



Tafseer

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Topic I

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Surah Yusuf

Introduction, Period of Revelation

Surah Yusuf was revealed during the last stage of the Prophet (saaw)'s residence in Makkah. This was a time of intense hardship for the Prophet (saaw) and his Companions. The Quraysh (the most influential tribe in Makkah, and whom the Prophet was from) were constantly conspiring against the Prophet (saaw) and strongly considering exiling, imprisoning, or assassinating him. This surah, which is unique in that it deals almost exclusively with one historical figure (Yusuf (as)) was revealed as a means of consolation to the Prophet (saaw), showing him that evil conspiracies have always been launched against innocent and righteous people.

In addition, the tafseer (Qur'anic Commentary) known as Ruh al Ma'aani states that during this time, though the pagans of Makkah were already bothering the Prophet (saaw), the Jewish community of Makkah also joined them by means of instigation. They encouraged people to ask the Prophet (saaw) "why did the Israelites go to Egypt?" (A Biblical account unknown to the pagan Arabs at the time). As a response, the full story of Yusuf (as) was revealed and the Prophet (saaw) to the amazement of his opposition recited the Surah to them on the spot.

Themes, Major Issues, and Divine Laws

- The dream of Yusuf (as): "...my father, I saw (in my dream) eleven stars and the Sun and the Moon; I saw them prostrate themselves before me" (12:4) The dream seen by Yusuf (as) was an indication that at some time he would acquire such a high status that all his eleven brothers (represented in the dream by eleven stars) and both his parents (represented in the dream by the sun and moon) would fall in prostration before him. Yusuf's father, Ya'qoob (as) feared that if his stepbrothers came to know this dream, they might plot to harm him due to their envy of him
- The faith of Prophets Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, may Allah's peace be upon them all, was the same as that of the Prophet Muhammad (saaw)
- Character molded by Islam compared to character molded by disbelief. (the patience of Ya'qoob (as) once he was told his son Yusuf (as) had been eaten by a wolf compared to the character of Yusuf (as)'s brothers and later the wife of the Aziz who tried to seduce him)
- It is made clear that whatever Allah wills, happens, and no one can defeat His plan or prevent it from happening
- The believers are advised to exert their efforts towards the Truth and put their trust in Allah. This will help them face their opponents with confidence and courage

Surat al Kahf

Introduction / Period of Revelation

It has been reported by Ibn Jarir on the authority of Abdullah bin Abbas (r) that some pagans of Makkah went to the Jews and Christians wanting to know their opinion of the Prophet Muhammad (saaw). They advised them to ask the Holy Prophet (saaw) the following three questions:

1. What is the story of the youngsters who left their city and took refuge in a cave?
2. What is the history of a person who traveled throughout the globe from East to West?
3. What is the reality of the soul? This Surah was revealed in the third stage (from the fifth to the tenth year) of Prophethood in Makkah, in response to these questions. Two of the questions were answered in this Surah while the third was answered in the previous Surah (Surat al Isra or Surat Bani Israa'eel). (Tafseer al Bahr al Muheet)

Some reports indicate that this entire Surah was sent down in a single revelation. It is named after the People of the Cave whose story is detailed in verses 9-26. Apart from the two stories narrated in response to the questions, the Surah also narrates the story of Musa (as) with Khadir (as). It also unveils the falsity of the Christians who ascribe a son to Allah (swt)

Major Issues, Divine Laws, and Guidance

- The story of the Companions of the Cave who fled their city due to their wanting to leave corruption and follow the truth. They retired to a cave and Allah (swt) caused them to sleep therein for hundreds of years
- Whenever you promise to do something in the future, always say "Insha'Allah" (if Allah so wills)
- The example has been given of a man who had been given two gardens by Allah (swt), and due to his been given abundant cultivation he became arrogant and heedless of the favors of Allah (swt). So Allah (swt) caused his gardens to be destroyed. It was then that he realized that the real protection comes only from Allah. His is the best reward and His is the best requital (Verse 44)
- An example of the worldly life is given and it is compared to how Allah (swt) gives life to vegetation during crop season yet causes it to die in the winter months. Similarly, Allah (swt) gave us life and one day this worldly life will share the same fate and be caused to wither away. "O Prophet! Give them the similitude of the life

of this world. It is like the vegetation of the Earth that flourishes with the rain from the sky, but afterwards the same vegetation turns into dry stubble which is blown away by the winds. Allah is the One who has power over everything." (Verse 45)

The Story of Musa (as) with Khidr

This story is mentioned in the Qur'an to illustrate 4 points:

1. Musa (as) was extremely learned but Divine Knowledge is unlimited. So when Musa (as) was given his divine mission, his knowledge was not so perfect that it could not receive further additions.
2. Constant effort is necessary to keep our knowledge fresh, and
3. The mysterious man Musa (as) meets, to whom Tradition assigns the name of Khidr (literally, "Green"), is the type of that knowledge which is ever in contact with life as it is actually lived, and finally
4. there are paradoxes of life, apparent loss may be real gain, apparent cruelty may be real mercy, returning good for evil may really be justice and not generosity. Allah (swt)'s wisdom transcends all human calculation. (Abdullah Yusuf Ali)

The Prophet Musa (as) was asked to go to Khidr and learn from him. "Musa requested of him: "May I follow you so that you may teach me from that True Knowledge which you have been taught?" He answered: "Surely, you will not be able to bear with me, for how can you have patience about that which is beyond your knowledge?" Musa said: "If Allah wills, you shall find me patient and I shall not disobey you in any way." He said: "If you want to follow me, then do not question me about anything until I tell you about it myself." (Verses 66-70)

They reached upon a boat and Khidr made a hole in the boat. Musa (as) inquired why he did so and Khidr rebuked him for not having patience. Thereafter they reached upon a boy who Khidr killed. Musa inquired once again about the act of Khidr. Khidr once again rebuked Musa (as) for breaking their agreement of not questioning and advised him to be patient. Musa responded: "If I ever ask you about anything after this, you may not keep me in your company..." (Verse 76). Lastly, they entered a town and found a wall on the point of falling down, so Khidr restored it. Prophet Musa (as) could not resist but comment on how Khidr did not take any wage for the building of the wall. Khidr then declared that now is the parting between him and Musa (as). Before he left, Khidr explained the rationale for his three actions: (1) "As for the boat, it belonged to some poor fishermen who toiled on the sea. I intended to damage it because there was a king after them who was seizing every boat by force. As for the youth, his parents are true believers, and we feared lest he would oppress them by rebellion and disbelief. It was our wish that our Lord should grant them

another in his place, a son more righteous and better in affection. As for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the city and beneath it their treasure was buried. Since their father was a righteous man, your Lord desired that these children should attain their maturity and take out their treasure. All this was done as a mercy from your Lord. What I did was not done by my own will. That is the interpretation of those actions which you could not bear to watch with patience." (Verses 79-82)

The Story of Dhul Qarnain

The literal meaning of Dhul Qarnain is 'Man of Two Horns.' It was the title of an emperor for reasons not certainly known. His full identity is not given by the Holy Qur'an. Most of the modern exegetes and historians are inclined to the view that he was Cyrus of Persia who delivered the Israelites from the exile of Babylon. The Holy Qur'an has mentioned that he traveled firstly to the extreme West then to the extreme East, and lastly to the extreme North, where he built a wall against the invasions of the tribes of Ya'juj and Ma'jooj. (Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

Surah Maryam

Introduction / Period of Revelation

This Surah was revealed before the migration to Habasha (Abyssinia or present day Ethiopia) during the third stage of the Prophet (saaw)'s residence at Makkah. Authentic traditions indicate that Ja'far (r) recited verses 1-40 of this Surah in the court of Negus, the king of Habasha, when he called the immigrants to his court upon the extradition request of the Quraish.

