

الجزء
الثالث عشر

The Thirteenth Chapter



عشر
مئة
عشرون

MASUMA ABDUL-MUHT

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الجزء الثالث عشر The Thirteenth Chapter

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Surah Yusuf

Ahsanul Qasas - The Best of Stories

Why is the story of Yusuf (as) referred to as أحسن القصص ‘The Best of Stories’?

Unlike the stories of other prophets mentioned in the Qur’ān, Yusuf was not sent to a nation who mistreated him, rather it is a story of family, love, loss and forgiveness.

The Minister of Harvest

Quick note: Egypt was ruled by Kings for a period of time before the title ‘Pharaoh’ was introduced. Thus, the leader in Yusuf’s story is referred to as ملك King, and the leader in Musa’s story is referred to as فرعون Pharaoh.

After being appointed by the King, Yusuf (as) had to come up with a plan which would keep the people of Egypt fed through the seven years of drought to come.

Yusuf knew - based on the King’s dream - that Egypt would experience seven years of prosperous harvest before the drought began. So he organised for large stores of food to be created, so that they be distributed when the need arose.

The King initially was not too fond of this idea, but Yusuf was sure of his ability to carry this plan out to the end.

The seven years of plentiful harvest passed, and enough food was stored that not only would the Egyptians be fed for the full seven years for free, but there would be enough for people in surroundings areas to come and trade their own goods for supplies from the King’s stock.

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Yaqub Sends His Sons to Egypt

وَجَاءَ إِخْوَةُ يُوسُفَ فَدَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَعَرَفَهُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُ مُنْكَرُونَ

(58) *And the brothers of Joseph came [seeking food], and they entered upon him; and he recognized them, but he was to them unknown.*

Yaqub and his sons, who were living in Palestine at that time, were also affected by this drought. Yaqub sent his sons to Egypt to collect rations from the Egyptian King.

Yusuf (as) set a rule that any person who came to Egypt would receive the equivalent of what their conveyances could carry for that year and in return, they would trade some wares to the Egyptians which were not available in their lands, such as olive oil, etc.

So Yaqub sent all ten of his eldest sons to collect their dues. Due to what had happened with Yusuf, Yaqub kept Binyamin by his side, and did not allow him to travel with his brothers.

When they arrived in Egypt, the brothers did not recognise Yusuf.

Yusuf spoke to the ten men, asking where they had come from. Then, he asked if they had left anyone behind. The brothers told Yusuf that they had two more brothers, but one had gone missing some years ago, and the other remained behind with their elderly father.

وَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُمْ بِجَهَّازِهِمْ قَالَ ائْتُونِي بِأَخٍ لَّكُمْ مِّنْ أَبِيكُمْ أَأَلَا تَرَوْنَ أَنِّي أُوفِي الْكَيْلَ
وَأَنَا خَيْرُ الْمُنْزِلِينَ

(59) *And when he had furnished them with their supplies, he said, "Bring me a brother of yours from your father. Do not you see that I give full measure and that I am the best of accommodators?"*

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فَإِنْ لَمْ تَأْتُونِي بِهِ فَلَا كَيْلَ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي وَلَا تَقْرُبُونِ

(60) *But if you do not bring him to me, no measure will there be [hereafter] for you from me, nor will you approach me."*

Yusuf (as) instructed his brothers to come with their 11th brother the next year, otherwise he would deem them to be liars, and not provide them with any food.

To ensure their return, Yusuf had his servants place the wares his brothers had traded for their rations back in their bags, so that when they returned home, they would be forced to return to Egypt.

The brothers returned to Palestine with their rations and informed their father of the command they had received from the King's Minister.

