

الجزء الأول

The First Chapter

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الجزء الأول The First Chapter

Surah Fatiha

This surah is the first in the Qur'ān, and in it are all of the fundamental aspects of the Islamic faith. Therefore, it is referred to as 'Umm al-Kitab', the Mother of the Book. This surah covers key topics such as:

- Belief
- Worship
- The Last Day
- Life after death

The Names of Surah Fatiha:

1 - Fatiha الفاتحة - meaning 'the opening', as it is the first surah of the Qur'ān and serves both as an introduction to the Qur'ān, as well as Islam itself.

2 - Al-Hamd الحمد - The Praise. Because the surah begins with praising Allah. It is the ultimate form of dua to Allah.

3 - As-Salah الصلاة - The prayer, as it serves as a prayer both in and outside of our ritual prayers. No prayer is complete without reciting Surah Fatiha.

4 - Ash-Shafiyah الشافية - The Curer. It is well known that reciting Surah Fatiha when one is facing an illness or ailment is a means of gaining health once again; this is for both physical and mental diseases, as it can cure the heart, as well as the body and soul. The surah works most effectively as a cure when the one who requires its healing properties understands the words he is speaking and the meaning behind them.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Surah begins with the Basmala.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

It is customary in Islam, as taught to us by the Prophet ﷺ to always begin acts with the Basmala, as to invoke Allah with His most beautiful names (الرحمن Ar-Rahman and الرحيم Ar-Rahim) will surely make your task a blessed one.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

[All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds -

The word حمد Hamd means 'praise', however when we say الحمد Al-Hamd, with the added Alif and Lam, it takes the meaning of 'All praise'. This is a form of شكر thankfulness and gratitude towards Allah ﷻ; generally, praising someone is an elevated form of thanks. For example, if someone makes you a meal, there is a difference between merely saying 'Thank you for this meal,' and showing your gratitude in addition to the thanks, 'This meal tasted amazing! You are such a great cook,' the latter displays a greater level of thanks.

Furthermore, gratitude and praise can be given to someone without initiation, whereas one always give thanks in response to a kind act.

The fact that we are praising Allah with gratitude without any initiation, merely because He is our Lord, is a higher form of worship and a show of subservience as His creation.

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the third verse, we are again repeating Allah's most beautiful attributes.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The name Ar-Rahman is an attribute which denotes mercy for all of mankind, believers and non-believers in this world. Whereas the name Ar-Rahim is the attribute of mercy which is specific for those who are true believers in this world, as well as the afterlife.

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

Sovereign of the Day of Recompense.

The word sovereign, or king denotes Allah both as a ruler over His subjects - in that He is in control of all creation - as well Allah as a ruler over the land, meaning this worldly realm, as well as the heavens, and the hereafter.

Allah is the ruler of the day of judgement. In arabic, the day of judgement is called يوم الدين Yawm ad-Deen. The word Deen in arabic comes from the same route as the word for 'debt' - in that on that day, we will be held accountable for everything we owe due to the actions we committed in this world.

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

It is You we worship and You we ask for help.

The wording of this verse is very specific in that the word إِيَّاكَ *Iyyaka*, is said first. Usually, a person would say, "We worship you alone," however, this verse is written so that we are addressing Allah first, before mentioning ourselves. This is both a show of humbling one's ego, as well as a show of the magnanimity of Allah.

The believer here first exclaims that Allah is the only One we worship, this is توحيد *tawhid* - the Oneness of Allah. After establishing that Allah is One, the sole Creator and Sustainer, only then can the believer say:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

“You alone we ask for help.” A person would never ask help from anyone they do not believe in and trust.

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

Guide us to the straight path -

What is the straight path? It is the moderate path. Islam is a religion of balance. Where we must be wary of being too extreme in our faith, we must also be wary of being too relaxed also, as both are follies which are easy to fall into.

On the other end of this, the Prophet ﷺ made it very clear to his ummah that Islam was a religion of ease. He presented a way of life in which a person could integrate worship of Allah into their daily lives with ease. Attaining the pleasure of Allah is an aim we should all hold in our minds when living our every day lives, however, we should not take this to the extreme, so much so that attaining the pleasure of Allah causes you to live life in such a way that causes great strain to yourself and those around you.

