 'You will not be able to kill me until you do as I order you. And if you do as I order you, you will be able to kill me.' The king asked, 'And what is that?' The boy said, 'Gather the people in one upland place and tie me over the trunk (of a tree); then take an arrow from my quiver and say, 'In the name of Allah, the Lord of the boy.' If you do this, you will be able to kill me. So he did this and, placing an arrow in the bow, he fired it, saying, 'In the name of Allah, the Lord of the boy.' The arrow hit the boy in the temple, and the boy placed his hand over the arrow wound and died. The people proclaimed, 'We believe in the Lord of the boy!' Then it was said to the king, 'Do you see what has happened? That which you feared, By Allah, all the people have believed (in the Lord of the boy).' So he ordered that ditches be dug at the entrances to the roads and it was done, and fires were kindled in them and then the king said, 'Whoever abandons his religion, let him go, and whoever does not, throw him into the fire. They were fighting and struggling over each other to escape the fire, until a woman and her baby whom she was nursing came and it was as if she was about to retreat, but to her surprise, the baby spoke, saying to her, 'Patience, Mother! For verily, you are on the truth.' » (Narrated by Aḥmad)

This was also narrated by Muslim at the end of his *Ṣaḥeeh*, and by Nasâ'i but in an abbreviated form.

Imam Tirmidhi said it was a good hadith and he narrated it in the tafseer of this *soorah*. It was also narrated on the authority of Suhayb ar-Roomi that, «The Prophet (ﷺ) said, concerning that king: “There was a king who had a fortuneteller who said to him, ‘Find me an intelligent boy, (or he said, an astute, worthy boy) and I will impart to him this knowledge of mine.’ Then he related the whole story and he added at the conclusion, ‘Allah says: ﴿[Self-]destroyed were the owners of the ditch, of the fuel-fed fire﴾ up to His words: ﴿the Mighty, the Owner of praise﴾.’ Then he said, ‘As for the boy, he was buried; and it is mentioned that he was exhumed during the time of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, and that his finger was to his temple just as he placed it before he died.’”» Tirmidhi said that this hadith is *ḥasan-ghareeb*.⁵ However, it is not correct that the words at the end of the story were those of the Prophet (ﷺ); Our teacher, the *Hâfidh*,⁶ Abul Ḥajjâj al-Mizzi said: “It is likely that it is the saying of Ṣuhayb (ar-Roomi), who was knowledgeable about the stories of the Christians, and Allah knows best.”

Muhammad ibn Is-hâq⁷ mentioned this story in his *Seerah*, with wording that contradicts the previous narrations in several

⁵ *Ḥasan-ghareeb*: A sound hadith, although narrated at some point(s) in its chain by only one narrator.

⁶ *Hâfidh*: A scholar of hadith who has memorized innumerable narrations with their chains of narrators and is knowledgeable in all matters pertaining to Hadith.

⁷ Muhammad ibn Is-hâq ibn Yasâr Abu Bakr al-Madani: He is most famous for the *Seerah* (biography) of the Prophet (bpuh) that he compiled and upon which Ibn Hishâm relied heavily in the compilation of his own *Seerah*. According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a scholar of Iraq; honest, though guilty of *tadlees* and accused by some of being a Shi‘ah and a member of the *Qadriyah* — a schismatic sect who denied Allah’s *Qadr* (divine predestination), claiming=

details. In his narration, he said that the king who killed the people of the trench was known as Dhu Nawwâs, and that he was a Jew named Zar' ah. According to Ibn Is-ḥâq, he killed twenty thousand people in the trench, and none survived except one man, who fled to Qaysar, the King of ash-Shâm. Qaysar wrote to Nejus, the Christian King of Abyssinia, who sent an army with him headed by Abrahah and Aryât. They freed Yemen from the hands of the Jews, and Dhu Nawwâs fled and was drowned in the sea. The rule of the Christians in Yemen lasted for seventy years.⁸ This incident must have taken place about five hundred years after the death of Prophet Ismâ'eel (Ishmael) (may Allah's peace be upon him). What Ibn Is-ḥâq mentioned tells us that it must have occurred during the period between the time of Jesus and Muhammad (peace be upon them), and Allah knows best. It might also be that several incidents such as this happened in various parts of the world, as Ibn Abi Ḥâtim said on the authority of 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn Jubayr,⁹ who said: "The trenches were in Yemen ... and in Constantinople during the rule of Constantine. This was at the time when the Christians changed their religion from that of the Messiah, of monotheism, into the doctrine of the trinity ... and in Iraq, in Babylon ... where (the ruler) ordered the people to worship a graven image, but Daniel and his companions refused. So they were thrown into a fire, but Allah caused the fire to be cool and safe for them and He saved them from it. Instead, those who had tyrannized them — there were nine of them — were thrown into it and burnt."

It was related from As-Suddi, concerning the words of Allah, the Exalted: ﴿[Self-]destroyed were the owners of the ditch﴾ The ditches were three: The ditch in Iraq, the ditch in Syria and the ditch

=that the human being is a totally free agent.

⁸ See the *Tafseer* of *Soorah al-Feel* (The Elephant, Qur'an 105).

⁹ 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn Jubayr ibn 'Abdullâh al-Anṣârî Abu 'Ateeq al-Madani: According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a reliable reporter of hadiths.

in Yemen. According to Muqâtil, one was in Najrân in Yemen, another in Syria and another in Persia. All of them were burnt in a fire. As for the ditch in Syria, it was during the rule of Anthony the Roman, while that in Persia was during the rule of Bakhtnaşar (Nebuchadnezzar). As for that in the land of the Arabs, it took place during the rule of Yoosuf, Dhu an-Nawwâs. Regarding those of Persia and Syria, Allah, the Almighty, All-Powerful, has not revealed anything concerning them in the Qur'an, but the verses were revealed concerning the people of Najrân¹⁰.

It is also narrated from Ar-Rabee' ibn Anas, that he said: "We used to hear concerning the words of Allah (ﷻ), ﴿[Self-]destroyed were the owners of the ditch﴾ that they were a people who lived during the time when corruption and religious innovation were widespread and the people were divided into numerous sects, each sect happy with its beliefs. The believers withdrew to a village where they could worship Allah, Alone, without partners, establishing prayer and paying zakah. They continued in this way for some time until a tyrant heard about them and what they were saying. He ordered them to worship graven images, but they all refused saying, 'We will worship none but Allah, Alone, without partners.' He said to them, 'Either you worship these deities whom I worship or I will kill you.' But they refused, so he had ditches of fire prepared. Then he said to them, 'Choose, either this (fire) or that (religion) which I follow.' They said, 'This (fire) is more preferable to us.' However there were women and children amongst them and the families began to panic. But their fathers said to them, 'There will be no fire after today.' So they fell into the ditches, but their souls were taken from them before the fire could touch them. Then the fire moved from its place and surrounded the tyrants and Allah burnt them. It was in

¹⁰ Najran: a city in southwestern Saudi Arabia

connection with this that Allah revealed: «[Self-]destroyed were the owners of the ditch, of the fuel-fed fire, when they sat by it, and were themselves the witnesses of what they did to the believers. They had nothing against them save that they believed in Allah, the Almighty, the Owner of Praise, Him unto Whom belongs the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth; and Allah is of all things the Witness.» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim) This was also narrated by Ibn Jareer.

«Certainly, they who persecute believing men and believing women» That is, those who burnt the believers, according to Ibn ‘Abbâs, Mujâhid, Qatâdah, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and Ibn Abzâ.¹¹

«And do not repent» That is, they do not desist from what they used to do, nor do they regret or repent what they did.

«Theirs verily will be the doom of Hell, and theirs the doom of burning» and that is a punishment in accordance with their deeds. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri said, “Look at this generosity, this magnanimity: they killed His close supporters, and still He calls them to repentance and forgiveness!”

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿١١﴾ إِنَّ بَطْشَ رَبِّكَ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿١٢﴾ إِنَّهُ هُوَ بَدِئُ وَيُئِذٍ ﴿١٣﴾ وَهُوَ الْعَفْوَءُ الْوَدُودُ ﴿١٤﴾ ذُو الْعَرْشِ الْمَجِيدُ ﴿١٥﴾ فَعَالَ لِمَا يُرِيدُ ﴿١٦﴾ هَلْ أُنثِقُ حَدِيثُ الْجُنُودِ ﴿١٧﴾ فِرْعَوْنَ وَنَمُودَ ﴿١٨﴾ بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي تَكْذِيبٍ ﴿١٩﴾ وَاللَّهُ مِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ مُحِيطٌ ﴿٢٠﴾ بَلْ هُوَ قُرْءَانٌ مَجِيدٌ ﴿٢١﴾ فِي لَوْحٍ مَحْفُوظٍ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾

(سورة البُورُوج : ١١-٢٢)

¹¹ ‘Abdur-Raḥmân ibn Abzâ: A Companion who was a child during the lifetime of the Prophet (bpuh). He grew to manhood during the caliphate of ‘Umar, he held official office under ‘Ali, in Khorasan, in Persia.

11. Certainly, those who believe and do good works, theirs will be Gardens underneath which rivers flow. That is the Great Success.
12. Indeed, the punishment of your Lord is stern.
13. Certainly, it is He Who produces, then reproduces,
14. And He is the Forgiving, the Loving,
15. Lord of the Throne of Glory,
16. Doer of what He will.
17. Has there come to you the story of the hosts
18. Of Pharaoh and [the tribe of] Thumud?
19. No, but those who disbelieve live in denial
20. And Allah, all unseen, surrounds them.
21. No, but it is a glorious Qur'an.
22. On a guarded tablet.

Allah (ﷻ) informs us about his believing slaves, that for them is the promise of gardens under which rivers flow in which they will dwell. This is in contrast with the burning Hell-fire which has been prepared for His enemies, as He says: ﴿That is the Great Success﴾.

Then He, the Exalted, says, ﴿Indeed, the punishment of your Lord is stern﴾ That is, the force and requital of Allah against His enemies, those who denied His Messengers and rejected His commandments is indeed harsh, terrible and overpowering. Verily, Allah is the Owner of enormous power, Whose Will is realized in the equivalent of the blink of an eye or less. This is why Allah says: ﴿Certainly, it is He Who produces, then reproduces﴾ That is, a part of His absolute power and ability to do all things is His ability to create from nothing and to bring those creations back to life once again, as He did in the first place.

﴿And He is the Forgiving, the Loving﴾ That is, He forgives the sins of those who turn to Him in repentance and submit themselves to Him, whatever their sins were. According to Ibn 'Abbâs and others, the verse means He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Loved.

«Lord of the Throne of Glory» That is, the Possessor of the mighty throne, Elevated above all of creation. As for «Glory», it has been recited in two ways: the first, as an adjective of the Lord, the Almighty, the All-Powerful, and the second as an adjective of the Throne. Both of these interpretations are correct.

«Doer of what He will» That is, whatever He wills, He does. None may criticize His Judgement. Nor is He asked about what He does, because of His Majesty, Force, Wisdom and Justice.

«Has there come to you the story of the hosts of Pharaoh and [the tribe of] Thumud?» That is, have you heard the story of the punishment and retribution that Allah sent against them? Theirs was a punishment from which none could save them. And this is connected to the meaning of Allah's words: «Indeed, the punishment of your Lord is stern» That is, when He seizes the unjust person, he receives a painful, severe requital and is seized in a mighty, powerful grip. It is narrated that, «The Prophet (ﷺ) passed by a woman who was reciting: «Has there come to you the story of the hosts»,” and he stopped to listen. Then he said, “Yes, it has come to me.” (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim)

«Nay, but those who disbelieve live in denial» That is, they are in doubt, suspicion, disbelief and obstinacy.

«And Allah, all unseen, surrounds them» That is, Allah is Master over them; He is All-Powerful and they are completely powerless to resist Him.

«Nay, but it is a glorious Qur'an» That is, mighty, holy.

«On a guarded tablet» That is, it is in the highest assembly, protected from all addition, shortening, editing or alteration. It is reported on the authority of Anas ibn Mâlik, concerning the words of Allah (ﷻ): «No, but it is a glorious Qur'an» that he said, “Verily, the

guarded tablet that Allah mentioned (in His words): ﴿No, but it is a glorious Qur'an, on a guarded tablet﴾ is on the forehead of Isrâfeel.” (Narrated by Ibn Jareer)

It is also reported that 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn Salmân¹² said:

“There is nothing that Allah ordained, including the Qur'an and all that came before it and all that came after it, except that it is written in the guarded tablet; and the guarded tablet is between the eyes of Isrâfeel, and it is not permitted for him to look at it.” (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim) Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri said: “Verily, this glorious Qur'an is with Allah, in a preserved tablet. He sends down of it what He wills to those of His creation whom He wills.”

Al-Baghawi narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that he said: “Verily, at the beginning of guarded tablet is written, ‘None is worthy of worship except Allah, Alone. His Religion is Islam and Muhammad is His Slave and messenger. So whoever believed in Allah and believed His promise and followed His messengers, He will admit him into Paradise.’” Ibn 'Abbâs said, “And the guarded tablet is a tablet of white pearl. Its length stretches between the heaven and the earth, while its width is from the east to the west. Its edges are lined with pearls and sapphires and its sides with rubies. Its pen is light and its words are attached to the Throne. Its original is in the chambers of an angel.” Muqâtil said: “The guarded tablet is on the right of the Throne.”

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Burooj*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

¹² 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn Salmân Abul Ayas was a *tâbi'ee* and a reliable reporter of hadiths, according to Ibn Hibbân.

Soorat at-Târiq (86)

The Night-Visitant

سُورَةُ الطَّارِقِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿وَالسَّمَاءِ وَالطَّارِقِ﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الطَّارِقُ ﴿٢﴾ أَلَتَجْمُ الثَّقَابِ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ لَمَّا عَلَتْهَا حَافِظٌ ﴿٤﴾ فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ ﴿٥﴾ خُلِقَ مِنْ مَّاءٍ دَافِقٍ ﴿٦﴾ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَيْنِ الصُّلْبِ وَالتَّرَائِبِ ﴿٧﴾ إِنَّهُ عَلَى رَجْعِهِ لَقَادِرٌ ﴿٨﴾ يَوْمَ تُبْلَى السَّرَائِرُ ﴿٩﴾ فَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَلَا نَاصِرٍ ﴿١٠﴾

(سورة الطارق: ١-١٠)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. By the Sky and the Night-Visitant [therein]; —
2. And what will explain to you what the Night-Visitant is? —
3. The piercing Star!
4. No human soul but has a guardian over it.
5. So let the human consider from what he is created.
6. He is created from a gushing fluid
7. That issued from between the loins and ribs.
8. Certainly, He verily is Able to return him [unto life]

9. On the day when hidden thoughts shall be searched out.
 10. Then will he have no might nor any helper.

It is narrated by Nasâ'i that «Mu'âdh prayed *maghrib* prayers and that he recited *Soorat al-Baqarah* and *Soorat an-Nisâ'*. The Prophet (ﷺ) said to him, "Are you one of those who put the people to trial O, Mu'âdh? Was it not enough for you to recite, ﴿By the Sky and the Night-Visitant [therein]﴾ or ﴿By the sun and its brightness﴾ or their like?"»¹

Allah, Most Blessed swears by the heaven and what He has placed in it of brilliant heavenly bodies. This is why He, the Exalted says: ﴿By the Sky and the Night-Visitant [therein]; and what will explain to you what the Night-Visitant is?﴾. Then He explains what it is in His words: ﴿The piercing Star!﴾ Qatâdah and others said that it was called the Night-Visitant because it appears suddenly at night. According to Ibn 'Abbâs, Allah's Words: ﴿The piercing Star!﴾ means the brilliant star. As-Suddi said that it is called the piercing star because it pierces the devils when it is sent to them. 'Ikrimah said that it is brilliant and it burns the devils.

﴿No human soul but has a guardian over it﴾ That is, every soul has a protector appointed by Allah over it that guards it from ill, as in the words of Allah (ﷻ):

﴿لَهُ مُعَقِّبَاتٌ مِّنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ ...﴾

(سورة الرعد: ١١)

﴿For him are angels ranged before him and behind him, who guard him by the Allah's command...﴾ (Qur'an 13: 11)

¹ The Prophet (bpuh) meant here that Mu'âdh should not have tired the people and caused them hardship by reciting such long chapters during the prayer, but could have chosen shorter chapters such as *aţ-Târiq* or *ash-Shams*. (Editor)

﴿So let the human consider from what he is created﴾ This is a warning to people so that they may be aware of the weakness of the substance from which they were created. It is also guidance for us regarding the promise of resurrection. For, He Who is Able to create humans in the first place is equally able to recreate them as He did before, as in His words:

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَهُوَ أَهْوَنُ عَلَيْهِ ...﴾

(سورة الرُّوم: ٢٧)

﴿He it is Who produces creation, then reproduces it, and it is easier for Him...﴾ (Qur'an 30: 27)

﴿He is created from a gushing fluid﴾ That is the sperm which comes forth from a man and the egg that is released in a woman² and a child is born from both of them, by Allah's leave. And so He says: ﴿That issued from between the loins and ribs﴾ That is, the backbone of the man and the ribs of the woman (that is, her chest). It was narrated from Ibn 'Abbâs: "﴿That issued from between the loins and ribs﴾ from the backbone of the man and the ribs of the woman. It is pale and thin, and no child is born except from them both." This was also said by Sa'eed ibn Jubayr, 'Krimah, Qatâdah, As-Suddi and others. It was narrated from Ibn 'Abbâs that he said: "﴿That issued from between the loins and ribs﴾: These are the ribs," and he placed his hand over his chest. (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim)

² Although these classical scholars had no way of knowing it, this verse is one of the scientific miracles of the Qur'an, for it describes the physical position in the body where the formation of male and female sex cells (egg and sperm) in the tiny human embryo occurs between five and seven weeks' gestation. (Editor)

Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and 'Atiyyah said, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), that the *tareebah*³ is the place where the necklace hangs. 'Ikrimah and Sa'eed ibn Jubayr agreed with this. 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah reported from Ibn 'Abbâs⁴ that the *tarâ'ib* are between the breasts. According to Mujâhid, the *tarâ'ib* are between the two shoulders and the chest. It is also narrated from him that the *tarâ'ib* are below the collar-bone. Sufiyân ath-Thawri said the *tarâ'ib* are above the breasts. Sa'eed ibn Jubayr said that they are four ribs away from the lowest end of the rib-cage. Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk said that the *tarâ'ib* are between the breasts and the legs and the eyes. Al-Layth ibn Sa'd⁵ said that he was informed by Mu'ammâr ibn Abi Ḥabeebah al-Madani⁶ concerning the words of Allah: “﴿That issued from between the loins and ribs﴾ it is from the essence of the heart — from here comes the child.” Qatâdah said: “﴿That issued from between the loins and ribs﴾ is the spinal column and its surrounding area.”

﴿Certainly, He verily is Able to return him [unto life]﴾ There are two sayings concerning this verse: “The first is that it means Allah is able to return this pouring fluid to the place from whence it came; this was said by Mujâhid, 'Ikrimah and others. The second saying is that Allah is able to return this human being, created from a pouring fluid, to life and send it to the abode of the hereafter, for He Who was able to create life in the first place is naturally able to return him to life. Allah has mentioned the proof of this in many places in

³ *tareebah*: the singular form of *tarâ'ib*, which is the word in verse 7 translated here as 'ribs'

⁴ See footnote 3 on page 112 of this book.

⁵ Al-Layth ibn Sa'd ibn 'Abdur-Raḥmân al-Fahmi Abul Ḥârith al-Misri. According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a reliable transmitter of hadiths, a scholar of jurisprudence and a famous Imam. He died in the month of Sh'abân in the year 75 H.

⁶ Mu'ammâr ibn Abi Ḥabeebah or, Ḥubayyah. According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a reliable narrator of hadiths.

the Qur'an." This was said by Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and it was the explanation preferred by Ibn Jareer.

This is why Allah says: ﴿On the day when hidden thoughts shall be searched out﴾ That is, on the Day of Resurrection the secrets will be revealed and will be made clear to all; that which was hidden will be revealed. It is authentically reported by Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ibn 'Umar that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «A flag will be fixed for every betrayer (on the Day of Resurrection) and it will be said, 'This is the perfidy of so-and-so.' »»

﴿Then will he have no﴾, 'he' is humankind, on the Day of Resurrection; ﴿might﴾ that is, in him or herself, ﴿nor any helper﴾ that is, other than him or herself. He will not be able to save himself from Allah's punishment, nor will any one else be able to do so.

﴿وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الرَّجْعِ ﴿١١﴾ وَالْأَرْضِ ذَاتِ الصَّدْعِ ﴿١٢﴾ إِنَّدَهُ لَقَوْلٌ فَصْلٌ ﴿١٣﴾ وَمَا هُوَ بِالْمُزِيلِ ﴿١٤﴾ إِنَّهُمْ يَكِيدُونَ كَيْدًا ﴿١٥﴾ وَأَكِيدُ كَيْدًا ﴿١٦﴾ فَمَهْلِكُ الْكَافِرِينَ أَهْمَهُمْ رُونًا ﴿١٧﴾﴾

(سورة الطارق: ١١-١٧)

11. By the heaven which gives the returning rain,
12. And the earth, which splits [with the growth of trees and plants]
13. Indeed, this [Qur'an] is a conclusive word,
14. It is no pleasantry.
15. Truly, they plot a plot [against you O Muhammad]
16. And I plot a plot [against them].
17. So give a respite to the disbelievers. Deal gently with them for a while.

Allah (ﷻ), swears by these aspects of His creation. Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said that the Arabic term *ar-raj'* (in verse 11) refers to

the rain. It is also narrated from him that he said it means rainclouds. It is also attributed to him that he said it means the clouds that rain and rain again. Qatâdah said it is the humans' subsistence, which returns every year, and if it did not, they would be destroyed along with their grazing animals. Ibn Zayd said it means the sky's returning stars, its sun and its moon.

﴿And the earth, which splits [with the growth of trees and plants]﴾, Ibn 'Abbâs (ؓ) said it means its bursting open with plants and Sa'eed ibn Jubayr, 'Ikrimah, Abu Mâlik, Ađ-Đahhâk, Al-Ĥasan, Qatâdah, as-Suddi and others agreed with this.

﴿Indeed, this [Qur'an] is a conclusive word﴾: this is what Allah (ؓ) is swearing to. Ibn 'Abbâs (ؓ) said it (the Qur'an) is truth, and Qatâdah concurred with this, adding that it is the last just judgement.

﴿It is no pleasantry.﴾ That is, on the contrary, it is absolute truth. Then He informs us about the unbelievers, that they reject it and turn away from its guidance, saying: ﴿Truly, they plot a plot [against you O Muhammad]﴾ That is, they seek to beguile the people away from the Qur'an.

﴿So give a respite to the disbelievers.﴾ Let the disbelievers wait, and do not be impatient on their behalf.

﴿Deal gently with them for a while.﴾ Bear with them for a little while and then you shall see the exemplary punishment, torment and humiliation that has been ordained for them, as in Allah's words:

(سورة لقمان : ٢٤) ﴿نَمْنَعُهُمْ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ نَضْطَرُّهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابٍ غَلِيظٍ﴾

﴿We give them comfort for a while, and then We drive them to a heavy doom.﴾ (Qur'an 31: 24)

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat at-Târiq*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-A'lâ (87)

The Most High

سُورَةُ الْأَعْلَى

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى ﴿١﴾ الَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسَوَّى ﴿٢﴾ وَالَّذِي قَدَّرَ فَهَدَى ﴿٣﴾
وَالَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الْمَرْعَى ﴿٤﴾ فَجَعَلَهُ غُثَاءً أَحْوَى ﴿٥﴾ سَنُقْرِئُكَ فَلَا تَنسَى ﴿٦﴾ إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ
اللَّهُ إِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْجَهْرَ وَمَا يَخْفَى ﴿٧﴾ وَنُبَشِّرُكَ لِلْيُسْرَى ﴿٨﴾ فَذَكِّرْ إِنْ نَفَعَتِ الذِّكْرَى ﴿٩﴾
سَيَذَكِّرُ مَنْ يَخْشَى ﴿١٠﴾ وَنَجْنِبُهَا الْأَشْفَى ﴿١١﴾ الَّذِي يَصِلُ النَّارَ الْكُبْرَى ﴿١٢﴾ ثُمَّ لَا
يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَى ﴿١٣﴾

(سورة الأعلى: ١-١٣)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Glorify the name of your Lord the Most High,
2. Who creates, then proportions [it];
3. Who measures, then guides;
4. Who brings forth the pasturage,
5. Then turns it to russet stubble.
6. We shall make you read [O Muhammad] so that you shall not forget

7. Save that which Allah wills. Certainly, He knows the disclosed and that which still is hidden;
8. And We shall ease your way unto the state of ease.
9. Therefore remind [people], for of use is the reminder.
10. He will heed who fears,
11. But the most hapless will flout it,
12. He who will be flung to the great Fire
13. Wherein he will neither die nor live.

The proof that this *Soorah* was revealed in Makkah is a narration of Bukhari, on the authority of Al-Barâ' ibn 'Âzib, that he said: "The first of the Companions to come to us in Madinah was Mus'ab ibn 'Umayr and Ibn Ummi Maktoom, who taught us the Qur'an. Then came 'Ammâr, Bilâl and Sa'd. Then came 'Umar ibn al-Khaţţâb with a band of twenty (men). After that the Prophet (ﷺ) came and I have not seen anything like his arrival. The children were happy and chanting: "This is the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) who has come!" And he did not arrive until I had learnt, ﴿Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High﴾ and other similar chapters."

It is also narrated on the authority of 'Ali (ؑ) that he said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to love this *soorah*, ﴿Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High﴾." (Narrated by Aĥmad) It is also authentically reported by Bukhari and Muslim that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to Mu'âdh: «Do you not recite in prayer, ﴿Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High﴾ (*Soorat al-A 'lâ*) or ﴿By the sun and its brightness﴾ (*Soorat ash-Shams*) or ﴿By the night enshrouding﴾ (*Soorat al-Layl*)?» Aĥmad also narrates on the authority of An-Nu'mân ibn Basheer that, «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to recite ﴿Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High﴾ and ﴿Has there come to you tidings of the Overwhelming?﴾ (*Soorat al-Ghâshiyah*): and if it was on Friday he recited both of them in the prayer." (Aĥmad, Abu Dawood, Muslim, Tirmidhi and Nasâ'i)

It is also narrated from several of the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to recite it in his *witr*¹ prayers along with «Say: O disbelievers!» (*Soorat al-Kâfiroon*), «Say: He is Allah, the One.» (*Soorat al-Ikhlâs*) and, according to 'Â'ishah, also *al-mu'awwidhatayn*.² This has been narrated from many of the Companions (رضي الله عنهم) and if it were not that I feared to make this too long, I would have mentioned them with their chains of narrators and their texts. However, the guidance of those already mentioned is sufficient, and Allah knows best.

It is narrated from 'Uqbah ibn 'Âmir al-Juhani that, «When the *soorah*:

(سورة الواقعة: ٧٤) ﴿فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ﴾

«Therefore glorify the name of your Lord, the Great.»

(*Qur'an* 56: 74),

— was revealed, that the Messenger of Allah said to us: “Place it in your bowing (in prayer).” Then when the *soorah* «Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High» was revealed, he said: “Place it in your prostration (in prayer).”» (Narrated by Aḥmad, Abu Dawood and Ibn Mâjah)

It is also narrated from Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that, «Whenever the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) recited, «Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High», he would say, “Glorified be my Lord, the Exalted.”» (Narrated by Aḥmad and Abu Dawood) It is also narrated by Ath-Thawri from 'Alî (رضي الله عنه) that he used to do likewise. Ibn Jareer reported from Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that whenever he used to recite:

¹ *witr* prayers: an odd number or single unit of superogatory prayer, to be prayed anytime after 'ishâ' but before the *adhân* (call for prayer) of *fajr* prayer

² *al-mu'awwidhatayn*: the last two chapters in the Qur'an: *Soorat al-Falaq* and *Soorat an-Nâs*

﴿Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High﴾, he would say: “Glorified be my Lord, the Exalted” and whenever he recited ﴿Nay, I swear by the Day of Resurrection﴾ (*Soorat al-Wâqi'ah*), he would say, upon reaching the verse:

(سورة القيامة: ٤٠) ﴿أَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ بِقَدِيرٍ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يُحْيِيَ الْمَوْتَىٰ﴾

﴿Is not He [Who does so] Able to bring the dead to life?﴾

(*Qur'an* 75: 1 & 40)

— he would say, “Glorified are You, assuredly (He is able to do so).” Qatâdah said, “﴿Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High﴾; We were informed that the Prophet of Allah (ﷺ) used to say: «“Glorified be my Lord, the Exalted,” whenever he recited it.»

﴿Who creates, then proportions [it]:﴾ Allah (ﷻ) created the whole universe and everything in it in the best form.

﴿Who measures, then guides﴾: according to Mujâhid, Allah guides humankind to happiness and unhappiness and the grazing animals to pasture. This verse is like the words of Allah in which He informs us that Prophet Moses (ﷺ) said to Pharaoh:

(سورة طه: ٥٠) ﴿قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَىٰ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ﴾

﴿Our Lord is He Who gave unto everything its nature, then guided it aright.﴾

(*Qur'an* 20: 50)

That is, He (ﷻ) proportioned everything in due measure and then guided all of creation to it, as is confirmed in the authentic hadith narrated by Muslim: «Verily, Allah ordained the measure of all creation fifty thousand years before he created the heavens and the earth and his Throne was over the water.»

﴿Who brings forth the pasturage,﴾ meaning, every kind of plant and crop.

﴿Then turns it to russet stubble﴾, According to Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), it means: altered chaff, and Mujâhid, Qatâdah and Ibn Zayd said likewise. According to Ibn Jareer, some scholars of Arabic language said that what is intended here is that Allah brings forth the crops green, then black and then makes it into chaff after that. But Ibn Jareer said: “This could be so, but it contradicts the sayings of the scholars of *ta’weel*.”³

﴿We shall make you read [O Muhammad]﴾: Allah (ﷻ) that He will make His Messenger recite, ﴿so that you shall not forget﴾ this is the statement of Allah, the Exalted, and His promise that He will make the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) recite a recitation that he will not forget, ﴿Save that which Allah wills﴾. This is the interpretation of Ibn Jareer. Qatâdah said: “The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) never used to forget anything except what Allah wished him to forget.” It was also said that what was meant by His words: ﴿Save that which Allah wills﴾ is that Muhammad would not forget anything except what Allah caused him to forget due to its abrogation.

﴿Certainly, He knows the disclosed and that which is hidden﴾ That is, He knows what His slaves do openly before Allah and what they try to hide from Him, whether it be in words or deeds, for none of it is hidden from Him.

³ *ta’weel*: In the time of Ibn Jareer aṭ-Ṭabari, the word *ta’weel* had not yet acquired its negative meaning of altering the definition of something in order to suit one’s purpose. Here it means *tafseer*, as in the words of Allah, Most High: ﴿Or do they say: He [Muhammad] has invented it? Say: Then bring a soorah like unto it, and call [for help] on all you can besides Allah, if you are truthful. No, but they denied that, the knowledge whereof they could not encompass, and whereof the interpretation [in events] [*ta’weel*] has not yet come unto them. Even so did those before them deny. Then see what was the consequence for the wrong-doers!﴾ (Qur’an 10: 38-39)

﴿And We shall ease your way unto the state of ease.﴾ That is, Allah will make it easier for Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) to do good deeds and say good words; and Allah will make the law easy and tolerant, and at the same time it shall be straight and just law, free from crookedness, and without difficulty or complication for His Messenger and the believers.

﴿Therefore remind [people], for of use is the reminder.﴾ That is, remind them where it is profitable to remind. From here we understand the necessity of using the correct manner in spreading knowledge; it should not be wasted upon foolish people. 'Ali, the Commander of the Faithful said: "...Speak to the people in a manner which they understand..."

﴿He who fears will heed﴾: anyone who receives the message that Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) delivered and in whose heart is fear of Allah and who knows that he or she will meet with Him, will be warned by it.

﴿But the most hapless will flout it, he who will be flung to the great Fire wherein he will neither die nor live.﴾ That is, the disbeliever who ends up in Hell will not die, thereby finding rest, nor will he live a beneficial life. On the contrary, it will do naught but harm him, for through it he will experience all manner of painful torment and punishment. It is narrated from Abu Sa'eed (al-Khudri) that he said: «“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘As for the people of the fire, those who are its inhabitants do not die nor do they live. But as for those for whom Allah wills mercy and compassion, He causes them to die in the fire and then the intercessors come and the people will be taken in groups. Then Allah will cause them to grow’; or he said, ‘Then they will be caused to grow in the river of *al-Hayâ*,’⁴ or

⁴ *al-hayâ*: modesty

he said, 'al-Ḥayât,'⁵ or he said, 'al-Ḥayawân,'⁶ or he said, 'the river of Paradise.' And they will grow like a grain in the flood waters of the river." He added: "The Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'Do you not see the tree, how it becomes green, then it becomes white, then it become green?' He (Abu Sa'eed) said, 'Some of those present said that it was as if the Prophet (ﷺ) was in the desert.' "» (Narrated by Aḥmad) Muslim also narrated this.

Allah has also said, concerning the people of the Fire: ﴿And they cry: O Mâlik [Keeper of Hell]! Let your Lord make an end of us! He says: Indeed, here you must remain.﴾ (Qur'an 43: 77).

He also says:

﴿... لَا يُقْضَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ فَيَمُوتُوا وَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِهَا ...﴾ (36)

(سورة فاطر: ٣٦)

﴿... It does not take complete effect upon them so that they die, nor is its torment lightened for them...﴾ (Qur'an 35: 36),

— and there are other verses that bear the same meaning.

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّىٰ ۖ وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّىٰ ۝١٥﴾ بَلْ تُؤَثِّرُونَ الْحَيَوَةَ الدُّنْيَا ۝١٦﴾
 ﴿وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ ۝١٧﴾ إِنَّ هَذَا لَفِي الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَىٰ ۝١٨﴾ صُحُفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ

(سورة الأعلى: ١٤-١٩)

﴿١٩﴾

14. He indeed shall be successful who purifies himself,

⁵ al-ḥayât: life

⁶ al-ḥayawân: all living things

15. And remembers the name of his Lord, so prays,
16. But you prefer the life of the world
17. Although the Hereafter is better and more lasting.
18. Truly, this is in the former scrolls,
19. The Books of Abraham and Moses.

Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿He indeed shall be successful who purifies himself﴾: that is, whoever purifies him or herself from base, evil ways and obeys what Allah revealed to His Messenger (ﷺ).

﴿And remembers the name of his Lord, so prays.﴾ This verse is referring to the believer who establishes prayer at its proper time, desiring to please Allah and to obey His commandments and is in compliance with the law of Allah. It is narrated from Jâbir ibn 'Abdullâh, that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“﴿He indeed shall be successful who purifies himself﴾, whoever testifies that none is worthy of worship except Allah, forsaking all partners, and testifies that I am the Messenger of Allah. ﴿And remembers the name of his Lord, so prays﴾, it is the five prayers and the strictest compliance and care in their performance.”» (Narrated by Al-Bazzâr) It was also narrated from Ibn 'Abbâs that it refers to the five prayers; this was the preferred tafseer of Ibn Jareer. I say: It is narrated to us from the Commander of the Faithful, 'Umar ibn 'Abdul 'Azeez, that he used to order the people to pay *zakât al-fiṭr*⁷ reciting: “﴿He indeed shall be successful who purifies himself [by paying *zakât al-fiṭr*] and remembers the name of his Lord, so prays﴾.” According to Qatâdah, it refers to him who pays *zakât*⁸ on his wealth, thus pleasing the Creator.

⁷ *zakât al-fiṭr*: charity in the form of food for the poor paid at the end of the month of Ramaḍân

⁸ *zakât*: obligatory charity; an 'alms tax' on wealth payable by Muslims and to be distributed to other Muslims who qualify as recipients

﴿But you prefer the life of the world﴾ people place it before the matter of the Hereafter, considering such interests as their income and their livelihood to be of greater importance than the next life.

