

Q114

089

سورة الفجر

al-Fajr

The Dawn



فاطمة
Q Fatima

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SURATUL FAJR

Suratul Fajr consists of 30 ayaat.

It was revealed in Makka and is the 89th sura of the Qur'an.

Benefits

Rasulullah (S.A.W.) has said: "Allah forgives the mistakes of whoever recites, Suratul Fajr on the 'Ten Nights', (i.e., the first ten nights of Dhulhijja), and it will become a light on the day of Qiyama for the one who recites it at other times (of the year)".

Imam Sadiq (A.S.) has said: "Recite Suratul Fajr, which is the sura of Imam Husayn (A.S.) in your salaa, whether they be wajib or mustahab. He who recites it will be with him (Husain ibn Ali) at the same place in Janna on the Day of Judgement".

SURATUL FAJR (89)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
وَ الْفَجْرِ

I swear by the daybreak,

وَ كَیَّالِ عَشْرِ

And the ten nights,

وَ الشَّفْعِ وَ الْوَتْرِ

And the even and the odd,

وَ اللَّیْلِ إِذَا یَسْرُ

And the night when it departs.

هَلْ فِي ذَلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّذِي حِجْرٍ

Truly in that there is an oath for those who possess understanding.

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ

Have you not considered how your Rabb dealt with 'Aad,

إِرَمَ ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ

(The people of) Iram, possessors of lofty buildings,

الَّتِي لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلَهَا فِي الْبِلَادِ

The like of which were not created in the (other) cities;

وَتَمُودَ الَّذِينَ جَابُوا الصَّخْرَ بِالْوَادِ

And (with) Thamood, who carved out the rocks in the valley,

وَفِرْعَوْنَ ذِي الْأَوْتَادِ

And (with) Firon, the lord of hosts,

الَّذِينَ طَغَوْا فِي الْبِلَادِ

Who committed inordinacy in the cities,

فَأَكْثَرُوا فِيهَا الْفَسَادَ

So they made great mischief therein?

فَصَبَّ عَلَيْهِمُ رَبُّكَ سَوْطَ عَذَابٍ

Therefore your Rabb let down upon them a portion of the punishment.

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبَالْمِرْصَادِ

Most surely your Rabb is watching.

فَأَمَّا الْإِنْسَانُ إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَأَكْرَمَهُ وَنَعَّمَهُ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَكْرَمَنِ

And as for the human being, when his Rabb tries him, then treats him with honour and makes him lead an easy life, he says: My Rabb honours me.

وَأَمَّا إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ فَقَدَرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقَهُ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَهَانَنِ

But when He tries him (differently), then straitens to him his means of subsistence, he says: My Rabb has disgraced me.

كَلَّا بَلْ لَّا تُكْرِمُونَ الْيَتِيمَ

Nay! but you do not honour the orphan,

وَلَا تَحَاضُّونَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ

Nor do you urge one another to feed the poor,

وَتَأْكُلُونَ التُّرَاثَ أَكْلًا لَّمًّا

And you eat away the heritage, devouring (everything) indiscriminately,

وَتُحِبُّونَ الْمَالَ حُبًّا جَمًّا

And you love wealth with exceeding love.

كَلَّا إِذَا دُكَّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا

Nay! when the earth is made to crumble to pieces,

وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا

And your Rabb comes and (also) the angels in ranks,

وَجِيءَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنْسَانُ وَأَنَّىٰ لَهُ الذُّكْرَىٰ

And Jahannam is made to appear on that day. On that day shall man be mindful, and what shall being mindful (then) avail him?

يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي قَدَّمْتُ لِحَيَاتِي

He shall say: O! would that I had sent before for (this) my life!

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا يُعَذِّبُ عَذَابُهُ أَحَدٌ

But on that day shall no one punish with (anything like) His punishment,

وَلَا يُوثِقُ وَثَاقَهُ أَحَدٌ

And no one shall bind with (anything like) His binding.

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ

O soul that art at rest!

ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً

Return to your Rabb, well-pleased (with him), well-pleasing (Him),

فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي

So enter among My servants,

وَادْخُلِي جَنَّاتِي

And enter into My Janna.

BENEFITS OF RECITATION AND MEMORISATION

Rasulullah (S.A.W.) said: “ For everything there is an adornment and a decoration. The adornment of the Quran is a beautiful voice and tone.”

It was asked from the Rasulallah (S.A.W.) that which of the peoples voice in the recitation of the Quran is better. He said; “The voice of that person is better who while reciting the Holy Quran and his recitation reaches you, you feel that he is fearful of Allah.”