The Sahaba (companions of the Prophet ﷺ) would always try to seek out ways to perform more acts of worship. Once a few men from the time of the Prophet ﷺ had said that they would fast every day, never marry a wife (and remain celibate) and spend the whole night in prayer. Upon hearing this, the Prophet ﷺ was angered and informed them that if Allah had wanted them to live such lives, He would have commanded it. However, Allah knows of the needs of His creation, it is not reasonable for a man to fast every day, as it would have a negative affect on his physical wellbeing, so instead they were told to fast every other day if this was a task they really wanted to act upon.

Furthermore, he ﷺ informed them that Allah created the night so that we may rest. A human cannot function continuously without any sleep,

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

and should they try to do so, their every day lives would be affected as they would not be able to live productive lives during the day, so they were told to sleep for 2 thirds of the night, and rise in the last third if they so wanted to perform tahajjud before Fajr prayers.

Lastly, the Prophet ﷺ explained to them that Allah created man with desires. In addition to his, He created man for woman, as well as the union of marriage through which one can fulfil their desires in a way which is pleasing to Allah ﷻ. Celibacy has never been endorsed as a practice by any of the Prophets of Allah. Of all of the stories we know of the prophets, nearly all of them had wives. An exception is Isa (Jesus), however we know that when he returns to Earth when the day of judgement nears, he will marry and have a family.

From this story we can see very clearly that Islam is a path of moderation. Yes, there are tests and vices in this world which we should abstain from, and this is not an easy task, but through studying the Qur'an and allowing its light to pierce our hearts, such tasks will Insha'Allah be made easier for us.¹

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favour, not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray.

Those whom Allah has bestowed favour upon are those who are successful, this, along with descriptions of the rest of this verse will be discussed later on.

Surah Fatiha is the ultimate dua we can make to Allah, but what many do not know is that it is also a conversation.

For every line we recite, whether it be in, or outside of prayer, Allah ﷻ responds to us. The following is based on a Hadith Qudsi (this is a hadith through which Allah speaks through the Prophet ﷺ directly).

¹ The original narration can be found in Riyadh As-Saliheen

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The conversation between Allah and His servant in Surah Fatiha

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

All praise is for Allah, Lord of the worlds

You

حمدني عبدي
My servant has praised me

Allah's ﷻ response

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Most Merciful, the All Merciful

You

أثني عليّ عبدي
My servant repeatedly praised me

Allah's ﷻ response

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

Master of the Day of Judgement

You

مجدني عبدي
My servant has glorified Me

Allah's ﷻ response

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

Only You we worship, & only You we ask for help

You

هذا بيني وبين عبدي ولعبدي ما سأل
This is between me and my servant, and for my servant is whatever he wishes

Allah's ﷻ response

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ، صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ
Guide us to the straight path of those whom You have favoured, not those who have incurred Your wrath & have been lead astray.

You

هذا لعبدي ولعبدي ما سأل
This is for my servant, and for my servant is whatever he wishes

Allah's ﷻ response

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Surah Baqarah

- It is the longest surah of the Qur'an
- It houses the greatest verse - Ayat al-Kursi
- For those who read it, it will act as a defence for them on the day of judgement
- It acts as a form of protection from black magic
- A home which has Surah Baqarah recited in it regularly repels Shaytan.

Note: Chapter One takes a slightly different approach to the rest of the series. As Surah Baqarah is extensive and contains many detailed legal and practical rulings, this chapter does not contain a verse by verse, chronological explanation. Instead, the chapter is structured around five key parables that help frame and understand the nature of revelation itself and how it speaks to the heart, the mind and everyday life.

When was it revealed?

- It was revealed in the beginning of the Medinan period
- It has a presence in the Prophet's ﷺ life from the beginning of the Medinan period, all the way until his death

The Qur'an was revealed over 23 years, as and when the verses were needed and were relevant to the Muslims at that time.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The last verse revealed is from Surah Baqarah. It is verse 281:

وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

And fear a Day when you will be returned to Allah. Then every soul will be compensated for what it earned, and they will not be treated unjustly.

Surah Baqarah is a surah that the Prophet ﷺ would use at times to appoint leaders and Imams, based on their knowledge of the topics within the surah. Leaders would be appointed based on their understanding of the laws and wisdoms it contained.

Imam Malik reports that Abdullah Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه spent 8 years studying the surah. In addition to this, his father, Umar رضي الله عنه spent 12 years studying the surah, and when he was done, he was so elated that he sacrificed a camel in celebration.

Ibn Mas'ud called Surah Baqarah the *سنام* hump (pinnacle) of the Qur'an; not only for its length, but its complexity also.