﴿Although the Hereafter is better and more lasting﴾ That is, Allah's reward in the abode of the hereafter is more lasting, for the life of this world is transient and short-lived, while the abode of the hereafter is noble, eternal. So how can any rational, intelligent person prefer that which is transient over that which is everlasting? How can a person pay so much attention to that which will end soon and ignore the eternal, everlasting abode? It is narrated on the authority of 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) that she said: «“Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, 'This life is the abode of one who has no abode; it is the wealth of one who has no wealth; and on account of it gathers those who have no sense.'”» (Narrated by Aḥmad)

It is narrated that Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) recited this verse, then he addressed the people saying: «“We have preferred the life of this world over the hereafter.” The people became silent and then he said, “We have preferred the life of this world because we have seen its adornments, its women, its food and drink and we have distanced ourselves from the hereafter; we have chosen the present over the future.”» (Narrated by Aṭ-Ṭabari) It is reported on the authority of Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «Whoever loves the life of this world will suffer in the hereafter, and whoever loves the hereafter will suffer in this world; so prefer that which is lasting over that which is transient.”» (Narrated by Aḥmad)

﴿Truly, this is in the former scrolls, the Books of Abraham and Moses.﴾ It is narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that he said: “The Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘All of this was in the scriptures of Ibrâheem (Abraham) and Moosa (Moses).’”» (Narrated by Nasâ'i) 'Ikrimah said that the verses of *Soorat al-A'la* are in the scriptures of Abraham and Moses. Abul 'Āliyah said that it means that the

message of this *soorah* was related in the former scriptures (of Abraham and Moses). Ibn Jareer's preferred tafseer for this verse was: ﴿He indeed shall be successful who purifies himself, and remembers the name of his Lord, so prays. But you prefer the life of the world, although the Hereafter is better and more lasting﴾, then Allah says: ﴿Truly, this﴾ that is, the purport of these verses ﴿is in the former scrolls. The Books of Abraham and Moses﴾. This tafseer was also attributed to Qatâdah and Ibn Zayd, and Allah knows best.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-A'îlâ*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-Ghâshiyah (88)

The Overwhelming

سُورَةُ الْغَاشِيَةِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ الْغَاشِيَةِ﴾ ١ ﴿وَجوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَاشِعَةٌ﴾ ٢ ﴿عَامِلَةٌ نَاصِبَةٌ﴾ ٣ ﴿تَصَلَّى نَارًا حَامِيَةً﴾ ٤ ﴿تُسْقَى مِنْ عَيْنٍ عَاطِيَةٍ﴾ ٥ ﴿لَيْسَ لَهُمْ طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ ضَرِيحٍ﴾ ٦ ﴿لَا يُسْمِنُ وَلَا يُغْنِي مِنْ جُوعٍ﴾ ٧

(سورة الغاشية: ١-٧)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Has there come to you the news of the Overwhelming?
2. On that day [many] faces will be downcast,
3. Toiling, weary,
4. Scorched by blazing fire,
5. Drinking from a boiling spring,
6. No food for them save bitter thorn-fruit
7. Which does not nourish nor release from hunger.

We have already mentioned that it was reported on the authority of An-Nu'mân ibn Basheer that the Messenger of Allah

(ﷺ) used to recite ﴿Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High﴾ and *Soorat al-Ghâshiyah* in the *Eid*¹ prayers and in the Friday congregational prayer. It is narrated that, «Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk ibn Qays asked An-Nu'mân ibn Basheer about what the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to recite in the Friday prayer along with *Soorat al-Jumu'ah*, and he said: “﴿Has there come to you the story of the Overwhelming?﴾”» (Narrated by Imam Mâlik, Abu Dawood, Nasâ'i, Muslim and Ibn Mâjah)

Al-Ghâshiyah (the Overwhelming) is one of the names of the Day of Resurrection, according to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), Qatâdah and Ibn Zayd, because it will totally overwhelm people. 'Amr ibn Maymoon said: «“The Prophet (ﷺ) passed by a woman who was reciting ﴿Has there come to you the story of the Over-whelming?﴾ and he stood, listening and said, ‘Yes, it has come to me.’”»

﴿On that day [many] faces will be downcast﴾ This interpretation of the word *khâshi'ah* was given by Qatâdah. Ibn 'Abbâs said: “They will be humble and their deeds will not benefit them.”

﴿Toiling, weary,﴾ they have laboured hard and they are exhausted, but on the Day of Resurrection they will enter a blazing fire. It is reported that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (رضي الله عنه) passed by the abode of a monk and he called out to the monk within: “O monk!” When the monk came out, 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) looked at him and began to weep. He was asked, “What has made you weep here, O, Commander of the Faithful?” He answered, “I remembered the words of Allah (ﷻ) in His Book, ﴿Toiling, weary, scorched by blazing fire﴾. That is what made me cry.” Bukhari said that Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said that the verse refers to the Christians. 'Ikrimah and As-Suddi said that it means they labour at their acts of disobedience

¹ Eid: festival; the two celebrations: one at the end of Ramaḍân and the other at the culmination of the Hajj

in this life, and then they enter the fire of eternal punishment and humiliation. Ibn ‘Abbâs (ﷺ), Al-Ḥasan and Qatâdah said they will enter a fire of intense heat.

﴿They will be given to drink from a boiling spring﴾: it is a boiling, scorching drink; this was said by Ibn ‘Abbâs, Mujâhid, Al-Ḥasan and As-Suddi.

﴿No food for them save bitter thorn-fruit﴾, ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (ﷺ)² that it is a tree in the fire. Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr said that it is the tree of *Zaqqoom*,³ and it is also narrated from him that he said it means stones. Ibn ‘Abbâs, Mujâhid, ‘Ikrimah and others said that it is *shabraq*, Qatâdah added that the people of Quraysh call it *ash-shabraq* in the spring and *Ḍaree‘* (the Arabic word at the end of this verse) in the summer. ‘Ikrimah said it is a thorny tree that reaches down to the ground. Bukhari said that Mujâhid said that *Ḍaree‘* is a plant known as *shabraq*; the people of Ḥijâz⁴ call it *Ḍaree‘* when it has dried, and it is poisonous. It is also narrated from Qatâdah that he said it is *shabraq*, and that when it has dried, it is called *Ḍaree‘*. It is additionally reported on the authority of Qatâdah that he said that it is the most evil of foods, the least nutritious and the most disgusting.

² It should be noted here that, according to Ibn Hajr al-‘Asqâlâni, ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah did not meet Ibn ‘Abbâs, therefore any narrations on his authority must be considered *mursal*, and cannot be cited as a proof.

³ *Zaqqoom*: a horrible tree in Hell, food for the people in Hell. Allah, the Most High says, addressing the unbelievers: ﴿You verily will eat of a tree called *Zaqqoom* and will fill your bellies therewith; and thereon you will drink of boiling water, drinking even as the camel drinks. This will be their welcome on the Day of Judgement.﴾ (*Qur’an* 56: 52-56)

⁴ Ḥijâz: the western region of the Arabian peninsula in which Makkah and Madinah are located

﴿Which will neither nourish nor release from hunger.﴾ That is, it does not achieve the desired result, nor does it save one from misfortune.

﴿وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاعِمَةٌ ﴿٨﴾ لَسَعِيهَا رَاضِيَةٌ ﴿٩﴾ فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ ﴿١٠﴾ لَا تَسْمَعُ فِيهَا لَغِيَةً ﴿١١﴾ فِيهَا عَيْنٌ جَارِيَةٌ ﴿١٢﴾ فِيهَا سُرُرٌ مَّرْفُوعَةٌ ﴿١٣﴾ وَأَكْوَابٌ مَوْضُوعَةٌ ﴿١٤﴾ وَمَنَارِقُ مَصْفُوفَةٌ ﴿١٥﴾ وَزَرَابِيُّ مَبْثُوثَةٌ ﴿١٦﴾﴾

(سورة الغاشية: ٨-١٦)

8. On that day other faces will be calm,
9. Glad for their effort past,
10. In a high Garden
11. Where they hear no idle speech,
12. Wherein is a gushing spring,
13. Wherein are couches raised
14. And goblets set at hand
15. And cushions ranged
16. And silken carpets spread.

After mentioning the situation of the wretched, He, the Exalted, says: ﴿On that day﴾, that is, on the Day of Resurrection.

﴿other faces will be calm﴾ Bliss will be evident on their faces, and they have achieved this by their striving.

﴿Glad for their effort past﴾ Sufiyân said that their deeds have made them happy.

﴿In a high Garden﴾, Paradise is an elevated and glorious place, and its inhabitants will live in spacious chambers, safe, secure and peaceful.

«Where they hear no idle speech,» in the garden, you will not hear a word of nonsense, or vain talk, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

(سورة مريم: ٦٢) ﴿لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا إِلَّا سَلَامًا...﴾

«They hear therein no idle talk, but only Peace...» (Qur'an 19: 62)

And:

﴿لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا تَأْتِيهَا إِلَّا قِيلًا سَلَامًا سَلَامًا﴾

(سورة الواقعة: ٢٥-٢٦)

«There they hear no vain speaking nor recrimination, [naught] but the saying: Peace, [and again] Peace.» (Qur'an 56: 25-26)

«Wherein is a gushing spring» The gushing spring is only mentioned in the singular in order to emphasize it.⁵ It is not inferred from this that there is only one spring, on the contrary, there are a number of gushing springs. It is reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that he said: «“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘The rivers of Paradise spring from beneath hills (or he said: from beneath mountains)⁶ of musk.’”» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim)

«Wherein are couches raised», that is, elevated (couches),⁷ soft, with many cushions, of elevated thickness. Upon them are *hoor*

⁵ This literary technique is well known to scholars of the Arabic language.

⁶ Abu Hurayrah's uncertainty about whether the Prophet said hills or mountains may have been due to the fact that in Arabic, the two words sound similar as well as having similar meanings, (*tilâl*: hills, and *jibâl*: mountains) — and Allah knows best.

⁷ Ibn Katheer has not given any explanation for the word *surur* used in this verse. He probably saw no need to explain it. The dictionary definition of the word is given as 'throne' or 'couch'. Muhammad Muhsin Khan and Muhammad Taqi ad-Deen al-Hilâli have followed Abdullah Yusuf Ali's=

al-'ein.⁸ It is said that when the friends of Allah want to sit on these raised couches, they will be lowered for them.

﴿And goblets set at hand﴾ are drinking vessels prepared, waiting for the believers if they want them.

﴿And cushions ranged﴾ According to Ibn 'Abbâs, *namâriq* (the Arabic term used in this verse) are cushions or pillows; 'Ikrimah, Qatâdah, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and others held the same view. The cushions are set in rows.

﴿And silken carpets spread.﴾ This meaning is according to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and others; rugs are spread out for whoever wants to sit on them.

﴿أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ ﴿١٧﴾ وَإِلَى السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ ﴿١٨﴾ وَإِلَى الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ ﴿١٩﴾ وَإِلَى الْأَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ ﴿٢٠﴾ فَذَكَرْ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُذَكَّرٌ ﴿٢١﴾ لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيِّرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِلَّا مَنْ تَوَلَّى وَكَفَرَ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَيُعَذِّبُهُ اللَّهُ الْعَذَابَ الْأَكْبَرَ ﴿٢٤﴾ إِنَّ إِلَيْنَا إِيَابَهُمْ ﴿٢٥﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا حِسَابَهُمْ ﴿٢٦﴾﴾

(سورة العنكبوت: ١٧-٢٦)

17. Will they not regard the camels, how they are created?

18. And the heaven, how it is raised?

=rendering of the word as *thrones*, while Muhammad Pickthall has chosen *couches*. The latter seems more correct, based on Ibn Katheer's description of them as: "...soft, with many cushions, of elevated thickness; upon them are the *hūr al-'ein*", and Allah knows best.

⁸ *Hūr al-'Ein*: plural of *ḥuwra*' (gazelle-like) + *'ein* (eye); houris, the buxom women with beautiful eyes, promised to the believers in Paradise

19. And the hills, how they are set up?
20. And the earth, how it is spread?
21. Remind them, for you are but one who reminds,
22. You are not at all a warder over them.
23. But whoso is averse and disbelieves,
24. Allah will punish him with the direst punishment.
25. Certainly, unto Us is their return
26. And Ours their reckoning.

Allah (ﷻ) commands His slaves to observe His creatures, which are a clear proof of His ability and grandeur in His words: ﴿Will they not regard the camels, how they are created?﴾ Truly, they are a wondrous creation. The way they are assembled is indeed strange; they are extremely strong and powerful; they are able to carry heavy loads, yet even the weakest driver may lead them. Their meat can be eaten, their hair can be woven into rugs and tents, and their milk is a highly nutritious drink.

The Arabs took note of this verse because the most valuable of their livestock to them were camels. Shurayh al-Qâdi said: “Let us go out and look at the camels, how they are created, and at the heaven, how it is raised.” That is, let us look at how it was raised by Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful, above the earth in a powerful elevation. As Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿أَفَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَوْقَهُمْ كَيْفَ بَنَيْنَاهَا وَزَيَّنَّاهَا وَمَا لَهَا مِنْ فُرُوجٍ﴾

(سورة ق: ٦)

﴿Have they not then observed the sky above them, how We have constructed it and beautified it, and how there are no rifts therein?﴾

(*Qur'an 50: 6*)

﴿And the hills, how they are set up?﴾ As if the hills and mountains were planted, for they are fixed and firm. If they were not, the earth would tremble and shake with its inhabitants. In them are found many valuable minerals; and there are other benefits in them as well.⁹

﴿And the earth, how it is spread?﴾ The surface of the earth has been spread, flattened, and stretched out. The bedouins observed these clear proofs — in the camels that they ride, the heaven that is over their heads, the mountains in front of them and the earth beneath them of Allah's power and ability to create all of them, for He is the Mighty Lord, the Creator, the Ruler, the Disposer of affairs, besides Whom there is none who has the right to be worshipped.

It is narrated on the authority of Anas (رضي الله عنه), that he said: «“We were constrained from asking the Messenger (ﷺ) about something, and so we hoped that an intelligent man would come from the desert and ask him while we were listening. Then a bedouin man came and he said, ‘O Muhammad! Your messenger came to us and he maintains that you claim that Allah has sent you.’ He (ﷺ) replied: ‘He has told the truth.’ ‘Then (tell me),’ said the man, ‘Who created the heavens?’ He (ﷺ) answered, ‘Allah.’ The man said, ‘Then who created the earth?’ He (ﷺ) replied, ‘Allah.’ The man said, ‘Then who fixed these mountains, and placed in them what is there?’ He (ﷺ) said, ‘Allah.’ The man said, ‘Then by Him Who created the heaven and the earth and fixed these mountains, did Allah send you?’ He (ﷺ) answered, ‘Yes.’ The man then said, ‘And your messenger claims that we are obligated to pray five times a day (did he speak the truth)?’ Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) replied, ‘He has spoken the truth.’ He then asked, ‘And by Him Who sent you, did Allah order you to do

⁹ Mountains and hills play a key role in the formation of high and low pressure areas that bring rain and other weather patterns. (Editor)

this?' He (ﷺ) said, 'Yes.' The man said, 'And your messenger claims that we are obliged to pay zakah on our wealth (did he speak the truth)?' He (ﷺ) replied, 'Yes.' The man said, 'Then by Him Who sent you, did Allah order you to do this?' He answered, 'Yes.' The man said, 'And your messenger says that we have to undertake a pilgrimage to (Allah's) House, for whoever has the means.' The Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'He spoke the truth.' Then the man turned to leave, saying, 'Then by Him Who sent you with the truth, I will not do anything more or less than this!' At which, the Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'If he is truthful, he will surely enter Paradise.' » (Narrated by Imam Ahmad) Muslim has also narrated this as has Tirmidhi, Bukhari, Abu Dawood, Nasâ'i and Ibn Mâjah, at the end of whose narration, the man said: "And I am Dhamâm ibn Tha'labah, the brother of Bani Sa'd ibn Bakr."

﴿Remind them, for you are but one who reminds. You are not at all a warder over them﴾ That is, so remind the people, O Muhammad, of that with which Allah has sent you to them, (as in His words):

﴿... فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلْغُ وَعَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ﴾ (سورة الرعد: ٤٠)

﴿... Yours is but conveyance [of the Message], Ours the Reckoning.﴾
(*Qur'an* 13: 40)

This is why Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿You are not at all a warder over them﴾. Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) and Mujâhid and others said it means that Prophet Muhammad is not a dictator over people: that is, he cannot create faith in their hearts. Ibn Zayd said it means that Prophet Muhammad is not the one who will force them to believe. It is reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «I was ordered to fight the people until they say that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah, and that if they say it, their blood and their

wealth are inviolate to me, except in accordance with the law; and their account is with Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful.” Then he recited the words of Allah: ﴿Remind them, for you are but one who reminds. You are not at all a warder over them﴾.» (Narrated by Imam Aḥmad) This was also narrated by Muslim in the Chapter of Faith and Tirmidhi and Nasâ'i in the Chapter of Tafseer in their collections of Hadith (*Sunan*). It is also narrated by Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, without mentioning the verses.

﴿But whoso is averse and disbelieves﴾, means: whoever turns away from all good works and rejects the Truth. This is why Allah says: ﴿Allah will punish him with the direst punishment﴾ It is reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «“Verily, every one of you will enter Paradise except he who flees from Allah like a startled camel that bolts from the herd.”» (Narrated by Imam Aḥmad) It was also narrated by Ibn Abi Ḥâtim without adding anything to what we have narrated here.

﴿Certainly, unto Us is their return﴾ Their final return is to their Creator on the Day of Resurrection.

﴿And Ours their reckoning﴾ Allah will call them to account for their deeds and will recompense them accordingly: good with good and evil with evil.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Ghâshiyah*.
All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-Fajr (89)

The Dawn

سُورَةُ الْفَجْرِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿وَالْفَجْرِ﴾ ١ وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ ﴿٢﴾ وَالشَّفْعِ وَالْوَتْرِ ﴿٣﴾ وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَسْرِ ﴿٤﴾ هَلْ فِي ذَلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّذِي حِجْرِ ﴿٥﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ ﴿٦﴾ إِرَمَ ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ ﴿٧﴾ الَّتِي لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلُهَا فِي الْبِلَادِ ﴿٨﴾ وَتَمُودَ الَّذِينَ جَابُوا الصَّخْرَ بِالْوَادِ ﴿٩﴾ وَفِرْعَوْنَ ذِي الْأَوْدَادِ ﴿١٠﴾ الَّذِينَ طَغَوْا فِي الْبِلَادِ ﴿١١﴾ فَأَكْثَرُوا فِيهَا الْفَسَادَ ﴿١٢﴾ فَصَبَّ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّكَ سَوْطَ عَذَابٍ ﴿١٣﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِالْمِرْصَادِ ﴿١٤﴾

(سورة الفجر: ١-١٤)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. By the Dawn
2. And ten nights,
3. And the Even and the Odd,
4. And the night when it departs,
5. There surely is an oath for a reasoning person.
6. Do you not consider how your Lord dealt with [the tribe of] 'Âd,
7. With many-columned Iram,

8. The like of which was not created in the lands;
9. And with [the tribe of] Thamood, who clove the rocks in the valley;
10. And with Pharaoh, firm of might,
11. Who [all] were rebellious [to Allah] in these lands,
12. And multiplied iniquity therein?
13. Therefore your Lord poured on them the disaster of His punishment.
14. Indeed, your Lord is ever watchful.

﴿By the dawn﴾ refers of course to the daybreak. This was agreed upon by 'Ali, Ibn 'Abbâs, 'Ikrimah, Mujâhid and As-Suddi. According to Masrooq and Muhammad ibn Ka'b, it refers to the dawn of the day of slaughter during Hajj especially since it marks the end of the ten nights (see below). It was also said that it refers to the dawn prayer, and it was said that it means the daylight hours.

﴿And ten nights﴾ are the first ten nights of the month of Dhul Hijjah (the month in which the Hajj takes place), as explained by Ibn 'Abbâs, Mujâhid and others. It has been authentically reported by Bukhari, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «“There are no days whose deeds are more loved by Allah than these.” that is, the ten days at the start of Dhul Hijjah. They asked, “Not even battle (jihad) in the way of Allah?” He (ﷺ) replied, “Not even battle (jihad) in the way of Allah, unless it were a man who went out (for battle), giving of himself and his wealth, and returned with nothing.”» It was also said that it refers to the first ten nights of the month of Muḥarram, however it cannot be traced back to any of the Companions or the *tâbi'oon*¹. It was also narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs, that it refers to the first ten nights of the month of

¹ *tâbi'oon*: (plural of tâbi'ee): those who had met one or more of the Companions of the Prophet (bpuh)

Ramadan, however the first saying (i.e. that it refers to the first ten nights of Dhul Hġijjah is the correct explanation.

﴿And the Even and the Odd﴾ According to Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه), ‘Ikrimah and Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk, ﴿the even﴾ refers to the day of slaughter, because it falls on the tenth day of the month, while ﴿the odd﴾ refers to the day of ‘Arafah, which falls on the ninth of the month. It was also said that the day of ‘Arafah is the tenth (and therefore ﴿the even﴾), while the night of the day of slaughter is the ninth (and therefore ﴿the odd﴾). A third saying is that ﴿the even﴾ refers to the words of Allah (ﷻ):

﴿... فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ...﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٢٠٣)

﴿... Then whoso hastens [his departure] by two days, it is no sin for him...﴾ (Qur’an 2: 203)

—and ﴿the odd﴾ refers to the words of Allah (ﷻ):

﴿... وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ...﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٢٠٣)

﴿... and whoso delays, it is no sin for him...﴾ (Qur’an 2: 203).

Still another saying is that ﴿the even﴾ refers to all creation, while ﴿the odd﴾ refers to Allah swearing by His creation. It was also said that Allah is ﴿the odd﴾ because He is only one, and His creation is ﴿the even﴾ referring to the male and female from amongst His creatures. It was narrated from Mujāhid that he said: “Everything that Allah has created is ﴿the even﴾ and Allah is ﴿the odd﴾.” That this is the meaning of Allah’s words:

﴿وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ﴾ (سورة الذاریات: ٤٩)

﴿And all things We have created by pairs, that haply you may reflect﴾ (Qur’an 51: 49)

— that is, to know that the Creator of those pairs is One.

According to Qatâdah, the verse refers to the number of Allah's creation, which includes odd numbers and even. It is also attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: ««The even» is the first two days (of Dhul Hijjah), while «the odd» is the third day.» This was narrated by Ibn Jareer, but it contradicts what is narrated from Aḥmad, Nasâ'i and Ibn Jareer himself. It was also said that it refers to prayers: «the odd» refers to *maghrib* and *witr* prayers², and «the even» refers to *fajr*, *dhuhr*, *'aṣr* and *'ishâ* prayers³. Another saying is that the verse refers to the five obligatory prayers of which there are odd and even; however, this saying is not authentic. Still, Imam Aḥmad reports something like it in his *Musnad*, and Tirmidhi and Ibn Jareer narrate it also, but all of these narrations have some weakness in them.⁴

«And the night when it departs» is the meaning attributed to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه); 'Abdullâh ibn Zubayr said that it means 'by the night as it departs, little by little'. It was narrated from Mujâhid, Abu 'Âliyah and others that it means 'by the night as it approaches', or 'departs', since the Arabic word *sarâ* may carry both meanings. It could be said that 'departs' is closer to the correct meaning because it comes after Allah's words: «By the dawn», because the dawn approaches daybreak and heralds the retreat of the night. So, if we understand the verse to refer to the approach of night, it would mean that Allah swears by the approaching night and the departure of the day and vice versa, as in His words (ﷻ):

² *Maghrib* means 'sunset' or the prayer at that time: the maghrib prayer is three units long. *Witr* is a superogatory night prayer consisting of a single unit of prayer added to a two-unit prayer. (Editor)

³ *Fajr* prayer is a two-unit prayer. *Dhuhr* (midday), *'aṣr* (afternoon) and *'ishâ* (evening) prayers are each four-units long. (Editor)

⁴ Ibn Katheer has not indicated a preference for any of these narrations, but merely points out that Ibn Jareer did not favour any particular one.

(سورة الليل: ٢-١)

﴿وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَىٰ وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّىٰ﴾

﴿By the night enshrouding, and the day resplendent.﴾

(Qur'an 92: 1-2).”

In the opinion of Ad-Daḥḥâk verse 4 of *Soorat al-Fajr* means ‘by the night as it flees’. ‘Ikrimah said that it is the night of the gathering in Muzdalifah, during the Hajj. This was reported by Ibn Jareer and Ibn Abi Ḥâtim.

﴿There surely is an oath for a reasoning person.﴾ That is, a person of reasoning, intelligence, judgement and acumen. Reason is referred to as *hijr* because it is what prevents people from practising those words and deeds that are not fitting for them. This includes the black stone (*hajar/hijr*) of the Sacred House, so called because it prevents the one circumambulating around the Ka‘bah from clinging to the wall of the Ka‘bah facing the lands of Syria and Palestine. It is also said that a judge has *hajara* (passed judgement) upon a person because he has forbidden him his liberty.

﴿... لَا بُشْرَىٰ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُجْرِمِينَ وَيَقُولُونَ حَجْرًا مَّحْجُورًا﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٢٢)

﴿... [On that day] there will be no good tidings for the guilty; and they will cry: A forbidding [*mahjoor*] ban!﴾ (Qur'an 25: 22)

All of these sayings are similar in meaning. This is an oath by the times of acts of worship, and by the acts of worship themselves, be they prayer or pilgrimage or any other act of worship that brings the pious, believing slaves, who fear Allah and are humble before Him, closer to their Lord. This is why He has mentioned them, their worship and their obedience.

﴿Do you not consider how your Lord dealt with [the tribe of] ‘Ad,﴾ that is, those who were rebellious, arrogant oppressors,

disobedient rejectors of His Messengers, deniers of His books. Allah tells us how He destroyed them and made them a legend and a warning for all humankind, saying, ﴿Do you not consider how your Lord dealt with [the tribe of] ‘Ād, with many-columned Iram﴾. ‘Ād⁵ are the descendants of one ‘Ād ibn Iram ibn ‘Aws ibn Sām ibn Nooh. This was said by Ibn Is-hāq, and they are the people to whom Allah sent His Messenger Hood (ﷺ), but they rejected him and disobeyed him, but Allah saved Hood from them along with those who believed and then He destroyed the disbelievers with

﴿... بِرِيحٍ صَرْصَرٍ عَاتِيَةٍ ﴿٦﴾ سَخَرَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعَ لَيَالٍ وَتَمَنِيَةً أَيَّامٍ حُسُومًا فَتَرَى الْفَوْمَ فِيهَا صَرْعَى كَأَنَّهُمْ أُعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ خَاوِيَةٍ ﴿٧﴾ فَهَلْ تَرَى لَهُمْ مِنْ بَاقِيَةٍ ﴿٨﴾﴾

(سورة الحاقة: ٦-٨)

﴿... a fierce roaring wind, which He imposed on them for seven long nights and eight long days so that you might have seen men lying overthrown, as they were hollow trunks of palm trees. Can you [O Muhammad] see any remnant of them?﴾ (Qur'an 69: 6-8)

Allah has mentioned their story in more than one place in the Qur'an so that the believers may take warning from their demise. He (ﷻ) describes them in detail saying: ﴿with many-columned Iram﴾. He (ﷻ) says: ﴿with many-columned﴾ because they were a people who lived in houses built with strong pillars and they were the most powerful and intrepid people in their time. Prophet Hood (ﷺ) used to remind them of these great blessings and called upon them to use them in obedience to their Lord, Who created them, saying:

﴿... وَأَذْكُرُوا إِذْ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ مِنْ بَعْدِ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَزَادَكُمْ فِي الْخَلْقِ﴾

⁵ This would mean that ‘Ād was the great-great-grandson of Prophet Noah (peace be upon him). (Editor)

﴿سورة الأعراف: ٦٩﴾ **بَصَّطَةٌ فَاذْكُرُوا ءَالَآءَ اللّٰهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَفْلِحُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾**

﴿... Remember how He made you viceroys after Noah's folk and gave you growth of stature. Remember [all] the bounties of your Lord, that perhaps you may be successful.﴾ (Qur'an 7: 69)

And:

﴿فَأَمَّا ءَادٌ فَأَسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَقَالُوا مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً ... ﴿١٥﴾﴾

﴿سورة فصلت: ١٥﴾

﴿As for 'Ād, they were arrogant in the land without right, and they said: Who is mightier than us in strength? Could they not see that Allah Who created them, He was mightier than them in power?﴾

(Qur'an 41: 15)

﴿The like of which was not created in the lands;﴾ refers to the tribe of 'Ād, the like of whose strength, power and physical size had never before been created in their land. Mujâhid said that Iram was the name of an ancient people, that is, 'Ād the First. Qatâdah and As-Suddi said that Iram was the seat of the kingdom of 'Ād, and this interpretation is a good, strong one. Mujâhid, Al-Kalbi and Qatâdah said that the verse ﴿with many-columned Iram﴾ means 'of lofty poles', and that they were a nomadic people whose tents had high poles. Al-'Awfi reports from Ibn 'Abbâs that the verse means of tall stature and that they were a tall race. Ibn Jareer chose the first saying and rejected the second, and he was right. Ibn Zayd said that the subject of the verse ﴿The like of which were not created in the lands﴾ refers to the pillars, because of their height. As for Qatâdah and Ibn Jareer, they said that the subject of the verse was the tribe of 'Ād; that is, a tribe, the like of whom had not been created before their time in that land. This is the correct saying, and the saying of Ibn Zayd and those who said likewise is weak, because had this been the intended

meaning, Allah would have said 'the like of which was not *made* in the land', but He said, ﴿The like of which was not created in the lands﴾. I say, it does not matter which of these sayings we accept. The fact remains that they were a tribe and a people and they are the people referred to in the Qur'an in several places along with Thamood, as here. And Allah knows best.

As for claims that what is meant by Allah's words ﴿with many-columned Iram﴾ is a city, either Damascus, as narrated on the authority of Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib⁶ and 'Ikrimah, or Alexandria, as narrated from Al-Quradhi, or some other city, there is some doubt about that. If it were so, how would that harmonize with His words ﴿Do you not consider how your Lord dealt with [the tribe of] 'Âd, with many-columned Iram﴾? Also, the story tells how Allah destroyed the tribe known as 'Âd and the punishment meted out to them by Allah. As for the stories of a city called Iram whose palaces were bedecked with gold and silver and encrusted with jewels, blessed with orchards and rivers, whose dust was of musk and which moved between Ash-Shâm (Syria), Yemen and Iraq, these are all superstitions of the Jews. It was mentioned by Ath-Tha'labi and others that a man from among the desert Arabs named 'Abdullâh ibn Qalâbah who lived in the time of Mu'âwiyah went in search of his camels, which had wandered away. During his search, he came across a great city that was surrounded by a great wall inset with gates. He entered it and found more or less the same city of gold that we have described above. Then he returned to his people and

⁶ Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib ibn Hazn ibn Abi Wahb ibn 'Amr ibn 'Â'id ibn 'Imrân ibn Makhzoom al-Qurashi al-Makhzoomi was a *tâbi'ee* and one of the greatest scholars of Islam. Scholars are agreed that even his *mursal* narrations are amongst the most authentic of all *mursal* narrations. He was a scholar of jurisprudence and Hadith. Ibn al-Madani said: "I know of no other *tâbi'ee* who was more knowledgeable than he." He died in his late seventies sometime after the year 90 H.

informed them about what he had found and they went out with him to the place where the city had been, but they found nothing. Ibn Abi Hâtim relates the story of the city of Iram of the lofty pillars and it is a very long narration, but its chain is not strong. Even if it were, it could be that the man ‘Abdullâh invented the story, or that he was suffering from some delusion or madness and really believed what he said to be the truth, when it was not. Such stories are told by many ignorant, foolish people about lost cities or underground troves of gold, silver and precious stones, thereby extracting sums of money from the simple-minded and the credulous.

﴿And with [the tribe of] Thamood, who clove the rocks in the valley﴾ Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), Mujâhid, Qatâdah, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and Ibn Zayd said that they hewed out rocks from the valley. Allah says:

(سورة الشعراء: ١٤٩) ﴿وَتَجِدُونَ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا فَرَاهِينَ﴾

﴿Though you hew out dwellings in the mountains, being skilful.﴾
(*Qur’an* 26: 149)

﴿And with Pharaoh, firm of might﴾: Al-‘Awfi said, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), that the word *al-awtâd* used in this verse refers to the armies of Pharaoh, who enforced his commands. This was also said by Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr, Al-Ḥasan and As-Suddi. Qatâdah said that Pharaoh used to have a marquee supported by ropes and stakes under which entertainers used to play for him. Thâbit al-Bunâni⁷ said that Pharaoh was called ‘owner of *al-awtâd*’ because he ordered four stakes to be erected for his wife (to which she was then tied), then he had heavy stones placed upon her back until she died.

⁷ Thâbit ibn Aslam al-Bunâni Abu Muhammad al-Baṣri: According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a reliable reporter of hadiths and a pious man. He died around the year 20 H. at 86 years of age.

«Who [all] were rebellious [to Allah] in these lands, and multiplied iniquity therein» That is, 'Âd, Thamood and Pharaoh were rebellious, tyrannical and caused great corruption and harm to the people in their nations.

«Therefore your Lord poured on them the disaster of His punishment»: He sent down upon them a terrible punishment from heaven and ordained for them a severe chastisement.

«Indeed, your Lord is ever watchful.» That is, according to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), He hears and He sees; He watches His creatures vigilantly in all that they do and He recompenses everyone according to his deeds in this world. In the Hereafter, all creation will stand before Him and He will judge them with complete justice. Everyone shall receive what he deserves, for Allah is Exalted above any injustice or inequity.

﴿فَأَمَّا الْإِنْسَانُ إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَأَكْرَمَهُ وَنَعَّمَهُ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَكْرَمَنِ ﴿١٥﴾ وَأَمَّا إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ فَقَدَرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقَهُ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَهْنَنِ ﴿١٦﴾ كَلَّا بَلْ لَا تُكْرِمُونَ الْيَتِيمَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَا تَحْتَضِرُونَ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمَسْكِينِ ﴿١٨﴾ وَتَأْكُلُونَ التَّرَاثَ أَكْلًا لَمًّا ﴿١٩﴾ وَتُحِبُّونَ الْمَالَ حُبًّا جَمًّا ﴿٢٠﴾﴾

(سورة الفجر: ١٥-٢٠)

15. As for the human being, whenever his Lord tries him by honouring him and is gracious unto him, he says: My Lord honours me.

16. But whenever He tries him by straitening his means of life, he says: My Lord despises me.

17. No, but you [for your part] do not honour the orphan

18. And do not urge the feeding of the poor,

19. And you devour heritages with devouring greed

20. And love wealth with abounding love.

Allah (ﷻ) speaks in refutation of people who believe that when their Lord tests them by increasing their sustenance, that He has honoured them. On the contrary, it is a trial as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿أَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّمَا نُمِدُّهُم بِهِ مِنْ مَّالٍ وَبَيْنَ ۙ نَسَارِۙ هُمْ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ بَلْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ﴾

(سورة المؤمنون: ٥٥-٥٦)



﴿Think they that in the wealth and children wherewith We provide them We hasten unto them with good things? No, but they perceive not.﴾
(*Qur'an* 23: 55-56).

Likewise, when Allah tests a person by decreasing his sustenance, he or she thinks that Allah has humiliated them, but Allah says: ﴿No,﴾ the matter is not as they believe it to be in either situation. Verily, Allah, the Exalted gives wealth both to one who loves it and to one who does not. The point of all this is what the believer does in both situations: if he or she is wealthy, s/he thanks Allah and if he or she is poor, s/he is patient.

﴿No, but you [for your part] do not honour the orphan﴾: Implicit in this verse is a command to honour the orphans as it was mentioned in the hadith narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) from the Prophet (ﷺ): «“The best Muslim house is one in which there is an orphan who is well treated, and the worst Muslim house is one in which there is an orphan who is ill-treated.” Then he (ﷺ) said, placing two fingers together, “I and the guardian of the orphan will be like this on the Day of Resurrection.” [Meaning that the guardian who treats his or her ward well will be next to the Prophet (ﷺ) in Paradise.]» (Narrated by Ibn al-Mubârak)

﴿And do not urge the feeding of the poor﴾: That is, you do not order kindness and charity towards the poor and under-privileged nor do you encourage each other to do so.

﴿And you devour heritages with devouring greed﴾: That is, you consume any inheritance, whether it is permissible or forbidden.

﴿And love wealth with abounding love.﴾ The love of material possessions some to great excess and wickedness.

﴿كَلَّا إِذَا دُمِّتِ الْأَرْضُ دُكًّا دُكًّا ﴿٢١﴾ وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا ﴿٢٢﴾ وَجِئْنَا بِيَوْمِئِذٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ يَوْمِئِذٍ يَنْذَكُرُ الْإِنْسَانُ وَأَنَّى لَهُ الذِّكْرَى ﴿٢٣﴾ يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي قَدَّمْتُ لِحَيَاتِي ﴿٢٤﴾ فَيَوْمِئِذٍ لَا يُعَذِّبُ عَذَابُهُ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٥﴾ وَلَا يُؤْتِقُ وَثَاقَهُ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٦﴾ يَأْتِيهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ﴿٢٧﴾ أَرْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَرْضِيَّةً ﴿٢٨﴾ فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ﴿٢٩﴾ وَادْخُلِي جَنَّاتِي ﴿٣٠﴾﴾

(سورة الفجر: ٢١-٣٠)

21. No, but when the earth is ground to atoms, grinding, grinding,
22. And your Lord shall come with angels, rank on rank,
23. And Hell is brought near that day; on that day the human being will remember, but how will the remembrance [then avail him]?
24. He will say: 'Ah, would that I had sent before me [some provision] for my life!'
25. None punishes as He will punish on that day!
26. None binds as He then will bind.
27. But ah! You soul at peace!
28. Return unto your Lord, content in His good pleasure!
29. Enter among My bondmen!
30. Enter My Garden!

Allah (ﷻ) informs us about the great terror of the Day of Resurrection, saying: ﴿(No,) truly, (But when the earth is ground to atoms, grinding, grinding,﴾: the mountains will be crushed, flattened and levelled, and all creation will come forth from their graves to their Lord.

﴿And your Lord shall come﴾ to judge between His creatures after they have requested the best of the sons of Adam, Muhammad (ﷺ), to intercede with Allah on their behalf. This is after they have requested the other Messengers, one after another, and have been refused by all of them. Then the Prophet (ﷺ) will be allowed to intercede for the believers and this is *al-Maqâm al-Mahmood*.⁸ The Lord, Most Exalted, Most High will come and deliver judgement as He wills, ﴿with angels, rank on rank﴾: the angels will come before Him in row upon row.

