

JEWELS OF THE QUR'AN

*Gems of Guidance from
the Thirty Juz'*

Volume II – Pathways of Divine Wisdom
(Juz' 16 – 30)



Dr. Mamdouh M Salama

Jewels of the Quran

Gems of Guidance from the 30 Juz

Volume 2- Pathways of Divine Wisdom (Juz 16-30)

Jewels from the Second Fifteen Juz presents ten carefully selected insights from each Juz, guiding readers from the ending of Surat Al-Kahf to Surat Al-Nas through the Qur'an's enduring themes of guidance, character, and divine wisdom.

This volume illuminates the moral architecture of the Qur'an: its call to honor, humility, reliance on Allah, and clarity of purpose, drawn from the very words of the final divine message.

Accessible and deeply reflective, it invites readers to experience the Qur'an as a living guide: one that continues to shape hearts, homes, and societies across every generation.

The journey begins here, with jewels that illuminate the path of faith.

Table of Contents

About this Volume	7
Preface.....	8
Introduction: The Quran — A Treasure of Divine Jewels	9
Jewels from the Sixteenth Juz: Guidance, Wisdom and Strength	11
1. Dhul-Qarnayn: Identity Analysis	11
Dhul-Qarnayn: Identity Analysis Based on Quranic Data	13
2. Ya'jūj & Ma'jūj in the Quran:.....	17
3. Importance of Physical and Non-Physical Powers	22
4. Humility Despite Great Success.....	23
5. The Blessing of Being Loved.....	23
6. Emotional Strength: Man and Woman	25
7. Allah's Revelation is Intended for Ease	26
8. Success in the Hereafter in One Sentence	27
9. Breaking Unity Cannot be Treated Easily	28
10. Perseverance	29
Jewels from the Seventeenth Juz: Reflections on Trials, Trust, and Divine Support.....	31
1. Time is Running Out Soon	31
2. Validate Knowledge Through Expertise and Sound Reason.....	32
3. Confirmation of Intelligent Creations Beyond Earth.....	33
4. The Mystery of the Universe's Creation	34
5. Revelation and Civilizational Development	37
6. Guaranteed Immediate Fulfillment of Certain Dua	39
7. Beware of the Danger of Conditional Faith	40
8. You Fulfill the Command and Allah Delivers the Results	42
9. The Fundamental Rule for Securing Divine Support	43
10. Recognizing Allah Through the Simplest Sign of Creation.....	44
Jewels from the Eighteenth Juz: Divine Light, Human Responsibility, and Social Order	46
1. Rank Your Character Against that of the Successful Believers.....	46
2. Human Life Supply: Water Is Under Allah's Absolute Control	48
3. Egypt's Unique Position in the Quranic Narrative.....	49
4. Every Test Is Measured to One's Capacity	50
5. The Supremacy of Divine Command in Establishing Moral Order	50
6. Proper Protocol of visiting Peoples' homes.....	52
7. Guidelines for Modesty in Women's Dress	53
8. The Masjid as a Source and Projector of Divine Light.....	54
9. The Conditional Divine Promise	55
10. The Nature of Messengers.....	57
Jewels from the Nineteenth Juz: Truth, Integrity, and the Architecture of Divine Guidance.....	59
1. The Slow and Thematic Study of the Quran	59
2. The Best Tafseer of the Quran is the Divine One.....	61
3. Shadow	62
4. Rank Yourself Against the Righteous Slaves of Allah	62
5. The Singularity of the Righteous and the Messengers	64

6.	The Divine Support and the Role of the Magicians	65
7.	Bani Israel After the Drowning of Pharaoh	66
8.	The People of Ad: A Quran-Based Hypothesis	68
9.	Why Shuayb Is Not Called “Their Brother”	69
10.	Blame Yourself first Before Accusing Others	71
Jewels from the Twentieth Juz: Faith, Trial, and Human Destiny		73
1.	The Rise of the Beast: A major Pre-Hour Sign.....	73
2.	The Mountains: Allah’s Perfect Design	75
3.	Beware of Personal Exaltation and Mischief	76
4.	Brevity in Conveying Multiple Layers of Meaning.....	77
5.	Even Pharaoh Was Bound by Law.....	78
6.	The Diverse Social Position of Bani Israel in Egypt.....	79
7.	The Divine Law: Belief Must be Demonstrated	80
8.	Divine Invitation to Exploration	82
9.	Reliance on Others is Like Reliance on a Spider’s Web	83
10.	The Moral Influence of Prayers	84
Jewels from the Twenty First Juz: Fitrah, Family, and Faithful Leadership		87
1.	Honor Allah’s signs by Honoring the Wife	87
2.	True Religion and the Pure Fitrah	89
3.	The Corruption on Earth is Man-Made	90
4.	Gratitude to Allah is for Your Own Benefit.....	92
5.	Teaching Priorities for Children	93
6.	Honoring Parents, Especially the Mother	95
7.	The Creation and Resurrection of the Soul	96
8.	The Hopeful Disobedient.....	98
9.	The Prophet as Best Role Model	99
10.	Leaders Are Formed by Patience and Certainty	101
Jewels from the Twenty Second Juz: From Intellectual Awe to Civilizational Responsibility		104
1.	The Pyramid of Faith: From Identity to Excellence	104
2.	Heirs of the Book: Hope for Every Striving Soul.....	106
3.	Wholehearted Submission: The Prophet as the Living Qur’an	107
4.	The Strategy of Serious Reflection: Breaking the Noise	109
5.	The Source of True Honor: Seeking the Audience of One	110
6.	Invoking Blessings: A Divine Partnership.....	111
7.	The Great Trust: Empowering the Human Soul	113
8.	The Individual’s Duty: No One is Excused from the Message.....	116
9.	True Scholars: The Scientists of Creation.....	117
10.	The Curse of Greed: Why the Kingdom of Saba Fell	118
Jewels from the Twenty Third Juz: Faith Under Trial, Power Under Trust, and the Path Back to Allah		121
1.	Divine Blessings That Most People Overlook.....	121
2.	The Unique Creation of Cattle.....	123
3.	The Legacy of Ihsan: A Blueprint for Excellence.....	126
4.	Prophet Yunus: The Trial of Patience and the Miracle of Recovery	127
5.	Engaging the Quran: The Command of Tadabbur	129

6.	The Legacy of Prophet Dawud: Power, Patience, and the Limits of Authority	132
7.	The Trial of Power: Prophet Sulaiman’s Illness and Kingdom.....	135
8.	The Trial and Recovery of Prophet Ayoub: Patience, Effort, and Ethical Renewal.....	136
9.	The Pure Religion: Eliminating the Intermediary	138
10.	The Mark of Intelligence: Discernment and the Choice of the Best.....	141
	Jewels from the Twenty Fourth Juz: A Journey through the Soul, the Universe, and the Divine Command.....	143
1.	Sincerity and Pure Devotion.....	143
2.	The Signs of a Sincere Heart	144
3.	The Mircle of Sleep	146
5.	The Final Journey – A Tale of Two Gates	149
6.	The Angelic Support System.....	150
7.	The Nature of Revelation – Creation or Command?	152
8.	The Mircle of Plant Growth.....	153
10.	The Moral Compass of the Messenger	155
	Jewels from the Twenty-Fifth Juz: From the Inner Cosmos of the Soul to the Collective Unity of the Ummah.....	157
1.	The Everlasting Miracle – Science and Revelation	157
2.	Prohibition of Using Religion as a pretext for creating division.....	159
3.	The Key Means to Eliminate Division.....	160
4.	Addressing Domestic Discord: Divine Decree in Family Life.....	162
5.	The Universality of Islam and the Centrality of Mecca	163
6.	The Grave Loss: The Reality of Divine Abandonment	164
8.	The Major Signs: Divine Warnings and Human Preparedness	167
9.	Accountability: The Personal and Collective Record.....	168
10.	True Adornment vs. The Glitter	170
	Jewels from the Twenty Sixth Juz: From Individual Excellence to Global Stewardship	173
1.	The Obligation of Children towards their Parents.....	173
2.	The Quran: A Revelation for Both Humans and Jinn	174
3.	The Divine Law for Victory and Conflict	176
4.	Preservation Through Charity	177
5.	The Unique Traits of Believers	179
6.	The Ethics of Information: The Principle of Verification	180
7.	The Divine Code of Social Ethics	182
8.	The Divine Metric: Redefining Human Honor	183
9.	The Certainty of Sustenance (Rizq)	185
10.	The Ultimate Awareness: Living Under Divine Nearness	186
	Jewels from the Twenty Seventh Juz: From the Expanding Heavens to the Humble Heart: A Unified Blueprint for Spiritual and Civilizational Excellence.....	188
1.	The Expansion of the Universe	188
2.	The Obligation of Worship: The Purpose of Creation.....	190
3.	Divine Comfort: Finding Strength in the Sight of Allah	191
4.	The Path of Excellence: Sincerity Over Perfection	192
5.	The Accessible Miracle: A Quran for Every Heart	193

6.	The True Teacher of the Quran.....	194
7.	The Three Classes of Humankind.....	196
8.	Power as a Guardian of Justice: The Symbolism of Iron.....	197
9.	The Muscle of Strength: Financial Sacrifice and the Divine Loan	199
10.	The Call to the Heart: It is Time.....	200
Jewels from the Twenty Eighth Juz: From Divine Nearness to the Stewardship of the Self and Society		203
1.	The Nearness of Allah, Hearing all You Say	203
2.	Accommodating Others: From the Masjid to the Heart	204
3.	Measuring the Heart: Its Reaction to the Quran	206
4.	Relationships with Peaceful Non-Believers: The Standard of Birr.....	207
5.	Islam Demands Thinking Believers	208
6.	Solidarity in the Friday Prayer: The Divine Rhythm.....	210
7.	The Regret of the Deferred Charity	211
8.	Wealth and Family: The Subtle Test	212
10.	The Unfathomable Scale of Creation	215
Jewels from the Twenty Ninth Juz: Where the Quran Speaks Directly to the Soul, Here and Now.....		218
1.	Death and Life are Just Tests: Run in the Right Direction.....	218
2.	The Diamond on the Crown of the Prophet: Noble Character	220
3.	Committing to Feeding the Poor is a Defining Sign of Belief	221
4.	The Perfection of Character Through Prayers.....	222
5.	The Power of Seeking Forgiveness	224
6.	The Grave Danger of Seeking Help from Jinn.....	225
7.	From Being Wrapped to Standing Firm: A Living Call from Surat Al-Muzzammil and Al-Muddaththir	226
8.	No Excuses: You are the Witness over Yourself.....	229
9.	The Traits of the Righteous and the Centrality of Feeding	230
10.	The True Liars – Denying the Obvious Truth	231
Jewels from the Thirtieth Juz: The Final Call - From Awareness to Action.....		234
1.	Knowing Allah: The Foundation of All Action	234
2.	Certainty of the Hereafter: The Driver of Behavior	235
3.	Absolute Accountability: Nothing Is Lost	236
4.	Justice: Faith Manifested in Dealings.....	236
5.	The Path of Moral Courage	237
6.	Personal Responsibility: You Stand Alone	238
7.	The Inner Battlefield: Purifying the Soul	239
8.	The Essence of True Religion	240
9.	Time and Loss: The Urgency of Life	242
10.	Recognizing Danger and Seeking Protection.....	244
About the Author		247

About this Volume

A Journey Through the Quran: One Juz, Ten Jewels at a Time

Jewels from the Second Fifteen Juz takes the reader on a reflective journey through the second half of the Quran, from the ending of Surat Al-Kahf to Surat Al-Nas, illuminating the most luminous themes that shape faith, character, and civilizational purpose.

Across these fifteen Juz, the Quran unfolds its deeper spiritual architecture: the promise of divine support for those who act with integrity, the battle against the ego, divine laws operating through history, the refinement of speech and conduct, trust in Allah through trial, the honor of humanity, and the moral vision that elevates individuals and societies alike.

Each chapter presents ten jewels: carefully selected verses that illuminate a core message within the Juz. Together, they form a tapestry of insights that:

- Strengthen one's connection to Allah
- Clarify the laws of guidance and misguidance
- Highlight the dignity of the human being
- Teach reliance, patience, humility, and wisdom
- Demonstrate how divine guidance transforms hearts and civilizations
- Reveal the Quran as a living manual for life

From the profound stories of the prophets in Surat Al-Isra to the urgent, soul-shaking call of Surat Al-Nas, these jewels guide the reader through the Qur'an's later chapters: dense in meaning, rich in purpose, and direct in their address to the human heart.

Accessible, inspiring, and deeply rooted in the Qur'an's thematic structure, this volume is ideal for personal study, Ramadan reading, educational programs, or community circles.

This is Volume 2 of a two-volume series: Jewels of the Qur'an: Gems of Guidance from the 30 Juz.

Preface

For many years, Muslims have recited the Qur'an with love, devotion, and longing, but not always through a structured pathway that reveals its thematic beauty, its moral architecture, and its civilizational vision. This work, *Jewels from the Qur'an*, began as an effort to illuminate ten selected insights from every Juz, creating a journey of reflection that brings the reader closer to the heart of divine wisdom.

This second volume, covering Juz 16 through 30, emerges from years of study, writing, teaching, and deep contemplation. It is a companion to the first volume, which traversed the opening fifteen Juz, yet it carries its own distinct character. Where the first half of the Qur'an lays the foundations of faith, law, and prophetic history, the second half speaks with increasing directness to the soul: calling it to accountability, urging it toward action, and reminding it of the nearness of its Creator.

Each Juz in this volume contains jewels: verses that shine with meaning, direction, and transformative potential. They teach us how to live with dignity, how to honor creation, how to understand guidance, how to rely on Allah, and how to elevate our character in every situation. The final Juz, in particular, closes the Qur'an's journey with an urgent and intimate call: from awareness to action, from knowledge to commitment, from the self inward to the world around us.

These reflections do not claim to replace classical tafsir, nor do they exhaust the depths of the Qur'an. Rather, they offer a thematic doorway: an invitation for the reader to experience the Qur'an as a living guide, one Juz at a time, and to discover the wisdom embedded within its very structure.

With gratitude to Allah alone, I present this volume as the completion of a project covering all thirty Juz. May every reader find in these jewels a spark that brightens the heart and draws them closer to their Creator.

Introduction: The Quran — A Treasure of Divine Jewels

The Qur'an is unlike any other book. It is Allah's final, preserved message to humanity: comprising 114 surahs, divided into 30 Juz, containing within its verses priceless treasures of wisdom, guidance, and light, awaiting discovery through *tadabbur*: deep and sincere reflection. Too often, however, the Qur'an is approached mainly through reverence and recitation, while its transformative power as a guide for life remains underutilized.

Recitation is a noble act of worship, but the Quran was revealed for far more. It is a living blueprint for civilization: a source of guidance that shapes individuals, communities, and nations. It is a light by which to navigate challenges, a *Ruh* that gives life to hearts, and a divine constitution capable of reviving values, strengthening societies, and positioning believers as beacons of justice and mercy for all humanity.

One of the great tragedies of the modern Muslim condition is that, although the Quran is cherished and defended, it is often abandoned as a source of practical guidance. Outrage erupts when its physical pages are desecrated, yet indifference prevails when its wisdom is neglected in shaping our morals, decisions, policies, and societal structures. This paradox fulfills the painful complaint voiced by the Prophet (PBUH):

﴿ وَقَالَ الرَّسُولُ يَرَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا ﴾ (الفرقان 30)

“The Messenger will say: ‘O my Lord, indeed my people have taken this Quran as something abandoned.’” (Al-Furqan 25:30)

This book seeks to respond to that complaint by reviving engagement with the Quran through meaningful reflection. The approach is simple yet powerful: from each Juz, ten jewels are selected, verses that illuminate profound truths about faith, character, society, and the laws by which Allah governs human destiny. These jewels reveal the Quran's role not merely as a spiritual text but as a comprehensive guide for life.

This second volume, covering Juz 16 through 30, weaves together insights on divine wisdom and civilizational responsibility, the refinement of character through trial and patience, the architecture of moral courage, the certainty of accountability, and the urgent call to return to Allah before time runs out. These Juz speak to the reader with increasing intimacy and directness: addressing the soul, confronting the ego, and summoning the believer toward a life of purpose and conscious engagement with their Creator.

By uncovering these jewels, this book invites the reader to experience the Quran as a living conversation: a source of clarity and purpose, and a wellspring of divine wisdom that illuminates every aspect of one's journey.

The Author

Jewels from the Sixteenth Juz: Guidance, Wisdom and Strength (Al-Kahf 18:75 – Ta-Ha 20:135)

Introduction

The sixteenth Juz gathers passages that emphasize how revelation is delivered with wisdom, strengthens the heart over time, and offers the “best explanation” to every confusion and challenge. Within this framework, the story of Dhul-Qarnayn becomes more than a historical narrative: it becomes a living lesson about power under restraint, knowledge in service of protection, humility after achievement, and the civilizational responsibility of resisting corruption without becoming corrupt.

Alongside that, the Juz highlights spiritual truths that shape human life: Allah’s special love for the righteous, the wisdom of accountability within the family, the Quran as a source of ease rather than hardship, the conditions for true success in the Hereafter, the danger of tearing communal unity, and the necessity of perseverance through prayer and patience.

These reflections are offered with humility, not as final certainty, but as an invitation to engage the Quran more deeply, and to recognize that its guidance is meant to build minds, hearts, families, and societies.

1. Dhul-Qarnayn: Identity Analysis

This section establishes the identity of Dhul-Qarnayn using the scientific approach of Ibn al-Haytham and Quranic data. Ibn al-Haytham’s research methodology, formulated over a millennium ago, stressed careful questioning, evidence-based reasoning, and intellectual humility. Known in Latin sources as Alhazen (d. 1040 CE / 431 AH), he is widely regarded as one of the earliest thinkers to articulate what we now call the scientific method. In his major works, especially *The Book of Optics*, he rejected blind acceptance of authority, speculation without proof, and conclusions drawn solely from tradition.

Ibn al-Haytham argued that the seeker of truth must:

- Question assumptions
- Rely on evidence
- Test ideas carefully
- Accept correction when evidence demands it

He emphasized that a true researcher must be willing to doubt even his own conclusions if unsupported by evidence.

This approach matters because, in any field of research, how one studies a subject is often more critical than what one studies. Sound conclusions arise from disciplined

inquiry not inherited assumptions or personal conviction. This principle applies as much to physics and history as it does to textual and religious studies.

Ibn al-Haytham's method can be summarized in five clear steps:

1. **Ask a Clear Question:** Research begins by defining a specific problem or uncertainty; vague questions lead to vague answers.
2. **Propose a Hypothesis:** A hypothesis is a tentative explanation, open to testing and possible rejection.
3. **Collect Evidence (Data):** Evidence must come from reliable primary sources. In the natural sciences, this involves experiments; in textual studies, the primary text itself serves as data.
4. **Test the Hypothesis:** The hypothesis must face all available evidence. If data contradict it, it must be revised or rejected.
5. **Revise or Conclude:** Conclusions remain provisional. Confidence grows with evidence consistency, but certainty is claimed only where evidence is explicit.

This method protects the researcher from forcing the data to fit preconceived conclusions.

Applying Scientific Methodology to Quranic Studies

Although Ibn al-Haytham developed his approach for studying natural phenomena, its underlying logic applies to all forms of inquiry, including the study of sacred texts.

When applied to Quranic analysis, this means:

- Quranic verses are treated as primary data, not supplementary citations
- Interpretations are treated as hypotheses, not unquestionable truths
- Language, structure, and context act as constraints on interpretation
- Conclusions are accepted only if they align with the totality of Quranic evidence

This approach aligns with the Quran's own repeated invitation to reflect, examine, and reason (*tadabbur*).

Methodological Commitment to This Study

This study adopts Ibn al-Haytham's scientific approach as its guiding framework, accordingly:

- No conclusion is assumed in advance
- All claims are tested against Quranic text
- Where the Quran is explicit, the analysis submits
- Where the Quran is silent, the analysis remains cautious

The goal is neither to challenge classical scholarship nor to promote novelty, but to demonstrate how disciplined reasoning, rooted in the Islamic intellectual tradition, can deepen understanding and sharpen critical thinking. This is especially valuable for students learning to study complex texts responsibly.

With this methodology established, the thesis proceeds to a focused Quranic case study: the identity of Dhul-Qarnayn and the nature of Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj. Rather than starting with inherited interpretations, the analysis begins with questions, forms hypotheses, examines Quranic data, and tests each claim against linguistic, structural, and contextual evidence, in full accord with Ibn al-Haytham's scientific tradition.

Dhul-Qarnayn: Identity Analysis Based on Quranic Data

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ ذِي الْقَرْنَيْنِ قُلْ سَأَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا (الكهف ٨٣)

“They ask you about Dhul-Qarnayn. Say: “I will tell you something of his account.” (Al-Kahf 18:83)

1. Data Definition

Primary Data Source: The Quran itself, specifically:

- Surat al-Kahf (18:83–98)
- Cross-referenced Quranic verses defining titles, functions, and attributes

2. Data Set A: The Title “Dhul–” in Quranic Usage

Data A1 — Definition of the Title

The Qur'an uses “Dhul–” (ذو) to assign functional identity, not personal names.

Evidence:

The Quran assigns the title Dhul– to five figures:

1. Dhul-Ayd (ذَا الْأَيْدِ)
2. Dhul-Awtad (ذُو الْأَوْتَادِ)
3. Dhul-Nun (ذَا النُّونِ)
4. Dhul-Kifl (ذَا الْكِفْلِ)
5. Dhul-Qarnayn (ذِي الْقَرْنَيْنِ)

Among these, two are explicitly identified in the Quran:

1. Prophet Dawud as Dhul-Ayd

أَذْكُرُّ عَبْدَنَا دَاوُدَ ذَا الْأَيْدِ إِنَّهُ وَأَوَّابٌ

“Remember Our servant David, Dhul-Ayd (the one of great might); indeed, he was ever turning back to Allah.” (Ṣad 38:17)

Here, *Ayd* refers to strength and capability, fitting Dawud's divinely granted power.

2. Pharaoh as Dhul-Awtad

وَفِرْعَوْنَ ذِي الْأَوْتَادِ

“And Pharaoh, Dhul-Awtad (the one with rooted dominion).” (Al-Fajr 89:10)

This title reflects Pharaoh’s oppressive might and entrenched dominion.

3. Dhul-Nun: Identified by Context

Although not named explicitly, Dhul-Nun is clearly Prophet Yunus, based on Qur’anic context and Prophetic Hadith:

دَا النُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغْضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ (٨٧)

“And (mention) Dhu'n-Nun, when he went off in anger and deemed that We had no power over him, but he cried out in the darkness, saying: There is no God but You. Glory to You. I have been a wrong doer.” (Al-Anbiya 21:87)

Observation: In all three cases, the title highlights a dominant defining trait and does not require the personal name to be stated again

3. Data Set B: Unidentified “Dhul–” Figures

Dhul-Kifl: Explicitly named among the prophets but functionally unexplained

وَأَسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِدْرِيسَ وَذَا الْكِفْلِ كُلٌّ مِّنَ الصَّابِرِينَ

“And Ishmael, Idris, and Dhul-Kifl, each among the steadfast.” (Al-Anbiya’ 21:85)

Linguistic Data for *Kifl*:

- Guardianship:

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا

“So, her Lord accepted her with goodly acceptance. He made her grow in a good manner and put her under the (kifl) care of Zakariya,” (Al-Emran 3:37)

- Assigned share:

وَمَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ وِكْفَلٌ مِّنْهَا

“Whosoever intercedes for an evil cause will have a (kifl) share of it.” (Al-Nisa 4:85)

- Measured divine allotment:

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَءَامِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِن رَّحْمَتِهِ

“O you who believe, have Taqwa of Allah, and believe in His Messenger, He will grant you two (kifl) portions of His Mercy.” (Al-Hadid 57:28)

Inference: The term *Kifl* consistently denotes responsibility, allocation, and guardianship, not physical description. The prophet most strongly associated with administering resources, managing societal welfare, and distributing provisions during

crisis is Prophet Yusuf (Joseph). This functional association aligns closely with the title Dhul-Kifl.

4. Data Set C: Semantic Range of *Qarn*

Evidence:

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِّنْ قَرْنٍ

“Did thy not see how many of (qarn) generation We destroyed before them,” (Al-An’am 6:6)

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا آخَرِينَ (٣١)

“Then, after them, We brought forth another (qarn) generation. (Al-Mu’minun 23: 31)

Observation: The Qur’an uses *qarn* to mean a generation, a civilization, or a dominion or era. Thus, *Qarnayn* linguistically permits: two generations, two realms, or two domains of authority

5. Data Set D: Direct Attributes of Dhul-Qarnayn (Primary Evidence)

D1 — Universal Enablement

إِنَّا مَكَّنَّا لَهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَءَاتَيْنَاهُ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ سَبَبًا

“We established him on earth and gave him the means to all things.” (Al-Kahf 18:84)

D2 — Judicial Authority

قَالَ أَمَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ فَسَوْفَ نُعَذِّبُهُ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ فَيُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا نُكْرًا (٨٧) وَأَمَّا مَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُ جَزَاءٌ أَحْسَنُ يَوْسُفُوهٖ وَسَنُقَوِّلُ لَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِنَا يُسْرًا (الكهف ٨٧ ، ٨٨)

“He said: As for the one who does wrong, we will punish him, then he will be returned to his Lord, who will punish him severely. (87) But as for the one who believes and acts righteously, he will have the best reward and we will speak to him kindly.” (Al-Kahf 18:87–88)

D3 — Cross-Linguistic Communication

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ بَيْنَ السَّدَّيْنِ وَجَدَ مِنْ دُونِهِمَا قَوْمًا لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ قَوْلًا (الكهف ٩٣)

“Until, when he reached a place between two mountains, he found by them a people who were unable to understand anything said.” (Al-Kahf 18:93)

Yet communication and negotiation clearly occur.

D4 — Advanced Engineering and Metallurgy

ءَاتُونِي زُبَرَ الْحَدِيدِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا سَاوَىٰ بَيْنَ الصَّدَفَيْنِ قَالَ أَنفُخُوا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَعَلَهُ نَارًا قَالَ ءَاتُونِي أُفْرِغَ عَلَيْهِ قِطْرًا (الكهف ٩٦)

"Bring me blocks of iron, and place in the space between the mountain sides and blow until the iron becomes (red) as fire, then bring me molten copper and I will pour over it (the iron)." (Al-Kahf 18:96)

4. Hypothesis Testing Against Sulayman (With Data)

Two Realms

وَحُشِرَ لِسُلَيْمَانَ جُنُودُهُ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ .. (١٧)

"And there were gathered before Sulaiman his armies of the jinn and humankind ... (Al-Naml 27:17)

Language Mastery

وَوَرِثَ سُلَيْمَانُ دَاوُودَ وَقَالَ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ عَلَّمْنَا مِنْطِقَ الطَّيْرِ (١٦)

"And Suliman inherited (the knowledge of) Dawud. He said: "O mankind! We have been taught the language of birds," (Al-Naml 27:16)

Metallurgy

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ مِنَّا فَضْلًا يَجِبَالُ أُوبَى مَعَهُ وَالطَّيْرِ وَأَلْنَا لَهُ الْحَدِيدَ (١٠)

"And assuredly We gave Dawud grace from Us, (saying): O you mountains and birds, glorify (Allah) with him! And We made the iron pliable for him." (Saba 34:10)

وَلِسُلَيْمَانَ الرِّيحَ غُدُوُّهَا شَهْرٌ وَرَوَاحُهَا شَهْرٌ وَأَسَلْنَا لَهُ عَيْنَ الْقِطْرِ ... (١٢)

"And to Suliman (We gave) the wind, whereof the morning course was a month's journey and the evening course a month's journey, and We caused the fount of copper to gush forth for him," (Saba 34:12)

7. Result

Every defining Quranic data point for Dhul-Qarnayn explicitly present, functionally mirror and textually support the Quranic profile of Prophet Suliman.

8. Conclusion

When Quranic verses are treated as primary data rather than illustrative citations, the identification of Dhul-Qarnayn with Prophet Suliman demonstrates the highest degree of internal coherence. No competing hypothesis satisfies the same number of independent Quranic constraints without importing non-Quranic assumptions.

2. Ya'jūj & Ma'jūj in the Quran:

The nature of Ya'jūj & Ma'jūj will be identified following Ibn al-Haytham's scientific tradition, rather than starting with inherited interpretations. The analysis begins with questions, forms hypotheses, examines Quranic data, and tests each claim against linguistic, structural, and contextual evidence.

1. Research Problem

The Qur'an mentions Ya'jūj & Ma'jūj in two distinct contexts:

Context A: within the Dhul-Qarnayn narrative (Surat al-Kahf)

قَالُوا يٰذَا الْقَرْنَيْنِ اِنَّ يٰجُوجَ وَمَاجُوجَ مُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْاَرْضِ فَهَلْ نَجْعَلُ لَكَ خَرْجًا عَلٰى اَنْ تَجْعَلَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمْ
سَدًّا (٩٤)

“They said: O Dhul-Qarnayn, indeed Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj are causing corruption in the land. Should we assign you a payment so that you may place a barrier (sadd) between us and them? (Al-Kahf 18:94)

Context B: as an eschatological sign preceding the Hour (Surat al-Anbiya)

حَتّٰى اِذَا فُتِحَتْ يٰجُوجُ وَمَاجُوجُ وَهُمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ حَدَبٍ يَنْسِلُوْنَ (٩٦) وَاَقْتَرَبَ الْوَعْدُ الْحَقُّ ... (٩٧)
“Until, when Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj are released and they surge forth from every elevation, (96) and the true promise (Day of Judgment) draws near...” (Al-Anbiya 21:96-97)

The research problem is whether the referent of the term “Ya'jūj & Ma'jūj” is necessarily identical in both contexts, or whether Quranic usage allows different realities under a shared descriptive title.

2. Research Questions

Q1 (Textual / Referential): In Surat al-Kahf, does the Quranic description require Ya'jūj & Ma'jūj to be human groups?

Q2 (Engineering / Structural): Does the construction described in Surat al-Kahf function more like a military wall against people, or like a containment seal against a physical hazard?

Q3 (Inter-contextual): If Surat al-Anbiya refers to a mass release near the end of time, does that necessitate that Surat al-Kahf also refers to humans, or can the title be descriptive and context-dependent?

3. Hypotheses

H₀ (Null / Classical Default): Ya'jūj & Ma'juj in Surat al-Kahf are human groups, and the barrier is a fortification to stop their assault.

H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis Under Test): In Surat al-Kahf, Ya'jūj & Ma'juj refers to a destructive phenomenon emerging from the passage, requiring containment rather than punishment, while Surat al-Anbiya may refer to a later human emergence under the same descriptive title.

This section tests H₁ against Quranic data constraints.

4. Data Set (Primary Quranic Evidence)

Data D1 — The complaint of “corruption”

قَالُوا يَنْدَا الْقَرْنَيْنِ إِنَّ يَأْجُوجَ وَمَأْجُوجَ مُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ (٩٤)

“They said: O Dhul-Qarnayn, indeed Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj are causing corruption in the land. „(Al-Kahf 18:94)

Observation: the complaint describes an outcome (*ifsād*), not a biography.

Data D2 — Requested structure: “sadd”

.... فَهَلْ نَجْعَلُ لَكَ خَرْجًا عَلَىٰ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمْ سَدًّا (٩٤)

Should we assign you a payment so that you may place a barrier (sadd) between us and them?” (Al-Kahf 18:94)

Data D3 — Delivered structure: “radm”

قَالَ مَا مَكَّنِّي فِيهِ رَبِّي خَيْرٌ فَأَعِينُونِي بِقُوَّةٍ أَجْعَلْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ رَدْمًا (٩٥)

“He said: What my Lord has placed under my control is better (than your payment). So help me with manpower, and I will make between you and them a backfill (radm).” (Al-Kahf 18:95)

Key textual constraint: the Quran distinguishes what was requested from what was constructed.

Data D4 — Composition and process: iron + heat + molten copper

ءَاتُونِي زُبَرَ الْحَدِيدِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا سَاوَىٰ بَيْنَ الصَّدَفَيْنِ قَالَ انْفُخُوا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَعَلَهُ نَارًا قَالَ ءَاتُونِي أُفْرِغَ عَلَيْهِ قِطْرًا (٩٦)

“Bring me blocks of iron.” Then, when he leveled it between the two mountain sides (*şadafayn*), he said: “Blow,” until it became red-hot. Then he said: “Bring me molten copper to pour over it.” (Al-Kahf 18:96)

Constraint: this is not ordinary masonry; it is metallurgical sealing by fusion and overlay.

A subtle yet significant detail in the Quranic description is that Dhul-Qarnayn first leveled the two ṣadafayn (the opposing mountain sides). Notably, the Quran does not use the term safḥ (سَفْح), which typically refers to an ordinary mountain slope characterized by soil, erosion, and vegetation. Instead, the term ṣadaf implies hard, solid surfaces, suggesting compacted or hardened rock, possibly the result of earlier molten or geological activity.

Leveling these hardened sides would have been a critical preparatory step. It would eliminate irregular gaps and prevent lateral seepage, particularly of pressurized gases, around the backfilled structure. This preparation ensured that the subsequent fill would form a continuous, sealed interface with the surrounding rock, preventing any pressurized material from breaching the barrier by lateral seepage or pressure-driven perforation.

Data D5 — The outcome described: no “escape from sides,” no “perforation”

فَمَا اسْتَطَعُوا أَنْ يَظْهَرُوهُ وَمَا اسْتَطَعُوا لَهُ نَقْبًا (٩٧)

So, they were unable to climb (from the sides), nor were able to pierce it.” (Al-Kahf 18:97)

Constraint: the Qur’an emphasizes two failure modes:

- يَظْهَرُوهُ: inability to get past laterally/over/around
- نَقْبًا: inability to pierce/perforate

Data D6 — End-state: “dakka”

... فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي جَعَلَهُ دَكَّاءَ... (٩٨)

“..... But when the promise of my Lord comes, He will make it “dakka”,” (Al-Kaf 18:98)

Cross reference:

فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّى رَبُّهُ لِلْجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُ دَكًّا

“When his Lord revealed Himself to the mountain, He made it “Dakka” crashing down.” (Al-Araf 7:143)

Constraint: *Dakka* indicates crushing/collapse of a coherent solid mass.

Data D7 — Second context: release before the Hour

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فُتِحَتْ يَأْجُوجُ وَمَأْجُوجُ وَهُمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ حَدَبٍ يَنْسِلُونَ (٩٦)

“Until, when Ya’juj and Ma’juj are released and they surge forth from every elevation.” (Al-Anbiya 21:96)

Constraint: A global scale “opening” and “surging from every elevation.”

5. Analytical Tests

Test 1 — Structural-Functional Test: “wall vs seal”

If the target is a human enemy, the expected engineering response would be: climb prevention, breakthrough resistance, and military defense. But the Quranic data highlights: radm (backfill rather than a standing wall), iron blocks fused with heat and molten copper overlay, and an emphasis on no lateral seepage and no perforation (18:97).

Result: This description aligns more naturally with containment of a hazard than with repelling a human assault.

Test 2 — Linguistic Failure-Mode Test (18:97)

The Quran does not say they destroyed it, broke it, or overcame it. Instead it describes failure modes consistent with leak, escape, and penetration: يظهره (getting past from the sides or above) and نَقَبًا (perforation).

Result: The language is more consistent with “containment integrity” than with warfare vocabulary.

Test 3 — Ethical Agency Test (18:87 vs. Dhul-Qarnayn’s action)

Dhul-Qarnayn states a governing policy of punishing wrongdoers:

قَالَ أَمَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ فَسَوْفَ نُعَذِّبُهُ (٨٧)

“He said: “As for the wrongdoer we will be punish him” (Al-Kahf 18:87)

But in the Ya’juj & Ma’juj segment, he does not confront or punish them; he applies an engineering solution.

Result: If Ya’juj & Ma’juj are moral agents, the narrative would be expected to include ethical adjudication. The shift toward technical containment supports the claim that the problem is not a punishable “community” but a destructive source requiring neutralization.

(Important note for examiners: this is an inference, not a Quranic explicit statement. It is valid only as a coherence test.)

6. Linguistic Proposal (Names as Descriptive Titles)

Proposed Root Associations (as a hypothesis mechanism)

The terms may connect to roots implying: blazing or roaring (أَج) and gushing or expelling (مَج).

This is not treated as proof by itself, but as a plausible explanatory mechanism consistent with "descriptive naming," comparable to:

﴿تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ﴾ (Al-Masad 111:1) "Abu Lahab" means (father of the flame) is a descriptive title for the Prophet's uncle Abd al-Uzza, reflecting his role in igniting conflict, not a reference to literal fire.

7. Inter-Context Reconciliation Test: Same term, different entity?

Quranic Arabic allows one word to hold multiple meanings by context. You provide the internal Quranic precedent of *ummah*:

- **Nation:** ﴿كَلَّمَآ دَخَلَتْ أُمَّةٌ لَعَنَتْ أُخْتَهَا﴾ "Every time a nation enters, it curses its sister (nation)." (Al-Araf 7:38)
- **Time period:** وَقَالَ الَّذِي نَجَا مِنْهُمَا وَادَّكَرَ بَعْدَ أُمَّةٍ "And said the one of the two men who had been released and remembered a long time." (Yousuf 12: 45)
- **Religion/path:** ﴿إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم مُّقْتَدُونَ﴾, "We found our fathers following a religion and we are following in their footsteps." (Az-Zukhruf 43:23)

Result: Quranic usage supports the principle that a single term may shift meaning by context without contradiction. This makes it logically possible that:

- Surat al-Kahf: a descriptive title for a destructive phenomenon
- Surat al-Anbiya: a descriptive title for a later human emergence (or force) characterized by similar "ifsād" effects

8. Provisional Conclusion

Based on the Quranic data and the structural-linguistic tests:

1. The construction details (radm, iron fusion, molten copper overlay) and the failure-mode description (no lateral escape, no perforation) are more naturally consistent with a containment seal than a military wall.
2. The narrative's shift from ethical punishment ﴿قَالَ أَمَا مَن ظَلَمَ فَسَوْفَ نَعَذِّبُهُ﴾ (18:87) to technical containment supports, as a coherence inference, that the threat in this context may not be a conventional human opponent.
3. The Quran itself provides precedent for context-dependent meanings (*ummah*), leaving room for the term *Ya'juj & Ma'juj* to function as a descriptive label across contexts.

Therefore, the hypothesis that *Ya'juj & Ma'juj* in Surat al-Kahf refers to a destructive phenomenon emerging from the passage remains viable and textually coherent. The null hypothesis that *Ya'juj & Ma'juj* in Surat al-Kahf are human groups requires additional assumptions about why the Quran emphasizes containment-style failure modes rather than conflict-style language.

9. Limitations (What the Thesis Does *Not* Claim)

- This section does not claim absolute certainty about referent identity.
- The linguistic root association is treated as supportive plausibility, not decisive proof.
- Prophetic narrations about end-time emergence are acknowledged and considered as referring to Surat Al-Anbiya. This section therefore confines itself to Quranic data in Surat al-Kahf as primary evidence.

10. Closing Statement

Allah praises Dhul-Qarnayn not merely for possessing power, but for applying knowledge and authority to restrain corruption and protect life, rather than to dominate or destroy.

11. Project for a Muslim Explorer

From Al-Kahf 18:95–98, any *candidate location* would need to demonstrate all of the following:

1. Two opposing mountain sides (*ṣadafayn*), not hills
2. A narrow pass / throat, not a wide valley
3. Evidence of flattened or hardened rock faces (not soil slopes)
4. A subsurface pressure history (gas, magma, geothermal activity)
5. Natural seepage paths that could be sealed
6. A region where engineering sealing (*radm*) makes physical sense

3. Importance of Physical and Non-Physical Powers

Corruption arises when power is unleashed without restraint or moral guidance. It therefore becomes the responsibility of believers to contain destruction by acquiring knowledge and developing both physical and non-physical forms of power, and to use them wisely in restraining evil and protecting society.

Dhul-Qarnayn offers a model of disciplined and ethical power. He did not rely solely on the authority and resources granted to him by Allah; rather, he empowered the people he was helping by engaging them directly in the process:

قَالَ مَا مَكَّنِّي فِيهِ رَبِّي خَيْرٌ فَأَعِينُونِي بِقُوَّةٍ أَجْعَلْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ رَدْمًا (٩٥)

“He said: "What my Lord had given under my control is better (than your honorarium). So, help me with some manpower and I will make a backfill between you and them. (Al-Kahf 18:95)

In this instance, physical power, manpower, materials, and technical execution, was essential to accomplish the task. Yet physical power alone, if unguided, cannot fulfill divine objectives. It must be directed by spiritual and moral power, which comes from revelation.

This balance is emphasized in Allah's command to Prophet Yahya (PBUH):

يَلِيحِي خُذِ الْكِتَابَ بِقُوَّةٍ وَأَنْتَ نَحْوُ الْحَكَمِ صَبِيًّا (١٢)

"O Yahya (John)! Take hold of the book with strength." And We gave him wisdom while yet a child." (Maryam 19:12)

"Taking the Book with strength" does not merely mean reading it, but learning it deeply, internalizing its guidance, and living by it with determination. This verse establishes that non-physical power, moral resolve, intellectual clarity, and spiritual discipline, is indispensable for any righteous endeavor.

Accordingly, righteous nations can prosper only when physical capability and spiritual authority are united, both grounded in knowledge and guided by divine revelation.

When I was growing up, the covers of schoolbooks distributed by the Ministry of Education carried the following lines of poetry:

تعلم العلم واقراً. تحز فخار النبوة
فأله قال ليحيى خذ الكتاب بقوة

Learn and read, let knowledge be your way, For it brings honor, bright and true.
Allah said to Yahya one day: Hold fast the Book, be strong and true.

Unfortunately, these lines were later removed, and with them disappeared a powerful message that once inspired students to see learning as both a spiritual and civilizational responsibility.

4. Humility Despite Great Success

Despite his power and accomplishments of Dhul Qarnayn, he remained humble and credited everything to Allah.

قَالَ هَذَا رَحْمَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّي

"This is a mercy from my Lord." (Al-Kahf 18:98)

His story teaches that true gratitude for power is shown by using it justly and for the benefit of others. The Quran did not name him, possibly to shift focus from his identity to the lessons of his character and actions. This approach also invites reflection and analysis.

5. The Blessing of Being Loved

Many of the blessings Allah created to make life enjoyable are shared by both believers and disbelievers. However, Allah grants the believers who perform righteous deeds a special gift that is exclusive to them: His special love, known as Wud. Allah says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَيَجْعَلُ لَهُمُ ٱلرَّحْمَنُ وُدًّا (مريم ٩٦)

“Indeed, those who believe and do righteous deeds, Al-Rahman will bestow upon them Wud (a special love).” (Maryam 19:96)

Although the Arabic words ḥubb (حب) and wud (ود) are both translated as “love” in English, they convey different meanings. Ḥubb refers primarily to emotional affection and feeling, whereas wud refers to love expressed through action and commitment.

A person may feel love (ḥubb) for someone yet not be willing to sacrifice or act for them. But when one has wud for another, that love is demonstrated through effort, care, and consistent action. The Wud of Allah far exceeds human love: it means that Allah commits Himself to caring for you, supporting you, and granting you goodness, often beyond what you even ask for.

Consider how honored and excited you would feel if a public figure or dignitary mentioned you by name. How much greater, then, should be your joy when Allah, the Lord of the universe and King of all kings, mentions your name and declares His love for you. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ إِذَا أَحَبَّ عَبْدًا دَعَا جِبْرِيلَ ، فَقَالَ : إِنِّي أَحِبُّ فُلَانًا فَأَحِبَّهُ ، قَالَ : فَيُحِبُّهُ جِبْرِيلُ ، ثُمَّ يَنَادِي فِي السَّمَاءِ ، فَيَقُولُ : إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَحِبُّ فُلَانًا فَأَحِبُّوهُ ، فَيُحِبُّهُ أَهْلُ السَّمَاءِ ، ثُمَّ يُوَضِّعُ لَهُ ٱلْقَبُولُ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ . [مسلم عن أبي هريرة]

“ When Allah loves a servant, He calls Jibril and says, ‘I love so-and-so, so love him.’ Jibril loves him, then announces to the inhabitants of the heavens, ‘Allah loves so-and-so, so love him.’ The inhabitants of the heavens love him, and acceptance is then placed for him on earth.” [Muslim]

When Allah loves you, even your enemies are restrained from harming you as they wish. Securing Allah’s Wud means that He is always near, inviting you to turn to Him with your fears, pain, and needs. Sit privately and call upon Al-Wadūd (الودود). Speak to Him about your worries, your job, your business, your children, your future, and rely upon Him for support and relief.

When you seek comfort in sorrow, compassion in distress, or simply someone to whom you can pour out your heart, Allah Al-Wadud is always there. He loves you without expecting anything in return. He supports and guides you not out of need, but out of mercy and love for your sincerity and righteousness.

Human love and hatred are beyond our control. Hearts are not owned by people; they are owned by Allah. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

إِنَّ ٱلْقُلُوبَ بَيْنَ أُصْبَعَيْنِ مِنْ أُصْبَاعِ ٱلرَّحْمَنِ يَقْلِبُهَآ كَيْفَ يَشَآءُ (مسلم عن عبد الله بن عمرو بن العاص)
“The hearts are between the two fingers of Al-Rahman, He turns them as He wills”.
(Muslim)

Allah also said:

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ ۗ

“And know that Allah intervenes between the man and his heart.” (Al-Anfal 8:24)

Hearts are never united in love for someone except by Allah’s permission. For this reason, Imam Ibn Hajar (ابن حجر) said: (إن محبة قلوب الناس علامة محبة الله) *“The love of people is a sign of the love of Allah”*.

To attain this elevated relationship with Allah, one must possess true faith and consistently perform righteous deeds.

6. Emotional Strength: Man and Woman

What is striking, however, is how the Quran assigns responsibility. Allah places the blame entirely on Adam, not on Eve. Adam is described as forgetting the covenant and lacking firm resolve, and it is Adam who is explicitly described as having disobeyed his Lord.

وَلَقَدْ عَهِدْنَا إِلَىٰ آدَمَ مِن قَبْلُ فَنَسِيَ وَلَمْ نَجِدْ لَهُ عَزْمًا (١١٥)

“Indeed, We made a covenant with Adam before, but he forgot, and We found in him no firm resolve. (Taha 20:115)

فَأَكَلَا مِنْهَا فَبَدَتَ لَهُمَا سَوْءَاتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِن وَرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ وَعَصَىٰ آدَمُ رَبَّهُ فَغَوَىٰ (١٢١)
(١٢٢) نُمَّ أَجْتَبَهُ رَبُّهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ وَهَدَىٰ (١٢٢)

“Both ate from the tree, and their private parts became manifest to them, and they began to cover themselves with the leaves of Paradise for their covering. Thus, Adam disobeyed his Lord and went astray (121) Then his Lord chose him, accepted his repentance, and guided him.” (Taha 20: 1121-122)

Despite the shared action, the Quran singles out Adam for accountability. This reflects divine wisdom and deep understanding of human nature. Allah knows the emotional sensitivity of women and does not burden them with blame in a way that would harm or diminish them.

From this, an important moral lesson emerges: a true man carries responsibility, especially within the family. A husband who is willing to shoulder blame, rather than assign it, preserves harmony and emotional safety in the home. Learning to say “I am sorry”, even when one believes he is not at fault—often leads to a calmer, happier, and more stable life.

This is not weakness; it is strength guided by wisdom.

7. Allah's Revelation is Intended for Ease

Allah comforts the Prophet (PBUH) and by extension, all believers, by clarifying that the revelation of the Quran and its commands are not meant to impose hardship.

مَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لِتَشْقَىٰ (٢)

“We have not sent down the Quran to you to cause you difficulty.” (Taha 20:2).

To illustrate this principle, Allah presents the story of Prophet Musa عليه السلام, showing that divine revelation is meant to bring reassurance, ease, and divine support to those who receive it and convey it. Within this narrative, Allah mentions a unique detail that appears only once in the entire Quran and can be closely associated with comfort and the removal of hardship:

فَلَمَّا أَتَاهَا نُودِيَ يَمْوَسَىٰ (١١) إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ فَاخْلَعْ نَعْلَيْكَ إِنَّكَ بِالْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى (١٢)

“When he came to it (the fire), he was called: "O Musa (11) Indeed, I am your Lord, So, take off your shoes, you are in the sacred valley of Tuwa. (Taha 20:11-12)

Allah commands Prophet Musa to remove his shoes without providing an explicit explanation. This omission invites reflection, especially in light of the Surah's opening declaration that revelation is not intended to cause hardship. Removing one's shoes is a natural sign of comfort and relief. When a person returns home after fatigue or long travel, one of the first acts of rest is to remove their shoes.

Thus, this command symbolizes the transition of Prophet Musa into a state of reassurance, divine protection, and inner ease as he is chosen for prophethood. It marks the beginning of a mission carried not by burden alone, but by divine support.

To reinforce this meaning, Allah later makes clear that hardship is not caused by revelation itself, but rather by turning away from it:

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ وَمَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَىٰ (١٢٤)

“Whoever turns away from My remembrance (the Quran) will have a life of hardship, and on the Day of Resurrection We shall raise him up blind.” (Taha 20:124)

Classical books of tafsir commonly offer two explanations for the command to remove the shoes:

1. Prophet Musa's shoes were made from the skin of a dead donkey and were therefore unsuitable for the sacred valley of Tuwa.
2. He was commanded to remove them so his feet would directly touch the blessed land.

However, these explanations raise several difficulties:

1. The donkey is not an impure or inferior animal. It is mentioned in the Quran within a narrative that highlights Allah’s power and resurrection (the story of Uzayr), which undermines the claim that its skin is inherently filthy.
2. People have historically entered, and continue to enter, the valley of Tuwa wearing shoes, and animals freely roam the area.
3. Prophet Musa was traveling through the desert, where footwear would more likely be clean than contaminated.
4. Islamic practice allows, and even encourages, prayer in shoes when they are clean. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم “خالفوا اليهود فإنهم لا يصلون في نعالهم ولا خفافهم.”
“Be different from the Jews, for they do not pray in their shoes or leather slippers.”

The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

إذا جاء أحدكم إلى المسجد فليُنظر، فإن رأى في نعليه قذراً أو أذى فليمسحه وليصل فيهما
“When one of you comes to the mosque, let him look at his shoes. If he sees any dirt or harm on them, let him wipe them and pray in them.” (Abu Dawud)

Notably, this command appears only once in the Quran, despite the story of Prophet Musa being mentioned approximately 136 times across 34 Surahs. This strong uniqueness suggests that the instruction is not incidental but thematically linked to the core message of Surat Ṭa Ha: that divine guidance is a source of reassurance, not distress.

The command to remove the shoes aligns naturally with the Surah’s opening declaration, Allah’s revelation is intended to bring ease, comfort, and stability, not hardship.

8. Success in the Hereafter in One Sentence

This verse defines, in a single statement, who is truly worthy of hoping to meet Allah. Such a person must come to Allah with two essentials: sincere righteous deeds and pure monotheism (tawḥīd). Righteous deeds are not limited to acts of worship alone; they must shape the believer into a moral exemplar in every sphere of life, one’s relationship with Allah, with family and friends, with adversaries, with the poor and the wealthy, and with all of creation, including humans, animals, and the natural world.

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ ۚ أَحَدًا (١١٠)

“Say: I am only a human being like you. It has been revealed to me that your God is One God. So, whoever hopes to meet his Lord, let him do righteous deeds and associate none in the worship of his Lord.” (Al-Kahf 18:110)

The path to attaining such exemplary conduct is to take the Prophet (PBUH) as one's model. Only through following his character and way of life does a person become truly deserving of hoping to meet Allah. Allah states:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا (٢١)

“Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example for whoever hopes for Allah (the meeting with) and the Last Day and remembers Allah much.” (Al-Ahzab 33:21)

Accordingly, hoping to meet Allah is not a mere claim or emotion; it requires a serious and continuous study of the Prophet's (PBUH) character and the conscious effort to embody his conduct in all aspects of life.

9. Breaking Unity Cannot be Treated Easily

Unity among the followers of any prophet is a matter of profound seriousness, especially because every believing community inevitably includes deviants and hypocrites. The challenge, therefore, is not whether deviation will occur, but how it should be handled without destroying the unity of the community itself.

The Quran illustrates this delicate balance through the position of Prophet Harun during the crisis of the golden calf. Despite the gravity of the sin committed by some of the Children of Israel, Harun refrained from confronting them violently or expelling them. When Prophet Musa questioned him about this restraint, Harun explained:

إِنِّي خَشِيتُ أَنْ تَقُولَ فَرَّقْتَ بَيْنَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَلَمْ تَرْفُتْ قَوْلِي (٩٤)

“I feared that you would say: ‘You have caused division among the Children of Israel and did not observe my instruction.’ (Taha 20:94)

This response reveals a critical principle of prophetic leadership: preserving the unity of the community sometimes takes precedence over immediate confrontation, even when serious wrongdoing is present. Prophet Harun recognized that forceful action at that moment would have fractured the community beyond repair, undermining the very mission he was entrusted to protect.

The same principle is evident in the leadership of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Despite being fully aware of the plots, rumors, and internal disruption caused by the hypocrites in Madinah, the Prophet (PBUH) chose restraint. One of his central concerns was that outsiders would say, “Muhammad is killing his own companions.” Such a perception would have damaged the message of Islam and torn the community apart.

Thus, the Quran and the Prophetic model teach that unity is a fragile trust. Breaking it cannot be treated casually, nor can it be repaired easily once shattered. Wisdom in leadership lies in distinguishing between correcting deviation and preserving the

collective body, knowing when to confront, when to restrain, and when to prioritize the survival and cohesion of the Ummah over immediate punitive action.

10. Perseverance

Obedience to Allah requires perseverance, and the means by which perseverance is attained are patience and prayer. Allah instructs His Messenger (PBUH) and through him, all believers, to remain steadfast through constant remembrance and devotion:

فَأَصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا وَمِنْ آنَاءِ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْ وَأَطْرَافَ
النَّهَارِ لَعَلَّكَ تَرْضَىٰ (١٣٠)

“So, be patient over what they say, and glorify the praise of your Lord before sunrise and before sunset, and during some hours of the night and at the ends of the day, so that you may be content.” (Taha 20:130)

In this verse, as in many others, the Quran establishes patience and prayer as the foundations of obedience and spiritual endurance. Perseverance is not sustained by resolve alone, but by regular connection with Allah through worship and remembrance.

For this reason, Allah gives a direct command regarding the household:

وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا لَا نَسْأَلُكَ رِزْقًا نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكَ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ (١٣٢)

“And command your family to pray and be patient in doing so. We do not ask you for provision; We provide for you. And the best outcome is for those of taqwa.” (Taha 20:132)

Allah emphasizes that enjoining prayer within the family is itself an act that requires patience and perseverance. Guidance is not imposed instantly; it is nurtured through consistency, example, and endurance. Adhering to this divine instruction plays a vital role in establishing spiritual stability within the household and can resolve many family tensions by anchoring daily life in worship, trust, and shared purpose.

Conclusion

Taken together, the jewels of this Juz present a coherent Quranic vision of righteous strength. True power is not the ability to dominate, but the ability to restrain corruption and protect life, guided by revelation, disciplined by humility, and supported by collective effort, as Dhul-Qarnayn exemplifies. The believer is reminded that spiritual success is not claimed by words but earned through sincere tawhīd and righteous deeds that radiate integrity in every relationship and responsibility.

At the same time, the Juz teaches that Allah’s guidance is not a burden but a mercy: turning to it brings ease, while turning away from it produces constriction and hardship. It reminds us that unity is a fragile trust that can be shattered easily and repaired with

difficulty; therefore, wisdom is needed in confronting deviation without destroying the community itself. And it anchors endurance in its two greatest supports: patience and prayer, first in personal life, then in the home, where lasting stability begins.

In the end, this Juz calls the reader to become the kind of person who truly “hopes to meet Allah”: grounded in revelation, strengthened by worship, refined in character, and committed to using knowledge and power as a mercy rather than a weapon.

Jewels from the Seventeenth Juz: Reflections on Trials, Trust, and Divine Support

(Al-Anbia 21:1 – Al-Hajj 22:78)

Introduction

The seventeenth Juz presents a powerful constellation of themes that speak directly to the human journey through time and accountability. It confronts the nearness of reckoning, exposes the reality of divine testing through both ease and hardship, unveils the vastness of the unseen universe, traces the rise and fall of civilizations, and reveals the intimate relationship between sincere supplication and divine response.

This chapter gathers selected verses and reflections that show how Allah educates humanity through two complementary books: the revealed Word and the created world. Together, these signs train the heart to worship with sincerity, the mind to reason with clarity, and the will to act with responsibility. In this Juz, the Quran emerges not as a text for ritual alone, but as a comprehensive guide that prepares the believer to live with purpose, patience, courage, and unwavering trust in Allah.

1. Time is Running Out Soon

From the moment a person is born, the clock of life begins its steady countdown toward an inevitable end: the moment when one's record is submitted for final judgment. Yet many people live as though time were open-ended, squandering their days without realizing that every passing moment is irretrievable. Like students unaware that an exam has a fixed duration, they waste precious time despite repeated warnings.

The Quran captures this dangerous illusion with striking clarity:

أَقْتَرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُونَ (١)

“The reckoning of people has drawn near, yet they remain heedless and turned away.” (Al-Anbia 21:1)

Allah then describes their response to divine reminders:

مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِّنْ ذِكْرٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ مُّحَدَّثٍ إِلَّا اسْتَمَعُوهُ وَهُمْ يَلْعَبُونَ (٢) لَاهِبَةً فُلُوبُهُمْ

“Whenever a renewed reminder comes to them from their Lord, they listen to it playfully (2) their hearts distracted.” (Al-Anbia 21:2-3)

The tragedy is not ignorance, but negligence. The reminders are heard yet treated lightly. The heart remains disengaged, as though accountability was a distant abstraction rather than an approaching certainty.

The Quran then removes another common misconception: that divine testing occurs only through hardship. In reality, Allah tests human beings through both adversity and ease:

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَنَبَلُّوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ (٣٥)

“Every soul is certain to taste death: We test you with both hardship and ease as a trial, and to Us you will be returned.” (Al-Anbiya 21:35)

In fact, ease often proves the more dangerous test. When confronted with hardship, people instinctively turn to Allah in humility and dependence. But when tested with comfort, wealth, influence, or success, many grow complacent, sensing less need for guidance. It is precisely at this point that heedlessness deepens, and Satan’s deception becomes more effective.

Thus, the nearness of accountability and the subtlety of divine testing together form the opening warning of this Juz: time is limited, the test is ongoing, and distraction is its greatest enemy.

2. Validate Knowledge Through Expertise and Sound Reason

One of the recurring obstacles to accepting divine guidance has always been resistance to the idea that Allah sends human beings as His messengers. Some reject this outright, unable to reconcile ordinary human life with divine revelation. Others accept the human messenger but then elevate him beyond human limits, drifting toward deification in an attempt to resolve the same tension.

The Quran addresses this confusion through two complementary and rational steps.

First, Allah directs people to consult those who possess historical and scriptural knowledge, scholars and followers of earlier revelations, who can testify that all of Allah’s messengers were human beings. This establishes continuity in divine practice and removes the claim that a human messenger is something unprecedented:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُوْحِي إِلَيْهِمْ فَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ (٧)

“We sent before you only men to whom We revealed [Our message]. If you do not know, ask the people of remembrance.” (Al-Anbiya 21:7)

Second, Allah closes the door to deification by appealing to simple, undeniable reason. He highlights two essential human traits that are incompatible with divinity: dependence and mortality:

وَمَا جَعَلْنَاهُمْ جَسَدًا لَا يَأْكُلُونَ الطَّعَامَ وَمَا كَانُوا خَالِدِينَ (٨)

“We did not make them bodies that they did not eat food, nor were they immortal.” (Al-Anbiya 21:8)

The need for nourishment signifies dependence; mortality signifies limitation. Both are definitive attributes of created beings, not of God.

Together, these verses establish a foundational Quranic principle: truth is confirmed through informed authority and reinforced by plain reason. Authentic knowledge

validates revelation, while simple observation dismantles false beliefs. Divine guidance does not ask people to abandon reason; it asks them to use it honestly.

This rational clarity prepares the reader for what follows in the Juz: a sequence of signs, arguments, and historical lessons meant not to overwhelm, but to awaken hearts before time runs out.

3. Confirmation of Intelligent Creations Beyond Earth

The Quran affirms that intelligent, conscious beings exist beyond humanity, inhabiting the vast expanse of creation. These beings are not detached from divine awareness; rather, they are fully conscious of Allah and continuously engaged in worship and glorification.

Allah states:

وَلَهُ ۥمَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۚ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ ۥ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُوْنَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهٖ ۚ وَلَا يَسْتَحْسِرُوْنَ (١٩) يُسَبِّحُوْنَ اَلَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ لَا يَفْتُرُوْنَ (٢٠)

“To Him belongs whoever is in the heavens and the earth. Those who are with Him are never too proud to worship Him, nor do they grow weary. (19) They glorify Him night and day without ceasing.” (Al-Anbiya 21:19-20)

The phrase “whoever is in the heavens and the earth” establishes a broad category that includes more than human beings. The Quran speaks of created entities whose existence, awareness, and devotion are real, even if their nature lies beyond human perception.

The Quran further expands this vision by describing universal submission that includes both animate and inanimate creation:

اَلَمْ تَرَ اَنَّ اَللَّهَ يَسْجُدُ لَهٗ ۚ وَمَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْاَرْضِ وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ وَالنُّجُوْمُ وَالْجِبَالُ وَالشَّجَرُ وَالْاَنْۢبِيَاۗءُ وَكَثِيْرٌ مِّنَ النَّاسِ ۚ (الْحَجَّ ١٨)

“Do you not see that to Allah prostrates whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, the animals, and many among humankind” (Al-Hajj 22:18)

These verses establish a foundational Quranic worldview: all creation is alive with purpose, awareness, and obedience, each according to its own mode of existence. The Quran repeatedly affirms that creation possesses forms of communication and submission that are real, though often hidden from human senses. The limitation, therefore, is not in creation’s awareness, but in humanity’s perception.