Surah Baqarah is known well for its parallels and similes. Furthermore, it has laws pertaining to *tawhid*², and the other pillars of Islam. In it contain the first commands towards *tawhid*, and prohibitions away from *shirk*³.

The fact that it is a Madinan surah is highlighted in that it speaks of the essence of building an Islamic society. Madinah was the first Muslim society, city and capital.

² Oneness of Allah

³ Associating partners with Allah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

It highlights very clearly, that through respecting revelation, one finds success. Such success can be attained through believing it, learning it, internalising it and implementing it.

It is important to note the difference between Surahs revealed in Makkah and those revealed in Madinah.

There were two periods of revelation in the Qur'ān:

- Makkan - this period took place first, when Islam was first born, beginning with the first revelation of Surah Alaq.
- Madinan - took place after the Prophet ﷺ migrated from Makkah to Madinah.

The Makkan Period

This period was one filled with turmoil and tests. The Muslims were a minority in a idol-worshipping city. Due to this, they were greatly persecuted by the citizens of Makkah who opposed this new religion brought forth by Muhammed.

Surahs revealed at this time contained short verses and sounded very poetic. There were very few أحكام rulings, except the basics which new Muslims could follow. The reason behind this was that as Islam was a new religion, it would be difficult to make non-believers sit and listen to lengthy legal passages. Such small, poetic verses had many uses:

1 - These short Surahs firstly introduced two very key concepts. The oneness of Allah, and the fact that Muhammad ﷺ was his messenger. These two facts are the foundation of Islam. This was the initial seed which had to be planted in the hearts of the Makkans. Eventually, through

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

the Qur'ān and the Prophet ﷺ, more and more information would be revealed about Islam.

2 - The Arabs of Makkah were very fond of poetry, thus they were enchanted by the words of the Qur'ān when they heard them. The Arabic of the Makkans who lived in the Hijaz (modern day Saudi Arabia) at that time was linguistically perfect, and they prided themselves in their ability; often holding competitions between tribes. It was very clear to Arabic speaking person who heard the Qur'ān that its words were nothing short of linguistically perfect, so much so that they could not have been written by a man.⁴

The Madinan Period

The Hijra - migration from Makkah to Madinah - signified many things, not only for the Muslims, but from Islam as a religion, and a movement. Where in Makkah, the Muslims were persecuted to the point of hiding, the core goal of Makkan revelation was to move the hearts of people towards Islam.

Thereafter, without the pressure of the Kuffar (idol worshippers), the Muslims were able to establish a stronghold in the oasis of Madinah. There, the first mosque was established, and with this safe space, the Muslims were finally allowed to finally practice Islam openly. The Muslims could now pray, build their community, and study revelation without fearing for their lives.

Due to this, the surahs revealed in this period were often lengthy, they contained detailed explanation of Islamic rulings so that the first community of Muslims could learn

⁴ It's important to note here that Muhammad was illiterate, he did not know how to read or write, thus the transmission of the Qur'ān from Jibreel to him was solely oral, and through memory. Therefore, it would have been impossible for him to have been the author of the Qur'ān.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

how to live their lives correctly, in a manner pleasing to Allah.



قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣٢﴾

(32) THEY SAID, "EXALTED ARE YOU; WE HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE EXCEPT WHAT YOU HAVE TAUGHT US. INDEED, IT IS YOU WHO IS THE KNOWING, THE WISE."

The Unseen

True success is not built upon total reliance on the mind, but from the sources provided to us by Allah. Certain aspects of life, the unseen, the metaphysical, are beyond the human mind's understanding. Allah ﷻ says in the beginning of Surah Baqarah:

الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

Those who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them.

Those who are God conscious are those who believe in the unseen, establish prayers, and so on. But how do we believe in something we cannot see? True believers put their trust in Allah and believe in the unseen based on what Allah has told us in the Qur'an. Allah is the perfect source.

The unseen does not only include the realms of the afterlife and those creations which are not visible to the human eye. The unseen also includes those ritualistic acts which are ordained upon us, which may not have a clear cut logical explanation, but

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are obeyed by true believers as they are commands from their Creator.

The three letters mentioned at the beginning of Surah Baqarah:

الم

These letters are called حروف المقطعة - 'huruf al-muqatta'at' - the meanings of these letters are unknown to all but Allah. But straight after, Allah ﷻ says:

ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ

This is the Book about which there is no doubt,

This verse points out very clearly that although we may not understand every letter of the Qur'an, this lack of understanding does not negate the wisdom which it contains.