Major Issues / Divine Laws / Guidance

- Story of Zakariyya (as) (Zacharia) and the miraculous birth of their son Prophet Yahya (as) (John). Zakariyya (as) and his wife were both extremely old but he pleaded to Allah (swt) that He grant him a son and his prayers were answered.
- The fact that 'Isa (Jesus) (as) is not the son of God, and that it is not befitting to the Majesty of Allah that He needs a son
- The manners with which Ibrahim (as) dealt with his father who was an idolater (addressing him in respectful terms such as "o beloved father")
- All prophets of Allah were divinely guided and chosen people
- Allah (swt) has made the Qur'an easy for mankind

The Muslims' First Migration and its Historical Background

The chiefs of the Quraish had failed to suppress the Islamic movement through ridicule, sarcasm, and threats, so they resorted to persecution and economic pressure. They persecuted, starved, inflicted physical torture, and coerced the Muslims to give up Islam. The victims of their persecution were the poor people and the slaves. Not only were they not paid by the Quraish for labor and professional work but they were beaten, imprisoned, kept thirsty and hungry and were even dragged on the burning sands. The condition of the Muslims had become so unbearable that in the fifth year of the Prophet's mission, he advised his followers in the following words: "You may emigrate to Habasha, for there is a king who does not allow injustice to anyone. You should remain there till Allah provides a remedy for your affliction."

Taking advantage of this permission, eleven men and four women immediately left for Habasha. The Quraish pursued them to the coast but fortunately they escaped by getting on a boat leaving for Habasha at the seaport of Shu'aibah. After a few months, other people followed suit and their numbers rose to eighty three men and eleven women from Quraish and seven from other tribes. Only forty Muslims were left with the Prophet (saaw) at Makkah. This migration caused a great hue and cry in Makkah, for there was hardly any family of the Quraish which did not lose a son, a son-in-law, a daughter, a brother or a sister. These included the near relatives of Abu Jahl, Abu Sufyan, and other chiefs of the Quraish who were notorious for their persecution of the Muslims. As a result, some of them became more bitter in their enmity toward Islam, while others were moved by this that they embraced Islam.

The Quraish held a meeting and decided to send Abdullah bin Abi Rabiyy'ah, the half-brother of Abu Jahl, and Amr bin "Aas with some precious gifts to the King of Habasha to persuade him to send the immigrants back to Makkah. Sayyida Umm Salamah, who became a wife of the Prophet (saaw) later on and was among the migrants, related their story in detail. She says: "When these two clever statesmen of the Quraish reached Habasha, they distributed the gifts among the courtiers of the king and persuaded them to support their request to send the immigrants back. Then they approached Negus, the king of Habasha, presented the expensive gifts, and said: "Some headstrong people of our city have come to your land so our chiefs have sent us to you with the request that you kindly send them back. These people have forsaken our faith, have not embraced yours, and have invented a new faith." As soon as they made their request, all the courtiers supported their case, saying: "We should send such people back. It is not proper for us to keep them here." At his the king, who got annoyed, said: "I am not going to send them back without proper enquiry. Since those people have put their trust in us through coming and taking shelter in my country

rather than going to some other country, I will not betray them. I will send for them and investigate the allegations these people have made against them. Then I will make the decision." So the king sent for the immigrants to come to his court.

When the immigrants received the summons from the king, they held a meeting and after lengthy discussions decided: "We shall present the teachings of the Prophet to the king without adding anything to or withholding anything from it regardless of whether he lets us remain here or turns us out of his country." When they came to the court, the king put this abruptly: "I understand that you have given up the faith of your own people and have neither embraced my faith nor any other existing faith but have invented a new faith. I would like to know what your new faith is." At this, Ja'far bin Abi Talib responded on behalf of the immigrants, in these words: "O King! We were sunk deep in ignorance and had become very corrupt, then Muhammad (saaw) came to us as a Messenger of Allah and reformed us, but these Quraish began to persecute us, so we have come to your country in the hope that here we will be free from persecution." Hearing this statement, the king asked: "Please recite a piece of the Revelation which your Prophet has received from Allah." In response, Ja'far bin Abi Talib (r) recited a portion of Surah Maryam which relates the story of Prophets Yahya (John) and Isa (Jesus) (may peace be upon them both). When the king listened, he started weeping and wept so much that his beard became wet with tears. When Ja'far (r) finished the recital, he said: "most surely this revelation and message brought by Jesus have come from the same source. By God, I will not put you in the hands of these people."

The next day 'Amr bin 'Aas made another attempt. He went to the king and said: "Please send for them again and ask them concerning the belief they hold about Jesus, for they say horrible thing about him." The king again sent for the immigrants, who had already learned about the scheme of Amr. They again held a meeting to discuss the answer they should give to the king if he should ask about the belief that they held about Prophet Jesus. It was a very critical situation and all of them were uneasy about it, however, they decided that they would just say what Allah and His Messenger had said about Jesus. The next day, when they went to the King's court, he asked them the question that had been suggested by 'Amr bin 'Aas. Ja'far bin Abi Talib (r) stood up and answered without any hesitation: "Jesus was a Servant of Allah and His Messenger. He was a Spirit and a Word of Allah which had been sent to Virgin Mary." At this, the king picked up a straw from the ground and said: "By God, Jesus was not different (even as much as this straw) than what you have said about him." After this the king returned the gifts of the Quraish, saying: "I do not accept bribes." Then he addressed the immigrants: "You are welcome in my country and you can stay here in peace." (Muhammad Farooq-i-Azam Malik)

Story of Maryam (Mary) and the Miraculous Birth of Prophet Isa (as) (Jesus, Son of Mary)

"Mention to them the story of Maryam in the Book when she withdrew from her family to a place in the East. She chose to be secluded from them. We sent to her Our Angel and he appeared before her as a perfect human being. She said: "I seek The Most Merciful's protection against you, if you are God-fearing." He said: "Don't be afraid, I am merely a messenger from your Lord to tell you about the gift of a righteous son." She said: "How shall I bear a son when no man has ever touched me nor am I unchaste?" The angel replied: "So shall it be, your Lord says: "It is easy for Me, We wish to make him a sign for mankind and a blessing from Us" and this matter has already been decreed." So she conceived the child and she retired with him to a remote place. The pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm tree. She cried in her anguish: "Ah! Would that I had died before this, and been long forgotten!" An angel from beneath her consoled her saying: "Do shake the trunk of this palm tree, it will drop fresh ripe dates upon you. So eat, drink, and refresh yourself. If you see any human being, say: "I have vowed a fast for The Most Gracious, so I will not speak to any human being today."