وَلَمَّا فَتَحُوا مَتَاعَهُمْ وَجَدُوا بِضَاعَتَهُمْ رُدَّتْ إِلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا مَا نَبْغِي هَذِهِ
بِضَاعَتُنَا رُدَّتْ إِلَيْنَا وَنَمِيرُ أَهْلَنَا وَنَحْفَظُ أَخَانَا وَنَزِدَادُ كَيْلَ بَعِيرٍ ذَلِكَ كَيْلٌ يَسِيرٌ

(65) *And when they opened their baggage, they found their merchandise returned to them. They said, "O our father, what [more] could we desire? This is our merchandise returned to us. And we will obtain supplies for our family and protect our brother and obtain an increase of a camel's load; that is an easy measurement."*

The next year, Yaqub hesitantly allowed Binyamin to travel to Egypt with his brothers, as they could not afford to be refused their rations. However, he would not let Binyamin leave without a promise from his sons:

قَالَ لَنْ أُرْسِلَهُ مَعَكُمْ حَتَّى تُؤْتُونِ مَوْثِقًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ لَتَأْتُنِي بِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يُحَاطَ بِكُمْ
فَلَمَّا آتَوْهُ مَوْثِقَهُمْ قَالَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا نَقُولُ وَكِيلٌ

(66) *[Jacob] said, "Never will I send him with you until you give me a promise by Allah that you will bring him [back] to me, unless you should be surrounded*

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by enemies." And when they had given their promise, he said, "Allah, over what we say, is Witness."

Binyamin and Yusuf are Reunited

وَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ آوَىٰ إِلَيْهِ أَخَاهُ ^ط قَالَ إِنِّي أَنَا أَخُوكَ فَلَا تَبْتَئِسْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

(69) And when they entered upon Joseph, he took his brother to himself; he said, "Indeed, I am your brother, so do not despair over what they used to do [to me]."

When the brothers returned to Egypt with Binyamin, Yusuf (as) was overcome with joy upon seeing his younger brother. Yusuf was able to meet Binyamin in private as the brothers were collecting their rations and revealed his true identity to Binyamin.

Binyamin was overjoyed and pleaded with Yusuf to stay with him. However, Yusuf (as) knew of his father's frail state, and did not want to harm him any further by taking away another son from him.

Binyamin persisted and Yusuf, after being separated from his brother for decades, could not refuse him. So they hatched a plan.

فَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُم بِجَهَّازِهِمْ جَعَلَ السَّقَايَةَ فِي رَحْلِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ أَذَّنَ مُؤَذِّنٌ أَيَّتُهَا الْعِيرُ إِنَّكُمْ لَسَارِقُونَ

(70) So when he had furnished them with their supplies, he put the [gold measuring] bowl into the bag of his brother. Then an announcer called out, "O caravan, indeed you are thieves."

A chalice, belonging to Yusuf was placed in Binyamin's saddlebag. A guard called out for the missing chalice as the brothers were leaving with their grain. Shocked, the brothers turned and denied

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having any knowledge of a missing chalice. They were so sure that they did not have it in their possession that they said:

قَالُوا جَزَاؤُهُ مَنْ وُجِدَ فِي رَحْلِهِ فَهُوَ جَزَاؤُهُ ۚ كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ

(75) [The brothers] said, "Its recompense is that he in whose bag it is found - he [himself] will be its recompense. Thus do we recompense the wrongdoers."

The cup was discovered in Binyamin's bag. They were shocked and they tried to explain to Yusuf:

قَالُوا إِنْ يَسْرِقْ فَقَدْ سَرَقَ أَخٌ لَّهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۚ فَأَسْرَهَا يُوْسُفُ فِي نَفْسِهِ وَلَمْ يُبْدِهَا لَهُمْ ۚ قَالَ أَنْتُمْ شَرٌّ مَكَانًا ۗ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَصِفُونَ

(77) They said, "If he steals - a brother of his has stolen before." But Joseph kept it within himself and did not reveal it to them. He said, "You are worse in position, and Allah is most knowing of what you describe."

The brothers are referring to an incident which took place when Yusuf (as) was a child. After his mother passed away, Yusuf was sent to live with his paternal aunt, so she could take care of him the way a mother would.