Surah Fatiha mentions two groups of people who incurred the wrath of Allah in its final verse:

عَٰلِيٍّ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

“Those who have evoked you anger,” are generally understood to be the Jews, from the time of prophet Musa (as). We are told why they received Allah's anger. Surah Baqarah informs us of the orders given to them and the ways in which they acted which caused them to continually test their prophet, and eventually, invoke the anger of God; their sins, their arrogance, their total disrespect of Allah, His messengers and His revelation.

Whereas “Those who are astray,” are thought to be the Christians.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Surah Baqarah tells the story of the Bani Israil (Jews) in great length. And thereafter, the following surah, Al Imran, discusses the Christians. It is commonly known that Surah Fatiha, in one of its many definitions, is thought to be an introduction of the Qur'an, and this is a very clear example of it.



رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿١٢٧﴾
 (127) OUR LORD, ACCEPT [THIS] FROM US. INDEED, YOU
 ARE THE HEARING, THE KNOWING.

You can recite this du'a whenever you would like for Allah (swt) to accept whatever good you've just done. Du'a Prophet Ibrahim (as) recited after building the kaaba with his son.

Intellect and Revelation

Allah has honoured us with minds and intelligence, but the mind is not given authority over revelation. This does not mean the mind is useless. It means the mind is a tool, not a judge over Allah.

Both the mind and revelation come from the same perfect source, Allah. Because of that, in their original and correct forms, they cannot truly clash. A real contradiction between a sound mind and authentic revelation is impossible.

So the role of the mind is to understand, reflect, and submit to what Allah has revealed, not to sit above it and decide whether it is acceptable.

Nature can affect the Fitrah (natural state of the mind) to the point in which it malfunctions. When this happens, we can become مغضوب عليهم. In Surah Baqarah, verse 101, Allah ﷻ says:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ نَبَذَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا
الْكِتَابَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

And when a messenger from Allah came to them confirming that which was with them, a party of those who had been given the Scripture threw the Scripture of Allah behind their backs as if they did not know [what it contained].

The Jews turned their back on the revelation which was sent to them from Allah. Their minds were so convoluted, that when revelation came to them and they did not understand it, they turned their backs.

This is referring both to the Jews at the time of Musa, when they received the Tawrah and to the Jews who lived in Madinah at the time of the Prophet ﷺ. The latter group of Jews knew of the final coming of the prophet, they had detailed descriptions of him, however when they realised that he was to come from the nation of the Arabs instead of the Jews, their arrogance caused them to ignore and change their scriptures so that they could deny the Prophet ﷺ. It is said that had the knowledgeable Jews of the time of the Prophet ﷺ revealed to their people what was actually in their scriptures, they would have accepted Islam in hordes.

In the beginning of the Juz, Allah ﷻ speaks of the successful people in verse 5:

أُولَئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

Those are upon [right] guidance from their Lord, and it is those who are the successful.

Those who understand that the mind is a source of knowledge, but that the revelation - in its correct and authentic form - holds precedence.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the first chapter, we are first told who Allah is, and what His revelation is. Thereafter, the importance of that revelation; respecting and learning it. Then, allowing the knowledge within it to transcend you, and finally, putting it into practice.

This should be our goal this Ramadan. Putting that which we have learnt from the Qur'ān into practice.

Taqwa (God consciousness) is not to just stay away from Haram, but to implement that which is Halal.

The right of Islam is to learn, and the right of learning is to act.

Parables

Surah Baqarah is famous for its parables and similes. There are around 10, 5 of which are related to revelation, and the attitudes of those who receive it.

1 - The Fire

مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ

Their example is that of one who kindled a fire, but when it illuminated what was around him, Allah took away their light and left them in darkness [so] they could not see.

Just as this fire grew and illuminated the riches around them, Allah cut them off. They physically could see, but were spiritually blind. They physically could hear, but are spiritually deaf. They have minds and brains, but they are spiritually dumb.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Allah ﷻ is referencing the fact that fire has both benefit and harm. It can illuminate and give warmth, but at the same time burn and cause destruction.

At the beginning of Surah Baqarah, we are told of different types of people. These verses were revealed in Madinah, where the Muslims coexisted with the Jews. Furthermore, after the Muslims first victory at Badr, their strength grew, but so did their enemies. A new enemy arose, the hypocrites; those who outwardly were Muslim, but in their hearts held contempt towards the believers. They put their desires and their supposed superior intellect before revelation. They were originally believers, but as soon as they were faced with tests, their hearts left the religion.