Rasulullah (S.A) said: “ The most honorable and noble from amongst my Umma are the memorisers of the Quran and those who (stay) awake (for worshipping).”

Imam Sadiq (A.S) said: “ Recite the Quran and memorise it. Allah will not punish the heart in which the Quran has been placed.(in it).”

And from amongst the Duas of Imam Sadiq (A.S): “ O Allah, select and approve for us two works : to recite the Quran in a good manner and to memorize their Ayaat.”

AYA 1

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
وَالْفَجْرِ

I swear by the daybreak

Fajr means daybreak or dawn and in essence refers to a beginning. The beginning of knowledge, awareness, and of wakefulness.

Fajr also has a two fold connotation:

- i) Fajr Kadhif – The false dawn which rises without extending laterally
- ii) Fajr Sadiq – The true dawn when the horizon is filled with light which spreads laterally bringing in daybreak. A time when Salatul Fajr can be prayed.

Some commentators have carried the term fajr here to its absolute meaning, that is; light that spreads, which is one of the signs of Allah's Greatness.

It is also a reference point in the lives of human beings and all earthly creatures, and the prime glory of the victorious light and the end of faded darkness when the calm sleep ends and the movement of living creatures begins. It is for this very life that Allah swears by it.

The dawn of the light of Islam and Muhammad (S.A.W.) in the darkness of ignorance at that time, is one of the examples of fajr . The dawn for the rise of Sahibul 'asr is also an example of fajr and so is the rise of Imam Husayn (A.S.) on the plains of Karbala. In essence all revolutions against disbelief, ignorance, transgression and injustice are examples of fajr.

Even the light of wakefulness that appears in the heart of one who sins turning him/her towards repentance is fajr.

AYA 2

وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ

And the ten nights,

These are generally understood to be the first ten nights of Zul-Hajj; nights which are witness to the largest gathering of Muslims in the world. As narrated by Jabir-ibn-' Abdillah in a hadith from Rasulullah (S.A.W.). The mention of nights as opposed to days is similar to Allah's appointing 40 nights for Prophet Musa (A.S.) - 2:51, 7:142. It may imply the benefit of reflection and praying at night when there is a greater concentration on the inner. Also, every night has it's day and the journey of the human being which begins in darkness and ignorance will Insha'Allah end with the clear perception of knowledge.

These nights may also refer to the last ten nights of the month of Ramadhan or some say even the first ten nights of the month of Muharram.

AYA 3

وَالشَّفَعِ وَالْوَثْرِ

And the even and the odd,

Shaf' is from shafa'a which means to double, mediate, intercede... Shafa'a is generally referred to as intercession where the presence of another person who has greater power or knowledge brings comfort, guidance or success to another.

All creation hinges on duality but rely on ONE reality. E.g. day and night; knowledge and truth; obedience and disobedience etc....

Salatut Tahajjud (Shab, Layl) begins with several pairs of rakats and ending with Saltul Witr – Duality finally merges into one in the Witr salaa.

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَىٰ أَن يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا
مَّحْمُودًا

And during a part of the night, pray Tahajjud beyond what is incumbent on you; maybe your Rabb will raise you to a position of great glory. 17:79

The Prophet (S.A.W.) has said:

“There is no good deed except that its reward has been outlined in the Qur'an, except the Salatut Tahajjud. Almighty Allah has not specified its reward due to its greatness with Him. He says (about the reward of those who recite Salatut Tahajjud: So no soul knows what is hidden for them of that which will refresh the eyes; a reward for what they did.(32:17)”

It consists of a total of 11 raka'ats, divided into the following prayers:

1. Nafilah of Layl: 8 raka'ats (4 x 2 raka'ats)
2. Salatush Shafa: 2 raka'ats
3. Salat ul Witr: 1 raka'at

🕒The time for Salatut Tahajjud begins after midnight until the time for Salatul Fajr (morning prayers). The best time for it is just before Fajr Salaa. Salatut Tahajjud is so important that even if you cannot recite all 11 raka'ats, then recite only one rakat of Salatul Witr.

Method

- **Nafilah of Layl**

The 8 raka'ats of Nafilah are divided into four prayers of two raka'ats each just like Salatul Fajr. With the niyya of Salatul Layl. It is recommended to recite Suratul Kafirun after Suratul Fatiha in the first 2 rakats. In the other six recite any small sura or even leave out the sura after Suratul Fatiha. For Qunoot you can recite salawat or the recommended duas.