"Carrying the baby, she came back to her people. They said: "O Maryam! You have brought something hard to believe! O sister (a woman from the noble family) of Aaron! Your father was not a bad man nor your mother an unchaste woman." In response, she merely pointed towards the baby. They said: "How can we talk to a baby in the cradle?" Whereupon the baby spoke out: "I am indeed a servant of Allah. He has given me the Book and made me a Prophet. He has made me blessed wherever I may be. He has commanded me to establish Salah (prayer) and give Zakah (obligatory charity) as long as I live." He has exhorted me to honor my mother and has not made me arrogant, disobedient. Peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I shall die, and the Day I shall be raised to life again." Such was Isa (Jesus) the Son of Maryam (Mary), and this is the true statement about him concerning which they are in doubt."

"It is not befitting to the majesty of Allah that He Himself should beget a son! He is far above this, for when He decrees a matter He need only say: "Be" and it is. Isa (as) declared, Verily Allah is my Lord and your Lord, therefore worship Him. This is the Right Way. In spite of this, the sects from among them are divided. So woe to the disbelievers from the meeting of a Great Day. They will be able to see and hear very clearly on that Day when they will appear before Us! But today these wrongdoers are in manifest error. Forewarn them about the Day of intense regret when this matter will be decided, they are paying no heed and do not believe. Ultimately, all things will perish and it is We, Who will inherit the Earth and all that is on it, and to Us shall they return." (Verses 16-40)

Surat Ta Ha

Introduction / Period of Revelation

This surah was revealed in the early phases of the Makkan period. Authentic reports indicate that the noble companion 'Umar bin al Khattab (r) embraced Islam shortly after reading this Surah in a script given to him by his sister Fatimah (ra). Once he read it, he could not help but admire the discourse, he immediately proceeded to the Holy Prophet (saaw) and embraced Islam.

It appears that the main purpose of the Surah is to console the Holy Prophet (saaw) and his Companions at a time when they were facing extreme hardships at the hands of their opponents. The story of Musa (as) is narrated with its full details to show how he faced similar hardships, but Allah (swt) helped him and ultimately he was triumphant. The story also proves that the basic call of Musa (as) was the same call of the Holy Prophet (saaw), that is, inviting people to believe in Tawheed (the Oneness of Allah). (Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

Major Issues / Divine Laws / Guidance

- The Qur'an is but a reminder for those who fear Allah
- In the Hereafter, the life of this world shall appear to be no more than a day or part of a day
- Story of the Prophet Musa (as) as a Messenger to the Pharaoh and his chiefs
- Famous prayer of Musa (as) before starting his mission
- Dialogue between Prophet Musa (as) and the Pharaoh
- Confrontation with the Pharaoh's magicians who eventually accepted Islam after witnessing the miracles of Allah
- A scene from the Day of Judgment
- The Qur'an is sent in the Arabic language for easy understanding, so read it and say: "O Lord increase me in knowledge"
- The story of Adam's creation and Shaitan's temptations
- Those who do not read the Qur'an and follow its directions shall be raised to life as blind persons on the Day of Resurrection

This Surah begins with the object of the Qur'an's revelation that it is an admonition and guidance to the Right Way for those who fear Allah and want to save themselves from His punishment. This Qur'an is the Word of Allah Who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. After this introduction, the story of the Prophet Musa (as) is related to admonish the

people of Makkah who knew about Musa (as) as a Prophet of Allah due to their relations with Jews and neighboring Christian kingdoms. This story has verified the following facts:

1. The fundamental principles of Tawheed and the Hereafter which are being presented by the Prophet Muhammad are the same as were conveyed by the Prophet Musa (as) to his people
2. The Prophet Muhammad (saaw) has been made a Messenger to convey Allah's Message to the people of Quraish without worldly means, just as the Prophet Musa (as) was made a messenger without worldly means to convey Allah's message to a tyrant king
3. The people of Makkah were employing the same devices against the Prophet Muhammad (saaw) as the Pharaoh did against the Prophet Musa (as) (i.e. - frivolous objections, accusations, and cruel persecutions). Just as the Prophet Musa (as) came out victorious over Pharaoh, so shall the Prophet Muhammad (saaw) over the Quraish, for the mission which is supported by Allah always comes out victorious in the end
4. The Muslims are advised to follow the excellent example of the magicians, who remained steadfast in their faith, though Pharaoh threatened them with horrible vengeance.

After this, the story of Adam is related, as if to tell the Quraish, "the way you are following is the way of Shaitan, whereas the Right Way for a man is to follow his forefather Adam, who was seduced by Shaitan, but when he realized his error, he confessed, repented and returned to the service of Allah." (Muhammad Farooq-i-Azam Malik)

Important Excerpts from Surah TaHa

The Story of Musa (as) in Detail, Verses 9-76

"And has there come to you the story of Musa (Moses)? When he saw a fire, he said to his family: "Wait! Verily, I have seen a fire, perhaps I can bring you some burning brand therefrom, or find some guidance at the fire." And when he came to it (the fire), he was called by name: "O Musa (Moses)! "Verily! I am your Lord! So take off your shoes, you are in the sacred valley, Tuwa. "And I have chosen you. So listen to that which is inspired to you. "Verily! I am Allah! La ilaha illa Ana (none has the right to be worshipped but I), so worship Me, and perform As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat) for My Remembrance. "Verily, the Hour is coming and My Will is to keep it hidden that every person may be rewarded for that which he strives. "Therefore, let not the one who believes not therein (i.e. in the Day of Resurrection, Reckoning, Paradise and Hell, etc.), but follows his own lusts, divert you therefrom, lest you perish. "And what is that in your right hand, O Musa (Moses)?" He said: "This is my stick, whereon I lean, and wherewith I beat down branches for my sheep, and

wherein I find other uses." (Allah) said: "Cast it down, O Musa (Moses)!" He cast it down, and behold! It was a snake, moving quickly. Allah said: "Grasp it, and fear not, We shall return it to its former state, "And press your (right) hand to your (left) side, it will come forth white (and shining), without any disease as another sign, "That We may show you (some) of Our Greater Signs. "Go to Fir'aun (Pharaoh)! Verily, he has transgressed (all bounds in disbelief and disobedience, and has behaved as an arrogant, and as a tyrant)." [Musa (Moses)] said: "O my Lord! Open for me my chest (grant me self-confidence, contentment, and boldness). "And ease my task for me; "And make loose the knot (the defect) from my tongue, (i.e. remove the incorrectness from my speech) [That occurred as a result of a brand of fire which Musa (Moses) put in his mouth when he was an infant]. [Tafsir At-Tabari, Vol. 16, Page 159]. "That they understand my speech, "And appoint for me a helper from my family, "Harun (Aaron), my brother; "Increase my strength with him, "And let him share my task (of conveying Allah's Message and Prophethood), "That we may glorify You much, "And remember You much, "Verily! You are of us Ever a Well-Seer." Allah said: "You are granted your request, O Musa (Moses)!"