They continued to portray themselves as Muslims so as to benefit from the Islamic state; charity, spoils of war, and so on. This is the first group of Hypocrites who are addressed in the aforementioned verse.

Revelation is light, and if one does not allow that light to pierce their hearts, they will be burnt by the fire of their own disbelief and hypocrisy, their own desires.

Allah ﷻ says:

صُمُّ بِكُمْ عُمَىٰ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ

Deaf, dumb and blind - so they will not return [to the right path].

They chose to be subjective with their reception of the Qur'ān, instead of being objective.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

2 - The Water

أَوْ كَصَيْبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَاتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ مِّنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ

Or [it is] like a rainstorm from the sky within which is darkness, thunder and lightning. They put their fingers in their ears against the thunderclaps in dread of death. But Allah is encompassing of the disbelievers.

Such rainfall comes when the skies are encompassed with dark rainclouds. The lightening is so powerful, it almost snatches away their sight. During those times, the only light they had at night time was the dim light of the moon. So when the lightening came, their surroundings would be illuminated, and when it passed, again, they were enclosed in the darkness. The same way in which this illumination was given and taken away so suddenly, Allah can do so with the senses He has given us.

Allah did not only say rain, He specifically said rain from the sky. This is to denote that the rain did not only fall to the Arabs in their dessert, it is speaking for all rain that falls. Thus telling us that the Qur'an is not merely a guide for the Arabs at the time of the Prophet ﷺ, it is a guide for every person that reads it.

The 'Dhulumaat' darkness mentioned is said to denote those verses in the Qur'an which have multiple plausible meanings. Such verses are a test from Allah. Within these various meanings are those which are not in harmony with the rest of the Qur'an, and those which are. It is a test for us to look at these verses in the context in which they were revealed, in the section of the Qur'an they are placed, and finally, holistically look at its message in light of the message of the Qur'an as a whole. We must look at similar verses which deal with the same topic, but have only a single meaning, and ensure that our understanding of one does not contradict the other.

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The uses of the words lightening and thunder refer to the وعد promises and وعيد warnings within the Qur'ān. The promises of reward and paradise, etc. The warnings against the tests within this world and the punishment of the hereafter.

Then Allah ﷻ discusses a second group of hypocrites, He says that He did not take away their abilities. He is referring to those who are transgressing away from belief into disbelief, they are entering hypocrisy thorough their misunderstanding of the Qur'ān. If they do not take heed now, they will be struck.

The three groups of Hypocrites who are addressed:

- 1 - Those who believed and were tested, then inwardly left islam, but outwardly still practised to benefit from the Muslim state.
- 2 - Those who believe, but whose hearts weaken and begin to incline towards evil; we should all be fearful of falling into this state.
- 3 - The outright liars. These people are addressed in the simile of the mosquito.

3 - The Mosquito

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي أَنْ يَضْرِبَ مَثَلًا مَّا بَعُوضَةً فَمَا فَوْقَهَا ۚ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ ۗ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَيَقُولُونَ مَاذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِهَذَا مَثَلًا ۗ يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَيَهْدِي بِهِ كَثِيرًا ۚ وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ

Indeed, Allah is not timid to present an example - that of a mosquito or what is smaller than it. And those who have believed know that it is the truth from their Lord. But as for those who disbelieve, they say, "What did Allah intend by this as an example?" He

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misleads many thereby and guides many thereby. And He misleads not except the defiantly disobedient,

Those who are defiantly disobedient are those who make any excuse to not follow revelation when it is revealed. They would say that Allah would not send such parables in His revelation, so much so that they believed their own lies.

Furthermore, the idolators of Makkah questioned this parable, in that why would Allah speak of such small and insignificant creatures?

In other parts of the Qur'ān, Allah talks of the house of the spider عنكبوت. Allah does not shy away from using parables of such creatures, because He was the one who created them, He knows everything about their states and ways of living, and displays this majestic knowledge through His revelation. Thus, the flimsy excuses of the idolators were disproved.

4 - The Stone

قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَا ذَلُولَ تُثِيرُ الْأَرْضَ وَلَا تَسْقِي الْحَرْثَ مُسَلَّمَةٌ لَا شِيَةَ فِيهَا
قَالُوا الْآنَ جِئْتَ بِالْحَقِّ فَذَبِّحُوهَا وَمَا كَادُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

They said, "Call upon your Lord to make clear to us what it is. Indeed, [all] cows look alike to us. And indeed we, if Allah wills, will be guided."

