

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

We seek forgiveness from Allah
We stand witness to Allah that there is no God but Him
That Muhammad (SAWW) is his slave and messenger

Surah Takathur

Fazilat of the Surah

- The Prophet has said: “Whoever recites this surah at the time of sleep will be safe in the grave (*fitnah kubr*)” [*Tafseer Al Bashaer, Vol 58 pg 386*]
- Imam Sadiq as said: “Whoever recites this surah in his obligatory prayer, will get the *thawaab* of 100 martyrs and whoever recites this in his recommended prayer will get the reward for 50 martyrs. And forty rows of angel will pray with him if he recites this surah.” [*Tafseer Nur as Thaqaain, Vol 5 pg 660*]
- The Holy Prophet said: ‘He who recites this surah, Allah will not account the bounties he was given in the world and He will award him such a reward as if had recited one thousand verses of the Quran.’ [*Majma-al-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 532*]
- However, we should not just recite the surah or do *ibadat* only for *thawaab*. We should worship Allah SWT because He deserves to be worshipped. Indeed that is the worship of a free person.
- Imam Zain ul-Abideen says: “I dislike worshipping Allah only for *thawaab* as then I will be among the selfish servants of Allah.’ Nor do I worship Him out of fear or punishment as then I will be like the bad servant of Allah. Imam was then asked, ‘For what do you worship Allah?’ Imam said: ‘I worship Allah because he deserves to be worshipped and because of His authority over me and for his bounties on me.” [*Miizaan al Hikmah, Hadith # 11348*]

Some interesting facts

- It is generally agreed that this surah was revealed in Mecca.
- Surah Takathur begins with a verb. The Arabic word ‘*Alhaa*’ is a verb. In fact 22 of the 114 surahs begin with verbs.

- The word *alhaal* is the root word of '*lahw*' and it has been mentioned in the Quran 16 times
- The word '*kallaa*' means to negate. This word has been repeated 3 times in this surah.
- The word '*hataa*' has been mentioned 6 times in the Quran.
- The word '*muqabir*' has been mentioned 8 times in the Quran.
- The word '*yaqin*' has been mentioned 8 times in the Quran.
- The word '*jaheem*' has been mentioned 26 times in the Quran.
- The word '*Naimat*' has been mentioned 144 times in the Quran.

[Tafseer Al Bashaeer , Vol 58 pg 426]

Verses 102:1-2

- In the first two verse of Surah Takathur, Allah SWT says:

**أَلْهَاكُمُ النَّكَاثِرُ
حَتَّىٰ زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ**

*Rivalry in worldly increase distracteth you.
Until ye come to the graves.*

Background of the Surah

- Some commentators believe this Surah was revealed against the tribes who vied in boasting with one another and prided themselves on increasing their wealth, position, and the number of adherents so to add to the number of men in each tribe, they even went to the cemetery and counted the tribal graves.
- Some believe that the meaning refers to two tribes from the tribes of Quraish in Mecca, while some others think it refers to two tribes from the helpers of the Prophet, the Ansar, in Medina; and still some relate it to the vying of the Jews to others.

The meaning of Alhakum

- The term *alhakum* is based on the root *lahw* with the meaning of 'amusement, being busy with unimportant small things and neglectful of great aims and ideas.' Raqib cites

in Mufradat: "The word *lahw* means something that amuses one with itself and detains him from his real goals."

- Hence we should not waste our time in frivolous matters and gossip. Indeed as we learnt from surah Asr time is our capital and we should use it wisely. Indeed in Surah Luqman 31:6, Allah SWT says:

**وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْتَرِي لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ
عِلْمٍ وَيَتَّخِذَهَا هُزُوًا أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ**

Some men there are who buy diverting talk to lead astray from the Way of God without knowledge, and to take it in mockery; those – there awaits them a humbling chastisement.

Listening to entertaining music is haram

- Muadda Ibne Ziyad says, "I was in the company of Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) when a person said, "When I go to the toilet, I can hear the singing girls of my neighbour. Sometimes, I remain (in toilet) longer so that I may listen to more of it."

Imam (a.s.) said:

"Desist from listening to music and songs attentively."

Then this man further said, "Master, I do not go to music gatherings! I only hear the sounds!"

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) said,

"Have you not read this Quranic verse..."

إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُورًا

"Surely, the hearing and the sight and the heart, all of these shall be questioned about that?" (Surah Bani Israel 17:36)

The man replied, "I was not aware of this ayat. I regret my actions. I shall not do so in the future. I repent for my past sins and I seek forgiveness from my Lord."

Seeing his condition, Imam (a.s.) said,

"Get up ! Go and perform ghusl and offer namaz and pray for forgiveness. You have certainly been involved in a deadly sin and a terrible situation. You have repented for it and I thank Allah for that; and I seek forgiveness of Allah for all those things that He dislikes. Certainly, Allah only dislikes the evil things. Leave the evil things to the evil people because there are different people suitable for different things."