This aunt grew very attached to Yusuf, and when the time came for him to return to Yaqub, his aunt hid a belt which had belonged to their father Is'haq under his clothing. As he was leaving, Yusuf's aunt exclaimed that her family heirloom was missing and the belt was found on Yusuf. In the Shari'ah of Yaqub, the recompense for thievery is the thief, thus Yusuf was made to stay with his aunt.

The brothers pleaded with Yusuf:

قَالُوا يَا أَيُّْهَا الْعَزِيزُ إِنَّ لَكَ أَبًا شَيْخًا كَبِيرًا فَخُذْ أَحَدَنَا مَكَانَهُ ۗ إِنَّا نَرَاكَ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

(78) They said, "O 'Azeez, indeed he has a father [who is] an old man, so take one of us in place of him. Indeed, we see you as a doer of good."

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The oldest of the ten - Ruben - vowed to stay in Egypt as he could not bare to face his father a second time. The remaining nine brothers returned to Yaqub (as). Yaqub was yet again disappointed by his sons, but he placed his trust in Allah. However, through this whole ordeal, now having lost three of his sons, Yaqub lost his eyesight from crying excessively to Allah ﷻ.

The following year, Yaqub sent his sons to Egypt a third time in order to collect their rations.

This time, however, Yusuf (as) asked his brothers:

قَالَ هَلْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ بِيُوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ جَاهِلُونَ

(89) He said, "Do you know what you did with Joseph and his brother when you were ignorant?"

Recognition dawned upon the brothers and they fell to their knees before their younger brother, seeking his forgiveness, as well as the forgiveness of Allah ﷻ. Yusuf (as) responded by saying:

قَالَ لَا تَثْرِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ ^طيَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ^طوَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

(92) He said, "No blame will there be upon you today. Allah will forgive you; and He is the most merciful of the merciful."

اذْهَبُوا بِقَمِيصِي هَذَا فَالْقُوهُ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِ أَبِي يَأْتِ بَصِيرًا وَأْتُونِي بِأَهْلِكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

(93) Take this, my shirt, and cast it over the face of my father; he will become seeing. And bring me your family, all together."

فَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ آوَىٰ إِلَيْهِ أَبَوَيْهِ وَقَالَ ادْخُلُوا مِصْرَ إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ آمِنِينَ

(99) And when they entered upon Joseph, he took his parents to himself and said, "Enter Egypt, Allah willing, safe [and secure]."

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Allah ﷻ uses the term ‘parents’ as Leah was still alive at this time, and Yusuf (as) loved her both as a mother, and as his biological mother’s sister.

A Dream Come True

وَرَفَعَ أَبَوَيْهِ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَخَرُّوا لَهُ سُجَّدًا ۖ وَقَالَ يَا أَبَتِ هَذَا تَأْوِيلُ رُؤْيَايَ مِنْ قَبْلُ
 قَدْ جَعَلَهَا رَبِّي حَقًّا ۖ وَقَدْ أَحْسَنَ بِي إِذْ أَخْرَجَنِي مِنَ السِّجْنِ وَجَاءَ بِكُمْ مِنَ الْبَدْوِ
 مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ نَزَغَ الشَّيْطَانُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ إِخْوَتِي ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّي لَطِيفٌ لِمَا يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ
 الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

(100) And he raised his parents upon the throne, and they bowed to him in prostration. And he said, "O my father, this is the explanation of my vision of before. My Lord has made it reality. And He was certainly good to me when He took me out of prison and brought you [here] from bedouin life after Satan had induced [estrangement] between me and my brothers. Indeed, my Lord is Subtle in what He wills. Indeed, it is He who is the Knowing, the Wise.

Thus, little Yusuf’s dream was made a reality. 11 stars (his brothers), the sun (Yaqub) and the moon (Leah) all prostrated to him.

Yusuf (as) refers to his banishment at the hands of his brothers as ‘estrangement’ induced by Shaytan. Not only was he beautiful on the outside, but on the inside; Yusuf (as) indeed had a pure heart. After facing trial beyond trial due to the actions of his brothers, in the end Yusuf was nothing but grateful for being reunited with them and his family.