"And indeed We conferred a favor on you another time (before). "When We inspired your mother with that which We inspired. "Saying: 'Put him (the child) into the Tabut (a box or a case or a chest) and put it into the river (Nile), then the river shall cast it up on the bank, and there, an enemy of Mine and an enemy of his shall take him.' And I endued you with love from Me, in order that you may be brought up under My Eye, "When your sister went and said: 'Shall I show you one who will nurse him?' So We restored you to your mother that she might cool her eyes and she should not grieve. Then you did kill a man, but We saved you from great distress and tried you with a heavy trial. Then you stayed a number of years with the people of Madyan (Midian). Then you came here according to the fixed term which I ordained (for you), O Musa (Moses)! "And I have Istana'tuka, for Myself. "Go you and your brother with My Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), and do not, you both, slacken and become weak in My Remembrance. "Go, both of you, to Fir'aun (Pharaoh), verily, he has transgressed (all bounds in disbelief and disobedience and behaved as an arrogant and as a tyrant). "And speak to him mildly, perhaps he may accept admonition or fear Allah." They said: "Our Lord! Verily! We fear lest he should hasten to punish us or lest he should transgress (all bounds against us)." He (Allah) said: "Fear not, verily! I am with you both, hearing and seeing. "So go you both to him, and say: 'Verily, we are Messengers of your Lord, so let the Children of Israel go with us, and torment them not; indeed, we have come with a sign from your Lord! And peace will be upon him who follows the guidance! 'Truly, it has been revealed to us that the torment will be for him who denies [believes not in the Oneness of Allah, and in His Messengers, etc.], and turns away.' (from the truth and obedience of Allah)"

Fir'aun (Pharaoh) said: "Who then, O Musa (Moses), is the Lord of you two?" [Musa (Moses)] said: "Our Lord is He Who gave to each thing its form and nature, then guided it aright." [Fir'aun (Pharaoh)] said: "What about the generations of old?" [Musa (Moses)] said: "The knowledge thereof is with my Lord, in a Record. My Lord is neither unaware nor He forgets." Who has made earth for you like a bed (spread out); and has opened roads (ways and paths etc.) for you therein; and has sent down water (rain) from the sky. And We have brought forth with it various kinds of vegetation. Eat and pasture your cattle, (therein); verily, in this are proofs and signs for men of understanding. Thereof (the earth) We created you, and into it We shall return you, and from it We shall bring you out once again. And indeed We showed him [Fir'aun (Pharaoh)] all Our Signs and Evidences, but he denied and refused. He [Fir'aun (Pharaoh)] said: "Have you come to drive us out of our land with your magic, O Musa (Moses)? "Then verily, we can produce magic the like thereof; so appoint a meeting between us and you, which neither we, nor you shall fail to keep, in an open wide place where both shall have a just and equal chance (and beholders could witness the competition)." [Musa (Moses)] said: "Your appointed meeting is the day of the festival, and let the people assemble when the sun has risen (forenoon)." So Fir'aun (Pharaoh) withdrew, devised his plot and then came back. Musa (Moses) said to them: "Woe unto you! Invent not a lie against Allah, lest He should destroy you completely by a torment. And surely, he who invents a lie (against Allah) will fail miserably." Then they debated with one another about what they must do, and they kept their talk secret. They said: "Verily! These are two magicians. Their object is to drive you out from your land with magic, and overcome your chiefs and nobles. "So devise your plot, and then assemble in line. And whoever overcomes this day will be indeed successful." They said: "O Musa (Moses)! Either you throw first or we be the first to throw?" [Musa (Moses)] said: "Nay, throw you (first)!" Then behold, their ropes and their sticks, by their magic, appeared to him as though they moved fast. So Musa (Moses) conceived a fear in himself. We (Allah) said: "Fear not! Surely, you will have the upper hand. "And throw that which is in your right hand! It will swallow up that which they have made. That which they have made is only a magician's trick, and the magician will never be successful, no matter whatever amount (of skill) he may attain." So the magicians fell down prostrate. They said: "We believe in the Lord of Harun (Aaron) and Musa (Moses)." [Fir'aun (Pharaoh)] said: "Believe you in him [Musa (Moses)] before I give you permission? Verily! He is your chief who taught you magic. So I will surely cut off your hands and feet on opposite sides, and I will surely crucify you on the trunks of date-palms, and you shall surely know which of us [I (Fir'aun - Pharaoh) or the Lord of Musa (Moses) (Allah) " can give the severe and more lasting torment." They said: "We prefer you not over the clear signs that have come to us, and to Him (Allah) Who created us. So decree whatever you desire to decree, for you can only decree (regarding) this life of the world. "Verily! We have believed in our Lord, that He may forgive us our faults, and the magic to which you did compel us. And Allah is better as regards reward in comparison to your [Fir'aun's (Pharaoh)] reward, and more lasting

(as regards punishment in comparison to your punishment)." Verily! Whoever comes to his Lord as a Mujrim (criminal, polytheist, disbeliever in the Oneness of Allah and His Messengers, sinner, etc.), then surely, for him is Hell, therein he will neither die nor live. But whoever comes to Him (Allah) as a believer (in the Oneness of Allah, etc.), and has done righteous good deeds, for such are the high ranks (in the Hereafter), 'Adn (Edn) Paradise (everlasting Gardens), under which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever: such is the reward of those who purify themselves [(by abstaining from all kinds of sins and evil deeds) which Allah has forbidden and by doing all that which Allah has ordained]].

The Story of Adam (as), Verses 116-128

"And (remember) when We said to the angels: "Prostrate yourselves to Adam." They prostrated (all) except Iblis (Satan), who refused. Then We said: "O Adam! Verily, this is an enemy to you and to your wife. So let him not get you both out of Paradise, so that you be distressed in misery. Verily, you have (a promise from Us) that you will never be hungry therein nor naked. And you (will) suffer not from thirst therein nor from the sun's heat.

Then Shaitan (Satan) whispered to him, saying : "O Adam! Shall I lead you to the Tree of Eternity and to a kingdom that will never waste away?" Then they both ate of the tree, and so their private parts appeared to them, and they began to stick on themselves the leaves from Paradise for their covering. Thus did Adam disobey his Lord, so he went astray. Then his Lord chose him, and turned to him with forgiveness, and gave him guidance. (Allah) said: "Get you down (from the Paradise to the earth), both of you, together, some of you are an enemy to some others. Then if there comes to you guidance from Me, then whoever follows My Guidance shall neither go astray, nor fall into distress and misery.