﴿And Hell be brought near that day﴾ Imam Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjâj⁹ recorded in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ*, on the authority of Ibn Mas‘ood (رضي الله عنه), that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «Hell will be brought near on that day, pulled by seventy thousand reins, each rein held by seventy thousand angels.» This was also narrated by Tirmidhi from two different sources [one of which he traced back only as far as Ibn Mas‘ood (رضي الله عنه)] and by Ibn Jareer (who also traced his narration back only as far as Ibn Mas‘ood).

﴿On that day the human being will remember﴾: he will remember the deeds that he did during his life, ﴿but how will the remembrance [then avail him]?﴾ That is, how will it benefit him?

﴿He will say: ‘Ah, would that I had sent before me [some provision] for my life!’﴾ That is, if he was disobedient, he will regret his acts of disobedience; if he was obedient, he will regret that he was

⁸ *Al-Maqâm al-Mahmood*: The Station of Praise and Glory, the special status given by Allah to one person only on the Day of Judgement that this would be the Prophet Muhammad (bpuh).

⁹ Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjâj ibn Muslim al-Qushayri an-Neesâboori: According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a reliable transmitter of hadiths and a great scholar of Islam. He was a renowned scholar of jurisprudence and the author of many important Islamic works, including his collection of hadiths: *Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim*. He died in the year 61 H at the age of only 57.

not more obedient. It is narrated from Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) that he said: «If the slave were to prostrate on his face from the day he was born until the day he died in obedience to Allah, he would scorn it on the Day of Resurrection and wish that he could return to the life of this world so that he might increase his reward and recompense.» (Narrated by Ahmad)

«None punishes as He will punish on that day!» That is, none will punish more severely than the punishment that Allah will inflict upon those who disobeyed Him.

«None binds as He then will bind» That is, none will seize and shackle more roughly and severely than the angels of punishment in Hell, known as *az-Zabâniyah*, who will seize and shackle those who disbelieved in their Lord, the Almighty, the All-Powerful. This is the just reward of the wrongdoers and the unjust from amongst Allah's creatures.

As for the pure, serene soul, which is always on the path of truth, it will be said to it:

«But ah! You soul at peace! Return unto your Lord»: come near to Him and to His reward and all that He has prepared for the believers in His Paradise.

«Content» the soul is well pleased with itself. «in His good pleasure!» That is, the soul at peace is well-pleased with Allah and Allah is well-pleased with it, and He gratifies it.

«Enter among My bondmen!» that is, in their ranks. «Enter My Garden!» This will be said to the believing soul at the time of death and also on the Day of Resurrection. The angels will give the believer the good news at the time of his death and when he is resurrected from his grave. Scholars of tafseer have disagreed about whom this verse was revealed. Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk reports that Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said that it was revealed concerning 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân (رضي الله عنه). Buraydah

ibn al-Ḥuşayb¹⁰ said it was revealed concerning Ḥamzah ibn ‘Abdil Muṭṭalib (ﷺ).

Al-‘Awfi narrated from Ibn ‘Abbâs (ﷺ) that it will be said to the tranquil souls on the Day of Resurrection: ﴿But ah! You soul at peace! Return unto your Lord, content﴾ That is, return to your owner, which is the body in which you resided during its earthly life, well-pleased and well-pleasing. It was also narrated from Ibn ‘Abbâs (ﷺ) that he used to recite: ﴿Enter among My bondmen! Enter My Garden [Paradise]!﴾ ‘Ikrimah, Al-Kalbi and Ibn Jareer also narrated this and it was the preferred tafseer of Ibn Jareer. However, it is an unusual interpretation; it is clear that the correct tafseer is the first one, because of His words:

(سورة الأنعام: ٦٢) ﴿ثُمَّ رُدُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ مَوْلَهُمْ الْحَقِّ ...﴾

﴿Then are they restored unto Allah, their Lord...﴾ (Qur’an 6: 62)

And:

(سورة غافر: ٤٣) ﴿... وَأَنَّ مَرَدَّنَا إِلَى اللَّهِ ...﴾

﴿... And our return will be unto Allah...﴾ (Qur’an 40: 43)

That is, to His Judgement and to stand before Him. It is also narrated from Ibn ‘Abbâs (ﷺ) concerning the two verses: ﴿But ah! You soul at peace! Return unto your Lord, content in His good pleasure!﴾ that, «“It was revealed while Abu Bakr was sitting [with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)] and he said, ‘O Messenger of Allah! How good this is!’ He (ﷺ) said, ‘Verily, it will be said to you!’”» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Ḥâtim) It is also narrated on the authority of Sa‘eed ibn al-Jubayr that

¹⁰ Buraydah ibn al-Ḥuşayb Abu Sahl al-Aslami: A Companion of the Prophet (bpuh), who embraced Islam before the battle of Badr. He died in the year 63 H.

he said: «‘I was reciting with the Prophet (ﷺ) ﴿But ah! You soul at peace! Return unto your Lord, content in His good pleasure!﴾, then Abu Bakr said, ‘Verily, this is good!’ at which the Prophet (ﷺ) replied, ‘Verily, the angel will say to this to you at the time of (your) death.’» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim) This was also narrated by Ibn Jareer from Abu Kurayb and it is *mursal, hasan*.¹¹ It is also narrated from Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr that he said: “Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) died in aṭ-Ṭâ’if and a bird never before seen flew down, alighted and entered his coffin and was not seen to leave. Then when he was buried, a voice was heard at the edge of the grave reciting this verse, and it was not known who was reciting it: ﴿But ah! You soul at peace! Return unto your Lord, content in His good pleasure!﴾.” (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim) This was also narrated by Aṭ-Ṭabarâni. It was also narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) told some one: «‘Say, ‘O Allah! I ask of You a soul that is at rest with You, that believes in the meeting with You, that is well-pleased with your decisions and is content with what You bestow upon it.’»» (Narrated by Ibn ‘Asâkir)

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Fajr*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

¹¹ *mursal, hasan*: a grade of hadith indicating that its chain does not reach to the Prophet (bpuh), but a sound narration

Soorat al-Balad (90)

The City

سُورَةُ الْبَلَدِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿١﴾ لَا أُقْسِمُ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ ﴿٢﴾ وَأَنْتَ حِلٌّ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ ﴿٣﴾ وَوَالِدٍ وَمَا وَلَدَ ﴿٤﴾ لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ ﴿٥﴾ أَيَحْسَبُ أَنْ لَنْ يَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ أَحَدٌ ﴿٦﴾ يَقُولُ أَهْلَكْتُ مَالًا لُبَدًا ﴿٧﴾ أَيَحْسَبُ أَنْ لَمْ يَرَهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿٨﴾ أَلَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ عَيْنَيْنِ ﴿٩﴾ وَلِسَانًا وَشَفَتَيْنِ ﴿١٠﴾ وَهَدَيْنَاهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ ﴿١١﴾

(سورة البلد: ١-١٠)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. No, I swear by this city —
2. And you are a freeman of this City; —
3. And the begetter and that which he begot,
4. Verily, We have created the human in affliction:
5. Does he think that none has power over him?
6. And he says: I have destroyed vast wealth:
7. Does he think that none beholds him?
8. Did We not assign unto him two eyes?

9. And a tongue and two lips,

10. And guide him to the parting of the two highways?

Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿No, I swear by this city﴾; Allah swears by Makkah and *Umm al-Qurâ*,¹ during the non-sacred months, concerning the situation of the citizens at that time in order to make clear to them how much greater its sanctity is during the sacred months when its inhabitants are in the state of *iḥrâm*.² Shabeeb ibn Bishr said, on the authority of 'Ikrimah, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), that Allah swears by Makkah to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) that he is free to fight the pagans of Makkah. In His words: ﴿And you are a freeman of this City﴾. Sa'eed ibn Jubayr, Abu Şâliḥ, 'Atiyyah, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk, Qatâdah, As-Suddi and Ibn Zayd agreed with this. Mujâhid said it means whatever you obtain in it is permissible for you. Qatâdah said it means you are at liberty to do as you wish, without being guilty of sin. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri said that it means that Allah lifted the sanctuary of Makkah for one hour of daylight. This meaning is supported by the hadith reported by Bukhari and Muslim in which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «Its (Makkah's) sanctuary was lifted for me for one hour of daylight and today its sanctity has returned just as it was before. Let those present inform those who are absent.»

﴿And the begetter and that which he begot﴾: Ibn Abi Ḥâtim said that the verse should be interpreted as: “And the begetter and the one who begets not.”³ However, according to Mujâhid, Qatâdah, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk, Sufiyân ath-Thawri, Sa'eed ibn Jubayr and many others, it means: “And the begetter (Adam) and that which he begot

¹ *Umm al-Qurâ*: the centre of settlements in and around Makkah, according to Aṭ-Ṭabari

² *iḥrâm*: the state of ritual purification and consecration during Hajj and 'Umrah

³ This difference of opinion arose due to the use of the word 'mâ' in the verse, which may mean *not*, *that* or *who*.

(humankind).” This is supported by the fact that Allah, the Exalted, swears by Makkah, which is the first of all habitations, and after that He swears by its first inhabitant, Adam, the father of humankind. Abu ‘Imrân al-Jawni⁴ said that the begetter is Abraham and the begotten refers to his progeny. This was narrated by Ibn Jareer and Ibn Abi Hâtim. However, Ibn Jareer preferred to say that the verse is more general and refers to every father and his progeny, which is quite possible.

﴿Verily, We have created the human in affliction:﴾ It was attributed to Ibn Mas‘ood and Ibn ‘Abbâs and several others that the verse should be interpreted as, ‘Verily, We have created the human being erect, upstanding.’ Another narration attributed to Ibn ‘Abbâs says that Allah created the human being upright in the womb of his mother, straight and tall and well-proportioned. Ibn Katheer says that this is like the words of Allah, the Exalted:

﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ ﴿٦﴾ الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّدَكَ فَعَدَدَكَ ﴿٧﴾ فِي
 أَيِّ صُورَةٍ مَا شَاءَ رَكَّبَكَ ﴿٨﴾﴾
 (سورة الانفطار : ٦-٨)

﴿O, man! What has made you careless concerning your Lord, the Bountiful, Who created you, then fashioned, then proportioned you? Into whatsoever form He will, He casts you.﴾ (Qur’an 82: 6-8)

It was reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that it means that Allah, the Almighty, All-Powerful, created us in severe pain, such as that of childbirth and the pain experienced by a child when he is teething. Mujâhid said that the Arabic word *kabad* in the verse means a drop of sperm. Allah created the human from that drop of sperm, then a clot, then a chewed-looking lump of flesh; and the

⁴ Abu ‘Imrân al-Jawni: According to Ibn Hajar, he was a reliable reporter of hadiths. He lived in Baghdad and was a great scholar.

mother experiences great suffering during her child's creation. This is shown by His words:

(سورة لقمان : ١٤) ... حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ ... ﴿١٤﴾

﴿... His mother bears him in weakness upon weakness...﴾

(Qur'an 31: 14)

Similarly, she breastfeeds him in hardship. Also a person's life is hardship and he or she endures it. Sa'eed ibn Jubayr said that it means that Allah created each person in adversity and in need of sustenance. Qatādah said it means that Allah has created each person in toil. It is narrated that Muhammad ibn 'Ali asked a man about this verse and the man who was from the Anṣār⁵ replied that it means that Allah created human beings straight and upright and that Abu Ja'far (Muhammad ibn 'Ali) did not deny this. (Narrated by Ibn Abi Ḥâtim) It is also narrated that Abu Mawdood heard Al-Ḥasan recite this verse, then he said it means that people endure in the affairs of this world and then they endure in the affair of the Hereafter. Another narration says that people suffer or endure difficulties in this world and hardship or calamity in the next. Ibn Zayd said that Adam was created in heaven in a place called *al-Kabad*. Ibn Jareer preferred the explanation that the human was created in toil and adversity.

﴿Does he think that none has power over him?﴾ Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri said it means, 'does a person think that none can take his wealth from him?' Qatādah said that people believe that they will not be asked about how they acquired their wealth or how they spent it. As-Suddi says that Allah asks, do people believe (correctly) that none can overcome Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful?

⁵ Anṣār: Supporters; the residents of Medinah who welcomed the Prophet Muhammad (bpuh) and his immigrant Companions

﴿And he says: I have destroyed vast wealth:﴾ That is, the children of Adam say, “I have wasted much wealth!” This was said by Mujâhid, Al-Ḥasan, Qatâdah and others.

﴿Does he think that none beholds him?﴾ Mujâhid said it means, does he think that Allah does not see him? Others of the *salaf*⁶ agreed with this.

﴿Did We not assign unto him two eyes﴾: that is, with which to see, ﴿And a tongue﴾ with which to speak.

﴿And two lips﴾ upon which he depends to speak and to eat, and as an adornment for his face and his mouth. Ibn ‘Asâkir narrates that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: «“Allah, the Exalted says, ‘O, son of Adam! I have blessed you with great blessings; you would not be able to enumerate them all, nor sufficiently give thanks for them. Amongst them are that I have favoured you and given you two eyes; you see with them. And I have given you a cover for them (the eyelids). So look at that which I have made permissible for you, and if you see that which I have made forbidden for you, then cover them. And I have made for you a tongue and made for it a cover (the mouth). So speak the words that I have made permissible for you and that I have ordered for you. And if words that I have forbidden for you should come to you, then close your mouth over your tongue...”

﴿And guide him to the parting of the two highways?﴾ That is, the two paths. Sufiyân ath-Thawri said, on the authority of Ibn Mas‘ood (رضي الله عنه) that it means the good and the evil. This was also attributed to ‘Ali (رضي الله عنه) and Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) amongst others. Ibn Wahb narrates, on the authority of Anas ibn Mâlik (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“They are two paths, and He has not

⁶ *salaf*: pious predecessors, i.e. the Companions, the *tâbi‘oon* and those who followed them

made the path of evil more loved to you than the path of goodness.”⁷ Ibn Jareer also narrates something similar, as did others. It is narrated on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that this verse means: “We have shown him the two breasts.” This was also narrated from Ar-Rabee‘ ibn Khaytham, Qatādah and Abu Ḥāzim. Ibn Jareer narrated it from Abu Kurayb and then said: “And the correct saying is the first one, which is similar to the verse:

﴿إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ نَبْتَلِيهِ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا﴾ (٢) ﴿٣﴾
 ﴿سورة الإنسان: ٢-٣﴾ هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا ﴿٣﴾

﴿Certainly, We create the human being from a drop of thickened fluid to test him; so We make him hearing, knowing. Certainly, We have shown him the way, whether he be grateful or disbelieving.﴾

(Qur'an 76: 2-3)

﴿فَلَا أَقْنَمَ الْعُقَبَةَ ﴿١١﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْعُقَبَةُ ﴿١٢﴾ فَكَ رَقَبَةَ ﴿١٣﴾ أَوْ إِطْعَمَهُ فِي يَوْمٍ ذِي مَسْغَبَةٍ ﴿١٤﴾ يَتِيمًا ذَا مَقْرَبَةٍ ﴿١٥﴾ أَوْ مَسْكِينًا ذَا مَتْرَبَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾ ثُمَّ كَانَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْمَرْحَمَةِ ﴿١٧﴾ أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينَةِ ﴿١٨﴾ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

⁷ Ibn Katheer explains that Ibn Ma‘een reports this hadith, which was only narrated from Sinân ibn Sa‘d or Sa‘d ibn Sinân^{7/1} and he said that he is trustworthy. However Aḥmad, Nasâ‘i and Al-Jawzajâni all say that the hadith is *munkar*^{7/2}. Aḥmad also added that he had abandoned his narrations because of his unreliability and that he had narrated fifteen *munkar* traditions.

^{7/1} Sa‘d ibn Sinân or Sinân ibn Sa‘d al-Kindi al-Miṣri: According to Bukhari, the latter is more authentic. Ibn Ḥajar says that he was a truthful reporter of hadiths, and added that he narrated hadiths that no one else related.

^{7/2} *Munkar*: the *munkar* narration is weak due to defect in accuracy. Technically, it refers to a weak hadith which contradicts an authentic hadith. This was the definition preferred by Ibn Ḥajar.

﴿سورة البلد: ١١-٢٠﴾ ﴿٢٠﴾ عَلَيْهِمْ نَارٌ مُّؤَصَّدَةٌ ﴿١٩﴾ أَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ

11. But he has not attempted the Ascent —
12. Ah, what will convey unto you what the Ascent is! —
13. [It is] to free a slave,
14. And to feed in the day of hunger
15. An orphan near of kin,
16. Or some poor wretch in misery
17. And to be of those who believe and exhort one another to perseverance and exhort one another to pity.
18. Their place will be on the right hand.
19. But those who disbelieved in Our revelations, their place will be on the left hand.
20. Fire will be an awning over them.

﴿But he has not attempted﴾ Ibn Jareer says, on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar, that it means he has not started. ﴿The Ascent﴾ That is, according to Ibn Jareer, a mountain in the Hell-fire. Ka‘b al-Ahbâr⁸ said that the word *al-‘aqabah* used in this verse refers to the seventy levels of Hell. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri said it is a place in the Hell-fire. Qatâdah said it is an extremely hazardous road; therefore, embark upon it by obeying Allah. Then Allah asks: “And how may you embark upon that path?” By ﴿[It is] to free a slave﴾. It is narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «Whoever frees a Muslim slave, Allah will save all the parts of his body from the fire as he has freed the body parts of his slave.» (Narrated by Bukhari) Muslim adds, in a similar narration, that ‘Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn, when he heard of this hadith, freed

⁸ Ka‘b ibn Mâti’ al-Himyari Abu Is-hâq al-Ahbâr: According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a reliable reporter of hadiths. He was born in Yemen and settled in Syria. He died towards the end of the rule of ‘Uthmân ibn ‘Affân when he was more than one hundred years of age. Bukhari and Muslim narrated from him.

a slave; that slave was Zayn al-‘Âbideen and the sum paid was ten thousand dirhams.

﴿And to feed in the day of hunger﴾ is the interpretation given by Ibn ‘Abbâs (ؓ), ‘Ikrimah, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk, Mujâhid, Qatâdah and others. Ibrâheem an-Nakha‘ee⁹ said it means a day when food is scarce. It is attributed to Qatâdah that he said it is a day when food will be jealously hoarded.

﴿An orphan﴾ to feed an orphan on that day, ﴿near of kin﴾ according to Ibn ‘Abbâs (ؓ), it should be a close relative of the giver. ‘Ikrimah, Al-Ḥasan, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and As-Suddi said likewise, as it is narrated in the hadith narrated by Imam Aḥmad, on the authority of Salmân ibn ‘Âmir (ؓ), who said: «‘I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, ‘Charity to a poor person is a charity, but charity to a relative is two things: charity and strengthening family ties.’ » This was also narrated by Tirmidhi and Nasâ‘i with an authentic chain of narrators.

﴿Or some poor wretch in misery﴾ literally, ‘a wretched needy person covered in dust’. Ibn ‘Abbâs (ؓ) said it means a poor wayfarer with no home of his own, no possessions and nothing with which to clean the dust from his clothes. In another narration, it means a man covered in misery and abject poverty who has nothing. In yet another narration, it means one who is from a distant land. Ibn Abi Hâtim said it means one who is far from his home. ‘Ikrimah said it means a poor man who is deeply in debt and greatly in need. Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr said it means the one who has no family. I say that all of these are close to the correct meaning and there is no contradiction between them.

⁹ Ibrâheem ibn Yazeed ibn Qays ibn al-Aswad an-Nakha‘ee Abu ‘Imrân al-Koofi: Ibn Ḥajar said that he was a great scholar of jurisprudence and a reliable reporter of hadiths, except that he reported many *mursal* narrations. He died in the year 96 H at around the age of fifty.

﴿And to be of those who believe﴾ refers to someone possessing a believing heart and beautiful, pure qualities. He is also one who receives his reward (in the Hereafter) from Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful, as in the words of Allah:

﴿وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَىٰ لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَشْكُورًا﴾
(سورة الإسراء: ١٩)

﴿And whoso desires the Hereafter and strives for it with the effort necessary, being a believer; for such, their effort finds favour [with their Lord].﴾
(*Qur'an* 17: 19)

Also:

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾
(سورة التحل: ٩٧)

﴿Whoever does right, whether male or female, and is a believer, verily We quicken them with good life, and We shall pay them a recompense in proportion to the best of what they used to do.﴾
(*Qur'an* 16: 97)

﴿And exhort one another to perseverance and exhort one another to pity.﴾ describes believers who demonstrate their beliefs through good deeds, by recommending patience in the face of oppression and persecution, and by being forgiving and compassionate to their persecutors, as in the hadith: «The compassionate ones receive compassion from the Most Compassionate; be compassionate in this world and He Who is in the heaven will show you compassion.» And like the hadith: «Allah does not show compassion to those who do not show compassion to (other) people.»

﴿Their place will be on the right hand.﴾ That is, those who possess the above-mentioned qualities are the favoured ones in Paradise, the 'companions of the right hand'. ﴿But those who disbelieved in Our revelations, their place will be on the left hand﴾ that is, they are the losers, for they will end up in Hell.

﴿Fire will be an awning over them.﴾ That is, the fire will cover them completely; there is no way out of it for them, nor any way to avoid it. This was the explanation of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), 'Ikrimah, Sa'eed ibn Jubayr and others. Mujâhid said it means that the door is locked. Ad-Ḍaḥḥâk said it means it is closed over them and there is no door (by which one might escape). Qatâdah said it means that it is closed, and no light enters it, there is no escape or release from it, and it never ends.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Balad*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat ash-Shams (91)

The Sun

سُورَةُ الشَّمْسِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا ﴿١﴾ وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَّهَا ﴿٢﴾ وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّهَا ﴿٣﴾ وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا ﴿٤﴾ وَالسَّمَاءِ وَمَا بَنَاهَا ﴿٥﴾ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا طَرَاهَا ﴿٦﴾ وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا ﴿٧﴾ فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا ﴿٨﴾ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ﴿٩﴾ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا ﴿١٠﴾﴾

(سورة الشمس: ١-١٠)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. By the sun and its brightness,
2. And the moon when she follows it,
3. And the day when it reveals it,
4. And the night when it enshrouds it,
5. And the heaven and Him Who built it,
6. And the earth and Him who spread it,
7. And a soul and Him Who perfected it
8. And inspired it [with conscience of] what is wrong for it and [what is] right for it.
9. He is indeed successful who purifies it,
10. And he is indeed a failure who corrupts it.

According to Mujâhid, ﴿By the sun and its brightness﴾ means (Allah swears) by its light. Qatâdah said that ﴿and its brightness﴾ means the whole day. Ibn Jareer said that the correct explanation is that Allah swears by the sun and its day, because the clear light of day means the daytime.

﴿And the moon when she follows it﴾ Mujâhid said this refers to the moon as it follows the daylight. Al-'Awfi says, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), that it means when the daylight is followed by the moonlight. Qatâdah said this refers to the night on which there is a new moon, it is seen when the sun sets. Ibn Zayd said that the moon (rise) follows the sun (set) in the first half of the lunar month, while the sun (rise) follows the moon (set) in the second half of the month. Mâlik narrates, on the authority of Zayd ibn Aslam that it is when the moon follows the sun on the Night of *Qadr*.¹

﴿And the day when it reveals it﴾ is, according to Mujâhid, when the moon illuminates. Qatâdah said it is when it (the sun) is overwhelmed by the day. Ibn Jareer says that some scholars of Arabic language said that the verse refers to the day when it overcomes the darkness. I say, if those who say this had meant the day as it overcomes the earth, it would have been more correct and would have been confirmed by the words of Allah: ﴿And the night when it enshrouds it﴾ and it would have been better and stronger, and Allah knows best. Because of this, Mujâhid said that ﴿And the day when it reveals it﴾ is like the words of Him, the Exalted:

(سورة الليل: ٢)

﴿وَالنَّهَارَ إِذَا تَجَلَّى﴾

﴿And the day when it shines in brightness﴾

(Qur'an 92: 2)

¹ *Qadr*: predestination; destiny; exact measure. The word is also used in the Qur'an (54: 49) to mean exact measure.

Ibn Jareer says that the word ‘it’ in the second and third verse refers to the sun.

﴿And the night when it enshrouds it﴾ means that the night overcomes the sun when it sets and the horizon is plunged into darkness. Ibn Abi Ḥâtim relates, “When the night comes, the Lord, Almighty, All-Powerful says, ‘My great creation has overcome my slaves, then they fear the night, and the Creator is more deserving of their fear.’”

﴿And the heaven and Him Who built it﴾: Qatâdah said that the correct interpretation of this verse is ‘and by the heaven and its construction’, while Mujâhid said that it means ‘and by the heaven and Him Who built it’. I say that both meanings are inseparable from each other. The building refers to the raising of the heaven, as in His words:

﴿وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَيْنَاهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَالْأَرْضَ فَرَشْنَاهَا فَنِعْمَ الْمُهَيِّدُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾﴾

(سورة الذّاريات : ٤٧-٤٨)

﴿We have built the heaven with might, and We it is Who make the vast extent [thereof]. And the earth have We laid out, how gracious is the Spreader [thereof]!﴾ (Qur’an 51: 47-48).

This is similar to His words: ﴿And by the earth and Him Who spread it﴾. Mujâhid said that the Arabic word *ṭahâ* used in the verse is the same as the word *dahâ*, which means ‘to spread (something) out’. However, Al-‘Awfi, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs, says that the verse means ‘the earth and Him Who created that which is in it’. ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah says, also on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs,² that the word *ṭahâ* means *qassama*: ‘to proportion’. However, the majority of

² See footnote 3 on page 112 of this book.

scholars of tafseer take the view that it means to spread out, and this is supported by the scholars of the Arabic language.

﴿And a soul and Him Who perfected it﴾ refers to the fact that Allah, the Exalted, created it, and proportioned it well and made it straight on the *fiṭrah*,³ as in the words of Allah:

﴿فَأَقَمَ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا يَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾
(سورة الرُّوم: ٣٠)

﴿Then set your purpose for religion as one by nature upright — the nature [*fiṭrah*] made by Allah in which He has made people: There is no altering [the laws of] Allah's creation. That is the right religion, but most people do not know.﴾ (Qur'an 30: 30)

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «Everyone is born on the *fiṭrah*, then his parents make him a Jew or a Christian or a fire-worshipper, like the way an animal gives birth to normal offspring; do you notice it mutilated?» (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim)

It is narrated on the authority of 'Iyâd ibn Ḥimâr al-Majâshi'ee that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «"Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful says, 'Verily I have created My slaves true (to Allah), then the devils came to them and distracted their minds from their (true) religion.'» (Narrated by Muslim)

﴿And inspired it [with conscience of] what is wrong for it and [what is] right for it.﴾ Allah guided us to know the difference between transgression and piety, and what has been ordained for us. Ibn

³ *fiṭrah*: the natural state of believing in the oneness of Allah, the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, the One besides Whom none has the right to be worshipped, and Who possesses certain names and attributes that are unique to Him.

‘Abbâs (ﷺ) said that the verse means that Allah showed him the good and the evil. Mujâhid, Qatâdah, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and Ath-Thawri agreed with this. Ibn Zayd said that the verse means Allah placed in the soul good and evil. Ibn Jareer narrates, on the authority of Abul Aswad, that ‘Imrân said to him, “Do you consider that the actions of humankind and their strivings are a thing that is pre-ordained and written for them, or a thing that is only written after the message comes to them from the Prophet (ﷺ) when there will be a case against them?” He replied, “Verily, it is a thing that has been pre-ordained for them.” ‘Imrân then said, “Is this not then injustice?” Abul Aswad then said, “I became terrified at what he said, and said to him, ‘There is nothing that Allah has not created nor anything that he does not possess. He will not be asked about what He does, but they will be asked.’” He replied, “May Allah guide you! I only asked you about that in order to inform you that a man from Muzaynah or Juhaynah came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and asked him: «“O, Messenger of Allah! Do you consider that the actions of humankind and their strivings are a thing that has been pre-ordained for them and written for them from *qadr* (divine predestination), or something that has only been written for them after the message came to them from their Prophet, when there will be a case against them?” He replied, “Verily, it has been pre-ordained for them.” The man asked, “Then what is the point of our actions?” He (ﷺ) replied, “Whomever Allah has created (and destined) for one of the two abodes (Paradise and Hell), he paves the way to it for him, and the proof for that is in the book of Allah, the Exalted: ﴿And a soul and Him Who perfected it and inspired it [with conscience of] what is wrong for it and [what is] right for it﴾.”» (Narrated by Muslim and Aḥmad)

﴿He is indeed successful who purifies it, and he is indeed a failure who corrupts it﴾ It is possible that the meaning here is that he who purifies his soul through obedience to Allah has succeeded, according to Qatâdah, and has cleansed it from all low, despicable

traits. Mujâhid, 'Ikrimah and Sa'eed ibn Jubayr said likewise and that is like the words of Allah:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى ﴿١٤﴾ وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى ﴿١٥﴾﴾ (سورة الأعلى: ١٤-١٥)

«He indeed shall be successful who purifies himself and remembers the Name of his Lord, so prays.» (Qur'an 87: 14-15)

«He is indeed a failure who stunts it» that is, whoever diverts his soul from Allah's guidance, committing sins and abandoning obedience to Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful. It is also possible that the meaning is: he whose soul Allah purifies, has succeeded, and he whose soul Allah corrupts has failed, as was said by Al-'Awfi and 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه).⁴ It is narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), that he heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, whenever he read the above two verses: «O Allah! Grant my soul piety, for You are its guardian and its protector and the best of purifiers of it.» (Narrated by Aṭ-Ṭabarâni)

﴿كَذَبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِطَغْوَنِهَا ﴿١١﴾ إِذِ انْبَعَثَ أَشْقَاهَا ﴿١٢﴾ فَقَالَ لَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ نَاقَةَ اللَّهِ وَسُقْيَاهَا ﴿١٣﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَعَقَرُوهَا فَدَمْدَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُم بِذُنُوبِهِمْ فَسَوَّاهَا ﴿١٤﴾ وَلَا يَخَافُ عُقْبَاهَا ﴿١٥﴾﴾ (سورة الشمس: ١١-١٥)

11. [The tribe of] Thamood denied [the truth] in their rebellious pride,
12. When the basest of them broke forth
13. And the messenger of Allah said: It is the she-camel of Allah, so let her drink!
14. But they denied him, and they hamstrung her. So their Lord,

⁴ See footnote 3 on page 112 of this book.

doomed them for their sin and levelled [their dwellings].

15. He does not dread the sequel [of events].

«[The tribe of] Thamood denied [the truth] in their rebellious pride» Allah informs us that the people of the land of Thamood rejected their messenger due to their own wrongdoing and injustice. Muhammad ibn Ka'b said that the verse means that the entire tribe of Thamood rejected their messenger. However, the first explanation is more correct; Mujâhid and Qatâdah amongst others said likewise. They rejected in their hearts that which was brought to them by their Messenger (ﷺ) of guidance and truth.

«When the basest of them broke forth» That is, the most wicked of the tribe of Thamood, whose name was Qidâr ibn Sâlif. He was the one who killed the she-camel, and he is the one referred to in the words of Allah:

(سورة القمَر: ٢٩)

﴿فَنَادُوا صَاحِبَهُمْ فَتَعَاطَى فَعَقَرَ﴾

«But they called to their companion, and he took a sword in hand, and hamstrung [her].» (Qur'an 54: 29)

This man was considered a respected noble amongst his people, and was of respectable ancestry. He was a leader amongst men and his commands were obeyed. It is narrated on the authority of 'Abdullâh ibn Zam'ah that, «The Prophet (ﷺ) addressed the people and he mentioned the she-camel and the one who killed it, saying: «When the basest of them broke forth». A man from among them was sent forth: a huge, powerful man, the strongest of his tribe, like Abu Zam'ah.» (Narrated by Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi and Nasâ'i)

«And the messenger of Allah said»: the messenger was Prophet Sâlih (ﷺ). «It is the she-camel of Allah» That is, be careful of the she-camel of Allah, that you do not harm it. «So let her drink!» Do not attack it or prevent it from drinking, for it has been allocated a

day for drinking from the communal water source, and you (Thamood) have been allocated a day that has been made known to you.

﴿But they denied him and they hamstrung her﴾ That is, they rejected the message that he brought. As a result of which they killed the she-camel that Allah had sent as a sign for them and an evidence against them.

﴿So their Lord doomed them for their sin﴾: Allah was angry with them and in punishment He annihilated them. ﴿And levelled [their dwellings].﴾ This verse can also be interpreted to mean that Allah punished them all with an equal punishment. Qatādah says that Qidār did not kill the she-camel until every member of the tribe had pledged allegiance to him and supported him: every man, woman and child. Since all of them cooperated in killing it, Allah destroyed them all with the same punishment.

﴿He dreads not the sequel [of events].﴾ Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) said that it means that Allah fears none as a consequence of His destruction of Thamood; Allah answers to none, but all will answer to Him. This was also said by Mujāhid, Al-Ḥasan, Bakr ibn 'Abdullāh⁵ and others. Ad-Ḍaḥḥāk and As-Suddi both said that the verse means the one who killed the she-camel did not fear the consequences. However, the first saying is more accurate and more compatible with the context, and Allah knows best.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat ash-Shams*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

⁵ Bakr ibn 'Abdullāh al-Mizani Abu 'Abdullāh al-Baṣri: According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a reliable reporter of hadiths, steadfast and venerable. He died in the year 106 H.

Soorat al-Layl (92)

The Night

سُورَةُ اللَّيْلِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَىٰ ﴿١﴾ وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّىٰ ﴿٢﴾ وَمَا خَلَقَ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَىٰ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ سَعْيَكُمْ لَشَتَّىٰ ﴿٤﴾ فَمَا مَنَ أَعْطَىٰ وَانْفَىٰ ﴿٥﴾ وَصَدَقَ بِالْحَسَنِ ﴿٦﴾ فَسَنِيْرُهُ لِّلْعَسْرَىٰ ﴿٧﴾ وَأَمَّا مَنْ
بِجَلِّ وَأَسْتَفْنَ ﴿٨﴾ وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحَسَنِ ﴿٩﴾ فَسَنِيْرُهُ لِّلْعَسْرَىٰ ﴿١٠﴾ وَمَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالُهُ إِذَا
رَدَّىٰ ﴿١١﴾﴾

(سورة الليل: ١-١١)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. By the night enshrouding
2. And the day resplendent,
3. And Him Who has created male and female,
4. Truly, your effort is dispersed [toward diverse ends].
5. As for him who gives and is dutiful [toward Allah]
6. And believes in goodness;
7. Surely We will ease his way unto the state of ease.
8. But as for him who hoards and deems himself independent,
9. And disbelieves in goodness;
10. Surely We will ease his way unto adversity.
11. His riches will not save him when he perishes.

Bukhari reports on the authority of Ibrâheem that they visited Syria and prayed in the Mosque of Damascus. There, Abu ad-Dardâ' asked them how 'Abdullâh [Ibn Mas'ood (ﷺ)] used to recite the third verse of *Soorat al-Layl*. 'Alqamah, who had memorized more than the others, replied, "By the male and the female." Abu ad-Dardâ' said, "I testify that I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) recite it so, but these people would have me read ﴿And Him Who has created male and female﴾. By Allah, I will not follow them!" Ibn Mas'ood (ﷺ) and Abu ad-Dardâ' (ﷺ) used to recite it this way, and Abu ad-Dardâ' said it was from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). As for the majority, they recited it as it is confirmed in the 'Uthmâni copy of the Qur'an,¹ which is found everywhere.

﴿By the night enshrouding﴾ Allah, the Exalted swears by the night as it envelops the creation in darkness.

﴿And the day resplendent﴾ that is, with its radiant illumination.

﴿And Him Who has created male and female﴾: This is like His words,

(سورة التين: ٨)

﴿وَخَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا﴾

﴿And We have created you in pairs.﴾

(Qur'an 78: 8)

And:

(سورة الذاريات: ٤٩)

﴿وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ...﴾

﴿And all things We have created by pairs...﴾

(Qur'an 51: 49).

Just as He swears by these opposing things, so in His words, ﴿Truly, your effort is dispersed [toward diverse ends]﴾, we understand that

¹ 'Uthmâni copy: the copy that follows the style of that which 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân (may Allah be pleased with him) ordered sent to every corner of the Muslim Empire.

He is saying to His slaves: ‘the deeds that you do are likewise diverse, or opposite to each other and varied, for there are those who do good deeds and those who do evil deeds.’

﴿As for him who gives and is dutiful [toward Allah]﴾ that is, one who gives in charity and is mindful of Allah in all his affairs.