A Closing Statement

Allah finishes off this story with a statement for the Prophet’s ﷺ audience; the Jews and the Makkans:

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لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصصِهِمْ عِبْرَةً لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ^{فَلَمَّا} مَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُفْتَرَىٰ وَلَٰكِن تَصْدِيقَ
الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

(111) *There was certainly in their stories a lesson for those of understanding. Never was the Qur'an a narration invented, but a confirmation of what was before it and a detailed explanation of all things and guidance and mercy for a people who believe.*

When Yusuf instructed his brothers to go back to Palestine and return with their families, he was referring to Banu Israil; Yaqub, his sons and all of their families.

From the 12 sons of Ya'qub descended the 12 tribes of Isra'il, and this is how they came to live in Egypt.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Surah Ra'd - The Thunder

Makki

Key Themes

- The harmony of the natural world
- Guidance is for those who truly want it
- How to attain guidance

The Harmony of the World Around Us

اللّٰهُ الَّذِیْ رَفَعَ السَّمَاوَاتِ بِغَیْرِ عَمَدٍ تَّرَوْنَهَا ثُمَّ اسْتَوٰی عَلَی الْعَرْشِ وَسَخَّرَ
الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ یَّجْرِیْ لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّی ۚ یُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ یُفَصِّلُ الْآیَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ بِلِقَآءِ
رَبِّكُمْ تُوقِنُونَ

(2) It is Allah who erected the heavens without pillars that you [can] see; then He established Himself above the Throne and made subject the sun and the moon, each running [its course] for a specified term. He arranges [each] matter; He details the signs that you may, of the meeting with your Lord, be certain.

Allah ﷻ created the sun and the moon and set them in a path of perfect harmony; they do not deviate from their orbit. Without fail, every day the sun rises and sets, and the moon appears at night.

Allah ﷻ created the earth in such a way that not only are humans dependant on one another, but we are also dependant on Allah's ﷻ other creations. We are dependant on bees to pollinate our plants, and the sun to regulate our temperatures, and livestock and plants to feed us and provide us with raw material.

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وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَدَّ الْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْهَارًا ^ط وَمِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ جَعَلَ فِيهَا زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ ^ط يُغْشَى اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ ^ج إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

(3) And it is He who spread the earth and placed therein firmly set mountains and rivers; and from all of the fruits He made therein two mates; He causes the night to cover the day. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought.

Allah ﷻ created every species with male and female counterparts, even each genus of fruit has multiple types.

Allah ﷻ created the land of the earth flat in some parts so that we may live on it with ease, and he created other parts to be rocky and mountainous so they may be sanctuaries for His ﷻ other creations.

The Qur'an encourages us to ponder on the creation of Allah, and marvel at the miraculous nature of those things we take for granted.

Guidance is For Those Who Truly Want It

لَهُ مُعَقَّبَاتٌ مِّنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ ^ق إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ ^ق وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوءًا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ ^ج وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَالٍ

(11) For each one are successive [angels] before and behind him who protect him by the decree of Allah. Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves. And when Allah intends for a people ill, there is no repelling it. And there is not for them besides Him any patron.

Allah does not change the condition of those who refuse to change themselves. Planning to pray, to wear hijab, or to improve “one day” while blaming Allah for distance is self deception. It is

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like enrolling in a course, never attending, yet expecting to pass. Thoughts alone do not transform us. We are accountable for deeds, not intentions without action. Even small steps matter. If someone begins striving sincerely and dies before completion, they are rewarded for acting, not merely wishing.

How to Attain Such Guidance

Allah speaks of those who are blind to His guidance, and then says:

إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

(19) Only the People of Understanding shall be reminded

Who are these People of Understanding? Allah ﷻ tell us in the following verses:

الَّذِينَ يُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَنْقُضُونَ الْمِيثَاقَ

(20) Those who fulfil the covenant of Allah and do not break the contract,

1 - Those who fulfil the rights which are due to Allah and His creation.