"But whosoever turns away from My Reminder (i.e. neither believes in this Qur'an nor acts on its orders, etc.) verily, for him is a life of hardship, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection." He will say: "O my Lord! Why have you raised me up blind, while I had sight (before)." (Allah) will say: "Like this, Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) came unto you, but you disregarded them (i.e. you left them, did not think deeply in them, and you turned away from them), and so this Day, you will be neglected (in the Hell-fire, away from Allah's Mercy)." And thus do We requite him who transgresses beyond bounds [i.e. commits the great sins and disobeys his Lord (Allah) and believes not in His Messengers, and His revealed Books, like this Qur'an, etc.], and believes not in the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of his Lord, and the torment of the Hereafter is far more severe and more lasting.

Is it not a guidance for them (to know) how many generations We have destroyed before them, in whose dwellings they walk? Verily, in this are signs indeed for men of understanding.

Surah Shu'ara

Introduction / Period of Revelation

This Surah was revealed during the middle stage of the Prophet's residence in Makkah. According to Ibn Abbas (r), Surah Shu'ara was revealed after Surah Taha and Surah Waqi'ah (Tafsir Ruh al Ma'ani). This surah is the 26th Chapter of the Qur'an and should not be confused with Surah Shura (Chapter 42) which is a similar sounding but completely different surah.

Major Issues, Divine Laws, and Guidance

- Allah's address to the Prophet Muhammad (saaw) that he should not fret himself to death with grief for the people's disbelief.
- Story of Musa, Pharaoh, and deliverance of the children of Israel
- Story of Prophet Ibrahim (as) and his famous arguments against idol worshipping
- Stories of the Prophets Nuh, Hud, Saleh, Lut, and Shu'aib (may peace and blessings be upon them all) and their people
- The shaitans descend on those slandering sinners who listen to hearsay and are liars

This Surah was revealed at a time when the Holy Prophet (saaw) was extremely grieved over the stubborn attitude of the disbelievers and their constant demand to show them more and more supernatural miracles of their choosing. This surah was not only a source of consolation for the Holy Prophet (saaw) but also contained convincing discourses as an answer to the pagans' absurd objections and demands. This surah makes it abundantly clear that the signs of Allah's Oneness and His Omnipotence are spread all over the universe. These signs were highlighted to show that such signs should be enough for the sincere and genuine seeker of truth to lead him or her to the right faith. Then stories of past nations and prophets are narrated to prove that they did not believe even after miracles of their choice were made manifest to them. (Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

The Dialogue of Ibrahim (as) and the Idol Worshippers, Verses 69-89

"And recite to them the story of Ibrahim (Abraham). When he said to his father and his people: "What do you worship?" They said: "We worship idols, and to them we are ever devoted." He said: "Do they hear you, when you call (on them)? "Or do they benefit you or do they harm (you)?" They said: "Nay, but we found our fathers doing so." He said: "Do you observe that which you have been worshipping, "You and your ancient fathers?

"Verily! They are enemies to me, save the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists);

"Who has created me, and it is He Who guides me; "And it is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink. "And when I am ill, it is He who cures me; "And Who will cause me to die, and then will bring me to life (again); "And Who, I hope will forgive me my faults on the Day of Recompense, (the Day of Resurrection), "My Lord! Bestow Hukman (religious knowledge, right judgment of the affairs and Prophethood) on me, and join me with the righteous; And grant me an honorable mention in later generations; And make me one of the inheritors of the Paradise of Delight;

And forgive my father, verily he is of the erring; And disgrace me not on the Day when (all the creatures) will be resurrected; The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, Except him who brings to Allah a clean heart [clean from Shirk (polytheism) and Nifaq (hypocrisy)]."

Surah 'Ankabut

Introduction / Period of Revelation

This surah was revealed in Makkah shortly before the Muslims' migration to Habasha and during the time when Muslims were facing the hardest persecution at the hands of the pagan Makkans. A long period of hardships and suffering was demoralizing the Muslim community. This surah was revealed in part to clarify that there is no "royal road" to Paradise, on the contrary, undoubtedly Faith will come with a little difficulty. This surah reminds the believers that:

1. those who adhere to true faith have to pass through trials and ordeals,
2. the hardships they were suffering were of temporary nature, and
3. the ultimate victory is destined for those who remain firm and steadfast during the trial.

Major Issues, Divine Laws, and Guidance

- Allah (swt) tests the Believers to see who is truthful and who is a liar. "Do people think that they will be left alone on saying "we believe" and that they will not be tested? We did test those who have gone before them so Allah will surely know the ones who are truthful and the ones who are liars." (Verses 2-3)

- Be kind to parents and obey them not in matters of Shirk (associated partners with Allah, Most High)
- Those who say: "Follow us, we will bear your burden on the Day of Judgment" are liars
- The Prophet Nuh (as) admonished his people for 950 years
- The Prophet Ibrahim (as) was thrown into the fire by his people, Allah (swt) caused the fire to cool and thus saved him
- The old nations of 'Ad, Thamud, Madyan, and Pharaoh rejected their messengers, as a result Allah (swt) destroyed them all
- The parable of those who seek protectors other than Allah is given: It is that of the dwelling of an 'Ankabut (Spider), "...and in fact the weakest of all the dwellings is the dwelling of a spider." (Verse 41)
- The Prayer keeps one away from shameful deeds. "Recite from this Book which has been revealed to you and establish Salah (prayers). Surely, Salah (Prayer) keeps one away from shameful and evil deeds, and surely the remembrance of Allah is the greatest, and Allah knows what you do." (Verse 45)
- Whenever someone makes sincere efforts to become righteous and obedient to Allah, He helps him or her reach the right path. "As for those who strive in Our cause, We will surely guide them to our ways, surely Allah is with the righteous" (Verse 69)

This Surah strengthens the faith of sincere Muslims and admonishes those who were showing weakness of their faith. This Surah also addresses those questions which some young men were facing in those days, whose parents were urging them to abandon Islam and return to their ancestral religion. The Muslims are instructed: "If you feel that the persecution has become unbearable for you, you should give up your homes instead of giving up your faith. Allah's earth is vast, seek a new place where you can worship Allah with full peace of mind." The disbelievers are urged to understand Islam. The realities of Tawheed (Oneness of God) and the Hereafter are presented with rational arguments, shirk (polytheism) is refuted, and their attention is drawn toward the signs in the Universe, they are told that these signs conform to the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (saaw).

Surah Hujurat

Introduction / Period of Revelation

This Surah was revealed towards the latter part of the Prophet Muhammad (saaw)'s life when the Muslims were established and needed a code of conduct for their social behavior. Traditions and the subject matter indicate that this Surah is a combination of the commandments and instructions revealed on different occasions.