﴿And believes in goodness﴾: One who believes in the requital, in accordance with one’s deeds. This was said by Qatâdah. Khaseef said it means the reward of good deeds. Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), Mujâhid, Abu Şâliḥ and Zayd ibn Aslam all said that ﴿and believes in goodness﴾ means that one believes in the recompense. Abu ‘Abdir-Raḥmân and Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk said it is to believe in the testimony, *Lâ ilâha illa Allâh* (none is worthy of worship except Allah). It is also attributed to ‘Ikrimah that he said it means that one believes in the blessings that he or she receives from Allah. It is also reported that Zayd ibn Aslam said it means that one believes in prayer, zakâh and fasting. In another narration attributed to Zayd, he added *ṣadaqât al-fiṭr*². It is narrated on the authority of Ubayy ibn Ka‘b that, «He asked the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) about *al-ḥusnâ* (the Arabic word translated in this verse as *goodness*), and he replied, “It is in Paradise.”» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Ḥâtim)

﴿Surely We will ease his way unto the state of ease.﴾ Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said that the path of ease means the path of goodness, while Zayd ibn Aslam said ease means Paradise. Some of the *salaf* said it means part of the reward of the good deed is the good deed that follows it, and part of the requital of the evil deed is the evil deed that follows it. This is to say that Allah makes it easier for the one who does good and likewise for the one who does evil.

² *ṣadaqah al-fiṭr*: Another term for *zakât al-fiṭr*, which is the obligatory charity given at the end of the month of Ramadan

﴿But as for him who hoards﴾: that is, he or she who is miserly with their worldly wealth. ﴿And deems himself independent﴾: 'Ikrimah says, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), that it means those who are miserly with their money and think that they are not in need of their Lord, the Almighty, the All-Powerful. This was reported by Ibn Abi Hâtim. ﴿And disbelieves in goodness﴾: that is, disbelieves in the recompense of the Hereafter.

﴿Surely We will ease his way unto adversity﴾ This is like the words of Allah,

﴿وَنَقَلِبْ أَفْقَادَهُمْ وَأَبْصَرَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ أَوْلَ مَرَقٍ وَنَذَرَهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾﴾
(سورة الأنعام: ١١٠)

﴿We confound their hearts and their eyes. As they believed not therein at the first, We let them wander blindly on in their contumacy.﴾
(Qur'an 6: 110).

There are many verses in the Qur'an with this meaning, proving that Allah, the Exalted, recompenses the one who intends good with success, while whoever intends evil is abandoned; and all this is in accordance with a preordained measure. There are also many hadiths of the Prophet (ﷺ) that prove this. It is narrated on the authority of Ṭalḥah ibn 'Abdullâh, the great-grandson of Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq, who heard from his father ('Abdullâh), that he heard his father say, "I heard my father say, 'I said to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), «'O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! Are we acting upon what has already been decided, or is the matter just beginning (still undecided)?' He replied, 'Indeed, (we are acting upon) what has already been decided.' Abu Bakr asked, 'Then why should we act?' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) answered, 'Everyone will find it easy to do such deeds as will lead him to his destined abode.'» (Narrated by Aḥmad). It is reported on the authority of 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah

(ﷺ) said, «“There is none among you but has his place written for him, either in Paradise or in the Hellfire.” They said, “O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! Shall we depend (on this)?” He replied, “No, carry on doing good deeds, for everyone will find easy (to do) such deeds as will lead him to his destined abode. Then he recited, ﴿As for him who gives and is dutiful [toward Allah], and believes in goodness, surely We will ease his way unto the state of ease﴾ up to His words ﴿Surely We will ease his way unto adversity﴾.”» (Narrated by Bukhari). Ibn Jareer says that this verse, ﴿As for him who gives and is dutiful [toward Allah]﴾, was revealed concerning Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq, because he used to pay to emancipate the slaves who embraced Islam, including the elderly and women; so much so that his father asked him why he did not emancipate strong young men who could support him and protect him. Abu Bakr replied that he wanted naught but the reward of Allah.

﴿His riches will not save him when he perishes﴾ Mujâhid said that this means ‘when he dies’. Abu Ṣâliḥ and Mâlik said it means ‘when he descends into the fire’.

﴿إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا لَلْهُدَىٰ ۝۱۲ وَإِنَّ لَنَا لَلْآخِرَةَ وَالْأُولَىٰ ۝۱۳ فَأَنذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا تَلَظَّىٰ ۝۱۴ لَا يَصْلَاهَا إِلَّا الْأَشْقَى ۝۱۵ الَّذِي كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ۝۱۶ وَسَيُجَنَّبُهَا الْأَتْقَى ۝۱۷ الَّذِي يُؤْتِي مَالَهُ يَتَزَكَّىٰ ۝۱۸ وَمَا لِأَحَدٍ عِنْدَهُ مِن نِّعْمَةٍ تُجْزَىٰ ۝۱۹ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِ الْأَعْلَىٰ ۝۲۰ وَلَسَوْفَ يَرْضَىٰ ۝۲۱﴾

(سورة الليل: ۱۲-۲۱)

12. Certainly, Ours it is [to give] the guidance
13. And certainly, unto Us belong the latter portion and the former.
14. Therefore have I warned you of the flaming Fire
15. Which only the most wretched must endure,

16. He who denies and turns away.
17. Far removed from it will be the righteous
18. Who gives his wealth that he may grow [in goodness],
19. And none has with him any favour for reward,
20. Except as seeking [to fulfil] the purpose of his Lord Most High.
21. He verily will be content.

﴿Certainly, Ours it is [to give] the guidance﴾: according to Qatâdah, this means that it is for Allah alone to determine the permissible and the forbidden. Others said it means whoever follows the path of Allah will reach Him and His reward. Ibn Jareer was one of those who said this, and that it is like the His words, the Exalted,

﴿وَعَلَى اللَّهِ قَصْدُ السَّبِيلِ ...﴾ (سورة التحل : ٩)

﴿And upon Allah it rests to show the right way...﴾ (Qur'an 16: 9).

﴿And certainly, unto Us belong the latter portion and the former.﴾ That is, all belongs to Allah and He is the disposer of all affairs.

﴿Therefore have I warned you of the flaming Fire﴾: Imam Aḥmad narrates, on the authority of Simâk ibn Ḥarb³ that he heard An-Nu'mân ibn Basheer delivering a sermon in which he said, «“I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) deliver a sermon in which he said, ‘I have warned you of the fire!’ — (in such a voice) that even if a man had been in the market, he would have heard it from the place where I am standing now.”» Imam Aḥmad also narrates that the Messenger

³ Simâk ibn Ḥarb ibn Aws ibn Khâlid az-Zuhli al-Bakri al-Koofi 'Abul Mugheerah: According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a truthful reporter of hadiths, but his narrations from 'Ikrimah were said to be *muḍṭarib* (when the different narrations of the same hadith differ, either in the text or the chain, without the possibility of preferring one narration to the others because they are all equal in their authenticity and they are related by trustworthy narrators). He died in the year 23 H.

of Allah (ﷻ) said, «“Verily, the most lightly punished of the people in Hell will have a burning ember on the sole of each foot which will cause his brain to boil.”» This was also narrated by Bukhari, and Muslim narrated something similar.

﴿Which only the most wretched must endure﴾: that is, none shall be consumed by the fire of Hell (from every direction) except the most wicked and contemptible, as is made clear by the following verse:

﴿He who denies and turns away.﴾ Those who deny the Truth in their hearts, and they turn away from those actions that, by Allah’s Grace, might save them. It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «“None will enter the fire except the wretched.” They asked, “Who is the wretched, O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)?” He answered, “The one who disobeys (Allah) and leaves no opportunity to obey (Allah).”» (Narrated by Imam Ahmad). It is also narrated from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger said, «“None shall enter the fire except one who refuses.” They said, “Who refuses, O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)?” He replied, “Whoever obeys me will enter Paradise, and whoever disobeys me has refused.”» This was also narrated by Bukhari.

﴿Far removed from it will be the righteous﴾: this means that Allah will pull away all the pious, God-fearing slaves. Allah explains further: ﴿Who gives his wealth that he may grow [in goodness]﴾. That is, the righteous are those who spend from their wealth in obedience to their Lord in order to purify their souls,, their wealth and all that has been granted to them by Allah in worldly affairs and matters of religion.

﴿And none has with him any favour for reward﴾ That is, they do not spend their money in charity in order to get some favour from anyone; they do it desiring only the reward of Allah, as in the verse that follows:

«Except as seeking [to fulfil] the purpose of his Lord Most High.﴾: They are striving only to attain a glimpse of their Lord in the abode of the Hereafter, in the gardens of Paradise.

«He verily will be content.﴾ That is, those who fit the above description will be pleased with that which Allah rewards them. Several scholars have said that these verses were revealed with regard to Abu Bakr aş-Şiddeeq (رضي الله عنه); indeed, some scholars claim that there is no doubt that he is included in this description and is the most worthy of this community. While it is agreed that the verses are general, including anyone who fits the description in the verses, it is also accepted that Abu Bakr was the best of the Prophet's *Ummah*.⁴ He had all of the attributes of the righteous and all praiseworthy characteristics. He was a sincere believer who was pious, generous and liberal with his wealth in obedience to his Protector and in support of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). How many dirhams and dinars did he spend, wanting only to meet his Lord, the Most Generous? He did not need anything from any of his people, but his generosity and his virtuous conduct were shown to all of the tribes, particularly to the women and the old. In Bukhari and Muslim it is narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «“Whoever equipped two riding animals in the cause of Allah, the gatekeepers of Paradise will call to him, saying, ‘O slave of Allah! This is true wealth.’ Abu Bakr said, ‘O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! The one who is called by them will not be in need of anything, then is there anyone who will be called by all of them?’⁵ The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) replied, ‘Yes, and I hope that you will be one of them.’”»

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Layl*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

⁴ *Ummah*: Nation (the community of believers).

⁵ That is, whom the gatekeepers of all the gates of Paradise will call. (Editor)

Soorat ad-Duḥâ (93)

The Morning Hours

سُورَةُ الضُّحَى

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿وَالضُّحَىٰ ۝۱﴾ وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَىٰ ۝۲ مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَىٰ ۝۳ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ
مِنَ الْأُولَىٰ ۝۴ وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰ ۝۵ أَلَمْ يَجِدْكَ يَتِيمًا
فَآوَىٰ ۝۶ وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَىٰ ۝۷ وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلًا فَأَغْنَىٰ ۝۸ فَأَمَّا الْيَتِيمَ فَلَا
نَقَهَرَ ۝۹ وَأَمَّا السَّائِلَ فَلَا نَنْهَرَ ۝۱۰ وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ ۝۱۱ ﴿﴾

(سورة الضحى: ۱-۱۱)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. By the morning hours
2. And by the night when it is stillest,
3. Your Lord has not forsaken you nor does He hate you,
4. And verily the latter portion will be better for you than the former,
5. And verily your Lord will give you so that you will be content.
6. Did He not find you an orphan and protect [you]?
7. Did He not find you wandering and direct [you]?

8. Did He not find you destitute and enrich [you]?
9. Therefore the orphan do not oppress,
10. Therefore the beggar do not drive away,
11. Therefore the bounty of your Lord proclaim.

It has been said by some that when one recites this chapter and those following it, he should say *Allâhu Akbar* (Allah is Greater) at the end of it. While the narration used to support this is weak, it is narrated that Shâfi'ee heard a person doing so and said to him, "Well done! You have performed an authentic Sunnah."¹ Allah knows best. Scholars of Qur'anic recitation have differed as to how one should do this. Some said one should simply say *Allâhu Akbar* while others said that it is better to say *Allâhu Akbar, Lâ ilâha illa Allâh wallâhu Akbar* (Allah is Greater! None is worthy of worship except Allah and Allah is Greater). Scholars also differed as to whether one should say this at the conclusion of *Soorat al-Layl* or *Soorat aḍ-Ḍuḥâ*. It was said concerning this *takbeer* (saying *Allâhu Akbar*) that when the revelation to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) ceased for some time, causing him anxiety, the angel Gabriel came to him and revealed ﴿By the morning hours and by the night when it is stillest﴾ to the end of the chapter, and he said, "*Allâhu Akbar!*" However, nothing has been narrated in this connection, authentic or otherwise, and Allah knows best.

It is narrated from Al-Aswad ibn Qays that he heard Jundub saying, «"The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was grieved (for revelation had ceased temporarily) and he did not stand in prayer for a night or two. A woman came and said to him, 'O Muhammad! I see that your devil has left you.' So Allah revealed ﴿By the morning hours and by the night when it is stillest; your Lord has not forsaken you nor does He hate you﴾."» (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim). Another

¹ Sunnah: Sayings, actions and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad (bpuh).

narration by Ibn Abi Ḥâtîm makes it clear that the reason that the Prophet did not stand in prayer for one or two nights was because of an injury sustained to his finger when someone threw a stone at him. It was said that the woman who said this was Umm Jameel, the wife of Abu Lahab. Al-‘Awfî reports on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that when the Qur’an was revealed to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), Jibreel (Gabriel) was late by a few days (on one occasion) and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was affected by this. The pagans said concerning this, “His Lord has left him and hates him.” So Allah revealed ﴿Your Lord has not forsaken you nor does He hate you﴾.

Allah swears by the forenoon and the glorious light it emits and ﴿by the night when it is stillest﴾, that is, when it becomes calm and pitch-black. This was said by Mujâhid, Qatâdah, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk, Ibn Zayd and others. This is a clear proof of Allah’s ability to create what He wills, as in His words,

﴿فَالِقُ الْإِصْبَاحِ وَجَمَلَ اللَّيْلِ سَكَنًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ حُسْبَانًا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ
الْعَلِيمِ﴾
(سورة الأنعام: ٩٦)

﴿He is the Cleaver of the Daybreak, and He has appointed the night for stillness, and the sun and the moon for reckoning. That is the measuring of the Mighty, the Wise.﴾
(Qur’an 6: 96)

﴿Your Lord has not forsaken you﴾: Allah assures His Messenger (ﷺ) that He has not abandoned him. He is still with him in His Knowledge, Sight, Hearing, Mercy, Love and Protection.

﴿Nor does He hate you﴾: Allah assures Muhammad (ﷺ) that He does not hate His Messenger (ﷺ), even though He had not communicated with Muhammad during those days.

﴿And verily the latter portion will be better for you than the former﴾ The abode of the hereafter is superior and more desirable for Allah’s Prophet (ﷺ) than the abode of this world. Because of this, the

Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was the most abstemious and frugal in this world and its affairs and the greatest of men in rejecting its delights and pleasures, as is well known to those who have studied his biography. It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه), «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) lay down on his mattress to sleep and it left marks on his side because the mattress was so thin. When he awoke, it was said to him, “Will you not permit us to make for you something soft to place on your mattress?” He replied, “I have nothing to do with this world. I am in this world like a rider resting in the shade of a tree, who then passes on and leaves it.”» (Narrated by Ahmad, Ibn Mâjah and Tirmidhi who said it is authentic).

﴿And verily your Lord will give you so that you will be content.﴾ This is a promise about what he will receive in the abode of the hereafter, so that he will be pleased with his community and that which has been prepared for him from His generosity, magnanimity and munificence. An example is the river of *Kawthar*, whose banks are made from pearls and coral, whose clay is musk and whose scent is fragrant, as will be mentioned, Allah willing, in the tafseer of *Soorat al-Kawthar*. Imam Abu 'Amr al-Awzâ'ee ² narrates on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was shown that with which his community will be blessed after him: treasure upon treasure. He (ﷺ) became pleased, at which the verse ﴿And verily your Lord will give you so that you will be content﴾ was revealed. Allah has given him numerous palaces in Paradise, each one of them complete with wives, servants and more. All the narrators in this chain are reliable, but it appears to be *mawqoof*,³ reaching only to Ibn 'Abbâs. It is narrated from Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that

² 'Abdur-Rahmân ibn 'Amr ibn Abi 'Amr Abu 'Amr al-Awzâ'ee was a celebrated scholar of jurisprudence. According to Ibn Hajar he was trustworthy and honourable; he died in the year 57 H.

³ *mawqoof*: lit. 'restricted': a category of hadith that is actually not concerning=

part of the treasure that Muhammad (ﷺ) will receive is that none of his family (who were Muslims) will enter the Hellfire. This was also narrated by Ibn Jareer and Ibn Abi Ḥâtim. Al-Ḥasan said it means the Prophet's intercession; Abu Ja'far al-Bâqir⁴ said likewise. It is reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «“We are *ahl al-bayt*;⁵ Allah has chosen for us the hereafter in preference to this world: ﴿And verily your Lord will give you so that you will be content﴾.”» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Shaybah)

Then Allah, the Exalted, Almighty, enumerates His blessings upon His slave and Messenger, Muhammad (ﷺ): ﴿Did He not find you an orphan and protect [you]?﴾ That is because his father died before he was born, although it was also said that he died after the Prophet was born.⁶ Then his mother, Âminah bint Wahb, died when he was only six years old, after which he was under the guardianship of his grandfather, ‘Abdul Muṭṭalib, until he also died when the Prophet (ﷺ) was eight years old. Then his uncle, Abu Ṭâlib, took responsibility for him. After Allah commissioned him as a prophet and messenger at the age of forty, Abu Ṭâlib continued to protect, assist and honour him, restraining his people from harming him. Throughout this, Abu Ṭâlib remained an adherent of the religion of his people, worshipping idols. All of this took place by the divine decree of Allah, as He had ordained it. His uncle, Abu Ṭâlib, died before the Hijrah⁷ began, and the ignorant, foolish people of

=a saying or action of the Prophet (bpuh), but rather concerns sayings or actions of the Companions

⁴ Muhammad ibn al-Ḥusain ibn ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib Abu Ja'far al-Bâqir: according to Ibn Ḥajar, he was reliable and pious.

⁵ *Ahl al-Bayt*: members of the Prophet's family

⁶ The word used in Arabic for “it was said” is *qeela*, which is a form usually used by scholars of Hadith to indicate a weakness in a hadith.

⁷ Hijrah: the migration of the Muslims from Makkah where they had endured persecution, to the sanctuary of Madinah

Quraysh began to increase their oppression and persecution against him. Allah then ordained for him the Hijra to Madinah, to the people of the Anṣâr⁸ from the tribes of Al-Aws and Al-Khazraj. There, his *Sunnah*⁹ was implemented in full and they gave him shelter, protected him and fought by his side, may Allah be pleased with them all. All of this is included in Allah's protection, care and providence.

«Did He not find you wandering and direct [you]?» This is like His words, the Exalted,

«And thus have We inspired in you [Muhammad] a Spirit of Our command. You did not know what the Scripture was, nor what the Faith. But We have made it a light whereby We guide whom We will of Our bondmen.» (Qur'an 42: 52)

Some said that what is meant by the word «wandering» is lost; that it refers to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) being lost in the mountains of Makkah when he was a child. (Narrated by Al-Baghawi). It was also said that he and his uncle, Abu Ṭâlib, got lost on the road to Syria when he was riding a she-camel at night, and that Satan came and led the camel astray. Then Jibreel came and blew *Iblees* (Satan) with such a strong breath that he was blown to Abyssinia, and he guided the camel back to the right road. (Narrated by Al-Baghawi)

«Did He not find you destitute and enrich [you]?» That is, He found you in poverty and made you richer than any other man (in terms of Allah's favour), and gave you the reward of the patient, poor man and the thankful, wealthy man. Qatâdah said, concerning the verses «Did He not find you an orphan and protect [you]? Did He not find you wandering and direct [you]? Did He not find you destitute

⁸ Anṣâr: See footnote no. 5 on page 169 of this book

⁹ Sunnah: Sayings, actions and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad (bpuh)

and enrich [you]?) that these verses refer to his life prior to the start of the revelation. Ibn Jareer and Ibn Abi Hâtîm narrated this. It is narrated from Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «Wealth is not (measured by) worldly goods, but wealth is wealth of the soul.» (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim). Muslim also narrates that Allah's Messenger said, «The one who embraces Islam and is content with the provision given to him by Allah will be successful.»

«Therefore the orphan do not oppress»: that is, 'just as you were an orphan and Allah gave you refuge, do likewise and do not oppress the orphan; do not humiliate or scold him, but instead be kind and generous.' Qatâdah said it means be to the orphan like a generous father.

«Therefore the beggar do not drive away» That is, just as you were lost and He guided you, do not refuse the seeker of knowledge who wishes only to be guided. Ibn Is-hâq said it means 'do not be an oppressor, arrogant, shameless in speech, or uncivil with the weakest of Allah's slaves.' Qatâdah said it means be compassionate in your response to the poor and the indigent.

«Therefore of the bounty of your Lord proclaim.» That is, 'remember how you were also poor and needy until Allah blessed you with provision, and tell people about the blessings of Allah.' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to say in supplication to Allah, «Make us grateful for Your blessings, make us praise You for that, and accept it and complete it (Your blessing) upon us.» Ibn Jareer reports, on the authority of Abu Naḍrah, that the Muslims considered that part of their gratitude for Allah's blessings was to tell people about them. 'Abdullâh ibn al-Imam Aḥmad narrates, on the authority of An-Nu'mân ibn Basheer, that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) ascended the pulpit and said, «"Whoever does not thank the few does not thank the majority; and whoever does not thank the people does not thank

Allah. And to speak about the blessings of Allah is to give thanks and not to do so is an act of disbelief. The Ummah (Community) is a mercy, and division is suffering.» The chain of this hadith is weak. However, Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi narrate, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «He who does not thank the people does not thank Allah.» According to Tirmidhi, this is an authentic narration. Mujâhid says that the grace of Allah refers to the prophethood, while another narration attributed to him says it means the Qur'an. Ibn Is-hâq says it refers to that which came to Muhammad (ﷺ) of Allah's blessings and generosity, such as the prophethood, so he must speak about it and call people to Islam by it. So the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) started to speak in secret to those whose hearts were able to accept it from amongst his family and friends, about the blessing of Allah upon him in the form of the prophethood. Then it became incumbent upon him to pray, so he prayed.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat aḍ-Ḍuḥâ*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat ash-Sharḥ (94)

The Expansion

سُورَةُ الشَّرْحِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿۱﴾ أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ ﴿۱﴾ وَوَضَعْنَا عَنَّا وِزْرَكَ ﴿۲﴾ الَّذِي أَنْقَضَ ظَهْرَكَ ﴿۳﴾ وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ ﴿۴﴾ فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ﴿۵﴾ إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ﴿۶﴾ فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانصَبْ ﴿۷﴾ وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْغَبْ ﴿۸﴾

(سورة الشرح: ۱-۸)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Have We not caused your bosom to dilate,
2. And eased you of the burden
3. Which weighed down your back;
4. And exalted your fame?
5. But certainly, with hardship comes ease,
6. Certainly, with hardship comes ease;
7. So when you are relieved, still toil
8. And strive to please your Lord.

﴿Have We not caused your bosom to dilate﴾: Here, Allah is reminding Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) how He opened his heart, enlightened it, expanded it, and made it magnanimous, patient and forbearing, as in the words of Allah,

﴿فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ، يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ، لِلْإِسْلَامِ...﴾ (١٢٥)

(سورة الأنعام: ١٢٥)

﴿Those whom Allah [in His plan] wills to guide, — He opens their breast to Islam...﴾ (Qur'an 6: 125).

And just as Allah (ﷻ) opened his breast, He made His law accommodating, abounding in justice, and easy to follow, with neither constriction, heavy burden in it, nor difficulty. It was also said that what was meant by the His words, the Exalted, ﴿Have We not caused your bosom to dilate﴾ was that the Prophet's heart was opened up on the night of the *Isrâ'*.¹ As narrated by Mâlik ibn Sa'sa'ah,² the Prophet (ﷺ) said, «While I was at home in a state between sleep and wakefulness (an angel recognized me) as the man lying between two men. A golden tray full of wisdom and belief was brought to me and my body was cut open from the throat to the lower part of the abdomen and then my abdomen was washed with *zamzam*³ water and (my heart) was filled with wisdom and belief.» (Narrated by Bukhari) This was also narrated by Tirmidhi. It may be that this is the

¹ *Isrâ'*: the Prophet's nocturnal journey from the Holy Mosque in Makkah to Al-Aqsâ Mosque in Jerusalem. The same night he also experienced his journey of ascension to the seven heavens, known as *al-Mi'râj*. Anas narrated the hadith of the Prophet's *Mi'râj*.

² Mâlik ibn Sa'sa'ah al-Anṣârî al-Mâzinee was a Companion. It is believed that he lived to a very old age. Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi and others narrate on his authority.

³ *Zamzam*: The blessed well of water, near the Ka'bah in the Holy Mosque of Makkah.

correct interpretation of the verse, but it does not negate the first explanation that the opening referred to is a figurative one also, and Allah knows best.

It is narrated on the authority of Ubayy ibn Ka'b that Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) went to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) with the intention of asking him about things that no one had asked him before, and so when he said to him, «“O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! What is the first thing you saw in connection with the prophethood?” The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) sat up straight and said, “You have asked, O Abu Hurayrah! I was a boy of ten years old or so, in the desert, when I heard someone speaking above me, and when I looked, it was two men, one saying to the other: ‘Is this he?’ Then they came towards me, and I had never seen the like of their faces before ... wearing clothes the like of which I had never seen before. Then they came towards me, walking until each of them took a hold of part of me and I could not feel their touch. Then one of them said to his companion: ‘Lie him down!’ So they did so carefully, without hurting me. Then one of them said to his companion: ‘Open his chest!’ So one of them descended towards my chest and opened it as far as I could see, without any bleeding and without any pain and he said: ‘Remove the malice and envy.’ So he removed something shaped like a small clot and threw it away. Then he said: ‘Insert the compassion and mercy.’ And the thing that he took out (to place in my chest) was like silver. Then he shook the big toe of my right foot and said: ‘Return in peace.’ So I returned, exceeding in kindness to the young and mercy to the old.”» (Narrated by ‘Abdullâh ibn al-Imam Aḥmad)

﴿And eased you of the burden﴾ This is like His words,

﴿لِيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ ...﴾ (سورة الفتح: ٢)

﴿That Allah may forgive you of your sin that which is past and that which is to come...﴾ (Qur'an 48: 2).

﴿Which weighed down your back﴾ Several of the *salaf* said that this is the meaning of the verse.

﴿And exalted your fame﴾ Mujâhid said that the verse means that Allah (ﷻ) has elevated the mention of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), as in one's saying, "I testify that none is worthy of worship except Allah and I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." According to Qatâdah, it means that Allah has exalted the mention of the Prophet (ﷺ) in this world and in the hereafter, for there is not one who delivers the Friday sermon nor one who pronounces the Muslim testimony nor a person who prays but that he swears that none is worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah (Blessings and peace be upon him).

It is reported from Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «"I asked my Lord a question that I wish I had never asked. I said, 'Before me were prophets who were given control of the wind and some who gave life to the dead (by Allah's will).' He, the Exalted said, 'O Muhammad! Did I not find you an orphan and give you a refuge? Did I not raise high your fame?' I said, 'Most certainly you did, O my Lord!'"» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim)

﴿But certainly, with hardship comes ease, Certainly, with hardship comes ease﴾: Allah, the Exalted, informs us that after every difficulty there is ease and relief; and then He reinforces this by repeating it. It is related on the authority of Anas ibn Mâlik (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was sitting opposite a rock and he said, «"Were hardship to come and enter this rock, surely ease would come and enter upon it and remove the hardship." Then Allah revealed, ﴿But certainly, with hardship comes ease, Certainly, with

hardship comes ease».)» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Ḥâtim)⁴ It is reported on the authority of Al-Ḥasan that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) came out one day looking very happy, smiling and laughing and saying: «“One hardship will not overcome two reliefs, one hardship will not overcome two reliefs: ﴿But certainly, with hardship comes ease, Certainly, with hardship comes ease﴾.” (Narrated by Ibn Jareer at-Ṭabari) Something similar was also narrated from Qatâdah. The meaning of this is that the hardship mentioned twice in the two verses is only one, while the relief is two.⁵ It is reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «Relief is sent down in due proportion to the burden of suffering, and patience descends in due proportion to the amount of afflictions.» (Narrated by Al-Ḥasan ibn Sufiyân)

﴿So when you are relieved, still toil and strive to please your Lord.﴾ That is, when you have finished attending to the affairs of this world, completely cut yourself off from them, then stand in worship with zeal and ardour — but without haste — devoting your intention and desire to Allah exclusively. It is narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, «There is no prayer when the food is served (until after it has been eaten), nor when the *akhbathân*⁶ are pressing him (the worshipper).» (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim) Mujâhid says, concerning this verse: when you have finished attending to the affairs

⁴ This narration contains in its chain one 'Â'id ibn Shurayḥ, who is described by at least one scholar as weak, although the same hadith is also narrated from Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) in a *mawqoof* form.

⁵ This is because the hardship is expressed in Arabic as the definite article, *al-'usr*, indicating the singular, while relief is expressed as the indefinite article, *yusr*, indicating plurality.

⁶ The *akhbathân*: The two most foul things — excrement and urine. One should not pray until he has relieved himself from the urge to urinate or defecate, because in this state one cannot concentrate on one's prayers and devote them sincerely to Allah, as is incumbent upon us.

of this world, then stand in prayer and turn to your Lord. Another narration attributed to Mujâhid says: if you stand in prayer, then turn to your Lord for your needs. According to Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه), it means that when you have completed the obligatory prayers, stand in prayer at night. Ibn 'Ayyâḍ is reported to have said the same thing. It is also attributed to Ibn Mas'ood that he said, ﴿So when you are relieved, still toil and strive to please your Lord﴾ refers to when you have finished praying and are sitting. 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah reports on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه)⁷ that the verse ﴿So when you are relieved, still toil﴾ refers to supplication. Zayd ibn Aslam and Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk said: so when you have finished jihad,⁸ then stand up in worship of Allah. ﴿And strive to please your Lord.﴾ According to Ath-Thawri, it means, make your intention and your desire purely for Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat ash-Sharḥ*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

⁷ See footnote 3 on page 112 of this book.

⁸ jihad: self-exertion, striving, exerting a great effort in the Cause of Allah

Soorat at-Teen (95)

The Fig

سُورَةُ التِّينِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿وَاللِّينِ وَالزَّيْتُونِ﴾ ١ وَطُورِ سِينِينَ ﴿٢﴾ وَهَذَا الْبَلَدِ الْأَمِينِ ﴿٣﴾ لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾ ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ ﴿٥﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ﴿٦﴾ فَمَا يُكَذِّبُكَ بَعْدُ بِالذِّينِ ﴿٧﴾ أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَحْكَمَ الْحَاكِمِينَ ﴿٨﴾

(سورة التين : ١-٨)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. By the fig and the olive,
2. By Mount Sinai,
3. And by this land made safe;
4. Surely We created the human of the best stature
5. Then we reduced him to the lowest of the low,
6. Save those who believe and do good works, and theirs is a reward unailing.

7. Then what can, after this, contradict you, as to the judgment [to come]?

8. Is not Allah the most conclusive of all judges?

﴿By the fig﴾ Mâlik has narrated from Al-Barâ' ibn 'Âzib that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to read *Soorat at-Teen* in one unit of his prayer when he was travelling and he added, "I have never heard anyone recite it in a better voice." This has been mentioned by all the major narrators of Hadith. Scholars have differed as to what is intended by the mention of the fig. It was said that it represents the Mosque of Damascus, the city of Damascus itself, or the mountain that is near to it. Al-Qurtûbi said that it is the mosque of the 'people of the cave'.¹ Al-'Awfî said, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs, that it means the Mosque of Noah (ﷺ) on the Mountain of al-Joodiyy. Mujâhid said it simply means the fig.

﴿And the olive﴾: Ka'b al-Ahbâr, Qatâdah, Ibn Zayd and others said it refers to the Mosque of Jerusalem. Mujâhid and 'Ikrimah said it simply means the olive.

﴿By Mount Sinai﴾: Ka'b al-Ahbâr and others said that it is the mountain where Allah spoke to Prophet Moses (ﷺ).

﴿And by this land made safe﴾: According to Ibn 'Abbâs, Mujâhid, 'Ikrimah, Al-Ḥasan and others, it means Makkah and there is no difference of opinion on this. Some scholars said that Allah sent a prophet to the people in each of these three places with a message for humankind, all of them resolute, bearing a law or code of life. The first place was Jerusalem (the fig and the olive) to which Allah sent Jesus the son of Mary (may Allah's peace be upon them). The second place is Mount Sinai where Allah spoke to Moses the son of 'Imrân. The third is Makkah, the city of security. Whoever enters it is

¹ See *Soorat al-Kahf* (18).

protected and to it Allah (ﷻ) sent Muhammad (ﷺ). It was said that these three places were mentioned at the end of the Torah.

﴿Surely We created the human of the best stature﴾: It is this upon which Allah swears: that He created the human being in the best form — upright with perfectly formed limbs.

﴿Then We reduced him to the lowest of the low﴾ meaning in the fire of Hell, and that is because he or she did not obey Allah nor follow the prophets.

﴿Save those who believe and do good works﴾ Some said ﴿Then We reduced him to the lowest of the low﴾ means that Allah reduced the human to a decrepit being in old age. This was attributed to Ibn ‘Abbâs and ‘Ikrimah, however this is not correct. This verse is like the words of Allah,

﴿وَالْعَصْرِ ﴿١﴾ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ﴿٢﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ﴿٣﴾ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ﴿٤﴾﴾
 (سورة العَصْرِ : ١-٣)

﴿By the declining day, certainly, people are in a state of loss; save those who believe and do good works, and exhort one another to truth and exhort one another to endurance.﴾ (Qur’an 103: 1-3).

﴿Theirs is a reward unfailing﴾ means that they will have an abode in Paradise, the duration of which will be forever.

﴿Then what can, after this, contradict you, as to the judgment [to come]﴾ That is, O son of Adam, why do you deny ﴿the judgment [to come]﴾?

﴿The judgment [to come]﴾ is the repayment that is promised. Allah asks His slave: Why do you deny it when you know Who was responsible for creating you in the first place and that He is capable, therefore, of creating you once again (after death). So what ails you

that you reject (the truth) when you know all this? It is reported on the authority of Manşoor that he said to Mujâhid, “﴿Then what can, after this, contradict you, as to the judgment [to come]?: does it mean the Prophet (ﷺ)?﴾” Mujâhid replied, “Allah forbid! What is meant is humankind.” ‘Ikrimah and others agreed with this.

﴿Is not Allah the most conclusive of all judges?﴾ That is, is He not the best of judges Who does not oppress or do injustice to anyone? And out of His Justice He will begin the resurrection and will right the wrongs of the oppressed. We have already mentioned the narration on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «“If any of you recited ﴿By the fig and the olive﴾ until he reached the verse ﴿Is not Allah the most conclusive of all judges?﴾, he should say: Certainly, and I am one of those who testify to this.”»

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat at-Teen*.
All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-'Alaq (96)

The Clot

سُورَةُ الْعَلَقِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿أَقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ﴿٢﴾ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ﴿٣﴾﴾
﴿الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ﴿٤﴾ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ﴿٥﴾﴾

(سورة العلق: ١-٥)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Read: In the name of your Lord Who creates,
2. Creates the human being from a clot.
3. Read: And your Lord is the Most Bounteous,
4. Who teaches by the pen,
5. Teaches people that which they knew not.

It is reported on the authority of 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) that she said, «“The beginning of revelation to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was that he began to have true visions in his sleep, and he never had a vision except that it was like the rising of the sun at daybreak. Then there awoke in him a desire to be alone and so he used to go to a cave to meditate, devoting himself to the worship of Allah, especially at

night, taking provisions with him that he might remain there for some time. Then he would return to his wife, Khadeejah (رضي الله عنها), and take fresh supplies of food and then return once more to the cave, which was called *Hirâ'*. Then suddenly, the revelation began to come to him while he was in the cave of *Hirâ'*. The angel came to him and said: 'Read!' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) replied: 'I do not read.' Then the angel seized him until he felt he was at the limit of his endurance then he released him and said again: 'Read!' The Prophet answered: 'I do not read.' Then the angel seized him again until he felt he was at the limit of his endurance then he released him and said again: 'Read! In the Name of your Lord Who creates ... [up to the words] ... teaches people that which they knew not.' Then the Messenger, shivering because of what had happened to him, left the cave and ran home saying to his wife, Khadeejah: 'Cover me! Cover me!' So she covered him until he calmed down, then he said: 'O Khadeejah! What ails me?' Then he told her what had happened to him and said: 'I was afraid for myself.' She replied: 'No, be of good cheer, for by Allah! He will never dishonour you; you maintain family ties, you are truthful in speech, you are tolerant and forbearing, you are hospitable to your guests and you assist those who have been afflicted by calamity.' Then she took him to Waraqah ibn Nawfal ibn Asad ibn 'Abdil 'Uzzah, who was her cousin. He had embraced Christianity during the days of ignorance and he was one of those who could write in Hebrew and he had written on Biblical matters in that language as Allah willed. He was a man advanced in years and he had become blind. Khadeejah said to him: 'O son of my uncle! Listen to what the son of your brother has to say.' Waraqah then asked the Prophet (ﷺ) what he had seen and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) told him what had happened. Waraqah replied: 'This was the angel who descended to Moses (ﷺ) I wish that I were a young man; I wish that I would still be living when your people cast you out.' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: 'Will they expel me then?' Waraqah

answered: 'Yes. There has not come a Messenger except that he has been opposed and if I was but present on the day (when you are called to prophethood) I would surely support you strongly.' Soon after this Waraqah died; and the revelation did not continue for some time, so the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) became saddened. He would go out to the mountains and climb to the top, but whenever he approached the summit, the angel Jibreel came to him and said: 'O Muhammad! Verily, you are the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).' He would become calm when he heard this and he would return to his home, placated. Still the revelation did not recommence and so he would climb a mountain and Jibreel would appear to him again and tell him the same thing.» (Narrated by Ahmad) This has all been authentically narrated by Bukhari and Muslim.