Rights of Allah: Faith and obedience (of His commands)

Right of His creation: Fulfilling contracts; personal, social and business

وَالَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ

(21) And those who join that which Allah has ordered to be joined and fear their Lord and are afraid of the evil of [their] account,

2 - Those who maintain their relationships and fear evil and wrongdoing.

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وَالَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا ابْتِعَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَاطَانِيَةً
وَيَذَرُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةَ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ

(22) And those who are patient, seeking the countenance of their Lord, and establish prayer and spend from what We have provided for them secretly and publicly and prevent evil with good - those will have the good consequence of [this] home -

3 - Those who fear Allah and follow the five pillars of Islam.

The word fear used in this verse is the type of fear which is born out of respect and love.

In a narration recorded in Sahih Bukhari, the Prophet ﷺ promised Jannah to a man who simply does all of the fara'id (obligations) of faith in their due time.

أَنَّ أَعْرَابِيًّا جَاءَ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ثَابِرَ الرَّأْسِ فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ
أَخْبِرْنِي مَاذَا فَرَضَ اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ فَقَالَ " الصَّلَوَاتِ الْخُمْسِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَطَّوَعَ
شَيْئًا ". فَقَالَ أَخْبِرْنِي مَا فَرَضَ اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ مِنَ الصِّيَامِ فَقَالَ " شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ إِلَّا أَنْ
تَطَّوَعَ شَيْئًا ". فَقَالَ أَخْبِرْنِي بِمَا فَرَضَ اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ مِنَ الزَّكَاةِ فَقَالَ فَأَخْبَرَهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ
صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ شَرَائِعَ الْإِسْلَامِ. قَالَ وَالَّذِي أَكْرَمَكَ لَا أَتَطَّوَعُ شَيْئًا وَلَا
أَنْقُصُ مِمَّا فَرَضَ اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ شَيْئًا. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " أَفْلَحَ إِنْ
صَدَقَ أَوْ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِنْ صَدَقَ "

A bedouin with unkempt hair came to Allah's Messenger ﷺ and said, "O Allah's Messenger ﷺ! Inform me what Allah has made compulsory for me as regards the prayers." He replied: "You have to offer perfectly the five compulsory prayers in a day and night, unless you want to pray optional prayers."

The bedouin further asked, "Inform me what Allah has made compulsory for me as regards fasting." He replied, "You have to fast during the whole month of Ramadan, unless you want to fast more as the optional."

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The bedouin further asked, "Tell me how much Zakat Allah has enjoined on me." Thus, Allah's Messenger ﷺ informed him about all the obligations of Islam. The bedouin then said, "By Him Who has honoured you, I will neither perform any Nawafil nor will I decrease what Allah has enjoined on me. Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, "If he is saying the truth, he will succeed (or he will be granted Paradise)."

Allah then describes the reward of the People of Understanding:

جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ
يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ

(23) Gardens of perpetual residence; they will enter them with whoever were righteous among their fathers, their spouses and their descendants. And the angels will enter upon them from every gate, [saying],

The Surah's Namesake - The Thunder

وَيُسَبِّحُ الرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِ وَيُرْسِلُ الصَّوَاعِقَ فَيُصِيبُ بِهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَهُمْ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ شَدِيدُ الْمِحَالِ

(13) And the thunder exalts [Allah] with praise of Him - and the angels [as well] from fear of Him - and He sends thunderbolts and strikes therewith whom He wills while they dispute about Allah; and He is severe in assault.

وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا وَظِلَالُهُم بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ

(15) And to Allah prostrates whoever is within the heavens and the earth, willingly or by compulsion, and their shadows [as well] in the mornings and the afternoons.

These sounds of nature are Allah's creation praising Him and doing dhikr (remembrance) of Him.