Major Issues, Divine Guidance, and Guidance

- Allah (swt) commanded the Sahaba to lower their voices in the presence of the Prophet (saaw), nor should they even walk in front of him. This verse shows the degree of respect the Companions maintained around the Prophet (saaw). The Prophet (saaw) due to his mercy extended this form of etiquette to elderly and pious Sahaba as well by rebuking Abu Darda (r) when he walked in front of Abu Bakr (r). (Ruh al Bayan, on the authority of Kashf ul Asraar)
- The 'Ulama (religious scholars) are the inheritors of the Prophets so a similar degree of respect should be afforded to them and other people to whom we are individually and communally obliged to (e.g. - pious leaders, parents, etc.)
- If the believers fight among themselves, make peace between them

This surah laid down broad principles that should govern the social life of all Muslims. The opening part of the Surah describes the etiquette to be observed when visiting the Holy Prophet (saaw) and speaking to him or on his presence. By extension, this Surah teaches us the etiquette to be observed in front of any elder or respected person, including parents, and the inheritors of the Prophet (saaw): the 'Ulama (scholars of Islam). (Ma'ariful Qur'an, Chief Justice Mufti Muhammad Shafi') This surah also prohibits certain acts that give rise to social evils and mutual disputes. If any dispute arises, Muslims are directed to make earnest efforts to bring reconciliation and harmony between quarrelling groups. It is also declared in unequivocal terms that all claims of superiority on the basis of race, nation, and/or language are, as far as Islam is concerned, false. The sole criterion for determining one's rank in the society is his or her piety. Towards the end of the Surah, it is clarified that it is not enough for one's salvation to declare his belief orally. It is necessary that he accepts Islam with his heart and soul, and surrenders himself unconditionally to the commands of Allah and His Messenger. (Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

Islamic Etiquettes of Moral Behavior Revealed in Surat al Hujurat

1. Do not laugh at someone or degrade them
2. Do not defame someone through sarcastic remarks
3. Do not call someone by offensive nicknames
4. Avoid immoderate suspicions, for in some cases it is a sin
5. Do not spy on one another
6. Do not backbite one another (backbiting is likened, in this surah, to eating the flesh of your brother)
7. All mankind is created from one man and one woman, therefore, no one has superiority over another, and noblest is he who is the most pious

(Muhammad Farooq-i-Azam Malik)

Islam vs. Iman

These are two terms used in this Surah. Islam is often translated as 'submission' that is to say, the way of life revealed by Allah (swt) through the Holy Prophet (saaw), the central tenant of which is to suspend one's own vain desires and submit to the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, Allah (swt). "Iman" on the other hand is often translated as "faith" or an unwavering conviction in Allah (swt), His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Day of Judgment, and whatever Allah has decreed. Iman is the protection and security of these tenants deep within the heart of a believer.

The two terms, technically, connote different senses. "Iman," in the technical sense of Shari'ah (Islamic Law), refers to the belief in one's heart and thus connotes a firm resolve and unshakable belief in the Oneness of Allah and His Messenger. "Islam," on the other hand, stands for complete surrender and obedience to Allah and His Messenger. However, "Islam" and "Iman" of a person need to complement each other. In Shari'ah, the belief of the heart must manifest itself by performing deeds outwardly, the least degree of which is to proclaim the Testimony of the Oneness of Allah verbally. But the outward performance of deeds is not recognized by Shari'ah unless accompanied by faith and if that faith goes deep down into one's heart. Otherwise it would be hypocrisy. Thus in the original and final analysis of "Islam" and "Iman" is that they are different concepts. "Iman" is the inner quality of the heart and manifests outwardly while "Islam" starts outward through actions and culminates in the inner sincere affirmation of the heart. In terms of their goal, they are mutually necessary and complementary in that "Iman" with "Islam" is not possible, nor is "Islam" possible without "Iman."

Hence, it is not true to say that "Muslim" (one who has Islam) and "Mu'min" (one who has Iman) are antonyms and mutually contradictory concepts. In Shari'ah, it is not possible for a person to be a "Muslim" but not a "Mu'min" or be a "Mu'min" but not a "Muslim."

However, this is possible only lexically, as is the case of the hypocrites who were treated outwardly as Muslims because of their outward obedience to Islamic injunctions but their hearts were devoid of sincere faith, belief, and affirmation. (Ma'arif ul Qur'an, Chief Justice Mufti Muhammad Shafi')

Surah Balad

Introduction / Period of Revelation

This Surah was revealed during the Makkan period of the life of the Holy Prophet (saaw).

Major Issues, Divine Laws, and Guidance

- Allah (swt) has given the human being numerous faculties, among them: two eyes, one tongue, and two lips
- Some of the qualities of a righteous person: freeing slaves, feeding the hungry, being patient, advising others about piety and compassion
- The Surah takes its name from the first verse in which Allah (swt) swears by al-Balad which is most commonly translated as 'the city.' The city in reference is the Holy City of Makkah. Thereafter Allah (swt) mentions that the Prophet Muhammad (saaw) is "hillun" in regards to the Holy City of Makkah.

Scholarly Discussion of Verse Two: Linguistic and Historical Implications of the word "Hillun"

The Arabic word "Hillun" is understood two ways:

1. It could be derived from "hulool" which signifies to reside in. In this sense, "hillun" signifies 'a dweller or resident' and the verse purports to say that the city of Makkah is sacred because the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saaw) is in fact a dweller / resident/ inhabitant of the city, this adds to its honor and sanctity.
2. The second possibility is that it is derived from "hillatun" which means 'the thing which is lawful.' From this point of view, "hillun" could signify the fact that killing is normally unlawful in Makkah due to it being a holy city. However a time will come (as it did during the Conquest of Makkah) when the Prophet (saaw) will be granted the opportunity to make killing lawful. It should be noted that due to the merciful nature of the Prophet Muhammad (saaw), he never availed this permission and conquered Makkah without shedding a drop of blood.

(Tafseer Mazhari)

This Surah compressed a vast subject into a few brief sentences. It is a miracle of the Qur'an that a complete ideology of life which could hardly be explained in a thick volume has been abridged most effectively in the few brief sentences of this Surah. Its theme is to explain the true position of man in the world and of the world in relation to man and relate that Allah (swt) has shown man the way of good and the way of evil. Allah (swt) has also provided for man, the means to judge, see, and follow the paths of his choosing. Now it rests upon each individual's own effort and judgment whether he or she chooses the path of virtue and reaches felicity or adopts the path of evil.

After this, man's misunderstanding that he is all in all in this world and there is no superior power to watch what he does and to call him to account, has been refuted. The way which leads to moral depravity is often easy and pleasing to the self and the way which leads to moral heights is steep like an uphill road for which man has to exercise self-restraint.

Finally the people are advised to give up spending for ostentation, display and pride, and should spend their wealth to help the orphans and the needy. They should believe in Allah (swt), join the company of righteous believers and participate in the construction and advancement in human society. As a result, they would become worthy of Allah's mercy, while those who will follow the wrong way would become the fuel of hell from which there is no escape

(Muhammad Farooq-i-Azam Malik)

Obligations of a Believer from Surat al Balad

"Then he did not join those who believe and advise each other to be patient and advise each other to be merciful" (verse 17). This verse points out that just doing of good actions is not enough for raising the all-round stature of the Muslim community. Good ideals and right principles, combined with continuous and sustained adherence to the path of moral rectitude and teaching of virtues to others are equally essential for the attainment of the high aim. Thus the verse after 'faith' draws the attention of the believer to his socio-moral obligation to the effect that he ought to teach other Muslims brothers [and sisters] to be patient and to be merciful. The word "sabr" [often translated as 'patience'] signifies [in this particular Surah] 'to withhold oneself from evil deeds and to act upon good deeds.' The word "marhamah" [also found in this verse] signifies 'to show mercy to one another or to empathize with others and abstain from hurting them.' This embraces almost all the injunctions of the entire religion.