- **Salat al-Shaf'a**

Two rakats with Suratun Naas I the first rakat after Suratul Fatiha and Suratul Falaq in the second rakat after Suratul Fatiha. There is no qunoot in Salatus Shafa.

- **Salatul Witr**

One rakat with Suratul Ikhlas 3x, Suratul Falaq 1x, and Suratun Naas 1x after Suratul Fatiha. Then raise your hands for qunoot and recite:

(You can hold a book and/or tasbeeh in a mustahab salaa)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
 لَا اِلهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ الْحَلِیْمُ الْكَرِیْمُ لَا اِلهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ الْعَلِیُّ الْعَظِیْمُ
 سُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ رَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَ رَبِّ الْاَرْضِیْنَ السَّبْعِ
 وَ مَا فِیْهِنَّ وَ مَا بَیْنَهُنَّ وَ مَا فَوْقَهُنَّ وَ مَا تَحْتَهُنَّ
 رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِیْمِ وَ سَلَامٌ عَلٰی الْمُرْسَلِیْنَ
 وَ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِیْنَ وَ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ وَ آلِهِ
 الطَّاهِرِیْنَ

There is no god except Allah, the Forbearing, the Generous
 There is no god except Allah , the High the Almighty
 Glory be to Allah, Rabb of the seven heavens and Rabb of the
 seven earths and whatever is in them, and between them and
 above them and below them, Rabb of the Mighty Throne and
 peace be on the Messengers.

All praise is for Allah Rab of the worlds.

O Allah bless Muhammad and his pure family.

Recite 70 x

اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللّٰهَ رَبِّي وَ اَتُوْبُ اِلَيْهِ

I seek forgiveness of Allah my Rabb and I turn to Him

Ask for the forgiveness of forty believers who have died or are living, by saying 40x followed by the name of the person:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِ
O' Allah, forgive.....

Or say

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ

O Allah forgive all believers, male and female

Then say:

اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْ لَا اِلهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ لِجَمِيْعِ ظُلْمِيْ وَ
جُرْمِيْ وَ اِسْرَافِيْ عَلٰى نَفْسِيْ وَ اَتُوْبُ اِلَيْهِ

I seek forgiveness of Allah, He who there is no god but He, the Ever living, the subsisting, from all my oppressions and my sins and my excesses on my soul, and I turn (repentant) to Him

Repeat 7x:

هَذَا مَقَامُ الْعَائِدِ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ

This is the position of one who seeks refuge in You from the fire

Say 300x

اَلْعَفْوَ

(I ask for Your) pardon

Then say:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَارْحَمْنِي وَتُبْ عَلَيَّ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

My Rabb, forgive me and have mercy on me, and turn to me
Surely You are the Oft-returning, the Merciful

Complete the rakat with rukoo, sujood, tashahhud and salaam and
recite a tasbee of Sayyida Fatima Zahra (A.S.)

AYA 4

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَسْرِ

And the night when it departs

The oath is taken to the darkness which moves to the light; a moving darkness, not a stationary one. Darkness is frightening when it becomes fixed and immobile, but when there is movement unto the light, it becomes valuable.

Saara means to depart, start, go away....Sayr means journey, motion..All creation is in continuous motion...Night and day are in motion. When at the end of the journey in this life there is an awakening and the darkness of the night departs, then our ignorance will depart as well and awaken us to reality.

AYA 5

هَلْ فِي ذَلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّذِي حِجْرٍ

Truly in that there is an oath for those who possess understanding.

There are five awakening oaths at the beginning of the Sura. Hijr in this context means understanding. To paraphrase the aya it is saying – “Is this not enough evidence – are there not enough signs in these phenomena for people who have intellect?”

Having told us that at the end of ignorance there is knowledge, at the end of night there is day and at the end of sleep there is consciousness and that the nature of creation is always to be in constant movement towards wakefulness – Allah now gives specific historic evidence.

AYAAT 6, 7, 8

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ

Have you not considered how your Rabb dealt with 'Aad,

إِرَمَ ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ

(The people of) Iram, possessors of lofty buildings,

الَّتِي لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلُهَا فِي الْبِلَادِ

The like of which were not created in the land

Prophet Hud (A.S.) was sent to the people of Aad. Aad was situated in Ahqaaf (which is plural of Hoqf means a raised spot in the desert). It is said to have been located in Yemen at the shores of the sea of Oman.

Prophet Hud (A.S.) was born amongst these people who were very strong, powerful and arrogant. They however worshipped idols.