All creations of Allah, whether they are living or not, all are signing the praise of Allah constantly.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

(13:28) THOSE WHO BELIEVE AND WHOSE HEARTS FIND REASSURANCE IN THE REMEMBRANCE OF ALLAH. SURELY, IN THE REMEMBRANCE OF ALLAH DO HEARTS FIND REASSURANCE.

True change lies within ourselves.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Surah Ibrahim

This Surah was revealed in the final stages of the Prophet's ﷺ life in Makkah.

Key Themes

- The wisdom behind certain aspects of revelation
- Comparisons of the good and bad tree
- The Subjugation of creation for our benefit
- Ibrahim's (as) duas to Allah and the establishment of Makkah

Why is the Qur'an in Arabic?

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانٍ قَوْمِهِ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ فَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

(4) And We did not send any messenger except [speaking] in the language of his people to state clearly for them, and Allah sends astray [thereby] whom He wills and guides whom He wills. And He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.

There are various reasons the Qur'an was revealed in the Arabic language.

Firstly, the Prophet ﷺ himself was an Arab, and it was his native tongue. Furthermore, he was born in the Arab city of Makkah, which is the location of the house of Allah ﷻ, the Ka'bah.

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Secondly, Arabic is the language spoken in the heavens. It is the language spoken by the angels, as well as the language which the Preserved Tablet (لوح محفوظ)¹ is written.

Finally - although there are many other arguments, I will suffice with only three - the inherent treasures and capabilities of the Arabic Language lend it to the expression of the divine and infinite ideas which are in the Qur'ān.

This is why it is also very important for Muslims to study the Arabic language. This does not need to be done formally. A person who simply sits with a translation of the Qur'ān and becomes familiar with those words and expressions which are used often will find themselves able to delve into a deeper level of meaning within the Qur'ān.

I implore readers of these summaries to always read the Arabic of the verses provided along with the English. This is so that as you learn of the themes and concepts within the Qur'ān, and those ideas become consolidated in your mind, when you got to recite the Qur'ān or listen to it, you are able to identify those parts which you have now studied.

The Tree Parable

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ

(24) Have you not considered how Allah presents an example, [making] a good word like a good tree, whose root is firmly fixed and its branches [high] in the sky?

¹ The preserved Tablet will be discussed in the 30th Chapter Insha'Allah.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The term 'good word' can be understood either as good speech, speech in which Allah ﷻ is exalted/remembered, or even the Shahadah.

This parable likens a believer to a tree with a strong trunk whose roots are firmly planted within the earth, such that they cannot be lifted from the earth. These roots are watered and nourished by the minerals and streams of water which flow deep in the untouched parts of the earth.

Its trunk sits strongly, and from it grows sturdy branches which reach far into the sky. Its fruits growing up high, away from the pollutants down below, such fruits can be eaten in all seasons, by any people, at any time of day. Not only this, but this tree has multiple uses throughout its lifespan.

It is said that this tree is a date-palm. A date-palm can be noticed from afar due to its high trunk and expansive branches and leaves. Its fruit can be picked and consumed in all stages of its life. Furthermore, not only can the flesh of its fruit be consumed, but its seeds can be used as fodder for animals and its leaves can be used to weave baskets, and so on. Unlike most trees, the date-palm gives off fruit during all seasons.

As a believer, our faith is our roots, planted firmly in the ground, unwavering. Islam encourages us towards purity in our bodies and our actions, such that we may elevate ourselves above the filth of the desires of this world. Our hands, outstretched in dua, praying for the forgiveness and provision of Allah are our branches, reaching up to the sun in the sky. For a practicing believer who follows the Qur'ān diligently, our actions are not seasonal, we do not dust off prayer mats only in the month of Ramadan and for Jum'ah prayers. Rather, our deeds are continuous throughout not only the year, but the day and the night, our hearts continuously calling out to Allah ﷻ.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَمَثَلُ كَلِمَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ كَشَجَرَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ اجْتُثَّتْ مِنْ فَوْقِ الْأَرْضِ مَا لَهَا مِنْ قَرَارٍ

(26) *And the example of a bad word is like a bad tree, uprooted from the surface of the earth, not having any stability.*

The disbeliever is that like tree which is easily toppled, as their roots sit just beneath the surface of the earth, weak and brittle from lack of nourishment and care. Their fruits hang low, bruised by the filth around them, worthless and unpicked.