This Quranic perspective stands in contrast to modern scientific speculation, which often asks whether humanity is alone in the universe. Contemporary astronomy

estimates that the observable universe contains trillions of galaxies, with billions of potentially habitable planets. In response to this vastness, scientists have proposed probabilistic models, such as the Drake Equation, to estimate the number of technologically advanced civilizations that might exist within the Milky Way.

$$N = R^* \times f_p \times n_e \times f_l \times f_i \times f_c \times L$$

Where:

- N = number of communicative civilizations
- R^* = average rate of star formation
- f_p = fraction of stars with planets
- n_e = average number of habitable planets per star
- f_l = fraction of planets that could support life that can be developed
- f_i = fraction of planets that develop intelligent life
- f_c = fraction of civilizations that develop technology to release detectable signals
- L = duration over which such civilizations release detectable signals

While such models vary widely in their conclusions, the Quran approaches the question from an entirely different angle. It does not speculate about isolated pockets of intelligence struggling to emerge in a silent universe. Instead, it presents the cosmos as fully inhabited by conscious creation, constantly engaged in glorification and submission to its Creator.

The Quran itself provides examples of this concealed awareness. Prophet Sulaiman (peace be upon him) was granted the ability to understand the speech of birds and the communication of ants, communities described as organized, intentional, and morally aware. The miracle was not that these creatures communicated, but that he was enabled to comprehend their language.

Thus, from the Quranic perspective, intelligence and awareness are not rare anomalies in the universe. They are intrinsic features of creation. What is rare is not conscious life, but human humility, the willingness to recognize that existence extends far beyond what the senses can detect.

4. The Mystery of the Universe's Creation

Human beings have always been drawn to the question of how the universe began and how it will ultimately end. Across history, scientists and philosophers have proposed competing theories to explain cosmic origins. The Quran does not enter this discussion to satisfy curiosity alone, but to redirect it, inviting reflection, inspiring inquiry, and grounding exploration in reverence for the Creator and the coherence of His design.

In Surah Al-Anbiya, two verses stand out as foundational references to the beginning and conclusion of the universe.

The first describes the heavens and the earth as once forming a single, unified entity before undergoing a decisive separation:

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا... (٣٠)

“Do those who disbelieve not see that the heavens and the earth were once a joined entity, and We then split them apart?” (Al-Anbiya 21:30)

The Quran does not specify the physical mechanism of this separation, nor does it attempt to reduce creation to a technical process. Instead, it affirms two decisive truths: unity preceded differentiation, and the transition occurred by divine command.

In the same verse, Allah immediately connects cosmic origin to biological reality:

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (٣٠)

“And We made from water every living thing. Will they then not believe?” (Al-Anbiya 21:30)

Here, the Quran links the structure of the cosmos with the emergence of life, emphasizing continuity between the grand scale of creation and the intimate reality of living beings. Life is neither accidental nor detached from the universe’s origin; it is woven into its design.

Later in the same Surah, the Quran shifts from origin to destiny, presenting a striking image of cosmic closure:

يَوْمَ نَطْوِي السَّمَاءَ كَطَيِّ السِّجِلِّ لِلْكُتُبِ (١٠٤)

“On the Day when We will fold the heaven like the folding of a scroll for records.” (Al-Anbiya 21:104)

The imagery of folding and unfolding conveys order, intentionality, and reversibility. Just as creation began deliberately, it will be concluded deliberately. The universe is not drifting toward chaos but moving toward fulfillment according to a divine promise:

كَمَا بَدَأْنَا أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ نُعِيدُهُ ۖ وَعَدَّا عَلَيْهَا إِنَّا كُنَّا فَعْلِينَ (١٠٤)

“Just as We began the first creation, We will repeat it. This is a promise binding upon Us, and We will surely fulfill it.” (Al-Anbiya 21:104)

The Quran thus frames the universe as finite, purposeful, and reversible, governed not by chance but by command.

This Juz further deepens the cosmological picture by introducing a critical concept: time is not uniform across all realms of existence. The Quran presents multiple statements that challenge the assumption that time flows identically everywhere. Two verses explicitly compare divine time to human reckoning:

وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِالْعَذَابِ وَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ ۖ وَإِنَّ يَوْمًا عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ كَأَلْفِ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ (٤٧)

“And they ask you to hasten on the punishment. But Allah never fails His Promise. Indeed, a day with your Lord is like a thousand years of what you count.” (Al-Hajj 22:47)

يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يَعْرُجُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ (٥)

“He manages the affair from the heaven to the earth, then it ascends to Him in a day whose measure is a thousand years of what you count.” (Al-Sajda 32:5)

In both cases, the phrase “of what you count” anchors the comparison explicitly to human temporal reckoning. The Qur’an acknowledges human time as one valid measure, but not the only one.

A third verse introduces a far greater timescale:

﴿تَعْرُجُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ﴾

“The angels and the Spirit ascend to Him in a day whose measure is fifty thousand years.” (Al-Ma‘ārij 70:4)

Here, the Quran deliberately omits any reference to human reckoning. This omission is significant. It suggests that angelic ascent occurs within a different temporal domain, not merely a longer duration of the same time humans experience.

The Quran thus presents time as plural and contextual:

- Human time tied to earthly cycles,
- Divine administration operating on different scales,
- Angelic realms functioning within distinct temporal frameworks.

The Quran does not collapse these into a single model, nor does it attempt to quantify them mathematically. It preserves distinction, hierarchy, and mystery.

Modern physics arrived, centuries later, at a comparable insight: time is not absolute. Einstein’s theory of Special Relativity demonstrated that time depends on motion; as velocity increases, time slows relative to a stationary observer, a phenomenon known as time dilation. This effect has been experimentally confirmed through atomic clocks, satellites, and GPS systems. The relationship is governed by the equation

$$\text{Time dilation factor} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1 - \frac{v^2}{c^2}}}$$

where:

- v is the speed of motion
- c is the speed of light

What Speed Corresponds to “One Day = One Thousand Years”?

If one day in a moving frame corresponds to 1,000 years on Earth, then the time dilation factor is:

$$1000 \times 365 \approx 365,000$$

Solving Einstein's equation shows that such a ratio is only achieved when the moving system travels at:

$$v \approx 0.999999999996 c$$

That is: Less than one millimeter per second below the speed of light, an extreme condition far beyond ordinary cosmic motion.

While the Quran is not a physics textbook, this scientific discovery provides a useful analogy. It shows that the intuition of uniform time is false, and that time varies across contexts, and human experience represents only one frame among many.

The Quran invites humanity to contemplate the universe's origin, structure, and destiny not as products of blind chance, but as expressions of deliberate order and divine will. It presents a cosmos that begins and ends by command, operates across multiple temporal frameworks, and remains intelligible without being exhaustively defined.

Scientific inquiry, when guided by humility, becomes a form of reflection rather than rivalry. The Quran does not discourage exploration; it anchors it, so that wonder leads not to arrogance, but to recognition of the One who began creation and will bring it to completion.

5. Revelation and Civilizational Development

Divine revelation is often narrowly understood as guidance limited to belief, worship, and personal morality. The Quran, however, presents a broader vision of wahy (وحي): a form of divine inspiration that also nurtures human intellect, craftsmanship, and civilizational advancement. Revelation does not merely reform hearts; it equips humanity with the knowledge and skills necessary to preserve life, organize society, and fulfill its role as steward on earth.

One clear example appears in the mission of Prophet Nuḥ (peace be upon him), who was divinely guided to build the ship, an unprecedented engineering achievement allowing survival amid global catastrophe and laying foundations for maritime knowledge. Likewise, Allah granted Prophet Dawud (peace be upon him) specialized knowledge in metallurgy and armor-making:

وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ صَنْعَةَ لَبُوسٍ لَّكُمْ لِيُحْصِنَكُمْ مِنْ بَأْسِكُمْ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ شَاكِرُونَ (٨٠)

“We taught him how to make coats of armor for your benefit, to protect you in battle. Will you then be grateful?” (Al-Anbiya 21:80)

Iron is among the most resistant naturally occurring materials, requiring controlled technique and precision to shape. The Quran attributes this mastery not to trial-and-

error alone, but to divine enablement, whether through inspired knowledge of techniques, extraordinary facilitation, or a combination of both.

This is further elaborated in Surah Saba:

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ مِنَّا فَضْلًا يَجِبَالٌ أَوْبِي مَعَهُ وَالطَّيْرُ وَالنَّارُ لَهُ الْحَدِيدَ (١٠)

“And We certainly granted Dawud favor from Us, [saying]: O mountains and birds, echo with him in praise! And We made iron pliable for him.” (Saba 34:10)

The Quran does not specify *how* this pliability occurred. It leaves open multiple possibilities:

- inspiration toward advanced metalworking techniques,
- divine protection from the dangers of heat and forging,
- or a temporary suspension of ordinary physical constraints.

All possibilities point to the same truth: Allah is sovereign over the laws of nature and grants humanity access to them when wisdom and mercy require it.

This pattern extends beyond metallurgy. From Nuh’s ship emerged principles of buoyancy and structural design; from Yusuf’s administration came models of economic planning and crisis management; from Sulaiman’s authority came advances in organization, construction, and governance. Each prophetic mission marked progress in both spiritual orientation and applied knowledge.

The Quran thus presents revelation as a catalyst for civilization, not an obstacle to it. When later Muslim societies embraced the Qur’anic calls to *tafakkur* “تفكر” (reflection) and *ta’aqul* “تعقل” (reasoned understanding), these principles translated into tangible achievements: sophisticated water systems, metallurgy, architecture, chemistry, and engineering. Knowledge flourished not despite faith, but because of it.

Figures such as Jabir ibn Ḥayyan advanced experimental chemistry and metallurgical techniques; Muslim engineers developed complex hydraulic systems; and craftsmen refined high-quality steels renowned for durability and precision. These were not isolated achievements, but expressions of stewardship (khalifah) grounded in tawhid.

Seen in this light, the Quran’s integration of revelation and applied knowledge is an expression of mercy. Protection through armor, survival through shipbuilding, stability through planning, and stewardship through knowledge all reflect divine compassion extended through prophetic guidance.

It is within this comprehensive framework that Allah defines the mission of His final Messenger (PBUH)

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ (١٠٧)

“And We have not sent you, [O Mohammad], except as a mercy for all the worlds.” (Al-Anbiya 21:107)

This mercy encompasses not only spiritual salvation, but guidance that nurtures life, preserves dignity, restrains destruction, and builds civilization upon moral clarity.

6. Guaranteed Immediate Fulfillment of Certain Dua

While all sincere supplication (du‘a’) is heard by Allah, the Qu’an highlights specific invocations that carry an explicit promise of immediate divine response. Among the most powerful is the supplication of Prophet Yunus (Dhul-Noon) when he found himself enveloped in layers of darkness, physical, emotional, and spiritual.

وَدَا النُّونَ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغْلِظًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ (٨٧)

“And [mention] Dhul-Noon, when he went away in anger, thinking We would not restrain him. Then he called out in the darkness: ‘There is no god but You. Glory be to You! Indeed, I have been among the wrongdoers.’ (Al-Anbiya 21:87)

This supplication combines three essential elements:

1. Absolute affirmation of *tawhid*,
2. Glorification of Allah beyond any imperfection,
3. Honest acknowledgment of personal fault.

Allah’s response is immediate and universalized:

فَأَسْتَجِبْنَا لَهُ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْعَمَّةِ وَكَذَلِكَ نُجِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (٨٨)

“So, We responded to him and saved him from distress. This is how We do save the believers.” (Al-Anbiya 21:88)

The Quran does not present this rescue as an isolated event. It explicitly extends the promise to all believers who invoke Allah with the same sincerity, humility, and clarity.

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq reflected on this Quranic pattern with deep attentiveness, noting how Allah repeatedly pairs moments of fear or distress with specific invocations, followed immediately by divine relief. His reflections highlight a profound reality: the Quran is not only guidance, but a manual of divine response.

He said: “I am astonished at the one who feels fear but does not remember the verse in which Allah says:

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ
“Those to whom the people said, ‘Indeed, a great army has gathered against you, so fear them.’ But it only increased them in faith, and they said, ‘Allah is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs.’ (Al-Imran 3: 173)

For I have heard Allah say immediately after it:

فَأَنْقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ لَمْ يَمَسَّ لَهُمْ سُوءٌ

"So, they returned with grace and favor from Allah, no harm had touched them."
(Al-Imran 3: 174)

He continued: "I am astonished at the one who feels distressed and anxious yet does not recall Allah's words about Dhul-Noon:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

"There is no God but You, glory to you, I have been among the wrongdoers."(Al-Anbia 21:87)

For I have heard Allah say right afterward:

فَأَسْتَجِبْنَا لَهُ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْعَمِّ وَكَذَلِكَ نُنْجِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

" We responded to him and saved him from distress. This is how We do save the believers." (Al-Anbia 21:88)

And he added: I am astonished at the one who fears the deceit of others but does not remember the saying of Allah about the believer from the family of Pharaoh:

فَسْتَذْكُرُونَ مَا أَقُولَ لَكُمْ وَأَفَوضُ أُمْرِي إِلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

"I commit my affairs entirely to Allah; surely Allah is fully aware of His servants,"(Ghafer 40:44)

For I have heard Allah say afterward:

فَوَقَاهُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِ مَا مَكَرُوا وَحَاقَ بِآلِ فِرْعَوْنَ سُوءُ الْعَذَابِ

"So, Allah protected him from their evil schemes." (Ghafer 40:45)

These reflections reveal a profound Qur'anic reality: the Quran is not merely a book of guidance, but a living manual of divine response. Certain supplications are deliberately paired with Allah's immediate answer, inviting the believer to trust, invoke, and witness the promise fulfilled through sincerity and faith.

7. Beware of the Danger of Conditional Faith

These verses issue a serious warning against conditional faith, belief that survives only in comfort and collapses under trial. The Quran makes clear that true faith is not measured by verbal profession, but by steadfastness when circumstances turn difficult.

وَمَنْ النَّاسُ مَنْ يَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ عَلَى حَرْفٍ فَإِنْ أَصَابَهُ خَيْرٌ اطْمَأَنَّ بِهِ وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ فِتْنَةٌ انْقَلَبَ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ خَسِرَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةَ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْخُسْرَانُ الْمُبِينُ (١١) يَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُ وَمَا لَا يَنْفَعُهُ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الضَّلَالُ الْبَعِيدُ (١٢) يَدْعُوا لِمَنْ ضُرُّهُ أَقْرَبُ مِنْ نَفْعِهِ لِيُبْسَ الْمَوْلَى وَلِيُبْسَ الْعَشِيرُ (١٣)

“And among people is one who worships Allah on the edge. If good befalls him, he is reassured by it; but if a trial afflicts him, he turns back on his face, losing both this world and the Hereafter. That is the manifest loss. (11) He calls upon besides Allah what can neither harm nor benefit him. That is extreme misguidance. (12) He calls upon one whose harm is closer than his benefit, how wretched a protector and how wretched an ally.” (Al-Hajj 22:11-13)

The image is striking. To worship "on the edge" is to stand at the margin of commitment: never fully rooted, always prepared to withdraw. Such a person approaches faith as a transaction. If ease continues, belief remains; if hardship appears, belief retreats. The consequence is clear: he loses both this world and the Hereafter.

In this world, such faith produces anxiety and instability, because security depends on circumstances that constantly change. In the Hereafter, it results in loss because devotion was never anchored in sincerity.

This pattern is not new. Allah reminds believers that earlier communities were tested severely:

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَّاءُ وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصُرُ اللَّهُ أَأَلَّا إِنَّ نَصَرَ اللَّهُ قَرِيبٌ (٢١٤)

“Do you think you will enter Paradise while there has not yet come to you the like of what came to those who passed before you? They were touched with hardship and adversity until the messenger and those who believed with him said, ‘When will the help of Allah come?’ Indeed, the help of Allah is near.” (Al-Baqarah 2:214)

Even prophets and their companions reached moments of intense strain, yet they did not abandon faith. Trial was not evidence against truth; it was the arena in which truth was proven.

The Israelites offer a recurring example: gratitude flourished during visible miracles but weakened when hardship returned. Their story stands as a mirror for any community that allows comfort, rather than conviction, to govern belief.

In contrast, the sincere believer’s relationship with Allah is not transactional. Ease becomes an opportunity for gratitude; hardship becomes a field for patience. The Prophet (PBUH) summarized this unique state:

عَنْ أَبِي يَحْيَى صُهِيبِ بْنِ سِنَانَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: عَجَبًا لِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ إِنَّ أَمْرَهُ كُلُّهُ لَهُ خَيْرٌ، وَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ لِأَحَدٍ إِلَّا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ: إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ سَرَاءٌ شَكَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ، وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ ضَرَاءٌ صَبَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ. (رواه مسلم)
“How amazing is the affair of the believer! For him, there is good in every situation. If something pleasing befalls him, he is grateful and that is good for him; and if hardship strikes him, he is patient and that is good for him.” (Muslim)

Thus, while superficial faith seeks comfort, true faith seeks Allah Himself. Those who remain firm under trial gain inner stability in this life and eternal security in the next. Those who worship on the edge risk losing both.

8. You Fulfill the Command and Allah Delivers the Results

Allah commanded Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) to proclaim the pilgrimage, despite standing alone in a barren valley, far removed from population centers and human infrastructure. By any human calculation, the command appeared impossible: how could a single voice reach people across continents and generations? Yet Allah said:

وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَىٰ كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ (الحج)

“And proclaim to mankind the Hajj (pilgrimage). They will come to you on foot and on every lean camel, they will come from every distant pass.” (Al-Hajj 22:27)

Ibrahim’s responsibility was not to achieve, but to obey. He fulfilled the command without hesitation. The outcome, millions responding across centuries, belonged entirely to Allah. A single act of obedience became a timeless global reality.

This episode establishes a foundational Qur’anic principle: Human responsibility lies in obedience; divine responsibility lies in outcomes.

The action is required, but it is never sufficient on its own. When obedience is sincere and uncompromised, Allah magnifies its effects beyond human capacity.

This principle applies universally. When believers align their actions fully with Allah’s commands, pure in intention and firm in obedience, Allah blesses even limited efforts with disproportionate impact. What appears insignificant by worldly standards becomes, by divine will, transformative.

Yet many believers reverse this equation. They rely heavily on strategy, wealth, influence, and calculation, often compromising divine principles to secure results. When success does not materialize, frustration and doubt follow. The Quran teaches a different logic: effort without obedience is hollow, while obedience, even with minimal means, invites divine support.

True success is not measured by the scale of human effort, but by its alignment with Allah’s command. When obedience is complete, Allah assumes responsibility for the result.

9. The Fundamental Rule for Securing Divine Support

The Quran establishes a clear, unwavering law of victory: divine support is granted only to those who actively support Allah's cause. This principle is neither symbolic nor rhetorical; it is a binding promise repeatedly affirmed in revelation.

وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَن يَنْصُرُهُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ (٤٠)

“Indeed, Allah will surely support those who Support Him. Truly, Allah is All-Powerful, All-Mighty.” (Al-Hajj 22:40)

The same rule is restated with equal clarity in Surat Muhammad:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ (٧)

“O you who believe! If you support Allah, He will support you and make your footing firm.” (Muhammad 47:7)

The Quran then removes all ambiguity by defining precisely who qualifies as those who “support Allah”:

الَّذِينَ إِذَا مَكَتْنَاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتَوْا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَنَقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ (٤١)

“[They are] those who, when We establish them in the land, establish prayer, pay the Zakat, command what is right, and forbid what is evil. And to Allah belongs the outcome of all matters.” (Al-Hajj 22:41)

Divine support, therefore, is not earned through slogans, emotional attachment, or identity alone. It is secured through obedience, moral responsibility, and the active establishment of justice, beginning with personal conduct and extending to society.

History repeatedly confirms this law. Communities that appeared weak by worldly measures, small in number and limited in resources, prevailed against far greater forces, not through superior strategy alone, but through divine support earned by clarity of purpose and integrity of action.

The most striking example is the generation of the Prophet's Companions. Within a few decades, they overcame the two dominant empires of their age, not because they possessed greater armies, but because they carried a mission grounded in truth and justice.

One of their representatives summarized that mission when addressing a Persian general: *“Allah has sent us to deliver you from the worship of creation to the worship of the Creator of creation; from the narrowness of this world to the vastness of this world and the Hereafter; and from the injustice of religions to the justice of Islam.”*

They supported Allah by upholding His commands, carrying the message of His Messenger (PBUH), and standing firmly for justice. In return, Allah fulfilled His promise, granting them victory, stability, and enduring impact.

The rule remains unchanged across time: support Allah's cause, and Allah will support you.

10. Recognizing Allah Through the Simplest Sign of Creation

Throughout the Quran, Allah presents signs not only in the extraordinary, but in the most ordinary and familiar elements of creation, directing human intellect toward a simple conclusion: none is worthy of worship except Him. One of the most striking examples appeals to reason through the smallest of creatures:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ضَرْبٌ مِّثْلُ مَا فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَنْ يَخْلُقُوا ذُبَابًا وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعُوا لَهُ ..
(٧٣)

“O mankind! A parable is presented, so listen to it carefully: those whom you call upon besides Allah could never create a single fly, even if they all came together for that purpose. ...” (Al-Hajj 22:73)

Allah deliberately chooses the fly, an insect often dismissed as insignificant, to expose the absolute helplessness of all false objects of worship. Even if every idol, power, or authority were to unite, they could not create the simplest living creature. The verse then sharpens the argument further:

وَإِنْ يَسْلُبْهُمُ الذُّبَابُ شَيْئًا لَا يَسْتَنْقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ضَعُفَ الطَّالِبِ وَالْمَطْلُوبِ (٧٣)

“And if the fly were to snatch something away from them, they could not recover it. How weak are both the seeker and the sought,” (Al-Hajj 22:73)

Modern scientific observation deepens this reflection. A fly feeds by secreting digestive enzymes that chemically break down substances before ingestion. Once this process occurs, the original material is permanently altered and cannot truly be retrieved. The Quranic statement is therefore not only rhetorically precise, but scientifically accurate.

Allah ends with a devastating assessment: "How weak are both the seeker and the sought." The one who seeks help from false gods is weak, and what he seeks is even weaker. Allah then identifies the root of this failure:

مَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ (٧٤)

“They have not given Allah His rightful due. Indeed, Allah is All-Powerful, All-Mighty.” (Al-Hajj 22:74)

Failure to recognize Allah does not arise from lack of evidence, but from lack of reflection. Even the smallest creature, when examined honestly, reveals layers of

complexity, precision, and design that point unmistakably to a Creator of absolute power and wisdom. Those who truly reflect are not led to arrogance, but to humility; not to doubt, but to awe; not to confusion, but to unwavering faith.

Conclusion

Taken together, the reflections in this chapter reveal the seventeenth Juz as a coherent moral framework built upon three enduring principles: steadfast faith under trial, responsible effort in obedience to Allah, and complete reliance on Him for outcomes. The verses remind us that time is limited, accountability is inevitable, and that true loss is not the loss of comfort or position, but the loss of one's standing in the Hereafter.

At the same time, this Juz makes clear that revelation is not a retreat from the world, but guidance for engaging it rightly. Faith is tested through action, knowledge is meant to build and protect civilization, supplication is paired with trust, and divine support is granted according to clear moral laws. Victory, relief, and stability are not the products of power alone, but of sincerity, obedience, and perseverance upon truth.

If these jewels awaken in the reader a deeper awareness of Allah's nearness, a firmer resolve to obey Him without conditions, and renewed confidence that sincere effort, however small, can be magnified by Allah's power, then they will have fulfilled their purpose, by His permission.

Jewels from the Eighteenth Juz: Divine Light, Human Responsibility, and Social Order

(Al-Munenoon 23:1 -Al-Furqan 25:20)

Introduction

The selected verses from Juz 18 revolve around two tightly connected Quranic themes: moral order within society and measured responsibility before Allah. At the heart of this Juz stands Surah Al-Nur, which lays down a comprehensive framework for social integrity, beginning with the supremacy of divine command, refining personal and social conduct, regulating modesty, establishing the Masjid as a center of moral illumination, and culminating in a conditional promise of security and leadership.

Alongside this moral architecture, the Juz addresses foundational realities of human existence: that life is a measured test, that essential provision such as water is precisely controlled by Allah, that history unfolds according to moral laws, and that messengers are human so that accountability remains unavoidable. Together, these verses demonstrate that stability, guidance, and leadership arise only when moral clarity and responsibility are firmly established.

1. Rank Your Character Against that of the Successful Believers

Surah Al-Mu'minun opens by presenting the defining qualities of true believers. These opening verses function as a moral and spiritual scorecard, enabling believers to evaluate themselves before they are evaluated by Allah. Notably, the Quran integrates acts of worship with moral conduct (al-ibadat wal-akhlaq/ العبادات والأخلاق), emphasizing that success in the sight of Allah requires both inward devotion and outward discipline.

Omar ibn al-Khattab (RA) reported that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

عن عمر بن الخطاب - رضي الله عنه - قال : قال رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم ".....أُنزِلَ عَلَيَّ عَشْرُ آيَاتٍ مَنْ أَقَامَهُنَّ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ ، ثُمَّ قَرَأَ : " قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ " ، حَتَّى حَتَمَ عَشْرَ آيَاتٍ (الترمذي)
"Ten verses were revealed to me; whoever upholds them will enter Paradise. Then He (PBUH) recited (قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ) "Indeed the believers had succeeded" until He finished the ten verses of Surah Al Mu'minun." [Tirmidhi]

The Surah begins by identifying six core characteristics that define successful believers. These traits are deliberately structured, reflecting a balanced integration of worship, self-restraint, and social responsibility:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ (١) الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ (٢) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ (٣) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ (٤) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ (٥) إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَرْوَاحِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ

عَيَّرَ مَلُومِينَ (٦) فَمَنْ أَبْتَعَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ (٧) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمْنَتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ (٨) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَوَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ (٩)

“Indeed, the Believers have succeeded:

1. Those who are reverent (have Khoshoo) in their prayers.
2. Those who turn away from Laghw (vain talk and deeds).
3. Those who are active in working to pay the Zakat.
4. Those who guard their private parts, except with their spouses or those lawfully permitted; whoever seeks beyond that are transgressors.
5. Those who faithfully observe their trusts and covenants.
6. And those who carefully maintain their prayers.” (Al- Mu'minun 23:1-9)

One trait that is frequently underestimated, yet deliberately placed immediately after prayer, is abstaining from laghw (اللغو): vain or purposeless speech and action. Laghw includes idle talk, gossip, backbiting, fruitless arguments, and activities that consume time without moral, intellectual, or practical benefit. Such behaviors drain attention, corrode relationships, and weaken spiritual focus.

By placing avoidance of laghw directly after humility in prayer, the Quran highlights the decisive role of speech and attention in shaping character. What a person consciously avoids is as revealing as what they actively perform.

A critical linguistic detail strengthens the certainty of this success. In Arabic, when قد precedes a present-tense verb, it may indicate possibility. However, when it precedes a past-tense verb, it conveys certainty and confirmation. Thus, ﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ does not describe potential success; it declares success is already affirmed by Allah.

This emphatic construction appears sparingly in the Quran, including:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا﴾ (سورة الشمس)

“Indeed, he who purified his soul has succeeded.” (Ash-Shams 91:9)

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى﴾ (سورة الأعلى)

“Indeed, he one who purifies himself has succeeded.” (Al-Ala 87:14)

In all cases, success is presented not as a distant hope but as a realized outcome.

Surat Al-Mu'minun therefore defines success neither by status nor wealth, but by disciplined worship, moral restraint, responsible speech, and trustworthiness. These verses invite believers to measure themselves honestly and to align their lives with a success that Allah Himself has already confirmed.

2. Human Life Supply: Water Is Under Allah’s Absolute Control

Human survival depends on resources that lie entirely beyond human command, and among them, water stands foremost. Life collapses without it, and even slight imbalance in its quantity results either in destruction through flooding or death through drought. Control over water is, therefore, control over life itself. Allah declares:

وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً بِقَدَرٍ فَأَسْكَنْتَهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ ذَهَابٍ بِهِ لَقَادِرُونَ (١٨)

“We sent water down from the sky in precise measure and We settled it within the earth, and indeed, We are fully capable of taking it away.” (Al- Mu’minun 23:18)

This verse establishes three foundational realities:

1. Water is sent in measured quantity, not randomly or autonomously.
2. Its storage within the earth is divinely arranged, not a human achievement.
3. Its continued availability is conditional, entirely subject to Allah’s will.

The phrase (فَأَسْكَنْتَهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ) **“We settled it in the earth”** points directly to underground water systems, natural reservoirs that sustain human civilization, agriculture, and ecosystems. Humanity benefits from these systems without having designed, regulated, or guaranteed them. Their existence is a divine mercy; their disappearance would be a reminder of dependence.

Allah reinforces this truth through a complementary verse:

وَأَرْسَلْنَا الرِّيحَ لَوَافِحَ لِنُزِّلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَاسْقَيْنَاكُمُوهُ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ لَهُ بِخَازِنِينَ (٢٢)

“We send the winds for fertilization and send down water from the sky, providing it for you to drink, but you are not the ones who store it.” (Al-Hijr 15: 22)

The precision of the Quranic wording is critical. The phrase (فَأَسْقَيْنَاكُمُوهُ), "We gave it to you to drink," narrows the focus from rainwater in general to drinking water specifically. Humans may store water externally, but they cannot store it within themselves. The Quran thus establishes a hierarchy of dependence:

- Allah controls the sending of water,
- Allah controls its storage in the earth,
- Allah controls its distribution into living bodies,
- And Allah alone can withhold it entirely.

Water, therefore, is not merely a physical resource, it is a daily sign of measured provision and continuous dependence upon Allah.

3. Egypt's Unique Position in the Quranic Narrative

Among all lands mentioned in the Quran, Egypt occupies a uniquely prominent position. No other country is associated with as many recorded events. Approximately five hundred verses refer directly or indirectly to events that occurred there, particularly those connected to Prophet Musa and Prophet Yusuf (peace be upon them).

In Juz 18, this focus appears clearly in Allah's statement:

ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ وَأَخَاهُ هَارُونَ بِآيَاتِنَا وَسُلْطٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ (٤٥) إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِۦ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا ..

“Then We sent Moses and his brother Aaron, with Our signs and clear authority, (45) to Pharaoh and his elite, but they responded with arrogance; ..” (Al-Mu'minun 23:45-46)

This passage highlights not only prophetic confrontation, but also a fully developed political structure: centralized authority, a ruling elite, and an entrenched system of power.

Another verse in the same Juz refers to the land of Sinai:

وَشَجَرَةً تَخْرُجُ مِن طُورِ سَيْنَاءَ تَنْبُتُ بِالدُّهْنِ وَصِبْغٍ لِلْآكِلِينَ (٢٠)

“And a tree, growing out of Mount Sinai, that produces oil and relish for the eaters.” (Al-Mu'minun 23:20)

Although the tree is not named explicitly, the description strongly points to the olive tree, mentioned here after Allah speaks of rain-watered vegetation. Its inclusion highlights Sinai, and by extension Egypt, as a land of both material sustenance and symbolic guidance.

The Quran's sustained focus on Egypt is not incidental. Egypt functions as a historical laboratory in which the laws governing civilizations are demonstrated through lived events rather than abstract theory.

Within the Egyptian narratives, the Quran presents a complete civilizational ecosystem:

- Absolute centralized authority: Pharaoh
- Administrative elite: al-mala' (the ruling class)
- State economy: agriculture, storehouses, cycles of abundance and famine
- Social stratification: oppression of the Children of Israel
- Official ideology: deification of political power
- Knowledge systems: magic and institutionalized deception
- Crisis management: Yusuf's administration during famine
- Civilizational transition: the Exodus and collapse of tyranny

Egypt stands in the Quran not merely as a geographical location of past events, but as a recurring case study for humanity, a warning, a lesson, and a mirror for every society that seeks power without justice or prosperity without moral restraint.

4. Every Test Is Measured to One's Capacity

One of the most common arguments against belief in God is the presence of evil in the world. This argument, however, rests on a misunderstanding of the nature of life itself. From the Quranic perspective, life is not a final destination but a testing ground. Hardship, struggle, and moral challenge are not flaws in the system; they are essential components of it.

Just as students must undergo examinations to demonstrate readiness and progress, human beings are tested to reveal faith, integrity, and accountability. The Quran repeatedly frames life as an examination of belief, character, and obedience, both in hardship and in ease.

Crucially, Allah establishes a decisive principle that no test exceeds a person's capacity:

وَلَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۗ وَلَدَيْنَا كِتَابٌ يَنْطِقُ بِالْحَقِّ ۗ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ (المؤمنون: 62)

“We do not burden any soul beyond its capacity. With Us is a record that speaks the truth, and they will not be wronged.” (Al-Mu'minun 23:62)

Every test is precisely measured, recorded with truth, and administered with absolute justice. Failure, therefore, is never the result of unbearable burden, but of moral neglect:

بَلْ قُلُوبُهُمْ فِي غَمْرَةٍ مِّنْ هَذَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْمَلُ مِّنْ دُونِ ذَلِكَ هُمْ لَهَا عَمِلُونَ (٦٣)

“Rather, their hearts are immersed in heedlessness of this (message), and they are occupied with other deeds.” (Al- Mu'minun 23: 63)

The Quran thus identifies the true cause of failure: heedlessness, not hardship. Guidance is available, capacity is sufficient, and accountability is clear.

5. The Supremacy of Divine Command in Establishing Moral Order

Surah Al-Nur opens by declaring its purpose with unmistakable clarity. It is not a collection of optional moral recommendations, but a divinely mandated framework intended to illuminate social life, protect human dignity, and purify relationships:

سُورَةٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهَا وَفَرَضْنَاهَا وَأَنْزَلْنَا فِيهَا آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ (١)

“This is a Surah which We have sent down and made obligatory, and in it We have sent down clear verses so that you may take heed.” (Al-Nur 24:1)

The name Al-Nur (The Light) signals the Surah's central function: to illuminate the moral and social fabric of society. Its commands are designed to protect honor, restrain desire, establish justice, and guide people toward Allah through clarity rather than ambiguity.

Immediately after this declaration, the Surah presents one of its most serious legal rulings:

الرَّانِيَةُ وَالرَّانِي فَاجْلِدُوا كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا مِائَةَ جَلْدَةٍ وَلَا تَأْخُذْكُمْ بِهِمَا رَأْفَةٌ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلْيَشْهَدْ عَذَابَهُمَا طَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (٢)

“The adulteress and the adulterer, flog each of them with one hundred lashes. Let not pity for them should prevail upon you in the matter of Allah’s religion, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. And let a party of believers witness their punishment.” (Al-Nur 24:2)

This placement is deliberate. The Quran begins by safeguarding sexual morality, because its corruption destabilizes families, lineage, trust, and ultimately the foundations of society itself.

It must be emphasized that such punishments are not individual actions. They are applied exclusively by a legitimate judicial authority to ensure due process, evidentiary standards, and social stability. Vigilante enforcement is categorically prohibited.

A long-standing juristic debate concerns whether this punishment applies equally to married and unmarried offenders. The verse itself makes no distinction. It is historically documented that the Prophet (PBUH), before the completion of certain revelations, adjudicated some cases according to existing Jewish law, which prescribed stoning for adultery. However, there is no definitive evidence that the Prophet (PBUH) applied stoning after the revelation of this verse in a new case.

This uncertainty is explicitly acknowledged in a report from Abdullah ibn Ab Awfa:

عن الشيباني سألت عبد الله بن أبي أوفى هل رجم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال نعم قلت قبل
سورة النور أم بعد قال لا أدري (البخاري)

“He was asked whether the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) ordered stoning. He said yes. He was then asked: was that before or after Surah Al-Noor? He replied: I do not know. (Bukhari)

Therefore, any juristic claim that permanently substitutes a Quranic ruling with pre-Quranic legislation requires unequivocal proof. Absent such proof, elevating earlier law above the Quran risks undermining the supremacy of divine revelation.

It must also be noted that establishing the crime of adultery requires four independent eyewitnesses in addition to the accuser, making false accusation extremely dangerous. Any accusation lacking four witnesses results in severe punishment for slander. Consequently, such penalties were not enforced during the Prophet’s lifetime except in cases of voluntary confession.

The objective of this ruling is deterrence, moral clarity, and protection of society, not punishment for its own sake.

Having established firm legal boundaries that protect dignity and reputation, the Surah then moves to refining everyday social conduct, addressing behaviors that preserve trust and emotional well-being.

6. Proper Protocol of visiting Peoples' homes

Surah Al-Nur transitions from major moral violations to subtle yet powerful rules of social etiquette. Trust, after all, is destroyed not only by crimes, but also by everyday insensitivity. Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ بُيُوتِكُمْ حَتَّى تَسْتَأْذِنُوا وَتُسَلِّمُوا عَلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ (٢٧) فَإِن لَّمْ تَجِدُوا فِيهَا أَحَدًا فَلَا تَدْخُلُوهَا حَتَّىٰ يُؤْذَنَ لَكُمْ وَإِن قِيلَ لَكُمْ آرْجِعُوا فَآرْجِعُوا هُوَ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ (٢٨)

“O you who believe, do not enter houses other than your own until you seek familiarity and greet their inhabitants; that is better for you, in order that you may remember; And if you find no one therein, still, do not enter until permission has been given. And if you are told to return, then return; that is purer for you. And Allah is All-Knower of what you do” (Al-Nur 24:27-28).

At first glance, this instruction may appear self-evident. Yet it addresses a common social tension: visiting someone who may feel obligated to receive a guest despite being distracted, burdened, or unprepared.

The key term here is *تَسْتَأْذِنُوا* (tastanisū). Often translated as “seek permission,” but its root (أذِن) conveys comfort, ease, and emotional readiness. The verse therefore requires more than formal consent; it requires genuine welcome. Entry is only appropriate when the host is truly comfortable with the visit.

If one is asked to return, the Quran reframes this not as rejection, but as moral refinement:

هُوَ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ

“That is purer for you.”

This command protects emotional boundaries, preserves relationships, and prevents resentment, essential elements of a society built on trust rather than pressure.

Once private spaces are protected and social boundaries respected, the Surah advances to regulating modesty itself, guarding not only homes, but eyes, hearts, and desires.

7. Guidelines for Modesty in Women’s Dress

The Quranic verse that provides direct guidance regarding women’s modesty, specifically the protection of private parts and restraint in adornment, states:

وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَعْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَرِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهُنَّ وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ
بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ (٣١)

“And say to the believing women to lower their gaze, guard their private parts, and not to display their adornment except what is apparent thereof, and to draw their head covering over their over chests (the necks and bosoms,) (Al-Noor 24:31)

The central phrase in this verse is (وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا) “and do not to expose their adornment except what is apparent thereof.” This expression is intentionally concise and open-ended. Any attempt to define what qualifies as “apparent” requires adding explanatory qualifiers, and it is precisely here that scholarly interpretations diverge. Common interpretive additions include:

1. “What is apparent due to necessity”
2. “What is apparent due to need”
3. “What is apparent according to custom”

Each addition yields a different level of restriction. Yet it is essential to recognize that all such qualifiers are interpretive additions, not explicit Quranic statements. Had Allah intended to restrict the phrase to necessity, need, or custom, He could have done so unambiguously.

Because of this openness, scholars often turn to hadith literature for further clarification. The most frequently cited narration is attributed to Sayyidah Aishah (RA), reported by Khalid ibn Dureik (خالد بن دريك), concerning Asma bint Abi Bakr:

عن خالد بن دريك عن عائشة رضي الله عنها: أن أسماء بنت أبي بكر دخلت على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وعليها ثياب رقاق، فأعرض عنها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، وقال: يا أسماء إن المرأة إذا بلغت المحيض لم تصلح أن يرى منها إلا هذا وهذا- وأشار إلى وجهه وكفيه. (رواه أبو داود)

قال أبو داود هذا مرسل خالد بن دريك لم يدرك عائشة رضي الله عنها. وقال ابن القطان: ومع هذا فخالد مجهول الحال.
“Asma, daughter of Abu Bakr (that is, Aisha’s sister), entered upon the messenger of Allah (PBUH) wearing thin clothes. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) turned away and said, “O Asma, when a woman reaches the age of menstruation, nothing should be seen of her except this and this,” and he pointed to his face and hands.” (Sunan Abu Dawud)

This narration appears only in Sunan Abu Dawud. Abu Dawud himself classified it as “*mursal*”, since Khalid ibn Dureik did not meet Aishah (RA). Additionally, Ibn al-Qattan (ابن القطان) noted that Khalid’s reliability is unknown.

Given the absence of explicit Quranic specification and the weakness of the most commonly cited hadith, any rigid definition of what "is apparent" must be understood as interpretive rather than definitive.

The Quran establishes the principle of modesty: lowering the gaze, guarding private parts, and restraining display, while leaving room for contextual judgment rather than imposing uniform rigidity across cultures and eras. This approach is consistent with the Quran's broader methodology: it sets ethical boundaries while avoiding unnecessary constraints that could distort lived reality.

Importantly, this command is not isolated. It is part of a gradual moral architecture constructed throughout Surah Al-Nur. Before declaring that Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth (24:35), the Surah prepares hearts and societies to receive that light through self-restraint, moral discipline, and respect for boundaries.

Light does not enter a space overwhelmed by chaos and impulse. It requires clarity, order, and openness. Modesty in this Surah is therefore not merely concealment; it is moral refinement. It disciplines desire, reduces distraction, and clears the path from confusion toward illumination.

The light described later in the Surah does not descend into a moral vacuum. It shines upon hearts that have been trained to receive it.

8. The Masjid as a Source and Projector of Divine Light

After establishing moral discipline, modesty, and respect for boundaries, Surah Al-Noor reaches its conceptual center. Allah now discloses the source of all guidance and the mechanism through which it enters human life

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ، مَثَلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ، الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ، الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ، يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ، وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَلَ لِلنَّاسِ، وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ (٣٥)

“Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His Light is that of a niche within which is a lamp; the lamp is within glass; the glass as if it were a shining star, lit from a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would almost glow even if untouched by fire. Light upon light. Allah guides to His Light whom He wills.” (Al-Nur 24:35)

The parable describes a complete illumination system: a niche that focuses light, a lamp as its source, pure fuel that nearly glows on its own, and glass so clear it intensifies brightness rather than distorting it. Every element is refined, balanced, and purposeful. The result is not scattered illumination, but concentrated guidance: light upon light.

The Quran then links this parable directly to a physical and social reality:

فِي بُيُوتٍ أَدَانَ اللَّهُ أَنْ تُرْفَعَ وَيُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا أَسْمُهُ وَيُسَبَّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ (٣٦)

“In houses (mosques), which Allah has permitted to be raised and in which His Name is remembered, and His purity is pronounced in the morning and in the evening.” (Al-Nur 24:36)

The preposition *في* (in) is decisive. Divine light is not abstract; it is cultivated *within* specific institutions. Just as the niche is not the source of light but its organizer and projector, the Masjid is not the source of revelation but the space in which divine guidance is nurtured, disciplined, and transmitted to society.

Allah then identifies the human carriers of this light:

رِجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ (٣٧)

“Men whom neither trade nor commerce distracts them from the Remembrance of Allah, establishing prayers, and giving the Zakat. They fear a Day when hearts and eyes will be overturned.” (Al-Nur 24: 37)

These are individuals whose priorities are anchored in remembrance, prayer, charity, and accountability. Their hearts are not detached from life but disciplined within it.

Historically, the Masjid fulfilled precisely this role. It was the center of prayer, governance, education, consultation, justice, and social cohesion. From it emerged scholars, judges, leaders, and reformers. The Masjid (jam') gave rise to the university (jami'ah), and divine light shaped both intellect and character.

In this parable:

- Revelation fuels the lamp,
- The intellect absorbs and processes it,
- The purified soul transmits it without distortion,
- And the Masjid focuses and projects it into society.

When this system functions as intended, individuals emerge as beacons of moral clarity. Divine light does not remain confined within walls, it radiates outward, preparing a community for trust, responsibility, and leadership.

This naturally leads to the next question: Under what conditions does Allah entrust such a community with authority on earth?

9. The Conditional Divine Promise

When Allah makes promises, He does not present them as unconditional guarantees. Rather, His promises are tied to moral readiness and spiritual responsibility. The

promise of succession and security on earth is among the most significant collective promises in the Quran:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ
وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَن
كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ (٥٥) وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُرْحَمُونَ (٥٦)

“Allah has promised those among you who believe and do righteous deeds that He will surely grant them succession in the land, as He granted it to those before them; that He will firmly establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that He will replace their fear with security, provided that they worship Me and associate nothing with Me. And whoever disbelieves after that, those are the defiantly disobedient. (55) [People], keep up the prayer, pay the Zakah, and obey the Messenger, so that you may receive mercy. (Al-Nur 24:55-56)

This promise includes three major outcomes:

1. Succession and leadership on earth,
2. Empowerment of the chosen religion,
3. Security replacing fear.

Yet Allah explicitly conditions these outcomes. Leadership is not granted for identity, lineage, or aspiration, it is earned through obedience and integrity. The Quran identifies the conditions clearly:

- True belief that manifests in obedience,
- Righteous action that benefits society,
- Exclusive worship of Allah without association,
- Establishment of prayer,
- Payment of zakah,
- Obedience to the Messenger (PBUH).

These are not ritual checklists. They form the moral infrastructure of leadership. When these conditions are fulfilled, Allah guarantees stability, empowerment, and mercy. When they are betrayed, empowerment collapses into corruption.

Allah then issues a severe warning:

وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

“And whoever disbelieves after that, those are the defiantly disobedient.” (Al-Nur 24:55)

This is not mere theological disbelief. It is rejection through betrayal of responsibility after empowerment.

Thus, Surah Al-Nur establishes a clear sequence: moral discipline, then illumination, then institutional cultivation, then conditional empowerment.

The Qur'an then anticipates the final objection: Why should such responsibility be accepted at all? The answer lies in the nature of messengers and accountability.

10. The Nature of Messengers

The Quran repeatedly exposes the false arguments used to reject Allah's messengers. In this passage, Allah dismantles the claim that a messenger must be extraordinary in wealth or form, and reveals the real reason behind rejection: denial of accountability.

وَقَالُوا مَالِ هَذَا الرَّسُولِ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِي فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ فَيَكُونُ مَعَهُ نَذِيرًا (٧) أَوْ يُلْقَىٰ إِلَيْهِ كَنْزٌ أَوْ تَكُونُ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ يَأْكُلُ مِنْهَا وَقَالَ الظَّالِمُونَ إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَّسْحُورًا (٨)

“They say, ‘What sort of messenger is this? He eats food and walks in the marketplaces! Why has no angel been sent down with him as a warner? (7) Or why has he not been given treasure, or a garden to eat from?’ And the wrongdoers say, ‘You are only following a man under a spell.’ (Al-Furqan 25:7-8)

The objections appear material: why is he human, why does he work, why is he not accompanied by angels or wealth? But Allah exposes these claims as pretexts. Their comparisons are confused, their demands inconsistent.

Then the Quran states the real cause explicitly:

بَلْ كَذَّبُوا بِالسَّاعَةِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِمَن كَذَّبَ بِالسَّاعَةِ سَعِيرًا (١١)

“Rather, they deny the Hour, and We have prepared a blazing Fire for those who deny the Hour.” (Al-Furqan 25:11)

Rejection of the Messenger is rooted not in intellectual doubt, but in refusal to accept judgment, moral limits, and ultimate accountability.

Allah then establishes a universal rule:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ مِنْ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا إِنَّهُمْ لَيَأْكُلُونَ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشُونَ فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ..... (٢٠)

“We did not send before you any messengers except that they ate food and walked in the marketplaces.” (Al-Furqan 25:20)

Messengers are human by divine design so that guidance remains practical and binding. Accepting a human messenger means accepting responsibility. Those who deny the Hour will always reject the Messenger, regardless of how clear the message is.

Conclusion

The selected verses of Juz 18 present a unified Qur'anic logic: moral order precedes social stability, and accountability precedes divine empowerment. Through Surah Al-

Noor, Allah establishes boundaries that protect honor, privacy, and trust; disciplines desire through modesty; concentrates guidance within the Masjid; and then promises security and succession, but only upon obedience and sincerity.

The remaining verses remove all excuses. Tests are never beyond human capacity, provision is never outside Allah's control, history is governed by moral law, and messengers are human so guidance cannot be evaded. Rejection, therefore, is not caused by hardship, scarcity, or ambiguity, but by refusal to accept responsibility and the coming of the Hour.

Juz 18 teaches that divine light is not granted to societies that demand power, but to those that submit to moral truth. Where Allah's command is honored, light emerges. Where it is ignored, decline inevitably follows.

Jewels from the Nineteenth Juz: Truth, Integrity, and the Architecture of Divine Guidance

(Verses 21 of Al-Furqan to 55 of Al-Naml)

Introduction

The nineteenth Juz of the Quran moves between two vast domains: the architecture of divine guidance and the architecture of human civilization. It opens with Allah revealing the Quran as a criterion for all of humanity, and it closes with a prophet-king governing a multi-species civilization with justice, knowledge, and humility. Between these two poles, the Juz weaves together deep spiritual truths, ethical foundations, and civilizational patterns that explain how societies rise, fall, and are judged.

This Juz does not merely call individuals to faith; it shows how belief, knowledge, power, technology, and moral accountability interact. It teaches that guidance is not given randomly, that civilizations are tested by how they use their capacities, and that even the smallest creature can play a decisive role in history.

The following ten jewels draw out these themes, inviting the reader to see the Quran not only as a book of devotion, but as a map of reality itself.

1. The Slow and Thematic Study of the Quran

Truth seekers raise sincere questions in order to clarify matters, verify what is true, and remove doubt. By contrast, those who reject divine authority often raise objections not to understand, but to evade moral and spiritual responsibility. One such objection was voiced by the disbelievers of Mecca, who claimed they would have believed in the Quran had it been revealed all at once. Allah responds to this claim directly:

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَّأَحَدَهُ كَذَّالِكِ لِنُنَبِّتَ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ وَرَتَّلْنَاهُ تَرْتِيلًا (٣٢)
“Those who disbelieve say, “Why was the Quran not revealed to him all at once?” Thus (it is revealed gradually) so that We strengthen your heart with it, and We have arranged it in a deliberate, measured manner.” (Al-Furqan 25:32)

This verse not only refutes their objection but also reveals a fundamental principle of how divine guidance was delivered. The phrase ﴿وَرَتَّلْنَاهُ تَرْتِيلًا﴾ indicates intentional ordering and measured sequencing, not randomness or haste. Classical translations reflect this by rendering it as “in stages,” “with deliberate arrangement,” or “in a well-ordered manner.”

The key term is tartīl (ترتيل), which appears only twice in the Quran: here, and in Surat al-Muzzammil:

وَرَتَّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا (٤)

“And recite the Qur’an with measured recitation”. (Al-Muzzammil 73:4)

In this verse, tartil is traditionally understood as a command to recite in a careful, deliberate, and mindful way: clearly articulated, unrushed, and attentive to meaning.

When these two verses are read together, an important symmetry emerges. In Surat al-Furqan, Allah performs tartil in the mode of revelation, gradual and purposeful, to strengthen the heart of the Prophet (PBUH). In Surat al-Muzzammil, the Prophet (peace be upon him) is commanded to perform tartil in recitation, as preparation for bearing the weight of revelation:

وَرَتَّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلاً (٤) إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا (٥)

“Recite the Qur’an with measured recitation. (4) Indeed, We are about to place upon you a weighty message.” (Al-Muzzammil 73:4-5)

Classically, this pairing indicates that measured recitation supports spiritual endurance, while gradual revelation supports emotional and psychological stability. Both serve the same divine purpose: enabling the Messenger (PBUH) to carry a message of immense gravity.

Beyond this, the Quran's gradual revelation was closely tied to lived events, questions, and struggles faced by the early Muslim community. Guidance was delivered in context, allowing it to be immediately understood, applied, and embodied. In this sense, revelation was not only gradual but educationally structured: another dimension of divine tartil.

Linguistically, the root ر ت ل (r-t-l) conveys the idea of ordered arrangement and deliberate alignment of similar elements. Classical usage includes expressions such as *ratala al-khayl* (رتل الخيل), meaning to arrange horses of similar type in a disciplined row. This denotes not mere sequence, but purposeful organization based on relevance and similarity.

In this light, studying the Quran thematically, by gathering and correlating verses that address a single subject, may be understood as a reflective application of the Quran's tartil-based structure. This approach seeks to honor the Quran's underlying principle: that guidance is meant to be encountered in an ordered, coherent, and integrated way

Thus, just as divine tartil organized revelation in a form suited to human capacity and lived reality, thematic study allows the Quran to explain itself, as expressed in the classical principle:

القرآن يفسر بعضه بعضاً

“The Qur’an explains itself through itself.”

2. The Best Tafseer of the Quran is the Divine One

The Quran is the Word of Allah, and no one is more qualified to explain it than Allah Himself. This foundational principle is stated explicitly:

وَلَا يَأْتُونَكَ بِمَثَلٍ إِلَّا جِئْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَأَحْسَنَ تَفْسِيرًا (٣٣)

“They do not bring you any example except that We bring you the truth and the best explanation.” (Al-Furqan 25:33)

Classical scholars understood this verse as the foundation of Quranic self-interpretation: القرآن يفسر بعضه بعضاً, "The Quran explains itself through itself." The highest form of interpretation is therefore using the Quran to explain the Quran. Ambiguous verses are clarified by explicit ones, general statements by specific ones, and concise passages by fuller explanations found elsewhere in the text.

Scholars like al-Shatibi noted that the Quran is not structured like a linear textbook. Instead, it weaves central themes, such as faith, divine justice, and mercy, across various contexts. These repetitions are not redundant; they offer variations that deepen meaning. Understanding a topic therefore requires a thematic approach: gathering all relevant verses to allow their cumulative message and internal coherence to emerge.

This explains why the Prophet (PBUH) did not leave verse-by-verse commentary. His mission was to embody and apply the message, while the Quran maintained its own explanatory framework. Scholars such as Ibn Taymiyyah noted that the Prophet (PBUH) provided clarification primarily where it was needed for law and practice.

The Quran does not require an external authority to speak for it; it invites every believer to engage in *tadabbur* (deep reflection). To balance direct engagement with scholarly tradition, consider this approach:

1. Thematic Synthesis: Gather all verses on a specific theme and reflect on their patterns and connections.
2. Scholarly Refinement: Consult *tafsir* literature after initial reflection. This allows the scholars to enrich and refine your understanding rather than replace it.

Beginning with tafsir alone risks narrowing your perspective to a specific author's historical context. By allowing the Quran to speak first, you honor the Divine Word while remaining humble before the wisdom of the scholars. This balance preserves personal responsibility and fulfills the Quranic invitation to sincere, thoughtful engagement.

3. Shadow

The following verses highlight Allah's control over the shadow as a sign of cosmic order and divine governance:

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَيْفَ مَدَّ الظِّلَّ وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَجَعَلَهُ سَاكِنًا ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا الشَّمْسَ عَلَيْهِ دَلِيلًا (٤٥) ثُمَّ قَبَضْنَاهُ إِلَيْنَا قَبْضًا يَسِيرًا (٤٦)

“Have you not seen how your Lord spread the shadow. If He willed, He could have made it still. But We have made the sun its guide (45) Then We withdraw it to Us a gradual concealed withdrawal.” (Al-Furqan 25:45-46)

The Quran directs our attention to the movement of shadows, a familiar yet profound occurrence. Physically, a shadow appears when an object obstructs light. As the earth rotates, the sun's relative position shifts, causing shadows to lengthen, shorten, and move. The Quran beautifully describes the sun as a "guide" for the shadow, acknowledging that its celestial motion governs the shadow's behavior. While science explains this through rotation and orbit, the Quranic perspective presents this predictability as a reflection of divine order rather than mere chance.

Shadows are essential to the earth's delicate equilibrium:

- **Climate Regulation:** By reducing solar energy on specific surfaces, shadows create temperature differentials that drive air movement and influence local climates.
- **Visual Perception:** Light and shadow provide depth, shape, and spatial definition; without them, our visual world would appear flat and indistinguishable.
- **Sustainability of Life:** The balance between light and shade is part of a system that includes photosynthesis and the water cycle. While light fuels growth and oxygen production, the alternating shade regulates the heat that makes regions habitable.

The invitation to observe the "stretching and withdrawing" of shadows is more than poetic imagery. It is a call to recognize the intricate coordination between light, motion, and biology. In these daily shifts, the believer is invited to see the wisdom of the Creator and His sustaining power over the physical laws that make life possible

4. Rank Yourself Against the Righteous Slaves of Allah

In this remarkable passage, Allah describes the defining qualities of His chosen servants, “Ibad al-Rahman”, the servants of Al-Rahman. These verses offer a complete moral and spiritual profile that every sincere believer is invited to measure himself against:

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا (٦٣) وَالَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَامًا (٦٤) وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا (٦٥) إِنَّهَا سَاءَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا (٦٦) وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا (٦٧) وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا (٦٨) يُضْعَفُ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخْلُدُ فِيهِ مُهَانًا (٦٩) إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا (٧٠) وَمَنْ تَابَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَإِنَّهُ يَتُوبُ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَتَابًا (٧١) وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَشْهَدُونَ الزُّورَ وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوا كِرَامًا (٧٢) وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرُوا بِكَأَيِّ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَخِرُّوا عَلَيْهَا صُمًّا وَعُمْيَانًا (٧٣)

The Righteous Slaves of Al-Rahman are those who:

1. Walk upon the earth with humility.
2. Respond to ignorance with dignity and peace.
3. Spend their nights in prayer, standing and prostrating before their Lord.
4. Pray earnestly for protection from Hell, recognizing the seriousness of its punishment.
5. Show moderation in their spending, neither wasteful nor stingy.
6. Worship none besides Allah.
7. Do not taking a life unjustly.
8. Guard their chastity and stay away from immorality.
9. Repent sincerely and do righteous deeds when they err, trusting that Allah can transform their sins into good deeds.
10. Do not bear false witness or participate in deceit.
11. Pass by idle and degrading speech with dignity.
12. Respond to Allah's signs with open hearts and attentive minds, not with heedlessness.

Together, these qualities form a complete framework for the Islamic personality, built upon three interconnected foundations:

- *Iman* (faith): expressed through devotion, reliance on Allah, and sincere repentance.
- *Ibadah* (worship and obedience): manifested in prayer, moral discipline, and balanced living.
- *Akhlaq* (character): reflected in humility, self-control, honesty, and mercy toward others.

These verses show that Islam is not merely belief or ritual. It is a holistic way of being in the world, balancing devotion to Allah with responsibility toward others

Allah concludes this passage by promising forgiveness, mercy, and lasting honor in Paradise for those who embody these traits. These verses are not meant only to inspire admiration; they are meant to invite honest self-evaluation. Every believer is called to ask: Which of these qualities have I truly adopted? Which ones still need work?

5. The Singularity of the Righteous and the Messengers

Among the defining qualities of Ibad al-Rahman is their profound supplication:

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا فُرْقَةً أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا (٧٤)

“And those who say, "Our Lord, grant us from our spouses and children comfort to our eyes and make us an Imam for the people of Taqwa.” (Al-Furqan 25:74)

The structure of this supplication is striking. It begins in the plural, "grant us from our spouses and children," yet it concludes with the singular: "make us an Imam." Grammatically, one might expect "make us Imams," but the Quran deliberately uses the singular (Imam). This conveys a profound theological idea: the truly righteous, though many in number and scattered across generations, form a single moral and spiritual entity. They are united by one vision, one standard of righteousness, and one path of devotion.

The Quran applies the same principle to the messengers of Allah. Although many prophets were sent across history, their mission is described as one. This is beautifully illustrated in the story of Musa and Harun (peace be upon them). Though two individuals, they are commanded together and described by a single term:

قَالَ كَلَّا فَاذْهَبَا بِآيَاتِنَا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ مُسْتَمِعُونَ (١٥) فَأْتِيَا فِرْعَوْنَ فَقُولَا إِنَّا رَسُولُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (١٦)

“(Allah) said: " Go you both with Our Signs; indeed, We are with you, listening. (15) "And go both of you to Fir'aun (Pharaoh) and say: 'We both are a Messenger of the Lord of all the worlds.” (Al-Shu'ara 26:12-16)

The verbs are dual, go both of you, say both of you, yet the noun rasūl (messenger) is singular. The Quran thus emphasizes that the mission, authority, and message are one, even when carried by more than one individual.

This unity is extended across all prophethood. In Surat al-Nisa, the Quran treats belief in all messengers as one indivisible act of faith:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا (١٥٠) أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا (١٥١) وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ أُولَئِكَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرَهُمُ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا (١٥٢)

“Verily, those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers and wish to make distinction between Allah and His Messengers by saying, "We believe in some but reject others," and wish to adopt a way in between. (150) They are in truth disbelievers. And We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating torment. (151) But those who believe in Allah and His Messengers and make no distinction between any of them, He will grant reward, and Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Al-Nisa 4:150-151)

To reject even one messenger is to fracture the unified chain of divine guidance.

The Quran thus presents both the prophets and the people of taqwa as single, continuous realities across time. They are not disconnected individuals but members of one enduring spiritual body, bound together by the same truth, the same moral vision, and the same devotion to Allah.

The Prophet (PBUH) expressed this unity with luminous clarity:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " أَنَا أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِعَيْسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، وَالْأَنْبِيَاءُ إِخْوَةٌ لِعَلَاتٍ، أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ شَتَّى، وَدِينُهُمْ وَاحِدٌ " .

"The Prophets are brothers from different mothers; their religion is one." (Al-Bukhari, Muslim)

Therefore, when the righteous pray "Make us an Imam for the people of taqwa," they are not asking for personal leadership or social authority. They are asking to belong to the unified caravan of the guided: to be integrated into the same moral and spiritual lineage that carried divine light through all generations.

6. The Divine Support and the Role of the Magicians

The Qur'an describes the decisive moment when Pharaoh's magicians encountered the truth of Musa's sign:

فَأُلْقِيَ السَّحَرَةُ سَاجِدِينَ (٤٦) قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (٤٧) رَبِّ مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ (٤٨)

"So, the magicians were cast down in prostration. (46) They said, 'We believe in the Lord of the worlds, (47) the Lord of Musa and Harun.'" (Al-Shu'ara 26:46-48)

The phrasing فَأُلْقِيَ ("were cast down") is deeply significant. By using the passive voice, the Quran conveys a sense of sudden, overpowering force. The truth these men witnessed was so unmistakable that it compelled them into prostration before conscious deliberation could even intervene.