[Al Kafi, Chapter of Music]

Melodious sounds of Paradise

Hazrat Imam Ali Ibn Musa ar-Reza (a.s.) said,
"One who avoids songs shall be provided by Allah, a tree, which will produce such a melodious sound as has never been heard by anyone. But the one who has not kept himself aloof from songs will not be able to hear this sound."

[Al Kafi]

Beautiful songs in Heaven

The following tradition of Allah's Messenger (s.a.w.s.) is recorded in the book Tafseer Majmaul Bayan, "One who has listened to too many songs will not be able to hear the Ruhaanis on the Day of Qiyamat."

"Who are the Ruhaanis, O Prophet of Allah (s.a.w.s.)?" someone asked.

The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) replied, "They are the melodious singers of Heaven."

A similar tradition from Hazrat Ali (a.s.) is found in Nahjul Balagha, "Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) will be the chief of the singers of Paradise."

The people will listen to such melodious songs from Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) in Heaven, the like of which have never been heard by anyone. However only those who have refrained from listening to songs in this world would be able to hear them.

Vying and boasting will lead to disastrous consequences in the grave and the hereafter

- The word *takathur* is derived from *kithrat* with the sense of 'vying, glorifying and boasting in other's sight.'
- The term *zurtum* is based on *ziyarat* and *zaur* which originally means 'the upper part of the chest' and, later, it has been used in the sense of 'to visit' and 'to face with'.
- The term *maqabir* is the plural of *maqbirah* with the meaning of 'the place of the grave of a corpse'; and visiting the graves metaphorically means 'death' (according to some commentaries), or it has to the meaning of 'going to the graves in order to vie for the number of the dead.'
- The second meaning seems more appropriate. One of the evidences to this idea is the words of Hazrat Ali (as) on this matter, cited in Nahjul Balagah, sermon 221 that after

reciting “Engageth you (your) vying in exuberance”, “Until you visit the graves”, he said: “How distant (from achievement) is their aim, how neglectful are these visitors and how difficult is the affair. They had not taken lessons from things which are full of lessons, but, they took them from far off places. Do they boast on the dead bodies of their forefathers, or do they regard the number of dead persons as a ground for feeling boastful of their numbers? They want to revive the bodies that have become spiritless and the moments that have ceased; those which are more entitled to be a source of lesson than a source of pride and those are more suitable for being a source of humility than of honour.”

- The Holy Prophet said: Whoever engages in worldly conversation at 5 junctions, Allah will nullify his *amal* for 70 years. Firstly one, who engages worldly conversation in masjid. Secondly when the Al-Quran is being recited. Thirdly when one is bidding farewell to the jenazah/deceased. Fourthly at the graveyard and lastly when prayer has been called for. **[Tafseer Al Bashaer, Vol 58 pg 589]**
- The Holy Prophet said that a time will come when my ummah will love five things while neglecting five things. These are as follows:
 - (i) They will love the world and neglect the hereafter.
 - (ii) They will love on the vying of wealth but will forget *hisaab* and accountability.
 - (iii) They will have affection towards other beings but will forget that angels await them.
 - (iv) They will love palaces and huge houses but will forget the grave that awaits them.
 - (v) They will have a lot of self love but will forget their Lord.

These are the people who have disassociated themselves from me and I have nothing to do with them. **[Tafseer Al Bashaer, Vol 58 pg 620]**

- The Holy Prophet said that everyday the grave calls out five *kalimat* :
 - (i) I am verily the house of loneliness. Bring along your companions.
 - (ii) I am the house full of poisonous snakes. Bring along your antidotes.
 - (iii) I am the house of total darkness. Bring along your light.
 - (iv) Verily, I am the house of dust. Bring along your mattress.
 - (v) I am the house of poverty. Bring along your provision.**[Tafseer Al Bashaer, Vol 58 pg 620]**
- A man once came to Imam Ali (as) and asked him four questions.
 1. Firstly he asked, ‘What is wajib (essential), and what is even more wajib than wajib?’
 2. The second question was, ‘What is near and what is even nearer?’
 3. The third question was, ‘What is astonishing and what is even more astonishing?’
 4. The fourth question is, ‘What is difficult and what is even more difficult?’

After hearing that, Imam Ali a.s answered, ‘Wajib is obedience to Allah and what is more wajib is to guard yourself from sins. Near is *qiyamat* but what is even nearer is death. Astonishing is the creation of this world and what is even more astonishing is the love for this world. **What is difficult is the affair of the grave and what is even more difficult is going there without any provision.**

Verses 102:3-4

- In the third and fourth verses of Surah Takthur, Allah SWT threatens the people who have gone astray and says:

كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ
ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ

Nay! You shall soon know.
Again, Nay! You shall soon know.