The Subjugation of Creation for Our Benefit

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ ^ط وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الْفُلْكَ لِتَجْرِيَ فِي الْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِ ^ط وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الْأَنْهَارَ

(32) *It is Allah who created the heavens and the earth and sent down rain from the sky and produced thereby some fruits as provision for you and subjected for you the ships to sail through the sea by His command and subjected for you the rivers.*

Allah ﷻ has created the earth in such a way that within it are hidden numerous treasures. Not just gold, or platinum, but materials such as copper and steel. Not only has Allah ﷻ created these elements for us, He has also gifted us with the strength to manipulate and shape them, and the intelligence to form them into objects.

The Story of Ibrahim & Ismail (as)

رَبَّنَا إِنِّي أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي بُوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْتِكَ الْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ فَاجْعَلْ أَفِيدَةً مِّنَ النَّاسِ تَهْوِي إِلَيْهِمْ وَارْزُقْهُمْ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْكُرُونَ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

(37) Our Lord, I have settled some of my descendants in an uncultivated valley near Your sacred House, our Lord, that they may establish prayer. So make hearts among the people incline toward them and provide for them from the fruits that they might be grateful.

As we previously mentioned, Ibrahim's (as) first wife Saarah was initially unable to have children, so he married Hajar who gave birth to a boy named Isma'il.

When Ismail was only an infant, Allah commanded Ibrahim to take Hajar and Ismail and travel South. After days of travel, they arrived in a mountainous region; for miles they saw no people, no vegetation and no water. This place was called مكة Bakkah or مكة Makkah.

When they came to a valley between two mountains, Ibrahim was ordered by Allah to leave Hajar and Ismail and return home. When he turned to leave, Hajar asked her husband if this was a command from Allah, Ibrahim could not bare to answer, but Hajar understood. She then said, "If this is what Allah wants, then Allah will protect and provide for us." Ibrahim (as) left and Hajar remained in the valley, but on his way, he stopped to pray to Allah provide food for his wife and son, and to guide other people towards them so that they may not be alone.

Side Note: Ibrahim (as) - despite leaving his son and wife in a barren valley - said to Allah ﷻ, "I have settled my descendants... near your sacred house." This is significant for two reasons.

1 - Ibrahim (as) specifically uses the word descendants, as opposed to referring to his son and wife directly. This is because the term descendants is referring to the Final Prophet who would come from the progeny of Ismail, born in that valley.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

2 - Some may ask why Ibrahim would mention a sacred house when there obviously were no structures in the valley at that time. This is because the Kabah which was later built by Ibrahim and Ismail was built 'upon the foundations', meaning in the same spot where previously an edifice of the house of Allah sat at the time of Nuh. However, this structure was destroyed during the Great Flood.

After some time passed, baby Ismail grew hungry, and his mother was unable to feed him as she herself had had nothing to eat. So Hajar left Ismail in the belly of the valley and began to run between the mountains in search for water or any signs of life; these mountains are called Safa and Marwah. Hajar ran between Safa and Marwah seven times until she grew tired and went to sit with her child. Hajar began to hear a voice, and she decided to follow it. To her surprise, Hajar saw a figure in white with a staff. The figure struck the ground and water gushed forth from the earth.

Hajar excitedly drank from the water and also fed Isma'il. She saw that the water was rushing rapidly from the ground and feared it would run out, so she shouted, "Zam! Zam!" (Stop! Stop!), and so the well of Zam Zam fed its first visitors.

Some travellers from Yemen eventually passed by Hajar and Isma'il and were shocked to find them near a well. Hajar invited these people to drink from Zam Zam and rest in her camp. Eventually, this little settlement grew into the city of Makkah.