This moment is theologically profound because of who these men were. They were not mere spectators; they were the elite experts of their craft and the pillars of Pharaoh's ideological authority.

- **Expert Witnesses:** By declaring that Musa's miracle was not magic but divine truth, they provided the most credible expert testimony possible against Pharaoh's claims.
- **Divine Irony:** Allah turned the very instruments of Pharaoh's power into witnesses for the Truth, dismantling the regime's authority from within.

The Quran emphasizes the depth of their transformation through their response to Pharaoh's threats. Despite his vows of mutilation and crucifixion, they remained unshakable. Their faith was not only immediate; it was informed by professional understanding and empowered by divine grace.

From a Quranic perspective, the magicians represent a divine pattern: truth is often made manifest through those best equipped to recognize its authenticity. Their story serves as a powerful example of how divine guidance can penetrate and overturn entrenched falsehood, transforming its most skilled defenders into instruments of truth.

7. Bani Israel After the Drowning of Pharaoh

The Quran gives significant attention to the fate of Bani Israel both before and after the drowning of Pharaoh and his army. Among the key verses describing the aftermath are the following:

فَأَخْرَجْنَاهُمْ مِّنْ جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ (٥٧) وَكُنُوزٍ وَمَقَامٍ كَرِيمٍ (٥٨) كَذَلِكَ وَأَوْرَثْنَاهَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ (٥٩)
“So, We expelled them from gardens and springs, (57) and from treasures and an honorable station. (58) Thus, it was, and We caused the Children of Israel to inherit them.” (Al-Shu'ara 26:57-59)

These verses state that Pharaoh's people were stripped of their wealth, resources, and status, and that Bani Israel were made heirs to what had been taken from them. This immediately raises an interpretive question: what exactly did this inheritance entail?

Classical tafsir generally does not interpret these verses as meaning that Bani Israel ruled Egypt itself. Many commentators understand this inheritance as a pattern: Allah removes wealth and power from oppressors and grants similar blessings to the oppressed elsewhere and at a later stage. Others interpret the inheritance as referring to the blessed lands of the eastern Mediterranean, based on verses in Surat Al-A'raf:

فَأَخَذْنَا هُمْ فَأَعْرَفْنَا هُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ ... وَأَوْرَثْنَا الْقَوْمَ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا يُسْتَضْعَفُونَ مَشَارِقَ الْأَرْضِ وَمَغَارِبَهَا الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا
“So We took vengeance on them and drowned them in the sea... And We made the people who had been oppressed inherit the eastern and western parts of the land which We had blessed.” (Al-Araf 7:136–137)

The Historical Question

Outside the Quran, the Exodus is one of the most debated episodes in ancient Near Eastern history. Modern scholarship remains divided between three broad positions:

- A large-scale departure from Egypt occurred, reflected mainly in biblical tradition with limited archaeological traces.

- The Exodus is largely a literary construction with no recoverable historical core.
- Elements of the narrative (foreign laborers in Egypt, Semitic populations, eventual movement into Canaan) are historically plausible, but the unified story reflects later shaping.

Multiple chronologies have been proposed, most commonly ranging from the 15th to the 13th centuries BCE. Several New Kingdom pharaohs have been suggested as candidates: Thutmose III (18th Dynasty), Amenhotep II (18th Dynasty), Ramesses II (19th Dynasty), Merneptah (19th Dynasty), and Ramesses III (20th Dynasty). No consensus exists.

It must also be noted that the absence of direct Egyptian records of a drowned pharaoh is not unusual. Egyptian royal inscriptions were designed to preserve triumph, not catastrophe. Defeats, disasters, and humiliations were omitted or reinterpreted rather than recorded.

Quranic Data That Merit Investigation

While archaeology remains uncertain, the Quran provides a remarkably consistent internal dataset that can serve as a framework for future historical inquiry. When the relevant passages are assembled [e.g., Al-Araf (7); Yunus (10); Al-Isra (17); Ṭaha (20); Al-Shu'ara (26); Al-Qaṣaṣ (28); Ghafir (40)], several patterns emerge:

1. Political and Narrative Consistency

- The Qur'an presents a single Pharaoh across Musa's story, from infancy to destruction.
- His power, arrogance, and downfall are personalized and total.
- No successor dynasty is mentioned after the drowning; the narrative focuses on the collapse of his authority.

2. Linguistic Precision

The ruler in Yusuf's time is called malik (king), while Musa's antagonist is called fir'awn, aligning with Egyptological evidence that "Pharaoh" became a formal royal title in the New Kingdom period (beginning with the 18th dynasty around the year 1550 BCE under Ahmose I who expelled the Hyksos and unified Egypt).

3. Destruction of Pharaoh's Works

The Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes not only Pharaoh's death but the destruction of what he built:

وَدَمَّرْنَا مَا كَانَ يَصْنَعُ فِرْعَوْنُ وَقَوْمُهُ، وَمَا كَانُوا يَعْرِشُونَ

This language invites correlation with archaeological patterns of abandoned or disrupted royal infrastructure, though no specific site is named.

4. Inheritance Language

The repeated use of inheritance in connection with Bani Israel is linguistically significant. It refers to taking over what belonged to the defeated party. Whether this included Egypt itself or only later settlement elsewhere remains an open Quranic question rather than a settled tafsir conclusion.

Conclusion

The Quran presents the Exodus as a real historical collapse of tyranny followed by a transfer of power and blessing. While modern archaeology has not yet reconstructed this episode with certainty, the Quranic account provides a coherent and testable narrative that invites serious interdisciplinary investigation rather than dismissal.

This is not a suggestion that archaeology must confirm the Quran. It is an argument that the Quran preserves historical data that archaeology has not yet fully recovered.

8. The People of Ad: A Quran-Based Hypothesis

The Quran provides unusually rich descriptions of the civilization of Ad. In Surat Al-Shu'ara, their prophet Hud addresses them as a people of power, engineering, and arrogance:

أَتَبْنُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيعٍ آيَةً تَعْبَثُونَ (١٢٨) وَتَتَّخِذُونَ مَصَانِعَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ (١٢٩) وَإِذَا بَطَشْتُمْ بَطَشْتُمْ جَبَّارِينَ (١٣٠)

"Do you build monuments on every high place, just for fun? (128) "And do you take masani, so you may live forever (129) " And when you strike, you strike as tyrants? "(Al-Shu'ara 26:128-130)

Rather than limiting the word masani' (مصانع) to pre-modern installations, the Quran deliberately uses a term whose semantic range expands with human technological development. The term derives from the root s-n-a', meaning to make, engineer, construct, or fabricate with skill. Unlike words for houses, palaces, or fortresses, masani' denotes places of engineered production and civilizational construction. The verse does not say that the buildings were meant to last forever; it says that the people took these engineered complexes as though they themselves would live forever, implying long-term societal dependence on large-scale, technologically maintained infrastructure.

Despite the detailed Quranic descriptions of Ad's civilization, no archaeological consensus exists regarding Ad. One reason is that investigation has often been guided by geographical traditions rather than by the Qur'an's internal data. A Quran-first research program requires assembling all relevant verses and deriving a self-contained civilizational profile before searching for material correlates.

From the Quran alone, the people of Ad emerge as:

- An early post-Flood civilization
- Inhabiting or dominating sand-dune regions (*al-Aḥqaf*)
- Possessing exceptional physical strength
- Builders of pillar-based monumental architecture (*Iram dhat al-imad*)
- Operators of large-scale *maṣāni*, engineered production facilities
- Destroyed by a sustained, extreme wind that annihilated the population but spared the structures

Hypothesis

Based strictly on this Quranic dataset, a testable hypothesis may be stated: "Ad constituted a technologically ambitious, high-capacity engineered society situated at the margins of major sand systems and habitable basins, whose collapse resulted from an extreme, sustained wind disaster capable of killing human populations while leaving major structures and installations standing."

This model can be tested against:

- Paleoenvironmental reconstructions of ancient dune-margin societies,
- Archaeological evidence of early pillar-based monumental engineering,
- Geological indicators of large-scale wind-driven devastation.

This Quran-first methodology differs fundamentally from tafsir-driven geography. Rather than fixing Ad to a location before analysis, it derives structural descriptors: dunes, pillars, engineered complexes, and wind destruction, directly from the Quran. Classical tafsir traditions may later be examined as historical memory, but they should not control the primary model.

If archaeology converges with those traditions, both are strengthened. If it diverges, the Quranic pattern remains primary. In this way, the Quran is honored as a self-consistent civilizational witness, while external sciences are invited to test rather than dictate interpretation.

9. Why Shuayb Is Not Called “Their Brother”

In Surat Al-Shu'ara, the Quran introduces several prophets using a strikingly consistent formula:

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمُّ أَخُوهُمْ نُوحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ (١٠٦)

When their brother Nuh said to them: Will you not have Tawqa? (106))

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمُّ أَخُوهُمْ هُودٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ (١٢٤)

When their brother Hud said to them: Will you not have Tawqa? (124))

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمُّ أَخُوهُمْ صَالِحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ (١٤٢)

When their brother Saleh said to them: Will you not have Tawqa? (142))

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ لُوطٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ (١٦١)

When their brother Lot said to them: Will you not have Tawqa? (161)

In each case, the prophet is introduced as “their brother” (أخوهم). This Quranic expression signifies tribal, ethnic, and social belonging. These prophets were not outsiders; they were born from within their communities. Their message therefore carried not only divine authority but moral proximity: they were calling their own people to accountability.

Yet when the Quran turns to the people of Al-Aykah, the pattern is deliberately broken:

كَذَّبَ أَصْحَابُ لَيْكَةِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ (١٧٦) إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ شُعَيْبٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ (١٧٧) إِيَّاكُمْ رَسُولٌ آمِينٌ (١٧٨)

“The dwellers of Al-Aykah [near Madyan (Midian)] belied the Messengers. (176) When Shuaib said to them: “Will you not have Taqwa? (177) “I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.” (Al-Shu'ara 26:176-178)

Shuayb is not called “their brother”. This omission is not stylistic; it is structural. Elsewhere, Shuaib is called the brother of Madyan:

وَإِلَى مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا (85)

“And to Madyan (We sent) their brother, Shuaib....” (Al-Araf 7:85)

This means that Al-Aykah and Madyan are not the same people, even though they were geographically and economically connected. Prophet Shuaib belonged by blood and lineage to Madyan, but he was sent as a messenger to the people of al-Aykah, a different social group.

The Qur'an is therefore drawing a subtle but powerful distinction:

- Madyan: Shuayb's people (his brothers)
- Al-Aykah: a connected but distinct economic-religious community

The people of Al-Aykah appears to be organized around a commercial hub, trade zone, or resource-rich settlement rather than a lineage-based tribe. Thus, Prophet Shuaib was addressing a commercial civilization whose corruption lay in fraud, exploitation, and economic injustice. He said to them:

﴿ أَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُخْسِرِينَ (١٨١) وَزِنُوا بِالْقِسْطَاسِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ (١٨٢) وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ وَلَا تَعْنُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ (١٨٣) ﴾

“Give full measure: do not sell others short. (181) Weigh with correct scales; (182) do not defraud people of what is theirs and do not spread corruption on earth.” (Al-Shu'ara 26:181-183)

By withholding the term "brother," the Quran signals that Prophet Shuayb was sent to the people of Al-Aykah as a divinely appointed moral auditor. His message centered on

dishonest trade, false weights and measures, economic oppression, and social injustice.

This linguistic precision reinforces one of the Quran's deepest patterns: prophethood is always socially embedded, but never socially constrained.

10. Blame Yourself first Before Accusing Others

When Prophet Sulaiman noticed that the hoopoe was not present, he did not immediately accuse it of negligence. Instead, he first questioned his own perception:

وَتَفَقَّدَ الطَّيْرَ فَقَالَ مَا لِيَ لَا أَرَى الْهَدْهَدَ أَمْ كَانَ مِنَ الْغَائِبِينَ (٢٠)

“He inspected the birds, and said: "Why I do not see the hoopoe, or is he among the absentees?” (Al-Naml 27:20)

This subtle wording teaches a profound principle of leadership and moral discipline. Sulaiman first considers the possibility that he himself may be mistaken before concluding that the hoopoe is absent. The Quran thus presents self-examination as the first step before judgment: a principle that applies to all human relationships.

Only after this does Sulaiman speak of possible punishment, showing that accountability follows verification, not assumption. Shortly thereafter, the hoopoe returns:

فَمَكَثَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحَطْتُ بِمَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ، وَجِئْتُكَ مِنْ سَبَأٍ بِنَبَأٍ يَقِينٍ (٢٢)

“It did not stay away long, and it said: ‘I have grasped what you have not grasped, and I have come to you from Saba (Sheba) with certain news.’” (27:22)

The Quran emphasizes two things here. First, the hoopoe's absence was not neglect; it was purposeful. Second, even a seemingly small member of the community had access to information crucial to the mission of a prophet.

This scene illustrates a deeper Quranic principle: Allah distributes knowledge and perception across His creation in ways that transcend hierarchy. Sulaiman, a prophet and king, is informed by a bird. Authority does not eliminate the need for listening; power does not negate the value of the smallest contributor.

The hoopoe's report concerns the political and religious state of a distant people, showing that Allah uses even the smallest creatures to uncover hidden realities and bring them to light. This is not about zoology; it is about divine governance. The universe, in all its parts, participates in Allah's unfolding plan.

The story thus teaches three enduring lessons:

- Examine yourself before blaming others,
- Do not dismiss anyone as insignificant,

- Recognize that Allah may deliver crucial truth through the least expected means.

Together, these form a Quranic ethic of humility, responsibility, and attentive leadership.

Conclusion

The nineteenth Juz presents a breathtaking vision of reality: a universe ordered by divine wisdom, societies tested by how they use power, and individuals measured by humility and truthfulness. From the shadow that cools the earth, to the bird that informs a prophet, to the rise and fall of civilizations, everything moves within Allah's moral and cosmic law.

These jewels invite the reader to see the Quran not as a collection of isolated teachings but as an integrated vision of reality: one that binds faith, reason, nature, and history into a single coherent whole.

Jewels from the Twentieth Juz: Faith, Trial, and Human Destiny (Al-Naml 27:56 – Al-Ankabut 29:45)

Introduction

This chapter presents a selection of Qur’anic jewels from the twentieth Juz, illustrating how brief yet precise verses convey profound guidance on faith, morality, destiny, and the unseen. Each section highlights a central theme, such as trials, reliance upon Allah, the signs of the Hour, the responsibility of knowledge, and the moral purpose of worship, demonstrating how the Qur’an addresses both the intellect and the heart. Together, these reflections show that Qur’anic brevity is not a limitation, but a vehicle for depth, clarity, and enduring relevance.

1. The Rise of the Beast: A major Pre-Hour Sign

In the famous Hadith of Jibril, the Angel asked the Prophet ﷺ four questions: What is Islam? What is Iman? What is Ihsan? And what are the signs of the Day of Judgment? The Prophet ﷺ answered each of them. After Jibril departed, the Companions asked who the visitor had been, and the Prophet ﷺ replied: “That was Jibril; he came to teach you your religion.” (Muslim)

This hadith shows that Islam, as a complete religion, consists of four integrated dimensions:

1. *Islam*: the outward acts of worship that regulate our physical submission to Allah.
2. *Iman*: the articles of faith that reside in the heart.
3. *Ihsan*: excellence in conduct, living with constant awareness that Allah sees us.
4. The Signs of the Hour: future realities that believers must understand in order to remain firm when trials and confusion arise.

These four together define not only how a believer lives, but also how he understands the destiny of the world.

Some of the signs of the Hour mark a point beyond which repentance and new faith will no longer be accepted. Allah says:

هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ رَبُّكَ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَ يَأْتِي بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ لَا يَنْفَعُ نَفْسًا إِيْمَانُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ ءَامَنَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ أَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِي إِيمَانِهَا حَيْرَةً فَلَا آتَتْظُرُونَ إِنَّا مُنْتَظِرُونَ (الأنعام: 158).

“Are they waiting for the angels to come to them, or for your Lord to come, or for some of the signs of your Lord to come? On the Day when some of your Lord’s signs come, no soul will benefit from its faith if it did not believe before or earn good through its faith. Say: ‘Wait; indeed, we too are waiting” (Al-An’am 6:158)

Among the many signs of the Hour mentioned by the Prophet (PBUH), some are minor and others are major. The Qur'an itself refers explicitly to four of the major signs, one of which appears in this Juz: the emergence of "a creature that moves upon the earth" (*dabbah*) that will speak to mankind:

وَإِذَا وَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَخْرَجْنَا لَهُمْ دَابَّةً مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ تُكَلِّمُهُمْ أَنَّ النَّاسَ كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا لَا يُوقِنُونَ (٨٢)
"When the decree (of the Hour) comes upon them, We will bring forth for them a creature (dabbah) from the earth that will speak to them, because people were not certain about our signs." (Al-Naml 27:82)

Most narrations describing the Beast in detail are weak, and even the sounder reports remain ambiguous. This has led some scholars to observe that the Arabic word *dabbah* (a creature that moves upon the earth) can linguistically include human beings, leaving open the possibility that the creature may not be an animal in the conventional sense.

Among the more reliable reports is the hadith narrated by al-Tirmidhi and Ibn Mājah, in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " تَخْرُجُ الدَّابَّةُ مَعَهَا خَاتَمُ سُلَيْمَانَ وَعَصَا مُوسَى فَتَجْلُو وَجْهَ الْمُؤْمِنِ وَتُخْتِمُ أَنْفَ الْكَافِرِ بِالْخَاتَمِ حَتَّىٰ إِنَّ أَهْلَ الْخِيَا نِ لَيَجْتَمِعُونَ فَيَقُولُ هَاهَا يَا مُؤْمِنٌ وَيُقَالُ هَاهَا يَا كَافِرٌ وَهَذَا يَا مُؤْمِنٌ " .

"A creature will emerge carrying the staff of Musa and the ring of Suliman. It will brighten the face of the believer and mark the nose of the disbeliever with the ring, so that when people sit together, they will say, "Here is a believer, and 'Here is a disbeliever." (At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah)

This sign represents a decisive moment when inner belief becomes outwardly visible, and ambiguity between faith and disbelief comes to an end.

The Qur'an also mentions three other major pre-Hour signs:

1. The return of Prophet 'Isa (Jesus):

وَإِن مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ (١٥٩)
"There is none of the People of the Book but will believe in him (Isa) before his death; " (Al-Nisa 4:159)

2. The release of Gog and Magog (Ya'juj and Ma'juj):

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فُتِحَتْ يَأْجُوجُ وَمَأْجُوجُ وَهُمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ حَدَبٍ يَنْسِلُونَ (٩٦)
"When Gog and Magog are let loose and they surge from every elevation." (Al-Anbiya 21:96)

3. The widespread Smoke:

فَارْتَقِبْ يَوْمَ تَأْتِي السَّمَاءُ بِدُحَانٍ مُّبِينٍ (١٠) يَعْصَى النَّاسَ هَذَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (١١)
"So, watch for a day when the sky brings visible smoke (10) that will envelop people. This will be a painful punishment." (Al-Dukhan 44:10-11)

In addition, the Prophet (PBUH) mentioned ten major signs in a hadith narrated by Muslim, Abu Dawud, and al-Tirmidhi. Hudhayfah ibn Usayd (RA) reported that the Prophet (PBUH) said::

عن حذيفة بن أسيد الغفاري رضي الله عنه قال: اطلع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم علينا ونحن نتذاكر فقال: ((ماذا تذاكرون؟))، قالوا: نذكر الساعة، قال: ((إنها لن تقوم حتى تروا قبلها عشر آيات؛ فذكر الدخان، والدجال، والدابة، وطلوع الشمس من مغربها، ونزول عيسى ابن مريم، ويأجوج ومأجوج، وثلاثة خسوف؛ خسف بالمشرق، وخسف بالمغرب، وخسف بجزيرة العرب، وآخر ذلك نار تخرج من اليمن تطرد الناس إلى محشرهم)) [رواه مسلم (2901)، وأبو داود (4311)، والترمذي (2183)].

“The Hour will not come until you see ten signs: the smoke, the Dajjal, the Beast, the rising of the sun from the west, the descent of ‘Isa son of Maryam, the emergence of Gog and Magog, three landslides: one in the east, one in the west, and one in the Arabian Peninsula, and finally a fire that will emerge from Yemen driving people to their place of assembly.” (Muslim, Abu Daud and Tirmidhi)

It is important to understand that the purpose of learning about the major signs of the Hour is not academic curiosity, nor the construction of speculative timelines. These signs are reminders of an unavoidable reality: this world is temporary, and every soul is moving toward its appointed meeting with Allah. Whether a person witnesses these major signs or not, their own Day of Judgment effectively begins at the moment of death. From that point onward, accountability is certain and irreversible.

Therefore, preparation for the Hereafter is not tied to the appearance of global signs, but to daily repentance, sincere faith, righteous action, and a heart attached to Allah. The believer lives in a state of readiness, not because the Beast may emerge or the sun may rise from the west in their lifetime, but because death itself may arrive at any moment.

2. The Mountains: Allah’s Perfect Design

The Qur’an contains many verses that point to the profound order embedded within Allah’s creation. These verses speak in a language accessible to all people, yet they also invite those who reflect deeply to discover layers of meaning that unfold with knowledge and observation. In this way, the Qur’an addresses both the hearts of believers and the minds of thinkers.

One of the most striking examples is found in the following verse:

وَتَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ صُنِعَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَدَىٰ أَلْتَقَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ إِنَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَفْعَلُونَ
(٨٨)

“You see the mountains and think they are motionless, yet they pass by like the clouds pass. Such is the work of Allah, Who has perfected all things. Indeed, He is fully aware of what you do”. (Al-Naml 27:88)

To the naked eye, mountains appear fixed and immovable. Yet the Qur'an declares that they are in motion, moving smoothly and silently, like drifting clouds. This statement reflects a reality that modern science has only recently come to appreciate: mountains are carried along by the motion of the Earth itself.

The Earth rotates on its axis at about 1,000 miles per hour. At the same time, it travels around the Sun at roughly 67,000 miles per hour. Our solar system, in turn, orbits the center of the galaxy at nearly 490,000 miles per hour, while the galaxy itself moves through space at extraordinary speeds. In this vast cosmic motion, mountains, along with everything on Earth, are never truly still.

Yet despite these immense velocities, we experience the world as stable and calm. We walk on solid ground, build cities, and live our lives without feeling any of this motion. This stability is not accidental. It is part of Allah's perfect design. He has synchronized these movements with such precision that life on Earth remains secure, balanced, and habitable.

This delicate balance between enormous motion and perfect stability is one of the great signs of divine mastery. It reveals how Allah governs the universe with flawless order, ensuring that even forces beyond human imagination serve life rather than destroy it.

For this reason, the Qur'an concludes this passage with a call to gratitude and reflection:

وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ سِيرِيكُمْ ءَايَاتِهِ ۚ فَتَعْرِفُونَهَا وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ (٩٣)

“Say: 'All praise belongs to Allah. He will show you His signs, and you will recognize them. And your Lord is not unaware of what you do.'” (Al-Naml 27:93)

The more humanity discovers about the universe, the clearer Allah's signs become. Every new insight into creation is not a challenge to faith, but an invitation to deeper awe, gratitude, and humility before the One who perfected all things.

3. Beware of Personal Exaltation and Mischief

Among the gravest sins that lead a person to destruction are self-exaltation and the spread of corruption through the disregard for human life and dignity. These two evils were the defining characteristics of history's greatest tyrant: Pharaoh. Allah describes him in the Qur'an:

إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضِعُّ مِنْهُ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ يُدَبِّحُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِ نِسَاءَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ (٤)

“Indeed, Pharaoh exalted himself in the land and made its people into factions, oppressing a group among them, slaughtering their sons and letting their women live. Indeed, he was one of the corrupters.” (Al-Qasas 28:4)

Pharaoh's tyranny did not begin with violence; it began with 'uluww/عُلُو . the desire to rise above others, to dominate, to see oneself as superior. From that arrogance came political division, social stratification, and eventually mass murder. The Qur'an presents this pattern not as ancient history, but as a recurring human disease: when people elevate themselves above others, corruption soon follows.

For this reason, Allah makes a profound declaration about who deserves the Hereafter:

تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ (٨٣)

“That Home of the Hereafter (i.e., Paradise) We assign to those who do not desire exaltation on the earth. nor corruption. And the good end is for those who have Taqwa.” (Al-Qasas 28:83)

This verse reveals a timeless law: Paradise is not for those who seek to rise above others, but for those who humble themselves before Allah. It is not for those who dominate and exploit, but for those who restrain their egos and purify their actions.

True faith is therefore not merely what one believes, but how one relates to power, people, and privilege. Every believer is tested with influence, wealth, knowledge, or authority. The question is always the same: Will it produce humility and justice, or arrogance and corruption?

The Qur'an leaves no doubt about which answer leads to salvation.

4. Brevity in Conveying Multiple Layers of Meaning

One of the linguistic miracles of the Quran is its ability to deliver deep, diverse, and emotionally powerful meanings with astonishing brevity. A single verse can contain information, commands, emotional reassurance, and future promise, all woven into a perfectly balanced structure.

A striking example appears in Allah's address to the mother of Musa:

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ فَإِذَا خِفْتِ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِي وَلَا تَحْزَنِي إِنَّا رَادُّوهُ إِلَيْكِ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ (٧)

“We inspired the mother of Musa: Nurse him, and when you fear for him, cast him into the river. Do not fear and do not grieve. We will return him to you and make him one of the Messengers” (Al-Qasas 28:7)

In this single verse, Allah conveys eight distinct messages, perfectly balanced in form and meaning:

1. Two statements of information (خبر)
 - We inspired the mother of Musa

- When you fear for him
2. Two commands (أمر)
 - Nurse him
 - Cast him into the river
 3. Two prohibitions (نهى)
 - Do not fear
 - Do not grieve
 4. Two glad tidings (بشارة)
 - We will return him to you
 - We will make him one of the messengers

Within a single, flowing sentence, Allah provides guidance, instruction, emotional reassurance, and a vision of the future. The mother of Musa is not only told what to do, but how to feel, and what outcome to expect, all in a moment of extreme distress.

This is not merely eloquence; it is divine precision. Every word is placed where it belongs, and nothing is wasted. The verse addresses the mind, the heart, and the future simultaneously, demonstrating how the Quran communicates complex realities in a form that is both concise and deeply compassionate.

Such verses remind us that the Quran is not only a book of laws or stories, but a perfectly crafted message designed to guide human beings through their most difficult moments with clarity, balance, and hope.

5. Even Pharaoh Was Bound by Law

Although Pharaoh was a tyrant who exalted himself above all people, the Quranic narrative suggests that his rule was not based on random impulse alone. Rather, he governed within a structured legal and political system. Ancient Egypt was built around the concept of *Ma'at* (ماعت): order, justice, balance, and truth. Pharaoh was the supreme authority, but he ruled through courts, officials, and procedures, not through constant arbitrary violence.

This background helps explain a striking feature of the Quranic story: Musa was not immediately executed when he returned to Egypt, even though he had previously killed an Egyptian.

Musa had fled Egypt after killing a man, a crime that in ancient Egypt was normally punishable by death if proven intentional. He then spent many years in Madyan, fulfilling a contractual term of service to his father-in-law:

قَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُنكِحَكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ عَلَى أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي ثَمَنِي حَجَجٍ فَإِنْ أَتَمَمْتَ عَشْرًا فَمِنْ عِنْدِكَ
 (٢٧) (٢٨) ﴿ فَلَمَّا قَضَى مُوسَى الْأَجَلَ وَسَارَ بِأَهْلِهِ ۚ آنَسَ مِنْ جَانِبِ الطُّورِ نَارًا ﴾ (٢٩)

“He said, ‘I wish to marry you to one of my two daughters, on the condition that you serve me for eight years; but if you complete ten, that will be your own choice’ (27) (28) Then when Moses had completed the term and was traveling with his family, he saw a fire on the side of the mountain” (Al-Qasas 28: 29)

This passage shows that Musa remained in Madyan for eight to ten years. His decision to return afterward strongly implies that he believed the immediate legal threat against him had expired under the passage of time.

More importantly, when Musa returned and confronted Pharaoh, Pharaoh did not order his execution for the earlier killing. Instead, he challenged him publicly, debated him, and demanded proof. This behavior only makes sense within a system that, at least formally recognized legal process, evidence, and public procedure.

Ancient Egyptian law was not merely a system of terror. It was a developed judicial structure with courts, judges, records, and high officials such as viziers who administered justice. Pharaoh was regarded as the embodiment of Ma'at, meaning that even he was expected to rule according to law, order, and legitimacy.

Thus, even in the court of a tyrant, law still exerted a restraining force. The Quran's depiction is therefore remarkably precise: Pharaoh was oppressive and corrupt, but he was not lawless. His tyranny operated within a system of power, institutions, and legal norms, which Allah would ultimately overthrow through Musa, not by chaos, but by truth.

6. The Diverse Social Position of Bani Israel in Egypt

It is often assumed that all of the Children of Israel were equally oppressed in Egypt. The Quran, however, presents a more complex social reality. While many among Bani Israel were subjected to humiliation, forced labor, and persecution, others became wealthy, influential, and integrated into the Egyptian elite, sometimes even participating in the oppression of their own people.

The most striking example is Qaroun, whom the Quran explicitly identifies as one of the people of Musa:

إِنَّ قَارُونَ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمِ مُوسَى فَبَغَى عَلَيْهِمْ وَآتَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْكُنُوزِ مَا إِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُ وَلَتَنُوءًا بِالْعُصْبَةِ أُولَى الْقُوَّةِ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ وَقَوْمُهُ لَا تَفْرَحُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَرِحِينَ (٧٦) وَابْتَغَى فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنَ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفَسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ (٧٧) قَالَ إِنَّمَا أُوتِيْتُهُ وَعَلَى عِلْمٍ عِنْدِي (٧٨)

“Indeed, Qaroun was from the people of Musa, but he transgressed against them. And We gave him treasures whose keys would burden a group of strong men. When his people said to him, ‘Do not exult; Allah does not love the exultant. (76) Seek with what Allah has given you the Home of the Hereafter, and do not forget your share of this world. Do good as Allah has done good to you, and do not seek corruption in the land; indeed, Allah does not love corrupters.’ (77) He said, ‘I was only given it because of knowledge I have.’” (Al-Qasas 28:76-78)

These verses reveal several important realities about the social structure of Bani Israel in Egypt:

- Qaroun was “from the people of Musa,” yet he “transgressed against them.” This means that he sided with the power structure rather than with his own oppressed community.
- His extraordinary wealth shows that some Israelites had access to economic and political privilege, becoming part of Egypt’s elite.
- His people reminded him that wealth is a trust: it should lead to gratitude, charity, and moral restraint, not arrogance and corruption.

But Qaroun rejected this moral responsibility. He attributed his success solely to his own knowledge and ability, erasing Allah from the picture. As a result, Allah made him a lasting sign:

فَحَسَفْنَا بِهِءِ وَبِدَارِهِ الْأَرْضَ فَمَا كَانَ لَهُ مِنْ فِئَةٍ يَنْصُرُونَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُنْتَصِرِينَ (٨١)
“So, We caused the earth to swallow him and his home. He had no group to help him against Allah, nor was he of those who could save themselves.” (Al-Qasas 28:81)

Qaroun's story exposes a painful truth: oppressed communities can contain internal collaborators, individuals who use their privilege, wealth, and proximity to power to reinforce injustice rather than resist it.

As for the physical location of Qaroun's palace or buried treasure, the Quran gives no details. The common association of Qaroun with Lake Qaroun in the Fayoum region is speculative and unsupported by historical or geological evidence. What matters in the Quranic narrative is not where his wealth went, but why he lost it. His downfall is not a story of buried gold; it is a warning about buried hearts.

7. The Divine Law: Belief Must be Demonstrated

The Qur’an repeatedly emphasizes that life on earth is a continuous process of testing, and that true success is not granted merely through verbal claims of faith, but through sincerity proven by action and perseverance. Allah states this principle clearly:

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ (٢) وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكٰذِبِينَ (٣)

“Do people think that they will be left alone because they say, ‘We believe,’ and they will not be tested? Indeed, We tested those before them. Thus, Allah will make evident those who are truthful and will make evident the liars.” (Al-Ankaboot 29:2-3)

These verses address a recurring question: why are people tested if Allah already knows their responses in advance? On a literal reading, the phrase *(فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ)* ("so that Allah will know") might seem to imply that Allah acquires knowledge through testing. This, however, is impossible. Allah's knowledge is eternal, complete, and independent of time.

The meaning here is not that Allah comes to know something He did not know before, but that His knowledge becomes manifest through outward, recorded actions. Allah does not hold people accountable merely on the basis of foreknowledge, but on the basis of evidence established through lived reality. In this way, judgment is founded on demonstrable proof that no one can dispute.

This principle safeguards the perfection of divine justice. Even with full records, some people would still deny wrongdoing or claim injustice. Absolute justice therefore requires that the evidence emerges from the individual themselves, until denial becomes impossible and acknowledgment becomes inevitable.

The Quran illustrates this with a powerful scene from the Day of Judgment:

وَيَوْمَ يُحْشَرُ أَعْدَاءُ اللَّهِ إِلَى النَّارِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ (١٩) حَتَّىٰ إِذَا مَا جَاءُوهَا شَهِدَ عَلَيْهِمْ سَمْعُهُمْ وَأَبْصَارُهُمْ وَجُلُودُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (٢٠) وَقَالُوا لِمَ لَجُودِهُم لِمَ شَهِدْتُمْ عَلَيْنَا قَالُوا أَنْطَقَنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْطَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ خَلَقَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ (٢١)

“On the Day when the enemies of Allah are gathered to the Fire. (19) When they arrive to it, their hearing, their sight, and their skins will testify against them regarding what they used to do. (20) And they will say to their skins, ‘Why did you testify against us?’ They will reply, ‘Allah made us speak—the One who makes everything speak. He created you the first time, and to Him you are returned. ” (Fussilat 41:19–21)

A person's own faculties, once used in denial, become witnesses against them. The Quran makes clear that this testimony is not imposed arbitrarily but arises from the very assumption that wrongdoing could be hidden from Allah.

This meaning is further clarified in an authentic hadith narrated by Anas ibn Malik (RA). The Prophet (PBUH) described that on the Day of Judgment, a person will argue with Allah:

عن أنس رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من مخاطبة العبد ربه يقول: يارب ألم تجرني من الظلم؟ قال: يقول: بلى قال: فيقول: فإني أجز على نفسي إلا شاهدا مني قال: فيقول: كفى بنفسك اليوم عليك شهيدا وبالكرام الكاتبين شهودا قال: فيختم على فيه فيقال لأركانه: انطقي قال: فتنتطق بأعماله ثم يخلى بينه وبين الكلام قال: فيقول: بعدا لكنّ وسحقا فعنكنّ كنت أناضل) رواه مسلم

“My Lord, did You not protect me from injustice?” Allah will say, “Yes.” The person will then say, “I will not accept any witness against me except from myself.” Allah will reply, “Today you are sufficient as a witness against yourself, along with the noble scribes.” Then his mouth will be sealed, and his limbs will be commanded to speak, and they will testify to his deeds. When he is allowed to speak again, he will say to his limbs, “Away with you! It was for your sake that I was arguing (denying).” (Muslim)

This scene completes the principle: belief must be demonstrated, denial must collapse from within, and justice must be acknowledged even by the one being judged.

Thus, trials in this world are not meant to inform Allah. They are meant to establish truth. By the time judgment is passed, every soul will recognize that Allah's justice is not only perfect in knowledge, but perfect in evidence, transparency, and fairness.

8. Divine Invitation to Exploration

Allah honors human curiosity and directs it, because through reflection, investigation, and discovery, humanity becomes capable of fulfilling its role as khalifah on earth. Curiosity is not presented in the Quran as a spiritual liability, but as a God-given capacity through which people uncover the resources Allah placed in creation and learn how to use them responsibly.

This curiosity naturally extends beyond the material world to questions about origins, resurrection, and even about Allah Himself. Revelation does not suppress these questions; rather, it channels them away from idle speculation and toward guided understanding.

The Quran records that Prophet Ibrahim asked how Allah gives life to the dead, and that Prophet Musa asked to behold his Lord. In both cases, Allah did not rebuke the question itself. Instead, He responded with demonstrations that instructed, reassured, and elevated understanding, establishing that sincere, truth-seeking inquiry is welcomed when it remains anchored to revelation.

With this framework, Allah issues a universal command to observe and reflect:

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ بَدَأَ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ اللَّهُ يُنشِئُ النَّشْأَةَ الْآخِرَةَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ
(٢٠)

“Say, ‘Travel through the land and observe how He began the creation; then Allah will bring forth the next creation. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent.’” (Al-Ankabout 29:20)

This verse invites believers to explore the world, its peoples, ruins, fossils, ecosystems, and cosmic signs, and to reflect on how creation began. Such reflection is meant to strengthen conviction in resurrection, not weaken it. The Qur'an deliberately links observation of the first creation with certainty in the second, making empirical inquiry a bridge to eschatological faith.

In modern terms, this command encompasses disciplines such as history, archaeology, geology, biology, and cosmology, when pursued with humility, intellectual honesty, and moral restraint. Exploration is not an end in itself; it is a means to recognize divine power, wisdom, and purpose.

At the same time, the Qur'an issues a firm warning against adopting narratives about origins from those who speak without knowledge. After mentioning Iblis and his followers, Allah states:

﴿ مَا أَشْهَدْتُهُمْ خَلْقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَا خَلْقَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمَا كُنْتُ مُتَّخِذَ الْمُضِلِّينَ عَضُدًا ﴾ (٥١)
“I did not make them witness to the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor their own creation; nor did I take the misleaders as helpers.” (Al-Kahf 18:51)

This verse establishes a crucial epistemic principle: accounts of ultimate beginnings and endings must rest on sound revelation or honest inquiry that recognizes its limits, not on myth, conjecture, or ideological storytelling disguised as knowledge.

The Qur'anic posture, therefore, is neither anti-curiosity nor anti-science. It is a disciplined affirmation that while ultimate reliance belongs to Allah alone, genuine exploration of His creation is itself an act of obedience. Just as trusting false powers instead of Allah is likened to clinging to a fragile spider's web, trusting ungrounded claims about creation is an intellectual illusion.

The believer is thus called to unite spiritual reliance with careful, critical study, traveling the earth, observing its signs, and allowing both revelation and creation to illuminate the truth together.

9. Reliance on Others is Like Reliance on a Spider's Web

Allah presents a powerful parable to describe those who seek protection, security, and ultimate support from anything other than Him:

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ كَمَثَلِ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ اتَّخَذَتْ بَيْتًا وَإِنَّ أَوْهَنَ الْبُيُوتِ لَبَيْتُ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ (٤١)

“The example of those who take protectors instead of Allah is that of the spider who takes a house. And indeed, the weakest of houses is the spider's house, if only they knew.” (Al-Ankabut 29:41)

At first glance, this comparison may appear puzzling. Modern knowledge tells us that spider silk is remarkably strong relative to its size. Yet the Quranic description does not refer to the strength of a single thread, but to the nature of the house as a refuge. A spider's web offers no real protection from wind, rain, heat, or impact. It has no shelter, no stability, and no defense when true danger arrives.

This is precisely the point of the parable. Any reliance placed in created beings, whether power, wealth, influence, institutions, or human alliances, may appear impressive or intricate, but it remains fundamentally fragile. When serious trials come, such reliance collapses just as easily as a spider's web.

Those who depend on worldly powers often focus on visible strength, much like insects drawn into a web without perceiving its purpose. What seems like safety becomes a trap. The web does not protect the insect; it entangles, immobilizes, and destroys it. Likewise, those who seek ultimate security, dignity, or salvation from anything other than Allah often find themselves constrained, controlled, and harmed by the very forces they trusted.

The Quran makes clear that such parables are deliberate educational tools, meant to deepen understanding and reflection:

وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَلُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعَالِمُونَ (٤٣)

“These are the examples We present to people, but none understand them except those of knowledge.” (Al-Ankaboot 29:43)

Early Muslims understood that failing to reflect upon Quranic parables was not a minor oversight; it signaled a lack of depth in understanding. When Allah sets forth a similitude, believers are expected to pause, reflect, and uncover its relevance to their lives.

The lesson is unmistakable: any reliance not rooted in tawhid is unstable and deceptive, like the spider's house. True security, protection, and dignity can only be found in reliance upon Allah alone, the One whose support never collapses and whose refuge never fails.

10. The Moral Influence of Prayers

Prayer is central to a Muslim's life, yet it is not an end in itself. Rather, it is a divinely ordained means to reach a higher and more comprehensive state: continuous remembrance of Allah. When prayer is reduced to a routine ritual rather than embraced as a transformative practice, a person may perform it regularly while showing little change in character or conduct. Such a gap reveals a misunderstanding of prayer's true purpose.

Allah has granted prayer as a direct and intimate connection between the servant and his Lord: a channel through which hearts are purified and souls are refined. The natural fruit of this connection must appear in one's behavior, choices, and moral restraint. Allah says:

أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ (٤٥) (العنكبوت)

“Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish the prayer. Indeed, prayer restrains from shameful and wrongful deeds. And the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows what you do” (Al-Ankaboot 29:45)

This verse clarifies a crucial hierarchy. The remembrance of Allah (dhikr Allah) is described as "greater" not because prayer is of lesser value, but because prayer is the primary means leading to the greater objective. By definition, the objective surpasses the means that lead to it, no matter how essential those means are.

A simple illustration makes this clear. If a parent tells their child, "Drive slowly so that you arrive home safely," the true goal is safe arrival, while driving slowly is the necessary means. The means is indispensable, but it exists to serve the higher purpose. Likewise, prayer is the greatest means Allah has given us to attain the supreme aim of living in constant awareness of Him.

Prayer itself is an immense honor. It is the only act of worship that the Prophet (peace be upon him) received directly in the heavens during the *Mi'raj*. Through it, the Creator of the universe invites His servant into a private audience, allowing the servant to speak, to ask, and to receive mercy and guidance.

Although prayer is itself a form of remembrance that shields the heart from indecency and wrongdoing, life beyond the prayer mat is filled with distractions, pressures, and temptations. For this reason, remembrance must extend beyond the moments of formal prayer. "The remembrance of Allah is greater" because it spans the entire day, governing behavior at work, within the family, and in society.

Moreover, *dhikr* is not limited to repeating words on the tongue. It is a conscious state of heart and mind in which one's thoughts, intentions, and actions remain aligned with awareness of Allah and the pursuit of His pleasure. When prayer fulfills this role, it becomes a living force, shaping character, restraining sin, and guiding the believer toward integrity in every aspect of life.

Conclusion

Taken together, these jewels from the twentieth Juz form a coherent tapestry of guidance: belief must be demonstrated through action, worship must shape character, and true security can only be found in reliance upon Allah. Reflecting on these themes moves the reader beyond recitation toward internalization, allowing the Quran to inform

one's worldview, discipline one's conduct, and guide one's preparation for the Hereafter. In this way, the Quran becomes not only a text to be read, but a compass by which life is oriented.

Jewels from the Twenty First Juz: Fitrah, Family, and Faithful Leadership

(Al-Ankabout 29:46 – Al-Ahzab 33:30)

Introduction

The twenty-first Juz of the Quran presents a rich and integrated set of themes that address belief and resurrection, family and parenting, gratitude and leadership, sin and repentance, and the unseen consequences of human choices in this life and the next. Throughout this Juz, Allah draws attention to His signs in creation and society, demonstrating that true religion is in full harmony with the pure human fitrah, and that corruption on earth is largely the result of humanity's departure from that natural order. The creation of the spouse as a source of tranquility, the central role of gratitude, and the contrast between hopeful hardship and deceptive ease all emerge as practical lessons for the believer.

At the heart of this Juz stands the wisdom of Luqman: a complete curriculum for *tarbiyah*. It begins with tawhid, deepens through awareness of Allah's knowledge and gentleness, then progresses to prayer, social responsibility, humility, and honoring parents, even when faith is challenged. Alongside this moral framework, the Juz reminds us that resurrection is as easy for Allah as the creation of a single soul, that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the supreme role model for those who hope to meet Allah and the Last Day, and that true religious leadership is granted only to those who combine patience with certainty in Allah's signs.

These jewels of the twenty-first Juz form a coherent and practical program for nurturing a sound heart, a righteous family, and a principled community. The guidance presented here is not abstract theology, but a lived roadmap, one that begins at home and extends outward to society, calling the believer to honor Allah's signs through character, gratitude, humility, and responsibility.

1. Honor Allah's signs by Honoring the Wife

In Surat Al-Rum, Allah draws attention to several of His signs in creation in verses 20 - 25 and 46, each introduced by the phrase "And among His signs" (وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ). These signs invite deep reflection, guiding people to recognize the perfection of Allah's wisdom in how He created the universe and prepared it as a place of stability, comfort, and benefit for human life.

Among these profound signs is the creation of spouses:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ (٢١)

“And among His signs is that He created for you, from yourselves, mates, that you may find tranquility in her; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who reflect” (Al-Rum 30:21)

Allah highlights that the wife is a sign of His wisdom in creation. He made her a source of *sukun*: rest, comfort, and inner tranquility, for her husband. This is the first objective of marriage: that a man finds repose with his wife, and that this tranquility is secured by Allah through the placement of *mawaddah* (deep affection and love) and *rahmah* (mercy, tenderness, and compassion) between them. This mutual love and mercy are the foundation of a happy family and a stable home.

Allah further reminds the husband that his wife is not a stranger to him; she is "from yourselves," sharing his own nature and humanity. To harm her, humiliate her, or live in constant conflict with her is, in reality, to disturb one's own peace and to act against one's own soul.

This same expression, "from yourselves" (مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ), is used in the Quran to describe the intimate and compassionate relationship between the Prophet (PBUH) and this Ummah:

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ (١٢٨)
“There has certainly come to you a Messenger from yourselves. Grievous to him is what you suffer; [he is] concerned over you and to the believers he is kind and merciful.” (Al-Tawba 9:128)

Just as the Prophet (PBUH) was deeply concerned for the well-being of his community, the husband is called to care for his wife with attentiveness, mercy, and gentleness, recognizing her as part of his own life and soul. Honoring the wife is therefore not merely good manners; it is recognition of a divine sign placed within one's own home.

The Prophet (PBUH) made this principle explicit:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " أَكْمَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِيمَانًا أَحْسَنُهُمْ خُلُقًا وَخَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِنِسَائِهِمْ خُلُقًا "

“The most complete of believers in faith are those with the best character, and the best of you are the best in behavior to their women.” (Al-Tirmidhi)

He also said:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ وَأَنَا خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِي "
“The best of you is the best to his wives, and I am the best of you to my wives.” (Al-Tirmidhi)

These teachings show that honoring one's wife with affection, mercy, and respect is not a secondary courtesy but a defining mark of true faith and prophetic character. To honor

the wife is to honor one of Allah's signs: to guard her dignity, seek her comfort, and establish a home in which the Quranic ideals of love and mercy are not merely recited, but lived.

2. True Religion and the Pure Fitrah

The uniqueness of Islam, as delivered in its pure form by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), lies in its complete harmony with the natural disposition (fitrah) of humankind. This harmony is the defining mark of the true religion of Allah: it corresponds perfectly to the sound nature He instilled within every human being. Allah says:

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (٣٠)

“So, direct your face toward the religion, Hanif (inclining to truth), the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created people. There is no change in the creation of Allah. That is the upright religion, but most people do not know” (Al-Rum 30:30)

This verse makes clear that the straight religion to which Allah calls humanity is the *hanif* religion: pure, upright, and free from deviation, fully consistent with the original fitrah of every human being. Islam does not suppress human nature; rather, it purifies, disciplines, and directs it, restoring people to the uncorrupted state from which false beliefs, shirk, and immoral practices have alienated them.

For this reason, Allah repeatedly commands adherence to the way of Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him), who is uniquely described as *hanif*. Guided by his sound fitrah, Ibrahim recognized the oneness of Allah and rejected idolatry even before revelation was given to him. Allah says:

وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى تَهْتَدُوا قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ (١٣٥)

“They said: Be Jews or Christians, you will be guided. Say: Rather, (we follow) the religion of Ibrahim, “Hanif”, and he was not of the polytheists.” (Al-Baqarah 2:135)

قُلْ إِنِّي هَدَانِي رَبِّي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قَبِيمًا مِّلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ (١٦١)

“Say, “Indeed, my Lord has guided me to a straight path - a correct religion - the religion of Ibrahim, “Hanif”, and he was not of the polytheists.” (Al-An’am 6:161)

The religion of Ibrahim is *hanifiyyah*: a decisive turning away from all forms of shirk and deviation, and a complete turning toward Allah with purity of belief and worship. This is the same religion that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) came to confirm and complete, not a new creed, but the restoration and perfection of the primordial way of tawhid planted within every sound heart.

The religion that truly aligns with the pure fitrah rests upon three foundational principles:

- Belief in Allah alone as Lord, Creator, and the only One worthy of worship.
- Belief in the Day of Judgment and final accountability.
- Performance of righteous deeds that benefit both the individual and society.

These principles are common to all prophetic messages, even though the details of certain laws and rituals differed from one community to another. Allah says:

وَمَا تَفَرَّقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ (٤) وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ (٥)

“The People of the Scripture did not differ except after clear proof had come to them. (4) And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, sincere to Him in religion, inclining to truth, and to establish prayer and give zakah. That is the upright religion.” (Al-Bayyinah 98:4-5)

Thus, the upright religion (*ad-dīn al-qayyim*/دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ) consists of sincere worship of Allah alone, lived in a state of *ḥanifiyyah* that corresponds to the *fitrah*, and expressed through acts of devotion, most notably prayer and Zakat, which cultivate justice, compassion, and social responsibility.

This Quranic concept of *fitrah* is further clarified in the Sunnah, where the Prophet (PBUH) directly linked pure human nature to tawhid:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " مَا مِنْ مَوْلُودٍ إِلَّا يُولَدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ وَيُنَصِّرَانِهِ وَيُنَاصِرَانِهِ "

“Every child is born upon the fitrah; then his parents make him a Jew, or a Christian, or a Polytheist.” (al-Bukhari, Muslim)

This hadith explains that the original state of every human being is one of natural readiness to recognize and submit to Allah's oneness. Deviation arises later through external influences, cultural conditioning, and distorted teachings. The role of revelation, culminating in Islam, is to call humanity back to that original clarity, remove layers of corruption, and realign the heart with what it was created for: knowing, loving, and worshipping its Lord.

3. The Corruption on Earth is Man-Made

Allah directs humanity to read history and observe the world carefully in order to grasp a fundamental divine law: moral corruption leads to social, economic, and environmental corruption. Allah says:

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ (٤١) قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُشْرِكِينَ (٤٢)

“Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of what people’s hands have earned, so that He may let them taste part of what they have done, that perhaps they may return. (41) Say: Travel through the earth and observe how was the end of those before; most of them were idolaters.” (Al-Rum 30:41-42)

These verses establish that *fasad*, manifested in unrest, injustice, environmental damage, scarcity, and societal breakdown, is not accidental or random. It arises directly from human actions. Allah allows people to experience some of the consequences of their deeds, not purely as punishment, but as a warning and an invitation to repentance and return to the straight path.

The term "idolaters" (*mushrikin*) in this context is not limited to those who bow to carved idols. It includes anyone who abandons the pure fitrah Allah placed within them and assigns ultimate authority to something other than Allah: whether by worshipping created beings, absolutizing human ideologies, or elevating personal desires to the level of supreme law. In doing so, people effectively place themselves or others as partners with Allah in defining right and wrong, constructing false value systems that contradict divine guidance.

This corruption at the level of belief and intention inevitably manifests as outward corruption in society. Allah makes this link explicit:

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِّنْ مُّصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُوا عَنْ كَثِيرٍ (٣٠)

“And whatever misfortune befalls you, it is because of what your hands have earned. And He pardons much.” (Al-Shura 42:30)

Calamities, whether affecting individuals, communities, or entire civilizations, are often the cumulative result of wrongdoing, injustice, arrogance, and moral decay. Yet Allah's mercy far outweighs His retribution: He forgives far more than He allows to appear as consequence in this world, granting repeated opportunities for repentance and reform.

Despite the clarity of this Quranic diagnosis, many Muslims today fall into the habit of blaming external forces alone: colonialism, foreign conspiracies, or hostile powers, while ignoring internal moral causes. When hearts are corrupted, knowledge alone does not produce reform. Instead, it can become a tool for further damage, including:

- Spreading mischief and corruption in the land.
- Oppressing the weak and exploiting the vulnerable.
- Betraying trusts and normalizing injustice.
- Exploiting religious language and symbols for personal or political gain.

In such a condition, religion may be spoken, but the lived reality reflects a practical form of *shirk*: granting ultimate loyalty to power, wealth, tribe, or ideology instead of to Allah and His guidance. The Quran calls believers to confront this disease honestly, to recognize that much of the corruption on earth is man-made, and to act upon the divine

cure: sincere *tawbah*, purification of the heart, and a return to justice, humility, and obedience.

The Prophet (PBUH) also warned that specific moral violations lead to specific worldly consequences. Among the narrations reported is the saying of Ibn Abbas (RA):

عن ابن عباس - رضي الله عنهما - قال : " ولا نقص قوم المكيال والميزان إلا قطع عنهم الرزق ... " . رواه مالك .
"Whenever a people cheat in weights and measures, their provisions are cut off and hardship is sent upon them." (Malik)

Such reports reflect the same Quranic pattern: when people corrupt markets, oppress others, and violate justice, Allah allows them to taste the bitter fruits of their own actions in this world, before the full reckoning of the Hereafter.

4. Gratitude to Allah is for Your Own Benefit

This Juz introduces us to Luqman. Scholars have differed over whether he was a prophet or a righteous servant of Allah, but this question carries little practical benefit. Had knowing his precise rank been essential for guidance, Allah would have stated it explicitly. Instead, Allah emphasized what truly matters: that Luqman was granted *hikmah* (wisdom), and that our concern should be to seek that wisdom and live by it, rather than to debate the status of the one who possessed it.

Allah teaches that wisdom is a divine gift, granted to whom He wills, and that receiving it is among the greatest forms of goodness:

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا وَمَا يَدَّكُرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ (٢٦٩)
"He grants wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever has been granted wisdom has certainly been given abundant good. But none will remember except those of understanding." (Al-Baqarah 2:269).

One of the clearest manifestations of Luqman's wisdom is his deep understanding that gratitude to Allah returns as a benefit to one's own self. Allah says:

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ (١٢)
"And We certainly gave Luqman wisdom [and said], 'Be grateful to Allah.' And whoever is grateful is grateful only for his own benefits; and whoever is ungrateful, then indeed, Allah is Free of need, Praiseworthy (Luqman 31:12)

Allah does not increase in greatness when He is thanked, nor does He diminish when gratitude is withheld. Rather, gratitude refines the heart, nurtures inner peace, and becomes a means for attracting further blessings in this life and the Hereafter. Luqman grasped this divine law clearly, a law Allah also expressed in this verse:

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ

“And your Lord has proclaimed: ‘If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favor].” (Ibrahim 14:7)

Gratitude is therefore both an act of worship and a means of increase. The wise believer understands that thanking Allah is never a burden imposed upon the soul; it is an investment whose returns are manifold. Through gratitude, faith deepens, the heart gains emotional balance, and life itself becomes more grounded and purposeful. Like Luqman, the person of wisdom recognizes every moment of gratitude as a step toward greater clarity, lasting contentment, and the continued flow of divine favor.

5. Teaching Priorities for Children

One of the greatest lessons drawn from the story of Luqman is not merely what he taught his son, but the order in which he taught him. Luqman's approach to education is itself an expression of divine wisdom, one preserved in the Quran as a model for parents, teachers, and all who are entrusted with nurturing the next generation.

Luqman's priorities unfold in a deliberate and meaningful sequence:

1. Establishing *tawhid* and the gravity of *shirk*.
2. Cultivating awareness of Allah's knowledge, nearness, and gentleness.
3. Introducing core religious obligations and social responsibility.
4. Refining character through humility in behavior and speech.

This order reflects a deep understanding of human development: belief before law, awareness before obligation, and inner grounding before outward conduct.

Step 1: Begin with Tawhid and the Gravity of Shirk

Luqman begins by appealing to his son's innate sense that injustice is something grave and repulsive, explaining that the greatest injustice of all is associating partners with Allah:

وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ

“And [remember] when Luqman said to his son while he was advising him, ‘O my dear son, do not associate anything with Allah. Indeed, association with Him is a great injustice.” (Luqman 31:13)

To clarify why *shirk* is such a profound injustice, Luqman directs his son to reflect upon Allah's creation:

خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا وَالْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍ كَرِيمٍ (١٠) هَذَا خَلْقُ اللَّهِ فَأَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِ بَلِ الظَّالِمُونَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ (١١)

“He created the heavens without pillars that you see, and He cast into the earth firmly set mountains lest it should shift with you, and He dispersed throughout it from every creature. And We sent down rain from the sky and caused to grow therein [plants] of every noble kind in pairs. (10) That is the creation of Allah. So, show Me what those other than Him have created. Rather, the unjust are in clear misguidance.” (Luqman 31:10-11)

By contrasting Allah's absolute creative power with the complete incapacity of all others, Luqman demonstrates that equating the Creator with beings who create nothing is both irrational and unjust. Teaching tawhid through reflection on creation roots faith in both the intellect and the heart.

Step 2: Instill Awareness of Allah’s Knowledge and Gentleness

Next, Luqman teaches his son that Allah does not merely create and then withdraw. Rather, He knows, oversees, and brings forth even the most hidden of things. To engrave this awareness, Luqman presents a vivid and unforgettable image:

يَا بُنَيَّ إِنَّهَا إِنْ تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُنْ فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ

"O my dear son, even if something were the weight of a mustard-seed and if it were (hidden) in a rock, or (anywhere) in the heavens or on earth, Allah will bring it forth: for Allah is Gentle, and All-Aware.” (Luqman 31:16)

Here Luqman introduces Allah through His attributes of *al-Lateef* (the Gentle, Subtle) and *al-Khabir* (the All-Aware). This nurtures awe without fear, accountability without despair, and love alongside reverence. It also offers a powerful lesson for parents and educators: children should be guided under the gaze of al-Lateef, with compassion, patience, and subtle correction, rather than through constant threat and punishment.

Step 3: Introduce Core Commands After Knowing Allah

Once belief and awareness are firmly established, Luqman introduces his son to religious and moral obligations:

يَا بُنَيَّ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأَصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَكَ إِنَّ ذَلِكُمْ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ

"O my dear son! establish regular prayer, enjoin what is good and forbid what is wrong; and be patient over whatever befalls you. Indeed, that is of the matters requiring strong resolve.” (Luqman 31:17)

Prayer is mentioned first, transforming knowledge of Allah into lived connection and daily remembrance. Faith thus becomes experiential rather than abstract. Luqman then expands his son's responsibility beyond himself, teaching him concern for the moral health of society. Finally, he prepares him for the reality that standing for truth invites hardship, and that patience in adversity is a hallmark of moral strength and leadership.

Step 4: Shape Character Through Humility and Gentle Conduct

After grounding belief and duty, Luqman turns to character and outward behavior, emphasizing humility in both demeanor and speech:

وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ (١٨) وَأَقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ
وَأَعْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ (١٩)

"Do not turn your cheek away from people in contempt, nor walk upon the earth arrogantly. Indeed, Allah does not love every self-deluded boaster. (18) And be moderate in your pace and lower your voice; indeed, the most offensive of sounds is the braying of donkeys." (Luqman 31:18-19)

Luqman warns against arrogance in posture, expression, and speech, reminding that outward conduct reflects the inner state of the heart. He teaches balance, dignity, and restraint, emphasizing that harshness and loudness in speech are signs of moral ugliness, not strength.

In this way, Luqman's counsel becomes a timeless educational framework: begin with pure tawhid, deepen awareness of Allah's nearness and gentleness, introduce obligations only after belief is rooted, and then refine character through humility and beautiful conduct. It is a complete curriculum, one that builds faith, responsibility, and noble character in harmony.

6. Honoring Parents, Especially the Mother

It is striking that within the narrative of Luqman, he does not himself instruct his son, "Obey me and your mother," despite the central importance of honoring parents in Islam. Instead, Allah Himself intervenes in the passage to deliver this command directly. This shift in voice highlights how weighty the parent–child relationship is from a divine perspective, elevating it beyond personal authority to a sacred moral obligation.

Allah singles out the mother in particular, drawing attention to her sacrifices, the physical weakness, pain, and vulnerability of pregnancy, followed by childbirth and the intense care of the child during the first two years of life. These realities are presented as a primary reason for children to show deep gratitude and goodness to their parents:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَى وَهْنٍ وَفِصَلَهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنْ أَشْكُرَ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَى الْمَصِيرِ
(١٤)

"And We have enjoined upon man [care] for his parents. His mother carried him in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning is in two years. [We said], 'Be grateful to Me and to your parents; to Me is the final destination.'" (Luqman 31:14)

Here, gratitude is directed in two connected directions: first to Allah, the ultimate source of life, care, and provision, and then to the parents as the immediate means through which that care reached the child. By joining the commands “Be grateful to Me and to your parents,” the Quran makes clear that honoring one’s parents is an integral part of gratitude to Allah, not a separate or secondary virtue.

At the same time, Allah establishes a critical boundary. Honoring parents does not mean unconditional obedience, particularly when obedience would violate *tawhid*. Even if parents exert intense pressure to force their child to abandon pure faith, the believer is not permitted to obey them in matters of shirk. Yet remarkably, the Quran still commands kindness, companionship, and respect:

وَأَنْ تَابَ إِلَيَّ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (١٥)

“But if they strive to make you associate with Me that of which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them; yet accompany them in this world with kindness, and follow the path of those who turn back to Me. Then to Me will be your return, and I will inform you of what you used to do.” (Luqman 31:15)

This verse establishes a precise and balanced ethic:

- No obedience is permitted where parents demand *shirk* or disobedience to Allah.
- Ongoing kindness, service, and honorable companionship remain obligatory throughout their lives.

