

Extracts from Khitab-e-Jumu'ah (TAZKEER BIL QUR'AN)

The Sixty-Second Surah (62nd); Al-Jumu'ah (Friday; The Congregation)

A recap to the Introduction of the Surah and explanation of verses 1 and 2

Delivered by: Ameer-e-Tanzeem-e-Islami, Hafiz Aakif Saeed, on Friday, 13th June 2014.

Ameer-e-Tanzeem, Hafiz Aakif Saeed, gave a detailed recap of the introduction and the first two (Aya'at) verses of the sixty-second (62nd) Surah of the Qur'an, Al-Jumu'ah (*Translated literally and virtually as 'Friday' in English. It has also been translated as 'The Congregation' in a few English translations of the Holy Scripture*) in the Khitab-e-Jumu'ah (Sermon of Friday) entitled, "TAZKEER BIL QURAN" on June 13, 2014.

He also recapped the the aforementioned Surah's link with the previous Surah (As-Saf), the circumstances under which it was revealed and its pertinence for Muslims living in this age, before recapping the elucidation of the first 2 Aay'at (verses) of the Surah.

Name

It is derived from the sentence 'idha nudiya-lis-salat-imin-yaum-il- Jumu'ati' of verse 9. Although in this Surah, injunctions about the Friday congregational Prayer also have been given, yet 'Jumu'ah' is not the title of its subject-matter as a whole, but this name too, like the names of other Surahs, is only a symbolic title.

The Surah has a paired relationship with the previous Surah, As-Saf, in a couple of constructs.

Firstly, the Surah commences in a fashion similar to As-Saf by referring to some of the beautiful attributive names of Allah (SWT), videlicet, *Al-Malik, Al-Quddus, Al-Aziz and Al-Hakeem*.

Secondly, it speaks of one of the many exclusive dimensions of the mission assigned to the Holy Prophet (SAW), viz., the purification, education translated into action and assemblage of a group that would work alongside him (SAW) in accomplishing his (SAW) grand mission of establishing Allah's (SWT) *Deen* (A Complete System of life based on Social Justice) on Allah's (SWT) land (the whole of earth). The Qur'an also refers to that group as the 'Party of Allah' (SWT) and 'The companions of Muhammad' (SAW) at various other places of the Holy Scripture.

Moreover, the Surah refers to the nation of Jews, as many other Surahs including As-Saf do.

Period of Revelation

The period of the revelation of the first section (verses 1-8) has been established to be around 7 AH, and probably this section was revealed, on the occasion of the conquest of Khyber or soon after it. Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i and Ibn Jarir (RAA) have related on the authority of Abu Hurairah (RA) that he and other Companions were sitting in the Holy Prophet's (SAW) assembly when these verses were revealed. About Abu Hurairah (RA) it is confirmed historically that he entered Islam after the truce of Hudaibiyah and before the conquest of Khyber, and Khyber was conquered, according to Ibn Hisham (RAA), in Muharram, and, according to Ibn Sa'ad (RAA), in Jamadi al-Awwal, 7 AH. Thus presumably Allah (SWT) might have sent down these verses, addressing the Jews, when their last stronghold had fallen to the Muslims, or these might have been revealed when, seeing the fate of Khyber, all the Jewish settlements of northern Hijaz had surrendered to the Islamic State of Madinah.

The second section (verses 9-11) has been established to have been revealed shortly after the emigration, for the Holy Prophet (SAW) had established the Friday congregational Prayer on the 5th day after his arrival at Madinah. The incident that has been referred to in the last verse of this section must have occurred at a time when the people had not yet received full training in the etiquette of religious congregations, thus the title Congregation found in a few English translations of the Scripture.

Theme and Subject Matter

As explained above, the two sections of this Surah were sent down in two different periods. That is why their themes as well as their audiences are slightly different, yet miraculously consonant. Although there is a kind of harmony between the two on account of which they have been put together in one Surah, yet we should understand their themes separately before we consider the question of their harmony.