These verses were the first revelation that came to the Prophet (ﷺ). They are the beginning of the mercy that Allah sent to His slaves and the first blessing that He sent to them. In them Allah draws our attention to the beginning of the creation of humankind, which starts with a clot of blood; and of His great generosity He has taught humans that which they did not know. He has honoured human beings and favoured them with knowledge and it is the measure by which He has preferred the father of humankind, Adam (ﷺ) over the rest of creation, including the angels. That knowledge may be in the minds of people, on their tongues, or in that which they write, whether it is intellectual, literary or any written material. And while the last (written knowledge) necessitates the first two (intellectual and spoken knowledge), the reverse is not true. For this reason Allah (ﷻ) says, ﴿Read: And your Lord is the Most Bounteous, Who teaches by the pen, teaches people that which they knew not﴾.

يَسْهَى ﴿٩﴾ عَبْدًا إِذَا صَلَّى ﴿١٠﴾ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ كَانَ عَلَىٰ الْهُدَىٰ ﴿١١﴾ أَوْ أَمَرَ بِالتَّقْوَىٰ ﴿١٢﴾ أَرَأَيْتَ
 إِنْ كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ﴿١٣﴾ أَلَمْ يَعْلَمْ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَرَىٰ ﴿١٤﴾ كَلَّا لَئِنْ لَمْ يَنْتَهِ لَنَسْفَعْنَا بِالنَّاصِيَةِ ﴿١٥﴾ نَاصِيَةٍ
 كَذِبَةٍ خَاطِئَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾ فَلْيَدْعُ نَادِيَهُ ﴿١٧﴾ سَنَدْعُ الزَّانِبَةَ ﴿١٨﴾ كَلَّا لَا نُطِيعُه وَأَسْجُدُ وَأَقْرَبُ
 ﴿١٩﴾

(سورة العلق: ٦-١٩)

6. No, but verily the human is rebellious
7. That he thinks himself independent!
8. Surely, unto your Lord is the return.
9. Have you seen him who dissuades
10. A slave when he prays?
11. Have you seen if he relies on the guidance [of Allah]
12. Or enjoins piety?
13. Have you seen if he denies [Allah's guidance] and is obstinate?
14. Is he then unaware that Allah sees?
15. No, but if he does not cease We will seize him by the forelock —
16. The lying, sinful forelock —
17. Then let him call upon his henchmen!
18. We will call the guards of Hell.
19. No, do not obey him. But prostrate yourself, and draw near [unto Allah].¹

Allah (ﷻ) informs us how people behave when they are filled with pride and happiness in their own recklessness, insolence and tyranny. People feels so because they consider themselves to be above any need of help or guidance, especially if they are wealthy. Then Allah threatens, warns and assures him of His retribution saying, «Surely, unto your Lord is the return» That is, we will all

¹ This is a verse of prostration: whoever recites it in Arabic or hears it recited should prostrate and praise Allah. (Editor)

return to Allah where we will face the reckoning concerning our wealth: how we acquired it and on what we spent it. 'Awn relates that 'Abdullâh said, "There are two greedy persons who are never satisfied: the possessor of knowledge and the possessor of this world (and its goods), but they are in no wise equal. As for the possessor of knowledge, Allah's pleasure upon him is increased. As for the possessor of this world, he continues his transgressions." Then 'Abdullâh recited, "﴿No, but verily the human is rebellious, that he thinks himself independent﴾. Then he said,

﴿... إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ ...﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٢٨)

﴿... Those truly fear Allah, among His Servants, who have knowledge...﴾ (Qur'an 35: 28)."

(Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim)

This was also narrated in a *marfoo'*² form, on the authority of Anas ibn Mâlik: «There are two greedy persons who are never satisfied: he who searches for knowledge and he who searches for (gain in) this world.» (Narrated by Al-Bayhaqi)

﴿Have you seen him who dissuades a slave when he prays?﴾ This verse was revealed concerning Abu Jahl, may Allah curse him!³ He used to threaten the Prophet against praying near the Sacred House (the Ka'bah) and so Allah admonished him, first with that which is better, saying, ﴿Have you seen if he relies on the guidance [of Allah]﴾ that is, 'what do you think if he whom you forbid from prayer was following the straight path? ﴿Or enjoins piety?﴾ by his actions and by His words, and yet you hurt him.'

² *Marfoo'*: lit. elevated; a term in hadith criticism: for a narration to be traceable up to the Prophet (bpuh), wherein the Companion says, 'the Messenger of Allah (bpuh) said.'

³ Abu Jahl: The uncle of the Prophet (bpuh) and an inveterate enemy of Islam.

«Is he then unaware that Allah sees?» That is, does not the preventer (Abu Jahl) of him who is rightly-guided [Muhammad (ﷺ)] realize that Allah is aware of what he does, that He sees him and hears His words and that He will chastise him because of what he does with the most severe of punishments. Then Allah (ﷻ) says, promising and threatening, «No, but if he does not cease» that is, if he does not desist from his obstinate rejection, «We will seize him by the forelock» that is, Allah shall disgrace him on the Day of Resurrection.

«The lying, sinful forelock» is the forelock of Abu Jahl, who is untruthful in speech and sinful in deed.

«Then let him call upon his henchmen» that is, let him call upon his tribe and his family.

«We will call the guards of Hell» The *zabâniyah* referred to in this verse are the angels of punishment. Then he will see who shall prevail: his helpers or Allah's.

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs that Abu Jahl said, «If I see Muhammad praying near the Ka'bah, I will tread on his neck.» When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) heard this, he said, «If he does so, the angels will seize him.»» (Narrated by Bukhari) Something similar has been narrated by Tirmidhi, Nasâ'i and Ibn Jareer, amongst others. Imam Aḥmad narrates on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs that Abu Jahl said, «If I see Muhammad praying near the Ka'bah, I will tread upon his neck.» The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «If he does so, the angels will seize him, without doubt. And even though the Jews might wish for death, if it came to them, they would see their places in the Hellfire. And if those who curse the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) were to return to their homes [from the place where they were cursing the Prophet (ﷺ)], they would find neither their wealth nor their families.»»

﴿No, do not obey him﴾ That is, O Muhammad! Do not obey him when he forbids you to continue in your worship. Rather, increase it and pray wherever you wish; pay no attention to him, for Allah is protecting you and helping you, and He will preserve you from the people's harm.

﴿But prostrate yourself, and draw near [unto Allah]﴾ It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to prostrate when he read,

(سورة الانشقاق : ٢١)

﴿وَإِذَا قُرِئَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقُرْآنُ لَا يَسْجُدُونَ﴾

﴿And when the Qur'an is read to them, they fall not prostrate.﴾

(*Qur'an* 84: 21)

— and ﴿But prostrate yourself, and draw near [unto Allah]﴾.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-'Alaq*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-Qadr (97)

Divine Decree (Power)

سُورَةُ الْقَدْرِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ﴿١﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ ﴿٢﴾ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ
مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ﴿٣﴾ نَزَّلَ الْمَلَكُوتُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ ﴿٤﴾ سَلَامٌ
هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطَلَعِ الْفَجْرِ ﴿٥﴾﴾

(سورة القدر: ١-٥)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Truly, We revealed it on the Night of Power.
2. Ah, what will convey to you what the Night of Power is!
3. The Night of Power is better than a thousand months.
4. The angels and the Spirit descend therein, by the permission of their Lord, with all decrees.
5. [That night is] Peace until the rising of the dawn.

Allah, the Exalted informs us that He sent down the Qur'an on the Night of Power [the Night of *al-Qadr*], and it is the blessed night referred to in His words, ﴿Truly, We revealed it on the Night of

Power». The Night of Power¹ occurs in the month of Ramadan, as Allah (ﷻ) says,

﴿شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ ...﴾ (سورة البقرة: ١٨٥)

«The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur'an...»

(*Qur'an* 2: 185).

Ibn 'Abbâs, amongst others, explains that on the Night of Power, the complete Qur'an was sent down from *al-Lawh al-Mahfoodh*² to the House of Glory in the lowest heaven. From there, it was revealed over a period of twenty-three years to the Prophet (ﷺ), corresponding to and in response to events that took place during his life. In order to make clear the greatness of the matter of the Night of Power that He has chosen for sending down of the Noble Qur'an, Allah (ﷻ) says: «Ah, what will convey to you what the Night of Power is! The Night of Power is better than a thousand months.»

It is narrated on the authority of Mujâhid that «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) mentioned a man from the Children of Israel who carried his sword in the way of Allah for a thousand months. The Muslims were amazed at this until Allah revealed, «Truly, We revealed it on the Night of Power. Ah, what will convey to you what the Night of Power is! The Night of Power is better than a thousand months», referring to the thousand months during which the man carried his sword in the Way of Allah.» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim)

Ibn Jareer narrates on the authority of Mujâhid that there was a man from the Children of Israel who used to spend the night in prayer then in the morning he would go out to fight the enemy in the way of

¹ The Arabic phrase in this verse is *Laylat al-Qadr*, which can also be translated as 'the Night of Decree (or Destiny)'. (Editor)

² *Al-Lawh al-Mahfoodh*: the Preserved Tablet

Allah, and would do so until the evening. He did this for a thousand months, so Allah revealed the verse, ﴿Truly, We revealed it on the Night of Power [Decree]﴾ until the verse ﴿The Night of Power is better than a thousand months﴾ That is, standing in prayer on that night is better than the actions of that man. Sufiyân ath-Thawri reports, on the authority of Mujâhid, that the Night of Power being better than a thousand months means that the good deeds performed on it (fasting and standing in prayer) are better than a thousand months of good deeds, prayers and fasting. (Narrated by Ibn Jareer)

Ibn Abi Hâtim relates, on the authority of Mujâhid, that it means that the Night of Power is better than a thousand months without the Night of Power. This was also said by Qatâdah, Ibn Da'âmah, Ash-Shâfi'ee and others, including Ibn Jareer. It is the correct interpretation and it is like the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ), «To spend the night in the way of Allah is better than a thousand nights not spent in worship.» (Narrated by Aḥmad)

Likewise, it is narrated that if someone goes to Friday prayers neatly dressed and with a pure intention, the reward of a year's good deeds will be written for him, as if he had fasted and spent the nights in prayer and other acts of worship. It is reported from Abu Hurayrah that he said: «“When the month of Ramadan came, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘The month of Ramadan has come, a blessed month in which Allah has made it obligatory for you to fast. In it the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hell are closed and the devils are chained. In it is a night better than a thousand months; whoever loses the benefit of it has lost something irreplaceable.’”» (Narrated by Imam Aḥmad) This was also narrated by Nasâ'i. It is reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «If someone stands in prayer on the Night of Power, in faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, he will have all of his previous sins forgiven.» (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim)

«The angels and the Spirit descend therein»: That is, innumerable angels descend with uncounted blessings and mercy. They descend just as they do when the Qur'an is recited and they surround those sitting in circles in remembrance of Allah; they lower their wings in the presence of the sincere seeker of knowledge in honour of him. As for the Spirit, it has been said that this refers to the angel Gabriel (ﷺ) and that he is mentioned thus to distinguish him from the other angels. It was also said that it means a group of angels, and Allah knows best.³

«With all decrees»: Sa'eed ibn Manṣoor narrates, on the authority of Mujâhid, that it means the night is safe from the machinations of the devils; they cannot commit evil or harm on it. Qatâdah and others said it means that the divine decrees are issued on that night: the appointed time of everything is fixed and the blessings are apportioned, as in the words of Allah, «Whereon every wise command is made clear» (*Qur'an* 44: 4).

«[That night is] Peace until the rising of the dawn.» Sa'eed ibn Manṣoor narrates, on the authority of Ash-Sha'bi, that it means the angels send their salutations of peace upon those who are occupied in prayer in the mosques until dawn.

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «It is the night of the twenty-seventh or the twenty-ninth and verily, the angels on that night are innumerable.» Al-A'mash says, on the authority of Abu Laylâ, that the verse means that the whole night is goodness; therein is no evil until the appearance of the dawn. This is supported by a narration on the authority of 'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit, that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «The Night of Power is to be found in the last ten (nights of

³ See the tafseer of *Soorat an-Naba'*, verse 38.

Ramadan). Whoever stands in prayer during these nights, wishing for the reward of them, will have their sins forgiven by Allah, both the earlier and the later; and it is an odd-numbered night: nine, seven, five, three or the last night of it.» (Narrated by Imam Aḥmad) It is reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «It is a night of magnanimity and joy, neither very hot nor very cold; and the sun on the morning following it is weak and red-coloured.» (Narrated by Abu Dawood at-Tayâlisi)

It is reported on the authority of Jâbir ibn 'Abdillâh that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «Verily, I saw the Night of Power and then I was made to forget it, but it is (to be looked for) in the last ten nights. The night is clear and fine, neither hot nor cold, as if there were a full moon. And on this night the devils do not go forth until the light of dawn.» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Ḥâtim)

Scholars have differed as to whether the Night of Power was extant for the communities which preceded that of Muhammad (ﷺ) or whether it was specially designated for them. There are two schools of thought on this subject. Abu Mus'ab Aḥmad ibn Abi Bakr az-Zuhri⁴ said that Mâlik informed him that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was shown the generations of old among humankind, and it was as if the lifespan of his community were shorter. Thus it was not possible to accomplish the same number of deeds as those communities of old who had lived longer lives. So Allah gave him the Night of Power, which is better than a thousand months. According to Mâlik, this necessarily means that this community (of Muslims) has been specially favoured with the Night of Power. One

⁴ Aḥmad ibn Abi Bakr ibn al-Hârith ibn Zurârah ibn Mus'ab ibn 'Abdir-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf Abu Mus'ab az-Zuhri: According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a scholar of jurisprudence and a truthful reporter of hadiths, though he was criticized by Abu Khaythamah for giving legal judgements based on opinion. He died in the year 42 H. when he was over ninety years of age.

of the Shâfi‘ee⁵ scholars said that this is the view of the majority of scholars of jurisprudence, and Allah knows best. The second view on the subject says that the Night of Power was given to previous peoples as it was given to this community and that the proof of this is the hadith that says that.⁶

It is narrated that Abu Dhar (رضي الله عنه) asked the Prophet (ﷺ): «“O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! Tell me about the Night of Power; is it in Ramadan or another month?” He replied, “No, it is in Ramadan.”» (Narrated by Imam Aḥmad). He also said: «“...it is until the Day of Resurrection” and “Look for it in the last seven days of Ramadan and do not ask me any more about it.”» (Narrated by An-Nasâ‘i) This hadith proves that the Night of Power is only to be looked for in the month of Ramadan and not, as has been attributed to Ibn Mas‘ood by the scholars of Kufa, that it is to be looked for throughout the whole year without any distinction.

In line with this, Abu Dawood wrote a chapter in his *Sunan* titled “Evidence that the Night of Power is in Every Ramadan.” He then went on to narrate on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar that he heard Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) being asked about the Night of Power; he replied, «It is in every Ramadan.» All of the men in this chain of narration are trustworthy except that Abu Dawood said the narration is *mawqoof*. It was also said that the Night of Power is on the first night of Ramadan, and that it is on the seventeenth of Ramadan; this was a saying attributed to Ash-Shâfi‘ee. Abu Dawood narrated a hadith on the authority of Ibn Mas‘ood and said that it was *marfoo‘*, while Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri said that it is the night of the Battle of Badr.⁷ It was said it is the night of the nineteenth and this was attributed to

⁵ *Shâfi‘ee*: a school of thought of Imam Shâfi‘ee

⁶ Ibn Kathir has not mentioned the hadith, however.

⁷ The Battle of Badr took place on the 17th of Ramadan. (Editor)

'Ali and Ibn Mas'ood (may Allah be pleased with them both). It was also said it is the night of the twenty-first, according to the hadith of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri in which he said: «“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) carried out his *i'tikâf*⁸ in the first ten days of Ramadan and we secluded ourselves in the mosque with him. Then Jibreel came to him and said, 'That which you are in quest of is still ahead of you.' So he made *i'tikâf* in the middle of the month and we made it with him, but Jibreel came to him again and said, 'That which you are in quest of is still ahead of you.' Then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) addressed the people saying, 'Whoever has secluded themselves in the mosque with me, let them return, for I have seen the Night of Power and then was made to forget it; but verily, it is in the last ten days and on the odd days, and I saw myself as if I were prostrating in mud and water.' — The roof of the Prophet's mosque was made from palm leaves and we could not see anything of the sky, but clouds came and it rained on us and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) led us in prayer until I could see the marks of rain and mud upon his forehead: a proof of what he had seen in his vision.”» Another version has it that it occurred on the morning after the twenty-first; this is narrated by Bukhari and Muslim and, according to Ash-Shâfi'ee, it is the most authentic narration. Ash-Shâfi'ee says concerning these apparently contradictory reports, «“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), when asked, 'Should we search for it on such-and-such a night?' would reply, 'Yes,' in order to encourage them to pray on all the last ten nights; but the Night of Power is a fixed night and it does not change.”» However, according to Aḥmad, Ath-Thawri, Ibn Khuzaymah and others, it can occur on any of the odd-numbered nights during the last ten days of Ramadan, and this is closer to the truth, and Allah knows best. Muslim reports that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) instructed 'Â'ishah (رضي الله عنها) to supplicate to Allah saying: «O

⁸ *i'tikâf*: seclusion in the mosque for the express purpose of worship

Allah! You are Forgiving, You love forgiveness, so forgive me (*Allâhumma, anta 'afoowun, tuhibbul-'afwah, fa 'afu 'annee*).» Tirmidhi, Nasâ'i and Ibn Mâjah narrated the same thing. According to Mâlik, one should look for the Night of Power throughout the last ten days of Ramadan and should not try to identify which is the Night of Power, but should intensify one's devotions throughout. The most preferred action is to increase one's supplications throughout the whole month of Ramadan, more so in the last ten days, and more still on the odd days. It is especially encouraged to supplicate using the aforementioned words to 'Â'ishah (ؓ) by the Prophet (ﷺ). It is narrated that Ka'b said, "Verily, whoever fasts the month of Ramadan resolving not to disobey Allah when he breaks his fast, will enter Paradise without reckoning or questioning."

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Qadr*.

All praise is due to Allah, and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-Bayyinah (98)

The Clear Evidence

سُورَةُ الْبَيِّنَةِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

لَمْ يَكُنِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ مُنْفَكِينَ حَتَّى تَأْتِيَهُمُ
الْبَيِّنَةُ ﴿١﴾ رَسُولٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ يَتْلُو صُحُفًا مُطَهَّرَةً ﴿٢﴾ فِيهَا كُتُبٌ قَيِّمَةٌ ﴿٣﴾ وَمَا تَفَرَّقَ
الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَةُ ﴿٤﴾ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ
مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ ﴿٥﴾

(سورة البينة: ١-٥)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Those who disbelieve among the People of the Book and among the Polytheists, could not have left off [erring] till the clear proof came unto them,
2. A messenger from Allah, reading purified pages
3. Containing correct scriptures.
4. Nor were the People of the Book divided until after the clear proof came unto them.
5. And they are ordered nothing else than to serve Allah, keeping

religion pure for Him, as people by nature upright, and to establish worship and to pay the poor-due. That is true religion.

As for the 'People of the Book', they are the Jews and Christians, while the polytheists are the Arabs and non-Arabs who worship idols and fire. Mujâhid says that they ﴿could not have left off [erring]﴾ means that they will not cease in their misguided ways until the clear proof comes to them. The clear proof is explained by the following verse: ﴿A messenger from Allah, reading purified pages﴾, who is Muhammad and that which he recites from the Noble Qur'an, which was copied by the heavenly host (the angels) on purified pages, as in the words of Allah,

﴿ فِي صُحُفٍ مُّكَرَّمَةٍ ۙ مَرْفُوعَةٍ مُّطَهَّرَةٍ ۙ بِأَيْدِي سَفَرَةٍ ۙ كِرَامٍ بَرَرَةٍ ۙ ﴾

(سورة عَبَسَ : ١٣-١٦)

﴿On honoured leaves exalted, purified, [set down] by scribes noble and righteous.﴾ (Qur'an 80: 13-16)

﴿Containing correct scriptures﴾ Ibn Jareer says it means that amongst the purified pages are correct scriptures from the Books of Allah of inestimable value; they are full of justice, perfectly correct, and without any error because they are from Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful. Qatâdah says, ﴿A messenger from Allah, reading purified pages﴾ means that the Qur'an is mentioned with the best description and that Allah extols it in the most laudatory terms. Ibn Zayd says, concerning the verse ﴿Containing correct scriptures﴾ that it means correct and fair. I say His words, the Exalted, ﴿Nor were the People of the Book divided until after the clear proof came unto them﴾ are like His words:

﴿ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ

(سورة عِمْرَانَ : ١٠٥)

عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴾

﴿And be not as those who separated and disputed after the clear proofs had come unto them. For such there is an awful doom.﴾

(Qur'an 3: 105).

That is, after Allah revealed to them proofs and clear signs, the followers of the Books revealed to the communities before us became divided and disputed amongst themselves as to what was required of them by Allah, the Exalted in their revealed books. They became involved in major differences, as is made clear by the hadith that is narrated from many different sources: «“Verily, the Jews have divided into seventy-one different sects, and verily, the Christians have divided into seventy-two sects, and verily, my community will divide into seventy-three different sects — all of whom will be in the Hellfire except one.” His Companions asked, “And who are they (in that one sect), O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)?” He replied, “Those who follow the path of me and my Companions.”»

﴿And they are ordered nothing else than to serve Allah, keeping religion pure for Him﴾ This is like His words:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيَ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ﴾
(سورة الأنبياء: ٢٥)

﴿And We sent no messenger before you but We inspired him, [saying]: There is no god save Me [Allah], so worship Me.﴾

(Qur'an 21: 25).

For this reason, Allah (ﷻ) says, ﴿as people by nature upright.﴾ That is, professing and practising the True Religion (Islamic monotheism) without associating any partners with Allah, as in His words,

﴿وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ ...﴾
(سورة التحل: ٣٦)

﴿And verily We have raised in every nation a messenger, [proclaiming]: Serve Allah and shun false gods...﴾ (Qur'an 16: 36).

﴿And to establish worship﴾, for prayer is the most noble of all physical activities.

﴿And to pay the poor-due﴾, which is to be charitable towards the poor and the needy.

﴿That is true religion.﴾ That is the true, correct and just faith: to belong to the most upright, religious community — a moderate community. Many scholars, including Az-Zuhri and Ash-Shâfi'ee, have concluded from this verse that true faith must include action (not just belief in the heart) and for this reason Allah (ﷻ) says, ﴿And they are ordered nothing else than to serve Allah, keeping religion pure for Him, as people by nature upright, and to establish worship and to pay the poor-due. That is true religion﴾.

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ الْبَرِيَّةِ ﴿٦﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ ﴿٧﴾ جَزَاءُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۗ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ حَسِبَ رَبَّهُ ﴿٨﴾﴾

(سورة البينة: ٦-٨)

6. Certainly, those who disbelieve, among the People of the Book and the idolaters, will abide in fire of Hell. They are the worst of created beings.

7. [And] certainly, those who believe and do good works are the best of created beings.

8. Their reward is with their Lord: Gardens of Eden underneath which rivers flow, wherein they dwell for ever. Allah is pleased with

them and they are pleased with Him. This is [in store] for those who fear their Lord.

«Certainly, those who disbelieve, among the People of the Book and the idolaters, will abide in fire of Hell.» Here, Allah (ﷻ) informs us about the end of the unjust rejectors among the People of the Book and the polytheists who oppose the revealed books of Allah and the prophets appointed by Him. He says that they will be thrown into the Hellfire on the Day of Resurrection, where they will remain for all eternity; they will not be able to evade it, nor will they be removed from it. «They are the worst of created beings.» They are the most despised of all Allah's creatures.

«[And] certainly, those who believe and do good works are the best of created beings.» Then He, the Exalted informs us concerning those who are pious, fear Allah and are true believers, confirming by their words and deeds that they are best of all created beings. Abu Hurayrah and a number of Muslim scholars have concluded from this verse that the pious, sincere believer is superior to the angels, since angels are a part of creation and Allah says that the true believers are the best of creation.

«Their reward is with their Lord»: that is, on the Day of Resurrection.

«Gardens of Eden under which rivers flow, wherein they dwell for ever.» They will live there without interruption, and this reward is never ceasing.

«Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him», and His pleasure is better and more sublime than the lasting felicity that they are given.

«And they are pleased with Him.» They feel joy and are content with the infinite grace bestowed on them by Him.

﴿This is [in store] for those who fear their Lord﴾ That is, this reward can be achieved by those who are conscious of Allah (ﷻ) and whose devotion is sincere; those who always worship Him as if they see Him, knowing that, though they do not see their Lord, their Lord sees them. It is reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that he said: «“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘Shall I not inform you about the best of creation?’ They said, ‘Certainly, O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)!’ He said, ‘A man who takes the reins of his horse (and rides it) in the way of Allah and whenever he hears the call of one in distress, he rides to his rescue. Shall I not inform you of the best of creation?’ They said, ‘Certainly, O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)!’ He said, ‘A man who (even when he) is busy with his sheep, is steadfast in prayer and pays zakâh. Shall I not inform you about the worst of creation?’ They said, ‘Certainly, O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)!’ He said, ‘The one who asks in Allah’s name, but does not give in His name.’”» (Narrated by Imam Aḥmad)

It is narrated on the authority of Mâlik ibn ‘Amr ibn Thâbit al-Anṣârî that he said: “When the *soorah* ﴿Those who disbelieve, among the People of the Scripture and the idolaters﴾ was revealed, Gabriel said, ‘O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! Verily, your Lord orders you to recite this chapter to Ubayy.’ So, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to Ubayy, ‘Verily, Gabriel has ordered me to make you recite this *soorah*.’ Ubayy said, ‘Then I was mentioned, O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ Then Ubayy wept.” (Narrated by Imam Aḥmad) Bukhari, Muslim, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasâ’i have reported something similar. This chapter was recited to Ubayy ibn Ka’b merely to strengthen him in his faith, to convey the message and as a reminder, not for Ubayy to learn something that he did not know, nor to make him memorize it, and Allah knows best.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Bayyinah*.

All praise is due to Allah, and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat az-Zalzalah (99)

The Earthquake

سُورَةُ الزَّلْزَلَةِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا﴾ ۱ ﴿وَأَخْرَجَتِ الْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا﴾ ۲ ﴿وَقَالَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا لَهَا﴾ ۳ ﴿يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا﴾ ۴ ﴿بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحَىٰ لَهَا﴾ ۵ ﴿يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصْدُرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِيُرَوْا أَعْمَالَهُمْ﴾ ۶ ﴿فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ﴾ ۷ ﴿وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ﴾ ۸ ﴿﴾ (سورة الزلزلة: ۱-۸)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. When Earth is shaken with her [final] earthquake
2. And Earth yields up her burdens,
3. And people say: What ails her?
4. That day she will relate her chronicles,
5. Because your Lord inspires her.
6. That day people will issue forth in scattered groups to be shown their deeds.
7. And whoso does an atom's weight of good will see it then,
8. And whoso does an atom's weight of evil will see it then.

﴿When Earth is shaken with her [final] earthquake﴾: Ibn ‘Abbâs (ؓ) said that it means when the earth moves beneath its surface.

﴿And Earth yields up her burdens﴾: that is, when it throws out its dead. This was said by more than one commentator. This verse is like the words of Allah,

﴿يَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ آتِفُوا رَبِّكُمْ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

(سورة الحج: ١)

﴿O people! Fear your Lord. Truly, the earthquake of the Hour [of Doom] is a tremendous thing.﴾ (Qur’an 22: 1)

And:

﴿وَإِذَا الْأَرْضُ مُدَّتْ ﴿٣﴾ وَأَلْقَتْ مَا فِيهَا وَتَخَلَّتْ ﴿٤﴾﴾ (سورة الانشقاق: ٣-٤)

﴿And when the earth is spread out, and has cast out all that was in her, and is empty﴾ (Qur’an 84: 3-4).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (ؓ) that the Messenger of Allah (ؐ) said, «The earth will throw out what is hidden within it, such as columns of gold and silver, and the murderer will say: For this I committed murder. Then the one who severed family ties will say: For this I severed relations. Then the thief will come and say: For this was my hand cut. Then they will leave it and not take anything from it.»

﴿And people say: What ails her?﴾ That is, in bewilderment they cry out, “What is happening to the earth that was previously fixed, firm and peaceful, and is now convulsing beneath its surface?” It does so by the command of Allah, the Exalted, then it throws out all of its dead from the first generation to the last. At this time people cry out in astonishment, ﴿What ails her?﴾.

﴿That day she will relate her chronicles﴾: the earth will speak about the actions of those whom it has thrown forth. It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that he said, «“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) read the verse ﴿That day she will relate her chronicles﴾, then said, ‘Do you know what the chronicles are?’ We replied, ‘Allah and His Messenger know best.’ He said, ‘Verily, (they) are that it will testify concerning every slave, male and female, about what they did on its surface, that it will say, He did this and this on such-and-such a day.’ Those are its chronicles.”» (Narrated by Imam Ahmad)

﴿Because your Lord inspires her﴾ Mujâhid said it means that Allah will command the earth to give its news.

﴿That day people will issue forth in scattered groups﴾: having been ordered to proceed to Hell or Paradise, they will proceed to the place of reckoning in scattered groups according to their type, ranging from the most abjectly wretched to the joyful.

﴿To be shown their deeds.﴾ This is to confirm what they did in their earthly life, whether good or bad, as Allah (ﷻ) says, ﴿And whoso does an atom’s weight of good will see it then, and whoso does an atom’s weight of evil will see it then﴾. It is narrated on the authority of ‘Adi that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «Fear the fire even if it were by (giving) a portion of a date or by (saying) a good word. Do not despise any act of kindness, even if it were to fill the drinking vessel of a thirsty person from your bucket, or to meet your brother face-to-face and smile at him.» (Narrated by Bukhari) Bukhari also narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «O community of believing women! Let not the woman neighbour ignore her woman neighbour, even if she only (gives her) a sheep’s trotter.» And in another authentic narration he said, «Respond to the one who asks (for assistance) even if it were with only a burnt trotter.»

It is narrated on the authority of ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âṣ that he said: «“When ﴿When the earth is shaken by convulsions﴾ was revealed,

Abu Bakr, who was sitting with the Prophet began to cry. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) asked him, 'What makes you cry, O Abu Bakr?' Abu Bakr replied, 'This *soorah* makes me cry.' Then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'Even if you did not err and commit sins that Allah might forgive you, He would have created another community who erred and committed sins that He might forgive them.'»

«And whoso does an atom's weight of good»: that is, the most insignificant weight, even less than an ant, «will see it then,» meaning, he or she shall see it recorded in the book given to him on the Day of Judgement, and will be pleased with it. Every sinful act and every charitable deed is recorded therein. Every bad deed will be recompensed as one deed, while every good deed will be recompensed ten times over. When the Day of Resurrection comes, Allah (ﷻ) will increase the weight (on the scales) of the good deeds of the true believers until each one is recorded as ten, while the bad deeds will be decreased, ten for each good deed. Then whoever has more good deeds than bad will enter Paradise.

It is narrated on the authority of 'Abdullâh Ibn Mas'ood that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «Beware of the minor sins, because they will build up over a man until they destroy him.» (Narrated by Imam Ahmad) The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) gave the analogy of a people who descend upon an area of land, then their leader orders the men to go out one at a time and bring back a stick until they have gathered a large number and can kindle a fire and burn the wood that they throw upon it.¹

¹ Each piece of wood on its own is insignificant and insufficient to kindle a blaze, but like small sins, when gathered together, they may be enough to make a fire (or to land the doer of those small sins in the Hellfire).

It is narrated on the authority of 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr that a man came to the Prophet and said: «“Tell me what to recite, O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)!” He replied, “Recite three chapters from *dhawât ar-râ'*.”² The man said, “I have grown old, my heart is weak and my tongue has become thick and coarse (it is difficult to pronounce the words).” The Prophet said, “Then read *dhawât hâ meem*.”³ The man gave the same reply and so the Prophet said, “Then read three chapters from the *musabbihât*.”⁴ The man again gave the same answer and added: “But give me to recite, O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), a *soorah* that is comprehensive (in inciting the good, forbidding the evil, and showing the recompense of good and evil deeds).” So the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) told him to recite: “﴿When Earth is shaken with her [final] earthquake﴾, then when he had finished reciting it, he said, ‘By Him Who sent you as a prophet with the truth! I will not exceed this, ever.’ Then he left and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘The man will prosper, the man will prosper.’” (Narrated by At-Tirmidhi)

It is reported by At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Anas that he said, «“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: ﴿Say: He is Allah, the One﴾⁵ is equal to one third of the Qur'an and ﴿When Earth is shaken with her [final] earthquake﴾ is equivalent to one quarter of the Qur'an.”» (Narrated by Al-Bazzâr)

It is related from Ibn 'Abbâs that he said, «“The Prophet (ﷺ) said: ﴿When Earth is shaken with her [final] earthquake﴾ is

² *dhawât ar-râ'*: those chapters that begin with the Arabic letters *alif, lâ, m, râ* (الر) (10:1, 11:1, 12:1, 14:1 and 15:1)

³ *dhawât hâ meem*: those chapters that begin with the Arabic letters *hâ, meem* (حم) (40:1, 41:1, 42:1, 43:1, 44:1, 45:1 and 46:1)

⁴ the *musabbihât*: those chapters that begin with the Arabic term *Sabbâha* (سبح) (59:1, 61:1, 62:1 and 64:1)

⁵ *Soorat al-Ikhlâs* (Chapter 112)

equivalent to half the Qur'an and ﴿Say: He is Allah, the One﴾ is equivalent to one third of the Qur'an and ﴿Say: O disbelievers﴾ is equivalent to one quarter of the Qur'an."» Then he (At-Tirmidhi) said, "This hadith is *ghareeb*."⁶ It is also reported on the authority of Anas ibn Mâlik (رضي الله عنه) that Allah's Messenger said to a man, «"Have you married, O so-and-so?" He replied, "No, by Allah! I have not the wherewithal, how may I marry?" The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "Do you not know⁷ ﴿Say: He is Allah, the One﴾?" He said, "Certainly!" He said, "(It is) one quarter of the Qur'an. Do you not know ﴿Say: O disbelievers﴾?" He replied, "Certainly!" He said, "(It is) one quarter of the Qur'an. Do you not know ﴿When the earth is shaken by convulsions﴾?" The man replied, "Certainly!" The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "(It is) one quarter of the Qur'an: Marry!"» (Narrated by At-Tirmidhi, who said it was a sound narration)

This completes the tafseer of *Soorat az-Zalzalah*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

⁶ *ghareeb*: reported at some point(s) in its chain by a single narrator

⁷ Or 'have you not memorized...' (Editor)

Soorat al-'Âdiyât (100)

The Swift Running Horses

سُورَةُ الْعَادِيَّاتِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿وَالْعَادِيَّاتِ ضَبْحًا ﴿١﴾ فَالْمُورِيَّاتِ قَدْحًا ﴿٢﴾ فَالْمُغِيرَاتِ صُبْحًا ﴿٣﴾ فَأَثَرْنَ بِهِ نَقْعًا ﴿٤﴾ فَوَسَطْنَ بِهِ جَمْعًا ﴿٥﴾ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنُودٌ ﴿٦﴾ وَإِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ ﴿٧﴾ وَإِنَّهُ لِحُبِّ الْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿٨﴾ أَفَلَا يَعْلَمُ إِذَا بُعْثِرَ مَا فِي الْقُبُورِ ﴿٩﴾ وَحُصِّلَ مَا فِي الصُّدُورِ ﴿١٠﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّهُم بِهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّخَبِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾﴾

(سورة العاديات: ١-١١)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. By the snorting coursers,
2. Striking sparks of fire
3. And scouring to the raid at dawn,
4. Then, therewith, with their trail of dust,
5. Cleaving, as one, the centre [of the foe],
6. Truly, the human is an ingrate unto his Lord
7. And truly, he is a witness unto that;

8. And truly, in the love of wealth he is violent.
 9. Does he not know that, when the contents of the graves are poured forth
 10. And the secrets of the breasts are made known,
 11. On that day will their Lord be perfectly informed concerning them.

«By the snorting coursers» Allah swears by the charging horses that gallop into battle in the way of His Cause, panting and snorting.

«Striking sparks of fire»: striking their iron-shod hooves on the rocks, making sparks fly.

«And scouring to the raid at dawn,» that is, carrying out a punitive raid at daybreak as the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to do. He would listen for a call to prayer; if he did not hear it, he knew the people of the town were not Muslims and he would attack. If he heard a call to prayer, it meant the people were Muslims and thus their lives and property were inviolate.

«Then, therewith, with their trail of dust»: the horses' hooves raise clouds of dust during the heat of battle.

«Cleaving, as one, the centre [of the foe]» That is, they penetrate into the midst of the enemy forces as one. Ibn Abi Hâtim and 'Ali say that «By the snorting coursers» refers to camels. However, Ibn 'Abbâs says that it means horses. Scholars have differed as to which saying is correct, though Ibn 'Abbâs and 'A'â' pointed out that no riding animal pants when it is running except the horse. Those who said that it refers to horses understood from the second verse that the horses' hooves strike sparks on the ground. However, some said it meant the raging of the battle between the riders, the planning or strategy of the men, the kindling of the fires when they returned home at night or the kindling of the fires in

Muzdalifah during Hajj. According to Ibn Jareer, the first explanation is the correct one. Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), Mujâhid and Qatâdah said that the third verse refers to the dawn attack of men on horseback in the way of Allah, while those who said that the first verse referred to camels explained it as meaning the journey from Muzdalifah to Mina during Hajj.