(Ma'ariful Qur'an, Chief Justice Mufti Muhammad Shafi')

Surah Duha

Introduction / Period of Revelation

This Surah was revealed during the early period of Makkah when the revelation was suspended for a time.

Major Issues, Divine Law, and Guidance

- Glad tidings given to the Prophet Muhammad (saaw) that the later period of Prophethood will be better for him than the earlier.

Some Comments regarding Fatra al Wahy (Temporary Hiatus in Revelation)

In the early days of Makkan life, revelation of the Holy Qur'an was temporarily interrupted for some days. Some of the opponents of the Holy Prophet (saaw) especially Umm Jamil, the wife of Abu Lahab, started taunting him that his Lord has abandoned him and has become angry with him. This Surah is the good news given to the Holy Prophet (saaw) that this certainly was not the case. (Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

The theme of this Surah is to console the Prophet (saaw) and its object is to remove his anxiety and distress, which was caused by the suspension of revelation. The Prophet (saaw) is reassured: "Your Lord has not forsaken you, nor is He displeased with you." Then, the Prophet (saaw) is given the good news that the hardships he was experiencing in the initial stage of his mission will not last long and the later period of life for him will be better than the former. Before long, Allah (swt) will bless him so abundantly that he will be well pleased. When this statement was made, there seemed not to be the remotest chance that the helpless and powerless man who had come to wage a war against ignorance and paganism would ever achieve such wonderful success.

The Prophet (saaw) is then told: "What made you think that your Lord has forsaken you, and that He is displeased with you? Whereas the fact that He has been good to you with kindness after kindness ever since the day of your birth. You were born and orphan, He made the best arrangement for your upbringing and care; you were unaware of the Right Way, He showed you the Right Way; you were indigent, He made you free of need. All this shows that you have been favored by Him from the very beginning and His grace and bounty has been constantly upon you." These are similar words which Allah (swt) said to console Prophet Musa (as) when he went to Pharaoh as described in Surah Ta-Ha in verses 37-42: "We have been looking after you with kindness ever since your birth, therefore, you

should be satisfied that you will not be left alone in this mission. Our bounty will constantly be with you." (Muhammad Farooq-i-Azam Malik)

Three Injunctions of Surah Duha

1. *"Therefore, as for the orphan, do not oppress him" (Verse 9)*

The word 'qahr' means to treat people who are less powerful in an unfair and cruel way.' In the context of the Surah, the verse means: 'Since you were a poor orphan, and Allah (swt) sheltered you, do not oppress the orphan.' In other words, do not seize their wealth by force and squander it. Do not scorn them, humiliate them or despise them. Rather, you should be kind and gentle to them. As a result, the Holy Prophet (saaw) emphasized that the orphan be treated kindly and gently, and has forbidden any hurting attitude toward them. The Holy Prophet (saaw) is reported to have said that the best house of a Muslim is the one in which there is an orphan who is treated kindly, and with love and affection. The worst house is the one in which there is an orphan who is treated badly (Al Adab ul Mufrad, Ibn Majah, Baghawi)

2. *"And as for the beggar, do not scold him" (Verse 10)*

The verb 'tanhar' is derived from 'nahr' which means 'to scold.' The word sa'il means 'one who asks.' So this verse is enjoining the believers to not scold those who ask. This includes a person who asks people's wealth, that is, a beggar, and it also includes the won who asks a question of knowledge, that is, an academic investigator. The Holy Prophet (saaw) has forbidden berating either of them. The best course of action is to give the beggar something. If one is unable to give anything, one should at least apologize to him politely (so as not to give him any further grief). Likewise, anyone who is searching knowledge and asks a question, it is forbidden to respond to him harshly and unkindly. The teacher should reply kindly and politely. However, if the investigator is unreasonable in his approach, it is permissible to scold him to the degree that is necessary.

3. *"And about the bounty of your Lord, do talk" (Verse 11)*

The verb haddith is derived from tahdith which means 'to talk' meaning just as you were poor and needy, and Allah (swt) made you wealthy, then talk about Allah's favors upon you. Talking about divine favors to people is one way of thanking Allah. If a person has done something good to another, he or she should be thanked. Therefore, the Holy Prophet (saaw) is reported to have said: "Whoever is not thankful to people on their favors is not thankful to Allah." (Imam Ahmed)

(Ma'ariful Qur'an, Chief Justice Mufti Muhammad Shafi')

Surah Kafiroom

Introduction / Period of Revelation

Ibn Ishaq reports from Ibn 'Abbas (r) that Walid bin Mughira, 'Aas bin Wa'il, Aswad bin Abdul Muttalib, and 'Umayyah bin Khalaf approached the Messenger of Allah (saaw) and proposed a compromise to him to the effect that he should worship their idols for a year, and they would worship Allah for a year (Tafsir Qurtubi)

According to Ibn 'Abbas (r), the pagans of Makkah proposed to the Messenger of Allah (saaw): "We shall give you so much wealth that you will become the richest man in Makkah, we shall give you whichever woman you like in marriage. We are willing to follow and obey you as our leader on condition that you do not speak ill of our gods. If you do not agree to this, then let us agree that you worship our gods for a year and we would worship your God for another year." (Tafsir Tabari and Tafsir Mazhari)

According to Abu Salih, Ibn 'Abbas (r) narrates that the pagans of Makkah made the following proposal for compromise: "At least touch some of our gods, we will believe in you." Upon this, Surat al Kafiroom was revealed.

English Text of Surah Kafiroom

"Say : O ye that reject Faith! (1) I worship not that which ye worship, (2) Nor will ye worship that which I worship. (3) And I will not worship that which ye have been wont to worship (4) Nor will ye worship that which I worship. (5) To you be your Way, and to me mine. (6)"