The believer is further instructed to “follow the path of those who turn back to Me,” highlighting the importance of surrounding oneself with righteous companions, teachers, and a supportive community. This guidance is especially significant for those whose families oppose their faith. It places a communal responsibility upon the Muslim society to provide compassion, mentorship, and belonging, particularly for youth and new Muslims, so that no one feels compelled to choose between loyalty to Allah and respectful care for their parents.

In this way, the Quran preserves both pillars: unwavering commitment to *tawhid* and unwavering excellence in character. It teaches that true faith never justifies cruelty or abandonment, and that honoring parents, especially the mother, remains a lifelong obligation, even amid deep differences of belief.

7. The Creation and Resurrection of the Soul

One of the primary reasons people reject revelation is their refusal to believe in resurrection and the Day of Judgment. Unable to imagine how scattered bodies and decayed remains could ever be restored; they dismiss the Hereafter as impossible. Yet this denial does not arise from evidence; it stems from a limited and distorted understanding of creation itself.

Allah addresses this doubt by directing humanity back to the most fundamental reality: the first creation is already the greatest proof. The One who brought human beings into existence from nothing, and who originated all of humanity from a single soul, is fully capable of returning them all to life at once for judgment. In this context, Allah says:

مَا خَلَقَكُمْ وَلَا بَعَثَكُمْ إِلَّا كَنَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ (٢٨)

“Your creation and your resurrection are but like that of a single soul. Indeed, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.” (Luqman 31:28)

This verse collapses all human numbers, generations, nations, and dispersed remains, into a single comparison. For Allah, who is not constrained by time, space, or resources, creating and resurrecting billions is no more difficult than dealing with one soul. The difficulty exists only in the human imagination, not in divine power.

By concluding the verse with “All-Hearing, All-Seeing,” Allah links resurrection to His perfect knowledge. The One who heard every word and saw every action throughout history does not lose track of any soul. Resurrection, therefore, is not only possible; it is the necessary completion of divine justice.

Within the same Juz, Allah reinforces this argument by reminding humanity that initiating creation is already proof of His ability to repeat it:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَهُوَ أَهْوَنُ عَلَيْهِ . (٢٧)

“And He is the One who begins creation; then He repeats it, and that is easier for Him.” (Al-Rum 30:27)

Allah also exposes the logical flaw behind denying resurrection: it is forgetting one’s own origin. He says:

وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَنَسِيَ خَلْقَهُ قَالَ مَنْ يُحْيِي الْعِظْمَ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ (٧٨) فَلْيُحْيِيهَا الَّذِي أَنْشَأَهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ (٧٩)

“He presents for Us an example and forgets his own creation. He says, ‘Who will give life to bones when they are decayed?’ (78) Say, ‘He will give them life who created them the first time, and He is Knowing of all creation’ (Yaseen 36:78–79)

Denial of resurrection is thus exposed as intellectual inconsistency: one who already exists cannot reasonably deny the power that brought him into existence.

To make this reality accessible to every mind, Allah repeatedly points to visible signs, such as the revival of dead earth after rain:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِنَا أَنْتَ تَرَى الْأَرْضَ خَاشِعَةً فَإِذَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا الْمَاءَ اهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ إِنَّ الَّذِي أَحْيَاهَا لَمُحْيِي الْمَوْتِ إِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (٣٩)

“And among His signs is that you see the earth humbled; then when We send down water upon it, it stirs and swells. Indeed, the One who gave it life is the Giver of life to the dead. Indeed, He is over all things competent” (Fussilat 41:39)

Through these arguments, the Quran presents creation and resurrection as two halves of a single reality. The One who effortlessly originated humanity from a single soul will just as effortlessly summon every soul back, simultaneously, knowingly, and justly, to stand before Him.

8. The Hopeful Disobedient

When reflecting on those who disobey Allah in this world, two broad conditions can be observed:

1. A disobedient person who lives in misery.
2. A disobedient person who appears to live in comfort and happiness.

The first group, those who disobey Allah yet experience hardship and distress, may in a profound sense be fortunate if they read their condition correctly. Their suffering can serve as a merciful warning from Allah: an opportunity to awaken, repent, and change course before facing a far greater loss in the Hereafter. Their pain is not merely punishment; it may be a call to return.

Allah describes the ultimate fate of those who persist in defiance without repentance, while also revealing the purpose of worldly hardship:

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فَسَقُوا فَمَأْوَاهُمُ النَّارُ كُلَّمَا أَرَادُوا أَنْ يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا أُعِيدُوا فِيهَا وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ النَّارِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ (٢٠) وَلَنُنذِرَنَّهُمْ مِّنَ الْعَذَابِ الَّذِي دُونَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَكْبَرِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ (٢١)

“As for those who defiantly disobeyed, their refuge will be the Fire. Every time they wish to come out of it, they will be returned to it and told, ‘Taste the punishment of the Fire which you used to deny.’ (20) And We will surely let them taste the nearer punishment before the greater punishment, so that perhaps they may return” (Al-Sajda 32:20-21)

The "nearer punishment" in this life, manifesting as anxiety, loss, humiliation, or hardship, can become a door of hope if it leads a person back to Allah with sincere repentance. In this sense, worldly suffering may be severe, but it is not devoid of mercy.

The second group, those who disobey Allah while enjoying apparent ease, success, and comfort, are in a far more dangerous position if that ease blinds them to their need for repentance. At times, worldly abundance is not a sign of divine pleasure but a gradual enticement (*istidraj* استدراج), in which people are allowed to sink deeper into heedlessness until a sudden and devastating reckoning arrives. Allah says:

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ (٤٤)

“So, when they forgot what they had been reminded of, We opened for them the doors of everything. Then, when they rejoiced in what they were given, We seized them suddenly, and they were plunged into despair.” (Al-Anaam 6:44)

This verse makes clear that not every open door is a blessing in the true sense. When comfort, opportunity, and pleasure accompany persistent disobedience and forgetfulness of Allah, they may signal not safety, but impending loss. The disobedient person who appears content may therefore be in a more perilous state than the one who suffers, because comfort can numb the heart and delay repentance.

The wise believer, whether examining his own condition or advising others, reads both hardship and ease through the lens of the Hereafter:

- Hardship can be a hopeful call back to Allah.
- Ease can be a hidden warning if it is coupled with ongoing disobedience.

In both cases, true safety lies only in returning to Allah, correcting one’s path, and refusing to confuse temporary worldly states, pleasant or painful, with Allah’s final judgment.

9. The Prophet as Best Role Model

One of the central commands in the Quran is to take the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) as a living example to be followed. Allah says:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا (الأحزاب)

"Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah, you have a beautiful role model whoever hopes for Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah often." (Al-Ahzab 33: 21)

This verse connects three core qualities:

- Hope to meet Allah.
- Belief in the Last Day.
- Frequent remembrance of Allah.

Whoever sincerely embodies these qualities will naturally find his most complete and practical roadmap in the life of the Prophet (PBUH). Emulating him is not limited to admiration or emotional attachment; it means consciously shaping one's daily conduct to resemble his way of life as closely as possible.

Taking the Prophet (PBUH) as a true role model requires studying his character in depth, because his *akhlaq* were the living embodiment of the Quran. When our mother

Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) was asked about his character, she replied: "His character was the Quran." This statement means that he was the Quran translated into action, and that every command, prohibition, and moral ideal of the Book was reflected in his behavior.

For this reason, when Allah praised him in the Quran, He praised him foremost for his character:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ (القلم 4)

"And indeed, you are upon a great moral character." (Al-Qalam 68:4)

This divine testimony establishes that excellence in religion is not measured by knowledge or ritual alone, but by the refinement of character, something the Prophet (peace be upon him) exemplified at the highest level.

Two foundational pillars of his exalted character were truthfulness and trustworthiness. Long before revelation, the people of Makkah unanimously recognized these qualities in him and gave him the title Al-Sadiq al-Amin (الصادق الأمين): the Truthful, the Trustworthy. He never betrayed a trust, even when dealing with enemies, and never spoke a lie, even when dishonesty could have served his worldly interests.

These traits became the bedrock of his dawah. When he stood on Mount Safa and called his people to Islam, they openly acknowledged that they had never known him to lie. A person who claims love for the Prophet (peace be upon him) yet is careless with truthfulness or *amanah* has not fully taken him as a genuine role model.

Beyond personal morality, the Prophet (peace be upon him) was also the finest leader of individuals and communities. His leadership combined moral integrity with strategic wisdom. Key features of his leadership include:

1. **Integrity**
 - Complete consistency between word and action.
 - Absolute reliability in promises, treaties, and responsibilities.
2. **Vision**
 - A clear, long-term mission: bringing people from darkness to light, not merely securing short-term gains.
 - Preparing generations, as seen in his nurturing of the Companions and concern for those who would come after them.
3. **Adaptability**
 - Employing different strategies in Makkah and Madinah, in peace and war, with the strong and the weak.
 - Flexibility in methods while remaining firm on principles.
4. **Accountability**
 - Welcoming consultation (*shura*) and correction.
 - Accepting responsibility for decisions and constantly seeking Allah's forgiveness.
5. **Decision-making**

- Combining tawakkul with careful planning and consultation.
 - Acting decisively once a matter was resolved, without hesitation or fear.
6. **Communication skills**
- Speaking clearly and deliberately, to the point that listeners could count his words.
 - Tailoring speech to the listener, sometimes brief, sometimes detailed; sometimes gentle, sometimes firm.

Studying these dimensions of his life through *seerah*, hadith, and practical application allows Muslims to take the Prophet (PBUH) not only as a spiritual guide, but as a model for family life, community building, conflict resolution, and civilizational leadership.

To take the Prophet (PBUH) as a role model is therefore an ongoing project, one that reshapes character, truthfulness, *amanah*, and leadership style until they increasingly reflect his noble and beautiful example

10. Leaders Are Formed by Patience and Certainty

In Surat al-Sajda, Allah describes a category of people whom He honored with true leadership, leadership grounded not in status or authority, but in inner spiritual qualities:

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أُمَّةً يَهْتَدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ (٢٤)

“And We made from among them leaders who guided [people] by Our command because they were patient and because they have certainty in Our signs.” (Al-Sajda 32:24)

This verse establishes a foundational Quranic principle: genuine religious leadership is neither inherited nor self-proclaimed. It is granted by Allah when two essential qualities are firmly established in a person:

- Patience (*ṣabr*): steadfastness in obedience, restraint from sin, and endurance through hardship and trial.
- Certainty (*yaqin*): deep, confident conviction in Allah’s revelations that guides thought, behavior, and decision-making.

Scholars have long observed that deviation from Allah’s path generally arises from two internal diseases:

- Carnal desire (*shahwah*), which pulls a person toward sin, ego, and worldly indulgence.
- Doubt or misconception (*shubhah*), which clouds understanding and blurs the distinction between truth and falsehood.

Patience is the cure for *shahwah*, enabling a person to restrain impulses and remain firm upon obedience. Knowledge of revelation, coupled with reflection and sincerity,

cultivates *yaqin*, which dispels *shubhah* and anchors the heart in truth. Only those who struggle against these two diseases within themselves are truly qualified to help guide others.

Yet Allah immediately follows the verse on leadership with a decisive reminder about the limits of human authority:

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ (٢٥)

“Indeed, your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection, concerning that over which they used to differ.” (Al-Sajda 32:25)

This serves as a vital warning, especially to preachers, scholars, and activists, against overstepping their role by hastily declaring others misguided, deviant, or condemned over disputed matters. The Quran draws a clear boundary:

- Human responsibility is to clarify the truth, advise with wisdom, and guide with patience, knowledge, and good character.
- Final judgment regarding hearts, intentions, and ultimate outcomes belongs exclusively to Allah on the Day of Resurrection.

True leadership is therefore marked by humility as much as by resolve. Those who aspire to guide others to Allah must cultivate patience and certainty within themselves, while exercising restraint, mercy, and fairness toward others. The true leader carries people toward Allah, without claiming Allah's exclusive right to judge their final destiny.

Conclusion

The guidance of the twenty-first Juz calls the believer to live in harmony with the fitrah, anchored firmly in tawhid, and expressed through gratitude, humility, and upright character. It teaches that honoring Allah's signs begins with the closest relationships: spouse, parents, and children, and that faith is not complete without mercy, wisdom, and moral responsibility within the family and community. The Juz also challenges the habit of blaming external forces for every misfortune, insisting instead that much of the corruption on land and sea arises from what human hands have earned, and that hardship may be a merciful call back to Allah, while unrepented ease can be a subtle form of trial.

At the same time, the Juz provides clear models and measures: Luqman as a teacher of wisdom, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the living embodiment of the Quran and the best role model, and the Quranic criteria for leadership, patience and certainty, tempered by humility and restraint in judgment. Ultimate accountability, it reminds us, belongs to Allah alone.

If these jewels are truly internalized, they can reorder a believer's priorities: to read both hardship and prosperity as messages from Allah; to nurture families with wisdom and gentleness; to uphold truth and trustworthiness; and to aspire to leadership that guides

without arrogance or harsh condemnation. The hope is that whoever journeys through this Juz with reflection will emerge with a heart better prepared to meet Allah, a character closer to the Prophet's example, and a life more aligned with the path of those whom Allah has guided and honored.

Jewels from the Twenty Second Juz: From Intellectual Awe to Civilizational Responsibility

(Al-Ahzab 33:31 -Yasin 36:27)

Introduction

The twenty-second Juz of the Qur'an, spanning parts of Surahs Al-Ahzab, Saba, Fatir, and Yasin, serves as a profound roadmap for the human soul. It is a section of revelation that bridges the inner heart and the external universe.

In these pages, we are not merely given laws; we are given a strategy for existence. We move from the Pyramid of Faith, which defines our internal spiritual rank, to the Strategy of Reflection, which teaches us how to decouple our minds from the noise of the crowd.

This chapter explores the theme of Conscious Submission. It challenges the believer to move beyond a superficial, identity-based faith into a life where the study of a mountain, the management of a trade route, and the defense of a Prophet's honor are all seen as interconnected acts of worship.

As we journey through these jewels, we will discover that the path to Divine proximity is paved with intellectual honesty, active gratitude, and the courage to stand alone before Allah.

1. The Pyramid of Faith: From Identity to Excellence

The Qur'an does not present faith as a static label or a binary condition. It does not reduce human spirituality to a simple division between believer and non-believer. Rather, the Qur'an portrays spirituality as a living, evolving reality: one that grows, deepens, and ascends over a lifetime.

This dynamic progression is masterfully captured in Surat Al-Ahzab:

إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْقَانِتَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْخَاشِعِينَ وَالْخَاشِعَاتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّيْمِينَ وَالصَّيْمَاتِ وَالْحَافِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا (٣٥)

“Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the devout men and devout women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their chastity and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allah often and the women who do so—for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward.” (Al-Ahzab 33:35)

This is not a random collection of virtues. It is a deliberate spiritual architecture: a ten-station pyramid that guides the seeker from outward religious identity to the summit of Ihsan (spiritual excellence) and Taqwa (God-consciousness).

The Ten Stations of Ascent

1. The Muslim (Submission): The entry point. It begins with the declaration of belonging and the acceptance of Divine guidance.
2. The Believer (Iman): Identity moves from the tongue to the heart. Faith becomes internalized conviction rather than inherited affiliation.
3. The Devout (Qunut): Faith manifests as consistent, conscious obedience. Worship is no longer an occasional act, but a settled way of life.
4. The Truthful (Sidq): The birth of inner integrity. The private and public self becomes one; the heart and tongue speak the same truth and in perfect alignment.
5. The Patient (Sabr): The anchoring of faith. The believer develops endurance in hardship, restraint in temptation, and perseverance in obedience.
6. The Humble (Khushu'): The softening of the heart before Allah. Awe, reverence, and quiet surrender begin to shape one's inner state.
7. The Charitable (Sadaqah): Faith overflows outward. Having been cultivated internally, it now manifests as generosity toward creation.
8. The Faster (Sawm): The discipline of desire. By willingly restraining lawful needs, the seeker gains mastery over the ego.
9. The Chaste (Hifdh): The moral fortress. This represents the peak of self-control—guarding one's purity and dignity against the powerful human instincts.
10. The Constant Remembrance (Dhikr): The summit. At this level, the heart lives in continual awareness of Allah, producing spiritual clarity and moral insight.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ (٢٠١)

"Indeed, those who have Taqwa, when a suggestion from Satan touches them, they remember [Him] and at once they gain insight." (Al-A'raf 7:201)

Spiritual growth in Islam is additive, not substitutive. Ascending to a higher station never cancels the lower ones; it perfects them, making them more firmly rooted than before.

An advanced seeker does not abandon prayer, honesty, or patience. Rather, these qualities become deeper, purer, and more sincere. The pyramid is accumulative: the higher you climb, the more virtues you carry. Any claim of spiritual "enlightenment" that lacks the foundation of basic morality, discipline, and obedience is a structure without a foundation: a house built on sand.

2. Heirs of the Book: Hope for Every Striving Soul

Many sincere believers struggle with a silent, painful internal dialogue: “I am not righteous enough.” “I fall too often to be a real believer.” “I will never reach the level of the truly pious.”

Surat Faṭīr directly addresses this inner struggle, replacing despair with a sense of purpose. In a single, profound passage, Allah redefines our relationship with success and failure.

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ ۖ وَمِنْهُمْ مُّقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ يُرِيدُونَ
اللَّهُ ذَاكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ (٣٢) جَنَّتٌ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا ... (٣٣)

“Then We gave the Book as inheritance to those whom We have chosen from among Our servants. Among them are those who wrong themselves, among them are those who are moderate, and among them are those who race ahead in good deeds by Allah’s permission. That is the great favor. (32) Gardens of Eden! They enter therein...” (Faṭīr 35:32-33)

Allah describes three categories of believers, yet all three are called: “Those whom We have chosen from among Our servants.” Even the one who wrongs himself is still included among the chosen. This alone shatters the idea that only spiritual elites belong to Allah.

The Three Categories

- 1. Those Who Wrong Themselves:** These are believers who struggle with consistency, fall into sins, and fail repeatedly. Yet, Allah still calls them “My chosen servants.” Their presence in this verse proves that falling into sin does not expel you from Allah’s concern. The only true failure is to abandon the path of repentance.
- 2. Those Who Are Moderate:** These are the steady and stable. They fulfill obligations and avoid major sins but do not consistently go beyond the minimum. They are upright and accepted.
- 3. Those Who Race in Good Deeds:** These are the spiritually ambitious, those who actively seek excellence (Ihsan) in worship, character and service. Notably, Allah adds: (بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ) “By Allah’s permission”, reminding us that even excellence is a gift from Allah, not a personal achievement to boast about.

This verse provides the "compass" for the Pyramid of Faith. While the pyramid shows us where we can go, this verse tells us that Allah accepts us where we are. It teaches us three liberating truths:

- Belonging comes before perfection: You do not need to be flawless to be "chosen."
- Struggle does not cancel election: Your internal battles with sin do not mean you aren't an heir to the Book.
- Islam is a directional religion: It is not about where you stand, but which way you are facing.

The real danger is not being a "struggling believer"; the real danger is giving up. To stop trying is to step outside the path entirely. As long as a person regrets their errors and returns to the Divine door, they remain among the heirs.

Allah did not divide humanity into "perfect saints" and "lost failures." Instead, He categorized His chosen servants as:

- The Struggling: Fighting their weaknesses.
- The Steady: Maintaining their ground.
- The Striving: Racing for the heights.

All three are heirs of the Book. All three are invited to the Gardens of Eden. The door upward remains open for everyone, regardless of how many times they have stumbled.

3. Wholehearted Submission: The Prophet as the Living Qur'an

True faith requires unwavering submission to the decrees of Allah and His Messenger (PBUH). In Islam, the Qur'anic command and the Prophetic application are not separate authorities; they are two expressions of the same Divine will. A believer therefore accepts both with an open heart, trusting in Allah's wisdom even when its full depth is not immediately apparent.

The Qur'an makes clear that obedience to the Messenger is not optional; it is a defining condition of faith:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُّبِينًا (٣٦)

“It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, to have any choice in their affair. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly gone astray into clear error.” (Al-Ahzab 33:36)

Allah also says:

فَلَا وَرَيْكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّى يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِي مَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا (٦٥)

“But no, by your Lord, they will not truly believe until they make you judge in all disputes between them, then find within themselves no discomfort regarding what you have decided, and submit in full submission.” (Al-Nisa 4:65)

The ultimate proof of love for Allah is following the Messenger:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (٣١) قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ
وَالرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكٰفِرِينَ (٣٢)

“Say: "If you love Allah, follow me, Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (31) Say: "Obey Allah and the Messenger. But if they turn away, then Allah does not like the disbelievers.” (Al-Imran 3:31-32)

The Qur'an is the divinely preserved word of Allah and the primary source of guidance. Yet by Divine design, it often presents universal principles rather than exhaustive procedural detail. The Sunnah, the lived example of the Prophet (PBUH), demonstrates how those principles are embodied in real life.

The Qur'an commands prayer, zakat, fasting, justice, and social responsibility. The Prophet (PBUH) showed how to pray, how to give, how to fast, and how to live those commands with balance, mercy, and wisdom. He modeled the harmony between complete reliance on Allah (tawakkul) and active engagement with practical means.

For this reason, even those who advocate a "Qur'an-only" approach cannot escape reliance on the universally transmitted practices of the Prophet, such as the form of prayer and the structure of communal worship. These practices represent a lived Sunnah that predates written collections and has been preserved through continuous communal transmission.

Because Prophetic teachings were transmitted through human chains, scholars developed a rigorous science to distinguish reliable reports from unreliable ones. At the highest level of certainty stands the Hadith Mutawatir: reports transmitted by such large numbers of people in every generation that deliberate fabrication is inconceivable.

Scholars historically differed on the minimum number required for mass transmission:

- Some suggest 10, citing the Qur'anic description of ten as "complete" (2:196).
- Others suggest 40, based on Prophetic narrations regarding the strength of a group.
- Some even cite 310 (the number of companions at Badr) or 1,400 (those at the Pledge of Ridwan).

Using the criterion of ten narrators per generation, scholars estimate that roughly 100–350 hadiths reach this level of absolute authenticity.

While Hadith science is a specialized discipline, its spiritual implication is simple: Allah sent the Messenger (PBUH) not merely to deliver revelation, but to embody it.

For the believer, following the Prophet ﷺ is not secondary to following the Qur'an. It is the most faithful way of following the Qur'an itself. Wholehearted submission, therefore, is not abstract belief; it is lived obedience, modeled by the Messenger and embraced with trust, humility, and love.

4. The Strategy of Serious Reflection: Breaking the Noise

When people harbor doubts about the Truth, their instinct is often to look toward the majority or immerse themselves in public discourse. Yet the Qur'an repeatedly indicates that crowds are rarely where deep realization occurs. Genuine understanding requires a deliberate withdrawal from collective noise into purposeful reflection.

In Surat Saba, Allah commands the Prophet (PBUH) to present a single, concise piece of advice to his critics:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَعْطُكُمْ بِوَاحِدَةٍ أَنْ تَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ مِثْلَىٰ شِئْءٍ وَفُرَادَىٰ ثُمَّ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ مَا بِصَاحِبِكُمْ مِّنْ جِنَّةٍ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ لَّكُمْ
بَيْنَ يَدَيْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ (٤٦)

“Say: I advise you to do one thing only: that you stand for Allah, in pairs or individually, and then reflect. You will realize that your companion is not possessed by madness. He is nothing but a warner to you before a severe punishment” (Saba 34:46)

In large groups, crowd psychology often dominates. People unconsciously absorb prevailing opinions in order to belong. The pressure to conform suppresses independent thought and muffles the voice of the fitrah: the innate human inclination toward truth.

Allah's instruction therefore begins with separation from the crowd.

- Individually (Furada): To stand alone before Allah, free from social influence, reputational concern, or performative behavior. It is a direct encounter between the soul and its Creator.
- In Pairs (Mathna): To engage in sincere dialogue with one trusted person. With no audience and no hierarchy, two minds assist each other in removing assumptions and blind spots.

Both modes cultivate honesty, humility, and intellectual courage. Once removed from the noise, a person can objectively assess several core realities emphasized in Surat Saba:

1. Evidence of Character: The Prophet (PBUH) lived among his people for decades as Al-Amin (the trustworthy). Reflection recalls a life defined by integrity, not delusion.
2. Evidence of Sincerity: (قُلْ مَا سَأَلْتُكُمْ مِّنْ أَجْرٍ فَهُوَ لَكُمْ إِنَّ أَجْرِي إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ) "No reward do I ask you... My reward is only from Allah." The Prophet (PBUH) repeatedly declared that he sought no payment, status, or worldly gain. His mission brought hardship, not privilege: evidence that his motivation was purely Divine.
3. Evidence of Source: Allah describes Himself as: (رَبِّي يَقْذِفُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلَٰمُ الْغُيُوبِ) "My Lord sends forth the Truth... the Knower of the Unseen." Truth is not a human fabrication; it is a deliberate projection from the Creator into human consciousness.
4. Evidence of Outcome: (جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَمَا يُبْدِيُ الْبَاطِلُ وَمَا يُعِيدُ) "The Truth has come, and falsehood cannot originate nor restore." Falsehood has no creative power. It only imitates, distorts, and collapses when confronted by Truth.

The strategy concludes with a statement of intellectual honesty:

قُلْ إِنْ ضَلَلْتُ فَإِنَّمَا أَضِلُّ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِي وَإِنِ اهْتَدَيْتُ فَبِمَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ قَرِيبٌ (٥٠)
"If I go astray, it is only against myself. And if I am guided, it is by what my Lord reveals to me. Indeed, He is All-Hearing, Ever Near" (Saba 34:50)

Guidance is not inherited from crowds. It is earned through sincere engagement with revelation. Truth does not require a majority vote. It requires an honest heart, a quiet mind, and the courage to stand before Allah.

5. The Source of True Honor: Seeking the Audience of One

When a believer comes to know Allah through reflection on His creation and His Names, a profound inner shift occurs. The heart gradually detaches from craving recognition, applause, and status among people. In their place emerges a firm conviction that all honor originates from a single Source: Allah.

Allah lays down this principle with striking clarity:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ يَمْكُرُونَ
 السَّيِّئَاتِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَكْرُ أُولَٰئِكَ هُوَ يُبْورُ (١٠)

"Whoever desires honor, to Allah belongs all honor. To Him ascend good words, and righteous deeds raise them. But those who plot evil will have a severe punishment, and their plotting will perish." (Fatir 35:10)

This verse reveals a subtle but powerful distinction:

- Good Words (Al-Kalim al-Tayyib): These are pure, sincere, and beneficial words. Allah says they ascend to Him: they are accepted, recorded, and rewarded.
- Righteous Deeds (Al-Amal al-Salih): For actions, Allah uses a stronger verb: yarfa`uhu (He raises it). Words may be acknowledged, but deeds are what elevate. They are the engine of spiritual promotion.

Many people compromise their principles to gain social approval. Yet this pursuit often results in losing both Allah's pleasure and people's respect. The Prophet (PBUH) summarized this spiritual law:

من التمس رضا الله عنه بسخط الناس رضي الله عنه ، وأرضى عنه الناس ، ومن التمس رضا الناس بسخط الله ، سخط الله عليه وأسخط عليه الناس. [أخرجه البيهقي في شعب الإيمان]

"Whoever seeks Allah's pleasure, even if it incurs the displeasure of people, Allah will be pleased with him and will cause the people to be pleased with him. But whoever seeks People's pleasure while incurring the displeasure of Allah, Allah will be displeased with him and will cause the people to be displeased with him. "
(Tirmidhi/Bayhaqi)

Why, then, do people still submit to others against their conscience? Most often, it is driven by two primal fears:

- Fear of losing provision
- Fear of losing security or life

The Qur'an dismantles both.

مَا يَفْتَحِ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ رَحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا وَمَا يُمْسِكْ فَلَا مُرْسِلَ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ (٢)
"Whatever mercy Allah opens for mankind, none can withhold it; and whatever He withholds, none can release it after Him. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise."
(Fatir 35:2)

No employer, ruler, institution, or network controls destiny. Allah alone does.

When you realize that no human can open what Allah has closed, and no human can close what Allah has opened, fear dissolves. You stop performing for crowds. You stop bargaining with your conscience. You begin living for an Audience of One. And in that moment, you become truly free.

6. Invoking Blessings: A Divine Partnership

In the Qur'an, most commands begin with the address (يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا) "O you who believe." However, there is one unique command where Allah does not begin by

instructing the believers. Instead, He first declares that He Himself and His angels are already engaged in the act, and only then invites the believers to join:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا سَلِيمًا (الأحزاب ٥٦)

"Indeed, Allah and His angels send blessings (Salat) upon the Prophet. O you who believe, ask blessings upon him and greet him with a worthy salutation."
(Al-Azab 33:56)

This verse reveals a profound reality: sending blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ is not merely a human devotion, it is participation in an ongoing Divine action.

The word Salat takes different meanings depending on who performs it:

1. **From Allah:** It is not a request, but a fulfillment. It signifies divine mercy, exaltation, praise among the angels, and the granting of forgiveness and grace.
2. **From the Angels:** It is *Istighfar* (seeking forgiveness). As carriers of the Throne, they ask Allah to protect and forgive those on Earth (Ghafir 40:7).

الذين يحملون العرش ومن حوله يسبحون بحمد ربهم ويؤمنون به ويستغفرون للذين آمنوا ربنا وسعت كل شيء رحمة وعلماً فاغفر للذين تابوا واتبعوا سبيلك وقهم عذاب الجحيم، (غافر)

"Those who carry the Throne (of Allah) and those around it glorify and Praise to their Lord; believe in Him; and ask forgiveness for those who believe: "Our Lord! Your reach is over all things, in mercy and knowledge. Forgive those who turn in repentance and follow Your Path; and protect them from the Penalty of the Hell Fire!" (Ghafer 40:7)

3. **From the Believers:** It is a Du'a (supplication), asking Allah to increase the Prophet's rank, honor his station, and shower him with mercy.

When verse 33:56 was revealed, the companions felt a sense of longing. Ibn Abbas reported that the Emigrants and Helpers said:

قال ابن عباس : لما نزل إن الله وملائكته يصلون على النبي قال المهاجرون والأنصار : هذا لك يا رسول الله خاصة ، وليس لنا فيه شيء

"This is for you alone, O Messenger of Allah, and we have no share in it."

They were accustomed to verses where Allah mentions the Prophet and the believers together, such as:

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا (الفتح)

"Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are strong against the disbelievers, but compassionate among themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating, seeking Bounty from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure." (Al-Fath 48:29)

ءَامَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ ۚ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ ۚ وَكُتُبِهِ ۚ وَرُسُلِهِ ۚ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّن رُّسُلِهِ ۗ

“The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the believers. Each one believes in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. (They say), “We make no distinction between one another of His Messengers” (Al-Baqarah 2:285)

Shortly after, Allah revealed that the believers are also recipients of Divine and angelic Salat:

هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَلِّي عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلَائِكَتُهُ لِيُخْرِجَكُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَكَانَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا (٤٣)
“He is the One who sends blessings (Salat) upon you, and His angels as well, so that He may bring you out from darkness into light; and He is ever Merciful to the believers.” (Ahzab 33:43)

How does a believer secure this continuous Divine and angelic attention? The Qur’an gives a clear condition: frequent remembrance.

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا (٤١) وَسَبَّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا (٤٢). (سورة الأحزاب)
“O you who believe, remember Allah with much remembrance (41) and glorify Him morning and evening. (Al-Ahzab 33:41:42)

The distinguishing mark between sincere faith and hypocrisy is not the presence of remembrance, but its scarcity:

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَدِّعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَدِيعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كَسَالَى يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا (النساء)
“The hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but it is He Who deceives them. And when they stand up for the prayer, they stand with laziness and to be seen of men, and they do not remember Allah but a little.” (Al-Nisa 4:142)

Sending blessings upon the Prophet (PBUH), engaging in abundant remembrance, and seeking closeness to Allah are not separate acts. They are intertwined pathways into a Divine partnership in which Allah elevates, the angels pray, and the believer walks in light. This is not merely honor, it is transformation.

7. The Great Trust: Empowering the Human Soul

The final two verses of Surat Al-Ahzab are often read in a way that unintentionally portrays the human condition as a tragic cosmic mistake. When approached only through surface-level translations, these verses may seem to depict humanity as reckless, doomed, and inherently unfit for the responsibility it accepted.

Yet through tadabbur (deep reflection), and by keeping in mind Allah's Names: the All-Wise, the All-Merciful, and the All-Just, a far more empowering message emerges.

The verses state:

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا (٧٢) لِيُعَذِّبَ اللَّهُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ وَالْمُشْرِكَاتِ وَيَتُوبَ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا (٧٣)

“Indeed, We presented the Trust to the heavens, the earth, and the mountains, but they declined to bear it and were apprehensive of it; and man undertook it. Indeed, he was unjust and ignorant. (72) So that Allah may punish the hypocritical men and hypocritical women and the idolatrous men and idolatrous women, and Allah may turn in mercy to the believing men and believing women. And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” (Al-Ahzab 33:72-73)

A purely literal reading often produces three troubling impressions:

- That the Heavens and Earth have free will and consciously “refused” Allah’s offer.
- That humanity was foolish for accepting a burden beyond its capacity.
- That the purpose of the trust was merely to create a scenario for punishment.

Such conclusions conflict with a foundational Qur’anic principle

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

“Allah does not burden any soul beyond its capacity.” (Al-Baqarah 2:286)

What is the "Trust" (Al-Amanah)?

In Surat Al-Baqarah, Allah announces:

إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً

“Indeed, I am placing upon the earth a Khalifa (vicegerent).” (Al-Baqarah 2:30)

The *Amanah* (Trust) is his very role: guardianship of the earth according to Divine guidance.

To fulfill it, Allah equipped humanity with extraordinary endowments:

- **Knowledge:** Adam was taught the names of all things (2:31).
- **Subjugation of creation:** The universe was made serviceable to humankind (45:13).
- **Consciousness with Free Will:** While all creation glorifies Allah (17:44), only humans possess the unique ability to consciously choose obedience or rebellion.

To reach a deeper understanding of these verses, we need to re-examine three key Arabic terms:

1. **'Arada (عَرَضَ):** Commonly translated as "offered," it also means "to project" or "to display." Just as a "showing hall" (صالة عرض) displays a film, Allah projected the magnitude of this responsibility to the mountains and heavens to demonstrate their relative incapacity compared to the potential of Man.
2. **Abayna (أَبَيْنَ):** Translated as "refused," but linguistically it implies "incapacity." In engineering, "pile refusal" occurs when a pile can no longer penetrate soil. The mountains did not "say no" to Allah; they simply reached the limit of their structural capacity.
3. **Ashfaqna (أَشْفَقْنَا):** Often translated as "they were afraid," but it carries the root meaning of "softness" or "fragility." It highlights that even the mighty mountains are "softer" than the spiritual and intellectual resilience Allah placed within the human soul.

Why Describe Man as *Zalum* "Unjust" and *Jahul* (Foolish)?

These descriptors do not condemn humanity for accepting the Trust. They describe what happens when humans neglect it:

- A person is unjust to himself when he wastes the divine potential placed within him
- A person is ignorant when he fails to recognize the honor of being chosen as Allah's vicegerent.

The criticism targets misuse, not existence.

The verses may therefore be understood as conveying:

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا (٧٢) لِيُعَذِّبَ اللَّهُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ وَالْمُشْرِكَاتِ وَيَتُوبَ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا (٧٣)

“Allah displayed the Trust: the guardianship of earth according to His guidance. The heavens, the earth, and the mountains lacked the capacity to carry it. Humanity, uniquely equipped with knowledge, consciousness, and choice, was entrusted with it. When man neglects this endowment, he wrongs himself and behaves in ignorance. (72) As a result, Allah holds accountable those who betray the trust and shows mercy to those who honor it. And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” (Al-Ahzab 33:72–73)

We were not created as a tragic experiment. We were created as entrusted guardians. The question is not whether we are worthy of the Trust. The question is whether we will rise to it.

8. The Individual's Duty: No One is Excused from the Message

In Surat Yasin, Allah recounts the story of a town to which He sent not one, but three messengers. Despite this extraordinary concentration of guidance, the people rejected them with hostility, ridicule, and threats.

At this critical moment, a man appeared, not from the center of power, but from the farthest part of the city. When he heard the truth, he refused to remain silent.

One might assume that with three messengers already present, the voice of an ordinary man would be unnecessary. Yet he understood something profound: when truth is blocked at the top, it must rise from within the community itself. He did not say, "I am not qualified." He did not say, "Others are more capable." He ran.

وَجَاءَ مِنْ أَقْصَا الْمَدِينَةِ رَجُلٌ يَسْعَى قَالَ يَنْقُومُ اتَّبِعُوا الْمُرْسَلِينَ (٢٠) اتَّبِعُوا مَنْ لَا يَسْأَلُكُمْ أَجْرًا وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ (٢١) وَمَا لِي لَا أَعْبُدُ الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ (٢٢) أَأَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً إِنْ يُرِدْنِ الرَّحْمَنُ بِضُرٍّ لَا تُغْنِ عَنِّي شَفَعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُنْقِذُونِ (٢٣) إِنْئِي إِذَا لَفِيَ ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ (٢٤) إِنْئِي ءَامَنْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ فَاسْمَعُونِ (٢٥)

“And there came from the farthest part of the city a man running. He said: ‘O my people, follow the messengers. (20) Follow those who ask of you no reward and who are rightly guided. (21) Why should I not worship the One who created me, and to whom you will be returned? (22) Shall I take besides Him gods whose intercession would not benefit me at all, nor could they save me? (23) Indeed, I would then be in clear error. (24) Indeed, I have believed in your Lord, so listen to me”. (Yasin 36: 20-25)

The townspeople, responded with violence and killed him. Yet the Qur’an reveals something extraordinary about the heart of a sincere believer.

قِيلَ ادْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ قَالَ يَلَيْتَ قَوْمِي يَعْلَمُونَ (٢٦) بِمَا غَفَرَ لِي رَبِّي وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ (٢٧)
“It was said "Enter Paradise." He said, "I wish my people could know (26) How my Lord has forgiven me and made me among the honored." (Yasin 36:26-27)

Even after being murdered, his concern was not revenge. It was guidance for others.

This story establishes a timeless principle: Conveying the message is not limited to prophets, scholars, or specialists. It is the responsibility of every believer.

Allah says:

قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي [يوسف]
"Say (O Muhammad): 'This is my path: I invite to Allah with clear insight, I and those who follow me.'" (Yusuf 12:108)

And the Prophet (PBUH) made the minimum threshold accessible to all: (بلغوا عني ولو آية) **"Convey from me, even if it is only one verse."** (Al-Bukhari).

The man in Surat Yasin was not a messenger, but he was a carrier of the message. His story proves that sincerity outweighs status and courage outweighs credentials. Every believer stands at a crossroads: remain silent or run toward the truth. And history is changed by those who run.

9. True Scholars: The Scientists of Creation

Modern culture often separates "religious scholars" from "scientists," as though they occupy two unrelated intellectual worlds. The Qur'an, however, presents a unified vision of knowledge in which studying revelation and studying creation are complementary paths toward knowing Allah.

In Surat Fatir, Allah directly links observation of the natural world with true scholarship:

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ ثَمَرَاتٍ مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهَا وَمِنَ الْجِبَالِ جُدَدٌ بَيْضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهَا وَعَرَابِيٌّ سُودٌ (٢٧) وَمِنَ النَّاسِ وَالْدَّوَابِّ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ كَذَلِكَ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ (٢٨)

"Do you not see that Allah sends down rain from the sky, and We bring forth with it fruits of varying colors; and among the mountains are streaks of white and red of varying shades, and others intensely black. (27) And among people, creatures, and livestock are those of varying colors as well. Only those who possess knowledge among His servants truly stand in awe of Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Mighty, Most Forgiving." (Fatir 35:27-28)

Immediately before defining who the *ulama* are, Allah draws attention to:

- **Meteorology and Botany:** rainfall cycle and plant diversity.
- **Geology:** mineral composition and layered mountain formations.
- **Biology and Zoology:** variation within human and animal life.

The Qur'an places these scientific observations as the gateway to understanding who qualifies as a true scholar.

A Linguistic Precision

The phrase (إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ) contains a deliberate grammatical structure.

In classical Arabic, a normal sentence order would be:
Verb → Subject → Object

Here, the Qur'an reverses it:
Verb → Object (Allah) → Subject (the scholars)

Combined with *innamā* /إِنَّمَا/ (only), this structure creates exclusivity: only those whose knowledge leads them to Allah attain true *khashya*.

This yields a dual definition:

- True scholars are those whose learning increases their awe of Allah.
- Anyone whose knowledge does not produce awe has not yet reached the Qur’anic meaning of scholarship, regardless of credentials.

Redefining *Khashya*

Khashya is often translated as “fear,” but its deeper meaning is reverential awe born from understanding. It is the feeling a person experiences when confronted with overwhelming complexity, precision, and scale, whether in galaxies, ecosystems, or molecular structures.

The Prophet (PBUH) affirmed this relationship between knowledge and awe:

والله إني لأعلمهم بالله ، وأشدهم له خشية(البخاري ومسلم)

“By Allah, I am the most knowing of Allah among you, and I am the most in awe (*khashya*) of Him.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

Knowledge does not inflate the ego. True knowledge humbles it.

In Islam, the microscope and the telescope can become instruments of worship. A true scholar reads two books simultaneously: the Book of Revelation and the Book of Creation. From both, the same conclusion emerges: Allah is Great.

10. The Curse of Greed: Why the Kingdom of Saba Fell

The story of the people of Saba (Sheba) stands as one of the Qur’an’s most penetrating case studies on the relationship between wealth, gratitude, and social justice. Saba was not a poor or struggling society. It was a civilization at the height of success, combining technical ingenuity with strategic geography.

Allah granted them two extraordinary blessings.

- **Technological Mastery:** They constructed the legendary Ma’rib Dam, an engineering achievement that regulated seasonal floods and transformed an arid land into fertile abundance: (جَنَّاتٍ عَن يَمِينٍ وَشِمَالٍ) "two gardens on the right and on the left" (Saba 34:15). Their prosperity was not accidental, it was the product of knowledge, planning, and Divine facilitation.

- **Infrastructure and Security:** Unlike other nations where travel was a life-threatening risk, Allah blessed Saba with a network of visible, closely spaced, and secure towns

وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ وَتَيْنَ الْقُرَى الَّتِي بَرَكْنَا فِيهَا قُرَى ظَاهِرَةً وَقَدَرْنَا فِيهَا السَّيْرَ

“We placed between them and the towns We had blessed other visible towns and measured the journey between them.” (Saba 34:18)

Trade was safe. Travel was easy. Prosperity was accessible.

The downfall of Saba did not happen because of scarcity; they fell because of greed. As trade became effortless, the wealthy elite grew resentful that ordinary people could participate in economic life. They desired exclusivity, not shared prosperity. In a display of selfish entitlement, they made the following request:

فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا بَعِدْ بَيْنَ أَسْفَارِنَا وَظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ۖ ... (١٩)

But they said: "Our Lord, make the distance between our journeys longer, and they wronged themselves. (Saba 34:19)

This was not a logistical request. It was a class-based demand. They were asking Allah to dismantle public infrastructure so that only the rich could afford travel, trade, and opportunity. They preferred a smaller elite market over a broad, inclusive economy.

When a society begins to desire hardship for others, it has already signed its own death warrant. Allah responded on two levels:

- **Physical Collapse:** The Great Dam of Ma'rib was breached (Sayl al-'Arim), turning their fertile land into wasteland.
- **Social Disintegration:** (فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَحَادِيثَ وَمَرَّقْنَاهُمْ كُلَّ مُمَرَّقٍ) "We made them tales, and We scattered them completely." (Saba 34:19) A civilization that once controlled trade routes became nothing more than a cautionary story.

The verse concludes with a powerful reminder:

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ (١٩)

"Indeed, in that are signs for every steadfast, grateful person." (Saba 34:19).

The issue was never wealth. The issue was *shukr* (gratitude). Allah presents a contrasting model through the family of Dawud:

أَعْمَلُوا ءَالَ دَاوُدَ دَشْكُرًا... (١٣)

" Work, O family of Dawud, in gratitude..." (Saba 34:13)

Gratitude is not passive emotion; it is productive action. True gratitude has five dimensions:

1. **Attribution:** Recognizing that every blessing comes from Allah.
2. **Utilization:** Actively using the blessing to fulfill Allah's directives and serve His creation.
3. **Prioritization:** Loving the Giver more than the gift.
4. **Humility:** Viewing blessings as responsibility, not superiority.
5. **Perpetual Praise:** Maintaining awareness of Allah in ease and hardship.

The Ayah concludes with a sobering reality: (وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّاكِرُونَ) "Few of My servants are truly grateful." This "minority status" is not something to be feared, but something to be sought.

Saba did not collapse because they were weak. They collapsed because they wanted others to struggle. When wealth stops circulating, societies stop breathing. And when gratitude dies, civilizations die with it.

Conclusion

The jewels gathered from this Juz converge upon a single, transformative realization: humanity is a creation of immense potential, entrusted with an equally immense responsibility.

Through the story of the people of Saba and the example of the family of Dawud, we have seen that the dividing line between civilizational collapse and Divine favor is not the quantity of wealth a society possesses, but the shukr: active, conscious gratitude with which it manages what has been given. We have learned that true scholarship is not defined by credentials alone, but by the khashya: the reverential awe that arises when a mind recognizes the signatures of the Creator embedded within creation.

The journey through this Juz ultimately returns the Trust to the individual.

Whether it is the man who came running from the farthest part of the city in Surat Yasin, or the believer who stands in singles or in pairs to reflect before Allah, the message is unmistakable: you are the guardian of truth within your own life.

To live as a believer in the light of the twenty-second Juz is to become someone who:

- Recognizes their unique spiritual and physical endowment.
- Measures worth by deeds, not slogans.
- Places obedience above social pressure.
- Fears no stigma in the pursuit of Divine pleasure.
- Remains among the grateful few who protect and cultivate the blessings entrusted to them.

May these thirteen jewels illuminate our hearts, enabling us to see the world not as a chain of accidents, but as a vast, open book of signs: inviting us to return to our Lord with sound hearts.

Jewels from the Twenty Third Juz: Faith Under Trial, Power Under Trust, and the Path Back to Allah

(Yasin 36:28 Al-Zumar 39:31)

Introduction

Juz 23 explores faith under pressure: the pressure of rejection, suffering, authority, moral responsibility, and inner struggle. Throughout its verses, Allah clarifies a central principle: human beings are accountable for effort and integrity, not for controlling outcomes. Guidance, healing, and ultimate success belong to Allah alone.

At the heart of this Juz stands Surat Sad, where the lives of Prophets Dawud, Sulaiman, and Ayoub (peace be upon them) are presented as interconnected lessons. Each prophet faces a different form of trial: power, illness, loss, or responsibility, yet all are united by a single trait: constant return to Allah (*inabah*). These narratives show that righteousness is not defined by circumstance, but by how one responds when tested.

Juz 23 also emphasizes how the Qur'an itself must be approached. The command of Tadabbur calls believers to reflect deeply, think critically, and choose what is best. True intelligence, according to the Qur'an, is not blind imitation nor uncontrolled emotion, but discerning submission guided by revelation.

Equally central is the purification of worship. Allah declares that religion belongs to Him alone, without intermediaries or divided intentions. Sincerity (*ikhlas*) becomes the measure by which all deeds are accepted or rejected. The Juz opens the door of hope wide: do not despair of the mercy of Allah. No failure is final, and no soul is too distant to return.

1. Divine Blessings That Most People Overlook

The Qur'an frequently draws our attention to profound blessings that surround us so constantly that many people fail to notice them. Among these are the growth of plants, trees, and fruits: sources of sustenance without which human life could not continue. This entire process rests upon two divine gifts: the earth that receives and nurtures seeds, and the water sent down as rain to revive lifeless soil. Because these blessings arrive daily and without visible effort on our part, they are often taken for granted, perceived as "ordinary" rather than recognized as continuous miracles worthy of gratitude.

Beyond their role in physical nourishment, the revival of barren land serves as a powerful spiritual analogy. Just as rain revives dry, lifeless soil and brings forth what was hidden beneath it, Allah will revive human beings from their graves on the Day of Resurrection. The Qur'an deliberately links these two scenes: the revival of the earth

and the resurrection of the dead, to awaken both gratitude for divine provision and awareness of the Hereafter:

وَأَيُّهُ لَّهُمْ الْأَرْضُ الْمَيِّتَةُ أَحْيَيْنَاهَا وَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهَا حَبًّا فَمِنْهُ يَأْكُلُونَ (٣٣) وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا جَنَّاتٍ مِّنْ نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ وَفَجْرْنَا فِيهَا مِنَ الْأَعْيُونِ (٣٤) لِيَأْكُلُوا مِنْ ثَمَرِهِ وَمَا عَمِلَتْهُ أَيْدِيهِمْ أَفَلَا يَشْكُرُونَ (٣٥)

“A sign for them is the dead earth: We give it life and We bring forth from it grain from which they eat; (33) We have placed in it gardens of date palms and grapes and We have caused springs to gush forth therein, (34) so that they eat its fruit and of what their hands have made. Will they not, then, give thanks?” (Yasin 36:33-35)

In verse 35, the tiny word “ma” (ما) carries remarkable depth, allowing two complementary meanings to coexist:

- **As negation:** “and their hands did not make it,” emphasizing that the origin of life, growth, and provision lies entirely with Allah, beyond human power or control.
- **As inclusion:** “and what their hands have made,” pointing to the products humans prepare from these fruits, such as juices, oils, jams, and other foods, using the skills, knowledge, and intelligence Allah has granted them.

With this single word, the verse captures both dimensions of human existence: Allah as the sole Creator of the original blessing, and humans as secondary agents who process and benefit from what He has provided. It is a striking example of how a seemingly small linguistic article in Qur’anic Arabic can open multiple layers of meaning within a single phrase.

Another subtle sign of divine artistry in the Qur’an appears in its use of symmetrical and palindromic letter patterns: structures that read the same forwards and backwards, especially in verses describing circular or continuous motion. Speaking of the precise orbits of the sun and the moon, Allah says:

لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنْبَغِي لَهَا أَنْ تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلَا اللَّيْلُ سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ وَكُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ (٤٠)

“The sun cannot overtake the moon, nor can the night outpace the day: each is floating in an orbit [Kullun fi falak].” (Yasin 36:40)

The phrase “كُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ” (kullun fi falak) is composed of letters that form a perfect palindromic sequence (ك ل ف ي ف ل ك). Just as the celestial bodies move in continuous cycles and return to their starting points, the letters themselves loop back, subtly reflecting the idea of circular motion embedded in the verse.

A similar pattern appears in the command found in Surat al-Muddathir:

رَبِّكَ فَكَبِّرْ

“And your Lord, magnify (Rabbaka fa-kabbir).” (Al-Muddathir 74:3)

Here again, the letters (ر ب ك ف ك ب ر) form a palindromic structure. These patterns are not mere stylistic curiosities; they resonate with the meanings of the verses themselves, cycles, continuity, return, and the centrality of Allah’s greatness. In this way, the Qur’an’s linguistic form reinforces its message, inviting the believer to reflect not only on what is said, but also on the precision and harmony with which it is expressed.

2. The Unique Creation of Cattle

Two Qur’anic passages suggest that the creation of cattle is distinguished in a special way from that of other animals. Together, these verses point to a unique divine origination for cattle, different from other creatures that appear to have been created on earth and may have undergone multiple stages of biological development.

Allah says in Surat Yasin:

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا خَلَقْنَا لَهُمْ مِمَّا عَمِلَتْ أَيْدِينَا أَنْعَامًا فَهُمْ لَهَا مَالِكُونَ (٧١) وَذَلَّلْنَاهَا لَهُمْ فَمِنْهَا رَكُوبُهُمْ وَمِنْهَا يَأْكُلُونَ (٧٢) وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مَنَافِعُ وَمَشَارِبٌ أَفَلَا يَشْكُرُونَ (٧٣)

“Have they not seen that We created for them, from what Our Hands have made, cattle, and they are their owners? (71) And We have subdued them for them, so some of them they ride and some of them they eat. (72) And they have in them benefits and drinks. Will they not then be grateful?” (Yasin 36:71-73)

The phrasing here is striking. Cattle are described as being created from what Allah’s “Hands” have made, a formulation not used for other animals, and as deliberately subdued for human benefit. Their role encompasses transportation, nourishment, utility, and provision, all presented as reasons for gratitude.

This special framing is further reinforced in Surat al-Zumar:

خَلَقَكُمْ مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَأَنْزَلَ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الْأَنْعَامِ ثَمَنِيَّةً أزْوَاجًا (لزمر - الآية 6)
“He created you from a single soul; then made it his mate. And He sent down for you eight pairs of cattle (the male and female pair sheep, goat, cow, and camel) (Al-Zumar 39:6)

The use of the verb “*anzala*/أنزل” (sent down) in reference to cattle is particularly noteworthy. When the Qur’an speaks of human beings, it does not use *anzala*; instead, it employs *ihbitou*/اهبطوا (descend), a term associated with moral trial, responsibility, and earthly testing. By contrast, *anzala* is typically reserved for entities that originate in a higher realm and are bestowed upon the earth by a direct divine act.

A survey of Qur’anic usage shows that *anzala* is commonly applied to six broad categories: revelation, angels, rain, divine provisions and blessings (such as tranquility, manna and quails, or the table spread for Isa), cattle, and iron. Among these, cattle and iron stand out, as their being “sent down” is not immediately obvious in a physical sense

and invites deeper reflection. The description of cattle as "sent down" suggests a special status and function in human life

Taken together, these verses indicate deliberate divine preparation regarding cattle. They are not presented merely as biological creatures, but as sign-bearing beings: created, subdued, and provided to humanity for survival, sustenance, and reflection.

This unique status helps illuminate Satan's specific threat mentioned in Surat al-Nisa:

وَأُضِلُّنَّهُمْ وَأَلَمِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَلَمَّرْنَهُمْ فَلْيُبَيِّتْكُنَّ ءَأَذَانَ الْأَنْعَامِ وَأَلَمَّرْنَهُمْ فَلْيَغَيِّرَنَّ خَلْقَ اللَّهِ... (١١٩)

"I will surely lead them astray, will fill them with false hopes, and command them so they will "yubattikunna" the "adhan" of the cattle, and I will command them so they will change the creation of Allah..." (Al-Nisa 4:119)

The common translation of *أَذَانَ الْأَنْعَامِ* as "slit the ears of cattle" is linguistically possible, but it appears limited in explanatory depth. Ear-slitting and physical marking of animals are widespread human practices and, on their own, do not seem to carry the profound theological weight suggested by the verse.

Classical commentators often linked this phrase to pre-Islamic customs in which certain animals, such as the Bahirah, were marked and consecrated to idols, practices explicitly rejected elsewhere in the Qur'an (Surat Al-Ma'idah):

مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ بَحِيرَةٍ وَلَا سَائِبَةٍ وَلَا وَصِيلَةٍ وَلَا حَامٍ. وَلَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ (١٠٣)

"Allah has not instituted [an animal called] Bahirah or Sa'ibah or Wasilah or Hami; but those who disbelieve invent a lie against Allah. Most of them do not understand" (Al-Ma'idah 5:103)

While this historical context is valid, it may not exhaust the meaning of the verse. The verb *battaka* (بَتَّكَ) conveys the sense of severing completely, cutting off at the root. This suggests that Satan's threat speaks of something more radical than a mere physical incision.

Moreover, the word *adhan* (أَذَان) does not only mean "ears." Linguistically, it also denotes "announcement" or "proclamation," as in the *adhan* of prayer. Read through this broader semantic lens, a deeper layer of meaning emerges.

Under this reading, Satan threatens to cause human beings to sever themselves from the announcement carried by cattle: from the message they proclaim about Allah's creative power, mercy, and deliberate provision. The verse may be understood as:

وَأَلَمَّرْنَهُمْ فَلْيُبَيِّتْكُنَّ ءَأَذَانَ الْأَنْعَامِ... (١١٩)

"I will command them to cut off the proclamation of the cattle (as a sign of Allah's creation and mercy) ..." (Al-Nisa 4:119)

This interpretation harmonizes with earlier verses that describe cattle as created by Allah's "Hands" and "sent down" as a gift and a sign. Satan's objective, then, is not limited to altering animals physically, but extends to distorting how human beings perceive and respond to the signs embedded in creation.

History appears to reflect this pattern. Rather than recognizing cattle as signs pointing to the Creator, many civilizations elevated them to sacred or semi-divine status. Cattle played central religious roles in ancient Egypt, Greece, Roman culture, and certain Israelite practices, and remain objects of reverence in Hinduism, Jainism, and some strands of Buddhism. In each case, devotion is redirected from Allah to the creature itself: precisely the misdirection Satan seeks.

Within this framework, the Islamic practice of animal sacrifice, especially during Hajj and Eid al-Adha, functions as a direct corrective. Sacrifice affirms that cattle are not sacred in themselves; they are honored gifts from Allah, to be used in obedience to Him. Claims that sacrifice should be replaced entirely by monetary charity overlook this deeper symbolic and theological dimension. The poor existed during the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH), yet he consistently practiced and commanded sacrifice. No one embodied greater mercy toward animals than the Prophet (PBUH), and yet he upheld this ritual.

A'ishah (RA) reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:

عن عائشة - رضي الله عنها - قالت : قال رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - : (ما عمل ابن آدم من عمل يوم النحر أحب إلى الله من إهراق الدم ، وإنه ليؤتى يوم القيامة ، بقرونها وأشعارها وأظلافها ، وإن الدم ليقع من الله قبل أن يقع بالأرض ، فطيبوا بها نفسا) . رواه الترمذي ، وابن ماجه .

"No deed of the son of Adam on the Day of Sacrifice is more beloved to Allah than the spilling of blood. It will come on the Day of Resurrection with its horns, hair, and hooves, and indeed the blood is accepted by Allah before it even falls upon the ground, so be content with it." (Al-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah)

Beyond its spiritual significance, sacrifice also serves as a powerful mechanism of economic circulation, supporting livestock producers, traders, and meat distribution, and often channeling resources from wealthier urban populations to poorer rural communities.

From the Qur'anic perspective, then, cattle emerge as uniquely created, deliberately "sent down," and deeply woven into human survival, health, economy, and spiritual awareness. Their role is intentional rather than accidental, a living sign of Allah's power, mercy, and providence. Satan's threat may thus be understood as an attempt to sever humanity from the message embedded in this sign. Islamic rituals surrounding cattle, especially sacrifice, restore and preserve that meaning, firmly situating human interaction with these creatures within the framework of tawhid, gratitude, and obedience.

3. The Legacy of Ihsan: A Blueprint for Excellence

In Surat Al-Saffat, Allah narrates the stories of several Prophets: among them Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa, Haroun, and Ilyas (peace be upon them all). Although their missions, circumstances, and trials differed, a single defining attribute unites them all: the attribute of Ihsan.

After describing their struggles and eventual triumphs, Allah concludes each account with a recurring declaration:

إِنَّا كَذَّالِكِ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"This is how We reward the *Muhsineen* (the doers of excellence)." (Al-Saffat 37: 80, 110, 121 and 131)

The repetition of this statement is deliberate. It creates a rhythmic pattern that functions as a timeless directive for every believer. By consistently pairing "Peace" (*Salam*) with reward for Ihsan, the Qur'an teaches that divine peace, honor, and lasting legacy are not arbitrary gifts; they are the natural outcome of a life lived with excellence.

Allah says regarding Nuḥ (AS):

سَلَّمَ عَلَى نُوحٍ فِي الْعَالَمِينَ (٧٩) إِنَّا كَذَّالِكِ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ (٨٠) إِنَّهُ وَمِنَ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (٨١)

"Peace be upon Noah throughout all the worlds. (79) This is how We reward the *Muhsineen* (the doers of excellence). (80) He was one of Our believing servants." (Al-Saffat 37:79-81)

سَلَّمَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ (١٠٩) كَذَّالِكِ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ (١١٠) إِنَّهُ وَمِنَ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (١١١)

"Peace be upon Ibrahim. (79) This is how We reward the *Muhsineen* (the doers of excellence). (80) He was one of Our believing servants." (Al-Saffat 37:109-111)

سَلَّمَ عَلَى مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ (١٢٠) إِنَّا كَذَّالِكِ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ (١٢١) إِنَّهُمَا وَمِنَ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (١٢٢)

"Peace be upon Musa and Haroun. (79) This is how We reward the *Muhsineen* (the doers of excellence). (80) They were of Our believing servants." (Al-Saffat 37:120-122)

سَلَّمَ عَلَى إِيْلَ يَاسِينَ (١٣٠) إِنَّا كَذَّالِكِ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ (١٣١) إِنَّهُ وَمِنَ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (١٣٢)

"Peace be upon Ilyasin (Elias). (79) This is how We reward the *Muhsineen* (the doers of excellence). (80) He was one of Our believing servants." (Al-Saffat 37:130-132)

Ihsan is often translated as "excellence" or "perfection," but its meaning is far deeper. It is the determination to perform every act, whether in worship, character, or worldly responsibility, in the best possible manner, with the awareness that Allah is fully aware

and ever-present. The legacy of the Prophets presents Ihsan as a comprehensive way of life, encompassing two inseparable dimensions:

Excellence in Worship (Vertical): Perfecting acts of worship through sincerity, attentiveness, and reverence. It is to worship Allah as though one sees Him, and even when one does not see Him, to remain conscious that He surely sees all.

Excellence in Service (Horizontal): Upholding beauty, integrity, and responsibility in interactions with people and the world, within one's profession, family life, studies, creativity, and service to society. Whether one is a student, parent, teacher, physician, engineer, or businessperson, Ihsan sets the standard: to give one's best purely for the sake of Allah.

The Prophets were not distinguished merely because they believed, though faith was their foundation. They were distinguished because they translated belief into action of the highest quality, combining sound faith with patience, sacrifice, trust in Allah, and excellence in conduct.

When believers pursue excellence in their daily responsibilities, they are not simply being "productive" or "high-performing." They are aligning themselves with the prophetic path and placing themselves within the scope of the same divine promise: peace in this life and a legacy of honor that endures beyond death. As Allah promises:

إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ (٥٦)

"Indeed, Allah's mercy is always near to the Muhsineen *(the doers of excellence)." (Al-A'raf 7:56)

This verse serves as both motivation and reassurance. Every time a believer chooses Ihsan: in worship, character, or work, he or she draws nearer to the special nearness of Allah's mercy.