Prophet Hud (A.S.) spent a long time preaching to them to worship the one and only god - their creator Allah. The people were stubborn and refused to listen to him except very few.

Allah punished the people of Aad by sending a drought (no rain). The people still would not believe and mocked Hud (A.S.) even beating him up. He warned them of a greater punishment but they just ignored him.

When the hardships became great they all came to Prophet Hud's house and asked him to pray for rain. He prayed for rain and the people had food again but they still refused to correct themselves. In fact they defied Prophet Hud (A.S.) to bring the punishment that he had said Allah would send on them if he was true.

Prophet Hud (A.S.) told them that the knowledge of when was only with Allah.

Soon they saw a cloud coming towards them. Thinking it was rain they gathered underneath it. However it was a blast of strong violent wind (like a cyclone) and it killed all the people of Aad. Prophet Hud (A.S.) and a few believers were saved and it is said Hud (A.S.) moved to Hadhremaut (Yemen). It is said he died there and is buried there too.

AYA 9

وَتَمُودَ الَّذِينَ جَابُوا الصَّخْرَ بِالْوَادِ

And (with) Thamood, who carved out the rocks in the valley,

Prophet Saleh (A.S.) was sent to the people of Thamood. The tribe of Thamood were well to do people who lived in the valley of Hijr between Medina and Syria. They used to carve their homes of huge rocks in the mountains. The tribe of Thamood is also known as the second Aad. Allah had favoured them with wealth and bounties but they forgot him and worshipped idols.

Prophet Saleh (A.S.) preached to the people for a long time urging them to abandon their idols and to worship Allah. They used to annually worship a piece of the mountain offering sacrifices it. They called Prophet Saleh (A.S.) to bring a sign from Allah to them if he was one of the truthful ones.

Allah sent as a sign to them a she-camel and it was commanded by Allah that the she-camel would drink all the water of the spring one day and the people of Thamood would drink from it one day. Never had the people seen such a camel who drink all the water of the spring on alternate days but still would not abandon their idols. Prophet Saleh (A.S.) had also warned them that if they harmed the she camel they would be punished by Allah.

Their pride and stubbornness however caused them to kill the she-camel. They then came to Prophet Saleh (A.S.) and said "O Saleh, bring us what you threatened us with if you are of the messengers" 7:77.

He asked them to repent (do tawbah) within three days but they only mocked him.

On the 4th day there was a thunder bolt from the sky and earthquake killing the people of Thamood. Prophet Saleh (A.S.) and his few followers escaped.

Prophet Saleh (A.S.) was greatly moved to see the dead bodies of his tribe and he returned and addresses the dead saying "O my people, indeed I did deliver to you the message of my Lord and did warn you but you did not heed the warners" Qur'an 7:79.

AYAAT 10, 11, 12, 13

وَفِرْعَوْنَ ذِي الْأَوْتَادِ

And (with) Firon, the lord of hosts,

الَّذِينَ طَغَوْا فِي الْبِلَادِ

Who committed inordinacy in the cities,

فَأَكْثَرُوا فِيهَا الْفَسَادَ

So they made great mischief therein?

فَصَبَّ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّكَ سَوْطَ عَذَابٍ

Therefore your Rabb let down upon them a portion of the punishment.

‘Awtad’ which is the plural of watad’ means stake or tent peg. A man’s wealth was measured in some ancient cultures by the number of pegs he had in his tent; the bigger his tent – the more powerful he was. But they also used to torture with pegs – Firawn tortured his wife Aasiya to death by tying her down to pegs.

When Firawn came to power in Egypt, he was alarmed to see that the Bani Israa’il had become so many. He started making life difficult for them. His oppression on them increased when an astrologer told him that a boy would be born from the Bani Israil who would destroy Firaun’s kingdom. On hearing this, Firawn ordered that every male child born to the Bani Israa’il should be killed.

When Prophet Musa (A.S.) was born, his mother hid him to protect him from the king’s soldiers. Allah inspired her to put her baby in a water proof box and cast him into the waters of the Nile. She did this, and then sent her daughter to follow the little ‘box’ and see where it went. Firawn’s wife – Aasiya found the box and asked

Firawn if they could adopt the child as their own. Despite his misgivings, he agreed to her request and called some women to feed the crying child. However, the baby refused milk from all the women who came to feed him. In the meantime the sister came forward and offered to introduce a woman who she was certain the child would accept. Firawn asked for the woman to be brought and thus Prophet Musa (A.S.) was reunited with his mum,

Once as a youth Prophet Musa (A.S.) saw two men fighting. One was from Bani Israil, and shouted for help. Prophet Musa (A.S.) came to his rescue and struck the other man unintentionally killing him. He was seen by one of Firawn's men who had reported him. Prophet Musa (A.S.) knew he had to leave the town.