Allah ﷻ speaks of Banu Israil, and of their disobedience when Allah ordered them to sacrifice a cow when they came to Musa inquiring about that death of one of their men. They mocked Musa, asking if he were playing a joke on them. They then asked Musa, what age cow, what kind of cow, and so on. They asked and asked until the specification of the cow was so rare that they searched for this cow for a long time until they located it. This mocking caused their hearts to become harder than a stone.

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ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ
 لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهَارُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشْقُقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ
 مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾

Then your hearts became hardened after that, being like stones or even harder. For indeed, there are stones from which rivers burst forth, and there are some of them that split open and water comes out, and there are some of them that fall down for fear of Allah. And Allah is not unaware of what you do.

Allah ﷻ says that there are some rocks from which rivers flow. There are rocks which fall down, humbling themselves out of fear and respect of their Lord who created them.

In the tafsir of Ibn Abi Hatim, it is mentioned that Ibn Abi Yuyha said: The first stone mentioned refers to a person who cries to Allah abundantly. Their heart is not hard, it is soft. The second rock refers to a person who cries less, their hearts are not as soft, but they are still good. The third refers to the heart which cries without any tears being shed.

Allah loves those who cry to Him outwardly, He loves those who cry, even if a little, and He loves those who although they do not cry outwardly, their hearts cry.

Even a hard stone is better than a hard heart, because a stone, no matter what form it is in, will still submit to Allah and cry, whether it be inwardly or outwardly, but a hard hearted person is not able to do any of this.

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5 - The Scream

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءً وَنِدَاءً صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ
عُمَى فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

The example of those who disbelieve is like that of one who shouts at what hears nothing but calls and cries cattle or sheep - deaf, dumb and blind, so they do not understand.

Some people scream, noise is coming from their mouths, but these sounds hold no meaning. They are like the cries of cattle and sheep, which make sound, and such sounds have no meaning to us.

Allah is saying that whatever justification a disbeliever comes up with in regards to Allah, His messengers, His revelation, and so on, they are as if they merely making the noises of animals. Their words fall upon deaf ears.

Such people do not understand the True Message sent by Allah. There is a difference between having a brain and having intellect - understanding something. True guidance is from Allah, it is up to Him who is to be guided.

One must have a sincere desire to understand and seek the truth.

One cannot say that they respect their intellect before revelation, as if they truly respected their intellect, they would understand that their own intellect will never be able to understand revelation without the permission of Allah.

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Lessons we may take from this chapter:

- Understanding and Obedience

Allah speaks of the Jews and their outright disobedience towards their messenger. They were constantly demanding things from Allah ﷻ due to their egos which were not of any benefit for them.

Here, we can take from the example of the Jews and understand the fact that when Allah ﷻ says the Qur'ān is 'complete' كاملة, we must trust that all that we need is contained within it. If we think it is deficient, it is due to our own lack of understanding and intellect.

Furthermore, we must be obedient to the messenger. Although he passed away in a time that preceded us, we have a lengthy account of how he lived his life in light of the Qur'ān and should endeavour to follow in his example.

- Humbleness and Arrogance

Allah ﷻ mentioned Banu Israil countless times within this surah, pointing out again and again that if they had merely humbled themselves before Allah, their hearts could have been opened to guidance. However, their egos, and what they perceived as their superior intellect and status drove them towards continuous misguidance. They did not give the revelation a chance to guide them.

- The Attitudes Believers and Hypocrites

An overarching theme within this surah is the attitude of not only a believer, but a successful believer.

We must take heed of the subtlety of hypocrisy which can creep into ones heart and slowly grow if left unattended.

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The biggest problem that Banu Israil had was their lack of ability to show gratitude. Allah tells us to remmed the blessings He has bestowed upon us.



رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ
وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٢٨﴾

(128) OUR LORD, AND MAKE US MUSLIMS [IN SUBMISSION] TO YOU AND FROM OUR DESCENDANTS A MUSLIM NATION [IN SUBMISSION] TO YOU. AND SHOW US OUR RITES AND ACCEPT OUR REPENTANCE. INDEED, YOU ARE THE ACCEPTING OF REPENTANCE, THE MERCIFUL.

This du'a should be recited to affirm your faith in Islam. It also a good prayer that asks for the success of the entire Muslim Ummah. Du'a Prophet Ibrahim (as) recited after building the kaaba with his son.