4. Prophet Yunus: The Trial of Patience and the Miracle of Recovery

When Yunus (AS) faced persistent rejection from the people to whom he was sent, he departed before receiving divine permission. The Qur'an describes this departure using the verb *abaqa* (أَبَقَ), a term commonly used for a slave who flees prematurely. His impatience arose from a subtle but critical misunderstanding: he assumed that because the people had not yet responded, his mission had ended. In doing so, he momentarily forgot that conveying the message is the responsibility of the messenger, while guidance itself belongs solely to Allah.

Allah says:

وَأَنَّ يُوسُفَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ (١٣٩) إِذْ أَبَقَ إِلَى الْفُلِّكَ الْمَشْحُونِ (١٤٠) فَسَاهَمَ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْمُدْحَضِينَ (١٤١)
فَأَلْتَمَمَهُ الْحُوتُ وَهُوَ مُلِيمٌ (١٤٢)

“Indeed, Yunus (Jonah) was among the messengers. (139) When he ran away to a fully loaded ship. (140) Then he drew lots and was among the losers. (141) Then the whale swallowed him, while he was blameworthy.” (Al-Saffat 37:139-142)

His confinement within the whale became a school of patience and humility. The whale, an immense creature governed purely by instinct, demonstrated greater obedience at that moment: holding Yunus safely without harming him, acting strictly in accordance with Allah's command.

What altered the course of Yunus's ordeal was not chance, but his established relationship with Allah. The Qur'an emphasizes that his deliverance was the result of his consistent glorification of Allah (tasbih) prior to this crisis. This teaches a critical principle: remembrance in times of ease becomes a means of rescue in times of constriction.

Allah says:

فَلَوْلَا أَنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُسَبِّحِينَ (١٤٣) لَلَبِثَ فِي بَطْنِهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٤٤﴾ ﴿١٤٤﴾ فَتَبَدَّنَهُ بِالْعَرَاءِ وَهُوَ سَقِيمٌ
(١٤٥) وَأُنْبِتْنَا عَلَيْهِ شَجَرَةً مِّنْ يَقْطِينٍ (١٤٦)

“Had he not been of those who glorified Allah, (143) He would have remained in its belly until the Day they are resurrected. (144) But We cast him onto the open shore while he was severely weakened. (145) And We caused a plant of *yaqteen* to grow over him.” (Al-Saffat 37:143-146)

When the Qur'an describes Yunus (AS) being cast onto the shore as *سَقِيمٌ* (*saqim*), (severely weakened and ill), it depicts a state of extreme physical vulnerability. His body had endured prolonged confinement, exposure to harsh internal conditions, dehydration, and trauma. In this precise context, the Qur'an draws attention to the divine response:

﴿١٤٦﴾ وَأُنْبِتْنَا عَلَيْهِ شَجَرَةً مِّنْ يَقْطِينٍ (١٤٦)

“And We caused a *yaqteen* plant to grow over him.” (Al-Saffat 37:146)

Although *yaqteen* is often translated generically as “gourd,” linguistic usage and botanical characteristics suggest a more specific identification, commonly associated with *Lagenaria siceraria* (bottle gourd or Opo squash). This detail is far from incidental. The biological properties of this plant align remarkably with the medical needs of someone suffering from acute skin damage, dehydration, and systemic weakness.

In the case of Prophet Yunus (AS), the *yaqteen* was not merely shade or nourishment; it functioned as a divinely provided, integrated healing system, addressing protection, hydration, nutrition, and recovery simultaneously.

Unlike many common gourds, the *yaqteen* possesses several distinctive features:

- **Soft, velvety leaves:** While most gourd leaves are rough or prickly, the *yaqteen*'s leaves are smooth and gentle, allowing direct contact with damaged or sensitive skin without irritation.
- **Broad leafy canopy:** The plant grows rapidly and produces large leaves that provide immediate shade, protecting fragile skin from harsh coastal sunlight.
- **Natural insect deterrence:** The leaves contain compounds that repel flies and insects, creating a natural sterile zone around open or sensitive skin, an essential protection in a humid, coastal environment.
- **Cooling growth pattern:** Its white flowers bloom at dusk or night, reflecting a plant adapted to cooler, shaded conditions rather than intense sunlight.

Through this carefully chosen provision, the Qur'an illustrates a profound principle: Allah's mercy is not only spiritual but precisely calibrated to physical reality. Recovery, like guidance, is a divine gift, but it arrives through means perfectly suited to the condition of the servant.

The story of Yunus (AS) stands as a lasting blueprint: patience in duty, humility in error, constancy in remembrance, and complete trust in Allah's wisdom. When these elements come together, even the deepest constrictions become gateways to renewal, restoration, and success beyond expectation.

5. Engaging the Quran: The Command of Tadabbur

Allah emphasizes that the Qur'an is a clear and blessed Book, revealed not merely to be recited, but to be understood, reflected upon, and lived. Any pursuit of sound, grounded knowledge must therefore begin with deliberate engagement with the Qur'an through Tadabbur. Allah says:

كَتَبْنَا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ (٢٩)

“(This is) a blessed Book which We have revealed to you, so that they may reflect deeply upon its verses and that those of understanding may be reminded.” (Sud 38:29)

At its core, Tadabbur means reflective contemplation that looks toward the aftereffect or consequence (*dubur*) of a verse, how it reshapes belief, refines character, and directs action. Reading the Qur'an without Tadabbur is like eating without digestion: nourishment is present, but no real strength is gained. For the Qur'an to guide conduct, its meanings must first penetrate the heart and the mind.

Tadabbur may be approached through two complementary dimensions, Spiritual and Intellectual, with a third, more technical form that belongs primarily to linguistic specialists.

Spiritual Tadabbur: Engaging the Heart

Spiritual Tadabbur transforms Qur’anic recitation into a living dialogue with Allah. It is accessible to every believer, regardless of academic background, and its aim is not information, but transformation. Here, verses become personal supplications and moral mirrors.

- **Seeking the Good:** When encountering descriptions of the righteous or the delights of Paradise, the believer pauses and prays: “O Allah, make me among them.”
- **Seeking Protection:** When reading about hypocrisy, arrogance, or punishment, one turns to Allah saying: “O Allah, I seek refuge in You from these traits and from Your punishment.”
- **Gratitude for Creation:** When Allah points to His signs in creation, the rain, the stars, the mountains, or the human soul, the heart responds with praise and gratitude for being allowed to recognize the One behind these signs.

In this mode, the reader is continuously engaged in dua, which the Prophet (PBUH) described as the very essence of worship. Al-Nu‘man ibn Bashir (RA) reported that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

عن النعمان بن بشير أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: إن الدعاء هو العبادة ، ثم قرأ: " ادعوني أستجب لكم، إن الذين يستكبرون عن عبادتي سيدخلون جهنم داخرين [غافر: 60] " ، [أحمد في "المسند، و"البخاري في الأدب المفرد].

“Indeed, supplication is worship itself and then recited: Supplicate to Me; I will respond to you.’ Indeed, those who are too proud for My worship will enter Hell humiliated.”
(Ghafir 40:60)

Through Spiritual Tadabbur, the Qur’an ceases to be a distant text and becomes a lived experience, guiding the heart moment by moment.

Intellectual Tadabbur: Engaging the Mind

If Spiritual Tadabbur softens the heart, Intellectual Tadabbur disciplines the mind. It treats the Qur’an as the ultimate framework for understanding reality, moral, social, and civilizational. This form of Tadabbur requires careful analysis, internal consistency, and methodological restraint.

A critical starting point is recognizing that Qur’anic terms must be understood as Allah defines them, not merely as they are used in culture or common speech. Every specialized field operates with its own technical language, and misusing definitions leads to error.

For example, the word “cell” carries very different meanings depending on context:

Field	Definition of "Cell"
Biology	The basic structural unit of life.
Technology	A unit in a spreadsheet or mobile network.
Electricity	A single unit in a battery.
Law Enforcement	A room for a prisoner.

Likewise, Qur'anic terms such as "Taqwa" and those who have "Taqwa" (تقوى و متقين), Ihsan and Muhsineen (احسان و محسنين), "Eman" and those who have "Eman" (إيمان و مؤمنون), Ibadah (عبادة), Al-Rahman (الرحمان), guidance (هداية), misguidance (ضلال), knowledge (علم), "Zann" (ظن) (assumption), "Shakk" (شك) (doubt) and Haneef (حنيف) must be derived from the Qur'an's own usage, not imported from later theology, culture, or philosophy..

The Three Governing Principles of Tadabbur

To prevent subjective or fragmented readings, Intellectual Tadabbur operates through three governing principles. These are not optional techniques; they are safeguards that protect the reader from distortion.

1. Objective Extraction (What is Allah establishing?)

Every verse aims to establish a principle, not merely convey information.

- What universal law, moral truth, or guidance is being set here?
- What belief, attitude, or action is Allah calling me to adopt or abandon?

Without extracting objective meaning, Tadabbur collapses into personal impression rather than divine guidance.

2. Internal Consistency (How does this fit within the Qur'an as a whole?)

The Qur'an explains itself. No verse stands in isolation.

- Is a general statement clarified or restricted by other verses on the same subject?
- Does this interpretation align with foundational Qur'anic principles, such as Allah's absolute justice, wisdom, and mercy?
- Does it preserve the moral integrity and honor of the Prophets, whom Allah has chosen and purified?

Any reading that contradicts established Qur'anic foundations signals a flaw in understanding, not a flaw in revelation.

3. The Law of Context (Why is this said *here*, in this way?)

Meaning emerges not only from words, but from placement.

- How do the verses before and after shape the message?
- Why does the verse conclude with these specific Names or Attributes of Allah?

- Why is this particular word chosen instead of a near-synonym? Each choice points to a precise shade of meaning appropriate to the context.

Ignoring context reduces Tadabbur to word-by-word speculation rather than coherent understanding.

The placement of the command for Tadabbur in Surat Sad is itself instructive. This Surah contains profound narratives about Prophets Dawud, Sulaiman, and Ayyub (AS): accounts that are easily misunderstood if approached superficially. Intellectual Tadabbur is essential here to reconcile the narratives with the established honor, wisdom, and purity of the Prophets, and to avoid interpretations that inadvertently attribute injustice, heedlessness, or moral failure to those whom Allah has elevated.

Thus, the command **لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ** *“that they may reflect deeply upon its verses”* is not theoretical. It is a practical requirement for engaging complex Qur’anic narratives with humility, discipline, and reverence.

Through the integration of Spiritual Tadabbur and Intellectual Tadabbur, the believer allows the Qur’an to shape both the heart and the worldview, fulfilling the very purpose for which this blessed Book was revealed.

6. The Legacy of Prophet Dawud: Power, Patience, and the Limits of Authority

In Surat Sad, Allah presents a distinctive portrait of Prophet Dawud (AS). a messenger uniquely granted prophethood, wisdom, and political authority. His kingdom was strong, his rule firm, and his devotion so deep that even the mountains and birds were made to join him in glorifying Allah. Allah says:

أَصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَاذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا دَاوُدَ ذَا الْأَيْدِينَ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ (١٧) إِنَّا سَخَّرْنَا الْجِبَالَ مَعَهُ يُسَبِّحْنَ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإشْرَاقِ (١٨) وَالطَّيْرَ مَحْشُورَهُ كُلُّ لَّهُ أَوَّابٌ (١٩) وَشَدَدْنَا مُلْكَهُ وَاَتَيْنَاهُ الْحِكْمَةَ وَفَصَّلَ الْخِطَابِ (٢٠)

“Be patient (O Muhammad) of what they say, and remember Our servant Dawud (David), the man of might who constantly turned to Us. (17) We subjected the mountains to glorify with him in the evening and at sunrise; (18) and the birds gathered, all returning to Allah. (19) We strengthened his kingdom and gave him wisdom and a decisive speech.” (Sad 38:17-20)

At first glance, one might ask how the mention of a powerful king with a “strengthened kingdom” consoles the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ during the Makkan period, when he possessed no worldly power and faced relentless rejection. The answer lies in the episode that immediately follows. When read with intellectual Tadabbur, and freed from Isra’iliyyat that misrepresent prophetic integrity, the narrative delivers a critical lesson: even the most powerful ruler cannot compel belief or assume guardianship over people’s hearts.

The Qur'an unfolds this lesson through four carefully structured scenes.

Scene 1: The Breach of Sanctuary

Prophet Dawud was in his mihrab, a private, elevated place of worship, when a group (plural: tasawwaru) suddenly climbed over the wall and appeared before him. This unexpected intrusion into a secure space naturally startled him (fazi'a). They then requested judgment in a dispute.

وَهَلْ أَتَاكَ نَبُؤُا الْخَصْمِ إِذْ تَسَوَّرُوا الْمِحْرَابَ (٢١) إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَى دَاوُدَ فَفَزِعَ مِنْهُمْ قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ خَصْمَانِ
بَعِيَ بَعْضُنَا عَلَى بَعْضٍ فَأَحْكُم بَيْنَنَا الْحَقَّ وَلَا تُنْشِطْ وَأَهْدِنَا إِلَى سَوَاءِ الصِّرَاطِ (٢٢)

“Has the story of the litigants reached you, when they climbed over the wall of the sanctuary? (21) When they entered upon Dawud, he was alarmed by them. They said, ‘Do not fear. We are two litigants; one of us has wronged the other. Judge between us with truth, do not be unjust, and guide us to the straight path.’” (Sad 38:21: 22)

Scene 2: The Dispute of Guardianship

One litigant presents the case: his “brother” possesses ninety-nine ewes, while he has only one. The one with abundance pressured him to entrust his single ewe to him, overpowering him through argument.

إِنَّ هَذَا أَخِي لَهُ تِسْعٌ وَتِسْعُونَ نَعْجَةً وَلِيَ نَعْجَةً وَاحِدَةً فَقَالَ أَكْفَلْنِيهَا وَعَزَّنِي فِي الْخِطَابِ (٢٣)

“This is my brother, has ninety-nine ewes (female sheep), while I have a single ewe. He said: "Entrust it to me, and he overpowered me in speech." (Sad 38:23)

The pivotal word here is akfilniha (أَكْفَلْنِيهَا), derived from kafalah, meaning sponsorship, guardianship, or assuming responsibility: not ownership. The issue is not greed, but overreach in control, where one party assumes it knows what is best for another.

Scene 3: The Swift Ruling

Without further questioning, Prophet Dawud (AS) immediately rules, describing the demand as injustice (dhulm) and noting how common oppression is among partners.

قَالَ لَقَدْ ظَلَمَكَ بِسُؤَالِ نَعَجْتِكَ إِلَىٰ نِعَاجِهِ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْخُلَطَاءِ لِيَبْغِيَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا
وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَقَلِيلٌ مَّا هُمْ

“[Dawud] said: "He has certainly wronged you by asking for your ewe to be added to his ewes. Indeed, many partners oppress one another, except those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and few are they." (Sad 38:24)

Some commentators err gravely here, either by turning the account into a parable of immoral desire (which violates prophetic integrity), or by portraying Dawud as unjust or hasty in judgment. Both readings contradict explicit Qur'anic testimony:

وَأَتَيْنَاهُ الْحِكْمَةَ وَفَصَّلَ الْخِطَابِ (٢٠)

“We gave him wisdom and a decisive speech.” (Sad 38:20)

The real oversight lies not in injustice, but in recognizing that the cause of the dispute mirrors his own tendency: the effort to bring those still outside divine guidance to the fold of believers, using his decisive authority to override their free will by assuming control over their choices.

Scene 4: Realization and Repentance

Dawud (AS) realizes that this was not a normal legal dispute, but a divinely arranged test, one that mirrored a subtle tendency in his own leadership: the noble desire to assume responsibility for those not yet guided, even when such responsibility risks overriding their freedom of choice.

وَوَظَّنَّ دَاوُدُ إِذْ أَنْتَمَّا فَتَنَّهُ فَأَسْتَعْفَرَ رَبَّهُ ، وَخَرَّ رَاكِعًا وَأَنَابَ ﴿ ٢٤ ﴾ فَعَفَرْنَا لَهُ ، ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا كَانَ لَهُ ، وَعِنْدَنَا لِرُفْقَىٰ وَحُسْنِ مَّآبٍ (٢٥) يَدَاؤُ دَاوُدُ إِذْ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاكَ خَلِيفَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ... (٢٦)

“And Dawud realized that We had tested him; so he sought forgiveness from his Lord, fell down bowing and turned back (in repentance). (24) So, We forgave him that, and indeed he has nearness to Us and an excellent return. (25) ‘O Dawud, We have made you a vicegerent on earth, so judge between people with truth and do not follow [your] desire, lest it leads you astray from the path of Allah...’ (Sad 38:24-26)

Even noble desire, such as wanting everyone guided, must not override justice or free will. Guidance is offered; acceptance remains a personal choice.

This narrative directly consoles the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in his Makkan struggle. His compassion for humanity was so deep that Allah cautioned him:

لَعَلَّكَ بَخِغٌ نَفْسَكَ أَلَّا يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ (الشُّعْرَاءُ)

“(O Prophet) Perhaps you would kill yourself (with grief) because they will not be believers.” (Al-Shu'ara 26:3)

If a king as powerful as Dawud could not take guardianship over every heart in his realm, then rejection should not consume the Prophet (PBUH). His duty is clear conveyance, not coercive care.

The legacy of Dawud in Surat Sad is a blueprint for leadership in every age: strength without tyranny, compassion without coercion, authority restrained by humility, and power guided by repentance and justice

7. The Trial of Power: Prophet Sulaiman's Illness and Kingdom

Surah Sad presents Prophet Sulaiman (AS) as a prophet-king and the son of a prophet-king, inheriting both spiritual responsibility and worldly authority:

وَوَهَبْنَا لِدَاوُدَ دَاوُدَ سُلَيْمَانَ نِعَمَ الْعَبْدِ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ (٣٠)

“And to Dawud We granted Sulaiman. What an excellent servant! Indeed, he was ever turning (to Us). (Sad 38:30)

Despite the vast authority granted to him, Sulaiman (AS) was subjected to a severe and humbling trial. Allah describes this test in strikingly concise terms:

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا سُلَيْمَانَ وَأَلْقَيْنَا عَلَى كُرْسِيِّهِ جَسَداً ثُمَّ أَنَابَ (٣٤)

“And indeed, We certainly tested Sulaiman and placed upon his throne a mere body; then he turned back (to Allah).” (Sad 38:34)

The Qur'an does not elaborate on the medical details of this illness, but the description is deliberate. Sulaiman, a ruler commanding forces beyond human reach, is reduced to a jasad: a powerless body seated on a throne. Authority remains outwardly present, but the ability to exercise is removed. This scene captures a central Qur'anic principle: power without divine support is empty, and sovereignty is never intrinsic to the human being.

Crucially, Sulaiman (AS) does not object, complain, or question Allah's decree. The verse concludes with thumma anab (ثُمَّ أَنَابَ), "then he turned back." His response to loss of power was not resentment, but repentance and renewed reliance upon Allah.

After his recovery, Sulaiman (AS) turns to Allah with a supplication that Allah not only accepts, but answers in a manner unparalleled in human history:

قَالَ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَهَبْ لِي مُلْكًا لَا يَنْبَغِي لِأَحَدٍ مِّنْ بَعْدِي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ (٣٥) فَسَخَّرْنَا لَهُ الرِّيحَ تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِهِ رُحَاءً حَيثُ أَصَابَ (٣٦) وَالشَّيَاطِينَ كُلَّ بَنَّاءٍ وَعَوَّاصٍ (٣٧) وَآخَرِينَ مَقْرَنِينَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ (٣٨)

“He said, ‘My Lord, forgive me and grant me a kingdom that shall not belong to anyone after me. Indeed, You are the Bestower.’ (35) So, We subjected to him the wind blowing gently by his command wherever he willed, (36) and the devils, every kind of builder and diver, (37) and others bound together in chains.” (Sad 38:35–38)

At first glance, Sulaiman's request, “a kingdom that shall not belong to anyone after me”, is often misunderstood as a desire for exclusivity or superiority. However, Intellectual Tadabbur requires that any interpretation align with two immovable Qur'anic principles:

1. Prophets are moral exemplars, protected from ego-driven ambition.
2. Allah does not praise or reward vanity, nor does He grant it divine endorsement.

Allah explicitly describes Sulaiman as ni'ma al-'abd (an excellent servant) and affirms that he was awwab, constantly returning to Allah. The granting of this supplication coupled with such praise conclusively rules out selfish motivation.

When read within the Qur'anic framework, Sulaiman's du'a is best understood as arising from three principled motives, each rooted in tawhid rather than personal desire:

1. Establishing a Unique, Permanent Sign (Ayah): Sulaiman sought a form of authority whose very nature would function as an ongoing miracle. The subjugation of wind, jinn, and elements beyond human reach transformed his kingdom into a continuous, living proof of Allah's absolute sovereignty. This was not power for its own sake, but a public, undeniable ayah demonstrating that dominion belongs to Allah alone.

2. Safeguarding Monotheism from Abuse of Power: By requesting that such a kingdom not be granted to anyone after him, Sulaiman was effectively asking that this level of extraordinary control be sealed off permanently. This closed the door to future tyrants or impostors who might exploit supernatural authority to claim divinity, enslave humanity, or corrupt belief. His request thus functioned as a protective measure for tawhid, not a personal monopoly.

3. Tools for Ultimate Service, Not Personal Rule: The elements granted to Sulaiman were not luxuries. The wind enabled rapid movement and administration across vast lands; the jinn built, dived, and labored where humans could not. These were instruments of service, allowing justice, worship, and order to be established on a scale otherwise impossible. Power, in this context, was a means to fulfill divine responsibility, not a goal in itself.

Seen through this lens, the story of Sulaiman (AS) becomes a profound lesson on the ethics of power. True authority begins with humility, is tested through loss, restored through repentance, and justified only when exercised in service of Allah's purpose.

Surat Sad thus presents a consistent Qur'anic pattern: power is granted, withdrawn, and restored, not to glorify the servant, but to manifest the sovereignty of the Lord.

8. The Trial and Recovery of Prophet Ayoub: Patience, Effort, and Ethical Renewal

In Surah Sad, Allah presents Prophet Ayoub (AS) as the supreme model of patience under prolonged hardship. He was afflicted with severe illness, the loss of wealth, and the loss of family. Authentic reports indicate that his ordeal extended over many years. Yet throughout this prolonged suffering, his supplication to Allah remained dignified, restrained, and deeply God-conscious:

وَأذْكَرٌ عَبْدَنَا أَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ ۖ أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الشَّيْطَانُ بِنُصْبٍ وَعَذَابٍ (٤١)

**“And remember Our servant Ayoub (Job), when he called upon his Lord (saying):
“Indeed, Satan has touched me with hardship and suffering.” (Sad 38:41)**

Ayoub (AS) did not accuse Allah, nor did he protest the decree. Instead, he describes his condition and attributes the harassing aspect of suffering to Satan, maintaining perfect adab with his Lord. This distinction reflects spiritual maturity: acknowledging pain without compromising reverence.

Allah's response to Ayoub's supplication is immediate, but instructive. Restoration does not come through passive relief; it comes through directed effort:

أَرْكُضْ بِرِجْلِكَ هَذَا مُغْتَسَلٌ بَارِدٌ وَشَرَابٌ (٤٢)

“(Allah said to him): "Strike the ground with your foot: here is cool water for washing and drinking.” (Sad 38:42)

Even in divine healing, Ayoub is commanded to act. Mercy does not negate effort; it activates it. Physical movement becomes the gateway to physical recovery.

With health restored, Allah then returns Ayoub's family, and more, explicitly framing this restoration as mercy and instruction:

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ ذُرِّيَّتَهُ وَأَهْلَهُ، وَمِثْلَهُمْ مَعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِنَّا وَذِكْرَى لِقَوْمٍ آلَاءِ بِنِيبٍ (٤٣)

“And We granted him back his family, and the like of them along with them, as a Mercy from Us, and a reminder for those of understanding.” (Sad 38:43)

The final stage of Ayoub's recovery concerns his material standing and moral commitments:

وَأَخَذَ بِيَدِكَ ضِعْفًا فَاصْرَبْ بِهِ، وَلَا تَحْنَثْ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ صَابِرًا نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ (٤٤)

“And take in your hand a Dighthan (bundle of diverse elements) and strike with it, and do not break your oath. Indeed, We found him patient. What an excellent servant! He was ever turning (to Us).” (Sad 38:44)

At this point, it is essential to move away from folkloric interpretations, especially the claim that this verse refers to striking Ayoub's wife. Such readings contradict prophetic character, ignore Qur'anic ethics, and overlook the established jurisprudence of oaths, which Allah has already legislated to be expiated through kaffarah, not violence. Ayoub himself was known for meticulous observance of expiation, even on behalf of others.

Instead, Intellectual Tadabbur directs attention to the key term dighthan (ضِعْفًا). Linguistically, a dighthan is a bundle of mixed elements, not a single, uniform object. Within the broader narrative of Ayoub's systematic restoration, health, family, then livelihood, this command emerges not as punishment, but as strategy.

The dighthan represents diversification: a deliberate move away from reliance on a single source of income or production.

This command can be understood across economic contexts:

- **Agrarian context:** A *dighthan* of varied seeds signals a shift toward polyculture, protecting livelihood from crop-specific failures, pests, or blight.

- **Commercial context:** “Striking out” with a *dighthan* of goods reflects portfolio diversification, a foundational principle of risk mitigation in trade.

In both cases, Allah provides Ayoub not merely with resources, but with a method, a way to rebuild wealth responsibly and sustainably. At the same time, Allah reinforces the ethical boundary:

وَلَا تَخْنَثُ

“Do not break your oath.”

Material recovery must not compromise moral integrity. Wealth is only a blessing when earned and restored without violating commitments or principles.

The Qur’anic business model implicit in Ayoub’s restoration can thus be summarized:

Stage	Command	Principle
Recovery	"Strike the ground" (Effort)	No reward without physical initiative.
Strategy	"Take a Dighthan" (Bundle)	Diversification: Protect against future loss.
Ethics	"Do not break your oath"	Integrity: Wealth is only a blessing when earned ethically.

Ayoub (AS) is ultimately praised with the same words used for Sulaiman (AS):

نَعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ دَوَّابٌ (٤٤)

“What an excellent servant! Indeed, he was ever turning (to Us).” (Sad 38:44)

Together, the stories of Sulaiman and Ayoub present the full spectrum of patience: patience while entrusted with extraordinary power (Sulaiman), and patience while stripped of nearly everything (Ayoub). In both extremes, absolute capacity and near helplessness, the true servant remains awwab, constantly returning to Allah, transforming every condition into a platform for obedience, wisdom, and trust.

9. The Pure Religion: Eliminating the Intermediary

The Qur'an establishes two inseparable conditions for any deed to be accepted by Allah. First, the action must be performed with complete sincerity for Allah alone. Second, no intermediary: no go-between, representative, or spiritual proxy, may be placed between the servant and his Lord. Every form of worship, whether supplication, prayer, sacrifice, vows, reliance, love, fear, or hope, must be directed exclusively to Allah, without sharing any portion of it with another being.

Allah makes this foundation unmistakably clear:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ (٢)

“Indeed, We have sent down the Book to you in truth: So worship Allah making (the practice of) the religion purely for Him.” (Al-Zumar 39: 2)

Here, Allah directly links the revelation of the Book with the purification of religion. The Qur’an did not come merely to inform the intellect, but to reform the heart, so that worship is directed to Allah alone, free from showing off, seeking validation, or relying on created beings. Ikhlas (sincerity) means that Allah is the sole intended object, the sole source of hope, and the sole One feared in worship.

Allah then dismantles the most persistent deviation from this purity: the claim that intermediaries are needed to draw closer to Him.

أَلَا لِلَّهِ الدِّينُ الْخَالِصُ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ
بَيْنَهُمْ فِي مَا هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ كَاذِبٌ كَفَّارٌ (٣)

“Unquestionably, for Allah is the pure religion. And those who take protectors besides Him [say], ‘We only worship them that they may bring us nearer to Allah.’ Allah will judge between them regarding that in which they differ. Indeed, Allah does not guide one who is a persistent liar and disbeliever.” (Al-Zumar 39:3)

This verse exposes a subtle but dangerous misconception: the belief that one is too sinful or too insignificant to approach Allah directly, and therefore must seek saints, idols, or revered figures as spiritual intermediaries. The Qur’an rejects this idea completely. Seeking intermediaries in worship is not humility, it contradicts Tawhid, because it diverts devotion away from the One who alone deserves it.

The pure religion that Allah commands is a direct, unmediated relationship with Him. You call upon Him directly. You rely upon Him directly. You hope in Him directly. No barrier exists except the one created by the servant’s own hesitation.

For this reason, Allah commands even His Messenger (PBUH), the most honored of creation, to publicly affirm undivided worship:

قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ (١١) وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ (١٢) قُلْ إِنِّي أَخَافُ إِنْ
عَصَيْتُ رَبِّي عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ (١٣) قُلِ اللَّهُ أَعْبُدُ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ دِينِي (١٤)

“Say, “Surely, I have been commanded to worship Allah, making the religion sincere to Him. (11) And I have been commanded to be the first Muslim. (12) Say, “Surely I fear, if I were to disobey my Lord, the punishment of a tremendous Day.” (13) Say, Allah alone I worship, making my religion purely for Him.” (Al-Zumar 39: 11-14)

If the Prophet (PBUH) is instructed to declare his fear of disobedience and his commitment to pure worship, then no one else can claim exemption. Allah Himself opened the door and invited every servant personally.

To remove any remaining hesitation, Allah reminds the believer of His nearness:

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ (١٦)

“Indeed, We created man and We know what his soul whispers to him, and We are nearer to him than his jugular vein.” (Qaf 50:16)

When Allah is nearer than one’s own lifeline, there is no need for a mediator. He knows the unspoken fears, the silent regrets, and the hidden hopes. He hears the supplication that never reaches the tongue, and He responds to the heart that turns sincerely.

Yet what if that heart has erred? What if sincerity was compromised? What if worship was neglected?

The same Surah that commands purity of religion immediately opens the horizon of limitless forgiveness:

قُلْ يَاعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ (٥٣) وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُوا لَهُ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ (٥٤)

“Say: “O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins; surely, He is The Ever-Forgiving, The Ever-Merciful. (53) And return to your Lord and submit to Him before the punishment comes to you; then you will not be helped. “(Al-Zumar 39:53-54)

Notice the expression: "those who have transgressed against themselves." Every sin is described not as diminishing Allah's majesty, which remains untouched, but as self-inflicted harm. Sin wounds the soul and distances it from clarity and serenity. Yet even for those who have gone far in wrongdoing, Allah's message is not condemnation but invitation: do not despair.

The door of mercy is not partially open; it remains wide open until life itself closes. The path back is simple and direct, the same directness that defines pure worship:

- Its path is tawbah (returning to Allah).
- Its condition is sincerity.
- Its outcome is renewal.

The servant who once worshiped directly must also repent directly. No intermediary carries repentance. No saint absolves sin. The One who commands sincerity is the same One who forgives all sins.

Thus, pure religion and limitless mercy are not separate themes. They are two movements of the same relationship. Worship is direct. Repentance is direct. Nearness is direct.

The pure religion, therefore, is not merely correct ritual performance. It is the conscious decision to choose Allah alone as the ultimate goal, and when one falters, to return to Him alone, without despair and without barrier.

The believer lives between two certainties: absolute sincerity in worship, and absolute hope in mercy. And between these two, the soul finds its balance.

10. The Mark of Intelligence: Discernment and the Choice of the Best

A true servant of Allah is not one who follows blindly, but one who listens carefully, reflects deeply, and chooses wisely. The Qur'an praises such a person as truly intelligent, one who distinguishes between voices, ideas, and opinions, then commits only to what is "ahsan": the best, the most righteous, and the most beneficial. Allah says:

فَبَشِّرْ عِبَادِ (١٧) الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَاهُمُ اللَّهُ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمْ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ (١٨)

"So, give good tidings to My servants (17) Those who listen to speech and follow the best of it. Those are the ones Allah has guided, and those are people of understanding." (Al-Zumar 39:17-18)

These verses celebrate intellectual discernment, the ability to listen without surrendering judgment, to evaluate without arrogance, and to select what aligns most closely with truth and righteousness. Islam thus promotes what we would today call information literacy long before the term existed.

The Ulu al-Albab (أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ), people of deep understanding, are not those who merely echo popular opinion or cling to inherited ideas without reflection. They are those who examine every claim, weigh it against divine guidance, and extract its highest moral and spiritual value. Listening, in the Qur'anic sense, is not passive reception; it is active evaluation followed by responsible choice.

In this verse, Allah defines intelligence as the capacity for Tadabbur, reflective analysis that leads to ethical action. The Qur'an does not call for suspending the mind, but for refining it. To "follow the best of what is said" is to cultivate an inner compass capable of distinguishing between truth and distortion, between fleeting trends and enduring wisdom.

True servitude to Allah, therefore, is not blind obedience to human authority, nor intellectual chaos driven by personal desire. It is enlightened submission, independent thought guided by revelation. Such intellect becomes a light by which the believer navigates the noise of life, consistently choosing the path most pleasing to Allah.

Conclusion

Juz 23 offers a complete spiritual framework, one that begins with responsibility and ends with hope. Across its verses, the Qur'an teaches that faith is lived through patience, effort, discernment, and sincerity, not through passivity or despair.

The prophetic models in this Juz reveal that trials are not signs of abandonment, but means of refinement. Yunus learns patience, Dawoud learns the limits of authority, Sulaiman learns humility in power, and Ayoub embodies endurance in loss. In every case, the servant fulfills his duty while leaving outcomes to Allah.

The Juz also defines true intelligence as the ability to listen, reflect, and follow what is best. Through Tadabbur, the believer learns to engage the Qur'an with both heart and mind, avoiding blind following while remaining anchored to revelation.

At the core of all guidance stands pure worship, direct, sincere, and unmediated. No intermediary stands between the servant and Allah, and no sincere return is ever rejected. After demanding responsibility and ethical clarity, Allah reassures every struggling soul: do not despair. As long as the heart can return, mercy remains near.

Faith, as this Juz teaches, is not about never falling. It is about always turning back.

Jewels from the Twenty Fourth Juz: A Journey through the Soul, the Universe, and the Divine Command

(Al-Zumar 39:32 – Fussilat 41:46)

Introduction

The twenty-fourth Juz of the Qur'an is a profound tapestry of spiritual psychology and cosmic majesty. Spanning parts of Surah Az-Zumar, Surah Ghafir, and Surah Fussilat, these verses bridge the gap between our inner world and the vast expanse of the heavens. In this chapter, we explore ten jewels: specific verses that provide deep insights into the nature of the soul, the precision of creation, and the absolute sincerity required to connect with the Creator. These are not merely ancient texts; they are living signals designed to guide the modern mind toward a state of certainty and peace.

1. Sincerity and Pure Devotion

Juz 24 contains a recurring emphasis on Sincerity (Ikhlas): the internal alignment of the heart with one's outward actions. These verses do not merely define sincerity; they provide a diagnostic tool to assess the health of our own devotion. The cornerstone of this theme appears early in the Juz:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ (٢)

“Indeed, We have sent down the Book to you in truth: So worship Allah making the practice of your religion sincere to Him.” (Al-Zumar 39: 2)

The Definition of Sincere Worship:

Sincere worship requires that nothing, and no one, comes between the servant and the Creator. Allah directly addresses the fallacy of "intercession" that misled the people of Makkah. They claimed that their idols were merely "bridges" to the Divine, but Allah identifies this as a deficiency in sincerity and a form of Shirk (associating partners with Him):

أَلَا لِلَّهِ الدِّينُ الْخَالِصُ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي مَا هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ كَاذِبٌ كَفَّارٌ (٣)

“Surely, the sincere religion is for Allah. And those who take guardians other than Him (say): "We only worship them in order that they may bring us near to Allah." Verily, Allah will judge between them concerning that wherein they differ. Truly, Allah does not guide him who is a liar, and a relentless disbeliever.” (Al-Zumar 39:3)

Sincerity is not a suggestion; it is a divine mandate. To lack sincerity is to possess a fundamental deficiency in belief. The Prophet (PBUH) was commanded to declare this twice, emphasizing its gravity:

قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ (١١) وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ (١٢) قُلْ إِنِّي أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّي عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ (١٣) قُلِ اللَّهُ أَعْبُدُ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ دِينِي (١٤)

“Say, “Surely, I have been commanded to worship Allah, making the religion sincere to Him. (11) And I have been commanded to be the first Muslim. (12) Say, “Surely I fear, in case I disobey my Lord, the torment of a Tremendous Day.” (13) Say, Allah I worship, making my religion sincere to Him.” (Al-Zumar 39:11-14)

The Two Dimensions of Sincerity

For worship to be complete, it must manifest in two ways:

1. External Manifestation: The obedience of the limbs “al-jawarih” (الجوارح) to Allah’s commands through visible action.
2. Internal Manifestation: The hidden intention (Niyyah) within the heart, known only to Allah and the individual.

True sincerity requires the full engagement of both body and soul. We often see this “forced” upon people during times of extreme distress. When a person faces a crisis, superficial distractions vanish, and they call upon Allah with total focus. However, the Quran warns against the “fickle heart” that reverts to arrogance once the storm passes:

فَإِذَا مَسَّ الْإِنْسَانَ ضُرٌّ دَعَانَا ثُمَّ إِذَا خَوَّلْنَاهُ نِعْمَةً مِّنَّا قَالَ إِنَّمَا أُوتِيتُهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ بَلْ هِيَ فِتْنَةٌ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (٤٩)

“And when affliction befalls man, he calls upon Us; then when We bestow on him a favor from Us, he says, “I have only been given it because of [my] knowledge.” Rather, it is a trial, but most of them do not know.” (Al-Zumar 39:49)

Cultivating Sincerity Through Reflection

Sincerity is not achieved in a vacuum; it is the fruit of deep reflection on the universe. By observing the order and majesty of creation, a person realizes that only One Being is worthy of absolute devotion:

خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ يُكَوِّرُ اللَّيْلَ عَلَى النَّهَارِ وَيُكَوِّرُ النَّهَارَ عَلَى اللَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۗ أَلَا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفَّارُ (٥)

“He has created the heavens and the earth in truth. He wraps the night over the day and wraps the day over the night. And He has subjected the sun and the moon; each is running its course for an appointed term. Verily, He is the All-Mighty, the Oft-Forgiving.” (Al-Zumar 39:5)

2. The Signs of a Sincere Heart

The Juz provides a beautiful description of the sincere believer: consistency through obedience “at various times of the night,” humility in prostration and standing, and a

balanced emotional state rooted in healthy fear of the Hereafter alongside profound hope for Allah's mercy.

أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَنِيتُ ءَانَاءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَائِمًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُوا رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ
وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ (٩)

“Is he who is devoutly obedient at various times of the night, prostrate and upright, being wary of the Hereafter, and hoping for the mercy of his Lord (the same as the disbeliever)? Say, “Are the ones who know equal to the ones who do not know?” Surely only the ones endowed with intellects would remind themselves.” (Al-Zumar 39: 9)

Sincerity in Repentance

Sincerity is the key that unlocks forgiveness. Even those who have "committed excesses against themselves" are invited back, provided their turning (inabah) is sincere and timely:

قُلْ يَاعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ
الرَّحِيمُ (٥٣) وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُوا لَهُ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ (٥٤)

“Say: 'O My servants who have committed excess against themselves, never give up hope in the mercy of Allah! Surely Allah forgives all sins; surely, He is the Ever-Forgiving, the Ever-Merciful. (53) And turn in repentance to your Lord, and surrender to Him, before the torment comes to you; thereafter you will not be helped.” (Al-Zumar 39:53-54).

Sincerity in Action: The Power of Dua

While sincerity is a state of the heart, its most potent expression is through Dua (supplication). In Juz 24, Allah emphasizes that calling upon Him is not merely an option, but a fundamental requirement of faith. To abandon Dua is to fall into Kibr (arrogance), a trait that leads to spiritual ruin:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ (٦٠)

“And your Lord has said, “Call Me, I will respond to you. Surely those who show arrogance against My worship shall enter Hell utterly humiliated.” (Ghaffir 40: 60).

The Pillars of Sincerity: Patience and Forgiveness

Sincere Dua does not exist in isolation; it must be coupled with Sabr (patience) and Istighfar (seeking forgiveness). Sincerity is often tested when an answer to a prayer seems delayed. In these moments, the believer is reminded that Allah's promise is absolute truth:

فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذُنُوبِكَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَرِ (٥٥)

“So be patient : surely, the promise of Allah is truth. And seek forgiveness for your sin and proclaim the purity and praise of your Lord in the evening and at dawn.” (Ghaffir 40:55)

By weaving together these verses, a complete picture of Ikhlas emerges:

- **The Root:** Understanding that the pure religion belongs to Allah alone.
- **The Tool:** Sincere Dua as the primary expression of our dependence on Him.
- **The Sustainer:** Patience and constant remembrance (Tasbih) to keep the heart firm

3. The Mircle of Sleep

This verse highlights one of Allah’s most overlooked miracles: the act of sleep. Because it is a daily occurrence, we often ignore its inherent mystery. We have no ultimate control over our sleep; we cannot force it to happen, nor can we indefinitely prevent it. While we may lie down exhausted, we do not dictate the exact moment of transition, we simply slip into it, just as we suddenly awaken. The Quran draws a direct parallel between sleep and death, offering profound insight into the relationship between the body and the soul:

اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنْفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا فَيُمْسِكُ الَّتِي قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا الْمَوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ الْأُخْرَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ (٤٢)

“Allah takes the souls of the dead and the souls of the living while they sleep; He keeps hold of those whose death He has ordained and sends the others back until their appointed time. Truly, there are signs in this for those who reflect.” (Al-Zumur 39:42)

While death marks a permanent separation between the body and the soul, sleep constitutes a temporary one. During sleep, the soul is partially freed from the constraints of time and space. This state facilitates dreams and visions. While many dreams are products of the imagination, true visions (ru'ya) offer glimpses into a non-physical reality. These are not exclusive to Prophets; as seen in the King of Egypt's dream during the time of Prophet Yusuf, even non-believers can receive these signals. This experience demonstrates both the power of Allah and the relativity of time.

This verse provides a framework for understanding the soul's nature. Since essential biological functions such as the heartbeat and respiration continue while the soul is "away" during sleep, it suggests that the soul does not directly manage the body's electrochemical functions.

We may speculate that Allah has equipped the body with an internal operating system that manages these involuntary processes. This system remains active until the physical "hardware" can no longer support it. While only Allah can "shut down" this system by decree through natural death, humans can interfere with it through violence. In such cases, the body is rendered physically unable to sustain the soul.

What, then, is the soul? A compelling modern analogy is that the soul is a hologram of the self. Just as a hologram contains the data of an entire three-dimensional image in every part, the soul preserves the complete information, memories, and characteristics accumulated during a lifetime. This analogy provides a powerful explanation for the Resurrection:

وَإِذَا النُّفُوسُ رُؤِّجَتْ (٧)

“And when souls are reunited.” (Al-Takwir 81:7)

At the Resurrection, Allah unites the soul with a new body suited for eternal existence. Because the soul acts as a data backup, the moment it is connected to this new form, the individual instantly possesses all the memories and identity of their earthly life. The Qur'an reinforces this concept of preserved identity across several verses:

1/ The "Retaining Record" (Kitabun Hafiz): When skeptics ask how they can be restored from dust, Allah refers to a specific record:

قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا تَنْقُصُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْهُمْ وَعِنْدَنَا كِتَابٌ حَفِيظٌ (٤)

"We know what the earth diminishes of them, and with Us is a retaining record (Kitabun Hafiz)." (Qaf 50:4)

Even as the physical body dissolves, the source code remains secure.

2/ Unique Biological Barcodes: Allah emphasizes the precision of the restoration:

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَلَّن نَّجْمَعَهُ ۗ (٣) بَلَىٰ قَدِيرِينَ عَلَيَّ أَنْ نُسَوِّيَ بَنَانَهُ ۗ (٤)

"Does man think that We will not reassemble his bones? (3) Yes; indeed, We are Able to reconstruct even his fingertips." (Al-Qiyamah 75:3-4)

The soul carries the precise individualizing data required to rebuild the exact person.

3/ The Self as Evidence: On the Day of Judgment, man is told:

يُنَبِّئُوكَ الْإِنْسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِمَا قَدَّمَ وَأَخَّرَ (١٣) بَلِ الْإِنْسَانُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ بَصِيرَةٌ (١٤)

"On that Day man will be informed of everything he put forward, and everything he left behind. (13) And man will be evidence against himself." (Al-Qiyamah 75:13-14)

For self-testimony to be valid, the resurrected person must possess the exact same data and consciousness as their earthly self.

4/ The Original Blueprint: Allah reminds us that the Second Creation is "easier"

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ ۗ وَهُوَ أَهْوَنُ عَلَيْهِ

"And He is the One Who begins the creation, then repeats it; and that is even easier for Him..." (Ar-Rum 30:27)

Repeating a process is always simpler when the original blueprint is already preserved.

4. Giving Allah His True "Qadr"

This verse contains a powerful reprimand to humanity for our failure to comprehend the majesty of the Creator. It is a theme so central to the Quranic message that it appears in two other places (Al-An'am 6:91 and Al-Hajj 22:74).

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ وَالْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ مَطْوِيَّاتٌ بِيَمِينِهِ سُبْحَانَهُ
وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ (٦٧)

“They have not given Allah His true Qadr (status, estimate) that is due to Him. The whole of the earth is in His grasp on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens will be folded in His Right Hand. Glorified is He, and High is He above all that they associate with Him!” (Al-Zumar 39: 67)

A Linguistic Nuance: Qadr vs. Qadar:

In Arabic, the word "Qadr" is often confused with its similar-sounding counterpart. The vocalization (Tashkeel) of the letter Dal (د) changes the meaning entirely:

- **Qadr** (قَدْر) with a Sukoon on the Dal: This means status, worth, value, or grandeur. This is the word used in this verse to describe Allah's immense dignity.
- **Qadar** (قَدَر) with a Fatha on the Dal: This refers to decree, destiny, or fate.

The verse in Az-Zumar is not speaking about destiny; it is a call to recognize the magnificence and grandeur of the One who holds the entire universe in His hand.

The Connection to Laylat al-Qadr

It is no coincidence that this same word, Qadr (with the Sukoon), is repeated three times in Surah Al-Qadr (Chapter 97) to describe the Laylat Al-Qadr "Night of Glory."

The greatness of that night stems from the revelation of the Qur'an: a Book sent down so that humanity might finally know Allah and give Him His true Qadr. The ultimate purpose of all revelation is to teach us how to honor His commands and respect His presence, knowing that He sees all we do, hears all we say, and knows all we think.

The Ramadan Reflection:

Many Muslims seek the immense blessings of Laylat al-Qadr during Ramadan, yet the Quran's message is far deeper than a single night of intensified worship. The rituals of fasting and prayer are not ends in themselves; they are tools designed to cleanse the heart and mind, stripping away the distractions of the world so that we may gradually build a genuine recognition of Allah's true greatness. Reducing this night to a concentrated burst of ritual activity, while neglecting the lifelong work that the Quran

actually demands, is precisely the failure the Quran repeatedly warns against in Al-Anam, Al-Hajj, and Al-Zumar. The real promise of Laylat al-Qadr belongs to those who treat Ramadan not as an annual opportunity to accumulate reward in a few hours, but as one milestone in a continuous journey of building their Qadr of Allah. That journey, and not the night itself, is what the Quran has been calling humanity toward from the very first revelation.

5. The Final Journey – A Tale of Two Gates

After judgment is rendered with absolute justice, humanity will be divided into two distinct groups, each led toward their eternal destination. The Quranic description of these journeys reveals a deep psychological and spiritual contrast in how these souls are received.

1. The Arrival at Hell: The Arrogant

For those who rejected the truth, the arrival is sudden and jarring. They are driven in groups toward a destination whose gates remain closed until the very last moment:

وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ زُمَرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا فَفُتِحَتْ أَبْوَابُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِ رَبِّكُمْ وَيُنذِرُونَكُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَلَكِنْ حَقَّتْ كَلِمَةُ الْعَذَابِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ (٧١) قِيلَ ادْخُلُوا أَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا فَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ (٧٢)

“And those who disbelieved will be driven to Hell in groups until when they reach it, its gates will be opened. And its keepers will say, “Did the Messengers not come to you from yourselves, reciting to you the revealed verses of your Lord, and forewarning you of the inevitable Meeting of this Day?” They will say: “Yes. But the Word of torment has been justified against the disbelievers.” It will be said (to them): “Enter you the gates of Hell wherein you shall abide forever. A most evil abode for the arrogant!” (Al-Zumar 39:71-72)

The gates are thrust open only upon their arrival, adding to their terror. They are met not with a welcome, but with a stinging interrogation from the keepers of Hell, who remind them of the warnings they ignored. Their final label is “the arrogant,” for it was pride that kept them from the truth.

2. The Arrival at Paradise: The Mindful

In beautiful contrast, the journey of the righteous is one of peace and honor. They are led toward Paradise in groups, but their experience at the gate is fundamentally different:

وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ الْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا وَفُتِحَتْ أَبْوَابُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَادْخُلُوهَا خَالِدِينَ (٧٣)

“And those who kept their duty to their Lord will be led to Paradise in groups until when they reach it, and its gates will be opened, and its keepers will say: Peace

be upon you! You are ever pure, so enter it abiding therein forever." (Al-Zumar 39:73)

Upon entering, the believers erupt in gratitude, testifying that Allah has fulfilled His promise and granted them an inheritance where they may dwell wherever they wish. The scene concludes with a magnificent vision of the angels encircling the Throne of Allah, glorifying Him in a final, universal declaration of praise.

The Linguistic Miracle: The "Waw" of Welcome

A fascinating detail emerges when we compare the Arabic phrasing of these two arrivals, a testament to the precision of the Quranic text

For Hell (39:71):

وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ زُمَرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا فَتِيحتَ أَبْوَابُهَا
(...until when they reached it, its gates were opened)

For Paradise (39:73):

وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ الْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا وَفُتِيحتَ أَبْوَابُهَا
(...until when they reached it, and its gates were [already] opened)

The addition of the letter Waw (و), meaning "and," in the description of Paradise is highly significant. In Arabic linguistics, this is referred to as the Waw al-Hal (the Waw of state or condition). It indicates that when the believers arrived, the gates were already open in anticipation of their coming.

While the disbelievers face the shock of a gate opening to imprison them, the believers find a home that has been prepared and opened long before they arrived. This is consistent with Surah Sad, in which Allah says:

هَذَا ذِكْرٌ وَإِن لِلْمُتَّقِينَ لِحُسْنِ مَّآبٍ (٤٩) جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ مَّفْتَحَةٌ لَهُمُ الْأَبْوَابُ (٥٠)

This is a Reminder, and indeed for those who have Taqwa a good place of return: (49) the gardens of Eden (everlasting Gardens), whose doors are (already) opened for them. (Sad 38:49-50)

The difference between the two destinations is not just the location, but the reception. One group is met with a closed door and a question of reproach; the other is met with an open door and a greeting of "Salam."

6. The Angelic Support System

One of the most profound honors given to the believer is revealed in a royal scene from the Unseen. These verses describe the majestic angels who carry the Throne of Allah,

the highest-ranking of all created beings, and their remarkable occupation: they are in a continuous state of supplication for you.

You may feel discouraged by your own sins, but if you turn back to Allah in repentance, the elite of the heavens advocates for you:

الَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ الْعَرْشَ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا رَبَّنَا وَسِعْتَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ رَّحْمَةً وَعِلْمًا فَاغْفِرْ لِلَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَاتَّبَعُوا سَبِيلَكَ وَقِهِمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِيمِ (٧) رَبَّنَا وَأَدْخِلْهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ الَّتِي وَعَدْتَهُمْ وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ ءَابَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ (٨) وَقِهِمُ السَّيِّئَاتِ وَمَنْ تَقِ السَّيِّئَاتِ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَقَدْ رَحِمْتَهُ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ (٩)

“Those (angels) who bear the Throne (of Allah) and those around it glorify the praises of their Lord, and believe in Him, and ask forgiveness for those who believe (saying): "Our Lord! You have embraced all things in Your mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who turn to You in repentance and have followed Your Way and save them from the torment of the blazing Fire! (7) Our Lord! admit them to the gardens of Adn (Eden) which you have promised them, together with whoever is righteous among their fathers, their spouses and their offspring! Indeed, You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. (8) And protect them from the consequence of evil deeds, and whomsoever You protect from the consequence of evil deeds on that day will be shown Your mercy." And that is the supreme success. (Ghaffir 40:7-9)

The angels do not merely pray for your safety; they pray for your legacy and your joy. They ask Allah to admit you into the Gardens of Eden and, most touchingly, to reunite you with your righteous parents, spouses, and children. This reveals the immense love Allah has for the repentant soul: He has commissioned His most powerful servants to be your advocates.

This celestial support is further explained by the relationship between human remembrance (Dhikr) and divine response. When you remember Allah, a reciprocal process begins:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا (٤١) وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا (٤٢) هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَلِّي عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلَائِكَتُهُ لِيُخْرِجَكُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَكَانَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا (٤٣)

“O you who believe, remember Allah with much remembrance (41) and glorify Him morning and evening. (42) "He is the One who sends blessings (Salat) upon you, and His angels as well, so that He may bring you out from darkness into light; and He is ever Merciful to the believers.” (Ahzab 33:41-43)

The "Salat" of the angels is their prayer for your forgiveness, acting as a spiritual lighthouse that pulls you out of the darkness of confusion and sin into the light of guidance.

Our relationship with the angels is not limited to the distant heavens. For those who strive to remain steadfast (Istiqamah) on the straight path, the angels become active, comforting companions at the most critical moment of life: the transition of death.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ (٣٠) نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَائُكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهُنَّ أَنْفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدْعُونَ (٣١)

“As for those who say, ‘Our Lord is Allah, and stand firm on the straight path, the angels will descend on them and say, ‘Have no fear or grief, but rejoice in the good news of Paradise, which you have been promised. (30) We are your allies in this world and in the world to come, where you will have everything you desire and ask for.’ (Fussilat 41: 30-31)

Imagine the moment of leaving this world: while the body fails, allies from the Unseen appear to remove all fear and grief. They welcome the soul not as a stranger, but as a friend for whom they have been praying since the first moment of repentance. The believer is never truly alone.

7. The Nature of Revelation – Creation or Command?

During the Abbasid Caliphate (833–851 CE), a fierce intellectual struggle arose over whether the Quran was "created" (makhlūq) or the "uncreated" word of Allah. While philosophers debated, the Quran itself offered a definitive characterization: it is a Spirit (Ruh) of the Divine Command (Amr).

رَفِيعُ الدَّرَجَاتِ ذُو الْعَرْشِ يُلْقِي الرُّوحَ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ لِيُنذِرَ يَوْمَ التَّلَاقِ (١٥)
“He is exalted in rank, the Lord of the Throne. He casts the Spirit of His command upon whom He will of His servants, to warn of the Day of Meeting.” (Ghafir 40:15)

The Distinction Between Khalq (Creation) and Amr (Command)

In Quranic terminology, there is a vital distinction between the "World of Creation" (Alam al-Khalq), which includes matter, time, and biology, and the "World of Command" (Alam al-Amr), the celestial realm of divine decree. By calling the Quran a "Spirit from His Command," Allah places the Revelation above the laws of physical creation. This theme is reinforced in Surah Ash-Shura:

وَكَذَلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا مَا كُنتَ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتَابُ وَلَا الْإِيمَانُ وَلَكِن جَعَلْنَاهُ نُورًا نَّهْدِي بِهِ مَن نَّشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ (الشورى: ٥٢)

"And thus We have revealed to you a Spirit from Our command. You did not know what the Book or faith was, but We made it a light by which We guide whom We will of Our servants, and indeed, you guide to a straight path " (Ash-Shura 42:52)

The "Spirit" as a Life-Giving Force

Calling the Revelation a Spirit (Ruh) is a deliberate and powerful image. Just as the soul gives life to a physical body, the Revelation gives life to the human heart. Without it, the intellect is hardware without an operating system.

Based on these verses, the Qur'an is not a mere created substance or a static book of history. It is:

- **Eternal in Origin:** Proceeding directly from the Divine Command.
- **Luminous in Nature:** Described as a Light (Nur) that penetrates spiritual darkness.
- **Transcendent:** Existing outside the constraints of time to shape human history.

Understanding the Qur'an as "a Spirit from His Command" changes how we interact with it. It is not just a text to be analyzed; it is the bridge between the Timeless Creator and time-bound creation, manifesting Allah's eternal word in the language of humanity.

8. The Mircle of Plant Growth

One of the most striking features of the Qur'an is its linguistic depth. A verse can be understood simply by a layman, yet reveal profound scientific complexity when viewed through the lens of modern research. Consider the description of life emerging from barren, compacted soil. The specific verbs used in the Arabic text point toward complex physical and biological processes that occur in a precise sequence:

وَمِنْ ءَايَاتِهِ ۚ أَنْ تَرَى ٱلْأَرْضَ بَرَةً فَإِذَا أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا ٱلْمَآءَ اهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِى أَحْيَاهَا لَمُحِى ٱلْمَوْتِ ۗ إِنَّهُ ۖ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (٣٩)

"And among His signs is that you see the earth barren, but when We send down water upon it, it shakes (ihtazzat) and swells (rabat). Verily, He who gives it life is indeed He who gives life to the dead. Surely, He has the power to do everything." (Fussilat 41:39)

For centuries, the "shaking" and "swelling" of the earth were viewed purely as literary images. However, modern soil science and the discovery of Brownian Motion (first observed by Robert Brown in 1827) provide a technical framework for understanding these stages:

1. The Kinetic Stage: "It Shakes" (Ihtazzat) The first stage involves the physical movement of soil particles upon contact with rainwater. Raindrops falling on the earth move in every direction, colliding with microscopic soil particles and causing them to vibrate and shift erratically: a phenomenon known as Brownian movement. This "shaking" is essential for the distribution of minerals and the creation of micro-cracks in the soil.

2. The Volumetric Stage: "It Swells" (Rabat) The second stage refers to the expansion of soil particles as they absorb water. Soil particles, particularly clay minerals, are composed of thin, layered structures with spaces between them. As water diffuses between these layers, it causes the particles to expand and the soil to swell.

This swelling property is critical; it allows the soil to retain moisture near the surface rather than allowing it to penetrate too deeply, ensuring that water remains accessible to organisms and plant roots.

3. The Biological Stage: Germination The final stage is the biological reanimation of the earth. The soil that appeared dead or dormant comes to life. The Brownian movement assists in distributing nutrients needed by seeds to begin sprouting, and the soil "opens up" through the preceding physical stages, allowing vegetation to emerge.

For the layman, this is a beautiful image of the Resurrection: the return of life to what was dust. For the scientist, it is a precise description of the physicochemical transformation of the earth's surface, a testament to the One who "reanimates" the dead.

9. The Pre-Measured Provisions

The Earth is approximately 4.6 billion years old. From its very inception, Allah designed it as a self-sustaining vessel. Aside from sunlight, nothing essential to life arrives from outside our atmosphere. Every resource needed to sustain every human, animal, bird, and insect, from the first creature to the last, was already embedded within the Earth's systems at the moment of its creation.

قُلْ أَيُّكُمْ لَتَكْفُرُونَ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَرْضَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ وَتَجْعَلُونَ لَهُ إِندَادًا ذَٰلِكَ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ (٩) وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ مِنْ فَوْقِهَا وَبَارَكَ فِيهَا وَقَدَّرَ فِيهَا أَقْوَاتَهَا فِي أَرْبَعَةِ أَيَّامٍ سَوَاءً لِّلسَّائِلِينَ (١٠)

“Say, ‘How can you disbelieve in the One who created the earth in two Days? How can you set up other rivals to Him, He is the Lord of the worlds!’ (9) He placed firm mountains on it, blessed it, and measured out its provisions in four days, equal for all who ask.” (Fussilat 41:9-10)

The phrase "measured out its provisions" (qaddara fiha aqwataha/ وَقَدَّرَ فِيهَا أَقْوَاتَهَا) implies a precise calculation. In modern terms, we refer to this as the carrying capacity of the planet. Allah informs us that these provisions were not an afterthought; they were "locked in" during the foundational stages of the planet's history. Furthermore, the term "equal for all who ask" (sawa'an li-ssaii'in/ سَوَاءً لِّلسَّائِلِينَ) suggests that the resources were designed to be sufficient for the entire collective of "seekers", every living being that requires sustenance.

These verses fundamentally challenge the Malthusian theory, proposed by Thomas Robert Malthus, which suggests that population growth will inevitably outstrip food production. According to the Quranic worldview, the problem is never a lack of creation, but rather a failure of distribution. Contemporary data support this:

- **Sufficient Caloric Output:** According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the world currently produces enough calories to feed 10 billion people, far

exceeding the current population of 8 billion. We live on a planet of abundance, not scarcity.

- **Access and Inequality:** The World Food Programme (WFP) highlights that hunger is rarely caused by a physical scarcity. It is a byproduct of economic inequality, political conflict, and market failures.

The injustice mentioned in the Qur'an often manifests as the hoarding of these pre-measured provisions. When communities encroach on resources meant for the collective, they disrupt the divine balance (Mizan). Food shortages are not a failure of Earth's capacity; they are a failure of human character. Recognizing this should inspire a drive for justice: if Allah provided for "all who ask," our duty is to ensure those provisions reach their rightful recipients.

10. The Moral Compass of the Messenger

The Quran, as Allah's final message, requires a human vessel to reach the hearts of others. However, the message cannot be delivered through logic alone; it requires superior moral character. To invite others to Allah, a Muslim must be a living embodiment of the faith's impact, demonstrating kindness, tolerance, and unshakable patience.

Allah defines the highest form of human discourse not by its eloquence, but by its purpose and the speaker's integrity

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ (٣٣)

“And who is better in speech than he who invites to Allah, and does righteous deeds, and says: "I am one of the Muslims." (Fussilat 41:33)

This verse establishes a three-part criterion for the caller: Inspiration (inviting to Allah), Consistency (doing righteous deeds), and Identity (humbly submitting as a Muslim).