He walked for a long time without any destination and finally reached Madain. He rested near a well and saw two women waiting their turn to get water whilst some sheperds got theirs. Prophet Musa (A.S.) helped them get some water. One of the women returned and told him that her father wished to thank him for his help. He went with her to her house and discovered that her father was Prophet Shuaib (A.S.).

Prophet Musa (A.S.) stayed with Prophet Shuayb and worked for him for 10 years eventually marrying his daughter Safura. He then left for Egypt with his wife. It was a cold Winter's night – suddenly he saw a fire in the distance. He asked his wife to remain where she was and headed for the fire, thinking to bring some of it back to give them relief from the bitter cold.

When he reached Mount Sinai he saw that the flames were coming from a green tree. Suddenly, a voice said:

"O Musa, I am your Lord! Take off your shoes for you have stepped on to the sacred valley of Tuwa." As Prophet Musa (A.S.) obeyed, he heard the voice ask him to throw his staff onto the ground. At once it changed into a snake, scaring him. He was then commanded to lift the snake without fear and as he did so, it changed back into a stick.

Next he was commanded to put his hand under his armpit. When he drew it out again, his hand glowed with a dazzling light, brilliant like the sun. The voice said to him, "O Musa! These are the two great Signs of your Lord. Go back to Firawn and his people and invite them towards your Lord!"

Prophet Musa (A.S.) requested that his brother, Prophet Harun (A.S.) accompany him and Allah agreed to his request.

Prophet Musa (A.S.) told Firawn that he was a Messenger of Allah. Firawn rejected this claim and then reminded Prophet Musa (A.S.) that he had brought him up and He accused him of having run away after committing a murder.

Prophet Musa (A.S.) argued that he had only been raised away from his own family because his mother had been forced to abandon him in fear of his life. He also said that he had not intentionally killed anyone.

The miracles of Prophet Musa (A.S.) frightened Firawn and he asked his ministers for advice. They assured him that Prophet Musa and Harun (A.S.) were magicians. All the magicians of the land were called and when they threw their ropes on the ground, they began moving like snakes. Prophet Musa (A.S.) cast his staff down and his serpent ate all the pieces of rope. The magicians immediately realised that they were witnessing a miracle. Immediately, they went into sijda saying, "We believe in the Rabb of Musa".

Firawn threatened to kill them but they would not budge.

Firawn increased his oppression of the Bani Israil. Prophet Musa (A.S.) warned him of the punishment from Allah but he did not listen. Soon the country was hit by famine. Swarms of locusts ate away the crops. The river Nile flooded its banks and people were afflicted with lice and tumours.

The people rushed to Prophet Musa (A.S.) asking him to pray for their relief and promised to believe in Allah but when they were cured, they returned to their idol worship.

Finally, Allah commanded Prophet Musa (A.S.) to take his people away:

“We commanded Musa, "Journey by night with Our creatures, and strike a dry path for them through the sea. Do not fear being overtaken by Firawn nor have dread of any thing. Firawn followed them with his army, but the sea overpowered and engulfed them. Firawn had led his people astray and did not rightly guide them.”
Suratu Taa Haa, 20 : 77 - 79

In the final moments of his life Fir'aun recognised the Greatness of Allah and he cried out that there is no god but the Rabb of Musa, and that he was a believer. Firawn and his people drowned, their bodies were thrown on the shore as a sign to humankind. The preserved body of Fir'aun can be seen in the Cairo museum even today as a lasting lesson.

Prophet Musa (A.S.) had promised the Bani Israil a book of guidance from Allah. On their way to Palestine, Allah commanded Prophet Musa (A.S.) that once they left Egypt he would bring to them a Divine Book for their guidance. Now that Fir'aun was dead, Prophet Musa (A.S.) to come to Mount Sinai. The Qur'an says:

We made an appointment of thirty nights with Musa to which we added ten more, so the term set by the Lord was completed in forty nights. Musa said to Harun, his brother, "Deputise for me among my people. Act rightly and do not follow the path of the mischief-makers".