﴿Then, therewith, with their trail of dust﴾: All commentators are agreed that this verse refers to the feet of the animals churning up dust, either in Hajj or in battle. The third verse, according to Al-'Awfi, who reports on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs and 'Aṭâ', means penetrating into the midst of the mass of the enemy. It is possible that what is meant is the penetration of the mass of the Muslim fighters into the enemy horde at one time.

﴿Truly, the human is an ingrate unto his Lord﴾: Allah is swearing that people reject the blessings of their Lord. This explanation was the preferred one of Ibn 'Abbâs, Mujâhid, Ibrâheem an-Nakha'ee, Sa'eed ibn Jubayr, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk, Qatâdah and many others. Al-Ḥasan said, "He is the one who counts his afflictions and forgets the blessings that come to him from Allah." Ibn Abi Ḥâtim relates, on the authority of Al-Amâmah, that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «﴿Truly, the human is an ingrate unto his Lord﴾. The ungrateful one is he who eats alone, beats his slave and refuses to help (to others in need).» However, this is a weak narration, containing in its chain of narrators Ja'far ibn az-Zubayr, who is considered *matrook*¹ by scholars of Hadith. Ibn Jareer has narrated it from Jareer ibn 'Uthmân in a *mawqoof* form.

﴿And truly, he is a witness unto that﴾ Qatâdah and Sufiyân ath-Thawri said that it means Allah is the One Who bears witness. It is

¹ *matrook*: abandoned: a term used by scholars of Hadith to describe one who is considered an unreliable narrator

possible that “he” refers to the human (mentioned in the previous verse), as was said by Muhammad ibn Ka‘b al-Qurazi; that is, the human is witness to the fact that he is an ungrateful rejector and his behaviour is testimony to this. This is similar to the words of Allah,

﴿مَا كَانَ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يَعْمُرُوا مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ شَاهِدِينَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِم بِالْكَفْرِ...﴾

(سورة التوبة: ١٧)



﴿It is not for the idolaters to tend Allah’s sanctuaries, bearing witness against themselves of disbelief...﴾ (Qur’an 9: 17).

﴿And truly, in the love of wealth he is violent﴾ There are two sayings in regard to this verse. The first is that man is passionate in his love of wealth, and the second is that he is greedy and miserly; both of these are correct. Then Allah, blessed be He, the Exalted, refers to the renunciation of this world’s pleasures in favour of the hereafter and the situation and terror of the individual at that time: ﴿Does he not know that, when the contents of the graves are poured forth﴾, that is, when the dead will be expelled from their graves, ﴿And the secrets of the breasts are made known﴾ Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) and others said that this refers to thoughts and deeds that each person kept secret that will, at this time, be revealed; ﴿On that day will their Lord be perfectly informed concerning them﴾ That is, on that day, all of creation will be assembled along with their deeds to receive the repayment for that which they did, and none shall receive an atom’s weight more or less than he or she deserves.

This is the end of the tafseer of Soorat al-‘Âdiyât.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-Qâri'ah (101)

The Calamity

سُورَةُ الْقَارِعَةِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿ الْقَارِعَةُ ﴾ ١ مَا الْقَارِعَةُ ﴿ ٢ ﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْقَارِعَةُ ﴿ ٣ ﴾ يَوْمَ يَكُونُ
النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوثِ ﴿ ٤ ﴾ وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ
الْمَنْفُوشِ ﴿ ٥ ﴾ فَأَمَّا مَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ﴿ ٦ ﴾ فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَاضِيَةٍ ﴿ ٧ ﴾
وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ﴿ ٨ ﴾ فَأُمُّهُ هَاوِيَةٌ ﴿ ٩ ﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا هِيَ ﴿ ١٠ ﴾
نَارٌ حَامِيَةٌ ﴿ ١١ ﴾

(سورة القارعة: ١-١١)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. The Calamity!
2. What is the Calamity?
3. Ah, what will convey to you what the Calamity is!
4. A day wherein people will be as thickly-scattered moths
5. And the mountains will become as carded wool.
6. Then, as for him whose scales are heavy [with good works],
7. He will live a pleasant life.

8. But as for him whose scales are light,
9. A bereft and Hungry One will be his mother,
10. Ah, what will convey to you what she is! —
11. Raging Fire.

Al-Qâri'ah (the Calamity) is one of the names of the Day of Resurrection, like *al-Hâqqah* (the Reality), *aṭ-Ṭammah* (the Completion), *aṣ-Ṣâkḥḥah* (the Call of the Trumpet), *al-Ghâshiyah* (the Overwhelming) and others. Allah (ﷻ), makes clear for us the greatness and awfulness of that day, «Ah, what will convey to you what the Calamity is!» Then He explains it for us in the following verses: «A day wherein people will be as thickly-scattered moths»; that is, people will be spread out and divided, running this way and that in their confusion, as if they were moths scattered about. This is similar to the words of Allah, the Exalted,

(سورة القمَر : ٧)

﴿... كَانَهُمْ جَرَادٌ مُنْتَشِرٌ﴾

﴿... As they were locusts spread about.﴾

(*Qur'an* 54: 7).

﴿And the mountains will become as carded wool﴾. As the mountains are destroyed and torn apart before the might of Allah, they will become as light and fluffy as bits of carded wool. This explanation was agreed upon by Mujâhid, 'Ikrimah, Sa'eed ibn Jubayr, Al-Ḥasan, Qatâdah, 'Aṭâ' Al-Khurasâni, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and As-Suddi.

Then Allah informs us about the blessing or the debasement of people that will take place according to their deeds, saying, «Then, as for him whose scales are heavy [with good works],» that is, if the weight of his or her good deeds is greater than that of his or her bad deeds, «He will live a pleasant life.» This means he or she will be in Paradise.

﴿But as for him whose scales are light,﴾ refers to the person whose balance of sins is heavier than that of his or her good deeds.

﴿A bereft and Hungry One will be his mother﴾ It was said that this means he or she will tumble into the Hellfire upon his or her forehead. Something like this has been narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs, Abu Şâlih and Qatâdah. Ibn Jareer says that *hâwiyah* (a bereft and hungry one) is one of the names of the Hellfire and the wretched person explains that the Arabic word *umm* (mother) means the place to which he will return, or his dwelling-place, and not his forehead. Because of this, Allah says, ﴿Ah, what will convey to you what she is! — Raging Fire﴾ that is, a fire of intense heat and a mighty, flaming inferno. Abu Mus'ab narrates on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «“Verily, the fire of the sons of Adam that you kindle is one part of the seventy parts of the Hellfire.” They said, “O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! Would it not be sufficient?”¹ He replied, “Verily, it (the fire of Hell) is more fierce than it by sixty-nine times.”» (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim) At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Mâjah reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, «The fire has been kindled for a thousand years, until it became red, then for a thousand years, until it became black and that is a gloomy blackness.»

In *Şaheeh Bukhari* and *Şaheeh Muslim* it is narrated that the Messenger of Allah (Blessings and peace be upon him) said: «“The Hellfire complained to its Lord, saying, ‘O Lord! Part of me is consuming another part (due to the intensity of the fire).’ So Allah allowed the fire to take two breaths: one in winter and one in summer; and the severest part of the winter is the coldest time (when the fire exhales) and the severest part of summer is the hottest time (when the fire exhales a second time).”» Also in Bukhari and Muslim it is

¹ i.e. would not the heat of this earthly fire be sufficient in Hell?

related that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «If the heat becomes intense, then delay the prayer, because the intensity of the heat is due to the vastness of the Hellfire.»

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Qâri'ah*.
All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat at-Takâthur (102)

Rivalry in Worldly Increase

سُورَةُ التَّكَاثُرِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿الْهَنَكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ﴾ ١ حَتَّىٰ زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ ٢ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ٣ ثُمَّ كَلَّا
سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ٤ كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ ٥ لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ ٦ ثُمَّ
لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ ٧ ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ ٨ ﴿﴾

(سورة التكاثر: ١-٨)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Rivalry in worldly increase distracts you
2. Until you come to the graves.
3. No, but you will come to know!
4. No, but you will come to know!
5. No, would that you knew [now] with a sure knowledge!
6. For you will behold Hell-fire.
7. Indeed, you will behold it with sure vision.
8. Then, on that day, you will be asked concerning pleasure.

Allah, (ﷻ) says that the love of this world, with its pleasures and its beauties, occupies your time so that you have no leisure to think about the hereafter. You remain in pursuit of these pleasures until death comes to you, when you visit the graves and become one of its inhabitants.

It is narrated on the authority of Zayd ibn Aslam from his father that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, «(Rivalry in worldly increase distracts you) from obedience (to Allah), (until you visit the graves), until death comes to you.» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim) Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī says that the worldly increase is of wealth and children.

In *Ṣaḥeeḥ Bukhari* it is revealed that Ubayy ibn Ka'b said, "We used to think that this (the words of this hadith: «If the son of Adam possessed a valley full of gold...») was part of the Qur'an until it was revealed, (Rivalry in worldly increase distracts you)." Imam Aḥmad reports on the authority of Ibn 'Abdillâh ibn ash-Shujayr on the authority of his father, who said, «"I came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) while he was saying: (Rivalry in worldly increase distracts you). The son of Adam says: My wealth! My wealth! Do you benefit from it more than when you eat and are satisfied? Or when you clothe yourself and wear out those clothes? Or when you give charity and spend your money?"» (Narrated by Muslim, An-Nasâ'i and At-Tirmidhi) Bukhari reports, on the authority of Anas ibn Mâlik that he said: «"The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'Three things follow the deceased person; two of them return while one remains behind with him. The things that follow him are his family, his wealth and his actions. His family and his wealth return while his actions remain.'" (Of those three things, the only one that benefits him is his actions).» Ibn 'Asâkir said, in his biography of Al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays¹ (whose

¹ Al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays ibn Mu'âwiyah ibn Ḥusayyin at-Tameemi as-Sa'di Abu Baḥr is described as reliable by Ibn Ḥajar. He died either in 67 H or 72 H.

name is Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk), that he saw a man holding a dirham and he asked him, "For whom is that dirham?" The man replied, "It is for me." He said, "It is only for you if you spend it seeking reward or desiring that which is praiseworthy." Then Aḥnaf began to recite the words of the poet:

*The money possesses you if you hold onto it,
But if you spend it (on something praiseworthy) then you possess it.*

Ibn Abi Ḥâtim narrates, on the authority of Ibn Buraydah, that he said, "This chapter was revealed concerning two tribes from amongst the Anṣâr, Bani Ḥârithah and Bani al-Ḥârith, because of their pride and their rivalry in worldly increase. One tribe would say to the other: You are the sons of so-and-so, who is the son of so-and-so and so-and-so. And the other tribe would reply in a like manner, and so they were proud of their tribes. Then they would visit the graves of their ancestors and do likewise, indicating the graves as they praised the other tribe, who would respond in a like manner. So Allah revealed the following verses: ﴿Rivalry in worldly increase distracts you, until you come to the graves﴾. In this is a clear warning and something to dwell upon." However, the correct explanation of these words ﴿until you come to the graves﴾ is, 'until you die and are buried therein'. This is based on the authentic hadith that states that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) visited a man who was ill and said to him: «"Don't worry, (there is) recovery, Allah willing!" He said, "You say recovery, but it is a raging fever that is like to carry an old man to his grave." The Messenger (ﷺ) replied, "Then it will be a blessing.»»

It is related on the authority of 'Ali (عليه السلام) that he said, «We used to doubt about the punishment of the grave until the *soorah* ﴿Rivalry in worldly increase distracts you, until you come to the graves﴾ was revealed.» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Ḥâtim) Ibn Abi Ḥâtim

also reports, on the authority of Maymoon ibn Mihrân² who said, “I was sitting with ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdil ‘Azeez, when he recited ﴿Rivalry in worldly increase distracts you, until you come to the graves﴾. Then he paused for a while and said, ‘I do not see the graves except as a visitor, but the visitor must return to his home.’”³

﴿No, but you will come to know! No, but you will come to know!﴾ Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri said that these two verses are one promise followed by another. Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk said that Allah is addressing the unbelievers in the first verse and the believers in the second.

﴿No, would that you knew [now] with a sure knowledge!﴾ That is, if only you knew without the slightest doubt, but rivalry in worldly gain diverts you from the pursuit of the hereafter until you come to the graves.

﴿For you will behold Hell-fire. Indeed, you will behold it with sure vision.﴾ This is an explanation of the above-mentioned promise. Allah warns them that soon they, the people headed for Hell, shall see the Hellfire. And if this Hellfire gave off just one exhalation, every favoured king and every appointed prophet would fall to his knees in fear and trembling at the sight of such awe-inspiring splendour and at the terror of those whose abode it is.

﴿Then, on that day, you will be asked concerning pleasure﴾ This means that on that day we will stand before Him, the Exalted and we will certainly be questioned concerning our gratitude (or lack of it) for the benefits given to us, such as good health, security, our subsistence and so on. Ibn Abi Ḥâtim relates on the authority of Ibn

² Maymoon ibn Mihrân al-Jazâri Abu Ayyoob al-Koofi: According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a reliable reporter of hadiths and a scholar of jurisprudence. He was appointed to an official government position by ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdil ‘Azeez. He used to report some *mursal* narrations. He died in the year 17 H.

³ i.e. his eternal home — Paradise or the Hell-fire.

'Abbâs that he heard 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (رضي الله عنه) say: «“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) went out one day at noon and found Abu Bakr in the mosque, so he said to him, ‘What has brought you outside at this time?’ Abu Bakr replied, ‘The same thing that brought you out has brought me also, O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)!’ Then ‘Umar came and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘What has brought you out, O ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb?’ He replied, ‘The same thing that brought you both out.’ Then ‘Umar sat and the Prophet began to talk to them; then he said, ‘Do you have strength to walk to that palm tree, where you might find food, drink and shade?’ We said, ‘Yes!’ He said, ‘Then let us pass by the house of Ibn at-Taiḥân, Abul Haytham al-Anṣârî. So they went to the house and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) stood before them and gave salutations of peace and asked permission to enter three times, while Umm al-Haytham came out and walked behind them, saying, ‘O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! By Allah! I heard your greetings but I wanted you to increase your salutations upon me.’ The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) replied, ‘That is good.’ Then he said, ‘Where is Abul Haytham? I do not see him.’ She said, ‘O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! He is near. He has gone to bring some sweet water. Come inside for he will return shortly, Allah-willing.’ Then she placed for them mats upon which to sit under a tree. Abul Haytham came and he was delighted to see them. He climbed the palm tree and brought for them a cluster of dates. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to him, ‘That is sufficient, O Abul Haytham!’ He replied, ‘O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! Eat the unripe dates, the ripe ones and the half-ripe ones.’ Then he brought them water and they drank from it, and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘This is from the pleasure about which you will be asked.’”» A similar hadith is reported by Muslim, Abu Ya‘lâ, Ibn Mâjah and others.

It is reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that he heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, «“The first thing about which

he (the slave) will be asked (on the Day of Resurrection) concerning the pleasure is that it will be said to him: Did We not give you good health and give you cool water to drink?”» (Narrated by At-Tirmidhi) Ibn Hibbân also narrated something similar in his *Ṣaḥeeh*. It is reported from Ibn Mas‘ood (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, concerning the words of Allah ﴿Then shall you be questioned that Day concerning the pleasure﴾, «﴿The pleasure﴾ means security and health.» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Ḥâtim) Zayd ibn Aslam said, on the authority of Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) that it refers to freedom from hunger, cold drinks, shaded houses, the perfection of creation and the pleasure of sleep. Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr said it refers to drinks made from honey. Mujâhid said it means every pleasurable thing in this world. Al-Ḥasan said that pleasure includes one’s meals. Abu Qilâbah⁴ said that pleasure includes eating butter and honey with fresh bread. However, the saying of Mujâhid is the most comprehensive of all these sayings. ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah said that it means healthy bodies, sight and hearing, for we will be asked about how we used these faculties, and Allah knows better than His slaves about what they did. That is the meaning of the words of Allah,

﴿... إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عِنْدَ مَسْئُولًا﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٣٦)

(سورة الإسراء: ٣٦)

﴿... Certainly, the hearing and the sight and the heart — of each of these it will be asked.﴾ (Qur’an 17: 36)

⁴ ‘Abdullâh ibn Zayd ibn ‘Amr Abu ‘Âmir al-Jarmi Abu Qilâbah al-Baṣri: According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a reliable reporter of hadiths and a pious man, but he reported many *mursal* narrations. Al-‘Ajli said about him: “There is a trace of deception in him.” He died in Ash-Shâm while fleeing the authorities in the year 104 H. (or later, according to some reports).

Bukhari, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasâ'i and Ibn Mâjah narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «There are two blessings of which many people are deceived (about which they wrong or deceive themselves): health and leisure time.» That is, they are slack or negligent in giving thanks for them, neither making full use of them nor fulfilling their obligations in regard to them.

It is reported from Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, «Allah will say (on the Day of Judgement): O son of Adam! I made you to ride on horseback and on the camel and I gave you wives and made you to rule and to sit upon thrones, and what thanks do you give for all that?» (Narrated by Ahmad)

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat at-Takâthur*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-'Aṣr (103)

Time

سُورَةُ الْعَصْرِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿وَالْعَصْرِ﴾ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ﴿٢﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
﴿سورة العَصْرِ: ١-٣﴾ وَتَوَّصَّوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَّصَّوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ﴿٣﴾

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. By time,
2. Truly, people are in a state of loss,
3. Except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and exhort one another to truth and exhort one another to perseverance.

﴿By time﴾: Allah swears by the ages during which the deeds — both good and bad — of the children of Adam take place. Mâlik said that it refers to the time of 'aṣr¹ prayer, but the first explanation is more correct. Allah swears by it (time) that humankind is in a state of misfortune and ruin.

﴿Except those who believe and do righteous deeds﴾: Allah (ﷻ) makes an exception for those of humankind who believe sincerely with all their hearts and do good deeds with their hands.

¹ 'aṣr: It can mean 'time' as in 'ages', or 'an era', but in this context, it means the afternoon (afternoon prayer).

﴿And exhort one another to Truth﴾: That is, in the face of misfortune or calamity, believers should encourage each other to accept the things which have been written for them and not to fear persecution by those who would seek to harm whoever enjoins what is good and right and forbids what is wrong. It is reported that Musaylamah was visited by 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ (رضي الله عنه) after the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had begun his mission, but before 'Amr had embraced Islam, and Musaylamah said to him: "What does your companion (the Prophet) say about this time?" 'Amr replied: "A *soorah* has been revealed to him which is concise, yet elegant." "And what is it?" inquired Musaylamah. "It is: ﴿By time, truly, people are in a state of loss, except those who believe and do righteous deeds and exhort one another to truth and exhort one another to perseverance.﴾." Musaylamah thought about this for a while and then he said: "It has been revealed to me something like that." "What would that be?" asked 'Amr. He replied: "Oh, *hyrax*! ² Oh, *hyrax*! You are merely two ears and a breast and the rest of you is but a hole." Then he asked: "What do you think, oh, 'Amr?" 'Amr replied: "By Allah! Surely you are aware that I know you lie!" Musaylamah intended by the composition of these nonsensical verses to produce something which was the very antithesis of the clarity and elegance of the Qur'an; as a result it did not even convince a pagan idol-worshipper of the time. According to Aṭ-Ṭabarâni, whenever any two Companions of the Prophet met, they would not part, until one of them had recited to the other *Soorah al-'Aṣr* and then said, "*Assalâmu 'alaykum*" to him. Ash-Shâfi'ee said: "If people were to reflect on this *Soorah*, it would be sufficient for them."

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-'Aṣr*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

² Hyrax: a small mammal described by Ibn Katheer as resembling a cat, having long ears and a large 'breast' and being generally 'very ugly'

Soorat al-Humazah (104)

The Scandalmonger

سُورَةُ الْهُمَزَةِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ ﴿١﴾ الَّذِي جَمَعَ مَالًا وَعَدَّدَهُ ﴿٢﴾ يُحَسِّبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُ
أَخْلَدَهُ ﴿٣﴾ كَلَّا لَيُنْبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ ﴿٤﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ ﴿٥﴾ نَارُ اللَّهِ
الْمُوقَدَةُ ﴿٦﴾ الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْآفَاقَةِ ﴿٧﴾ إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِمْ مُّوَصَّدَةٌ ﴿٨﴾ فِي عَمَدٍ
مُمَدَّدَةٍ ﴿٩﴾﴾

(سورة الهمزة: ١-٩)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Woe unto every slandering traducer,
2. Who has gathered wealth and arranged it,
3. He thinks that his wealth will render him immortal.
4. No! But he will surely be flung to the Consuming One.
5. Ah, what will convey to you what the Consuming One is?
6. It is the fire of Allah, kindled,
7. Which leaps up over the hearts.

8. It closes in on them,
9. In outstretched columns.

﴿Woe unto every slandering traducer﴾: Allah curses those who hold people in contempt and belittle them, as in the words of Allah, the Exalted:

(سورة القلم: ١١)

﴿هَٰذَا مَثَلٌ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُمْ﴾

﴿A detractor, spreading slander about.﴾

(Qur'an 68: 11)

That is, according to Ibn 'Abbâs and Qatâdah, a backbiter who goes about amongst the people sowing dissension and discord between them, carrying tales and causing corruption — and it is this which destroys the religion. It is narrated by Bukhari and Muslim that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) passed by two graves, and he said: «Assuredly, they are both being punished, not for a major sin, but because one of them did not clean himself after urinating and the other used to carry tales.» Imam Aḥmad has narrated that Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) said: «I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) saying: “The tale-bearer will not enter Paradise.”» This hadith has been narrated by all except Ibn Mâjah.¹

﴿Who has gathered wealth and arranged it﴾: a person who hoards his money and occupies himself in counting it, like a miser, as in Allah's words:

(سورة المعارج: ١٨)

﴿وَجَمَعَ فَأَوْعَى﴾

﴿And hoarded [wealth] and withheld it.﴾

(Qur'an 70: 18)

His wealth diverts him: All day he spends counting and piling up his money and at night, he sleeps like a rotting corpse. ﴿He thinks that his

¹ i.e. by Bukhari, Muslim, Nasâ'i, Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi

wealth will render him immortal.﴾ That is, he believes that his accumulated wealth will prolong his life in this world indefinitely.

﴿No!﴾ By no means! The matter is in no way as he supposes. ﴿He will surely be flung into the Consuming One.﴾ That is, without doubt, the one who hoards his wealth in a miserly manner will be thrown into a crushing fire which burns up to one's heart while the hapless person is still alive. ﴿Ah, what will convey to you what the Consuming One is? It is the fire of Allah, kindled, which leaps up over the hearts.﴾ Thâbit said: "It means it (the fire) burns them up to their hearts while they are alive." "Then", he said, "The punishment reaches its climax." At this point, Thâbit began to weep (at the thought of such terrible torment). According to Muhammad ibn Ka'b, the fire eats away the flesh of the body until it reaches up to the heart, then it proceeds up to his throat, then it recommences with his body.

﴿It closes in on them ﴾: there is no escape for them from it, nor any relief, since, according to Ibn 'Abbâs, the Arabic word *mu'sadah* used in this verse means that it (the fire) locks all doors on them so that there is no escape. Qatâdah said it means a fire that blocks out all the light and prevents any exit from it, while Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk said it means an all-encompassing fire from which there is no door by which to exit. According to Abu 'Imrân al-Jawni²: "When the Day of Resurrection comes, by Allah's command, every tyrant, every devil and every person who used to fear people (rather than fearing Allah) will be fettered in irons, then Allah will order that they be thrown into the Fire and they will be covered by it, then — by Allah! — their feet will not be able to touch the ground — ever; nor will they be able to

² 'Abdul Mâlik ibn Habeeb al-Azdi (or al-Kindi) Abu 'Imrân al-Jawni: He is most well-known as Abu 'Imrân; according to Ibn Ḥajar, he is a reliable reporter of hadiths, he died in the year 28 H or later.

see the sky from it, nor will their eyes ever be able to close in sleep, nor — by Allah — will they taste therein any cold (refreshing) drinks — ever.” (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim)

﴿In outstretched columns.﴾ ‘Atiyah ibn ‘Awfi said it means columns of iron, while As-Suddi said it means columns of fire. Qatâdah that according to Ibn ‘Abbâs, it means the doors (of the fire) are extended. Al-‘Awfi also attributes to Ibn ‘Abbâs that it means that Allah (ﷻ) will place them in the Fire with columns stretched out over them, buttressed by supports to which they are chained by their necks, and the doors are locked upon them. Qatâdah also said: “We used to say that they are punished with columns of fire.” This was the preferred explanation of Ibn Jareer, while Abu Şâliḥ said that the verse means: In heavy shackles (which bind them).

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Humazah*.
All praise is due to Allah, and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-Feel (105)

The Elephant

سُورَةُ الْفِيلِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ ﴿١﴾ أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضَلِيلٍ ﴿٢﴾
وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ ﴿٣﴾ تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ ﴿٤﴾ فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ
مَّا كُولٍ ﴿٥﴾﴾

(سورة الفيل: ١-٥)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the owners of the elephant?
2. Did he not make their plot go astray?
3. And send against them swarms of flying creatures,
4. Which pelted them with stones of baked clay,
5. And made them like green crops devoured?

Allah, the Exalted, the Almighty, mentions in this *soorah* (chapter) one of the many blessings which He showered on the people of Quraysh: How He (ﷻ) saved them from the people of the

elephant,¹ who intended to destroy the Ka'bah and erase all trace of it from the earth. But Allah destroyed them, thwarting their plans and causing their efforts to be in vain.

The owners of the elephant were Christians and as such, their religion was closer to the True Religion (Islam) than that of the pagans of Makkah, however, these events took place in the year in which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was born, and so it was Allah's Will that nothing should happen to the Ancient House (the Ka'bah), since the time was near when Muhammad would receive the Message. It was not the case that Allah favoured the people of Quraysh over the Abyssinian owners of the elephant, but He wished to preserve the Ancient House, as He wanted to honour it and glorify it and make it a place of respect by sending the Prophet (ﷺ) who was unlettered: the Seal of the Prophets.

It has already been mentioned in the story of the people of the ditch² that Dhu Nawâs, the last King of Himyar, who was a polytheist, was the one who ordered the killing of the believers in the ditch of fire. They were Christians, and their number was twenty thousand; and none of them escaped except one, who fled to Syria where he sought protection from the King, who was also a Christian. The King, Qaysar, wrote to the King of Abyssinia, which was closer to the man's home. The King, known as the Negus, sent with him two Governors, Aryât and Abraha ibn as-Sabâh Abu Yaksoom, backed by a great army. The army entered Yemen and began searching the houses and looting the towns. They found Dhu Nawâs and executed him by drowning him in the sea.

Thus Yemen became a part of the Kingdom of Abyssinia, with Aryât and Abraha as its Governors; however, they constantly

¹ The story is recounted in this tafseer.

² See the tafseer of *Soorat al-Burooj*.

disagreed about matters and fought each other, until one of them said to the other: "There is no need for our two armies to fight, instead let us fight each other (in single combat) and the one who kills the other will be Ruler of Yemen." So they fought each other and behind each man was a trench. Aryât gained the upper hand and attacked Abraha; he struck him with his sword, splitting his nose and mouth and slashing his face, but Abraha's body guard attacked Aryât and killed him; Abraha returned, wounded, to Yemen where he was treated for his injuries and recovered. He then declared his independence from Abyssinia by organizing the army into the Army of Yemen.

The Negus wrote to him, accusing him of having had Aryât killed, and threatening him, saying that he swore to tread on the soil of Yemen, and he cut off his own forelock.³ When Abraha read this, he sent gifts and precious objects to the Negus to placate him and flatter him, and a sack containing soil from Yemen, so that the King might walk upon it and thus fulfill his oath; he also cut off his own forelock and sent it to the King. When the Negus received this, he was pleased with Abraha and gave him his approval. Abraha then wrote to the Negus promising that he would build a church for him in Yemen the like of which had never been seen before. This he did; it was a huge church, built in Sana, tall, beautifully crafted and decorated on all sides. The Arabs called it: *al-Qalees* because of its height, because whoever looked at it, his head-dress (*qalansuwah*) was in danger of falling off as he tilted his head back.

Abraha al-Ashram had the idea to force the people to make their pilgrimage to his magnificent church, instead of to Makkah. He announced this in Yemen, but it was rejected by the Arabs from the tribes of 'Adnân and Qahtân. The people of Quraysh were infuriated by this decree, so much so that one of them went to Yemen and

³ As a practical expression of his vow to retake Yemen.

relieved himself in the church. When its custodians saw what he had done, they reported it to Abraha, saying: "One of Quraysh has done this in anger over his House (the Ka'bah) in whose place you have appointed this church."

Abraha, on hearing this, swore to march to Makkah and destroy the Ka'bah, stone by stone. Muqâtil ibn Sulaymân narrates that some people of Quraysh entered the church and set it alight. It was a very windy day, so the fire spread rapidly, burning the church to the ground. In retaliation, Abraha prepared an army to march on the Ka'bah in order to destroy it: It was an army so huge that none might prevent it from carrying out its mission. Abraha took along a great, powerful elephant, the like of which had never been seen; it was called Maḥmood, a gift, it was said from the Negus, the King of Abyssinia. It is reported that he brought with him eight other elephants; their number was also reported to be twelve, plus the large one, Maḥmood — and Allah knows best. It was the intention to fasten chains to the pillars of the building and then make the elephants pull on them until the structure was demolished. When the Arabs heard of the army's imminent approach, they called on all the Arabs to join together to defeat Abraha. This they set out to do, headed by a noble from Yemen whose name was Dhu Nafar. They joined battle with Abraha, but were defeated by him, by Allah's Will.

Dhu Nafar was captured and taken along with the army of Abraha, and the army continued on its way until it was confronted by Nufayl ibn Ḥabeeb al-Khath'ami along with his people, but they were defeated in their turn by Abraha and he captured Nufayl and wanted to kill him, but he forgave him and took him as his guide to show him the way to the Hijâz.⁴ When they approached the city of Ṭâ'if, its people went out to Abraha and attempted to appease him,

⁴ The Hijâz: a area in western Arabia, that includes Jeddah, Makkah and Madinah

fearful for their place of worship — which they called *al-Lât*. Abraha treated them with deference, so they sent with him a man named Abu Raghâl as a guide. When they reached a place known as al-Maghmas, near Makkah, he sent his troops on a foray to capture camels and other livestock belonging to the Makkans., This they did, including about two hundred camels belonging to ‘Abdul Muṭṭalib [the grandfather of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)]. The leader of this raiding expedition was a man named Al-Aswad ibn Maqsood.

Abraha then sent an emissary to the people of Makkah with instructions to seek an audience with the chief of the nobles of Quraysh and to inform him that the King would not harm the people of Makkah unless they attempted to frustrate the destruction of the Ka‘bah. The emissary, whose name was Hanâtah, approached the city and he was directed to ‘Abdul Muṭṭalib ibn Hâshim, to whom he relayed Abraha’s message.

‘Abdul Muṭṭalib replied: “By Allah! We have no wish to fight him, nor are we in any position to do so. This is the Sacred House of Allah, and the house of His *Khaleel*,⁵ Ibrâheem, and if He wishes to prevent him (Abraha) from (destroying) it, it is His House and His Sacred Place (and He will do so). And if He lets him approach it, by Allah! We have no means to defend it from him.”

So Hanâtah told him, “Come with me and tell him (Abraha) that.” ‘Abdul Muṭṭalib did so, and when Abraha saw him, he was impressed by him, because ‘Abdul Muṭṭalib was said to be a powerful, good-looking man. So Abraha sat with him on the ground and asked his translator to inquire what it was that the leader of Quraysh wanted of him.

⁵ Khaleel: The general meaning of this word is ‘friend’, however, this sense cannot do justice to the unique relationship between Allah and his noble and illustrious Prophet, Ibrâheem (Abraham) (may Allah’s peace be upon him).

'Abdul Muṭṭalib replied: "I want the King to return my camels which he has taken from me: they are two hundred in number."

Abraha answered: "I was impressed by you when I first saw you, but now I would withdraw from you, having spoken to you. You are asking me about two hundred camels which I have taken from you and you leave the matter of a House which is (the foundation of) your religion and the religion of your fathers, which I have come to destroy and you do not speak to me about it?"

'Abdul Muṭṭalib replied: "Verily, I am the lord of the camels, as for the House, it has its Lord Who will prevent its destruction."

Abraha said: "No one can prevent me."

'Abdul Muṭṭalib answered: "Then do so." (In other words, "I do not believe you can do so, but if you think you can, then do it.")

It is said that a number of the nobles of Quraysh accompanied 'Abdul Muṭṭalib and offered Abraha a third of the wealth of the tribe of Tihâmah if he would retreat from the House, but he refused, and simply returned 'Abdul Muṭṭalib's camels to him. 'Abdul Muṭṭalib then returned to his people and ordered them to leave Makkah and ascend to the top of the mountains, fearful of the excesses which might be committed by the army, then he took hold of the metal ring (the knocker) of the door to the Ka'bah and along with a number of Quraysh, he called upon Allah to give them victory over Abraha and his army thus: "There is no matter more important to any man right now than the defence of his livestock and property, so oh Lord! Prevent the unbelievers from (destroying) Your property, for no one can prevent them except You. Let not their cross and all which they have (their soldiers, elephants and arms) conquer that which is Yours, that which You have."

﴿Did He not make their plot go astray?﴾ According to Ibn Is-hâq, then 'Abdul Muṭṭalib sent away the metal ring of the door of the

Ka‘bah (that it might not be damaged or stolen) and they left the Ka‘bah and descended to the tops of the mountains. Ibn Is-hâq also says that the Makkans left a hundred she-camels tied up near the House of Allah, hoping that some of the soldiers would steal them and thus incur the vengeance of Allah. Abraha was about to enter the sacred city of Makkah and he had prepared Maḥmood the elephant, and readied his army; the elephant was turned towards the Ka‘bah when Nufayl ibn Habeeb approached it and spoke in its ear saying: “Kneel, Maḥmood! Then turn around and return directly to whence you came, because you are in the Sacred City of Allah.”

Then he released the elephant’s ear and it knelt down, after which Nufayl ibn Habeeb left and hastened to the mountains to join the other Makkans. Abraha’s men beat the elephant in an attempt to make it rise. They beat him about the head with axes and attempted to make him rise using hooked staffs, but he refused. However, when they directed him to return towards Yemen, and he rose and walked quickly, then they turned him towards Syria and he did likewise; then they turned him towards Makkah once more, whereupon he sat down again.

﴿And send against them swarms of flying creatures, which pelted them with stones of baked clay﴾: Then Allah sent against them birds from the sea, like swallows and herons, each one carrying three stones the size of chickpeas and lentils, one in each claw and one in its beak. Everyone who was hit by them was destroyed, though not all of Abraha’s army was destroyed by them — many of them fled in panic along the road, asking about the whereabouts of Nufayl that he might point out to them the way home; Nufayl however, was at this moment at the top of the mountain, observing the rout, witnessing the punishment which Allah, the Exalted, All-Powerful, had sent to the people of the elephant.

*Where will they flee when the One True God is the Pursuer?
For Al-Ashram is defeated and not the victor.*

According to Al-Wâqidi, when they mobilized the army and prepared the elephant to enter the city, no matter how they tried, the elephant would not turn in the direction of Makkah, though it would move in any other direction. When they tried to make him turn towards the Sacred House, he would lie down and trumpet loudly. Abraha began to harangue the elephant's driver and beat him that he should compel the elephant to enter the Sacred Place, the altercation becoming protracted. During this time, 'Abdul Muṭṭalib and a number of the nobility of Makkah — among them Mat'am ibn 'Adi, 'Amr ibn 'Â'id ibn 'Imrân ibn Makhzoom, Mas'ood ibn 'Amr ath-Thaqafi — were standing on the mountain of Hirâ' observing the doings of the army, including their attempts to make the elephant move towards the city.

All in all, it was an amazing spectacle, for while they were so involved, suddenly the birds which had been sent by Allah arrived. They were small, yellow birds, smaller than doves, and their feet were red. Each of them carried three stones and they encircled the army from above and unleashed their stones, destroying them. According to Muhammad ibn Is-hâq, they brought two elephants: Maḥmood and another; and while Maḥmood sat, refusing to move, the other elephant was pelted with stones. According to Wahb ibn Munabbih, they had a number of elephants, Maḥmood being the King's elephant; and while Maḥmood lay down so that the other elephants would follow his example, one other was very bold and tried to lead the rest, and this one was pelted with stones, after which the rest of them fled.

According to ‘Aṭâ’ ibn Yasâr and others,⁶ not all of the army died at once — some of them were destroyed immediately, while others took time to die — slowly, in agony, their flesh falling away from them as they fled. Abraha was amongst the latter group, for he died on the journey back to Yemen in a place called Khath’am. According to Ibn Is-ḥâq, they fled in wild panic, collapsing everywhere. Abraha was struck on parts of his body: they carried him out while the flesh was falling from his body and they took him to Sana. It was said that what was left of his body was like that of a small bird and that he lingered on in agony until his chest was split open up to the throat.