Virtues and Characteristics of Surah al Kafiroom

A'shah reports that the Messenger of Allah has said that it is better to recite two surahs in the sunnah prayer of fajr, namely, the Surah Al-Kafirun and Surah Al-Ikhlās. (Tafsir Mazhari) Ibn Kathir cites several traditions in which a large number of Companions report that they heard the Messenger of Allah (swt) often recite Surah Al-Kafirun and Al-Ikhlās in the sunnah prayer of fajr and maghrib. Some of the Companions requested the Messenger of Allah to teach them some supplications to recite at the time of sleeping. He taught them to recite Surah Al-Kafirun and said that this will give them immunity from idolatry. [Tirmidhi and Abu Dawud]. Jubair Ibn Mut'im says that the Messenger of Allah asked him whether he wished to be the happiest, most prosperous and well-to-do person among his

comrades when he goes out on a journey. He replied: "Yes, Messenger of Allah, I certainly do wish that." The Holy Prophet asked him to recite the last five surahs of the Qur'an starting from Surah Al-Kafirun to the end, and to start every surah with Bismillah, and to end with Bismillah. Sayyidna Jubair says that in those days he used to be distressed, miserable and man of little provisions for journeys compared to his comrades. But when he started acting upon this teaching of the Messenger of Allah, he became more prosperous than others. [Mazhari with reference to Abu Yala]. Sayyidna 'Ali reports that once a scorpion bit the Messenger of Allah, so he asked for water and salt. He applied the water on the spot where the scorpion bit him, and he recited Surah Al-Kafirun, Surah Al-Falaq and Surah An-Nas. [Mazhari]

Detailed Discussion of the Repetition of Verses 3 and 5 and Meaning of the word "Deen"

In this Surah, the statements are repeated. The repetition has been explained in different ways by different authorities. Imam Bukhari explains it thus: When two identical, or near identical, expressions occur side by side, many commentators interpret one of them as happening in the present time and the other as going to happen in the future time. Thus there is no meaningless repetition. The second and the third verses refer to the present time, meaning 'I do not worship at the present time what you are worshipping, nor do you worship at the present time what I am worshipping'. That is, 'I believe in Oneness of Allah and worship Him only, whereas you believe in multiple gods and goddesses and worship them'. Verses [4 and 5] refer to the future time, meaning 'neither is there a possibility that I will ever worship what you are going to worship in the future, nor will you worship what I will persist in worshipping. In other words, 'I will persist in my belief of Divine Oneness and worship of Him and you will persist in belief of multiple gods and goddesses and worship of them'. Maulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanawi has preferred this interpretation in Bayanul-Qur'an, (and the translation given above is based on it.) However, he disagrees with Bukhari's interpretation of the word din, which Bukhari interprets as 'the religion of disbelief and the religion of Islam'

respectively, in verse 6 "to you is your faith, and for me, my faith" meaning the proposed compromise or peace agreement is not acceptable. I shall continue to follow my faith and you may go on following your faith, and suffer its disastrous consequences. In Bayanul-Qur'an, however, the word deen has been interpreted as jaza' or 'retribution or requital'. Ibn Kathir prefers another interpretation. He expounds that the particle ma is used in two ways: [1] as mawsulah or relative pronoun in the sense of al-ladhi [that which]; and [2] as masdariyah transforming into infinitive the verb it governs. In this Surah, the first ma is a relative pronoun in the sense of al-ladhi, and the second ma is an infinitival particle. Thus in verses [2 & 3] the particle is a relative pronoun and may be paraphrased thus: 'I do not

worship the deities that you worship nor do you worship the One Whom I worship' and in verses [4 & 5] the particle is an infinitival particle and may be paraphrased thus: 'I will never adopt your mode or manner of worship, nor will you adopt the manner in which I worship'. In this way, verses [2 & 3] show that the objects of worship are different from each other, and verses [4&5] show the differences in the modes of worship. In sum, 'neither our objects of worship, nor our manner of worship, are commonly shared status; they are different.' In this way, it is seen that there is no real repetition, because while the formal expressions might be identical or near identical, but deeper semantic meanings are different. The mode of worship was revealed to the Prophet by Allah (swt) and passed on to the Muslims through him. The pagan manner of worship is

self-fabricated. Ibn Kathir prefers this interpretation, and says that this is the exact meaning that emanates from the creed of Islam: "There is no object worthy of worship except Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." Only the mode and manner of worship sanctioned by Allah is credible, and should be followed by Muslims. Ibn Kathir adds that the concluding verses "For you is your faith, and for me, my faith" yields the sense of other verses in the Qur'an, as for instance in [10:41] And if they belie you, say, for me, my deeds, and for you, your deeds and in [28:55] "For us, our deeds, and for you, your deeds." Thus the sum total of the word *din*, according to Ibn Kathir, refers to the 'deeds of religion' and its purport would be the same as explicated in *Bayanul-Qur'an*, in that each one will be requited for his own deeds. Other commentators have interpreted the two sentences in a third way. According to them, the particle is retained in both places as a relative pronoun, and in both the sentence is taken as representing present tense. They in fact maintain that the repetition of the two sentences have been used as a rhetorical device and employed by deliberate design to secure emphasis. Not every repetition is unpleasant or meaningless, even though the same idea may be reiterated by the same wording, as for instance in [94:5-6] Undoubtedly, along with hardship there is ease. Undoubtedly, along with) hardship there is ease) Verse [6] is the repetition of verse [5] and is deliberately reiterated to secure emphasis, as well as to reject outright the several proposals made on different occasions. [Ibn Kathir, Ibn Jarir].

Peace Treaties in Islam

Surah Al-Kafirun dismisses out of hand the many proposals of compromise offered by the pagans and declares dissociation from them. But the Holy Qur'an itself has said

"if they tilt towards peace, you tilt towards it" [Surah 8, Verse 61] that is, entering into a peace treaty with non-Muslims. Moreover, when the Holy Prophet migrated to Madinah, he entered into peace treaty with the Jews. Therefore, some of the commentators have opined

that Surah Al-Kafirun has been abrogated. Their basic argument pivots around the verse "For you is your faith, and for me, my faith" (Surah Kafiroon, Verse 6) They contend that this is apparently in conflict with the ordinances of jihad, but this is not true, because the verse does not guarantee, nor does it even permit, the non-Muslims to maintain their state of disbelief. It simply means what is stated in Surah 28, Verse 55: "For us, our deeds, and for you, your deeds that is, as you sow, so shall you reap." In fact, the correct position held by the majority of the scholars is that this Surah is not abrogated. The proposals of compromise that were offered by the pagans at the time of the revelation of the present Surah are still prohibited, and the peace treaties allowed by 8:61 or entered into by the Holy Prophet are still permissible. It is necessary to understand the circumstances and conditions of the treaty and take a proper decision accordingly. In one of his Traditions, the Holy Prophet laid down the general principle of peace treaty with non-Muslims and pagans, thus: "Every compromise is permitted except the one which turns prohibited things into lawful and lawful things into forbidden." If the various peace proposals made by the pagans are carefully analyzed, they were all certainly and definitely purported to mix elements of pagan beliefs and practices with Islamic beliefs and practices, thus creating confusion; and in some cases they required Muslims to renounce Islam [albeit temporarily] and commit themselves to paganism. Surah Al-Kafirun denounces such treaties, and declares dissociation from paganism. Analyzing the peace pact with the Jews, on the other hand, it is seen clearly that it did not in any way require Muslims to denounce or renounce Islam, nor did it require them to mix elements of unIslamic beliefs with the true faith.

Islam is the religion that stands for tolerance, kindness, politeness and peace more than any other religion. However, all these ethical principles can be applied in the matters of human rights. There is no room for compromise in the matter of Divine Law or the basic tenets of Divine religion.

Allah knows best