Suratul A'raaf, 7 : 142

When Prophet Musa (A.S.) returned with the Tawrat he saw that a man called Samiri had made a golden calf by collecting gold from the people of Bani Israil. And then sprinkled into its mouth some dust that he had collected from under the feet of the angel Jibraeel (A.S.), whom he had seen on the day that Fir'aun was drowned. The addition of the dust made the golden calf seem to make noises. The sight of his people worshipping a golden calf made Prophet Musa

(A.S.) furious. The people said they had been misguided by Samiri and did tawba. The calf was melted and thrown into the sea. After a long journey, the Bani Israil finally came near Palestine. The Qur'an says: "When Musa told his people, "Recall Allah's favours to you. He made Messengers and kings out of your own people and gave you what He had not given others. Enter the Sacred promised land. Do not return to disbelief lest you become losers". They said, "Musa, a strong race of people is living there. We shall never go there unless they leave the land first."

Suratul Ma'ida 5 : 20 - 22

Despite Prophet Musa's (A.S.) attempts to persuade them, they refused to move into Palestine. Instead, they said to him, "You and your Lord should go there and not we. We will stay away while you fight with the rulers and the people of Palestine. After the land is cleared of people, we will walk onto it".

As a result of their disobedience, the Bani Israil wandered in the wilderness for forty years.

During these forty years a new generation of stronger people replaced the older demoralised one. Prophet Musa (A.S.) and Prophet Harun (A.S.) had died but Yusha' bin Nun, a successor of Prophet Musa (A.S.), led the Bani Israil and finally conquered Palestine.

AYA 14

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبَالِغُ صَادٍ

Most surely your Rabb is watching

‘Rasada’ from which ‘mirsaad’ comes means to observe, keep one’s eye on.....

Imam Ali (A.S.) says: "If Allah has allowed time and opportunities to any tyrant, it does not mean that He has completely lost control over him. He can wait before bringing down His punishment which none can escape and no one can offer protection from it, not even death..."

So paraphrasing this aya; Allah is saying – You Rabb who wishes to bring all in in His domain to their full potential will catch hold of those who have transgressed."

It is narrated that a man once passed by a young slave tending sheep and pointed to an ewe and said, "Sell me this ewe, young shepherd!" The young slave told him that it was not his; therefore, he could not sell it, whereupon the man said, "Where is your brilliance?! Can't you tell its owner that a wolf ate one of his sheep?" He answered him by saying, "Then where is Allah?!" The man was very impressed by his answer, so he bought the young slave and set him free, then he bought the herd and gave it to him as a gift. Since then, that man kept repeating "Then where is Allah?!" quite often.

One who keeps in mind that Allah ever watches over him and sees whatever he does is always on guard.

AYAAT 15, 16

فَأَمَّا الْإِنْسَانُ إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَأَكْرَمَهُ وَنَعَّمَهُ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَكْرَمَنِ

And as for the human being, when his Rabb tries him, then treats him with honour and makes him lead an easy life, he says: My Rabb honours me.

وَأَمَّا إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ فَقَدَرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقَهُ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَهَانَنِ

But when He tries him (differently), then straitens to him his means of subsistence, he says: My Rabb has disgraced me.

The purpose of existence (balaa – affliction, trial) is to refine and develop the human being. And the trials are sometimes given through blessing and sometimes occur through calamities. Neither the abundance of blessings should cause the human being to be proud nor should calamities disappoint him/her. Allah draws our attention to the fact that the human being forgets the essence of the trial in both cases and when he receives the blessings of Allah he thinks that He has honoured him and that blessings are a sign of that honouring.

When the human being is afflicted with outer ease, he/she sits back and says: “My Rabb has been kind and generous to me”. On the other hand if his/her provision is restricted, it tests his/her patience and the ability not to be anxious. The human being then imagines that his/her straitened circumstances are meant to degrade him/her.

These two ayaat warn that blessings do not mean proximity to Allah, nor is adversity and the lack of blessings evidence of being far from Him. They are but diverse factors by which, Allah, according to His Wisdom, tests human beings.

In Suratul Fussilat. 41: 51 He says: “When We bestow favours on the human being, he turns away, and gets himself remote on his side (instead of coming to Us) and when Evil seizes him, (he comes) full of prolonged prayer!”.

In Suratu Hud 11:9 He says: “If We give the human being a taste of Mercy from Ourselves, and then withdraw it from him. Behold! He is in despair and (falls into) blasphemy.”.

AYAAT 17,18,19,20

كَلَّا بَلْ لَّا تُكْرِمُونَ الْيَتِيمَ

Nay! but you do not honour the orphan,

وَلَا تَحَاضُّونَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ

Nor do you urge one another to feed the poor,

وَتَأْكُلُونَ التُّرَاثَ أَكْلًا لَّمًّا

And you eat away the heritage, devouring (everything)
indiscriminately,

وَتُحِبُّونَ الْمَالَ حُبًّا جَمًّا

And you love wealth with exceeding love.