Muqâtil ibn Sulaymân has reported that Quraysh obtained a great amount of wealth from the plunder which came to them from the stricken army. ‘Abdul Muṭṭalib is said to have amassed enough gold to fill a large crater. Ibn Is-ḥâq says that this was the first time that the diseases measles and smallpox had been seen among the Arabs and that they began to be affected from this time forward by misfortune. This was also reported from ‘Ikrimah with a sound chain of narrators. Ibn Is-ḥâq reports that when Allah sent Muhammad it was considered a great mercy and blessing from Him upon Quraysh, and so the two chapters Quraysh and al-Feel were revealed, pointing out to the Arabs that Allah had favoured them with many blessings and had they but accepted the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), they would have remained custodians of the Ka‘bah and continued to enjoy Allah’s Blessings.

According to Ibn Hishâm, the Arabic word *abâbeel* in verse 3 means in flocks or large numbers, while to the Arabs, the word *sijjeel*

⁶ ‘Aṭâ’ ibn Yasâr al-Hilâli Abu Muhammad al-Madani: According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a reliable reporter of hadiths and a pious man. He died in the year 94 H or later, according to some reports.

in verse 4 means harsh pelting. According to some scholars, the word *sijjeel* is Persian in origin and is a corruption of the two words *sinj* and *jeel*, the former meaning a stone and the latter meaning clay, and that the meaning therefore is stones of (hard) clay.

﴿And made them the like green crops devoured?﴾ In Arabic, '*asf* means the stalks left behind after the wheat has been harvested. Sa'eed ibn Jubayr said that it means straw, and in a second narration attributed to him, that it means wheat leaves. It is also attributed to him that he said that '*asf* means straw and that eaten (*ma'kool* in Arabic) means the chaff which is fed to the livestock; Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri said likewise. Ibn 'Abbâs said that means the covering of the corn and the husk of the wheat. Ibn Zayd said that it is the leaves of vegetation after they have been eaten by cattle and excreted and become filth. Thus the meaning of the words in the verse is that Allah annihilated them, frustrated their plot and visited His Wrath upon them, killing most of them (at once).

None escaped to return to Yemen except those who were injured and later perished as did their King, Abraha. His chest was split open, revealing his heart by the time he reached his home, where he was able to relate to his people what had befallen the great army just before he died. His son Yaksoom succeeded him and then after him Yaksoom's brother, Masrooq ibn Abraha, became king. Saif al-Himyari went to Chosroes⁷ and obtained his support against Yemen. Saif invaded with an army supplemented by troops from Chosroes, and by Allah's Will, they were successful and annexed the Kingdom of Yemen. Delegations from amongst the Arabs came to him to congratulate him.

⁷ Chosroes, also known as Khosrau in Persian, or Kisrâ in Arabic, was King of Persia. (Editor)

Ibn Is-hâq reports that ‘Â’ishah (رضي الله عنها) said: “I saw the driver and the guide of the elephant and they were both blind and crippled and begging for food in Makkah.⁸ This was also reported by Al-Wâqidi. The driver’s name was Anees. It is mentioned in a hadith how, on the day of Hodaybiyah, the Prophet looked down on Quraysh from a high vantage point and his camel lay down; his Companions tried to make her rise without success and so they assumed that she was being stubborn, but the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) informed them that the One Who had stopped her was the same Who had caused the elephant of Abraha to lie down. Then he said: «“And by Him in Whose Hand is my soul, none shall ask of me anything today concerning any matter which is not forbidden, except that I shall agree to it.” Then he called upon the she-camel to rise and it did so.»⁹ It is likewise narrated by Bukhari and Muslim that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, on the day of the fall of Makkah to the Muslims: «Verily, Allah prevented the elephant from (destroying) Makkah and He has made His Messenger and the true believers victors over it, and now the prohibition of fighting in its precincts is once more in force, as it was so yesterday. Let those who are here inform those who are absent (of this prohibition).»

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Feel*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

⁸ Of course, this must have been decades after the Battle of the Elephant.
(Editor)

⁹ Bukhari

Soorat Quraysh (106)

The Tribe of Quraysh

سُورَةُ قُرَيْشٍ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿لَا يَأْتِي قُرَيْشٍ﴾ إِيْلَافِهِمْ رِحْلَةَ الشِّتَاءِ وَالصَّيْفِ ﴿١﴾ فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ
هَذَا الْبَيْتِ ﴿٢﴾ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِنْ جُوعٍ وَآمَنَهُمْ مِنْ خَوْفٍ ﴿٤﴾

(سورة قُرَيْشٍ : ١-٤)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. For the taming of Quraysh,
2. For their taming, [We cause] the caravans to set forth in winter and in summer.
3. So let them worship the Lord of this House,
4. Who has fed them against hunger and has made them safe from fear.

It was said by Muhammad Ibn Is-hâq and ‘Abdur-Rahmân ibn Zayd ibn Aslam that this *soorah* is connected to the previous *soorah*, *al-Feel*, because they assert that Allah is saying (in continuation from

the verses in *Soorat al-Feel*): When We protected Makkah from the elephant and destroyed its people, it was for the taming of Quraysh and their community in their city, in safety. It was also said that they were accustomed to travelling in caravans to Yemen in winter and Syria in summer for trade and other purposes, and that they would return to their city in safety without difficulty or hindrance because of their privileged status as the custodians of sacred House of Allah. For whoever recognized them would respect them and travel with them in order to protect them; and this was their situation, both in winter and in summer.

According to Ibn Jareer, the correct explanation of this verse is that Allah is saying: “Be amazed at the taming of Quraysh and My Blessings upon them,” because the consensus of Muslim opinion is that they are two separate chapters, independent of each other.

Then Allah indicates to them the obligation of expressing thanks and gratitude to Him by worshipping Him Alone: ﴿So let them worship the Lord of this House﴾. That is, worship the One True Deity in Islamic monotheism Who has made their lives and their city safe and inviolate, as in the Words of Him, the Exalted:

﴿إِنَّمَا أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ رَبَّ هَذِهِ الْبَلَدَةِ الَّذِي حَرَّمَهَا وَلَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ
وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾ (سورة التَّمَلُّ: ٩١)

﴿Say, I [Muhammad] am commanded only to serve the Lord of this city [Makkah], which He has sanctified, and unto Whom all things belong; and I am commanded to be of those who surrender [unto Him].﴾ (Qur'an 27: 91)

﴿Who has fed them against hunger﴾ reminds them that Allah the Lord of the House and it is He Who has fed them and kept them from starving. ﴿And has made them safe from fear﴾ He has preferred

them over other communities by granting them safety from fear, so let them then worship Him Alone, without associating any partners with Him, without worshipping graven images or setting up equals to Him. If someone responds positively to this command, Allah will grant him the best in this life and in the Hereafter, while whoever disobeys Allah will receive neither, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا قَرْيَةً كَانَتْ ءَامِنَةً مُطْمَئِنَّةً يَأْتِيهَا رِزْقُهَا رَغَدًا مِّن كُلِّ مَكَانٍ فَكَفَرَتْ بِأَنْعُمِ اللَّهِ فَأَذَاقَهَا اللَّهُ لِبَاسَ الْجُوعِ وَالْخَوْفِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾﴾

(سورة التحل: ١١٢-١١٣)

﴿Allah coins a similitude of a township that dwelt secure and well content, its provision coming to it [from Allah] in abundance from every side, but it disbelieved in Allah's favours, so Allah made it experience [what it feels like to be clothed in] the garb of hunger and fear because of what they used to do. And indeed there had come to them a messenger from among them, but they had denied him, and so the torment seized them while they were wrong-doers.﴾

(Qur'an 16: 112-113)

It is reported on the authority Asmâ' bint Yazeed that she said: «I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, "Woe to you, Quraysh! For the taming of Quraysh."» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim) It is also narrated, on the authority of Usâmah ibn Zayd, that he said: «I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, «For the taming of Quraysh: For their taming, We cause the caravans to set forth in winter and in summer.﴾ And He will judge (you), O people of Quraysh! «Worship the Lord of this House, Who feeds you against hunger and has made you safe from fear.﴾» (Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim) In these words it was narrated on the authority of Usâmah ibn Zayd, but it should be:

...on the authority of Asmâ' bint Yazeed, whose nickname was Umm Salamah and was one of the Anṣâr. It is likely that this mistake took place during the recording of the hadith, or in its first narration, and Allah knows best.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat Quraysh*.
All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-Mâ'oon (107)

Small Kindnesses

سُورَةُ الْمَاعُونِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالذِّينِ ﴿١﴾ فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَدْعُ الْيَتِيمَ ﴿٢﴾
وَلَا يَحْضُ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ ﴿٣﴾ فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٤﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ
صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ﴿٥﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُونَ ﴿٦﴾ وَيَمْنَعُونَ الْمَاعُونَ ﴿٧﴾﴾

(سورة الماعون: ١-٧)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Have you observed the one who belies the Religion?
2. That is the one who repels the orphan,
3. And does not encourage feeding the needy.
4. Ah, woe unto worshippers
5. Who are heedless of their prayer;
6. Who would be seen [at worship]
7. Yet refuse small kindnesses!

﴿Have you observed the one who belies the Religion?﴾ Allah, the Exalted asks: Have you seen, O Muhammad, the one who rejects

the Religion? Here, the Arabic word *Deen* refers to Judgement Day: the Appointed Time, the Requital and the Reward.

﴿That is the one who repels the orphan﴾, that is, the person who coerces and oppresses orphans, denying them their rights, refusing to feed them or give them any aid.

﴿And does not encourage feeding the needy.﴾ As Allah says:

﴿كَلَّا بَلْ لَا تُكْرِمُونَ الْيَتِيمَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَا تَحْضُونَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ الْمَسْكِينِ ﴿١٨﴾﴾

(سورة الفجر: ١٧-١٨)

﴿No, but you do not honour the orphan, nor do you encourage feeding the needy.﴾ *(Qur'an 89: 17-18)*

That is, when there is someone in need, who has nothing, the selfish person does not support or maintain him or supply his needs.

﴿Ah, woe unto worshippers who are heedless of their prayer﴾: According to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) and others, this verse refers to the hypocrites who pray in public but not in private; and for this reason He says: ﴿to worshippers﴾ who are among those who pray, and at first, they are steadfast in their prayers, then they become neglectful of them either entirely, according to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), or they become careless about praying on time until they pray them outside the prescribed time. This was the explanation by Masrooq and Abu aḍ-Ḍuhâ.

'Aḡâ' said: "Praise be to Allah, Who says: ﴿heedless of their prayers﴾ and He does not say: heedless in their prayers." However, the verse is comprehensive and covers both meanings. So whoever is neglectful by delaying his prayers, or is careless in implementing the prescribed sunnahs in prayer or fulfilling the conditions of the prayer, or does not pray with a fitting sense of humility and does not reflect on the meaning, may be considered a hypocrite in his actions as

confirmed by the hadith of Bukhari and Muslim, that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «This is the prayer of the hypocrite, this is the prayer of the hypocrite — he sits and observes the sun until it is between the horns of Satan,¹ then he quickly performs four units of prayer in which he barely remembers Allah.»

The prayer referred to is the '*aṣr*'² prayer and the delay is until the end of the permitted time and this is a time at which it is hated to offer prayers, when the hypocrite rapidly performs his prayer (so that his movements resemble the rapid pecking of a chicken), hastily, without a fitting sense of humility. Likewise, the one who prays in order to be seen by others, not to gain the pleasure of Allah, is like the one who does not pray at all. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كَسَالَى يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا﴾
(سورة التيساء: ١٤٢)

«Surely, the hypocrites think that they are deceiving Allah, but He is over-reaching them: When they stand up in prayer, they pray in a lazy, careless manner in order to be seen by others and little do they hold Allah in remembrance.»
(*Qur'an* 4: 142)

And Allah (ﷻ) says here: «who are neglectful of their prayers».

Aṭ-Ṭabarāni says: «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, “Surely, in Hell there is a valley (which is so terrible) that the Hellfire wishes it were not a part of it four hundred times a day. It has been prepared for those from the community of Muhammad who do actions in order to be seen doing them...”» Imam Aḥmad narrates that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «Whoever did an action in order to gain a good reputation, Allah will make him despised and degraded.» However,

¹ 'between the horns of Satan': at the end of '*aṣr*' time, late afternoon

² afternoon; the prescribed prayer at that time

if a person performs a deed which is seen by the people and it pleases them, there is no sin for him in this and the proof is the narration of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه): «“I was praying when a man entered and this pleased me, so I told the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) about it, and he said, ‘Two rewards have been written for you — the reward of praying in secret and the reward of being seen.’”»³

Ibn Jareer says that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“Who are heedless of their prayers» — They are those who delay their prayers and do not pray them at the right time.”»

Delaying the prayer may simply mean praying it late, or it may mean not praying it at all, or it may mean delaying the prayer until the prescribed time has expired.

«Yet refuse small kindnesses!» They do not behave well in worship, nor do they behave well towards their fellow human beings. They will not even lend to those in need, though it would be returned to them, nor do they like to pay zakât⁴ or other forms of charity. Ibn Abi Nujayh says that ‘Ali said that the Arabic word *mâ'oon* from this verse means zakât, and this was also related by As-Suddi. It was also attributed by more than one person to Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه). Many narrations suggest that the word is more general than this and even includes things commonly shared among neighbours or members of a community such as buckets, spades and axes. It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was asked the meaning of *mâ'oon* and that he replied: «“The stone (like pots and pans), the iron (like axes and spades) and all such things.”» Allah knows best.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Mâ'oon*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

³ Abu Hurayrah was pleased that the man saw him because his intention as to show the man the proper prayer, not to show off.

⁴ zakât: obligatory charity that is the third pillar in Islam

Soorat al-Kawthar (108)

Abundance

سُورَةُ الْكَوْثَرِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿إِنَّا أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكَوْثَرَ ﴿١﴾ فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأَنْحَرِ ﴿٢﴾ إِنَّكَ شَانِئٌ هُوَ

(سورة الكوثر: ١-٣)

الْأَبْتَرُ ﴿٣﴾﴾

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Indeed, We have given you Abundance;
2. So pray to your Lord, and sacrifice.
3. It is certainly your insulter [and not you] who is without posterity.

It is narrated that Anas ibn Mâlik (رضي الله عنه) said: «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was dozing and then he raised his head and smiled, then he said to them (the Companions), “Verily, a *soorah* has been revealed to me.” Then he recited, “(In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful, Indeed, We have given you Abundance) ... to the end of the chapter. Then he asked about a word

in the first verse, ‘Do you know what *al-Kawthar* is?’” They replied, “Allah and His Messenger know best.” He said, “It is a river granted to me by my Lord, the Almighty, the All-powerful, in Paradise, in which is great goodness; its drinking vessels are as (limitless as) the heavenly bodies. It refuses to allow one of the slaves to drink, and the Prophet will say, ‘O my Lord! He is one of my community.’ But it will be said to him, ‘You know nothing of the innovations (in religion) that they practised after you.’”»

It has been narrated about the pool of *al-Kawthar* that it has two streams running into it from the heavens which emanate from the river known as *al-Kawthar*, and its drinking vessels are as limitless as the stars in the sky.¹ Many Qur’anic scholars have taken this as proof that the *soorah* was revealed in Madinah while many fiqh scholars have deduced from it that the words *Bismillâh* (in the Name of Allah) are an integral part of the *soorah* that was revealed along with it.

As for the words of Allah (ﷻ): «Indeed, We have given you Abundance», it has already been mentioned that *al-Kawthar* is a river in Paradise. Imam Aḥmad has narrated on the authority of Anas (رضي الله عنه) that he recited this *soorah* and then he said: «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “I have been given *al-Kawthar*, and it is a flowing river in Paradise which does not flow along a normal channel, but instead its banks are domes of pearl. I struck its earth with my hand and it was a strong-smelling musk, and its pebbles were pearls.”»

Ibn Jareer narrated, on the authority of Anas (رضي الله عنه) that Anas asked the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) about *al-Kawthar* and he said: «“It is a river in Paradise, given to me by my Lord, whose colour is whiter than milk and whose taste is sweeter than honey; upon it are birds whose necks are like those of camels.” ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) said, “O

¹ Narrated by Muslim, Abu Dawood, and An-Nasâ’i.

Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! It is an ostrich.” He replied, “Its meat is more delicate and tender than that, O ‘Umar.”»

Bukhari relates, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that he said: “*Al-Kawthar* is the blessings bestowed upon the Messenger by Allah.” Abu Bishr then told Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr, [who narrated this from Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه)]: “But people say that it is a river in Paradise.” Sa‘eed replied: “The river in Paradise is one of the blessings by Allah upon him (ﷺ).” Mujâhid said: “It is the abundant blessings of this life and the Hereafter.” It has been confirmed that Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) also explained it (*al-Kawthar*) as being a river. Ibn Jareer narrates, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that he said: “*Al-Kawthar* is a river in Paradise; its banks are of gold and silver, its bed is of precious stones and pearls, and its water is whiter than snow and sweeter than honey.” Something very similar was narrated on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه), and At-Tirmidhi narrates something like it in a *mawqoof* form, while Aḥmad has narrated it in a *marfoo‘* form.

﴿So pray to your Lord, and sacrifice.﴾ That is, (Allah is saying): Since We have given you such blessings in this world, and in the Hereafter, including the river of Abundance, then devote your obligatory and your optional prayers to your Lord Alone, as well as your sacrifices and all your acts of worship. Worship Him Alone, without associating partners with Him, as in the words of Allah (ﷻ):

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهِ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٦٣﴾﴾

(سورة الأنعام: ١٦٢-١٦٣)

﴿Say: Truly, my prayers and my sacrifice and my life and my death are for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. No partners has He; this I have been commanded to do and I am the first to submit [to Allah].﴾

(Qur’an 6: 162)

Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), ‘Aṭâ’, ‘Ikrimah, Mujâhid and Al-Ḥasan are all agreed that the word *naḥr* in the second verse means *ḥalâl* (lawful and permitted) slaughter. Most of the scholars from amongst the pious *salaf*² agreed with this, and this practice is contrary to the practices of the idolaters, who prostrated themselves before false gods and sacrificed animals in their name. Allah, the Exalted, says:

(سورة الأنعام: ١٢١) ﴿وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذَكَّرْ اسْمُ اللَّهِ...﴾

﴿And do not eat of that which was not slaughtered in the Name of Allah...﴾
(Qur’an 6: 121)

The word *naḥr* was also interpreted as meaning the position of the hands when slaughtering and to the raising of the hands in prayer, at the time of the opening *takbeer*³ (in the prayer) and an instruction to face the *Qibla*⁴ when slaughtering; but all of these explanations are very unusual, and the correct interpretation is the first: that it refers to *ḥalâl* slaughter. Because of this, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to pray ‘Eid prayer before slaughtering an animal, and he said: «“Whoever prayed and then slaughtered has performed the slaughter (correctly) and whoever slaughters before prayer, there is no slaughter (accepted as his sacrifice) for him.” Then a Companion named Abu Bardah stood up and said, “O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! I have slaughtered my sheep before the prayer for I knew that today was a day on which the meat would be desirable (for slaughter).” He said, “Your sheep is merely meat.” (He meant that it was not acceptable as a sacrifice.) Abu Bardah then asked, “I have a young, female goat which is dearer to me than two sheep — is this sufficient

² *Salaf*: The pious predecessors, the believers of the early generation of Islam.

³ *Takbeer*: Saying “*Allâhu Akbar!*” (Allah is Greater).

⁴ *Qibla*: The direction which Muslims face when they pray (i.e., the Ka’bah in Makkah).

recompense from me?" The Prophet replied, "It would recompense you but it would not recompense anyone after you."»

The correct interpretation of the verse, according to Ibn Jareer is: So make all your prayers for your Lord and for Him Alone, and no other, neither partner nor deity; likewise make your sacrifices for Him Alone, not to any idols — in gratitude to Him for the provision and generosity which He has given you which is without equal.

«It is certainly your insulter [and not you] who is without posterity» That is, the one who hates you, O Muhammad, and hates that which you have brought (the Message of guidance, truth and proof most clear and light most evident) is defective, insignificant, despised and is cut off (from remembrance).

According to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), Mujâhid, Sa'eed ibn Jubayr and Qatâdah, the *soorah* was revealed in regard to Al-'Âṣ ibn Wâ'il, for it was said that Al-'Âṣ ibn Wâ'il used to say, whenever Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) was mentioned: "Leave him, for he is a man who is cut off and is of no consequence, and if he were killed, he would be forgotten." And so Allah revealed this *soorah*. It was also said that it was revealed concerning 'Uqbah ibn Abi Mu'eet. Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) and 'Ikrimah are reported to have said that it was revealed in regard to Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf and a number of the pagans of Quraysh. Al-Bazzâr reported that Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf approached Makkah and the people of Quraysh said: "You are their leader.⁵ Do you not see this weak, despised man, who is without family or any who might help him and who is cut off from his own people? He claims that he is better than we! We are the people of (the House of) the pilgrims, the custodians (of the Ka'bah), the suppliers of water (to the pilgrims)." He said: "You are better than he." So Allah revealed this *soorah*.

⁵ i.e., the leader of the people of Makkah

This is an authentic narration. ‘Aṭā’ said that it was revealed concerning Abu Lahab; this was when the Prophet’s son died and Abu Lahab went to the polytheists and said: “When his sons die, he will no longer be remembered.” Far from it! On the contrary, Allah has preserved his memory for all the world to witness and has placed the responsibility of (implementing) His Revealed Law upon their shoulders forever, until the Day of Congregation and the appointed time arrives — peace and blessings of Allah be upon him always till the Day of Assembly.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Kawthar*.
All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-Kâfiroon (109)

The Disbelievers

سُورَةُ الْكَافِرُونَ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿١﴾ لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ﴿٣﴾ وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدْتُمْ ﴿٤﴾ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ﴿٥﴾ لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ ﴿٦﴾﴾

(سورة الكافرون: ١-٦)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Say: O you who disbelieve!
2. I do not worship that which you worship,
3. Nor do you worship That Which I worship.
4. Nor will I worship that which you have been worshipping,
5. Neither will you worship That Which I worship.
6. To you, your religion and to me, mine.

It is narrated by Muslim that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to recite this *soorah* with *Soorat al-Ikhlâs* (112) in the two units of prayer following *ṭawâf*¹ of the Ka'bah; it is also narrated by Muslim

¹ *ṭawâf*: circumambulation (of the Ka'bah in Makkah)

that he used to recite them in the two superogatory Sunnah units of *fajr* prayer; and Imam Aḥmad narrates that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to recite them in the two superogatory Sunnah units of *maghrib*² prayer.

It has also been narrated that *Soorat al-Kâfiroon* is equivalent to one quarter of the Qur'an. The Prophet also said: «“Read: ﴿Say, Oh, you who disbelieve...﴾ before you sleep, because it is freedom from *shirk*.³ This chapter is freedom from associating anyone or anything with Allah in worship and it is an order to purify our faith (for Allah only) and the Words: ﴿Say: O you who disbelieve...﴾ include all disbelievers throughout the world, although those specifically addressed are the pagans of Quraysh. It was said that they proposed that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) worship their gods for a year, then they would worship what he worshipped (Allah) for a year, and so on. As a result, this *soorah* was revealed containing an order to the Prophet to declare his rejection of all that which they worshipped, and to say: ﴿I do not worship that which you worship﴾; that is, their idols and the partners they associate with Allah.

﴿Nor do you worship That Which I worship﴾: that is, the disbelievers do not worship Allah, Alone, without partners.

﴿Nor will I worship that which you have been worshipping, neither will you worship That Which I worship﴾ That is, the believer must say to the unbeliever: I will not follow your mode of worship and I will worship only Allah in the way which pleases Him.

﴿Neither will you worship That Which I worship﴾ means, neither will the unbelievers follow the Commands of Allah and His prescribed way of worship; indeed they have invented a thing for

² *maghrib*: sunset; the prescribed prayer at that time

³ *shirk*: associating partners with Allah

themselves, as in His words:

﴿... إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى الْأَنْفُسُ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ
الهُدَى﴾ (سورة النجم: ٢٣)

﴿... They follow nothing but their own opinions and their own [vain] desires, and guidance has already come to them from their Lord.﴾
(Qur'an 53: 23)

Thus he rejected their polytheism, for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and all those who follow him worship Allah in the way prescribed by Him. For this reason, the testimony of the Muslim is:

Lâ ilâha illa Allâh, Muhammadur-Rasoolullâh —

None is worthy of worship except Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. For there is no way to worship Him except that which was brought by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). The polytheists worship deities besides Allah in a way not permitted by Allah, so He told the Prophet (ﷺ) to say to them: ﴿To you your religion and to me mine﴾, as in His words:

﴿وَأَنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُلْ لِي عَمَلِي وَلَكُمْ عَمَلُكُمْ أَنْتُمْ بَرِيءُونَ مِمَّا أَعْمَلُ وَأَنَا بَرِيءٌ
مِمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾ (سورة يونس: ٤١)

﴿And if they reject you, then say: To me my deeds and to you your deeds; you are innocent of my actions and I am innocent of yours.﴾
(Qur'an 10: 41)

And:

﴿... لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ...﴾ (سورة الفصص: ٥٥)

﴿... For us our deeds and for you your deeds...﴾ (Qur'an 28: 55)

According to Bukhari, «your religion» means *kufr*⁴ and «mine» (that is, 'my Religion') means Islam. Abu 'Abdillâh ash-Shâfi'ee says that the verse: «To you, your religion and to me, mine» shows that the disbelievers are one people, because disbelief in all its many manifestations has one thing in common: its falsity.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Kâfiroon*.
All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

⁴ *kufr*: disbelief in Allah and His messengers

Soorat an-Naşr (110)

The Help

سُورَةُ النَّصْرِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ ﴿١﴾ وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا ﴿٢﴾ فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَأَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا ﴿٣﴾﴾

(سورة النصر: ١-٣)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. When comes the help of Allah and the conquest
2. And you see the people enter Allah's Religion in crowds,
3. Then glorify the praises of your Lord and seek His forgiveness. Truly, He is the One Who accepts repentance and forgives.

At-Tirmidhi relates from Anas ibn Mâlik that, «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to a certain man: “Are you married, O so-and-so?” He replied, “No, by Allah, Oh, Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! For I have nothing, so how may I marry?” He asked the man, “Do you not know (or have you not memorized), ﴿Say: He is Allah,

One.﴾?” The man replied, “Certainly!” He said, “It is (equivalent to) one third of the Qur’an.” Then he asked, “Do you not know, ﴿When comes the help of Allah and the conquest﴾?” The man answered, “Certainly!” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “It is (equivalent to) one quarter of the Qur’an.”»

It is narrated on the authority of ‘Ubaydullâh ibn ‘Abdillâh ibn ‘Utbah: “Ibn ‘Abbâs said to me: “Do you know which *soorah* was the last revealed from the Qur’an?” I replied: “Yes, it was: ﴿When comes the help of Allah and the conquest﴾.” He said: “You are right.”

Abu Bakr al-Bazzâr and Al-Bayhaqî have both narrated from Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) that he said: “This *soorah* ﴿When comes the help of Allah and the conquest﴾ was revealed to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) during the days of *tashreeq*¹ and he knew that it was his farewell address. He called for his riding-camel and after it went some way he stood and addressed the people with his famous farewell speech.” According to Al-Bayhaqî, Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said: “This *soorah* was revealed, following which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) called his daughter, Fâtimah (رضي الله عنها) and said to her: «“It heralds my death.” At this, Fâtimah began to cry; then she laughed when he said: “Patience, for you are the first of my family who will join me.”» Nasâ’î mentioned something similar without mentioning Fâtimah.

Bukhari has narrated from Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) took him to sit with him and the elders of Badr; some of them were not pleased with this and asked why ‘Umar had brought a mere boy to sit with them who was no older than their own sons, so ‘Umar asked them: “What do you say about the words of Allah, the Almighty, the All-powerful: ﴿When comes the help of Allah and the

¹ days of *tashreeq*: the three days following the 10th of Dhul Hijjah, during the Hajj.

conquest?» Some of them replied, “We are ordered to glorify Allah and seek His forgiveness when we receive help and victory.” Others remained silent and he said to me, “Do you say likewise, O Ibn ‘Abbâs?” I said, “No.” He said, “Then what do you say?” I replied, “He (Allah) honoured the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and informed him that «When comes the help of Allah and the conquest» is the sign of that honour [which He bestowed upon the Messenger (ﷺ)] — «Then glorify the praises of your Lord and ask for His forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts repentance and forgives.»” Then ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (رضي الله عنه) said, “I know no more of it than what you have said.”

Ibn Jareer mentioned something similar to it. Aṭ-Ṭabarâni relates, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that he said: «“When the *soorah*: «When comes the help of Allah and the conquest» was revealed, it heralded to Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) that his death was near, and he increased his preparations for the Hereafter (praying, fasting, supplicating and so on); he said after that: “The conquest and the help of Allah have come, and the people of Yemen have come.” A man said, “O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! Who are the people of Yemen?” He replied, “A people who are gentle-hearted, moderate in their ways — faith is in Yemen, fiqh is in Yemen.”»

It has been confirmed from Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that, «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, on the day of the conquest (of Makkah): “There is no hijrah (emigration) after the conquest, but there is jihad and *niyyah*;² but if you are afraid, then run away.”» (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim)

The explanation given by some of the Companions (those who were sitting with ‘Umar and Ibn ‘Abbâs — may Allah be pleased

² *niyyah*: intention. A prerequisite for the acceptance of deeds in Islam is that one’s intention be purely for the sake of Allah.

with them) that it means that we are ordered, when Allah (ﷻ) brings about for us the conquest of cities, to praise Him and give thanks to Him and glorify Him, is an explanation which is both sound and authentic. There is firm evidence for this in the hadith of the conquest of Makkah at the time of *dhuhr*,³ when the Prophet (Blessings and peace be upon him) prayed eight units. It was said that he was praying the *dhuhr* prayer, but others said how could that be, when he does not always pray it (in eight units); moreover, he was travelling (and therefore entitled to shorten his prayers) and he had not made the intention to stay in Makkah?

He prayed this way until the end of the month of Ramadan for about nineteen days, while he shortened his prayers and broke his fast, as did his army of around ten thousand men, and they said it was the prayer of conquest and it is recommended for the leader of the army to pray it when cities are conquered, as soon as he enters. This was the practice of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâş when he entered a conquered city. It was said that he prayed all eight units with one *tasleemah*⁴. But the correct version is that he used to perform a *tasleem* after every two units, as it is confirmed by Abu Dawood that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to do this.

As for the explanation of Ibn 'Abbâs and 'Umar ibn al-Khaţţâb (may Allah be pleased with them) that the revelation was a herald to the Prophet (ﷺ) of his approaching death, (Allah says to him): "Know that when Makkah falls — and it is your home town which formerly expelled you — and the people enter the Religion in crowds, then Our work with you in this world is done, so prepare yourself for your arrival with Us; for the Hereafter is better for you

³ *dhuhr*: midday; the obligatory prayer at that time

⁴ *tasleemah*: saying: "*As-salâmu 'alaykum wa rahmatullâh*," in this case at the end of the prayer, indicating that all of the units were prayed as one prayer.

than this life, and verily, your Lord will give you (all good) and you will be well pleased.”

And so Allah revealed: ﴿Then glorify the praises of your Lord and ask for His forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts repentance and forgives﴾.

Nasâ'i said, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that he said: “When this *soorah* ﴿When comes the help of Allah and the conquest﴾ was revealed, it was a herald to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) that his death was approaching and he began to increase his preparations for the Hereafter (by increasing his acts of worship). Then he said: «“The conquest has come, the help of Allah has come and the people of Yemen have come.” A man said, “O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! Who are the people of Yemen?” He replied, “A people who are gentle-hearted, tender-hearted; faith is in Yemen, wisdom is in Yemen and *fiqh*⁵ is in Yemen.”»

Bukhari reports from 'Â'ishah (رضي الله عنها) that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) used to say repeatedly in his bowing and prostrating: «“Most Glorified are You, O Allah, our Lord, and all praise is due to You. O Allah! Forgive me.”» — as he was ordered in *Soorat an-Naşr*. This was narrated by all except Tirmidhi.

Imam Ahmad reports, on the authority of Masrooq, that he said: “I heard 'Â'ishah saying that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to repeat: «“Glorified be Allah and all praise be to Him, I ask Allah's forgiveness and I turn to Him in repentance.” And he said, “Verily, my Lord has informed me that that I will see a sign amongst my people, and He ordered me, if I saw it, to glorify His praises and ask His forgiveness, and I have seen it: ﴿When comes the help of Allah and the conquest, and you see the people enter Allah's Religion in

⁵ *fiqh*: the understanding of Islamic jurisprudence

crowds, then glorify the praises of your Lord and ask for His forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts repentance and forgives.» This was also narrated by Muslim.

Ibn Jareer said, on the authority of Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها) that she said: «Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) towards the end of his life, would not stand, nor sit, nor depart, nor arrive, without saying, “Most Glorified is Allah and all praise is due to him.” So I said to him, “O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! I have observed you often glorifying Allah and praising Him.” He said, “I was ordered to do it.” Then he said, “When comes the help of Allah and the conquest...» (to the end of the *soorah*).» What is meant by «the conquest» is the conquest of Makkah. For the most part, the people of Arabia were slow in answering the call to Islam until the fall of Makkah, when they entered the Religion of Allah in large numbers, and within two years, the whole of Arabia became unified in faith so that there did not remain in all the tribes of Arabia any who had not embraced Islam; all praise be to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Bukhari reports that when Makkah was conquered, delegations from all the tribes of Arabia came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) to declare their allegiance to Islam, whereas prior to it, they had been slow to embrace Islam.

Imam Aḥmad on the authority of the neighbour of Jâbir ibn ‘Abdillâh (رضي الله عنه) that he said: “I returned from a journey and Jâbir ibn ‘Abdillâh came to me and he gave salutations to me and I began to talk with him about the disunity of the people and their innovations (in religion) and Jâbir began to cry and then he said, ‘I heard Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) say, “Verily, the people entered the Religion of Allah in crowds and they will abandon it in crowds.””

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat an-Naşr*.

All praise is due to Allah and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-Masad (111)

The Palm Fibre

سُورَةُ الْمَسَدِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ ﴿١﴾ مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ ﴿٢﴾
سَيَصْلَىٰ نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ ﴿٣﴾ وَأَمْرَاتُهُ حَمَّالَةَ الْحَطَبِ ﴿٤﴾ فِي جِيدِهَا
حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍ ﴿٥﴾

(سورة المسد: ١-٥)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. The power of Abu Lahab will perish, and he will perish.
2. His wealth and gains will not exempt him.
3. He will be plunged in flaming Fire,
4. And his wife, the wood-carrier,
5. Will have upon her neck a halter of palm-fibre.

Bukhari has narrated from Ibn 'Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (Blessings and peace be upon him) went out one day, after descending as-Safâ mountain, and then he called

out: “*Yâ Sabâha!*”¹ The people said, “Who is that?” Then they gathered around him, whereupon, he said, “Do you see? If I inform you that cavalymen are proceeding up the side of this mountain, will you believe me?” They said, “We have never heard you telling a lie.” Then he said, “I am a plain warner to you of a coming severe punishment.” Abu Lahab said, “May you perish! Have you called us here only for this reason?” Then Abu Lahab turned away in disgust.

So *Soorat al-Masad* was revealed in answer to Abu Lahab: The first verse is a supplication against him, while the second is information about him. Abu Lahab was one of the Prophet’s uncles — his name was ‘Abdul ‘Uzzah ibn ‘Abdil Muṭṭalib and his nickname was Abu Lahab, because of his ruddy face. He was a vicious enemy to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and he hated him intensely: he scorned Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) with a bitter contempt and disparaged him and his Religion.

Aḥmad has related on the authority of Rabe‘ah ibn ‘Ibâd (رضي الله عنه) that he saw the Prophet (ﷺ) calling to the people: “O people! Say, ‘*Lâ ilâha illa Allâh*, and you will succeed,” while the people were standing around him, and behind him was a cross-eyed man whose face was bright red, and he had two braids in his hair. He was saying: “He [the Prophet (ﷺ)] is a renegade (from the religion of Quraysh) and a liar!” This man was following him wherever he went, repeating these slanders, so I asked about him... and they said that it was his uncle, Abu Lahab.

﴿The power of Abu Lahab will perish﴾ means that all of his works are in vain, will be frustrated and will come to nothing, ﴿and he will perish﴾ means his destruction and punishment are assured. ﴿His wealth and gains will not exempt him.﴾ It was narrated on the

¹ *Yâ Sabâha*: An Arabic expression used to call for help or to alert the people to danger.

authority of Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) that Abu Lahab said: "If what my brother's son has said is true, then I will ransom myself with my wealth and my children from any punishment on the Day of Resurrection." So Allah, the Exalted revealed the verse: ﴿His wealth and gains will not exempt him. He will be plunged in a flaming Fire﴾. That will be the Hellfire, a Fire of sparks and flames that burn intensely.

﴿And his wife, the wood-carrier﴾: his wife was a member of one of the leading families of Quraysh; her nickname was Umm Jameel and her given name was Arwâ bint Harb ibn Umayyah. She was the sister of Abu Sufiyân and she was a supporter of her husband in his disbelief, his rejection and his obstinacy; and for this reason, she will be with him on the Day of Resurrection, sharing his punishment in the Hellfire. So Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿the wood-carrier﴾ That is, she carries the wood to feed the flames which have been prepared for him.