- These two verses inform of the punishment waiting for people who are proud and engaged in vying.
- Imam Ali explaining the above verses said: “Some people were in doubt about the chastisement in the grave until the time that Surah Takathur was revealed. (The verse) says: ‘Nay! You shall soon know’ which indicated (the punishment) in the grave, and (the verse) ‘Again, nay! You shall soon know’ (refers to the punishment) in the Hereafter.” [*Majma-al-Bayan*, vol. 10, p. 534]

Verses 102:5-7

- In the next three verses of the Surah, Allah SWT says:

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ
لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ
ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ

Nay! Were you to know with the knowledge of certainty, (you would beware!)
You shall certainly see the blazing fire.
Again, you will surely see it with certainty of sight.

- In verses 5-7, Allah SWT says that if you believed in the Hereafter and knew it with the 'knowledge of certainty' you would never indulge in such vain affairs and view for foolish things.

Yaqin

- Regarding *yaqin* or certitude, Imam Baqir (as) said: "Faith is one degree higher than Islam, and *taqwa* (virtue) is one degree higher than Faith, and *yaqin* (certitude) is one degree higher than *taqwa*." Then he added, "Nothing is divided less among people than *yaqin* (certitude). Then he was asked what '*yaqin*' meant and he replied, "(It is) trust in Allah, obedience to Allah, well-pleasing with the Will of Allah, and leaving all of (one's) affairs to Allah."
- Certainty of knowledge (*yaqin*) has been described as having three stages:
 - (i) Certitude of knowledge or certainty of mind (*Ilm-ul-yaqin*) which is the Faith that a person obtains by various means such as the one who sees smoke and believes there is fire there.
 - (ii) Certainty of sight (*Iym-ul-yaqin*) which is what one sees with one's eyes; for instance, one sees the fire, himself.
 - (iii) The absolute truth of assured certainty (*Haqq-ul-yaqin*) which means the 'realization' or the 'knowledge proper' and is the personal experience as when the one who arrives in the fire and feels the heat of it and takes the attributes of fire into his entity. This very state is the highest degree of '*yaqin*'.
- A tradition from the Holy Prophet denotes that some people asked him about a matter that they had heard about some of the companions of Prophet Jesus (as) who used to walk on water, and he replied: "If their certitude was in a higher position they could walk in the air." [*Al-Mizan*, vol. 6, p. 200]

Verse 102:8

- In the last verse of the Surah, Allah SWT says:

ثُمَّ لَنُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ

Then, on that Day you shall most certainly be questioned about the boon).

- Finally, Allah SWT says in the last verse of the surah, that on the Day of Judgement we will need to clarify how we have enjoyed the bounties of Allah.
- According to a tradition, Abu Hanifah asked Imam Sadiq (as) about the meaning of verse 102:8, then the Imam returned the questioned to him and asked him what he thought '*naim*' (bounty) was, and he replied that it was 'food' and 'cold water'. Then, the Imam said that if Allah kept him before Him to ask him about morsel he ate and every drop of

drink he drank, his stay, there, would be very long. Abu Hanifah asked again about the meaning of *naim* and Imam (as) said: "It refers to us, Ahlul Bayt, for whom Allah has given His servants bounties, and made them united after they were diverse and joined their hearts together in brotherhood after they had been enemies (with each other) and He has guided them to Islam through us and this is the bounty that will not cease, and Allah asks them about the 'right' of the bounty which He has given them and guided them to Islam by us. Yes, 'bounty' is the Prophet and his household." [*Majma-al-Bayan*, vol. 10, p. 535]

- Indeed, the biggest bounty that Allah SWT has bestowed upon us is the Ahlul Bayt (as).

Supplication

*O Lord! Shower upon us, ceaselessly, Your unlimited
Bounties especially the bounty of 'faith and vicegerency'.*

*O Lord! Give us the success of fulfilling our duties for them
As their right is.*

*O Lord! Please increase these bounties for us and never
Deprive us from them.*

Mind Blowing Story

Hazrat Abu Zar and the tiger

Hazrat Abu Zar was once offering his prayers. He was a shepherd and had left his sheep while praying. During this time a fox came and snatched one of the sheep and got away.

However, a tiger killed the fox and returned the sheep back to Abu Zar.

Abu Zar then narrated this incident to the Holy Prophet and subsequently the news reached the companions of the Prophet.

The companions started accusing Hazrat Abu Zar of lying.

However, later the companions noticed that when Abu Zar was praying, a tiger was guarding his sheep. They were very surprised and perplexed.

Tafseer Class Notes
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The companions went to the Prophet and asked him why the tiger was guarding the sheep of Abu Zar.

The Prophet replied, “Verily Abu Zar has served Allah and in return Allah has made the tiger serve him.”

[Quoted from *'The stories of Shalat'*]

Disclaimer:

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