Now, Allah cites four traits that show a human being who is at a loss.

i) **Not honouring an orphan** – Karuma means to be generous and in the context of an orphan it means “to give him/her due consideration and compassion”. Yatim means orphan, someone who needs support and protection and someone with no visible guardian. "Who so ever puts an affectionate hand on the head of an orphan will be rewarded by Allah with a radiance (light) for every hair which will pass from below his hand." – Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (A.S.)

One day Prophet 'Isa (A.S.) was passing through a grave yard with his companions and when nearing one particular grave he started walking faster.

When his companions enquired he said that the person in the grave was being punished and he did not want to be near the grave.

A year later on passing the same graveyard, the companions of Prophet 'Isa (A.S.) noticed that he was walking slowly cherishing each step when he walked passed the same grave.

They asked him about the change. Prophet 'Isa (A.S.) replied :

"The man had a son who has provided food and shelter to an orphan. Allah has forgiven the sins of the father on that account."

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) has said:

"If a person looks after an orphan and meets his/her expenses; he/she will be my companion in Janna and will sit by my side."

In his last will (after being struck by Ibne Muljim) Imam Ali (A.S.) said:

"Fear Allah when the question of orphans arises. You should never let them starve. So long as you are there to guard and protect them you should not let them be ruined or lost. The Prophet (S.A.W.) always reminded us of this responsibility so much so that we often thought that the Prophet (S.A.W.) might give them a share from our inheritance."

ii) **Not encouraging one another to feed the poor** – The aya implies that those who do not move in the forward moving stream of generosity are at a loss. Imam Ali (A.S.) has said: "Generosity is nearness to the Creator and creation, and miserliness is farness from the Creator and creation."

Imam Ali (A.S.) has also said:

"Generosity and giving people are displayed in feeding people, not in giving them wealth. Whoever gives away a thousand while being mean with a plate of food is not generous."

In the battle of Moota, there were a number of the companions of the Prophet (S.A.W.) who lay mortally wounded on the ground. They were all thirsty groaning for water). A man seeing them took some water and offered it to one of them who pointed to another

saying he was in greater need of water. The man went to the second mujahid who pointed to a third saying he was in greater need. When the man got to the third mujahid he found him dead. He returned to the second mujahid but he too was dead and so was the first man.

That is generosity - giving priority to others before oneself, one of the greatest of human values.

There are three kinds of givers-

The flint; The sponge and The honeycomb

To get anything out of a flint you must hammer it. And then only you get chips and sparks.

To get anything out of a sponge you have to squeeze it. The more pressure you use the more you will get.

However, the honeycomb just overflows with it's own sweetness.

Which kind of giver are you?

The Prophet (S.A.W.) has said:"Overlook and forgive the weaknesses of generous people, because if they fall down, the hands of Allah lifts them up."

iii) **Eating up the inheritance of others with greed** - It means 'to assemble the wealth of one's own and that of others', because the term 'lamm' originally means 'to assemble, to collect'. Here it may refer to the collection of lawful and unlawful wealth.. In particular, the pre-Islamic Arabs used to disinherit women, children and minors. They collected their interests and took it all for themselves as if it were their own inheritance. In essence the aya refers to the acquiring of the wealth of the defenceless.

iv)**Loving wealth with excessive love** – We all love wealth because it provides material security which in itself usually

brings about a greater feeling of insecurity through fear of its loss thereby compounding the anxiety.

The aya draws our attention to look within ourselves. If we ponder over this aya that the very security we search for in the love of wealth results in a greater insecurity at losing it.

AYAAT 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26

كَلَّا إِذَا دُكَّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا

Nay! when the earth is made to crumble to pieces,

وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا

And your Rabb comes and (also) the angels in ranks,

وَجِيءَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنْسَانُ وَأَنَّى لَهُ الذُّكْرَى

And Jahannam is made to appear on that day. On that day shall man be mindful, and what shall being mindful (then) avail him?

يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي قَدَّمْتُ لِحَيَاتِي

He shall say: O! would that I had sent before for (this) my life!

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا يُعَذِّبُ عَذَابُهُ أَحَدًا

But on that day shall no one punish with (anything like) His punishment,

وَلَا يُوثِقُ وَثَاقُهُ أَحَدًا

And no one shall bind with (anything like) His binding.

These ayaat refer to the end of the world as we know it and the stages which will herald in the day of Qiyama.