The most challenging aspect of representing Islam is dealing with opposition. Allah provides a masterclass in conflict resolution, commanding us to respond to negativity with its opposite

وَلَا تَسْتَوِ الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ (٣٤)

“The good deed and the evil deed are not equal. Repel the evil deed with one which is better, then verily; he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as he was a close friend.” (Fussilat 41: 34)

By refusing to mirror anger or malice, the believer breaks the cycle of animosity. This proactive kindness has the power to transform a staunch enemy into a close friend (Waliyyun Hamim/وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ).

Allah acknowledges that this restraint is difficult, requiring a specific spiritual maturity:

وَمَا يُلْقِنَهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَمَا يُلْقِنَهَا إِلَّا ذُو حُظٍّ عَظِيمٍ (٣٥)

“But none is granted it except those who are patient - and none is granted it except the owner of the great fortune (of soul).” (41:35)

To respond to an insult with prayer or kindness is a sign of great fortune. It indicates a heart so rich in its connection to Allah that it no longer needs to defend its own ego. To protect this state, one must guard against the whispers that urge revenge:

وَأَمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْعٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ (٣٦)

“And if a whisper from the devil reaches you then seek refuge in Allah. Indeed. He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.” (Fussilat 41:36)

By seeking refuge, the believer pauses. They recognize that anger is a distraction from their mission, allowing them to return to a state of peace and continue inviting others through their conduct. Character is the "silent Dawah", it is the patient response to mistreatment that reaches the soul and transforms enemies into allies.

Conclusion

As we reflect on these ten jewels, a clear theme emerges: the inseparable link between the microcosm of the human heart and the macrocosm of the universe.

From the biological internal operating system that manages our sleep to the vast geological endowment that provides for billions of people, the twenty-fourth Juz reminds us that we are part of a meticulously managed divine system. Whether it is the subtle linguistic difference of a single letter describing the gates of Paradise, or the celestial support of the Throne-bearing angels, every verse invites us to move from a state of heedlessness to one of deep reflection (Tafakkur).

Ultimately, these jewels teach us that when we give Allah His true Qadr and approach Him with a heart of Ikhlas (Sincerity), the Spirit of the Command transforms our lives, leading us from darkness into light.

Jewels from the Twenty-Fifth Juz: From the Inner Cosmos of the Soul to the Collective Unity of the Ummah

(Fussilat 41:47 to Al-Jathiya 45:37)

Introduction

The twenty-fifth Juz of the Qur'an, comprising Surahs Fuṣṣilat, Ash-Shura, Az-Zukhruf, Ad-Dukhan, and Al-Jathiyah, offers a comprehensive architectural framework for the believer's life. It bridges the inner world of faith and consciousness with the external realities of family, society, and civilization.

Across these surahs, the Qur'an moves seamlessly from the linguistic depth of revelation, its capacity to unfold meaning across generations, to the practical ethics that govern human relationships and communal life. It addresses the individual heart, the structure of the family, the unity of the Ummah, and the trajectory of humanity toward its final return to Allah.

This chapter explores ten interconnected themes that speak directly to the enduring challenges of every age. It begins with the Qur'an as a dynamic and ever-unfolding miracle, examines the roots and remedies of division, and culminates in the realities of accountability and the signs that precede the Last Hour.

Through this journey, the Qur'an emerges not as a historical record, but as a living guide, a Shariah that provides a clear and enduring path for navigating the complexities of both this world and the Hereafter.

1. The Everlasting Miracle – Science and Revelation

Allah affirms that the miracle of Qur'an is not static, confined to a single era, but a living and dynamic miracle whose signs continue to unfold as human knowledge expands:

سُرِّيهِمْ ءَايَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ..... (٥٣)

“We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it (the Quran) is the truth....” (Fussilat 41: 53)

One of the most remarkable features of the Qur'an is its linguistic depth. Its verses communicate meaning at multiple levels simultaneously: they are accessible to the layperson, yet capable of revealing profound dimensions when examined through advancing human knowledge. As scientific understanding progresses, new layers of these verses become increasingly apparent, without exhausting their meaning. Consider the following examples:

The Expanding Universe: The Qur'an describes the nature of the cosmos in a manner that aligns with what modern cosmology has only recently discovered:

وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَيْنَاهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ (٤٧)

“We have built the heaven (universe) with might, and indeed We are expanding it.” (Al-Dhariyat 51:47)

Fluid Dynamics and Barriers: The meeting of distinct bodies of water, while maintaining their unique properties, is described with striking precision:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ هَذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ وَهَذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخًا وَحِجْرًا مَّحْجُورًا (٥٣)

“And He is the One who has released the two seas, one fresh and sweet and one salty and bitter; and He placed between them a barrier and a forbidding partition.” (Al-Furqan 25:53)

The Multilayered Earth and Heavens: The Qur'an points to a structured complexity in both the heavens and the earth:

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَمِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَتَنَزَّلُ الْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا

“Allah is the One Who created seven heavens and of the earth the like thereof (i.e. seven). His Command descends between them, that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah surrounds (comprehends) all things in (His) Knowledge.” (Al-Talaq 65:12)

The Motion of the Earth: While mountains appear static to human perception, the Quran alludes to their continuous motion, consistent with the rotation of the Earth:

وَتَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ صُنِعَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنفَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ... (٨٨)

“And you will see the mountains, thinking them still, while they pass as the passing of the clouds; (such is) the making of Allah, Who perfected all things” (Al-Naml 27:88)

These examples are not isolated observations; they illustrate a consistent pattern: the Qur'an speaks in a manner that transcends the scientific capacity of its first audience while remaining continuously relevant to later generations.

Thus, the miracle of the Qur'an is not limited to its initial impact upon the Arabs of the seventh century. It renews itself across time, inviting every generation to rediscover its signs in light of their own expanding horizons of knowledge.

While these correspondences are deeply meaningful, the harmony between revelation and observed reality should be seen not as forced alignment, but as an invitation to contemplation: one in which the advancement of knowledge becomes a means of deepening certainty in the truth of the Qur'an, rather than restricting its meaning.

2. Prohibition of Using Religion as a pretext for creating division

A central command of the Quran is the strict prohibition against using divine revelation as a tool for creating division among believers. This mandate was not unique to the Final Revelation; rather, it is a foundational principle shared across the missions of all the messengers of Allah, particularly the Ulul 'Azm (أولى العزم من الرسل) the most resolute messengers: Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa, Isa, and Muhammad (peace be upon them all).

شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ (١٣)

“He (Allah) has ordained for you the same religion which He ordained for Nuh (Noah), and that which We have revealed to you (O Muhammad), and that which We ordained for Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses) and Isa (Jesus) saying you should establish the religion and make no divisions in it.” (Ash-Shura 42:13)

This verse establishes a profound reality: the essence of Allah’s religion is one. Therefore, no fundamental division should exist among those who follow His guidance. Yet, history, and present reality, demonstrates the opposite: divisions persist not only between followers of different prophets, but even among those who claim allegiance to the same messenger.

The Qur’an identifies the true roots of such division, not ignorance, but moral and social corruption. It explicitly states that fragmentation occurs even after knowledge has been made clear:

وَمَا تَفَرَّقُوا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَعَثْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ (١٤)

“And they did not divide till after knowledge had come to them, through transgression between themselves.” (Ash-Shura 42:14)

Thus, division is not primarily an intellectual failure, it is a moral one. The Qur’an attributes it to baghy (بغي): transgression, rivalry, and the pursuit of dominance. This manifests in several recurring patterns:

- **Claims of Superiority:** One group asserting exclusive salvation or inherent superiority over others.
- **Exploitation by Leaders:** Corrupt or self-serving leaders weaponizing religion to secure wealth, influence, or political power.
- **Blind Following:** The manipulation of sincere but uninformed followers, leading them to sacrifice their lives, resources, and loyalty for causes that ultimately serve human agendas rather than divine truth.

Despite this, the Qur’an also affirms a critical principle: Allah preserves human freedom of choice. He does not immediately punish those who create division or deviate from guidance. Instead, His decree allows for a delay in judgment:

...وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِنْ رَبِّكَ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى لَّفُضِيَٰ بَيْنَهُمْ

“...And had it not been for a Word that went forth before from your Lord for an appointed term, the matter would have been settled between them.” (Ash-Shura 42:14)

This delay is itself a manifestation of divine mercy. If accountability were immediate, humanity would not withstand its consequences. Instead, the “appointed term” represents a window of opportunity, extending throughout one’s life, for reflection, correction, repentance, and ultimately, a return to unity.

In this light, the Qur’anic call is not merely to avoid division in form, but to purify the inner motives that give rise to it. True unity is not achieved through uniformity of labels, but through sincerity in seeking the truth and submission to Allah alone.

Division is not a sign of strength; it is a deviation from revelation. And unity is not achieved by claiming the truth, but by humbly submitting to it.

3. The Key Means to Eliminate Division

To dismantle the structures of division, believers must adopt specific ethical principles and behaviors designed to preserve unity and protect the integrity of the community.

The foremost safeguard against division is a firm commitment to revelation over the shifting whims (ahwa') of human desire. Those who reject truth often do so not from lack of knowledge, but because they elevate their desires to the status of ultimate authority, effectively treating them as their "god."

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِ وَغَشَّىٰ عَلَيْهِ بَصَرَهُ غِشَاوَةً
فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ (٢٣)

“Have you seen the one who takes his desire as his god, and Allah has let him go astray knowingly, and sealing his hearing and his heart, and placing a veil over his sight? Who then can guide him after Allah? Will you not then reflect?” (Al-Jathiya 45:23)

When desire becomes the source of guidance, the heart becomes sealed. To counter this, Allah provides a clear and comprehensive roadmap:

فَلِذَٰلِكَ فَادْعُ وَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَقُلْ ءَامَنْتُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ كِتَابِهِ وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَعْدِلَ
بَيْنَكُمْ اللَّهُ ... (١٥)

“So, to this you must invite, and remain steadfast as you are commanded, and do not follow their desires, and say: I believe in whatever Allah has revealed of the Book, and I am commanded to be just among you....” (Ash-Shura 42:15)

This verse outlines a fourfold framework for preserving unity:

- **Invite (ادْعُ)**: Continuously call people back to the essence of the faith, not to factions or personalities.
- **Remain Steadfast (استقم)**: Embody consistency in belief and action, becoming a model of principled conduct.
- **Reject Bias**: Resist being drawn into partisan loyalties driven by desire rather than truth.
- **Uphold Justice (لأعدل بينكم)**: Maintain fairness toward all, regardless of affiliation, ensuring that justice prevails over group interest.

In addition to these individual qualities, the Qur'an establishes a collective mechanism to manage differences: shura (mutual consultation).

وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ (٣٨)

“And those who respond to their Lord, establish prayer, conduct their affairs through mutual consultation, and spend from what We have provided them.” (Ash-Shura 42:38)

Shura functions as a preventive system: it allows ikhtilaf/اختلاف (differences) to be expressed, examined, and resolved before they escalate into conflict. It transforms disagreement from a source of division into a process of collective wisdom.

It is a common misconception that unity requires complete uniformity. The Qur'an corrects this by affirming that diversity itself is part of the divine design:

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَهُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً (٨)

“And if Allah had willed, He could have made them one (single) nation.” (Ash-Shura 42:8)

Since diversity is intentional, ikhtilaf (difference) is natural. The danger lies not in ikhtilaf itself, but in how it is managed.

To prevent ikhtilaf from devolving into destructive division, Allah establishes the ultimate principle of resolution:

وَمَا آخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَحُكْمُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ (١٠)

“And in whatsoever you differ, its judgment rests with Allah.” (Ash-Shura 42:10)

This principle places a necessary limit on human claims. No individual or group has the authority to declare themselves the exclusive possessors of truth or the sole inheritors of salvation. The ultimate judgment of people rests with Allah alone.

Recognizing this boundary curbs arrogance, neutralizes sectarian absolutism, and opens the door for coexistence grounded in humility and shared devotion.

Unity is not the absence of differences, it is the discipline of managing them with justice, humility, and submission to Allah.

4. Addressing Domestic Discord: Divine Decree in Family Life

A significant source of conflict and emotional strain within families arises from misconceptions surrounding childbirth, particularly when a couple is unable to conceive or when they are granted only daughters. In many societies, this burden is unjustly placed upon the wife, leading to tension, emotional harm, and even family breakdown.

The Qur'an decisively removes the foundation for such disputes by establishing that procreation and gender are matters of divine decree alone, completely beyond human control. Allah states

لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ، يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ، يَهَبُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ إِنثًا وَيَهَبُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ الذُّكُورَ (٤٩) أَوْ يُزَوِّجُهُمْ ذُكْرَانًا وَإِنثًا وَيَجْعَلُ مَن يَشَاءُ عَقِيمًا إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ (٥٠) ﴿٥٠﴾

“To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth; He creates what He wills. He grants to whom He wills females, and He grants to whom He wills males. (49) Or He grants both males and females, and He renders whom He wills barren. Indeed, He is All-Knowing, All-Powerful.” (Ash-Shura 42:49-50)

These verses outline four distinct outcomes of parenthood, forming a complete framework for understanding family circumstances:

1. **The Gift of Daughters:** Mentioned first in the verse, elevating the status of female children in a society that historically devalued them.
2. **The Gift of Sons:** Equally a manifestation of divine grace.
3. **The Gift of Both:** A balanced provision, reflecting divine generosity.
4. **The State of Barrenness:** Defined not as a failure or deficiency, but a deliberate decree from Al-Alim (the All-Knowing) and Al-Qadir (the All-Powerful).

By framing all possibilities as acts of divine will, the Qur'an removes any basis for blame, shame, or resentment between spouses.

To use these outcomes as a justification for conflict, whether through emotional abuse, social pressure, or even divorce, is, in reality, a rejection of divine wisdom. It transforms what Allah has defined as decree into a human accusation.

Instead, such situations are meant to cultivate higher spiritual qualities:

- Ṣabr (patience) in facing trials,
- Riḍa (contentment) with Allah's decree, and
- Mutual support within the family unit.

From a scientific perspective, this Qur'anic principle is further reinforced: the biological determination of a child's gender is linked to the chromosomal contribution of the father. Thus, the cultural practice of blaming the mother is not only theologically unfounded, but also scientifically incorrect.

When these truths are internalized, a major source of domestic tension is removed. In its place emerges a family environment grounded in acceptance, compassion, and shared submission to the will of Allah. Peace in the home begins when blame ends and faith in Allah's decree begins.

5. The Universality of Islam and the Centrality of Mecca

While the core message of Islam is consistent across all messengers, the Final Revelation is distinguished by its universal scope. Previous scriptures were directed to specific communities and nations, whereas the Qur'an is addressed to all of humanity. Allah states:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ فُورَانَا عَرَبِيًّا لِّتُنذِرَ أُمَّ الْقُرَىٰ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا وَتُنذِرَ يَوْمَ الْآجْمَعِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ فَرِيقٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَفَرِيقٌ فِي السَّعِيرِ (٧)

“Thus, We have revealed to you an Arabic Qur'an so that you may warn the Mother of the Towns (Makkah) and all those around it, and warn of the Day of Gathering, about which there is no doubt, when a group will be in Paradise and a group in the Blaz.” (Ash-Shura 42:7)

This verse identifies Makkah as the spiritual and geographical center of the final message, *Umm al-Qura* (the Mother of Towns). The expression “and all those around it” (وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا) extends beyond a local or regional scope. Classical and contemporary scholarships understand it as encompassing all of humanity. Thus, Makkah is not merely a city; it is the point from which divine guidance radiates to the entire world.

An essential feature of this universal message is its accessibility. The Qur'an describes itself as *'Arabiyyan* (عَرَبِيًّا), which signifies more than linguistic identity, it denotes clarity, precision, and intelligibility.

- **Arabi (عربي):** Derived from a root conveying clarity, expression, and articulation.
- **A'jami (أعجمي):** That which is unclear, indistinct, or difficult to comprehend.

By describing the Qur'an as *'Arabiyyan*, Allah emphasizes that the message has been made clear and accessible to human understanding, removing ambiguity and eliminating any excuse for ignorance.

Contemporary Application: The Unified Calendar

The designation of Makkah as *Umm al-Qura* carries practical implications for the global Muslim Ummah. Some scholars and contemporary jurists have drawn upon this concept to advocate for a unified Islamic calendar. They argue that since Makkah serves as the spiritual center of Islam, and the focal point of Hajj, particularly the Day of Arafah, its lunar observations could serve as a unifying reference for determining the beginning and end of Ramadan and the dates of the two Eids.

Such an approach seeks to translate the universality of Islam into lived unity, allowing the Ummah to fast, celebrate, and worship as a single body, transcending geographical divisions.

A universal message calls for a united response, and Makkah remains the heart that gathers the Ummah into one direction, one purpose, and one destiny.

6. The Grave Loss: The Reality of Divine Abandonment

The most precarious state a human being can reach is to be abandoned by Allah. When a person is left entirely to themselves, cut off from divine support, they lose their only true protector and guide.

وَمَنْ يُضَلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَتَرَى الظَّالِمِينَ لَمَّا رَأَوْا الْعَذَابَ يَقُولُونَ هَلْ إِلَى مَرَدٍّ مِنْ سَبِيلِ
“**And whoever Allah allows to stray, there is no protector for him after Him. And you will see the wrongdoers, when they see the punishment, saying: ‘Is there any way to return?’**” (Ash-Shura 42:44)

At first glance, this verse may give rise to a critical misunderstanding: that Allah arbitrarily withholds guidance from some people, effectively forcing them into misguidance. Such an interpretation contradicts the foundational Qur’anic principles of Divine Justice (Adl) and Mercy (Raḥmah).

In reality, Allah’s guidance is universally extended through two primary channels:

1. **Al-Fiṭrah (الفطرة)**: The innate, pure disposition embedded within every human being.
2. **The Messengers and Revelation**: External guidance that clarifies, confirms, and preserves the truth recognized by the fiṭrah.
- 3.

Just as Allah has established physical laws governing the universe, He has also established spiritual laws (*sunan*) governing human behavior and its consequences. Divine abandonment is not arbitrary, it is the final stage of a process in which a person persistently rejects truth, suppresses their fiṭrah, and turns away from revelation.

Thus, Allah does not force misguidance upon anyone. Rather, when individuals repeatedly choose falsehood, they become unfit for divine support that enables guidance to take root in the heart.

The Qur’an explicitly identifies categories of people whose consistent actions lead to the withdrawal of this special guidance:

- **The Wrongdoers (الظالمون – Al-Zalimin)**: Those who violate the rights of others and the truth.: (وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ) “Allah does not guide the unjust/wrongdoers”. (Al-Baqarah 2: 258), Al-Imran 3:86, Al-Ma’ida 5:51, Al-An’am 6:144, Al-

Tawbah 9:19, Al-Tubah 9:19, 109, Al-Qasas 28:50, Al-Ahqaf 46:10, Al-Saf 61:7, Al-Jumu'ah 62:5).

- **The Rebellious (الفاسيقون – Al-Fasiqin)**, Those who defiantly break their covenant with Allah: (وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ) (All does not guide the rebellious). (Al-Ma'idah 5:108; At-Tawbah 9:24, 80; As-Saf 61:5; Al-Munafiqun 63:6)
- **The Disbelievers (الكافرون – Al-Kafiroun)**, Those who actively cover up the truth: (وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ) “Allah does not guide the disbelievers/those who reject faith”. Al-Baqarah 2:264; At-Tawbah 9:37; An-Nahl 16:107; Al-Ma'idah 5:67)
- **The Betrayers (الخاننون – Al-Kha'inoun)**, Those who act with treachery and deceit. (وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي كَيْدَ الْخَائِنِينَ) “Indeed, Allah does not guide the scheme of the betrayers.” (Yusuf 12:52)
- **The Liars and Transgressors (كذّاب مسرف - Kadhib, Musrif)**, those who live in falsehood and excess. (إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ كَذَّابٌ) “Indeed, Allah does not guide the extravagant, the liar.” (Ghafir 40:28)

These categories are not defined by isolated mistakes, but by persistent patterns of behavior. The door of repentance remains open, but when rejection becomes habitual and deliberate, the consequence is the gradual withdrawal of divine support. In this light, “misguidance” is not imposed, it is the natural outcome of sustained resistance to guidance.

The greatest loss is not ignorance but being left without Allah's guidance after knowing the truth.

7. Firmness on the Straight Path and the Reality of Power

Maintaining steadfastness (istiqamah) is a fundamental requirement for those who carry the message of the Qur'an. Consistency in belief and character is what gives credibility to that message in the eyes of others. Allah commands the Prophet (PBUH), and by extension, all believers to hold firmly to revelation, regardless of external pressure:

فَأَسْتَمْسِكْ بِالَّذِي أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ إِنَّكَ عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ (٤٣) وَإِنَّهُ لَذِكْرٌ لَّكَ وَلِقَوْمِكَ وَسَوْفَ تُسْأَلُونَ (٤٤)
“So, hold firmly to that which is revealed to you. Indeed, you are on the Straight Path. (43) And indeed, this (the Quran) is a reminder for you and your people and all of you will be questioned (about it).” (Az-Zukhuruf 43:43:44)

This dhikr (reminder) is both an honor and a responsibility. Being “questioned” implies that belief alone is insufficient; the message must be embodied in conduct, especially in interactions with those who oppose or disagree.

Accordingly, when confronted with hostility or false arguments, the Qur'anic response is not retaliation, but dignity and restraint:

فَأَصْفَحْ عَنْهُمْ وَقُلْ سَلَامٌ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ (٨٩)

“So, forgive them and say: Salam (peace)! For they will come to know (the result of their attitude).” (Az-Zukhuruf 43:89)

Forgiveness coupled with peaceful disengagement preserves the dignity of the believer and prevents conflict from descending into ego-driven confrontation. It also leaves space for reflection, free from the noise of hostility.

The Reality of Perception and Power

While believers are instructed not to be attracted by materialism, the Qur'anic worldview does not ignore sociological realities. When the followers of truth appear weak, divided, or impoverished, it can create a psychological barrier that prevents others from embracing the message.

People are often influenced not only by truth itself, but by the condition of those who claim to uphold it. This reality is illustrated in the encounter between the Prophet (PBUH) and Oday ibn Hatim (عدي بن حاتم), a tribal leader who hesitated to accept Islam due to three perceived weaknesses: the poverty of the Muslims, their insecurity and constant exposure to threats, and their lack of political power and authority.

The Prophet (PBUH) addressed each concern with clarity and prophetic certainty:

لعلك يا عدي إنما يمنعك من دخول في هذا الدين ما ترى من حاجتهم ، فوالله ليوشكن المال أن يفيض فيهم حتى لا يوجد من يأخذه ؛ ولعلك إنما يمنعك من دخول فيه ما ترى من كثرة عدوهم وقلة عددهم ، فوالله ليوشكن أن تسمع بالمرأة تخرج من القادسية على بعيرها (حتى) تزور هذا البيت ، لا تخاف ؛ ولعلك إنما يمنعك من دخول فيه أنك ترى أن الملك والسلطان في غيرهم ، وايم الله ليوشكن أن تسمع بالقصور البيض من أرض بابل قد فتحت عليهم ؛ قال : فأسلمت. فكان عدي يقول : مضت اثنتان ، وبقيت الثالثة ، والله لتكونن ، قد رأيت القصور البيض من أرض بابل قد فتحت عليهم ، وقد رأيت المرأة تخرج من القادسية على بعيرها ولا تخاف حتى تحج هذا البيت ، وايم الله لتكونن الثالثة ، ليفيض المال حتى لا يوجد من يأخذه]]. المحدث : ابن كثير | المصدر : البداية والنهاية الصفحة أو الرقم : 57/5 التخریج : أخرجه ابن سعد في ((الطبقات الكبرى - متمع الصحابة)) (2 / 642) والطبراني في ((المعجم الأوسط)) (6614) بنحوه، والترمذي (2953) وأحمد (18260)

"O Adiy, perhaps what prevents you from entering this religion is what you see of their poverty. By Allah, wealth will soon become abundant among them until no one remains to accept it. And perhaps what prevents you is what you see of their many enemies and their small number. By Allah, you will soon hear of a woman traveling from al-Qadisiyyah to this House fearing none but Allah. And perhaps what prevents you is that you see power and authority in the hands of others. By Allah, you will soon hear of the white palaces of Babylon being opened to them." (Adiy later testified that he witnessed the fulfillment of the first two promises and had absolute certainty in the third.) [Ibn Kathir, Al-Bidaya wal-Nihaya, 5:57; also narrated by Al-Tirmidhi (2953) and Ahmad (18260)]

These promises establish a recurring principle: material weakness can obscure the visibility of truth, and strength grounded in guidance removes barriers to belief.

Thus, strengthening the socioeconomic condition of the Muslim community is not a pursuit of worldly excess, but a means of enabling the truth to be seen without distortion. Neglecting resources does not eliminate their influence; it simply allows them to be used by others, often against the very values Islam seeks to uphold.

Steadfastness preserves the truth within, but strength allows the truth to be seen.

8. The Major Signs: Divine Warnings and Human Preparedness

The Qur'an warns that the approach of the Last Hour will be marked by profound and unmistakable events, signs that serve both as warnings and as decisive tests for humanity. Among these is the emergence of a visible smoke (Dukhan Mubin), described as a phenomenon that will affect all people:

بَلْ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ يَلْعَبُونَ (٩) فَأَرْتَقِبْ يَوْمَ تَأْتِي السَّمَاءُ بِدُحَانٍ مُّبِينٍ (١٠) يَغْشَى النَّاسَ هَذَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (١١)
“Yet, they are in doubt, playing. (9) So, watch for the Day when the sky will bring visible smoke. (10) that will envelop the people; this is a painful punishment.” (Al-Dukhan 44:9-11)

Islamic tradition speaks of major signs (*Al-Alamat al-Kubra*) that precede the Hour. While the Hadith literature elaborates on several of these signs—such as the Dajjal and the rising of the sun from the west, the Qur'an explicitly highlights key phenomena, including:

- The Smoke (الدخان)
- The Beast of the Earth (دابة الأرض)
- Gog and Magog (ياجوج ومأجوج)

These are not abstract symbols; they are presented as real events with profound implications for human existence.

A common misconception is that the signs of the Hour are to be awaited passively. However, a deeper Qur'anic reading suggests that they are meant to awaken preparedness, both spiritually and materially.

If we consider scholarly interpretations that understand the “smoke” as a widespread, enveloping phenomenon, it raises critical questions for Muslims:

- **Agricultural Resilience:** If sunlight were significantly obstructed, traditional agriculture would be disrupted. This calls for the development of alternative systems, such as controlled-environment agriculture and hydroponics, to ensure the preservation of life.

- **Technological Contingency:** A global atmospheric disruption could affect communication systems, satellites, and digital infrastructure. Communities must consider resilient, decentralized, or non-digital systems as contingencies.
- **Civilizational Ethics:** The Qur'an repeatedly links destruction to moral corruption, dhulm (injustice), baghy (transgression), and fasad (corruption on earth). These signs may thus reflect not only physical disruption, but the culmination of a deeper ethical crisis.

The importance of engaging with the future is rooted in the famous Hadith of Jibril. When Jibril (peace be upon him) questioned the Prophet (PBUH), the discussion encompassed four essential dimensions of the Din:

- **Islam:** The outward acts of worship and law
- **Iman:** The core beliefs
- **Ihsan:** Spiritual excellence and awareness of Allah
- **As-Sa'ah (the Hour):** Its reality and its signs

The inclusion of the Hour and its signs within this foundational framework indicates that awareness of the future is not peripheral, it is integral to the Islamic worldview.

However, this awareness is not about predicting when events will occur. It is about preparing for how to respond: maintaining faith, stability, and ethical integrity in times of profound disruption.

The signs of the Hour are not given to alarm us, but to prepare us.

9. Accountability: The Personal and Collective Record

Allah warns those who reject His message of the undeniable reality they will face when the Hour is established. This judgment is not based on assumption or hearsay, but on a precise and undeniable record of reality itself.

وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُومِئِدُ يَحْسَرُ الْمُبْطِلُونَ (٢٧) وَتَرَى كُلَّ أُمَّةٍ جَائِيَةً كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ
تُدْعَى إِلَى كِتَابِهَا الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (٢٨) هَذَا كِتَابُنَا يَنْطِقُ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّا كُنَّا نَسْتَنسِخُ مَا كُنْتُمْ
تَعْمَلُونَ (٢٩)

To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and the Day when the Hour will take place. On that Day the followers of falsehood will lose. (27) And you will see every nation kneeling (in anticipation). Every nation will be called to its record: "This Day you will be recompensed for all what you used to do. (28) "This is Our record that speaks about you in all truth: Indeed, We were having transcribed whatever you used to do." (Al-Jathiya 45:27-29)

A profound linguistic nuance exists in the word *nastansikh* (نَسْتَنسِخُ). While often translated as "We record" or "We transcribe," the root in Arabic conveys the meaning of producing

an exact copy or replica. This suggests that the Book of Deeds is not merely a written log, but a complete and faithful reproduction of one's actions, leaving no room for denial or reinterpretation. It is as if reality itself is preserved and presented back to the individual with absolute precision.

Beyond the Individual: The Record of the Nation

While personal accountability is central to Islamic belief, these verses introduce a second dimension: collective accountability. The Qur'an portrays entire nations (*umam*) as being called to their records:

"Every nation will be called to its book..." This raises a critical question: Are individuals accountable not only for their private deeds, but also for the collective actions of the society they are part of? This perspective suggests multiple layers of responsibility:

- **Systemic Injustice:** To what extent does an individual share responsibility for the ظلم (injustice), corruption, or aggression carried out by their society?
- **The Silent Majority:** When a community collectively abandons divine guidance, silence or passive acceptance may itself become a form of participation.

Thus, accountability extends beyond the individual (*al-fard*) to the community (*al-ummah*). This dual accountability can be understood through two levels of evaluation:

- **Individual Assessment:** Based on one's personal actions, intentions, and efforts.
- **Collective Assessment:** Based on the outcomes of the group or society one contributes to.

Even if an individual fulfills their personal responsibilities, they may still bear a share in collective failure if they enabled, ignored, or did not strive to correct systemic wrongdoing. Conversely, collective success elevates all who contributed to it.

The Al-Fatihah Principle: Speaking as "We"

This collective identity is embedded in the very foundation of daily worship. In every unit of prayer, the believer recites:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

"You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help." (Al-Fatiha 1:5)

The use of the plural "we" is not incidental, it reflects the reality that the believer is part of a larger Ummah. Guidance is sought collectively, and responsibility is shared collectively. If we ask for guidance as a community, then deviation as a community also carries shared consequences.

Following the presentation of records, humanity will be divided based on its response to the truth:

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُدْخِلُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْمُبِينُ (٣٠) وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَفَلَمْ تَكُنْ ءَايَاتِي تُنزلُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ وَكُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِينَ (٣١)

“As for those who believed and did righteous deeds, their Lord will admit them to His mercy. That is the evident triumph. (30) But as for those who disbelieved (it will be said to them): Were My revelations not recited to you? But you showed arrogance and were a guilty people.” (Al-Jathiya 45:30-31)

Our record is not only what we did alone, but what we allowed to be done around us.

10. True Adornment vs. The Glitter

Surat Az-Zukhruf, named after "gold adornments" or "glitter", draws a powerful contrast between the fleeting luxuries of this world and the enduring honors of the Hereafter.

To demonstrate how insignificant worldly wealth is in the sight of Allah, He presents a striking hypothetical scenario:

وَلَوْلَا أَن يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً لَّجَعَلْنَا لِمَن يَكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ لِبُيُوتِهِمْ سُفُفًا مِّن فِضَّةٍ وَمَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ (٣٣) وَلِبُيُوتِهِمْ أَبْوَابًا وَسُرُورًا عَلَيْهَا يُتَّكَبُونَ (٣٤) وَرُحُرُفًا وَإِن كُلُّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمَّا مَتَّعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ (٣٥)

“Had it not been that mankind would become one community (of disbelievers), We would have provided for those who disbelieve in Al-Rahman, silver roofs for their houses, and (silver) stairs upon which they ascend, (33) And also for their houses, doors (of silver), and couches (of silver) on which they could recline, (34) And adornments of gold. Yet all this is nothing but an enjoyment of this worldly life. And the Hereafter with your Lord is (only) for the righteous.” (Az-Zukhruf 43:33-35)

This verse reveals a profound reality: wealth itself is not a sign of divine favor. In fact, Allah indicates that He could have granted overwhelming material luxury to those who reject Him, were it not for the consequence that humanity would be collectively misled.

Thus, the current distribution of wealth is not arbitrary; it is a form of divine wisdom and protection. By limiting the visible dominance of material excess, Allah shields the hearts of believers from a trial that could overwhelm their faith.

Worldly wealth, no matter how dazzling, is described as mata' (متاع): a temporary utility, not a lasting possession.

The Qur'an then redirects the believer's gaze from the silver and gold of this world to the true adornment of the Hereafter:

أَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنْتُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ (٧٠) يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِصِحَافٍ مِّنْ ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ وَفِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِيهِ
الْأَنْفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ الْأَعْيُنُ وَأَنْتُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (٧١) وَتِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (٧٢)

“Enter Paradise, you and your spouses, in joy. (70) Circulated among them will be trays and cups of gold, and therein is whatever the souls desire and the eyes delight in, and you will abide therein eternally. (71) This is the Paradise which you have been made to inherit because of what you used to do. (Az-Zukhuruf 43:70-72)

Here, gold is no longer a test; it becomes an honor. What was once a distraction in the dunya becomes a reward in the akhirah. Unlike worldly enjoyment, which is often followed by anxiety, competition, or loss, the pleasure of the Hereafter is complete, pure, and eternal: fulfilling both the soul and the senses without deficiency or end.

A Message for the Modern Believer

In an age defined by material display and constant comparison, the Qur'an calls the believer to see beyond the zukhruf: the glitter. No matter how advanced or abundant worldly wealth becomes, it remains finite and temporary. The true investment is not in what is possessed, but in what is preserved for the Hereafter.

The believer is thus invited to reframe life itself: not as a race for accumulation, but as a purposeful journey of deeds whose returns are eternal.

Do not be dazzled by what glitters; be guided by what endures

Conclusion

The journey through Juz 25 leads to a unifying and transformative realization: every dimension of human existence, personal, familial, societal, and global, operates within the framework of Sunan Allah (divine laws).

We have seen that the greatest threat to human success is not ignorance, but the elevation of desire (hawa) above revelation. From this deviation emerge division, injustice, and the illusion of permanence in what is merely temporary, the zukhruf of worldly life.

In contrast, the Qur'an calls the believer to a higher path:

- To be future-aware, preparing not only for the certainty of the Hour, but for the conditions that precede it.
- To be socially responsible, recognizing that accountability extends beyond the individual to the collective.
- To be spiritually steadfast, anchoring the heart in what endures rather than what dazzles.

Ultimately, this Juz teaches that success lies in aligning oneself with divine guidance, in thought, in action, and in intention. May these reflections serve not merely as knowledge, but as direction: guiding us away from the grave loss of divine abandonment and toward the evident triumph of Allah's mercy.

Jewels from the Twenty Sixth Juz: From Individual Excellence to Global Stewardship

(Al-Ahqaf 46:1 to Adh-Dhariyat 51:30)

Introduction

The twenty-sixth Juz of the Qur'an marks a profound transition in the believer's journey: from the intimate sphere of the family to the expansive responsibility toward society and humanity at large. It begins by grounding the individual in the fundamental duty of honoring one's parents, then gradually broadens to define ethical conduct within the community and ultimately situates the believer as a witness to all of humanity.

Within these jewels, we explore the multifaceted nature of Taqwa, not as a static attribute, but as a dynamic and transformative force. It shapes how we engage with information, how we interact with others, how we manage wealth, and how we understand our purpose in life.

Through the guidance of Surah Al-Ahqaf, Surah Muhammad, Surah Al-Fath, Surah Al-Hujurat, Surah Qaf, and Surah Adh-Dhariyat, this Juz presents a comprehensive blueprint for a balanced life: one that harmonizes spiritual humility with intellectual clarity, and inner devotion with outward excellence.

1. The Obligation of Children towards their Parents

The Qur'an places immense emphasis on the obligation of children to honor and respect their parents, regardless of their parents' faith. In Surah Al-Ahqaf, Allah highlights a profound milestone: the age of forty. This stage represents a moment of deep reflection, when an individual becomes fully aware of the sacrifices made by their parents, especially the mother, who endured hardship in pregnancy, childbirth, and nursing.

A person's righteousness is reflected in their recognition of these parental rights and in their consistent supplication for them. In return, Allah promises reward for both the children and their parents.

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا وَحَمَلُهُ وَفِصْلُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ (١٥)

"And We have commanded man to show excellence to his parents. His mother carried him with hardship and gave birth to him with hardship, and his gestation and weaning period is thirty months. When he reached maturity and reached forty years, he said, 'My Lord, enable me to be grateful for Your favor which You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and that I do righteous deeds that

please You, and make my offspring righteous. Indeed, I have repented to You, and indeed, I am of the Muslims." (Al-Ahqaf 46:15)

The age of forty is thus presented as the peak of intellectual and spiritual maturity. At this stage, a person should fully recognize their lifelong responsibilities, especially toward their parents. As a reward for fulfilling this duty, Allah declares His acceptance of such individuals:

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ نَنْقَبِلُ عَنْهُمْ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَنَتَجَاوَزُ عَنْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ فِي أَصْحَابِ الْجَنَّةِ وَعَدَّ الصَّادِقِ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ (١٦)

"Those are the ones from whom We will accept the best of what they did and overlook their misdeeds, [being] among the companions of Paradise. That is the promise of truth which they were promised." (Al-Ahqaf 46:16)

The duty of Birr (goodness and kindness) towards parents does not end with their death. A man once asked Prophet Muhammad (PBUH):

يا رسول الله هل بقي عليّ شيء من برّ والديّ بعد موتهما ؟

"O Messenger of Allah, is there any act of goodness remaining that I owe my parents after their death?"

The Prophet (PBUH) replied, *"Yes, four things:*

نعم ، أربعة أشياء ، أن تدعوّ لهما كل يوم خمس مرات ، رب اغفر لي ولوالديّ ، رب ارحمهما كما ربّيتني صغيراً وأن تصل صديقهما ، وأن تنفذ عهدهما ، وأن تصل الرّحم التي لم يكن لها صلة إلا بهما ، فهذا الذي بقي عليك من برّهما بعد موتهما

- 1) *Supplication: Pray for them five times every day, saying: "My Lord, forgive me and my parents. My Lord, have mercy on them as they raised me when I was young."*
- 2) *Social Ties: Maintain relationships with their friends.*
- 3) *Legacy: Fulfill their promises and legal testaments.*
- 4) *Kinship: Uphold ties with family members who were only connected to you through them.*

This is what remains of your duty to honor them after their death. (Ahmad, Abu Dawood & Ibn Majah)

2. The Quran: A Revelation for Both Humans and Jinn

The Qur'an is a divine message addressed not only to humanity but also to the jinn. Both realms share the responsibility of receiving this guidance, internalizing it, and conveying it to their respective communities. In Surah Al-Ahqaf, Allah records the profound reaction of a group of jinn when they first heard the recitation of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH):

وَأَذْهَبْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوا أَنصِتُوا فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ وَلَّوْا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِمْ مُّذَرِّينَ (٢٩)

“And (remember) when We sent towards you a group of the jinn, listening to the Quran, when they stood in its presence, they said: "Listen in silence!" And when it was finished, they returned to their people, as Warners. (Al-Ahqaf 46:29)

The response of the jinn represents a model of ideal engagement with revelation. They listened with complete attentiveness, observed proper etiquette during recitation, and upon its completion immediately assumed the role of conveyers of the message.

قَالُوا يَنْفَوْمَنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَابًا أُنزِلَ مِن بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِي إِلَىٰ الْحَقِّ وَإِلَىٰ طَرِيقٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ (٣٠) يَنْفَوْمَنَا أَجِيبُوا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَآمِنُوا بِهِ، يَعْفِرْ لَكُمْ مِّنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُجِرْكُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ (٣١)

“They said: " O our people! Indeed, we have heard a Book sent down after Musa, confirming what came before it. It guides to the truth and to a straight path. O our people! Respond to the caller of Allah and believe in him; He will forgive you of your sins and protect you from a painful punishment.” (Al-Ahqaf 46:30-31)

Their words reflect both immediate conviction and a clear understanding of their responsibility to call others, demonstrating that true reception of revelation must lead to action and transmission.

The statements made by the Jinn highlight two profound theological points:

1. **The Nature of Forgiveness:** Their statement: “He will forgive you of your sins” (يَعْفِرْ لَكُمْ مِّنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ) employs the preposition min (من), which suggests partiality rather than totality. This linguistic nuance has been noted by scholars to indicate that while Allah forgives sins related to His own rights through sincere repentance, violations involving the rights of others require restitution, reconciliation, or compensation. Thus, divine forgiveness operates within a framework of both mercy and justice.
2. **The Absolute Sovereignty of Allah:** The jinn further recognized that no being could escape the dominion of Allah. Power, intellect, and status offer no ultimate protection. Even the strongest individual may be rendered helpless by something as subtle as a microscopic clot. This realization reflects a deep awareness of human vulnerability and affirms that there is no refuge or protector except Allah.

Reflection on the Mention of Musa (Moses)

A striking feature of their statement is their reference to the Qur’an as a revelation sent after Musa, without mentioning Isa ibn Maryam, despite his chronological position between Musa and Muhammad (peace be upon them all).

This invites a deeper reflection on the nature of revelation. The Qur’an frequently describes what was given to Musa as “Al-Kitab” (The Book), a comprehensive legal and

societal framework. In contrast, what was given to Isa is often described as “Al-Bayyinat” (clear proofs or evidences):

وَعَاتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ

and We gave Jesus, son of Mary, clear proofs ...” (Baqarah 2:87, 253)

This distinction may suggest that the Torah and the Qur’an share a structural role as complete legislative systems (Kutub), whereas the Injil is presented more as a confirmation, spiritual refinement, and moral illumination.

Thus, the jinn’s direct linkage of the Qur’an to the Torah, bypassing mention of the Injil, may reflect an awareness of this structural continuity between the two “Books.” It highlights a continuity of comprehensive guidance, governance, and law, inviting deeper exploration into how different forms of revelation function within the divine framework.

3. The Divine Law for Victory and Conflict

Surah Muhammad establishes a clear divine framework governing conduct during and after conflict. It outlines not only the ethics of engagement but also the treatment of prisoners of war, while defining a fundamental principle that may be described as the Law of Reciprocity in divine support.

The Qur’an provides explicit guidance on how to deal with adversaries once the intensity of battle subsides and victory is secured:

فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمْ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَضَرْبِ الرِّقَابِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَثْبَثْتُمُوهُمْ فَشُدُّوا الْوَتَاقَ فَإِمَّا مَثًّا بَعْدُ وَإِمَّا فِدَاءً حَتَّىٰ تَضَعَ
الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ... (٤)

“When you meet those who disbelieve [in battle], strike [their] necks until, when you have subdued them, then secure their bonds; thereafter, either [grant them] favor or ransom [them] until the war lays down its burdens...” (Muhammad 47:4)

This verse establishes two primary approaches for handling prisoners of war:

1. **Grace (Mannan):** Releasing them as an act of goodwill and mercy.
2. **Ransom (Fida):** Releasing them in exchange for compensation, including the return of Muslim prisoners.

It is significant that the verse explicitly limits the options to these two outcomes. The absence of enslavement as a stated option in this foundational directive invites careful reflection. While later juristic discussions incorporated prevailing historical norms and reciprocal practices between competing empires, the Qur’anic text itself emphasizes resolution through mercy or negotiated release.

The Law of Reciprocity

Allah establishes a clear and profound condition for receiving divine support:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُذَبِّبْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ (٧)

“O you who have believed, if you support Allah, He will support you and make your footing firm.” (Muhammad 47:7)

Although Allah is absolutely Self-Sufficient and in no need of assistance, “supporting Allah” signifies actively upholding His cause on earth. This responsibility is manifested in two central dimensions:

- **Conveying the Message:** Delivering the truth of Tawheed to humanity with clarity and sincerity.
- **Establishing Justice:** Striving to ensure that fairness, equity, and divine guidance govern human interactions.

The essence of this mission is powerfully captured in the statement of the companion Rib'i ibn Amer (ربيعي بن عامر) during his encounter with Rostam, the commander of the Persian forces. When questioned about the purpose of the Muslim campaign, he replied:

الله ابتعثنا لنخرج من شاء من عبادة العباد إلى عبادة الله، ومن ضيق الدنيا إلى سعة الآخرة ومن جور الأديان إلى عدل الإسلام

“Allah has sent us to bring forth whomever He wills from the worship of men to the worship of Allah, from the narrowness of this world to the vastness of the Hereafter, and from the injustice of (man-made) religions to the justice of Islam.”

Despite possessing absolute power to eliminate oppression instantly, Allah has ordained that believers engage in struggle. This is not due to necessity, but as a form of trial, a means to test sincerity, commitment, patience, and moral integrity.

Through this framework, conflict is not merely a physical encounter but a transformative process. It distinguishes between those who merely profess belief and those who actively uphold it, demonstrating that victory is not granted solely through strength, but through alignment with divine purpose.

4. Preservation Through Charity

Surah Muhammad concludes with a solemn warning to the believers against miserliness. The message is clear: if they withhold their wealth and efforts in the cause of Allah, He is not in need of them. He is fully capable of replacing them with others who possess greater sincerity and readiness to sacrifice.

One of the primary means through which Allah tests the sincerity of faith is wealth. For many, financial security represents the ultimate attachment, and the heart inevitably inclines toward what it treasures most. For this reason, the institution of Zakat, as one of the pillars of Islam, transforms financial sacrifice into a foundational expression of faith.

When a person is presented with an opportunity to give yet withholds, the loss is not to the cause of Allah, but to the individual themselves. Allah states:

هَآءَنتُمْ هَآؤِلَآءِ تُدْعَوْنَ لِتُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ فَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يَبْخُلُ وَمَنْ يَبْخُلْ فَإِنَّمَا يَبْخُلْ عَن نَّفْسِهِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ
الْغَنِيُّ وَأَنتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ وَإِن تَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُونُوا أَمْثَلَكُمْ (٣٨)

“Here you are, being invited to spend in the way of Allah; yet among you are those who are miserly. And whoever is miserly is only miserly toward himself. Allah is the Rich, while you are the poor. And if you turn away, He will replace you with another people; then they will not be the likes of you “(Muhammad 47:38)

This verse naturally caused concern among the companions, who asked, “O Messenger of Allah, who are these people Allah mentioned, those who would replace us if we turned away?”

At that moment, Salman al-Farisi (RA) was sitting beside the Prophet (PBUH). The Prophet (PBUH) struck Salman’s thigh and said:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أ قَالَ قَالَ نَاسٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَا رَسُولَ اللّٰهِ مَنْ هَآؤِلَآءِ الَّذِينَ
ذَكَرَ اللّٰهُ إِن تَوَلَّيْنَا اسْتُبْدِلُوا بِنَا ثُمَّ لَمْ يَكُونُوا أَمْثَلَنَا قَالَ وَكَانَ سَلْمَانَ يَجْتَبِ رَسُولَ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
قَالَ فَضَرَبَ رَسُولُ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَخَذَ سَلْمَانَ قَالَ " هَذَا وَأَصْحَابُهُ وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَوْ كَانَ
الْإِيمَانُ مَنُوطًا بِالثَّرَيَّا لَتَنَاوَلَهُ رِجَالٌ مِنْ فَارِسَ " .{أخرجه الترمذي (3261)

“This one and his people. By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, if faith were suspended near the Pleiades (the highest star), men from among these people would surely attain it.” (Al-Tirmidhi)

The reference to the people of Persia, the people of Salman, highlights a foundational Islamic principle: faith is not determined by lineage, ethnicity, or historical proximity, but by sincerity, striving, and receptivity to truth.

The preservation of faith is thus entrusted not to a specific group, but to those who value it, uphold it, and are willing to sacrifice for it. Whenever a community fails in this responsibility, Allah replaces them with others who will carry the trust with greater integrity.

This passage establishes a direct connection between charity and civilizational continuity. Financial sacrifice is not merely an act of personal piety; it is a mechanism through which the mission of faith is sustained across generations. Miserliness, therefore, is not only a moral deficiency, but also a threat to the continuity of divine guidance within a community.

Note: Because this Hadith touches upon the excellence of a specific group, it is important to approach it with scholarly care to ensure proper contextualization and guards against interpretations influenced by modern ethnic or political biases.

5. The Unique Traits of Believers

Surah Al-Fath concludes by defining the essential characteristics of true believers. These traits are not presented in abstraction; rather, they are a direct extension of the character of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and are embodied by those who accompanied him.

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا لِّسِيَمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِّنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ذَٰلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ سُوقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيغِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا (٢٩)

“Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and those with him are forceful against the disbelievers, merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating [in prayer], seeking bounty from Allah and [His] pleasure. Their mark is on their faces from the trace of prostration. That is their description in the Torah. And their description in the Gospel is as a plant which produces its offshoots and strengthens them so they grow firm and stand upon their stalks, delighting the sowers, so that Allah enrages the disbelievers with them. Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds among them forgiveness and a great reward.” (Al-Fath 48:29)

This verse identifies several defining qualities of the Prophet’s companions, and, by extension, the model for all believers:

1. **Emotional Intelligence and Moral Balance:** They possess complementary traits of firmness and mercy. They are resolute in the face of opposition to truth, yet deeply compassionate and gentle with one another. Their distinction lies not merely in possessing these traits, but in applying each in its proper context in a manner that pleases Allah.
2. **Spiritual Marks (The Torah Description):** Their “likeness in the Torah” emphasizes their deep devotion to worship. The “mark” on their faces is not limited to a physical trace, but reflects an inner radiance (*nur*), a manifestation of humility, sincerity, and constant prostration before Allah.
3. **Collective Growth and Strength (The Gospel Description):** Their “likeness in the Gospel” portrays them as a living organism: growing, strengthening, and stabilizing over time. What began as a small group developed into a cohesive and resilient community. Like a seed that matures into a firm plant, they achieved both numerical growth and structural strength, becoming a source of stability and

a force that delights those who "sowed" the message and frustrates those who opposed it. This imagery points to the material success and societal stability they achieved.

It is significant that the Qur'an confirms descriptions found in previous scriptures, anchoring the final message in a long line of revelation:

- **The Torah Connection:** The concept of a "mark" or distinguishing sign of the righteous appears in passages such as Ezekiel 9:4, where a mark is placed upon the foreheads of the faithful. Similarly, Exodus 34:29–30 describes the radiance of Musa after his communion with the Divine, paralleling the Qur'anic notion of spiritual mark manifesting outwardly.
- **The Gospel Connection:** The imagery of a growing and strengthening plant closely aligns with the parables attributed to Isa ibn Maryam, such as the Parable of the Growing Seed (Mark 4:26–28) and the Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31–32). These parables describe a process where something small evolves into a stable and impactful structure, mirroring the Qur'anic depiction of the believers.

Reflections on the Dual Likenesses

The dual reference, to the Torah and the Gospel, presents a comprehensive model of faith:

- The Torah dimension emphasizes the internal state: devotion, humility, and spiritual discipline.
- The Gospel dimension emphasizes the external manifestation: growth, strength, and societal impact.

Together, they establish that true faith is not confined to private worship nor limited to public success. Rather, it is the harmonious integration of both: a deep, sincere connection with the Creator that naturally produces a visible, constructive presence in the world.

6. The Ethics of Information: The Principle of Verification

Surah Al-Hujurat establishes a foundational ethical principle that is uniquely critical in the modern age: the obligation to verify information before accepting, acting upon, or transmitting it. In an era dominated by instant communication and social media, where a single click can reach thousands, the Qur'anic directive serves as a vital safeguard for truth, justice, and social harmony.

Allah provides a clear protocol for handling reports, particularly those that originate from unreliable sources or carry the potential for harm:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْحَبُوا عَلٰى مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ (٦)

“O you who have believed, if a disobedient person brings you news, verify it, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and then become regretful over what you have done.” (Al-Hujurat 49:6)

Acting upon or sharing unverified information, whether by forwarding a message, reposting a claim, or amplifying a rumor, constitutes a violation of Islamic ethical conduct. The harm caused by misinformation is often irreversible, particularly when it affects the dignity, honor, and reputation of others.

Ironically, while modern technology accelerates the spread of falsehood, it simultaneously provides the tools necessary for verification. The responsibility upon the believer is therefore not diminished; it is amplified.

This responsibility becomes even more critical in matters involving slander or character assassination, which undermine the honor and credibility of individuals, and religious fabrications, which involve attributing statements to the Prophet ﷺ without verifying their authenticity.

The Qur’anic command (فَتَبَيَّنُوا) (verify thoroughly), focuses on the content of the report, not merely the character of the transmitter. Even if the source is known to be unreliable (fasiq), the obligation remains to investigate the information itself before forming judgment or taking action. This ensures that decisions are grounded in truth rather than reaction.

The Prophet (PBUH) established a foundational principle of disciplined speech:

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيَقُلْ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ،

“Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him speak good or remain silent.”
(Bukhari and Muslim)

In line with this meaning, it has been wisely said:

مَنْ كَثُرَ كَلَامُهُ كَثُرَ سَفْطُهُ ، وَمَنْ كَثُرَ سَفْطُهُ كَثُرَتْ ذُنُوبُهُ ، وَمَنْ كَثُرَتْ ذُنُوبُهُ كَانَتْ النَّارُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِ

“Whoever speaks excessively will make many mistakes, and whoever makes many mistakes will accumulate many sins. Whoever accumulates many sins, the Fire is more deserving of him.”

A Contemporary Reflection

In the digital age, “speech” extends beyond spoken words to include every post, share, comment, and endorsement. Each action becomes a recorded testimony of one’s ethical discipline.

Every unverified message contributes to what may be considered “excessive speech,” increasing the likelihood of error and the spread of falsehood. The believer must therefore adopt a disciplined approach: verify before believing, confirm before sharing, and assess benefit before amplifying.

The Qur'anic principle of verification is not merely a guideline; it is a protective system designed to preserve truth, safeguard dignity, and maintain trust within society. In an age overwhelmed by information, it stands as one of the most urgent and practical ethical commands of the Qur'an.

7. The Divine Code of Social Ethics

Beyond the obligation to verify information, Surat Al-Hujurat establishes a comprehensive code of conduct governing interpersonal relationships among believers. These verses prohibit a range of verbal and social offenses that erode trust and fracture the moral fabric of the community, such as ridicule, insult, suspicion, spying, and backbiting.

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرُونَ قَوْمًا مِّن قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءً مِّن نِّسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِاللُّغَابِ بِبُغْسٍ ءَلَسَ أَلْسُنُكُمْ أَلْسُنًا مِّنْ أَلْسُنٍ وَإِن تَنَابَزْتُمْ عَلَيْهَا فإِنَّ أَلْسِنَتَكُمْ لَ مَنكُومَةٌ ۗ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا ۚ وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ (١٢)

“O you who have believed, let not a people ridicule [another] people; perhaps they may be better than them; nor let women ridicule [other] women; perhaps they may be better than them. And do not insult one another and do not call each other by [offensive] nicknames. Wretched is the ungodly name after having believed. And those who do not repent are indeed the wrongdoers. (11) O you who have believed, avoid much suspicion, for indeed, some suspicion is sin. And do not spy or backbite each other. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother when dead? You would detest it. And be conscious of Allah; indeed, Allah is Accepting of repentance and Merciful.” (Al-Hujurat 49:11-12)

The Prophet (PBUH) further elaborated on these divine principles through practical and timeless guidance:

1. **Self-Correction Over Criticism:** The Prophet (PBUH) advised:

طوبى لمن شغله عيبه عن عيوب الناس [رواه البزار عن أنس بن مالك]
“Glad tidings to the one whose preoccupation with his own faults keeps him from becoming concerned with the faults of others.”

A True believer is encouraged to be a "mirror" to himself first. His primary concern is internal refinement, not external fault-finding. Communities deteriorate when individuals become critics of others instead of reformers of themselves.

2. **The Sanctity of Privacy:** the Prophet (PBUH) taught:

من حسن إسلام المرء تركه ما لا يعنيه [أخرجه الترمذي عن أبي هريرة]
“Part of being a good Muslim is leaving alone what does not concern him.” (Tirmidhi)

In an age of constant exposure and intrusive curiosity, this principle is profoundly relevant. Islam prohibits spying, the deliberate search for the hidden faults or private matters of others, thereby preserving dignity and psychological safety within society.

3. The Severity of Backbiting: When Abu Dharr (RA) asked for a definition of backbiting, the Prophet (PBUH) provided a profound distinction:

يا رسول الله ما الغيبة ؟ قال : ذِكْرُكَ أَخَاكَ بما يكره فقال رجل : أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ كَانَ فِي أَخِي مَا أَقُولُ ؟ قال : إِنْ كَانَ فِيهِ مَا تَقُولُ فَقَدْ اغْتَبْتَهُ ، وَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِيهِ مَا تَقُولُ فَقَدْ بَهْتَهُ (أَخْرَجَهُ أَبُو دَاوُدَ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ)
البهتان أي الافتراء ، تهمة ليس لها أساس من الصحة ، فهذا بهتان وإفك

"O Messenger of Allah, what is backbiting?"

The Prophet (PBUH) replied: " Backbiting is mentioning about your brother something he would dislike in his absence."

Abu Dharr (RA) asked: "What if what I say is true?"

The Prophet (PBUH) replied "If it is true, you have backbitten him. And if it is not true, you have slandered him." (Reported by Abu Dawood)

The Qur'anic imagery, likening backbiting to consuming the flesh of one's dead brother, captures the moral repugnance of this act. It is a violation not only of social ethics but of human dignity itself.

4. The Principle of Moral Foresight: It has been narrated that the Prophet ﷺ advised:

جاء رجل إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال: يا رسول الله أوصني, قال: ... وإياك وما يعتذر منه. ورواه الطبراني من حديث ابن عمر.

"Beware of actions that will require you to apologize later." (Al-Tabarani)

This principle introduces a powerful ethical filter: before speaking or acting, one should ask whether the action will require justification or apology. If the answer is yes, restraint is the wiser path.

These verses and teachings establish a comprehensive ethical system governing the unseen dimensions of social life: speech, intention, perception, and interaction. While laws regulate outward behavior, these principles refine the inner moral compass that sustains trust, unity, and mutual respect.

A community that upholds these standards protects not only its external stability, but also its internal integrity, ensuring that hearts remain as sound as actions appear.

8. The Divine Metric: Redefining Human Honor

While the previous sections addressed conduct within the community of believers, the Qur'an now broadens the scope to encompass humanity at large. It establishes a universal framework for human relationships, rooted in shared origin, mutual recognition, and a divinely defined standard of honor.

In Surah Al-Hujurat, Allah reminds humanity of its common origin:

(يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَىٰكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ).

“O mankind, indeed, We have created you from a male and a female and made you peoples and tribes so that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable among you in the sight of Allah is the most in Taqwa among you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.” (Al-Hujirat 49:13)

By affirming that all humanity descends from a single pair, the Qur'an dismantles the very foundations of racism, tribal superiority, and social hierarchy. Diversity in nations and tribes is not a cause for division, but a divine design for mutual recognition, understanding, and cooperation. Human differences thus become a means of enrichment, not conflict.

This verse introduces a revolutionary shift in how value is measured. In worldly life, people compete for wealth, power, beauty, and status. Yet the Qur'an redirects this competition toward a higher and more meaningful objective:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَىٰكُمْ

“Indeed, the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is the one with the most Taqwa.” (Al-Hujurat 49:13)

If the metric is flawed, then even apparent success is, in reality, failure. The Qur'an replaces superficial measures with a single, universal criterion: Taqwa, a conscious awareness of Allah that shapes both intention and action.

The pursuit of Taqwa operates on two interconnected levels:

- **The Outward Dimension:** Manifested through Ihsan (excellence) in actions, integrity in dealings, justice in judgment, and compassion in relationships.
- **The Inward Dimension:** Rooted in the purification of the heart. Without sincerity and inner awareness, outward actions lose their true value.

In this Juz, Allah describes the ultimate reward for those who succeed in this divine competition. In Surah Qaf, He portrays the nearness of Paradise to the people of Taqwa:

وَأُزْلِفَتِ الْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ (٣١) مَنْ خَشِيَ الرَّحْمَنَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَجَاءَ بِقَلْبٍ مُنِيبٍ (٣٣)

“And Paradise will be brought near to the Muttaqeen not far off. (31) ... Who feared Al-Rahman in the unseen and came with a heart turned in repentance.” (Qaf 50: 31, 33)

At the center of Taqwa lies a heart that constantly returns to Allah. It is a heart that remains spiritually alert, responsive to divine guidance, and quick to repent when it falters. This repenting heart (al-qalb al-munib) "القلب المنيب" is the engine of

transformation. It sustains the believer's journey, anchoring them in humility, renewing their sincerity, and ensuring that their outward actions remain connected to an inward reality.

The Qur'an thus redefines human honor not as something inherited, acquired, or displayed, but as something cultivated within. It is neither lineage nor achievement that elevates a person, but the depth of their consciousness of Allah.

In a world obsessed with external measures, this divine metric restores balance, reminding humanity that the true scale of worth is known only to Allah.

9. The Certainty of Sustenance (Rizq)

One of the most profound lessons in this Juz is the transformation of how we perceive sustenance (rizq). The Qur'an establishes that provision is not the result of chance, market forces, or human favor, but a matter decreed and secured in the Divine realm.

In Surah Adh-Dhariyat, Allah affirms this reality with a powerful and emphatic oath:

وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ (٢٢) فَوَرَبَّ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ لَحَقُّ مَثَلٍ مَا أَنْتُمْ تَنْطِقُونَ (٢٣)
“And in the heaven is your provision and all that that you are promised. (22) By the Lord of the heavens and the earth, it is indeed the truth, as [certain as] the fact that you are speaking”. (Adh-Dhariyat 51:22-23)

The intensity of these verses is striking. Allah does not merely inform us of His provision, He swears by Himself to affirm it. The comparison is equally powerful: just as a person does not doubt their own speech, they should not doubt the certainty of their provision.