﴿Will have upon her neck a halter of palm-fibre.﴾ Mujâhid and 'Urwah said that this verse is referring to a twisted rope of fire. Also attributed to Mujâhid along with 'Ikrimah, Al-Ḥasan, Qatâdah, Ath-Thawri and As-Suddi is that ﴿the wood-carrier﴾ means: she who carries tales. Ibn Jareer also preferred this meaning. According to Al-'Awfi, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), 'Atiyah al-Jabali, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk and Ibn Zayd, she (the wife of Abu Lahab) used to place thorns in the path of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Ibn Jareer said that she used to taunt the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) about his poverty, and she used to gather wood and taunt him by that action. Ibn Jareer narrated it thus, without attributing it to anyone. However, the most correct interpretation is the first.

Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib said that she had a necklace of exquisite beauty, and she once said: "I will surely use this to fund our enmity against Muhammad." As a result of this, Allah made for her a

necklace of rope made from burning palm fibres. Ibn Jareer said, on the authority of Ash-Sha‘abi, that the Arabic word *masad* in this verse means fibre. According to ‘Urwah ibn az-Zubayr, it is a chain whose length is seventy cubits.² Ath-Thawri said it means a necklace of fire whose length is seventy cubits. Al-Jawhari said that it is fibre and it is also rope made from fibre or the stem of the palm leaf, or it might be from camel hair or camel leather. Mujâhid said: ﴿Will have upon her neck a halter of palm-fibre﴾ means a cable made of iron — that is, a collar of iron. It is reported on the authority of Asmâ’ bint Abi Bakr: “When the *soorah* ﴿The power of Abu Lahab will perish﴾ was revealed, the one-eyed Umm Jameel bint Harb (the wife of Abu Lahab) came to Allah’s Messenger carrying a stone and wailing:

*Hatefully, we reject,
And his religion we despise,
And his commands we disobey!*”³

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was sitting in the mosque and with him was his friend and Companion, Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) who, when he saw her approaching, said to the Prophet (ﷺ): “O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! She has come here and I am afraid that she should see you.” But the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) replied, “Verily, she will not see me.” And he recited the Qur’an, taking refuge in it, as Allah says:

﴿وَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ جَعَلْنَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ حِجَابًا مَّسْتُورًا﴾
 (سورة الإسراء: ٤٥)

﴿And when you [O Muhammad,] recite the Qur’an, We put between you and those who believe not in the Hereafter an invisible veil.﴾
 (*Qur’an* 17: 45)

² cubit: an ancient measurement of length, equivalent to about 18 inches

³ Narrated by Ibn Abi Hâtim

Umm Jameel came forward until she stood before Abu Bakr, but she could not see the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). She said: “O Abu Bakr! I have been informed that your companion [meaning the Prophet (ﷺ)] is lampooning me (in poetry).” Abu Bakr replied, “No, by the Lord of this House! He has not lampooned you.” So she turned away, saying, “(The people of) Quraysh know that I am the daughter of their leader.” (Meaning, ‘how dare you make fun of me, when I am one of the noble women of Quraysh?’) Scholars have said that this *soorah* is a clear miracle and an obvious proof of Muhammad’s Prophethood, since it states quite categorically that Abu Lahab and his wife will be condemned to the Hellfire, that they would die as disbelievers, neither of them having embraced Islam either inwardly or outwardly; and so it was — both of them died as disbelievers, and so it can be said that this *soorah* is one of the strongest proofs of Muhammad’s Prophethood (ﷺ).

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorah al-Masad*.

All praise is due to Allah, and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-Ikhlâs (112)

The Purity

سُورَةُ الْإِخْلَاصِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ﴿٢﴾ لَمْ يَكِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ﴿٣﴾
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ﴿٤﴾﴾

(سورة الإخلاص: ١-٤)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Say: He is Allah, the One,
2. Allah, the eternally Besought of all!
3. He does not beget, nor was begotten,
4. And there is none comparable to Him.

'Ikrimah said that when the Jews said: "We worship 'Uzayr, the son of Allah," and the Christians said, "We worship 'Eesâ, the son of Allah," and the Magians said, "We worship the sun and the moon," and the polytheists said: "We worship idols," Allah revealed to His Messenger (ﷺ), ﴿Say: He is Allah, the One﴾. That is, He is the One and Only, without equal, without any minister or partner, nor any like or parallel, and this description cannot be applied to anyone

save Allah, the Almighty, the All-powerful, because He is Perfect in all His Attributes and all His Actions.

«Allah, the eternally Besought of all!» 'Ikrimah said, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), that it means He is the One to Whom all creation turns to fulfill their needs and answer their prayers. 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah said, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs: “It means that Allah is the Master, Who is Perfect, the All-knowing, Whose Knowledge is complete, the Wise, Whose Wisdom is complete. He it is Who is Complete in all manner of Nobility and Perfection; and He is Allah, all praise be to Him Whose Attributes it is not fitting to ascribe to any other. He has no like and no equal, all praise be to Allah, the One and Only, the Irresistible.” Al-A'mash said, on the authority of Abu Wâ'il: “(The Arabic word) *aş-Şamad* (in this verse) means the Master Whose Perfection is complete.” This was also narrated by 'Âsim, on the authority of Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه). Mâlik said, on the authority of Zayd ibn Aslam: “«*Aş-Şamad*» is the Master.” Al-Ḥasan and Qafâdah said that it means He is the Ever-lasting after His creation. Rabee' ibn Anas said: “He is the One Who does not beget, nor was He begotten, as if He placed the following verse as a tafseer of «*Aş-Şamad*».” This is a good explanation. Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه), Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib, Mujâhid, 'Abdullâh ibn Buraydah, 'Ikrimah, Sa'eed ibn Jubayr, 'Aṭâ' ibn Abi Rabâh and several others said that «*Aş-Şamad*» is the One Who has no stomach. Ash-Sha'abi said: “He is the One Who does not (need to) eat or drink.” 'Abdullâh ibn Buraydah said: “«*Aş-Şamad*» is a blinding light.” Abul Qâsim aṭ-Ṭabarâni mentioned all of the above explanations and then he said: “All of them are correct as they are all the Attributes of Allah, the Almighty, the All-powerful — it is He to Whom all those in need turn and He is the One Whose Perfection is complete, and He is the Ever-lasting, Who has no stomach, and He is the One Who remains after His creation (because He does not die). Al-Bayhaqi also said something like this.

«He does not beget, nor was begotten, and there is none comparable to Him.» It means He has no son, father or wife. Mujâhid said: «And there is none comparable to Him» means He has no (female) companion, and that is like His words in *Soorat al-An'âm*:

﴿بَدِيعُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَتَىٰ يَكُونُ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُن لَّهُ صَاحِبَةٌ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠١﴾﴾
(سورة الأنعام: ١٠١)

«He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth, how can He have children when He has no wife? He created all things and He is the Knower of all things.»
(*Qur'an* 6: 101)

That is, He is the Owner and the Creator of everything and so how can it be said that He has an equal or partner or a relative who resembles Him, the Exalted, Most Glorified, Most Elevated?

Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا ﴿٨٨﴾ لَقَدْ جِئْتُمْ شَيْئًا إِذَا ﴿٨٩﴾ تَكَادُ السَّمَوَاتُ يَفْطَرْنَ مِنْهُ وَتَنْشُقُ الْأَرْضُ وَتَخِرُّ الْجِبَالُ هَدًّا ﴿٩٠﴾ أَنْ دَعَوْا لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدًا ﴿٩١﴾ وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِلرَّحْمَنِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا ﴿٩٢﴾ إِنْ كُلُّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا آتِي الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدًا ﴿٩٣﴾ لَقَدْ أَحْصَاهُمْ وَعَدَّهُمْ عَدًّا ﴿٩٤﴾ وَكُلَّهُمْ آتِيهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَرْدًا ﴿٩٥﴾﴾
(سورة مريم: ٨٨-٩٥)

«And they say: The Most Beneficent has begotten a son. Indeed you have brought forth a monstrous thing, whereby the heavens are torn and the earth split asunder and the mountains fall in ruins, that you ascribe a son to the Most Beneficent, when it is not befitting for [the Majesty of] the Beneficent that he should beget a son. There is none in the heavens and the earth but comes unto the Most Beneficent as a slave. Verily He knows them and counts them with a full counting.

And each one of them will come to Him on the Day of Resurrection alone [without any helper, protector or defender]. ﴿Qur'an 19: 88-95﴾

And Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا سُبْحٰنَهُۥٓ بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ لَا يَسْقُونَهُۥٓ
بِالْقَوْلِ وَهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾

(سورة الأنبياء: ٢٦-٢٧)

﴿And they say: The Most Beneficent has begotten a son. Glory be to Him! They [those whom they call children of Allah] are but honoured slaves, they do not speak until He has spoken and they act on His Command.﴾ (Qur'an 21: 26-27)

Bukhari reports that: “No one can bear the punishment from Allah (given to those who) attribute a son to Allah, when it is He Who succours them and cures them.” And on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه): “Allah, the Almighty, the All-powerful says: “The son of Adam has disbelieved in Me and it is not his right to do so, and he has blasphemed against Me and it is not his right to do so. As for his disbelief in Me, it is by His words, ‘Allah will not resurrect me as He has created me before.’ — And it is not more difficult for Me to resurrect him than to create him the first time; as for his blasphemy, it is in his saying that I have begotten a son, while I am the One and Only, *aş-Şamad*, I do not give birth, nor was I begotten, and there is none comparable to Me.”

Soorat al-Ikhlâs —

The Reason for its Revelation and its Excellence

It is reported on the authority of Ubayy ibn Ka'b (رضي الله عنه) that the polytheists said to the Prophet (ﷺ): «“O Muhammad! Tell us the genealogy of Allah!” — And so Allah revealed: ﴿Say: He is Allah, One, Allah is *aş-Şamad*, He begets not, nor was He begotten, and

there is none comparable to Him.﴾”» (Narrated by Imam Aḥmad) At-Tirmidhi also reported this, as did Ibn Jareer, with the addition: “﴿Aṣ-Ṣamad﴾ — Who begets not, nor was He begotten, because everything begotten must die and everything which must die must leave behind that which is inherited, and Allah, the Almighty, the All-powerful does not die and he does not leave any inheritance. ﴿And there is none comparable to Him.﴾ He has no like and no equal and none resembles Him.” Ibn Abi Ḥâtim also reported this. Ibn Jareer also narrates, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «“For everything there is a relationship and the relationship of Allah (to His slaves) is His words, ﴿Say: He is Allah, the One, Allah is aṣ-Ṣamad...﴾ — and Allah has no stomach.”» Bukhari reports, on the authority of ‘Â’ishah (رضي الله عنها) that, «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) sent a man in charge of a company of soldiers and when he led them in prayer, he would end each *soorah* with ﴿Say: He is Allah, the One...﴾; and so when they returned, they mentioned this to the Prophet (ﷺ) and he said: “Ask him why he does this.” So they asked him and he replied, “Because it is a description of the Most Beneficent, and I love to recite it.” The Prophet (ﷺ) when he heard this, said: “Tell him that Allah, the Exalted loves him (also).”» This how Bukhari narrated it in the chapter on Islamic Monotheism.

It has also been narrated by Muslim and An-Nasâ’i. Bukhari mentions in the chapter on prayer, on the authority of Anas (رضي الله عنه), that, «A man from the Anṣâr used to lead them in prayer in Qubâ’ Mosque and whenever he recited a *soorah*, he would begin with *Soorah al-Ikhlâs* and then he would recite another *soorah* with it and he would do this in every *rak’ah* of the prayer and so his companions spoke to him, saying: “Whenever you recite, you begin with this *soorah* and then you are not content with this, but you insist on reciting another *soorah* — you must either read only this *soorah* or leave it and recite another.” He replied, “I will not leave it; if you

wish me to lead you in prayer, I will do so in this way and if you dislike it, I will not lead you in prayer.” As they believed him to be one of the best of them, they disliked that another should lead them in prayer and so when the Prophet (ﷺ) came to them, they informed him of this, and he said: “O So-and-so! What prevents you from meeting the wishes of your companions, and what makes you insist on reciting this *soorah* in every unit of prayer?” He replied, “I love it.” He said, “Your love for it has placed you in Paradise.”» Bukhari related it in this manner and Tirmidhi has also narrated it in his collection of hadith. Tirmidhi has also reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was told by a man: “I love this *soorah*: ﴿Say: He is Allah, the One, Allah, the eternally Besought of all...﴾.” The Prophet replied, “Your love for it has placed you in Paradise.” — But this is narrated in a *mu'allaq* form¹. Aḥmad narrated it in a *muttasil* form².

Bukhari says, on the authority of Abu Sa'eed: «“A man heard another man reciting, ﴿Say: He is Allah, the One...﴾ and he kept repeating it; and so the man went to the Prophet (ﷺ) and mentioned this to him, as if he considered it too little;” but the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, it is equivalent to one third of the Qur'an.”» Imam Aḥmad reports from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri that, «Qatādah ibn Nu'mân (رضي الله عنه) spent the night in reciting, ﴿Say: He is Allah, One...﴾ then he mentioned this to the Prophet (ﷺ) who said to him, “By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, it is equivalent to one half of the Qur'an — or one third.”» 'Abdullâh ibn Aḥmad³ reports, on the authority of Habeeb (رضي الله عنه): «“We were suffering from thirst and misfortune and we were waiting for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) to

¹ *mu'allaq*: a chain of narrators which does not connect to the Prophet (bpuh)

² *muttasil*: a chain of narrators connecting to the Prophet (bpuh)

³ Abu 'Abdir-Raḥmân 'Abdullâh ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal ash-Shaybâni: The son of Imam Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, a trustworthy reporter of hadiths, according to Ibn Ḥajar, he died in the year 90 H., when he was over seventy years of age.

lead us in prayer, when he came out and took me by the hand and said, ‘Say!’ I was silent, so he repeated, ‘Say!’ So I asked, ‘What shall I say?’ He said, ‘Say: He is Allah, the One, and read the *mu’awwidhatayn* in the morning and in the evening three times — it will be sufficient for you: Every day, two times.’”» (Narrated by Abu Dawood, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasâ’i)

At-Tirmidhi narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: «“If someone wants to sleep and lies down on his right side, then recites, ﴿Say: He is Allah, the One...﴾ one hundred times, on the Day of Resurrection, his Lord will say to him, ‘O My slave! Enter Paradise by your right side.’”»

An-Nasâ’i narrates that, «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) entered the mosque and heard a man reciting, “O Allah! I ask You as one who testifies that You are One, that You are *aş-Şamad*, Who does not beget, nor was He begotten.” When he heard this, he said, “By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, he has asked Him by His greatest Name, which, if He was asked by it, He gives, and if He was supplicated by it, He answers.” ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Âmir (رضي الله عنه) reports that: «“...the Prophet (ﷺ) whenever he went to bed, would put his hands together and then blow into them, then recite, ﴿Say: He is Allah, the One...﴾ and the *mu’awwidhatayn*, and he said, ‘O ‘Uqbah! Don’t forget them, and don’t sleep at night until you have recited them.’”» (Narrated by Tirmidhi)

Bukhari relates, on the authority of ‘Â’ishah (رضي الله عنها) that: «“... the Prophet (ﷺ) whenever he went to bed, would put his hands together and then blow into them, then recite into them, ﴿Say: He is Allah, the One...﴾ and the *mu’awwidhatayn*, then wipe over as much of his body as he could with them, beginning with the head and face and then the remainder of the body, and he would do this three times.”»

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorah al-Ikhlâs*.

All praise is due to Allah, and from Him proceeds all grace.

Soorat al-Falaq (113)

Daybreak

سُورَةُ الْفَلَقِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ﴿١﴾ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ ﴿٢﴾ وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ ﴿٣﴾ وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ ﴿٤﴾ وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ ﴿٥﴾﴾

(سورة الفلق: ١-٥)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of daybreak
2. From the evil of what He has created;
3. From the evil of the darkness when it is intense,
4. And from the evil of malignant witchcraft,
5. And from the evil of the envier when he envies.

Ibn Abi Hâtim relates that Jâbir said that the word *(al-falaq)* in the first verse means the morning, and Al-'Awfi said that Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) also concurred with this. It is narrated also that several others

said this, including Mujâhid, Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr, Al-Ḥasan, Qatâdah, Mâlik and Zayd ibn Aslam. According to Ibn Jareer, it is like the saying of Allah in *Soorah al-An‘âm*:

(سورة الأنعام: ٩٦)

﴿فَالِقُ الْإِصْبَاحِ ...﴾

﴿[He is] the Cleaver of the daybreak...﴾

(*Qur'an* 6: 96)

‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥah said that the verse means all creation, in that Allah (ﷻ) commands the Prophet (ﷺ) to seek refuge in Him from all created things. This was also said by Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk. Ka‘b al-Aḥbâr said that the Arabic word *falaq* used in the verse refers to an abode in the Hellfire which is so terrible that when it opens up, the people of the Hellfire cry out in anguish because of its unbearable heat. Ibn Abi Ḥâtim also narrated this, then he said, on the authority of Zayd ibn ‘Ali, who narrated from his parents: “It is a pit in the depths of the Hellfire, over which there is a cover; when it is removed, a fire escapes from it which is so terribly hot that the Fire cries out because of the intense heat which emanates from that pit.” This has also been narrated from ‘Amr ibn ‘Anbasah, Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), As-Suddi and others.

Ibn Jareer says that it was narrated from Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that he said, on the authority of the Prophet (ﷺ): «“*Al-Falaq* is a covered pit in the depths of the Hellfire.”» However, it is not correct to attribute it to the Prophet (ﷺ). Abu ‘Abdir-Raḥmân al-Habli said it is one of the names of the Hellfire. Ibn Jareer states that the most correct tafseer is the first — that it means the daybreak, and this was the opinion of Bukhari also.

﴿From the evil of what He has created﴾: that is, from the evil of all His creatures. According to Thâbit ibn al-Bunâni and Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri, it means from the evil of Satan and all his minions, and from the Hellfire.

﴿And from the evil of the darkness when it is intense﴾: Mujâhid says it means the setting of the sun — this was narrated from him by Bukhari and it was also narrated from Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه), Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk, Al-Ḥasan and others. Qatâdah said that it means the night as it brings the darkness. Az-Zuhri said it means the sun as it sets. It is attributed to Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that he said the Arabic word *ghâsiq* used in the verse means the heavenly body. Ibn Zayd said that the word *ghâsiq* meant a falling star¹ to the pagan Arabs and they used to believe that it caused the spread of plague and other diseases. Ibn Jareer mentions a narration attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “...it is the falling star.” But this is not an authentic narration attributable to the Prophet (ﷺ). It was also said by Ibn Jareer and others to refer to the moon. The main evidence for this saying is a narration attributed to ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) that, «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) took her by the hand and showed her the moon as it was rising and said to her, “Seek protection with Allah from this *ghâsiq* when it darkens.”» This was narrated by Tirmidhi and Nasâ’i in the chapters of tafseer in their collections of hadith. The supporters of the first saying (that it refers to the darkness of the night) say that there is no contradiction here, since the moon is one of the signs of the night; likewise the stars only shine forth at night, and this is in line with what we have already said, and Allah knows best.

﴿And from the evil of malignant witchcraft﴾²: Mujâhid, ‘Ikrimah, Al-Ḥasan, Qatâdah and Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥâk said that it means the sorcerers, and Mujâhid said: “...when they make their incantations and blow on the knots.” Ibn Jareer quoted Ibn Tâwoos³ as saying, on

¹ That is, a meteorite.

² The literal translation of this verse is: ‘And from the evil of blowers upon knots’.

³ Abu Muhammad ‘Abdullâh ibn Tâwoos ibn Kaysân al-Yamâni: According to Ibn Ḥajar, he was a reliable reporter of hadiths and a pious, religious man. He died in the year 32 H.

the authority of his father: “There is nothing closer to *shirk* than those incantations used a protection from snakes and insanity (and so forth).” In another hadith, «Jibreel (ﷺ) said to Messenger of Allah (ﷺ): “Are you complaining of anything, O Muhammad?” He replied, “Yes.” Then Jibreel (ﷺ) said, “In the name of Allah, I incant for you (an incantation of protection from) every illness which might affect you, from the envious person and from the evil eye; may Allah cure you.”» It is quite possible that this occurred at the time when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had been bewitched, then Allah restored him to health and repelled the machinations of the envious Jewish sorcerers so that it bewitched their minds and He exposed their wicked plots. In spite of this, the Prophet (ﷺ) did not reproach the sorcerer, rather, Allah was sufficient for him, and He restored him to health and cured him.

Imam Ahmad on the authority of Zayd ibn Arqam, that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was bewitched by a Jew and that he suffered from this for a few days and then Jibreel came to him and informed him that a man from among the Jews had bewitched him and made an incantation (over some hair in a comb) which was in a certain well and told him that he should send someone to find it; this he did and it was found and brought to him and the spell was broken and then the Prophet (ﷺ) stood up as though he had been freed from shackles, but he never mentioned what he knew to the Jew, even when he met him face to face, until the day he died. This was also narrated by An-Nasâ’i. Bukhari has reported that ‘Â’ishah (رضي الله عنها) said: «The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was bewitched and he said to me, “O ‘Â’ishah! Do you know that Allah has answered my question? Two men came to me and one of them sat at my head, while the other sat at my feet; and the one at my head said to the other, ‘What is wrong with this man?’ He (the other) replied, ‘He is bewitched.’ ‘Who has bewitched him?’ asked the first. The second replied, ‘Lubayd ibn

A'şam, a man from the tribe of Bani Zurayq, who is an agent of the Jews, and one of the *munâfiqoon*.⁴ 'And in what (is the spell contained)?' asked the former. 'It is in a comb,' he answered. 'Where?' he was asked. 'In the bark of a date palm under a rock, in a well called Zarwân.' She (Ā'ishah) said: So he (Muhammad) went to the well and removed the spell and said, "This is the well that I was shown and it is as if its water had been infused with henna and its palm trees were like the heads of devils." (Said Ā'ishah,) Then, he said he removed it and I said, "Will you not make this public?" He replied, "As for Allah, He cured me and I hate to spread (the news of) wickedness to any person."»

Imam Aḥmad has narrated something similar to this as has Imam Muslim. In addition, Ath-Tha'labi narrated the following in his tafseer: Ibn 'Abbâs and Ā'ishah (may Allah be pleased with them) said: «A Jewish boy used to serve the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) the Jews kept on pressuring him until he took some of the Prophet's hair from his comb and a few teeth from it and gave them to the Jews, who used them to cast a spell upon him and the one who undertook the task was called Ibn A'şam, after which he concealed it in a well belonging to Bani Zurayq, called Zarwân. Then the Prophet (ﷺ) became ill and his hair fell out, and he remained in this state for about six months (in a confused state of mind), thinking that he had approached women when he had not, and he became emaciated and did not know what was affecting him. Then, when he was asleep, two angels came to him and one sat at his head, while the other sat at his feet and the latter said: "What is wrong with this man?" The former replied, "He is bewitched." The second asked, "And what does that mean?" It means (he is the victim of) sorcery." He asked, "And who has done this to him?" "Lubayd ibn al-A'şam, the Jew," replied the

⁴ *Munâfiqoon*: Hypocrites, those of the people of Madinah who secretly opposed the Prophet (bpuh), but outwardly affected to have embraced Islam.

first. “And by what has he been bewitched?” asked the second. “By a comb and some hair from it,” “And where is it?” asked the former. “In a piece of bark from a date palm under a stepping-stone⁵ at the bottom of the well of Zarwân.” Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) listened to this in a state of fright and then he said to his wife: “O ‘Â’ishah! Do you know that Allah has informed me what is wrong with me?” Then he sent ‘Ali, Zubayr and ‘Ammâr ibn Yâsir (may Allah be pleased with them all) and they drained the well, whose water was as if it had been infused with henna: then they lifted up the stone and found the piece of bark and in it were some hairs (from a comb) and some comb teeth and it was stitched with twelve stitches of thread. Then, it is said, Allah revealed the two chapters (*al-Falaq* and *an-Nâs*). And after each verse the Prophet (ﷺ) recited, a stitch was removed from it; and the Prophet (ﷺ) felt some relief. Then, when the last stitch was removed, he stood up as though he had been released from shackles, and Jibreel (ﷺ) began to recite: “In name of Allah, I incant for you (an incantation of protection) from everything which might hurt you, including the one who envies and the evil eye; may Allah cure you.” Then it was said to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), “Shall we not kill this disgusting person?” But he replied: “As for me, Allah has cured me and I hate to spread (stories of) wickedness amongst the people.”» Thus did Ath-Tha’labi narrate it without a chain of narrators; part of it is unusual, part of it is unacceptable and some of it is supported by other narrations, and Allah knows best.

This is the end of the tafseer of *Soorat al-Falaq*.

All praise is due to Allah, and from Him proceeds all grace.

⁵ a kind of stone at the bottom of a well which protrudes from the wall of the well, enabling the person who descends into the well to stand on it

Soorat an-Nâs (114)

Humankind

سُورَةُ النَّاسِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ﴿١﴾ مَلِكِ النَّاسِ ﴿٢﴾ إِلَهِ النَّاسِ ﴿٣﴾ مِنْ
شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ ﴿٤﴾ الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ ﴿٥﴾
مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ ﴿٦﴾﴾

(سورة الناس: ١-٦)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

1. Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of humankind,
2. The King of humankind,
3. The [true] Deity of humankind,
4. From the evil of the sneaking whisperer,
5. Who whispers into the hearts of people,
6. From the jinn and humankind.

The first three verses contain mention of three of the Attributes of Allah: His Lordship, His Kingship or Ownership and His Deity (meaning that He Alone must be worshipped), for He is the Lord of

everything, the King or Owner of everything; everything was created to worship Him; and all are His possessions and His slaves. He orders us to seek refuge in Him using these unique Attributes from the evil of Satan, who whispers in our ears; for no person has been created without a companion from the jinn who is always beside him, seeking to make the evil appear attractive to him and he spares no effort in his lies and fantasies; and protection from him is with Allah.

In an authentic narration, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) informed us: «There is none of you who has not been allocated a companion (from the jinn).» Bukhari and Muslim report on the authority of Anas, the story of Safiyyah's visit to the Prophet (ﷺ): «He was in seclusion, and he left the mosque in order to escort her to her house, when he met two men from the Anṣâr, and when they saw the Prophet (ﷺ) they hurried away, so the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) called to them, "She is Safiyyah, the daughter of Huyai." They said, "Glory be to Allah, O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)!" He said, "Surely, Satan walks with a person as the blood flows, and I feared that he might whisper something (or some evil) in your hearts." The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "Don't say, 'Perish Satan!' because when you do, Satan becomes larger and says, 'By my power I have defeated him!' But if you say, '*Bismillâh!*' — Satan becomes smaller and smaller until he is like a fly."» This was narrated only by Aḥmad but with a strong chain.

In this hadith is proof that when the heart remembers Allah, it makes Satan smaller, while if Allah is not mentioned, Satan overcomes him and he becomes stronger.

﴿Who whispers into the hearts of people﴾: That is, the devils from amongst the jinn and humankind as in the Words of Him, the Exalted:

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيْطَانِ الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ ... ﴿١١٢﴾﴾

(سورة الأنعام: ١١٢)

﴿And likewise We created for every Prophet an enemy from amongst the devils of humankind and the jinn...﴾ (Qur'an 6: 112)

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) also said: «O Abu Dharr! Seek refuge from the devils of humankind and the jinn.» (Narrated by An-Nasâ'i)

This is the end of the tafseer, all praise is due to Allah,
and from Him proceeds all grace.

Glory be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

Glossary of Islamic terms

<i>ahl al-bayt</i>	أهل البيت	members of the Prophet's family
<i>Anṣâr</i>	أنصار	'helpers', 'supporters': the Muslim citizens of Madinah who gave refuge to the Prophet (ﷺ) and the other Muslim emigrants from Makkah
<i>aṣr</i>	عصر	mid-afternoon; the obligatory prayer at that time
<i>Bayt al-Maqdis</i>	بيت المقدس	Jerusalem
<i>dhuhr</i>	ظهر	afternoon; the obligatory prayer at that time
<i>Eid ('eed)</i>	عيد	festival; the two celebrations: one at the end of Ramadan and the other at the culmination of the Hajj
<i>fajr</i>	الفجر	dawn; the obligatory prayer at that time
<i>fiqh</i>	فقه	Islamic jurisprudence; understanding or interpreting Islamic law
<i>fiṭrah</i>	فطرة	the natural inclination (of humans) instilled by Allah
<i>ghareeb</i>	غريب	lit. 'strange' or 'unusual': a category of hadith in which at some points in its chain there is only one narrator
<i>ghusl</i>	غسل	ritual shower necessary after a major impurity, e.g., after sexual intercourse or at the end of the menstrual period

<i>Hadith (ḥadeeth)</i>	حديث	the collected sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that with the Qur'an form the basis of Islamic law
<i>hadith (ḥadeeth)</i>	حديث	a saying or action of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that was remembered and recorded by his Companions and followers
<i>ḥāfidh</i>	الحافظ	one who has memorized (the Qur'an)
<i>ḥameem</i>	حميم	a boiling, scalding drink given to the inhabitants of Hell
<i>Imam</i>	إمام	one who leads the communal prayers; one of the founders of the schools of Islamic thought
<i>ḥasan</i>	حسن	a grade of hadith: acceptable
<i>ghareeb</i>	حسن غريب	a category of hadith that is sound, although at some points in its chain there is only one narrator
<i>ḥayâ</i>	الحياء	modesty
<i>ḥayât</i>	الحياة	life
<i>ḥayawân</i>	الحيوان	living things
<i>Hijâz</i>	الحجاز	the western region of Saudi Arabia in which Makkah and Madinah are located
<i>Hijrah</i>	هجرة	migration: <i>esp.</i> the migration from Makkah to Madinah by Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and his Companions that marks the start of the Islamic calendar
<i>ḥoor al-'ein</i>	حور العين	plural of <i>ḥawra'</i> (gazelle-like) + <i>'ein</i> (eye); houris, the buxom women with beautiful eyes, promised to the

		believers in Paradise
<i>ihrâm</i>	إحرام	the state of consecration for Hajj or 'umrah; the special clothing worn by the pilgrim in such a state
<i>'ishâ'</i>	عشاء	evening; the obligatory prayer at that time
<i>isrâ' and mi'râj</i>	الإسراء والمعراج	the night journey of the Prophet (ﷺ) from Makkah to Jerusalem and then up to visit heaven
<i>i'tikâf</i>	إعتكاف	seclusion in the mosque solely for the purpose of worship
<i>jihad (jihâd)</i>	جهاد	struggle or striving (in Allah's cause)
<i>janâbah</i>	جنابة	a state of impurity due to sexual activity or emission
<i>Jibreel</i>	جبريل	the Arabic name for Gabriel (pbuh), the archangel who transmitted the verses of the Qur'an and other communication from Allah to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)
<i>jinn</i>	جن	non-human, rational beings created by Allah, often referred to as 'demons'
<i>Juz' 'Amma</i>	جزء عمّ	the thirtieth and last section of the Qur'an; it takes its name from the first word in the first chapter (<i>Soorat an-Naba</i>) of this section
<i>Kaaba (Ka'bah)</i>	الكلعبة	the House of Allah in Makkah, originally built by Prophets Ibrâheem and Ismâ'eel
<i>khaleel</i>	خليل	a very close friend
<i>kufr</i>	الكفر	disbelief in Allah and/or what He has revealed

<i>Lâ ilâha illa Allâh</i>	لا إله إلا الله	there is none worthy of worship other than Allah
<i>al-Lawh al-Mahfoodh</i>	اللوح المحفوظ	the Preserved Tablet in Heaven on which Allah's words and decrees are written
<i>Laylat al-Qadr</i>	ليلة القدر	the 'Night of Destiny' or 'Night of Power' in which the Qur'an was first revealed, and in commemoration of which Muslims are supposed to spend some nights of the month of Ramadan in prayer and supplication, seeking Allah's forgiveness
<i>maghrib</i>	مغرب	sunset; the obligatory prayer at that time
<i>Al-Maqâm al-Mahmood</i>	المقام المحمود	the Station of Praise and Glory in Paradise that Muslims pray will be granted to Prophet Muhammad (s)
<i>maqâm Ibrâheem</i>	مقام إبراهيم	the Station of Abraham (Ibrâheem) next to the Ka'bah
<i>marfoo'</i>	مرفوع	lit. 'elevated': a category of hadith that is traceable up to the Prophet (ﷺ) where the Companion narrates, 'The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said...'
<i>matrook</i>	متروك	lit. 'abandoned': a term used by Hadith scholars to describe someone considered to be an unreliable narrator
<i>mawqoof</i>	موقوف	lit. 'restricted': a category of hadith that is actually not concerning a saying or action of the Prophet (ﷺ), but rather concerns sayings or actions of the Companions

<i>mu'allaq</i>	معلق	a category of hadith: a narration whose chain is not connected to the Prophet
<i>al-mu'awwidhatayn</i>	المعوذتين	the last two chapters in the Qur'an, <i>Soorat al-Falaq</i> and <i>Soorat an-Nâs</i> , recited as a protection against evil
<i>muḍṭarib</i>	مضطرب	a category of hadith in which the different narrations of the same hadith differ, either in the text or the chain, without the possibility of preferring one narration to the others, simply because they are all equal in their authenticity and in the fact that they are related by trustworthy narrators
<i>mufti</i>	مفتي	a learned person qualified to issue a derived ruling from revealed sources
<i>mujaddid</i>	مجدد	revivalist, one who renews
<i>munâfiqoon</i>	المنافقون	hypocrites; those people of Madinah who outwardly professed Islam, but secretly opposed the Prophet (ﷺ)
<i>munkar</i>	منكر	a category of hadith which is related by only one narrator, who is neither upright nor precise; technically, it is a weak hadith that contradicts an authentic hadith
<i>mursal</i>	مرسل	a category of hadith: a narration that a tâbi'ee ascribes to the Prophet (ﷺ) without mentioning the Companion that he took it from
<i>muttaṣil</i>	متصل	lit. 'connected': a category of hadith: a narration whose chain is connected all the way to the Prophet (ﷺ)

<i>niyyah</i>	نية	intention: a prerequisite for the acceptance of one's deeds is that they be purely for the sake of Allah
<i>qadr</i>	القدر	divine predestination; destiny; power; exact measure
<i>qibla (qiblah)</i>	القبلة	the bearing from the Kaaba to any point on Earth; the direction that all Muslims must face in prayer
<i>salaf</i>	السلف	the pious predecessors: the earliest generations of the righteous followers of Islam
<i>seerah</i>	سيرة	biography
<i>Ash-Shâm</i>	الشام	the area of land covering present-day Syria, Jordan, Palestine and Lebanon
<i>shirk</i>	الشرك	associating partners with Allah
<i>Sunnah</i>	سنة	the practice and collected sayings of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that together with the Qur'an forms the basis of Islamic law
<i>tâbi'ee (pl. tâbi'oon)</i>	تابعي	a person who had met one or more of the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ)
<i>tadlees</i>	تدليس	intentionally or unintentionally covering up a weakness in the chain of a hadith
<i>tafseer (pl. tafâseer)</i>	تفسير	commentary or explanation of the meaning of the Qur'an
<i>takbeer</i>	تكبير	the act of saying <i>Allâhu akbar</i>
<i>tashreeq</i>	التشريق	the three holy days following the 10 th of Dhul Hijjah, part of Eid al-Aḍḥa
<i>tasleem(ah)</i>	تسليم	the act of saying <i>as-salâmu 'alaykum wa rahmat Allâh</i> to end the prayer

<i>ṭawâf</i>	طواف	circumambulation of the Ka‘bah
<i>ta‘weel</i>	تأويل	interpretation; altering the definition of some concept in order to suit one’s own purpose
<i>Umm al-Qurâ</i>	أم القرى	the centre of settlements in and around Makkah
<i>uṣool al-fiqh</i>	أصول الفقه	principles of Islamic jurisprudence
<i>Ummah</i>	أمة	community or nation: <i>usu.</i> used to refer to the entire global community of Muslims
‘Uthmâni version	النقل العثماني	the version of the Qur’an that the Caliph ‘Uthmân ibn ‘Affân (رضي الله عنه) ordered sent to every corner of the Islamic state
‘Uzayr	عزير	the Prophet Ezra (عليه السلام)
<i>witr</i>	وتر	lit. an odd number: a single unit of superogatory prayer, to be prayed any time after the evening (<i>‘ishâ</i>) prayer and before the call for the dawn prayer
<i>zakât (zakâh or zakât)</i>	زكاة	obligatory charity: an ‘alms tax’ on wealth payable by Muslims and to be distributed to other Muslims who qualify as recipients
<i>zakât al-fiṭr</i>	زكاة الفطر	charity in the form of food for the poor, paid at the end of the month of Ramadan
<i>Zamzam</i>	زمزم	the blessed spring of water that Allah caused to gush out at baby Ismâ‘eel’s feet; located near the Ka‘bah
<i>Zaaqoom</i>	الزقوم	a terrifying tree that grows in Hell; its fruit are eaten by the inhabitants of Hell, and it boils in their stomachs