كَلَّا إِذَا دُكَّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا

Nay! when the earth is made to crumble to pieces, 'Kalla' is an admonition. We do not usually think of the earth to be annihilated. The aya is saying – 'And when the earth is shattered by it's vibrations, explosions and earthquakes....' In other words, just as creation arose, it will end.

This is the first stage of Qiyama.

وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا

And your Rabb comes and (also) the angels in ranks

The next stage is the witnessing of the orderliness of the angels and the forces of the cosmos in their natural order, line after line with there being no longer the possibility for the human being to interfere for there is no action.

وَجِيءَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنْسَانُ وَأَنَّى لَهُ الذُّكْرَى

And Jahannam is made to appear on that day. On that day shall man be mindful, and what shall being mindful (then) avail him

Jahannam will be very clear but the aya points out that what will be the use of the mindfulness then for the zone of action – correction will be over. It is at this moment that the human being will realise the reality of life but it will be too late to make amends.

يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي قَدَّمْتُ لِحَيَاتِي

He shall say: O! would that I had sent before for my life!

It is noteworthy that the aya does not say- ‘for my future life’ - ‘for (this) my life’, implying that the life of this world is not counted as life.

In Suratul ‘Ankabut 29:64 Allah says: "And the life of this world is nothing but play and amusement but verily the Home in the Hereafter -that is life indeed, if they but know".

The aya refers to those who devoured the wealth of orphans, did not feed the needy, took the lawful and unlawful inheritance from others, and loved the property of this world with all their hearts, who will wish, on That Day, that they would have forwarded some good deeds for their eternal life.

فِيَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا يُعَذِّبُ عَذَابُهُ أَحَدًا

But on that day shall no one punish with (anything like) His punishment,

وَلَا يُؤْتِقُ وَثَاقَهُ أَحَدٌ

And no one shall bind with (anything like) His binding. No one can be held responsible for anyone else's actions. A person's actions will dictate his/her condition in the next life. It is a unique state and the human being's condition of punishment and bondage will be according to his/her previous actions. Allah's hold on him/her will be particular and unique to the individual alone.

AYAAT 27,28,29,30

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ

O soul that art at rest!

ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً

Return to your Rabb, well-pleased (with him), well-pleasing
(Him),

فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي

So enter among My servants,

وَادْخُلِي جَنَّاتِي

And enter into My Janna.

In contrast to the previous ayaat, Allah addresses the nafs which is in tranquillity and at peace. If we are in agitation and turmoil constantly, how can we hear the echo of timeless knowledge embedded in our hearts?

The call therefore begins with the tranquil and contented nafs. If the nafs is fulfilling its obligation, which is to evolve towards knowledge of its One Source, then it reflects Allah's plan for all of us; it reflects our fitra. If, however, it has been distorted as a reflector, then it takes on the myriad forms that are classified below.

If the nafs is completely wayward and has lost touch with its fitra, it is classified as **nafs al-ammara**. This is the totally selfish, most egotistical of the selves, which, as the Qur'an says, 'commands to evil' 12:53. It is the nafs of the supremely self-centered who

wants something and wants it instantly. This nafs will not listen to reason nor rationality. It is purely whimsical.

Slightly higher on the scale is the nafs whose conscience is pricked because of its bad behavior. As a result, it blames itself for being extreme and may be spurred into positive action in order to do something about its dismal condition. This is the **nafs al-lawwama**, the blaming self.

When the nafs al-lawwama is brought under control, it is on the road to contentment, to becoming **nafs al-mutma'inna**. This self is certain that it will come to faithfully reflect the fitra in time, with diligence, commitment, honesty, companionship and applying the right prescriptions. It will increase in its certainty that it has come from beyond time; that it is only here to learn, to experience and to be poised for that final, incredible journey out of the prison of its body.

In these ayaat Allah is telling this nafs to enter into a zone of contentment that is within itself. The root of contentment lies inside each of us so that we may recognize it within creation and become instruments of contentment for others.

Imam Husayn (A.S.) says :*"The tranquil nafs is the nafs is the nafs that is in tawheed."* *An-nafsal mutmainnah hiya muwahhidah*

After tranquillity comes contentment with knowledge – Ridha – the knowledge of the perfection of the Decree. When one is content with creation, creation will be content and in harmony with him and this leads to Mardhiyya – from which comes the state of perfection – Kamila.

At this point Allah says: "Now enter into My arena, and be hidden in the one and only garden of tawheed, in that inner bliss and glory of abundant abandonment and abandoned abundance."