When this reality is internalized, it transforms the believer's worldview. One begins to recognize that while they interact with apparent sources: employers, clients, markets, these are merely means (asbab), not the true source. The ultimate Provider is Allah alone.

This realization liberates the believer from fear-driven compromise. It prevents the sacrifice of principles, dignity, or faith in pursuit of sustenance, because provision is not controlled by creation, it is guaranteed by the Creator.

To better understand how rizq operates in human life, it can be viewed through two complementary categories:

1. **Unconditional Rizq (The Gift of Life):** This includes provisions granted without any effort on our part, such as the air we breathe, the intricate design of our bodies, and the heartbeat that sustains life even before birth. This form of rizq is a direct manifestation of divine mercy, independent of human action.

2. **Conditional Rizq (The Reward of Striving):** This includes provisions placed within creation that require human effort to access, such as cultivating crops, extracting resources, or acquiring knowledge for livelihood. Here, effort is required, but it remains only a means, not a guarantee.

While conditional rizq necessitates striving, the outcome is never solely determined by effort. The believer operates within a balanced framework: the body engages in effort while the heart remains attached to Allah.

True reliance (tawakkul) is not the abandonment of effort, but the detachment from dependence on it. The believer works diligently yet understands that success is granted only by Al-Razzaq.

This Qur'anic perspective redefines the relationship between effort and outcome. It instills confidence without arrogance, and reliance without passivity. In a world driven by anxiety over provision, these verses anchor the believer in certainty: what is written for you will reach you, without compromising who you are

10. The Ultimate Awareness: Living Under Divine Nearness

The journey of Taqwa culminates in a profound realization: Allah is not distant. He is nearer to us than we are to ourselves. This awareness transforms belief from a concept into a constant, living consciousness. In Surah Qaf, Allah declares:

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ (١٦)

And We have certainly created man, and We know what his soul whispers to him, and We are closer to him than his jugular vein.” (Qaf 50:16)

This verse establishes the deepest foundation of Taqwa: the awareness that Allah knows, sees, and hears everything, both outward actions and inward thoughts. He knows even the silent whispers of the soul before they become words or actions. This is not merely knowledge; it is nearness: a nearness of complete awareness, authority, and presence.

When this reality settles in the heart, it produces a profound transformation. The believer becomes mindful in private as in public, careful in intention as in action, and consistent in hidden states as in visible ones.

This is the essence of Ihsan: To worship Allah as though you see Him; and if you do not see Him, then know that He sees you.”

At this level, Taqwa is no longer theoretical, it becomes an internal compass guiding every decision.

- We guard our speech because He hears
- We purify our actions because He sees
- We refine our intentions because He knows

A person may escape the sight of people, but never the sight of Allah. This awareness becomes an internal safeguard: it restrains from sin without external pressure, inspires goodness without the need for recognition, and protects sincerity from *riya'* "الرياء" (showing off).

In a world where people often divide their lives between public and private, the believer remains the same in both, because Allah is always present.

Conclusion:

As we reflect upon the Jewels of the Twenty-Sixth Juz, a unifying theme emerges with clarity and depth: the sovereignty of Allah and the sincerity of the human response, rooted in constant awareness of His nearness.

We have seen that Allah is the ultimate Provider, *Al-Razzaq*, yet He commands us to strive in His cause, not out of need, but as a test of our sincerity. Every moment of life, every blessing we possess, is part of a divine trust, and every action is an opportunity to fulfill that trust under the watchful awareness of Allah.

From the most subtle act, restraining the tongue from spreading a rumor, to the most visible, establishing justice, building communities, and cultivating the earth, every action becomes an expression of *'ibadah* when performed with consciousness of Allah. In this way, life itself is transformed into a continuous act of devotion.

This awareness, that Allah knows what we reveal and what we conceal, and is closer to us than our jugular vein, is the foundation of true *Taqwa*. It refines intention, disciplines behavior, and unifies the believer's public and private life.

By aligning our character with these divine instructions, we rise from being mere inhabitants of the earth to becoming true stewards (*khulafa*) of its message. Our interactions reflect our faith, our ethics preserve our communities, and our inner awareness anchors our sincerity.

The promise of Allah is true. And for those who return to Him with a sincere and ever-turning heart (*qalb munib*), the end is not merely success, but a closeness to the One who was always near.

Jewels from the Twenty Seventh Juz: From the Expanding Heavens to the Humble Heart: A Unified Blueprint for Spiritual and Civilizational Excellence (Adh-Dhariyat 51:31 – Al-Hadid 57:29)

Introduction

The twenty-seventh Juz of the Quran is a profound tapestry that weaves together the grandest scales of existence with the most intimate dimensions of the soul. It begins by directing our gaze upward to the stars and the expanding boundaries of the universe, proving that the Creator of the cosmos is the same Author of the Revelation.

As the narrative unfolds through Surahs Al-Dhariyat, Al-Tur, Al-Najm, Al-Qamar, Ar-Rahman, and Al-Waqi'ah, it provides more than just spiritual comfort; it offers a comprehensive blueprint for human success. We are taught that true worship (Ibadah) is inseparable from stewardship (Khalifah), and that divine justice must be guarded by both moral balance and material strength. This chapter explores ten "jewels" from these revelations, lessons designed to awaken the intellect, refine the character, and empower the Ummah to lead with both the Book and the Iron.

1. The Expansion of the Universe

The Quran contains numerous references to the natural world, reflecting the divine laws established by Allah to govern His creation. These references are intended to inspire Muslims to study, explore, and excel in all scientific disciplines, empowering them to lead through knowledge. The following verses address profound concepts in astronomy, geology, and biology:

وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَيْنَاهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ (٤٧) وَالْأَرْضَ فَرَشْنَاهَا فَنِعْمَ الْمَاهِدُونَ (٤٨) وَمِن كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا رُجُجَيْنَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ (٤٩)

“And the heaven We built with might, and indeed, We are expanding it. (47) And the earth We have spread out; how excellent is the One who prepared it. (48) And of all things We created pairs, so that you may reflect.” (Al-Dhariyat 51:47:49)

These verses highlight the expansion of the universe, the habitable surface of the Earth, and the duality of all creation. They serve as a reminder that studying the natural world is one of the most profound ways to recognize Allah. To seek knowledge of the Creator without contemplating His creation results in only a limited understanding of His attributes.

For centuries, the prevailing scientific consensus held that the universe was stationary. Even the greatest minds can falter when they prioritize prevailing dogma over raw data. In 1917, when Albert Einstein formulated his field equations for General Relativity, his original calculations suggested an expanding universe. However, to align with the static-

universe model of the time, he introduced an arbitrary "cosmological constant" to force his equations to show a stationary universe.

In 1924, a young Russian mathematician, Alexander Friedmann, demonstrated that Einstein's own equations actually predicted a dynamic universe: one that must be either expanding or contracting. Einstein eventually acknowledged his error, famously calling the cosmological constant his "greatest blunder." Later, in 1929, Edwin Hubble provided observational proof that the universe was indeed expanding.

This historical progression carries a vital lesson, especially for Muslim youth: scientific consensus is not infallible. When conclusions appear to conflict with the Qur'an, one should not react with blind acceptance or blind rejection, but with thoughtful investigation. Like Friedmann, we should not be intimidated by established authority, but should pursue truth with intellectual integrity.

Turning to the Earth, Allah has uniquely fashioned it for human habitation. Life could not thrive on a purely rocky planet. Allah created fertile soil, embedded hidden springs, and carved rivers across the landscape. Furthermore, He placed diverse minerals within the Earth, each with distinct properties that fuel human innovation.

Allah further reminds us of the paired nature of creation. This concept spans multiple levels of existence, from biological to subatomic:

- Atoms consist of positive and negative charges.
- Protons are composed of paired quarks.
- DNA is structured as a double helix built upon paired sequences.

This recurring pattern of duality reflects a deeper order within creation, pointing to deliberate design rather than randomness.

As we delve deeper into the study of creation, we are constantly reminded of Allah's infinite greatness. When we truly acknowledge Him as the Creator and Sustainer, our perception of Him deepens, compelling us to turn to Him with humility. Allah concludes this passage with a powerful call:

فَفِرُّوْا إِلَى اللَّهِ إِنِّي لَكُمْ مِّنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ (٥٠) وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ إِنِّي لَكُمْ مِّنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ (٥١)
“So, flee to Allah. Indeed, I am a clear warner to you for Him. (50) And do not make any other god along with Allah. Indeed, I am a clear warner to you from Him.” (Al-Dhariyat 51:50:51)

Thus, the journey from observing creation culminates in a decisive spiritual movement: to flee to Allah alone, recognizing His Oneness, rejecting all forms of shirk, and responding to knowledge with sincere devotion.

2. The Obligation of Worship: The Purpose of Creation

In Surah Adh-Dhariyat, Allah defines the purpose of existence with unmistakable clarity:

مَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ (٥٦) مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِّن رِّزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُونِ (٥٧)

“And I have not created the jinn and mankind except to worship Me. (56) I do not want from them any provision, nor do I want them to feed Me”. (Adh-Dhariyat 51:56-57)

The term “Ibadah” is often translated narrowly as “worship,” yet its root, ‘abd, denotes complete belonging and submission to a Master. In the Islamic worldview, being a slave (‘abd) of Allah is not a state of humiliation; it is the highest form of honor. It liberates the human being from all false forms of servitude whether to ego, wealth, status, or societal approval, and redirects the heart toward its only true Master.

This relationship of servitude is not one-sided. Allah, in His infinite mercy, presents what can be described as a Divine Bargain. Although He is the original Owner of our lives and wealth, He offers to “purchase” them from us in exchange for eternal success. In Surah At-Tawbah, Allah declares:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَىٰ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُم بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ ...﴾ (١١١)

“Indeed, Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their wealth in exchange for Paradise...” (Al-Tawbah 9:111)

Entrusting one’s life and wealth to Allah is not a loss; it is the ultimate realization of their true value. What is offered to the Divine is never diminished, it is elevated, preserved, and returned in a form far greater than what was given. This transaction transforms the believer’s life into a purposeful offering. Every action, sacrifice, and choice becomes part of a conscious covenant with Allah, the outcome of which is guaranteed by the Most Truthful.

To be a true slave of Allah is to be entrusted as a steward (khalifah) upon the earth. This role transforms ibadah from passive devotion into active responsibility. It requires the believer to:

- **Develop and Cultivate Resources:** Utilize intellect and capability to explore, refine, and benefit from the earth’s resources.
- **Uphold Justice:** Establish systems that reflect divine justice and remove barriers of oppression that hinder access to truth.
- **Pursue Knowledge:** Engage in science, technology, and industry as acts of worship when aligned with a divine purpose.

In this light, civilization-building itself becomes a profound expression of ibadah: faith not confined to rituals, but manifested in the construction of a just, knowledgeable, and God-conscious world.

3. Divine Comfort: Finding Strength in the Sight of Allah

The commitment to being a true slave of Allah and fulfilling the heavy responsibility of stewardship does not guarantee a life of ease. On the contrary, this world is designed as an arena for testing, not as a final place of reward. Growth often requires the friction of discomfort, and this journey demands profound patience (Sabr).

However, in moments of exhaustion, loneliness, or quiet sacrifice, Allah provides the believer with a source of unparalleled comfort. He assures them that their struggle is never hidden or unnoticed, because they are always under His direct and caring watch:

وَأَصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ (٤٨) وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَإِدْبَرَ النُّجُومِ (٤٩)
“So be patient with your Lord’s decree; for you in our eyes, so glorify the Praises of your Lord when you arise (48) and glorify Him during the night and at the receding of the stars.” (Al-Tur 52:48-49).

The phrase Bi-ayunina ("in Our Eyes") is one of the most intimate expressions in the Quran. It conveys not just observation, but protection, care, and divine attention. When the path of righteousness becomes difficult and the world seems indifferent to your sacrifices, Allah reminds you that your struggle is being witnessed by the Only One whose recognition truly matters. To be "in the Eyes of Allah" means:

- You are not forgotten: every private tear and every unseen effort mis known and recorded.
- You are protected: the One who entrusted you with this path does not abandon you upon it.
- Your worth is elevated: your patience has earned the attention of the Creator.

The verse concludes by offering the practical remedy for a weary heart: Tasbih, the consistent glorification of Allah. By praising Him when we arise and during the stillness of the night, we recalibrate our hearts and restore our spiritual focus.

The mention of glorifying Allah at the “receding of the stars” is particularly profound. It captures the transition from darkness to light, the quiet moment before dawn. It is a daily reminder that just as the night inevitably gives way to the rising sun, relief follows hardship with certainty.

In this way, the believer’s patience is not passive endurance, but an active state of connection. The “Divine Bargain” is sustained through this continuous remembrance, transforming hardship into elevation, and perseverance into a beautiful act of worship.

4. The Path of Excellence: Sincerity Over Perfection

Allah defines those who attain excellence (Al-Muhsininun), those worthy of the best reward, not as flawless individuals, but as those who strive to maintain integrity by avoiding major sins, even if they occasionally fall into minor lapses:

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْتَوُوا بِمَا عَمِلُوا وَيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ الَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا بِالْحُسْنَى
(٣١) الَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبِيرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ إِلَّا اللَّمَمَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ وَاسِعُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ إِذْ أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِنَ
الْأَرْضِ وَإِذْ أَنْتُمْ أَجِنَّةٌ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ فَلَا تُزَكُّوْا أَنْفُسَكُمْ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَى (٣٢)

“And to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, that He may recompense those who do evil with what they have done and reward those who do good with what is best; (31) those who avoid the major sins and shameful deeds, except for minor lapses. Indeed, your Lord is vast in forgiveness. He is most knowing of you, when He created you from the earth and when you were fetuses in the wombs of your mothers. So do not claim purity for yourselves; He knows best who has Taqwa.” (Al-Najm 53:31-32)

To walk the path of Ihsan (Excellence), a believer must recognize the boundaries established by Allah. Reflecting on the Qur’an allows us to identify the major sins (kaba’ir al-ithm) (كَبِيرَ الْإِثْمِ) and shameful deeds (fawahish) (الْفَوَاحِشَ) that we must be consciously avoided:

Major Sins (Kaba’ir)

1. Shirk: Associating partners with Allah (Al-Nisa 4:48)
2. Neglecting prayer (Salah) (Maryam 19:59) (Al-Mudathir 74:42-43)
3. Murder: Taking a life unjustly (Al-Maeda 5:32)
4. Riba: Consuming usury (Al-Baqarah 2:278-279)
5. Exploitation: Consuming the wealth of orphans (Al-Nisa 4:10)
6. Slander: Accusing chaste women (Al-Nour 24:4)
7. Betrayal: Breaking covenants (Al-Emran 3:77)
8. Intoxicants & Gambling (Al-Maeda 5:90-91)
9. Despair: Losing hope in Allah’s mercy (Yusuf 12:87) (Al-Hijr 15:56)
10. Disrespecting parents (Maryam 19:14) (Luqman 31:14-15)
11. Severing ties of kinship (Muhammad 47:22-23)
12. False testimony and dishonesty (Al-Baqarah 2:283)
13. Fleeing from battle (Al-Anfal 8:15-16)

Shameful deeds (Fawahish)

1. Zina: Adultery and fornication (Al-Isra 17: 32)
2. The Sin of the People of Lut: Homosexual acts (Al-A’raf 7: 80)
3. Speaking about Allah without knowledge (Al-Araf 7: 33)

The verse concludes with a powerful warning: "Do not claim purity for yourselves." This is a call for humility. While we can observe outward actions, only Allah has intimate knowledge of the heart, the seat of Taqwa (God-consciousness).

Allah's knowledge of us is not limited to the present; it is foundational and complete. He knew our essence when we were "dust of the earth" and oversaw our development in the womb. He alone understands our struggles, intentions, and sincerity. Therefore, He alone is qualified to judge the true state of the heart.

Human judgment is limited to appearances. Even when we witness great righteousness in others, we refrain from absolute claims of purity. Instead, we say: "We consider them to be people of taqwa, but Allah knows best." This mindset protects the believer from spiritual arrogance and redirects focus toward one's own journey, seeking the vast forgiveness of Allah.

5. The Accessible Miracle: A Quran for Every Heart

The Qur'an is not a cryptic manual reserved for scholars, nor is its wisdom locked behind inaccessible layers of interpretation. Allah, in His infinite mercy, revealed the Qur'an as a clear Book: a comprehensive and accessible guide for all of humanity.

In Surah Al-Qamar, after recounting the fate of past nations, the people of Noah, Ad, Thamud, and Lot, Allah punctuates the narrative with a striking truth and a powerful recurring question:

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ (٤٠) (٣٢) (٢٢) (١٧)

"And We have certainly made the Quran easy to understand. So, is there anyone who will remember? (Al-Qamar 54:17, 22, 32 and 40)

The repetition of this verse four times within a single surah is a profound divine assurance. It directly challenges the notion that the Qur'an is too difficult for the average believer to engage with.

Yet, despite this clarity, many Muslims today hesitate to engage deeply with the Qur'an. A "specialist-only" mindset has created an unnecessary barrier, leading most to believe that without mastery of classical Arabic or advanced tafsir, they are unqualified to reflect on the words of Allah.

While detailed legal derivation and advanced linguistic analysis require scholarship, the Qur'an's core purposes: guidance (Huda), healing (Shifa), and remembrance (Dhikr), are an open invitation to every sincere heart. The belief that the Qur'an is only for experts has become one of the greatest obstacles between the Ummah and the transformative power of revelation.

The Qur'an does not require academic credentials; it calls for a sound heart. When Allah asks, "*Is there any who will remember?*" He is calling for:

- **Sincerity (*Ikhlas*)**: Approaching the text with a genuine desire to be guided and transformed.
- **Reflection (*Tadabbur*)**: Allowing the verses to resonate with one's own life experiences and struggles.
- **Humility**: Recognizing that the Creator is speaking directly to His creation.

By internalizing the accessibility of the Qur'an, the believer reclaims a living relationship with it. One moves beyond passive listening to active engagement, entering into a continuous and personal dialogue with Allah.

6. The True Teacher of the Quran

The opening of Surah Ar-Rahman presents a profound and thought-provoking sequence:

الرَّحْمَنُ (١) عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ (٢) خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ (٣) عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ (٤)

“Al-Rahman (1) taught the Quran (2) created man. (3) taught him clear speech.” (Al-Rahman 55:1-4)

Logically, one might expect the creation of man to be mentioned first, followed by the teaching of the Quran. However, Allah places the teaching of the Quran before the creation of the human being. This deliberate sequencing invites reflection and raises a fundamental question: To whom was the Qur'an taught before mankind was created?

A compelling hypothesis, rooted in Qur'anic evidence, suggests that this teaching relates to the primordial human essence: the single soul (*nafs wahidah*) from which all of humanity originated. The Qur'an repeatedly affirms that all human beings were brought forth from one initial soul (Al-Nisa 4:1; Al-An'am 6:98; Al-A'raf 7:189; Al-Zumar 39:6):

يَأْتِيَا النَّاسُ آتَفَوْا رَبَّكُمْ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً

“O mankind! Have Taqwa of your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate; and from them spread many men and women.” (Al-Nisa 4:1)

If the Quran was taught to this original essence, it implies that the message of the Quran is already embedded within the spiritual "DNA" of every human being.

If we were all taught the Quran in our primordial state, why do we not remember it? The answer may lie in the same veil that obscures our memory of the primordial covenant, when Allah gathered the descendants of Adam and asked:

..... أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَا أَنْ تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ (١٧٢)

“Am I not your Lord?’ They said, ‘Yes, we bear witness,’ lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, ‘We were unaware of this...’” (Al-Araf 7:172)

Just as we do not consciously recall this covenant, yet carry its imprint as fitrah, we may also carry an “echo” of the Qur’an within our souls. This pre-earthly imprint lies beyond conscious memory, yet it shapes our innate recognition of truth.

To reconnect with this inner resonance, the Qur’an directs us toward purification of the self:

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا (٧) فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا (٨) قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّاهَا (٩) (الشمس)

“And by the Nafs (soul) and He who perfected it; (7) Then He inspired it to know its rebellion and piety (8) Indeed he succeeds who purifies it.” (Al-Shams 91:7-9)

Success, therefore, is defined by Tazkiyah, the purification of the soul. When Allah is recognized as the true Teacher, it becomes clear that the extent to which a person resonates with the Qur’an is directly tied to the state of their inner being. The purer the soul, the deeper its connection to the Divine Word.

This perspective offers a deeper lens through which to understand the well-known hadith:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو بْنِ الْعَاصِ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ يُقَالُ لِصَاحِبِ الْقُرْآنِ إِذَا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ أَقْرَأُ وَأَزْتَقُ وَرَزُلُ كَمَا كُنْتَ تُرْتَلُ فِي الدُّنْيَا فَإِنَّ مَنْزِلَتَكَ عِنْدَ آخِرِ آيَةٍ تَقْرَأُ بِهَا (رواه أبو داود والترمذي)

“It will be said to the companion of the Quran: “Read and ascend as you used to recite in the world. Indeed, your rank is determined by the last verse you recite.” (Abu Dawud and At- Tirmidhi).

And in another narration:

عن أبي سعيد قال : قال نبي الله عليه الصلاة والسلام يقال لصاحب القرآن إذا دخل الجنة : اقرأ واصعد ، فيقرأ ويصعد بكل آية درجة ، حتى يقرأ آخر شيء معه . [أخرجه ابن ماجه ، وأحمد]

“It will be said to the companion of the Quran (if he enters Paradise): “Read and ascend, so he reads and climbs with every verse, until he reads the last verse with him”. (Ibn Majah and Ahmad)

The "rank" described here may extend beyond mere memorization. It reflects the elevation of a soul that has allowed the Qur’an to penetrate and purify its inner reality. A person who memorized the Qur’an outwardly but did not internalize its guidance may find their ascent limited. In contrast, the one who lived by its meanings will find the verses flowing naturally from within, because they were never external to begin with.

Thus, the Qur’an is not merely a text to be learned; it is a truth to be uncovered. And Allah is not only the Revealer of the Qur’an: He is its ultimate Teacher, guiding each soul back to what it was always meant to recognize

7. The Three Classes of Humankind

When the Inevitable Event (Al-Waqi'ah), the Day of Judgment, occurs, the current world order will be dismantled and humanity will be permanently divided into three distinct groups.

إِذَا وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ (١) لَيْسَ لَوْفَعَتِهَا كَاذِبَةٌ (٢) خَافِضَةٌ رَافِعَةٌ (٣) إِذَا رُجَّتِ الْأَرْضُ رَجًا (٤) وَبُسَّتِ الْجِبَالُ بَسًّا (٥) فَكَانَتْ هَبَاءً مُنْبَثًّا (٦) وَكُنْتُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ثَلَاثَةً (٧)

“When the Inevitable Event occurs, (1) there can be no denial of its occurrence. (2) It will abase some and exalt others. (3) When the earth is shaken with a shock, (4) and the mountains are crumbled to dust, (5) becoming scattered particles, (6) you will be divided into only three groups.” (Al-Waqia 56:1-7)

A Linguistic Key: In verse 7, the number three (ثَلَاثَةً) appears after the counted noun *azwajan* (أَزْوَاجًا), indicating limitation. In this context, *azwajan thalatha* (أَزْوَاجًا ثَلَاثَةً) conveys the meaning of “only three groups”, emphasizing exclusivity. Had the structure been reversed, with the number “three” preceding the noun “azwaj”, such as *thalatha azwaj* (ثَلَاثَةُ أَزْوَاجٍ), it would imply enumeration without restricting the total. This subtle linguistic construction reinforces a decisive reality: on that Day, humanity will be reduced to only three final categories, no more and no less.

The Three Destinies

1. The Foremost (*As-Sabiqoon*)

These are the elite believers, those who did not merely follow the path, but raced ahead in faith, sincerity, and sacrifice. They are the *Muqarrabun*, those brought nearest to Allah.

وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ (١٠) أُولَئِكَ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ (١١) فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ (١٢) ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْأُولَىٰ (١٣) وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنَ الْآخِرِينَ (١٤)

“And the foremost shall be the foremost. (10) Those are the ones brought near (to Allah). (11) In Gardens of Bliss. (12) A large group from the former generations, (13) and a few from the later ones.” (Al-Waqia 56:10-14)

2. The Companions of the Right (*Ashab al-Yameen*)

These are the general body of believers: those who upheld faith and righteous deeds. Their reward is a life of peace, abundance, and lasting comfort.

وَأَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ (٢٧) فِي سِدْرٍ مَّخْضُودٍ (٢٨) وَطَلْحٍ مَّنضُودٍ (٢٩) وَظِلٍّ مَّمْدُودٍ (٣٠) وَمَاءٍ مَّسْكُوبٍ (٣١) وَفَلَكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ (٣٢) لَا مَقْطُوعَةٍ وَلَا مَمْنُوعَةٍ (٣٣)

“And the people of the right, how fortunate are the people of the right! (27) They will be amid thornless lote trees, (28) clusters of plantains, (29) extended shade,

(30) flowing water, (31) and abundant fruit, (32) never out of season nor forbidden.” (Al-Waqia 56:27-33)

ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ (٣٩) وَثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْآخِرِينَ (٤٠)

“A large group from the former generations. (39) and A large group from the later ones.” (Al-Waqia 56:39-40)

3. The Companions of the Left (*Ashab al-Shimal*)

These are those who rejected the truth and lived in defiance of divine guidance. Their fate stands as a stark warning against arrogance, heedlessness, and indulgence without accountability.

وَأَصْحَابُ الشَّمَالِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الشَّمَالِ (٤١) فِي سَمُومٍ وَحَمِيمٍ (٤٢) وَظِلٌّ مِّنْ يَّحْمُومٍ (٤٣) لَا بَارِدٍ وَلَا كَرِيمٍ (٤٤) إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ مُتْرَفِينَ (٤٥) وَكَانُوا يُصِرُّونَ عَلَى الْحِنثِ الْعَظِيمِ (٤٦) وَكَانُوا يَقُولُونَ أَإِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظْمًا أَأَنْتَا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ (٤٧)

“And the people of the left, how miserable are the people of the left! (41) In scorching wind and boiling water. (42) and a shade of black smoke, (43) neither cool nor refreshing. (44) Indeed, before this, they were indulging in luxury. (45) And persisted in major sins. (46) And used to say: “When we are dead and reduced to dust and bones, will we really be resurrected?” (Al-Waqia 56:41-47)

A remarkable observation emerges from the demographics of these groups:

- The Foremost are described as many from the early generations, but few from the later ones, suggesting that reaching the highest level of spiritual excellence becomes increasingly rare over time.
- In contrast, the Companions of the Right are many from both the early and later generations: a powerful reassurance that the door to salvation remains open for the masses of believers in every age.

8. Power as a Guardian of Justice: The Symbolism of Iron

The primary purpose of Allah's revelation is the eradication of injustice, whether against Allah through the denial of His authority, or against His creation through oppression. However, Surah Al-Hadid presents a sobering reality: truth without the means to defend it is often suppressed. To ensure that the Divine message reaches every soul and that the weak are protected from aggressors, justice must be accompanied by the means to uphold and protect it.

This profound interconnection between revelation, justice, and material strength is captured in a pivotal verse:

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ (٢٥)

"We have indeed sent Our Messengers with clear proofs, and We sent down with them the Book and the Balance so that mankind may uphold justice. And We sent down iron, wherein is great military might and benefits for mankind so that Allah may know who supports Him and His Messengers, even though unseen. Verily, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty" (Al-Hadid 57:25)

This verse outlines a complete framework for a just and functional society. Allah did not send revelation in isolation; rather, He provided the necessary components to ensure its implementation and preservation. Three foundational elements emerge:

1. **The Book (Al-Kitab):** The divine revelation that provides guidance, purpose, and the moral framework for life, the source of truth that defines what is right and wrong.
2. **The Balance (Al-Mizan):** The system of justice and ethical equilibrium that ensures fairness in human interactions and prevents societal imbalance and oppression.
3. **The Iron (Al-Hadid):** The material strength required to uphold justice, encompassing military capability, industrial development, infrastructure, and technological advancement.

The mention that Allah "sent down iron" is particularly striking. It elevates iron beyond a mere material substance, framing it as a divinely provided resource essential for human civilization. Iron is not only associated with defense and deterrence, but also with construction, transportation, medicine, and industry, the very pillars upon which advanced societies are built.

This verse establishes that justice is not sustained by ideals alone. It requires the capacity to protect truth, defend the vulnerable, and resist oppression. Without strength, even the most noble principles can be silenced.

The verse concludes by emphasizing that those who utilize these divinely provided tools to uphold truth are the true supporters of Allah and His messengers. This implies a collective responsibility across multiple domains:

- **Communication:** Conveying the message of the Book with clarity and wisdom.
- **Judiciary:** Establishing systems that reflect divine justice and protect rights.
- **Industry & Defense:** Developing the scientific, technological, and military capabilities necessary to safeguard justice.

History consistently demonstrates a critical imbalance: a society that possesses the Book but lacks the Iron becomes vulnerable to domination and external injustice, while a society that possesses Iron but lacks the Book and the Balance becomes a force of oppression. True success lies in the integration of all three.

A Muslim civilization that neglects scientific advancement, industrial strength, or strategic capability is, in effect, neglecting a resource that Allah explicitly "sent down" to

preserve justice. Thus, the pursuit of strength, when guided by revelation, is not merely permissible; it is a component of fulfilling the divine mandate on earth.

9. The Muscle of Strength: Financial Sacrifice and the Divine Loan

Just as justice requires strength, and strength requires material capability, material capability itself depends on financial resources. Yet Islam establishes a paradigm fundamentally different from modern systems built primarily on compulsory extraction. It calls for voluntary sacrifice, rooted in the recognition that all wealth ultimately belongs to Allah.

Believers are called to spend not as owners, but as trustees:

ءَامِنُوا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهِۦٓ وَاَنْفِقُوْا مِمَّا جَعَلَكُمْ مُّسْتَحْلِفِيْنَ فِيْهِۦۙ فَاَلَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا مِنْكُمْ وَاَنْفَقُوْا لَهُمْ اَجْرٌ كَبِيْرٌ (٧)
“Believe in Allah and His Messenger and spend from that of which He has made you trustees. For those who believe and spend, there will be a great reward.” (Al-Hadid 57:7)

This verse reframes wealth entirely. What we possess is not truly ours, it is entrusted to us. Spending, therefore, is not a loss, but a fulfillment of that trust.

The Quran distinguishes between those who give when the community is successful and those who give when the cause is vulnerable. To motivate the believers, Allah highlights the special status of "Early Adopters", those who sacrifice when the outcome is still uncertain:

لَا يَسْتَوِيْ مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ اَنْفَقَ مِنْ قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ وَقَتْلِ اَوْلِيَّكَ اَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِّنَ الَّذِيْنَ اَنْفَقُوْا مِنْۢ بَعْدُ وَقَتْلُوْا وَاَكْلًا
وَعَدَ اللّٰهُ الْاَحْسَنٰى
“Those among you who spent and fought before the victory are not equal to those who spent and fought afterward. They are greater in rank—though to all Allah has promised the best reward.” (Al-Hadid 57:10)

While "the victory" historically refers to the Conquest of Makkah, the principle is universal. Contributing when the Ummah is weak, under-resourced, or striving to establish itself carries a weight that cannot be matched by contributions made after success has already been secured.

To further motivate the believer, Allah introduces a remarkable financial image, describing spending in His cause as a loan to Him:

مَّنۢ ذَا الَّذِيْ يُقْرِضُ اللّٰهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضْعِفُهُۥ لَهٗۙ وَلَهٗۙ ءَاَجْرٌ كَرِيْمٌ
“Who is it that will lend Allah a good loan, so that He may multiply it for them and grant them a noble reward?” (Al-Hadid 57:11)

This is one of the most humbling concepts in the Quran. Allah is the Ghani (The Self-Sufficient), He owns the heavens and the earth. Yet, He uses the language of a borrower to invite us to give. It is as if He is saying: "I gave you the capital, and now I am asking you to lend a portion of it back to Me so that I may return it to you multiplied."

This "Good Loan" is the fuel for the Iron mentioned in the previous section. Without financial sacrifice, the pillars of a just civilization cannot stand:

- No Research and Development to build industrial strength.
- No Social Safety Systems to maintain the balance of justice.
- No Defense Capability to protect the vulnerable and preserve truth.

By framing spending as a loan that Allah guarantees to repay, the Quran removes the fear of loss and replaces it with certainty of gain. It teaches that true wealth is not what is accumulated, but what is invested with Allah.

In this light, a nation's strength is not measured by what it hoards, but by what it is willing to give. The wealth that is "lent" to Allah is the wealth that builds justice, sustains strength, and secures success in both this world and the Hereafter.

10. The Call to the Heart: It is Time

After addressing the vast dimensions of existence, the expansion of the universe, the foundations of justice, and the necessity of strength, Allah brings the focus back to the most critical component of any civilization: the human heart.

The following verse is one of the most tender, yet piercing, reminders in the entire Quran:

أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَسِفُونَ (١٦)

“Has the time not come for those who believe that their hearts should humble at the remembrance of Allah and the truth that has been revealed? And that they do not become like those who were given the Scripture before, whose hearts hardened with the passage of time, leading many of them to become defiant?”
(Al-Hadid 57:16)

This is a divine "wake-up call." Allah is gently asking the believer: how long will you wait? How much more guidance do you need before your heart responds?

The verse warns against one of the most dangerous spiritual diseases: the hardening of the heart. This condition does not occur suddenly; it develops gradually, when time passes without remembrance, reflection, and renewal. Eventually, the heart becomes resistant to truth, no longer moved by reminders that once stirred it.

The transformative power of this single verse is best illustrated by the life of Al-Fudayl ibn Iyad (الفضيل بن عياض) (d. 187 AH).

Before he became a legendary scholar and ascetic, Al-Fudayl was a notorious and feared highway robber in Khorasan. One night, as he climbed a wall to commit a theft, he overheard a voice nearby reciting this very verse: "Has the time not come for those who believe that their hearts should humble at the remembrance of Allah..."

The words struck him like a physical blow. In the darkness of the night, Al-Fudayl replied, "O my Lord, the time has indeed come!"

He abandoned his life of crime at that very moment. He did not just stop stealing; he sought out those he had wronged to return their goods and ask for their forgiveness. He migrated to Makkah, where he devoted himself to worship and the study of Hadith. The man who was once a threat to travelers became a "Wali" of Allah, a scholar whose wisdom is still quoted over a thousand years later.

Because Al-Fudayl had seen the darkest sides of the human ego, his later teachings were marked by profound sincerity and a deep fear of Allah. He famously said:

- *On Compassion*: "By Allah, it is not permissible for you to harm even a dog or a pig unjustly. How then can you harm a fellow Muslim?"
- *On Honesty*: "The most untruthful person is the one who denies his own sins; the most ignorant is the arrogant one who counts his good deeds; and the most knowledgeable of Allah is the one who fears Him the most."
- *On Mastery of Self*: "A servant of Allah will never be complete until his faith (Deen) has authority over his desires, and he will never be destroyed until his desires have authority over his Deen."

His story embodies the essence of this verse: transformation does not require a lifetime, it requires a moment of sincerity.

Like Al-Fudayl, every believer eventually reaches a defining moment: a point in their life when truth becomes undeniable. The question remains: will we hear the call? And when we do, will we finally decide that the time has come?

Conclusion:

The journey through the twenty-seventh Juz brings us to a singular, inescapable realization: while Allah has fashioned a universe of staggering complexity and provided us with the resources to build powerful civilizations, the ultimate event is the meeting with our Creator.

We have seen that the expansion of the heavens is a sign of His Might, and the Divine Loan is a test of our trust. Yet all the industrial strength and scientific knowledge in the world cannot save a heart that has grown hard with the passage of time. The jewels of this Juz remind us that excellence (Ihsan) is not about being flawless, but about being sincere: constantly returning to the path of purification and responding to the divine call, "Has the time not come?"

As we close this chapter, let us not merely be companions of the Qur'an in speech, but in essence. May we be among the Sabiqun (the Foremost), whose lives are a synthesis of prayer and progress, and whose hearts remain ever-softened by the remembrance of Allah.

Jewels from the Twenty Eighth Juz: From Divine Nearness to the Stewardship of the Self and Society

(Al-Mujadila 58:1 – Al-Tahrim 66:12)

Introduction

The Qur'an was revealed over twenty-three years, engaging directly with the lived realities of a community being shaped from the ground up. The twenty-eighth Juz stands as a remarkable segment of that revelation, offering a deeply human portrait of what it means to live in conscious relationship with Allah, with others, and with one's own household.

What emerges is a vision of Islam that is at once vast and intimate. It begins with Allah hearing the private grievance of a single woman and extends to the responsibility of every believer to safeguard the spiritual well-being of their own family. Between these two points, the Juz traverses the etiquette of generosity, the ethics of justice toward others, the discipline of thoughtful obedience, and the reality of a creation so immense that human knowledge is only beginning to grasp its scope.

Read these pages with deliberation. Let the example of the Ansar challenge your generosity. Let the image of a mountain humbled by the Qur'an awaken your heart. The demands of this Juz are real, but so is the divine support that accompanies them.

Woven throughout these reflections is a constant reminder of who Allah is: the All-Hearing, the Most Forgiving, and the One whose knowledge encompasses all things

1. The Nearness of Allah, Hearing all You Say

Allah's all-encompassing awareness is vividly illustrated in the opening of Surat Al-Mujadila. In this powerful scene, His closeness, attentiveness, and compassion are placed on full display. He did not merely overhear the conversation between the Prophet (PBUH) and a believing woman regarding a deeply personal grievance; He responded with guidance, justice, and relief

قَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّتِي تُجَادِلُكَ فِي زَوْجِهَا وَتَشْتَكِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَسْمَعُ تَحَاوُرَكُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ (١)
“Allah has certainly heard the statement of the woman who argued with you concerning her husband and complained to Allah. And Allah hears your dialogue. Indeed, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing”. (Al-Mujadila 58:1)

This verse establishes a profound reality: no voice is too quiet, no concern too small, and no grievance beyond the hearing of Allah.

Notably, Surat Al-Mujadilah is uniquely distinguished by the repeated mention of the Name “Allah” in every single verse. This remarkable feature reinforces the central

message of the Surah: Allah is ever-present, fully aware, and intimately involved in all that is said and done.

The Surah further warns those who engage in secret conversations, imagining that their words remain hidden. Allah removes this illusion entirely, affirming His constant presence and complete knowledge:

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا يَكُونُ مِنْ نَجْوَى ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَا آدْنَى مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْثَرَ إِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كَانُوا ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ (٧)

“Do you not see that Allah knows all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth? There is no private discourse among three except that He is their fourth, nor among five except that He is their sixth, nor fewer than that or more, except that He is with them wherever they may be. Then, on the Day of Resurrection, He will inform them of what they did. Indeed, Allah is the All-Knowing of everything.” (Al-Mujadila 58:7)

This reality leaves no room for the illusion of privacy from the Divine. Every word is heard, every intention is known, and every deed is recorded.

It is, therefore, a call to complete sincerity (ikhlaṣ) and constant mindfulness (taqwa) in our speech. In light of this, Allah directs believers to ensure that their private conversations serve only righteous and constructive purposes, free from sin, injustice, or harm.

2. Accommodating Others: From the Masjid to the Heart

Allah establishes a clear code of etiquette for gatherings, emphasizing both physical and emotional generosity when space is limited. He commands:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا فِي الْمَجَالِسِ فَافْسَحُوا يَفْسَحِ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَإِذَا قِيلَ فَأَنْشُرُوا فَأَنْشُرُوا يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتِهِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ (١١)

“O you who believe! When you are asked to make space in gatherings, then make space, and Allah will make a space for you. And when you are told to rise, then rise. Allah will elevate in ranks those among you who believe and those who have been granted knowledge. And Allah is fully aware of all that you do.” (Al-Mujadila 58:11)

Reflect deeply on the precision of this command. Allah does not suggest accommodating others only when it is convenient. He commands: “Make space.” It is immediate, unconditional, and deliberate.

And directly after the command comes a divine promise: “Allah will make space for you.” This space granted by Allah manifests in profound and multifaceted ways:

- **In this Life:** An expansion of your *rizq* (provision), barakah in time, and tranquility in the heart. Allah opens doors that once seemed closed and places ease where there was constraint.
- **In the Hereafter:** An elevation in ranks and a vastness in Paradise beyond imagination.

All of this is granted for what appears outwardly to be a small act: moving slightly, yielding comfort, and preferring another over oneself.

Allah then raises the level of sacrifice: **“And when you are told, ‘Arise,’ then arise...”**

Sometimes, making space requires more than shifting, it requires surrendering your place entirely. It means standing so that another may sit, sacrificing personal comfort for the benefit of a fellow believer. For this higher level of selflessness, the reward becomes greater: **“Allah will raise those who believe among you.”**

This is not merely physical etiquette; it is spiritual training.

We experience this test every Friday. As the masjid fills, each person faces a choice: do we protect our personal space, or do we give preference to our brother? Making room requires humility. It requires disciplining the nafs, the ego that seeks comfort, control, and priority. The greatness of the reward reflects the reality of this internal struggle.

To understand what "making space" looks like in practice, we must look to Madinah during the birth of the Muslim community.

To understand the full depth of “making space,” we turn to the lived example of the early Muslim community in Madinah.

The Muhajiroon (Emigrants) arrived with nothing. They had sacrificed their homes, wealth, and security in Makkah for the sake of Allah. They entered Madinah as strangers without resources. The Ansar (Helpers), the people of Madinah, faced a choice: they could protect their own interests, or they could embody the spirit of sacrifice. They did not merely accommodate them; they embraced them with extraordinary generosity. Allah describes their response:

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْتُونَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (٩)

"And those who were settled in the home and in faith before them love those who emigrated to them. They find no desire in their hearts for what the others were given, and they give preference over themselves even though they are in need. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul, it is they who are truly successful." (Al-Hashr 59:9)

Notice the profound pairing: they were settled in their homes (al-dar) (الدار) and settled in faith (al-iman) (الإيمان). Their iman was not superficial, it was rooted, stable, and as real as the homes they lived in. This depth of faith produced a remarkable outcome: they preferred others over themselves, even in hardship.

The Anṣar embodied the command to “make space” at its ultimate limit.

When Sa’d ibn al-Rabj was paired with Abd al-Raḥman ibn Awf, he offered to divide his entire wealth in half and even proposed parting with one of his wives so that his brother could establish a household. This was not mere generosity; it was a complete opening of one’s life.

It challenges modern definitions of generosity. This was not assistance, it was self-sacrifice.

And what was the result? Allah declared them successful, not because of what they possessed, but because of what they overcame the "stinginess of the soul" (شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ).

.....وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (٩)

"And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul, it is those who are the successful."

This defines true success. Stinginess (shuḥḥ) is not limited to wealth. It is a disease of the heart that causes a person to hoard space, time, attention, and compassion. It turns relationships into transactions and people into burdens.

The Anṣar were protected from this disease. They opened their homes, their wealth, and their hearts, and Allah granted them something far greater: an eternal legacy. More than fourteen centuries later, they remain the gold standard of brotherhood in Islam.

3. Measuring the Heart: Its Reaction to the Quran

In Surat al-Hashr, Allah addresses the believers not through a direct command, but by inviting them to a moment of deep reflection, one that reveals both the nature of the Qur’an and the majesty of its Source:

لَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى جَبَلٍ لَرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا مُتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَلُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ (٢١)

"Had We sent down this Quran upon a mountain, you would have surely seen it humbled and shattered apart from the fear of Allah. Such are the parables We present to mankind so that they may reflect." (Al-Hashr 59:21)

Pause and contemplate this imagery. A mountain represents the ultimate symbol of strength, permanence, and stability. It stands firm for centuries, unmoved by storms and untouched by the passage of time. Yet Allah tells us that if this Qur’an were revealed

upon it, that mountain would not merely tremble, it would collapse, humbled and split apart, not from a physical force, but from the overwhelming weight of khashyah, a profound awe and fear of Allah.

This is the power carried within these words. If the Qur'an has the capacity to shatter a mountain, then what should it be doing to the human heart?

Unlike stone, the human heart was created to be soft, receptive, responsive, and capable of transformation. It was designed to carry faith. This verse, therefore, turns the question inward:

- When I recite the Quran, what happens within me?
- Does it move me, awaken me, or shift my perspective?
- Or does it pass over me like water over a smooth stone, leaving no impression?

Ibn al-Qayyim noted that the heart exists in two states: softness and hardness.

- A soft heart is alive to Allah. It trembles at His words, responds to His reminders, and is repaired by His mercy.
- A hard heart has become desensitized. It hears the Qur'an repeatedly, yet no longer truly listens. It recites but does not receive; it reads but does not reflect.

This verse is more than a description; it is a spiritual diagnostic. The next time you sit with the Qur'an, observe your inner state. If even a slight shift occurs within you, a moment of reflection, a feeling of humility, a tear, or a renewed intention, this is a sign of life.

If nothing stirs, do not despair, but do not ignore it either. Hardness of the heart is not permanent; it is a condition that can be treated. It responds to حضور (presence) in recitation, to deeper tadabbur, and to sincere du'a asking Allah to soften what has become rigid.

A mountain has no choice in how it would respond to the Qur'an. But you do. And choosing to open your heart to the words of Allah is, in itself, one of the greatest acts of worship.

4. Relationships with Peaceful Non-Believers: The Standard of Birr

Within the Qur'anic framework, the governing principle of human relationships is not merely shared belief, but shared conduct. Allah establishes a precise and balanced distinction between those who are hostile and those who are peaceful:

لَا يَنْهَيْكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقْتُلُواكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُواكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ (٨) إِنَّمَا يَنْهَيْكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَتَلُواكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُواكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَهَرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَنْ تَوَلَّوهُمْ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

“Allah does not forbid you from showing birr (kindness and righteousness) and acting justly toward those who have not fought you because of your religion nor expelled you from your homes. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly. (8) Allah only forbids you from taking as allies those who have fought you because of your religion, expelled you from your homes, or supported your expulsion. And whoever takes them as allies, such are the wrongdoers.” (Al-Mumtahina 60:8-9)

The structure of these verses is deliberate and precise. The first opens a wide door for goodness; the second draws a clear boundary against active hostility. The message is unmistakable: it is not a person’s belief alone that determines how they are treated, but their conduct. Where there is no aggression, the default is not mere tolerance, it is birr.

The Qur’an does not use a casual term here. It uses: تَبَرُّوهُمْ , from birr (بِرّ). This word carries a depth far beyond simple kindness. Birr signifies piety, excellence in conduct, and a deeply rooted moral responsibility. It is not passive restraint; it is active goodness.

To appreciate its weight, consider how the Qur’an uses this same term elsewhere:

- **Parental Duty:** *Birr* defines the highest level of devotion a child owes to their parents (*Birr al-Walidayn*).
- **Prophetic Character:** It is the word Prophet Isa (Jesus, peace be upon him) used to describe his conduct toward his mother: (وَبِرًّا بِوَالِدَتِي) “*And [He made me] dutiful (bar’ran) to my mother.*” (Maryam 19:32).

By using this precise term, the Qur’an elevates the treatment of peaceful non-Muslims from a matter of social courtesy to a moral obligation of the highest order.

Thus, showing birr to a peaceful neighbor, colleague, or fellow citizen is not a diplomatic gesture, it is an act of worship. It flows from the same ethical source that governs the most sacred of human relationships.

This principle serves as a critical correction to common misconceptions. The believer’s default posture toward others is not suspicion or distance, but justice (qist/قِست), goodness (birr), and active benevolence toward all who coexist in peace.

5. Islam Demands Thinking Believers

In Surat Al-Mumtahina, Allah outlines the conditions of the pledge of allegiance (bay’ah) taken by believing women. This pledge is a comprehensive moral commitment, rejecting shirk, theft, adultery, infanticide, and slander, but it concludes with a striking and deeply significant qualifier:

يَأْتِيهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ يُبَايِعْنَكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ لَا يُشْرِكْنَ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَسْرِقْنَ وَلَا يَزْنِينَ وَلَا يَقْتُلْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ وَلَا يَأْتِينَ بِبُهْتَانٍ يَفْتَرِينَهُ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِنَّ وَأَرْجُلِهِنَّ وَلَا يَعْصِبْنَكَ فِي مَعْرُوفٍ فَبَايِعْهُنَّ وَأَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُنَّ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (١٢)

“O Prophet, when believing women come to you pledging that they will not associate anything with Allah, nor steal, nor commit adultery, nor kill their children, nor bring forth a slander they fabricate (about who has fathered their children), and that they will not disobey you in what is right (fi ma’ruf), then accept their pledge and seek forgiveness for them from Allah. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.” (Al-Mumtahina 60:12)

This phrase “nor disobey you in an what is right” (fi ma’ruf/ فِي مَعْرُوفٍ) demands careful reflection.

Since the Prophet ﷺ is the Messenger of Allah, it is an established matter of faith that he would never command anything but righteousness. Why, then, does the Qur’an include this qualifier? Why not command absolute, unqualified obedience? The answer reveals a profound principle at the heart of Islamic ethics: Islam does not cultivate blind followers; it cultivates thinking believers.

By embedding the term ma’ruf, that which is recognized as good, just, and morally sound) within the pledge itself, the Qur’an establishes a timeless safeguard governing all human authority. This qualifier carries far-reaching implications:

- **Obedience is Conditional:** Obedience is not absolute; it is anchored to righteousness. Commands are followed when they align with truth and justice, and they are rejected when they contradict divine guidance.
- **Protection from Abuse of Power:** This principle shields believers from becoming instruments of (dhulm / ظلم) injustice in the hands of those who misuse authority.

The scholars of jurisprudence captured this principle clearly: *“There is no obedience to the creation in disobedience to the Creator.”* This is not a call to rebellion, but a call to moral clarity and principled responsibility.

In practical terms, this means that a Muslim, whether a leader or follower, soldier or citizen, employee or student, never disengages their moral judgment. They are not passive executors of commands; they are conscious moral agents. They carry their principles into every decision, measuring their actions against the standard of what is right.

This represents one of the most sophisticated ethical frameworks within Islamic teaching. It ensures that ultimate loyalty remains with Allah and His truth, not with any fallible human authority.

6. Solidarity in the Friday Prayer: The Divine Rhythm

The weekly Friday prayer (Jumu'ah) stands as one of Islam's most visible and powerful expressions of communal unity. It is a divinely ordained rhythm woven into the fabric of Muslim life, returning the believer, every seven days, to the realization that they do not walk this path alone.

In Surat al-Jumu'ah, Allah issues a direct and urgent call:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ (٩) (الجمعة)

“O you who believe, when the call is made for the prayer on the day of Jumu'ah, hasten to the remembrance of Allah and leave off your trade. That is better for you if you only knew.” (Al-Jumu'ah 62:9)

Notably, Allah does not simply call the believers to “prayer”, He calls them to dhikr Allah (the remembrance of Allah). The prayer is the means, but the destination is connection.

The command is urgent: “hasten.” It requires detachment, leaving behind meetings, transactions, and worldly engagements. The phrase “if you only knew” invites deep reflection: what appears as a temporary interruption of worldly activity is, in reality, a moment of immense and lasting gain.

Immediately after the prayer, however, the tone shifts, from stillness back to motion:

فَإِذَا فُضِّيتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ (الجمعة)

“And when the prayer has concluded, disperse through the land and seek the bounty of Allah, and remember Allah much so that you may succeed.” (Al-Jumu'ah 62:10)

The same Lord who commanded you to leave your trade now commands you to return to it. This establishes a foundational Islamic balance: the sacred and the worldly are not in conflict, they are ordered. Islam does not call for withdrawal from life; it calls for discipline within it.

There is, however, a subtle and profound linguistic shift:

- When calling to the masjid: “hasten to the remembrance of Allah.
- When returning to the world: “remember Allah much.”

This distinction reflects two different environments. The masjid is a protected space designed for focus and presence, while the marketplace is a space of distractions and competing demands. Maintaining God-consciousness in the world therefore requires greater effort than maintaining it in prayer. Allah does not ask us to leave the world; He asks us to carry Him into it.

The Surah then concludes by addressing a real and revealing incident. During the Prophet's (PBUH) sermon, a trade caravan arrived in Madinah, and many from the congregation rushed toward it, leaving the Prophet standing on the pulpit:

وَإِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَارَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا أَنْفَضُوا إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكُوكَ قَائِمًا قُلْ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِّنَ اللَّهْوِ وَمِنَ التِّجَارَةِ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ
الرَّازِقِينَ (١١)

“Yet when they saw a transaction or an amusement, they rushed to it and left you standing. Say: What is with Allah is better than amusement and trade. And Allah is the best of providers.” (Al-Jumu'ah 62:11)

This incident involved companions of genuine faith. Yet even sincere hearts can momentarily be overtaken by the pull of the dunya. The Qur'anic correction is not a condemnation of trade; it is a recalibration of priorities. Do not abandon the eternal for the temporary.

The Surah closes with a powerful antidote to the anxiety that drives human haste and attachment: **"And Allah is the best of providers"** (وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ). You did not “miss” provision by attending Jumu'ah; what is written for you will reach you without fail.

What you must protect is not your rizq (provision) but your heart, your presence, and your connection to what truly lasts.

7. The Regret of the Deferred Charity

One of the most sobering warnings in this Juz does not describe a disbeliever or an openly sinful person. Instead, it portrays someone far more familiar: a believer who recognized the value of charity but kept postponing it until the opportunity was lost forever.

وَأَنْفِقُوا مِن مَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِّن قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ فَيَقُولَ رَبِّ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنِي إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ فَأَصَّدَّقَ وَأَكُن
مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ (١٠) وَلَنْ يُؤَخَّرَ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهَا وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ (١١)

"And spend from what We have provided you before death comes to one of you, and he says, 'My Lord, if only You would delay me for a short time, I would give charity and be among the righteous.' (10) But Allah will never delay a soul when its appointed time has come. And Allah is fully aware of what you do." (Al-Munafiqoon 63:10-11)

Pause on the words of this person. At the edge of death, they do not ask for more time to enjoy life, increase wealth, or pursue worldly ambitions. They ask for a brief extension for one specific purpose: to give.

In that final moment, clarity arrives. They realize that the wealth they held onto was never truly theirs to keep, it was an opportunity entrusted to them, now irretrievably lost. The divine response is absolute: the time has expired.

This passage is not merely a command; it is a scene. It does not simply instruct; it allows us to witness what we ourselves may wish we had done. Its power lies in its familiarity.

This is not someone who denied charity. This is someone who delayed it. It is the voice of one who said: "When things settle down...", "When the children are older...", "When I have more to spare..."

The Qur'an dismantles this illusion with a simple but profound truth: the only time you truly possess is now. Everything else is assumption.

The passage then concludes with a striking reminder: **“And Allah is fully aware of what you do.”**

Notice the precision, it does not say *what you intended* or *what you planned*. While intentions are known to Allah, it is actions that are recorded in the scrolls.

- The charity you give today is a reality.
- The charity you intend to give “someday” remains a possibility, one that may never materialize.

Thus, deferred charity is not merely delayed; it is often lost. This raises a deeper question: if the believer knows the value of giving, what holds them back? The Qur'an will go on to identify these obstacles: subtle, internal, and deeply rooted, reminding us that the greatest barriers to generosity are not external circumstances, but conditions within the heart.

8. Wealth and Family: The Subtle Test

If the previous section asks what holds us back from giving, this section provides the answer. The Qur'an identifies two of the most powerful attachments, wealth and family, that can quietly and subtly erode a believer's spiritual focus.

Allah issues a warning that often surprises the reader:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ مِنْ أَرْوَاجِكُمْ وَأَوْلَادِكُمْ عَدُوًّا لَكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُمْ وَإِنْ تَعَفَوْا وَتَصَفَحُوا وَتَغْفِرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (١٤)

“O you who believe! Indeed, among your spouses and children are enemies to you, so beware of them. But if you pardon, overlook, and forgive, then surely Allah is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Al-Taghabun 64:14)

This verse does not condemn family life, nor does it generalize this description to all families. The precision lies in the word “min” (من) “among”, indicating that this applies only to some, not all.

Nor does the term “enemy” imply hostility. Rather, it refers to a potential spiritual obstacle. Out of love, attachment, or the desire for comfort and stability, family members may unintentionally pull the believer toward prioritizing worldly concerns over divine obligations.

For this reason, Allah immediately balances the warning with a call to compassion: pardon, overlook, and forgive. The relationship is not to be broken; it is to be managed with awareness and mercy.

The broader principle is then stated with clarity:

إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ (١٥)

“Your wealth and your children are but a trial (fitnah), but with Allah there is a great reward.” (Al-Taghabun 64:15)

A fitnah is not merely a difficulty; it is a test designed to reveal the true state of the heart. Yet what makes this test profound is that these same elements, wealth and family, can either distract from Allah or become the very means of attaining eternal reward. The Prophet (PBUH) clarified this transformative potential:

إِذَا مَاتَ الْإِنْسَانُ انْقَطَعَ عَنْهُ عَمَلُهُ إِلَّا مِنْ ثَلَاثَةٍ، إِلَّا مِنْ ثَلَاثَةٍ، إِلَّا مِنْ ثَلَاثَةٍ، أَوْ عِلْمٍ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ، أَوْ وَلَدٍ صَالِحٍ يَدْعُو لَهُ [مسلم عن أبي هريرة]

“When a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge, and a righteous child who prays for him.” (Muslim, Tirmidhi)

Thus, the test is not in possessing wealth or having children, the test lies in how they are used.

- Wealth spent in charity outlives the one who gave it.
- A child raised upon faith becomes a continuous source of mercy.

To navigate this test, Allah provides a layered and practical framework:

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ وَأَسْمِعُوا وَأَطِيعُوا وَأَنْفِقُوا خَيْرًا لِّأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

“So have Taqwa of Allah as much as you able; listen and obey; and spend in charity, that is better for your souls. And whoever is saved from the greed of his soul, they are the successful.” (Al-Taghabun 64:16)

Notice that charity is not presented as an optional virtue, it is placed at the core of taqwa. True success is not measured by accumulation, but by overcoming shuhh (شُحّ), the deep-seated greed of the soul.

For those who feel the pain of “losing” wealth through giving, Allah reframes the act entirely by offering a transformative perspective:

إِنْ تُقْرِضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُّضْعِفْهُ لَكُمْ وَيَعْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ شَكُورٌ حَلِيمٌ (١٧)

"If you lend Allah a goodly loan, He will multiply it for you and will forgive you. And Allah is Most Appreciative, Most Forbearing." (Al-Taghabun 64:17)

This is the ultimate reframing. You are not losing what you give, you are lending it to the Owner of all things. He promises not only its return, but its multiplication, along with the gift of forgiveness.

In this light, charity becomes more than an act, it becomes evidence. Evidence that the love of Allah has become greater than the love of what He has given.

9. The Stewardship of the Home: Saving the Family

The Twenty-Eighth Juz contains one of the most demanding personal commands in the Qur'an. It is not directed at rulers or scholars, but at every believer, within the most intimate and influential space of all: the home.

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا قُورًا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ
اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ (٦)

"O you who believe! Protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones, over which are stern and severe angels who do not disobey Allah in what He commands them, but do what they are ordered." (At-Tahrim 66:6)

Notice the deliberate order: "Protect yourselves, and your families." One cannot give what one does not possess. A person who has not cultivated their own taqwa, who has not guarded their own relationship with Allah, is not equipped to guide others. Spiritual leadership begins with personal reform, then extends outward to those entrusted to our care.

The description of the Fire is striking, intentionally vivid and unsettling. It is fueled by people and stones, and guarded by angels described as stern and severe, who execute Allah's commands without hesitation. This imagery is meant to awaken, not merely inform. It underscores the gravity of the responsibility placed upon every believer.

The Prophet (PBUH) grounded this responsibility in a comprehensive principle:

"كلكم راعٍ وكلكم مسئولٌ عن رعيته" (رواه البخاري)

"Each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for his flock."

A shepherd does not simply lead and assume the flock will follow. A shepherd is attentive, vigilant, and proactive, watching for danger, guiding the lost, and ensuring that the flock is nourished and protected. This is the model for the Muslim parent, spouse, and guardian.

Saving a family is not achieved through occasional warnings or isolated instructions. It requires cultivating an environment where faith is lived, not merely spoken:

- Salah is established as a shared, consistent practice within the home.
- Values such as honesty, generosity, and justice, are demonstrated through action before they are taught through words.
- Dialogue is encouraged, allowing questions, doubts, and reflections to be addressed with wisdom rather than suppressed with fear.

Crucially, this command is balanced with profound mercy. The responsibility is to strive, to teach, to model, and to guide, not to control outcomes. No human being holds authority over the hearts of others. Even the Prophets Nuh and Ibrahim (peace be upon them) witnessed members of their own families choose a different path.

Thus, success is not measured by results alone, but by sincerity in effort. The believer who teaches, exemplifies, and consistently prays for their family has fulfilled their trust. They strive not because outcomes are guaranteed, but because Allah has commanded the striving itself. And that striving: with patience, sincerity, and persistence, is both an act of love and an act of worship.

10. The Unfathomable Scale of Creation

We often confine our understanding of divine power to the observable universe. The vastness of galaxies and stars already feels beyond comprehension, yet the Qur'an reminds us that what we see is only a fraction of Allah's creation:

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَمِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَتَنَزَّلُ الْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا

“Allah is the One who created seven heavens and of the earth the like of them (seven earths). His Command descends among them, so that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah has encompassed everything in knowledge.” (Al-Talaq 65:12)

The Qur'an frequently refers to the “seven heavens” as a reality beyond human perception. Yet the phrase “and of the earth the like of them” is especially striking. Classical scholars reflected deeply on this expression and offered multiple interpretations that are united by the interpretation that the earth we inhabit does not represent the entirety of creation:

1. **Distinct Realms:** Multiple creations or realms beyond our own, the exact nature of which remains unspecified.
2. **Layered Structure:** Seven layers within the earth itself, forming a structured internal composition.
3. **Geographical Division:** The known seven continents of our world, distinct yet sharing a single sky.
4. **Non-Specification:** Deliberately refraining from defining its precise nature, recognizing it as part of the unseen (ghayb).

Yet the purpose of this verse is not to provide a geography lesson. It is to overwhelm the reader with a sense of scale, to impress upon the heart that Allah's creation extends in directions the human mind cannot fully grasp. The verse points to a single realization: His power and knowledge are absolute and all-encompassing.

A Conversation Between Revelation and Emerging Science

When read in the light of contemporary thought, this verse acquires an additional layer of reflection. Modern theoretical physics has introduced concepts such as the multiverse, the possibility that our universe is one among many, each governed by distinct laws and constants.

While such theories remain speculative and unproven, their very emergence is telling. Science itself is beginning to acknowledge that reality may be far more expansive than a single observable universe.

For the believer, this is not a claim that the Qur'an predicts specific scientific models. Rather, it affirms a deeper principle the Qur'an has always conveyed: the scale of existence exceeds the boundaries of human measurement and imagination.

One of the most extraordinary reflections on this verse comes from a narration attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA), which describes the seven earths as being populated:

رواه ابن أبي حاتم في تفسيره والحاكم في مستدرکه، و رواه البيهقي، عن أبي الضحى، عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما أنه قال: الله الذي خلق سبع سماوات ومن الأرض مثلهن. قال: سبع أرضين في كل أرض نبي كنبيكم، وأدم كآدم، ونوح كنوح، وإبراهيم كإبراهيم، وعيسى كعيسى .

"Seven earths: in every earth there is a prophet like your Prophet, an Adam like your Adam, a Noah like your Noah, an Abraham like your Abraham, and a Jesus like your Jesus." [Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak, and Al-Bayhaqi, with Al-Hakim and Al-Dhahabi declaring its chain of transmission authentic]

Even if approached with scholarly caution, this narration invites a profound reflection. It presents a cosmos not of randomness, but of intentionality, worlds that, if they exist, are governed, guided, and encompassed by divine command. Allah's amr (command) descends through all of them.

We may never verify such realities through instruments or observation. Yet as we continue to uncover the immense scale of our own universe, hundreds of billions of galaxies, this verse begins to resonate more deeply.

The God we worship did not create something small and call it "everything." The verse itself directs us to its ultimate purpose:

لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ
“...so that you may know that Allah has power over all things...”

This is not merely a statement of theology; it is an invitation to transformation. When this knowledge settles in the heart, it reshapes perception. It dissolves limitation, instills awe, and anchors the believer in certainty.

The One who governs such a vast and incomprehensible creation is the same One who hears your Du'a, knows your struggles, and controls your destiny. And in that realization, the soul finds both humility and peace before the Lord of all worlds.

Conclusion:

A journey that begins with a woman's complaint and culminates in the protection of one's family spans a profound and meaningful distance. Yet, when viewed as a whole, these ten reflections reveal a remarkable coherence.

The Twenty-Eighth Juz offers a portrait of the striving believer: one who lives with the awareness that Allah hears every word; who makes space for others without calculating the cost; who thinks with clarity; who treats others with active goodness; and who gives before the opportunity slips away.

This Juz affirms that such striving is not in vain. The charity you give becomes a "goodly loan", multiplied and returned with forgiveness. The heart that responds to the Qur'an is a heart that has come alive. The family you guide with sincerity becomes a legacy that extends beyond your own lifetime.

While the Juz does not ignore human weakness, it never leaves the believer without direction. At every turn, it offers both a warning and a path forward.

Ultimately, this Juz answers a question that resides in every heart: Is Allah near? It answers with certainty. He heard the quiet struggle of a single woman and responded. If He was that near to her, then He is that near to you.

Carry these jewels into your daily life. Let them shape how you sit among others, how you lead within your home, how you give, and how you perceive the world around you. This is what the Juz calls you to. And that call, in itself, is a mercy.

Jewels from the Twenty Ninth Juz: Where the Quran Speaks Directly to the Soul, Here and Now

(Al-Mulk 67:1 – Al-Mursalat 77:50)

Introduction

The twenty-ninth Juz of the Qur'an is not a collection of disconnected passages. It is a sustained conversation between Allah and the human being: one that confronts the deepest questions of existence with clarity, urgency, and compassion.

Who are you? Why are you here? What are you moving toward? And how should you live in light of that reality?

The surahs gathered in this Juz traverse a remarkable range of themes: the nature of the test we are living through, the character we are called to embody, the dangers we must avoid, the deeds that define our standing, and the realities that await us beyond this life. Yet beneath this diversity runs a single unifying thread: The Qur'an is addressing you, directly, presently, and personally, about your actual condition. The Qur'an, as Allah reminds us, "guides to that which is most upright", in a present, continuous, and living sense. It speaks not only to past generations, but to your present moment. The only question is: Will you approach it with the openness it

1. Death and Life are Just Tests: Run in the Right Direction

The most undeniable reality every human being knows is this: we were born, and we will die. From this certainty arises profound questions that no thoughtful person can escape:

1. Who truly controls the timing and process of my birth and my death?
2. Since my time on earth is limited, what is my purpose?
3. Did I exist before this life, and what awaits me after death?

The Qur'an answers these questions with striking clarity in a single, concise verse:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ (٢)

"He is the One who created death and life that He may test you as to which of you is best in deeds; and He is the All-Mighty, the Most Forgiving." (Al-Mulk 67:2)

Our birth and our death are entirely under the control of Allah. He is the Creator of both. Our presence in this world is not random, it is a test, and the measure of that test is not merely action, but the quality of action. This test manifests in every form: hardship and ease, loss and provision, and adversity and opportunity. Each moment carries eternal significance.

Notice that the verse places death before life. Scholars have noted that death is mentioned first because it is the most decisive evidence of Allah's absolute authority over creation. Yet the sequence may also suggest a deeper reality: that we once existed in a state of non-existence before being brought into life. And just as we were brought into this life, we will pass through death again, only to be raised once more for judgment. This reality is confirmed by those condemned to the Fire:

قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَمَتْنَا اثْنَتَيْنِ وَأَحْيَيْتَنَا اثْنَتَيْنِ فَاعْتَرَفْنَا بِذُنُوبِنَا فَهَلْ إِلَى خُرُوجٍ مِّن سَبِيلٍ (١١)

“They say: Our Lord! You have made us to die twice, and You have given us life twice. Now we confess our sins; is there any way out?” (Ghafir 40:11)

If life is a test and time is limited, then the most critical question becomes: Where should our energy be directed? The Qur’an answers this by calibrating the speed at which we move, depending on what we are pursuing. Allah says:

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذَلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِن رِّزْقِهِ وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ (١٥)

“He is the One who has made the earth manageable for you, so walk through its regions and eat of His provision, and to Him is the Resurrection.” (Al-Mulk 67:15)

And He describes the righteous:

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا

The faithful slaves of Al-Rahman are they who walk upon the earth with calm dignity.” (Al-Furqan 25:63)

In both verses, the word used is (يَمْشُونَ,) they walk. A steady, composed movement. No panic. No frantic rushing.

When it comes to worldly provision, Allah deliberately tempers human instinct. The earth has been made easy; sustenance has been distributed. There is no need to scramble. But when the focus shifts to the Hereafter, the language transforms:

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ

“Hasten to forgiveness from your Lord.” (Al-Emran 3:133)

سَابِقُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ

“Race with one another towards forgiveness from your Lord.” (Al-Hadid 57:21)

فَفِرُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ

“Flee unto Allah.” (Al-Dhariyat 51:50)

Walk, hasten, race, flee; the escalation is deliberate. In matters of Dunya, human beings need no encouragement to move fast, their instinct is to rush. So, the Qur’an slows them down: walk, be balanced, be composed.

But in matters of the Hereafter, people delay. “Tomorrow” becomes a refuge. So, the Qur’an intensifies its call, hasten, race, flee, each command pushing against spiritual complacency.

This contrast is not merely rhetorical; it is diagnostic. It exposes the natural imbalance within us: we sprint toward what is temporary while we stroll toward what is eternal.

The Qur’an does not ask us to abandon the world. It asks us to recalibrate our pace, to ensure that our urgency aligns with what truly lasts.

The question, then, is not whether we are moving. The question is: Are we running in the right direction?

2. The Diamond on the Crown of the Prophet: Noble Character

The nature of the Prophet (PBUH) and the purpose of his message to humanity can be distilled in two words: noble character. The highest praise that Allah bestowed upon the Prophet (PBUH) is captured in this powerful verse:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ (٤)

“And indeed, you are of a great and exalted character.” (Al-Qalam 68: 4)

This divine testimony elevates character to the very summit of prophetic excellence. It is not merely one aspect of his mission; it is its defining quality. The Prophet (PBUH) himself articulated this purpose with remarkable precision:

“إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ.” [أَخْرَجَهُ الْبَيْهَقِيُّ وَأَحْمَدُ وَالْحَاكِمُ]

“I was sent only to perfect the noble character.” [Reported by Al-Bayhaqi, Ahmad, and Al-Hakim]

Thus, the message of Islam is not limited to rituals or legal frameworks; it is a comprehensive project of moral refinement.

The Prophet (PBUH) returned to this theme repeatedly, establishing a consistent standard for faith itself: that its completeness is measured through character. Among his sayings:

أَكْمَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَحْسَنُهُمْ خُلُقًا [أَبُو دَاوُدَ وَأَحْمَدُ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ]

“The most perfect of believers is the best in character.”

[إِنْ خِيَارَكُمْ أَحْسَنَكُمْ أَخْلَاقًا] [الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ]

“The best among you is the best in character.”

أَفْضَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَحْسَنُهُمْ خُلُقًا [الْحَاكِمُ عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ]

“The most excellent believer is the best in character.”

(أحب عباد الله إلى الله أحسنهم خلقاً) [الطبراني]

“The most beloved servant to Allah is the one who with the best manners.”

(إن الرجل ليُدرِك بحسن خُلُقِه درجات قائم الليل صائم النهار) [أبو داود والحاكم عن عائشة]

“A person reaches through good character, the rank of one who prays all night and fasts all day”.

(إن من أحببكم وأقربكم مني مجلساً يوم القيامة: أحاسنكم أخلاقاً). [الترمذي عن جابر]

“The most beloved to me, and the closest to me on the Day of Judgment, will be those with the best character”.

Taken together, these narrations establish a profound principle:

- Character is the completion of faith
- Character is the measure of excellence
- Character is the path to Allah’s love
- Character is the means to the highest ranks in the Hereafter

This elevates character from a secondary virtue to a central pillar of the religion. Rituals without character remain incomplete. Knowledge without character becomes a burden. Even acts of worship derive their true value from the character they produce.

3. Committing to Feeding the Poor is a Defining Sign of Belief

Surat Al-Ḥaqqah presents a vivid and decisive scene from the Day of Judgment: humanity divided into two distinct categories, each identified by how they receive their record of deeds.

One group receives their record in the right hand, an honor that reflects acceptance and success. They rejoice, knowing their destination is Paradise.

The other group receives their record in the left hand, a sign of utter loss. They are overwhelmed with regret, fully aware that they are bound for the Fire. This outcome is the result of foundational failures that shaped their lives:

إِنَّهُ كَانَ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ (٣٣) وَلَا يَحْضُرُ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ الْمَسْكِينِ (٣٤)

“Indeed, He did not believe in Allah, the Most Great, (33) nor did he encourage the feeding the poor” (Al-Haqqah 69:33-34)

The pairing in these verses is precise and deeply revealing. Disbelief in Allah is placed side by side with a social failure: neglecting, and even failing to encourage, the feeding of the poor. This is not accidental.

The Qur'an does not present faith as a purely internal conviction. True belief must translate into visible concern for others, especially the most vulnerable. What is striking in the verse is that the condemnation is not limited to one who refuses to give. Rather, it extends to one who does not even urge others to feed the poor. Such a person may claim faith, but the Qur'an challenges the authenticity of that claim.

This linkage between belief and care for the needy is not isolated. It appears consistently across the Qur'an:

أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالْإِيمَانِ (١) فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَدْعُ الْيَتِيمَ (٢) وَلَا يَحْضُ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ (٣)
“Have you seen the one who denies the Judgment? That is the one who repulses the orphan and does not encourage the feeding of the poor.” (Al-Ma'un 107:1-3)

Again, denial of the Hereafter is tied directly to neglect of the vulnerable. This establishes a powerful principle: belief in Allah must produce mercy, and certainty in accountability must produce responsibility. Without this transformation, belief remains superficial.

The Qur'an is not calling for sporadic acts of generosity. It demands a committed stance. Notice the language: “وَلَا يَحْضُ” **“nor did he encourage.”** This implies advocacy, social responsibility and a proactive role in building a caring community.

It is not enough to give occasionally. A believer must care deeply, act consistently, and inspire others to do the same

4. The Perfection of Character Through Prayers

Surah Al-Ma'arij presents a penetrating analysis of human nature. It exposes the innate weaknesses within the human being, traits that, if left unchecked, can corrupt both character and society. Allah says:

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا (١٩) إِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ جَزُوعًا (٢٠) وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الْخَيْرُ مَنُوعًا (٢١)
“Indeed, man was created anxious: (19) distressed when adversity touches him, (20) and stingy when good reaches him.” (Al-Ma'arij 70:19-21)

Three core deficiencies are identified:

- Anxiety (halu'an) (هَلُوعًا): a restless, unstable inner state
- Panic in hardship (jazu'an) (جَزُوعًا): losing control when tested
- Stinginess in ease (manu'an) (مَنُوعًا): withholding when blessed

These are not occasional flaws; they are described as part of the human condition.

But the Qur'an does not leave the human being trapped in this reality. It immediately introduces the path of transformation:

إِلَّا الْمَصْلِينَ (٢٢) الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ دَائِمُونَ (٢٣)

“Except those who pray (22) and are constant in their prayers.” (Al-Ma’arij 70:22-23)

Prayer in the Qur’anic sense is not a ritual performed in isolation. It is a disciplinary system that restructures the human soul. From this foundation of consistent prayer, a chain of moral qualities emerges:

Prayer transforms stinginess into generosity.

وَالَّذِينَ فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ مَّعْلُومٌ (٢٤) لِّلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ (٢٥)

“And those in whose wealth there is a recognized right (24) for the one who asks and the deprived. (Al-Ma’arij 70:25)

Prayer deepens certainty into accountability.

وَالَّذِينَ يُصَدِّقُونَ بِيَوْمِ الدَّيْنِ (٢٦)

And those who affirm the Day of Judgment (Al-Ma’arij 70:26)

Prayers cultivate heedlessness into awareness.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابِ رَبِّهِمْ مُّشْفِقُونَ (٢٧)

And those who are in awe of their Lord’s punishment.” (Al-Ma’arij 70:27)

Prayer disciplines desire into self-restraint.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ (٢٩)

“And those who guard their chastity.” (Al-Ma’arij 70:29)

Thus, prayer is not an isolated act; it is the engine that produces moral excellence.

The verses continue, extending the impact of prayer from Inner discipline to social Integrity:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمْتِنَتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ (٣٢)

“And those who are faithful to their trusts and their promises.” (Al-Ma’arij 70:32)

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِشَهَادَاتِهِمْ قَائِمُونَ (٣٣)

“And those who stand firm in their testimonies.” (Al-Ma’arij 70:33)

Here, prayer produces trustworthiness in responsibility, integrity in commitments, and truthfulness in speech. These are not separate virtues; they are the natural outcomes of a heart shaped by consistent connection with Allah.

These verses reframe how we understand prayer. Prayer is not merely a ritual obligation or a moment of spiritual pause; it is a comprehensive program for character development. If prayer is established properly: anxiety is replaced with tranquility, selfishness with generosity, instability with discipline, and moral weakness with integrity.

5. The Power of Seeking Forgiveness

Seeking Allah's forgiveness (istighfar) is presented in the Qur'an not merely as a spiritual act, but as a transformative key that unlocks divine provision and relief. Allah conveys the call of Prophet Nuḥ to his people:

فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبِّيَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا (١٠) يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا (١١) وَيُمْدِدْكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ أَنْهَارًا (١٢)

“I said (to them): Seek forgiveness from your Lord, for indeed He is Most-Forgiving; (10) He will send rain from the sky upon you in abundance, (11) and will provide you with wealth and children, and grant you gardens and rivers.”
(Nuh 71:10-12)

The promise is expansive: relief from drought, increase in provision, growth in family, and flourishing of life. Yet this raises an important and often unspoken question: if we frequently seek forgiveness, why do we not always see these outcomes?

The answer lies not in the promise, but in the quality of the seeking. Istighfar in the Qur'anic sense is not a verbal formula alone. It is a state that combines recognition of wrongdoing, sincere remorse, a turning back to Allah, and a commitment to change.

When istighfar is reduced to repetition without transformation, it loses its intended effect. A tongue that says “Astaghfirullah” while persisting in the same wrongdoing, neglecting obligations, or remaining heedless, is not engaging in the istighfar that Prophet Nuḥ described.

True istighfar is inseparable from tawbah (repentance). It is not only asking for forgiveness but also returning to Allah. This is why the Prophet (PBUH) not only taught istighfar, but modeled it as a living practice:

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: “وَاللَّهِ إِنِّي لَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ فِي الْيَوْمِ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً.” [رواه البخاري]

“By Allah, I seek Allah's forgiveness and repent to Him more than seventy times a day”.
[Reported by Al-Bukhari, from Abu Hurairah]

His istighfar was not driven by sin, but by humility, awareness of Allah and constant return.

The Prophet (PBUH) emphasized not just seeking forgiveness, but persisting in it:

عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: “من لزم الاستغفار، جعل الله له من كل ضيق مخرجاً ومن كل هم فرجاً، ورزقه من حيث لا يحتسب” رواه أبو داود.

"Whoever consistently seeks forgiveness, Allah will appoint for him a way out of every distress and a relief from every anxiety, and will provide for him sustenance from where he does not expect" [Reported by Abu Dawud, from Ibn Abbas]

The key word is "lazima" "لَزِمَ": to adhere, to persist, to remain attached. This is not occasional remembrance. It is a sustained state of returning to Allah.

If the outcome is not visible, the issue may lie in one or more of the following:

- Lack of sincerity: words without presence of heart
- Persistence in wrongdoing: seeking forgiveness without leaving the sin
- Impatience: expecting immediate worldly results while ignoring unseen benefits
- Limited understanding of provision: restricting Allah's response to material gain alone.

For Allah may respond by removing hidden harm, delaying a trial, increasing inner peace or storing the reward for the Hereafter. The response is always real, though not always in the form we expect.

Istighfar is also the most fitting conclusion to any act of worship. Just as prayer ends with seeking forgiveness, the believer recognizes that no action is free from deficiency. Thus, istighfar becomes an admission of imperfection and an expression of continuous humility before Allah.

6. The Grave Danger of Seeking Help from Jinn

The Qur'an introduces us to a parallel creation: the Jinn, beings created from smokeless fire (مَارِجٍ مِّن نَّارٍ), endowed with intellect, moral responsibility, and free will. Like humans, they receive guidance, believe or disbelieve, and will stand accountable before Allah on the Day of Judgment.

Yet despite this shared moral framework, the Qur'an draws a firm and uncompromising boundary, the Jinn are not a source of refuge, protection, or reliance.

Allah records a powerful confession, spoken by the Jinn themselves:

وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِّنَ الْإِنسِ يَعُوذُونَ بِرِجَالٍ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَزَادُوهُمْ رَهَقًا (٦)

"And there were men among humans who sought refuge with men among the jinn, but they only increased them in burden and humiliation." (Al-Jinn 72:6)

The weight of this verse lies in its source. This is not a human critique of superstition; it is a confession from the Jinn themselves. The believing Jinn, upon hearing the Qur'an, recount this reality not with pride, but with acknowledgment of harm. Their testimony exposes the illusion behind a practice that many humans once considered a source of protection.

By preserving their words in the Qur'an, Allah transforms this confession into an enduring warning: what appears as protection is, in reality, a pathway to harm.

The dynamic described in the verse is deeply revealing. A human who turns to a Jinn for protection assumes he is gaining power. In truth, he is surrendering it. The Qur'anic term "rahaqan" (رَهَقًا) conveys a range of meanings: oppression, burden, psychological distress, and overpowering subjugation. Instead of being protected, the person becomes entangled in a relationship that weakens the heart, distorts reliance, and opens the door to manipulation.

This issue is not merely about interacting with the unseen; it is about misdirected reliance. Seeking refuge (isti'adhah) (استعاذة) is an act of the heart: a declaration of human weakness and ultimate dependence. When this act is directed toward anything other than Allah, it undermines the foundation of tawhid.

While the ancient forms of seeking refuge in Jinn may appear distant, the underlying pattern remains: reliance on unseen forces, attraction to hidden power, and the desire for control beyond lawful means. Whether through superstition, occult practices, or distorted spiritual claims, the essence is the same: seeking from creation what only the Creator can provide.

The lesson is clear and decisive: turning to any created being, human or Jinn, for ultimate protection is not only spiritually dangerous, but also self-defeating. True refuge belongs to the Creator of the seen and unseen, the One who controls harm and benefit, and the One who is never overpowered

7. From Being Wrapped to Standing Firm: A Living Call from Surat Al-Muzzammil and Al-Muddaththir

We often approach the Quran in one of two ways: as a book we recite for blessings, or as a text we study for knowledge. Both are valuable. But there is a third way, more demanding and more transformative. It is to approach the Quran as a direct address to us, speaking to our present condition.

Scholars of Tafsir affirm that the openings of Surah Al-Muzzammil and Surah Al-Muddaththir refer to the state of the Prophet (PBUH) at the beginning of revelation, when he wrapped and covered himself out of awe. We affirm this fully. Yet the Quran also declares:

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ

"Indeed, this Quran guides to that which is the most upright." (Al-Isra 17: 9)

The verb "guides" is in the present tense: continuous, active, living. The Qur'an is not a record of past guidance. It is guidance unfolding in every generation. While the primary address of these surahs relates to the state of the Prophet (PBUH) at the beginning of revelation, the living nature of the Qur'an allows their message to extend beyond that

moment. With that in mind, these two surahs become more than historical records; they become a mirror for our own condition.

The First State: Wrapped and Closed

Allah opens Surat Al-Muzzammil with a striking image:

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَزْمُولُ (١) فُمْ أَلَيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا (٢)

"O you who are wrapped up, (1) arise in the night except a little." (Al-Muzzammil 73:1-2)

The word Muzzammil describes someone wrapped, enclosed, and isolated. Wrapping creates comfort, but it also creates distance. It keeps the outside out and preserves what is already within.

Ask yourself: in what way are you wrapped? For many of us, this wrapping is not physical, it is intellectual and spiritual. It is the quiet certainty that "I already know what the Quran means," "I have studied it," "I have heard the explanations." That knowledge is valuable, but it can become a ceiling. We stop expecting the Quran to transform us and begin using it only to confirm what we already believe.

From the outside, this can look like religiosity: we recite, attend lectures, and engage in discussions. But inwardly, something subtle has closed: true receptivity, true openness to receive.

The Reality of the Qur'an We Claim to Believe In

Allah reminds us of the true reality of the Qur'an:

وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تَبْيِينًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ (٨٩)

"And We have sent down to you the Book as clarification for all things and as guidance and mercy and good tidings for the Muslims." (An-Nahl 16:89)

The claim is absolute: clarification for all things, not just rituals or theology, but every dimension of life. The problem is rarely disbelief in this verse; the problem is the gap between affirming it and reading as if it were true.

The cure Allah prescribes is not more information or more lectures. It is something deeper; it is transformation of the state in which we approach the Qur'an:

فُمْ أَلَيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا (٢) نُّصَفَهُ تَوَّأَوْ أَنْقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا (٣) أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا (٤)

"Arise the night except a little. (2) Half of it or subtract from it a little. (3) Or add to it and recite the Quran with measured recitation." (Al-Muzzammil 73:2-4)

Why the night? Because the night removes noise, social roles, and external identity. In the night, you are no longer the scholar, the experienced believer, or the teacher. You are simply a servant standing before the words of Allah.

There is also a subtle harmony here with how the human mind functions. Modern neuroscience identifies what is known as the default mode network (DMN), a network in the brain that becomes more active when external stimulation decreases. In states of quiet wakefulness, when distractions are reduced, the mind naturally turns inward, reflecting, connecting ideas, and engaging in deeper contemplation.

The stillness of the night creates precisely this condition. As external noise fades, the heart and mind become more receptive. The Qur'an is no longer competing with the world; it is encountered in a state where reflection becomes natural, and meaning can settle with greater depth. As Allah says:

إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْئًا وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلًا (٦)

"Indeed, the hours of the night are stronger in impact and more suitable for words." (Al-Muzzammil 73:6)

The heart aligns with the tongue. The message penetrates deeper. The wrapping begins to loosen. This is not about gaining new information; it is about becoming receptive again, as if hearing the Qur'an for the first time.

The Second State: Covered but Not Moving

Then comes the second address:

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ (١) فُمْ فَأَنْذِرْ (٢)

"O you who is covered, (1) arise and warn." (Al-Muddaththir 74:1-2)

The condition has shifted. The Muzzammil was wrapped and closed to receiving. The Muddaththir has received but remains covered from action. This is the person who felt the impact of the Quran, experienced clarity, and gained insight and then returned to normal life unchanged. The truth entered but it did not move the person.

So, the command changes: arise, not to receive but to act. But before commanding action, Allah sets its conditions:

وَرَبِّكَ فَكَبِّرْ (٣) وَثِيَابَكَ فَطَهِّرْ (٤) وَالرُّجْزَ فَاهْجُرْ (٥)

"Magnify your Lord. (3) Purify your garments. (4) And abandon impurity." (Al-Muddaththir 74:3-5)

The sequence is precise: magnify Allah (correct your internal scale), purify yourself (align your character), abandon impurity (remove contradictions).

You cannot carry a message that you have not embodied. Internal sincerity must come first. Character must align with speech. Integrity precedes influence.

Then comes a critical warning:

وَلَا تَمُنُّنَ تَسْتَكْبِرُ (٦)

"And do not give, expecting to gain more." (Al-Muddaththir 74:6)

Do not act for recognition, do not speak for influence, and do not seek return.

The Complete Journey

Read together, these two surahs outline the journey of every believer:

1. You are wrapped: comfortable in what you know. Closed to deeper transformation.
2. You are called to arise: through night engagement, humility, and openness.
3. You begin to receive: the Qur'an starts speaking to your reality.
4. You are commanded to act: you cannot keep guidance to yourself.
5. You purify your intention: acting sincerely, without seeking return.

Unwrapping yourself is not a small act. It is an act of faith: trusting Allah's description of His Book more than trusting your familiarity with it. The Quran is open. The only question is whether you will meet it that way.

8. No Excuses: You are the Witness over Yourself

The following verses transport us to a decisive moment on the Day of Judgment, when every human being will be confronted with a complete and undeniable account of their life:

يُنَبِّئُوا الْإِنْسَانَ بِمَا قَدَّمَ وَأَخَّرَ (١٣) بَلِ الْإِنْسَانُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ بَصِيرَةٌ (١٤) وَلَوْ أَلْقَىٰ مَعَاذِيرَهُ (١٥)

"On that Day, man will be informed of what he sent ahead and what he left behind. (13) Truly, man will be a clear witness against himself, (14) even if he presents all his excuses." (Al-Qiyamah 75:13-15)

The scene strips away every illusion. A person is shown what they prioritized, what they delayed, what they chose to act upon, and what they neglected. Nothing is overlooked.

The most striking declaration is:

بَلِ الْإِنْسَانُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ بَصِيرَةٌ (١٤)

"Man is a witness against himself." (75:14)

This verse dismantles the very foundation of self-deception. In this life, a person can justify actions, reinterpret intentions, construct narratives, and defend himself before others. But on that Day, the inner reality becomes fully exposed. The "nafs" "نفس" (self) that once concealed the truth will now testify to it. Even more striking:

وَلَوْ أَلْقَىٰ مَعَاذِيرَهُ (١٥)

"Even if he presents all his excuses." (75:15)

No matter how refined, logical, or emotionally compelling the excuses may be, they will carry no weight, because the one presenting them already knows the truth.

The verses continue:

لَا تُحَرِّكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ ۚ (١٦) إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ ۚ وَقُرْآنَهُ ۚ فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ ۚ (١٨) ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ ۚ (١٩)

“Do not move your tongue to repeat it in haste. (16) It is our responsibility to collect it and recite it. (17) When We recite it follow our recitation. (18) Then it is our responsibility to make it clear.” (Al-Qiyamah 75:16-19)

The established interpretation among scholars is that these verses address the Prophet (PBUH) during the revelation, guiding him not to hasten in repeating the Qur’an as it was being revealed, with the assurance that Allah would preserve it and make it clear.

However, when read within the uninterrupted flow of this passage, a secondary reflective dimension may be observed. The language evokes a scene of listening without interruption: no rushing to respond, no attempt to interject, no effort to reshape the narrative. As if, on the Day of Judgment, when the record is presented, it will be recited completely and explained with perfect clarity. While in this life we interrupt, argue, justify, and defend, on that Day the record speaks and it is final.

These verses are not merely describing a future event. They are offering a mirror in the present before the Day comes when excuses collapse and the self becomes its own witness. The Qur’an invites us to ask: If I was to stand before my own record today, would I still need excuses? For the greatest opportunity we have now is that the witnessing self is still capable of change, before it becomes only a witness against us.

9. The Traits of the Righteous and the Centrality of Feeding

Before describing the qualities of the righteous, Allah first reveals their destination:

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا (٥)

“Indeed, the righteous will drink from a cup mixed with Kafur.” (Al-Insan 76:5)

The Qur’an begins with the outcome, a scene of purity, refreshment, and honor in Paradise. But this reward is not arbitrary, it is the direct result of who they were in this life. At the center of their character lies a defining trait: active compassion, expressed not in words but in tangible acts of sacrifice:

يُوفُونَ بِالَّذِذِّ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ مُسْتَطِيرًا (٧) وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ۚ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا (٨)
إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا (٩)

“They fulfil their vows and fear a Day whose harm is widespread. (7) They give food despite their need for it, to the needy, the orphan, and the captive. (8) saying, ‘We feed you only for the sake of Allah, we desire no reward nor any thanks.’ (Al-Insan 76:7-9)

Their actions are rooted in commitment to Allah and deep awareness of the Hereafter. This internal state then manifests outwardly: not as casual generosity, but as deliberate giving from what they value (عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ), not from surplus easy to spare.

Their words reveal true sincerity behind their action. They have no expectation of material return, no desire for recognition and not even a need for gratitude.

Perhaps the most striking element in this passage is the range of recipients: the needy “al-miskin” (المسكين), the orphan “al-yatim” (اليتيم), and the captive “al-asir” (الأسير). The first two are expected, but the third challenges instinct. A captive, especially in its historical context, may be a former enemy. Yet the righteous extend the same care, the same food, and the same sincerity.

This reveals a profound principle: True compassion is not selective. It does not depend on relationships, familiarity or perceived worthiness. It flows from a higher standard: seeking Allah alone.

Feeding others, in this context, is not merely an act of charity, it becomes a test of sincerity, a reflection of faith and a manifestation of the heart.

Across the Qur'an, care for others, especially through feeding, is repeatedly tied to belief, righteousness, and ultimate success. As if the Qur'an is teaching us that faith which does not reach the hands has not yet reached the heart.

The passage leaves us with a powerful reflection: do we give from what we do not need, or from what we love? Do we give for Allah or for recognition? Do we give selectively or universally?

10. The True Liars – Denying the Obvious Truth

Surah Al-Mursalat delivers one of the most forceful rhetorical structures in the Qur'an. It addresses those who deny the truth, not merely as people who are mistaken, but as those who persist in denying what has become unmistakably clear.

The surah builds its case through a sequence of decisive challenges, each followed by the same thundering refrain:

وَيَلِّ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ

“Woe on that Day to the deniers!” (Al-Mursalat 77:15, 19, 24, 28, 34, 37, 40, 45, 47 and 49)

The repetition is not accidental. Each return of the warning comes after evidence has been presented. It is as if the surah declares: Here is the proof, so what remains of denial?

The surah unfolds its argument through ten escalating challenges:

First: Terrifying cosmic signs announcing the end of the world, the unraveling of the universe itself. When reality collapses at this scale, denial becomes irrational.

Second: A historical pattern: those who denied before were destroyed. This is not speculation, it is precedent.

Third: Human creation: from a humble fluid, placed in a secure womb, precisely measured and formed. The denier's own existence stands as evidence against him.

Fourth: Visible blessings: the earth made livable, mountains set firm, and pure water provided. These are sustained signs, not random occurrences.

Fifth: A vivid portrayal of punishment: smoke, fire, sparks like castles, blazing intensity. The imagery is physical and concrete, removing any illusion that consequence is abstract.

Sixth: Total silence on that Day. No argument. No defense. The tongue that once denied will no longer function as a shield.

Seventh: Universal gathering: every generation brought together. No delay, no escape, no exception.

Eighth: A contrasting scene: the righteous in shade, springs, and provision, enjoying the reward of what they used to do. The contrast exposes the cost of denial.

Ninth: A cutting address: enjoy yourselves for a little while. The sarcasm is deliberate, highlighting the short-lived nature of worldly indulgence.

Tenth: The final exposure: even when commanded now to bow, they refuse. Yet on that Day, the opportunity will be gone. The door they ignored will be permanently closed.

When these ten challenges are viewed together, a powerful conclusion emerges; denial is no longer due to lack of evidence. It is rejection of what is already known, resistance to what is already clear, and refusal to submit despite certainty. This is why the Qur'an labels such people "al-mukadhdhibin" "المكذبين", not merely disbelievers, but deniers. They are not people who do not know. They are people who reject what they recognize.

The verses leave us with one unavoidable realization: The greatest falsehood is not failing to see the truth, but seeing it clearly and still turning away.

Conclusion:

The ten sections of this chapter draw from different passages of the twenty-ninth Juz, yet they converge upon a single, defining truth: A human life has a direction, and the Qur'an exists to orient it.

We began where the Qur'an itself begins its address: with life and death, with the reality of the test, and with the question of where our effort should be directed. From there, we moved through the defining features of a life aligned with that purpose:

- the noble character of the Prophet ﷺ as the living model.
- the inseparable link between faith and compassion, especially toward the poor.
- the role of prayer in reshaping human nature.
- the transformative power of sincere *istighfar*.
- the danger of misdirected reliance on creation.
- the call to rise from spiritual enclosure to active engagement.
- the certainty of accountability, where no excuse will remain.
- the portrait of the righteous, whose sincerity and sacrifice earned them Paradise.
- and finally, the Qur'an's ten-fold challenge to those who persist in denial.

What emerges is not a checklist of isolated actions, but a coherent vision of life: a life that moves through the world with calm balance yet races toward the Hereafter; a life that gives without expectation, serves without recognition, and remembers without distraction; a life that prays consistently, repents sincerely, and engages the Qur'an not as inherited knowledge, but as a living guide to its own reality.

The twenty-ninth Juz names the human condition with honesty: our anxiety, our hesitation, our attachment to comfort, and our tendency to delay what truly matters. Yet every exposure of weakness is accompanied by a path to strength. The Qur'an does not close the conversation, it opens it. And its invitation is simple and profound: arise, engage, return. Trust that the One who created you, knows you fully, and has already provided the guidance you need.

Jewels from the Thirtieth Juz: The Final Call - From Awareness to Action (Al-Naba 78:1 – Al-Nas 114:6)

Introduction

The thirtieth Juz of the Qur'an is unique. Its surahs are short, its verses compact, and its language direct. Yet within this brevity lies an extraordinary density of meaning. These are the surahs most Muslims memorize first and recite most often in prayer, and yet, paradoxically, they are often recited with the least reflection.

The reflections that follow are not a comprehensive commentary on Juz 30. They are ten carefully selected jewels which, when taken together, present the essential foundations of a life lived in conscious relationship with Allah.

They begin with the most fundamental question a human being can ask: Who is your Lord? From there, they move through the certainty of the Hereafter, the reality of accountability, the demand for justice, and the necessity of moral courage. They turn inward to the purification of the soul, then outward again to the lived structure of religion. They place the reader before the urgency of time, before concluding where the Qur'an itself concludes, with the believer seeking protection from the dangers that surround them and reside within them.

These reflections are not written for specialists. They are written for anyone who wants the Qur'an to speak directly to their life, their decisions, their struggles, and their daily choices. The Qur'an has never been a book of information alone. It is a book of transformation, but only for the one who brings it close enough to be addressed by it.

1. Knowing Allah: The Foundation of All Action

The Qur'an begins by addressing the most fundamental question a human being can ask: Who is your Lord?

He is neither distant nor abstract. He is the One who created, proportioned, and continues to govern every aspect of existence. He is One, absolutely independent, and utterly unlike anything the human mind can conceive.

سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى (١) الَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسَوَّى (٢) وَالَّذِي قَدَّرَ فَهَدَى (٣)

“Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most-High (1) Who created and perfected, (2) and who determined and guided.” (Al-Ala 87:1-3)

Tasbih (تسبيح) means glorifying Allah by affirming His absolute perfection and denying any deficiency or flaw. Derived from the root s-b-h (سبح), meaning "to swim" or "to move swiftly," it carries the sense of continuous, uninterrupted glorification, expressed through

word, action, and intention. True Tasbih is not merely a formula recited on the tongue. It is a continuous state, expressed through belief, intention, and action.

True tasbih is therefore not merely recited; it is lived. It emerges from knowing Allah as He truly is. The Qur'an provides the most complete and concise definition of this:

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ (١) اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ (٢) لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ (٣) وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ (٤)

“Say: He is Allah, the One! (1) Allah, the eternally Besought of all! (2) He neither begets nor was He begotten. (3) And there is none comparable to Him.” (Al-Ikhlās 112:1-4)

This is not a theological abstraction; it is a decisive reorientation of the human heart. Once it is firmly established that Allah alone is the Creator, Sustainer, and the One upon whom all existence depends, then every fear, hope, reliance, and intention must be directed to Him alone.

To truly know Allah is to reorder one's entire inner world, so that no motive competes with Him, and no reliance rivals Him.

2. Certainty of the Hereafter: The Driver of Behavior

The Qur'an identifies the root of moral corruption in the world, and it is not ignorance of rules but the absence of genuine certainty in accountability.

When people truly believe they will stand before Allah and answer for every action, their behavior reflects it through restraint, integrity, and sincerity. When that certainty weakens, even knowledge becomes ineffective and those who know the rules will bend them.

أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَبْعُوثُونَ (٤) لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ (٥) يَوْمَ يَقُومُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (٦)

“Do they not realize that they will be resurrected, (4) for a mighty Day, (5) a Day when all people will stand before the Lord of the Worlds?” (Al-Mutaffifin 83:4-6)

These verses address those who cheat in trade, taking full measure for themselves while giving less to others. The Qur'an does not attribute their behavior to a lack of awareness of honesty. Rather, it exposes a deeper deficiency: a weakened certainty in the Day of Judgment.

It is this lack of certainty that permits gradual moral compromise: first in small matters, then in greater ones. The Qur'anic method, therefore, is not merely to legislate behavior but to anchor it in conviction.

The Hereafter is not meant to be a distant concept we recall at funerals. It is meant to be a present reality that shapes every decision, every transaction, and every unseen moment of private life.

Certainty in the Hereafter transforms knowledge into integrity, making accountability a lived reality, not a deferred belief. Before any decision, ask: If I were to stand before Allah today, would I still make this choice?

3. Absolute Accountability: Nothing Is Lost

The Qur'an establishes a principle of profound consequence: nothing is ever lost. Every action is recorded. Every intention is preserved. No moment disappears into time.

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ ۖ (٧) وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ ۖ (٨)

“Whoever does an atom’s weight of good will see it, (7) and whoever does an atom’s weight of evil will see it.” (Al-Zalzala 99:7-8)

The verse does not speak of great deeds or major transgressions. It speaks of “mithqal dharrah” “مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ”, an atom’s weight, the smallest conceivable measure. This establishes that accountability has no lower limit. No act is too small to matter, no moment too insignificant to be counted, and no private deed too hidden to escape record.

It is reported that when a man heard these verses, he said: “This is sufficient for me.” He understood that if every atom of good and evil is seen, then the entirety of life is reduced to one central question: What am I doing with each moment? The Prophet (PBUH) affirmed his understanding, indicating the depth of this realization.

These two brief verses encapsulate a complete moral framework. They dismantle two common illusions:

- The illusion that small sins are insignificant
- The illusion that small acts of goodness are negligible

Both are false. The record is complete, and nothing is overlooked.

In this light, life is no longer measured by occasional grand actions, but by the accumulation of moments, each carrying weight in the sight of Allah.

When nothing is lost, every moment becomes meaningful, transforming life into a continuous field of accountability and opportunity.

4. Justice: Faith Manifested in Dealings

The Qur'an emphasizes the importance of the external manifestation of internal conviction. If faith is real, it must appear in how a person deals with others.

Acts of worship have defined boundaries, prayer has its times, fasting its limits. But justice operates without interruption, governing every interaction, every exchange, and every entrusted right.

وَيَلُّ لِلْمُطَفِّفِينَ (١) الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَكْتَالُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ (٢) وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَوْ وَزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ (٣)
“Woe to the defrauders. (1) Those who when they take a measure from people, take in full, (2) but when they measure or weigh for others, they give less. (Al-Mutaffifin 83:1-3)

The word "woe" (وَيْلٌ) is not a mild warning. It is an expression of severe ruin and destruction. Strikingly, it is directed here not at extraordinary crimes, but at a subtle and normalized form of injustice: the double standard. Taking one's full right while diminishing the rights of others.

This pattern appears in many forms:

- The employee who withholds effort while receiving full pay
- The employer who withholds due compensation
- The individual who claims credit without merit

All are manifestations of the same imbalance, taking more than one's due while giving less than what is owed.

Faith, therefore, is not validated by ritual alone. It is tested in moments where there is opportunity to exploit, yet one chooses fairness.

The true measure of faith is this: can those around you trust you to uphold justice, even when oversight is absent and accountability appears distant?

Faith becomes visible through justice, when a believer gives others their full due, even when no one else is watching.

5. The Path of Moral Courage

The path to Allah is not paved with comfort. It demands effort, sacrifice, and the willingness to choose what is right over what is easy.

فَلَا أَفْتَحَمَ الْعَقَبَةَ (١١)

“Shouldn't he has attempted the steep path.” (Al-Balad 90:11)

The verse comes after Allah describes the human being as created into struggle (kabad) (كَبَدٌ). Then it poses a striking question: why has he not attempted the steep ascent?

Al-Aqabah (الْعَقَبَةُ) is a steep mountain pass, the kind that demands full exertion to climb. The Qur'an uses it as a metaphor for the path of moral responsibility. It is difficult by

design. Comfort does not produce character, and ease, left unchecked, becomes the quiet enemy of growth, while struggle becomes the means of elevation.

The Qur'an does not leave this path undefined. It specifies what it means to ascend:

فَكَرِّهِي (١٣) أَوْ إِطْعَمْ فِي يَوْمٍ ذِي مَسْغَبَةٍ (١٤) يَتِيماً ذَا مَقْرَبَةٍ (١٥) أَوْ مِسْكِيناً ذَا مَتْرَبَةٍ (١٦) ثُمَّ كَانَ مِنَ
الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْمَرْحَمَةِ (١٧)

“To free a neck (liberate the oppressed) (13) Or to feed in a day of severe hunger (14) an orphaned relative (15) Or a needy person in hardship (16) And then be one of those who believe and urge one another to patience and compassion.” (Al-Balad 90:12-17)

The sequence is deliberate: liberation (removing oppression), provision (responding to urgent human need), care for the vulnerable (especially those with no support), and belonging to a moral community built on patience and mercy.

Moral courage, in the Qur'anic vision, is not an abstract ideal. It is expressed through costly action: giving when it is difficult, standing when it is inconvenient, and caring when it demands sacrifice.

It is also not purely individual. The path culminates in becoming part of a community that reinforces these values: where believers actively uphold one another in patience and compassion.

The question, therefore, is not theoretical. It is immediate: what is your steep path? What responsibility have you delayed? What sacrifice have you avoided? What need have you seen, yet chosen to overlook?

The Qur'an does not call for reflection alone; it calls for ascent. The path to Allah is climbed through deliberate sacrifice, where moral courage turns belief into action.

6. Personal Responsibility: You Stand Alone

We spend much of our lives defining ourselves through our relationships. We are someone's child, someone's spouse, someone's parent. On the Day of Judgment, every one of those definitions will fall away.

يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ (٣٤) وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبِيهِ (٣٥) وَصَلْحَتِهِ وَبَنِيهِ (٣٦) لِكُلِّ أَمْرٍ مِّنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ (٣٧)

“The Day when a man will flee from his brother, (34) his mother and his father, (35) his spouse and his children. (36) Each one of them, that Day, will have enough concern of his own”. (Abasa 80:34–37)

The Qur'an lists these relationships in a deliberate order, moving from sibling to parent to spouse to child, as if peeling away layer after layer of every bond we consider unbreakable. And then it delivers the most sobering verdict: each person, on that Day, will be entirely consumed by their own situation.

This is not a portrayal of indifference. It is a revelation of ultimate clarity. All justifications rooted in others, upbringing, environment, social pressure, lose their force. The account is personal, and the responsibility is indivisible.

The implication for this life is direct and uncompromising:

- Do not delay change waiting for others to change
- Do not inherit beliefs without conscious conviction
- Do not surrender moral judgment to culture, community, or convenience

Every decision you make is being recorded as *yours*, not as a product of circumstance alone. On that Day, you will not answer as part of a group, but as an individual soul. True accountability begins when you recognize that your standing before Allah is personal, independent of all external identities.

7. The Inner Battlefield: Purifying the Soul

Every external struggle begins with an internal one. Before a person is tested by the world, they are tested by their own soul.

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا (٧) فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا (٨) قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّاهَا (٩) وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّاهَا (١٠)
“And by Nafs (soul), and how He perfected it (7) Then He inspired it to know its rebellion and piety. (8) Indeed, the successful is the one who purifies it (his soul) (9) And indeed the failure is the one who corrupts it.” (Ash-Shams 91:7-10)

This passage opens with a series of oaths: by the sun, the moon, the day, the night, the sky, the earth, and finally, by the soul itself. Allah swears by the entirety of creation to make one single point: the outcome of your life depends on what you do with your soul.

The soul is not morally empty. Allah has already placed within it an awareness of both fujur (rebellion) and taqwa (conscious restraint). This is not knowledge acquired through experience alone, it is embedded within the human fitrah. The capacity for moral clarity exists from within, even as the inclination toward transgression persists alongside it.

The defining question, therefore, is not whether guidance exists, but which inclination you choose to nourish.

The Qur'an describes purification using the word zaka (زَكَّى) the same root as zakat. Just as wealth is purified through giving, the soul is purified through intentional removal

of what corrupts and intentional cultivation of what is good. Corruption does not require effort; it occurs by neglect. Purification, however, demands conscious action.

And the Qur'an tells us precisely what feeds the soul's purification:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَى وَاتَّقَى (٥) وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَى (٦) فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْيَسْرَى (٧)

“As for the one who gives and is mindful of Allah (5) And believes in the goodness; (6) We will surely facilitate for him the path of ease.” (Al-Lyl 92:5-7)

Three interlocking qualities emerge:

- **Giving:** releasing attachment and overcoming selfishness
- **Taqwa:** maintaining awareness of Allah in choices
- **Trust in Allah's promise:** acting with conviction in the unseen outcome

Thus, the greatest battlefield is not external. It is the quiet, continuous contest within: between a soul that gives and one that withholds, between a heart that remembers and one that neglects, between certainty and doubt.

Every choice either elevates the soul or buries it. Purification of the soul is an active, daily struggle, where each decision shapes the direction of your inner state.

8. The Essence of True Religion

Complexity often distracts from what is essential. So, Allah cuts through it all and gives us the core of His religion in a single verse, built on three foundational pillars: sincerity, prayer, and Zakat.

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ (٥)

“They only commanded to worship Allah sincerely, To Him is the religion as upright people, and establish the prayers and give the Zakat: and that is the true religion.” (Al-Bayyina 98:5)

Sincerity is the foundation. Every act is first weighed by its intention. Sincerity (ikhlaṣ) is not the absence of imperfection; it is the absence of شرك خفي (hidden association). It is the discipline of directing one's actions toward Allah rather than toward recognition, validation, or approval.

Zakat is not left to personal interpretation. Allah has defined its recipients in Surah Al-Tawbah (9:60) and the Prophet (PBUH) specified its amounts. It is a structured obligation, and its precision is itself a form of mercy. It transforms generosity from an occasional impulse into a consistent system of social justice. It ensures that care for others is not dependent on mood but embedded within the fabric of faith.

Prayer carries a command that is remarkably consistent throughout the Qur'an: "establish the prayer" (أقيموا الصلاة). This command appears more than forty times. It does not say "perform the prayer" (أدوا الصلاة). The distinction is not linguistic nuance; it is conceptual. It is a difference in the entire nature of the act.

Ada' al-salah (أداء الصلاة) is performing the prayer: executing its ritual words, movements, and prescribed form. It is what millions do every day. But it is not sufficient.

Iqamat al-salah (إقامة الصلاة) is establishing the prayer: something far more comprehensive. To make prayer upright, continuous, and formative within one's life. The word iqamah comes from the root qama (قام), meaning to stand, to rise, to make something upright and firm. To establish prayer, therefore, is not to visit it at intervals, but to build it into the structure of one's existence.

Allah does not leave us to guess what this establishment looks like:

أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا (٧٨)

"Establish the prayer from the decline of the sun until the darkness of the night, and the Quran of dawn. Indeed, the recitation of dawn is ever witnessed." (Al-Isra 16:78)

The verse does not present prayer as isolated moments. It describes a continuous span, stretching from the moment the sun begins to decline, through the afternoon, into the evening darkness, and then opens the next day with fajr. The prayer is not five separate visits to Allah. It is a single, unbroken state of orientation that spans the entire arc of a human day.

And Allah singles out fajr with a description He gives to no other prayer: "ever witnessed." Traditionally understood as the angels of the night and the angels of the day both being present at that hour. But there is another dimension: what is established at fajr shapes what follows. The declaration made in the fajr prayer shapes the quality of the entire day that unfolds from it.

This is what iqamah looks like in practice: not a ritual you perform and set aside, but a state you enter at dawn and are meant to carry, honestly and visibly, through every hour until the night returns.

Within the prayer itself lies its transformative power. When one declares Allahu Akbar, it is not a ritual utterance, it is a statement about reality. Allah is greater than every concern, fear, and pursuit that will arise in the hours ahead.

If this declaration is established at the beginning of the day, it necessarily reshapes behavior: decisions are made differently, pressures are interpreted differently, and priorities are reordered. This is the transition from performing prayer to living by it.

Prayer, in this sense, is not an act confined to specific times. It is a state initiated at those times and meant to extend beyond them, informing speech, conduct, and intention throughout the day.

True religion is not defined by the performance of rituals alone, but by their establishment, when sincerity anchors them, and they transform the structure of daily life.

9. Time and Loss: The Urgency of Life

Time is not merely passing; you are passing through it.

Loss is not an occasional outcome; it is the default condition of human existence. Success is not guaranteed by simply living. It must be deliberately pursued against a current that constantly pulls toward diminishment.

وَالْعَصْرِ (١) إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ (٢) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَّصُوا بِالحَقِّ وَتَوَّصُوا بِالصَّبْرِ (٣)

"By the declining day, (1) indeed, mankind is in a state of loss, (2) except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and exhort one another to truth, and exhort one another to patience." (Al-Asr 103:1-3)

Three verses. One oath. One verdict. One exception.

It is reported that Imam al-Shafi said:

لو تدبر الناس هذه السورة لوسعتهم.

"If people were to truly reflect on this surah, it would suffice them."

And in another narration:

لو ما أنزل الله حجة على خلقه إلا هذه السورة لكفتهم

"If nothing else had been revealed to humanity except this surah, it would have been sufficient for them."

Such a statement demands reflection. To understand why he said it, we need to begin with the oath itself.

The word *al-aṣr* (الْعَصْرِ) carries layered meanings, each intensifying the message:

- **The declining day:** the final stretch of daylight, when time is visibly running out, creating an immediate sense of urgency.
- **Compression and extraction:** from the root 'a-s-r (عصر), meaning to press or squeeze. Time is not static; it is actively extracting from your life with every passing moment. On average, the human heart beats between two and two and

a half billion times in a lifetime. Every heartbeat is a squeeze, and every squeeze brings you closer to the last one.

- **An era or epoch:** the span of human history. every civilization that rose, struggled, and declined, standing as a witness to the same conclusion.

Thus, the oath is not by time in abstraction, but by time as it is ending, pressing, and testifying.

Following this layered oath comes a sweeping verdict: **إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ** **Indeed, mankind is in loss.**

The term *khusr* (خسر) is not a momentary loss, but a continuous depletion of capital, like a trade that diminishes with every transaction. The Qur'an does not restrict this loss to the negligent or the wicked. It applies universally. Loss is the starting point.

Against this universal loss stands a precise exception, defined by four interdependent qualities that rescue a person from this default state of loss:

1. **Belief (al-iman) (الإيمان):** A sincere and sound conviction in Allah and the truths of Islam. Not inherited assumption, not cultural habit, but genuine, examined faith.
2. **Righteous Action (al-amal al-salih) (العمل الصالح):** Faith translated into ethical, beneficial deeds. Belief that does not change behavior remains incomplete.
3. **Mutual Commitment to Truth (al-tawasi bil-haqq) (التواصي بالحق):** Actively advocating for justice, honesty, and what is right, even when it is uncomfortable, even when it costs something.
4. **Mutual Commitment to Patience (al-tawasi bil-sabr) (التواصي بالصبر):** Supporting one another in endurance through trials, remaining steadfast in obedience, and holding each other accountable with compassion.

The structure is deliberate: the first two are personal (what you believe and what you do), while the last two are collective (what you advocate for and who you stand with).

The surah does not permit a privatized, individualistic faith that ignores the community around it. Salvation, in the Qur'an's formulation here, requires both personal integrity and communal responsibility. The believer who keeps their faith entirely to themselves has fulfilled only half of what this surah demands.

Together these four qualities represent a complete framework: personal conviction, practical action, social responsibility, and collective resilience.

The practical question

Every human being is spending time continuously. The question is not whether time is being used; it is always being used. The question is: what is it being exchanged for?

Take an honest account: what did your time this week produce? Did it strengthen faith, generate meaningful action, uphold truth, or support others? Or was it consumed by distractions that leave no trace beyond the moment?

The surah does not demand perfection. It demands direction. Loss is the default. Salvation requires conscious resistance.

Once the urgency of time is understood, another reality becomes clear: no one can sustain this path alone. The same life that demands belief, action, truth, and patience is surrounded by forces that distract, weaken, and mislead. Thus, after recognizing the nature of loss and committing to purposeful use of time, the next necessity emerges: seeking protection.

10. Recognizing Danger and Seeking Protection

The Qur'an opens with Surat Al-Fatihah, a prayer for guidance to the straight path. It concludes with Surat Al-Falaq and Surat Al-Nas, two prayers for protection along that path. This is not coincidence. It is design.

The journey with the Qur'an begins by asking Allah to show you the way and ends by asking Him to guard you as you walk it. Together, these two surahs are known as Al-Mu'awwidhatayn (المعوذتين), the two refuge-seekers. Their placement at the very end of the Qur'an is deliberate: guidance alone is not sufficient unless it is preserved.

Al-Falaq: Protection from External Harm

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)

"Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of Creation. (1) From the evil of all what He created. (2) From the evil of darkness when it spreads, (3) And from the evil of those who blow in knots. (4) And from the evil of the envier when he envies." (Al-Falaq 113:1-5)

The Arabic word "al-falaq" comes from the root meaning to split or break open, allowing something to emerge. This is the principle behind daybreak, but it extends far beyond it. Water bursts from the earth, rain breaks from clouds, a seed splits open to release life, a child emerges from the womb. Every act of creation involves this moment of emergence. Rabb al-Falaq is therefore the Lord of all creation and emergence, the One who brings everything into existence and governs every force within it. Seeking refuge in Him against the evils of His creation means turning to the only One who holds complete authority over everything that could harm you.

The surah identifies four categories of external harm:

- General harm within creation
- Harm concealed in darkness
- Deliberate harm (such as sorcery and manipulation)
- The harm of envy

Envy is singled out because it originates within the human heart yet manifests outwardly. It is a latent force that becomes destructive the moment it is activated. The Qur'an takes it seriously enough to place it as the closing concern of this surah.

Al-Nas: Protection from Internal Evil

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ (١) مَلِكِ النَّاسِ (٢) إِلَهِ النَّاسِ (٣) مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ (٤) الَّذِي
يُوسِّسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ (٥) مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ (٦)

“Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind, (1) The Sovereign King of mankind, (2) The One True God of mankind, (3) From the evil of the relenting sneaking whisperer, (4) Who whispers into the hearts of mankind, (5) from among the hidden forces and humankind” (Al-Nas 114:1-6)

The three divine attributes invoked are:

- **Rabb al-Nas:** the Lord who nurtures and sustains.
- **Malik al-Nas:** the Sovereign King who possesses authority and control.
- **Ilah al-Nas:** the True God who alone is worthy of ultimate devotion.

Together, they affirm Allah's complete sovereignty over the human being, his development, his affairs, and his allegiance.

The threat itself is described as al-waswas al-khannas (الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسُ): the whisperer who retreats and returns. It is not a direct assault, but a continuous infiltration: it suggests, then withdraws; it returns when heedlessness appears; and it operates through doubt, desire, and distraction. It comes from two sources: the unseen (jinn) and the seen (human influence). At times, it may even resemble one's own thoughts.

Here, the structure shifts in a way that carries meaning.

- In *Al-Falaq*, one divine attribute is invoked against four external threats.
- In *Al-Nas*, three divine attributes are invoked against a single internal threat.

This contrast is instructive: the danger from within is more subtle, and more persistent.

The placement of these two surahs at the end of the Qur'an is deeply significant. After knowing Allah, after affirming the Hereafter, after understanding accountability, justice, effort, responsibility, purification, and urgency, the believer is taught this final truth: you will not remain on this path without protection.

The threats are real. They are continuous. And they are often subtle.

For this reason, the Prophet (PBUH) made these surahs part of his daily practice, reciting them in the morning, the evening, and before sleep: establishing a rhythm of constant awareness and reliance.

Seeking refuge is not an emergency response. It is a daily discipline, an acknowledgment that guidance must be guarded, and that protection belongs only to Allah.

To seek refuge is to live with awareness: awareness of external harm, awareness of internal vulnerability, and awareness of dependence on Allah. It is to recognize that the heart is a contested space, and that protection is not self-generated; it is granted.

Begin each day by consciously seeking that protection. Name what you are seeking refuge from. And mean it. Guidance must be protected through constant awareness of danger and continuous reliance on Allah..

Conclusion

You have now sat with ten of the most concentrated passages in the Qur'an, not as distant text, but as direct address to your life, your choices, and your soul. Taken together, these reflections form a complete framework.

They begin with Allah, who He is, what it means to truly know Him, and why that knowledge must become the center of every intention and every action. They move through the certainty of standing before Him, the completeness of the record that will be presented, and the justice He expects to be reflected in how you deal with others.

They call you to climb the steep path of moral courage, to take personal responsibility without retreating behind relationships or circumstances, and to confront the inner battlefield where the decisive struggle takes place.

They then give you the structure of the religion, not as isolated rituals, but as a way of living. They place you before the reality of time, steadily diminishing from the moment you were born, and ask what you are truly exchanging it for.

And they close with a final recognition: the path is real, the dangers along it are real, and the protection available to you is complete, if you seek it with awareness and consistency.

This is the essence of Juz 30: not information to accumulate, not rules to memorize, but a call to reorient, to purify, to act, and to return to Allah again and again, across every dimension of life. The Qur'an has spoken. The question it leaves you with is the same question it has always asked: What will you do now that you have heard it?

About the Author

Dr. Mamdouh M. Salama is a Life Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) and a retired Senior Engineering Fellow from a major oil company. He earned his B.S. in Mechanical Engineering with highest distinction in Egypt, followed by M.S. and Sc.D. degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

Over his distinguished career, Dr. Salama authored over 150 technical papers, received 25 patents, and edited more than 30 international conference proceedings. He chaired numerous conferences on Offshore and Arctic developments and was the recipient of multiple industry awards.

Beyond engineering, Dr. Salama is an active speaker at Islamic centers in Houston, where he delivers Friday khutbahs and weekend lectures. He has authored articles on Islam in various newspapers and given talks to both Muslim and non-Muslim audiences.

He is the author of the following books:

- Your Reflection in the Mirror of Islam, reviewed and approved by the Al-Azhar Religious Committee for distribution in the West.
- Tadabbur of the Quran through the Lens of Key Terms
- Guided by Divine Purpose – Your Life in Light of Eternity
- Jewels of the Qur'an: Gems of Guidance from the Thirty Juz' — Volume I: Pathways of Divine Wisdom (Juz' 1–15)

He is currently working on several new books drawn from his lectures, including:

- From Al-Fatiha to An-Nas: The Central Theme of Every Surah
- The Qur'an: A Blueprint for Civilization and Salvation
- The Memoirs of the Prophet (PBUH)
- The Companions of the Prophet (PBUH)
- Basis of Fiqh

These works reflect his dedication to bridging scholarly insight and spiritual reflection through the guidance of the Qur'an and Prophetic teachings.

Back Cover

What does the Quran ask of you, right now?

Jewels from the Second Fifteen Juz is the second volume of a landmark two-volume journey through the entire Quran. Covering Juz 16 through 30, from the ending of Surat Al-Kahf to Surat Al-Nas, this volume draws ten luminous insights from each Juz, building a pathway of reflection that is both intellectually grounded and spiritually alive.

These are not summaries. They are jewels: carefully selected verses and reflections that reveal the Quran's deeper architecture, its call to justice and moral courage, its guidance through trial and loss, its vision for the human being as a dignified trustee of creation, and its final, urgent summons to accountability before the Hour arrives.

Across these fifteen Juz, the reader will encounter:

- The civilizational lessons of the prophets, from Musa to Yunus to Sulaiman
- The Quran's framework for justice, family, power, and community
- The inner battlefield of the soul and the path to its purification
- The signs of the Hour and the urgency of purposeful living
- The Quran's closing call: from awareness to action

Whether read in Ramadan, studied in circles, or kept close for daily reflection, this book offers every reader a structured, accessible, and deeply meaningful encounter with the second half of Allah's final message.

The Quran was not revealed to be recited and set aside. It was revealed to be lived.

Also available: Volume 1: Jewels from the First Fifteen Juz (Juz 1-15)