The first section was sent down at a time when all Jewish efforts to obstruct the message of Islam during the past six years had failed. Firstly, in Madinah as many as three of their powerful tribes had done whatever they could to frustrate the mission of the Holy Prophet (SAW), with the result that one of the tribes was completely exterminated and the other two were exiled. Thereafter, by intrigue and conspiracy, they brought many of the Arab tribes together to advance on Madinah, in what is known as the Battle of the Trench in which they were all repulsed. After this, Khyber had become their stronghold, where a large number of the Jews expelled from Madinah also had taken refuge. The series of Jewish fortresses in Khyber too was taken without any extraordinary effort and the Jews, at their own request, agreed to live there as tenants of the Muslims. After this final defeat, the Jewish power in Arabia came to an end. Thereafter, Wad-il-Qura, Fadak and Tabuk, all surrendered one after the other, so much so that all Arabian Jews became subdued to the same Islam which they were not prepared to tolerate before. This was the occasion when Allah Almighty (SWT) addressed them in this Surah, and probably this was the last and final address that was directed to them in the Qur'an.

In this section of the Surah, the Jews of all times have been reminded of three things:

1- You refused to believe in this Messenger (SAW) only because he (SAW) was born among a people whom you contemptuously call the "gentiles". You seemed to have been convinced that anyone who claimed to be a prophet from outside your community, must be an imposter, for this 'office' had been reserved for your race, and a messenger could never be raised among the "gentiles". However, this 'office' is Allah's (SWT) bounty, which He (SWT) may bestow on anyone He (SWT) may please. [It is to be noted that the office of messenger-ship, otherwise referred to as Prophet-hood and Apostleship was closed and the 'position' terminated after Muhammad (SAW), who is the last messenger of Allah (SAW).]

2- You had been made bearers of the Torah, but you did not understand your responsibility for it nor discharged it as you should have. You are like the donkey which is loaded with books, and which does not know what burden it is bearing (a parable). Rather you are worse than the donkey, for the donkey is devoid of sense, but you are intelligent human beings.

3- If you really were Allah's (SWT) favorites and you were sure of having a place of honor and high rank reserved with Him (SWT), you would not have feared death so much as to prefer a life of disgrace to death. It is only because of this fear of death that you have suffered humiliation after humiliation, not just during the past few years, but for centuries! Your present condition is by itself a proof that you are fully conscious of your misdeeds, and your conscience is aware that if you die

with these misdeeds, you will be 'rewarded' with a greater disgrace by Allah (SWT) in the Hereafter than in this world, viz. the Hellfire.

This sums-up the subject-matter of the first section.

The second section that was sent down many years later, was appended to this Surah because in it Allah (SWT) has bestowed Friday on the Muslims as against the Sabbath of the Jews, and Allah (SWT) wanted to warn the Muslims not to treat their Friday as the Jews had treated their Sabbath. Most exegetes of the Qur'an agree that this second section was revealed on an occasion when a trade caravan arrived in Madinah right at the time of the Friday congregational service and on hearing its din and drum, the audience, except for 12 men, left the Prophet's (SAW) Mosque and rushed out to the caravan, although the Holy Prophet (SAW) at that time was delivering the Khitab-e-Jumu'ah (Friday Sermon). Thereupon it was enjoined that after the call is sounded for the Friday Prayer all trade, business and other occupations become forbidden and the believers should suspend every kind of transaction and hasten to the remembrance of Allah (SWT). However, when the Prayer is over, they have the right to disperse in the land to resume their normal occupations.

With this Introduction, the Ameer commenced the recap of the first two verses.

I seek refuge of Allah (SWT) from the accursed Satan

In The Name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful

Verse 62:1

"All that is in the heavens and all that is on earth extols the limitless glory of Allah (SWT), the Sovereign Supreme, the Holy, the Almighty, the Wise!"

The Surah starts with a familiar anecdote, stating the fact that everything in the universe, explicitly or impliedly, proclaims that its Creator and Sustainer is free from any blemish and defect, any weakness, error or evil. He (SWT) is glorified in His (SWT) essence, He (SWT) is glorified in His (SWT) attributes, He (SWT) is glorified in His (SWT) works as well as His (SWT) commands whether they relate to creation or to the religious law given to mankind.

The grammatical structure of certain words in the verse also signify that every particle in the universe has always been extolling the glory of its Creator and Sustainer in the past, is doing so at present and will continue to do so eternally.

The Word '***Al-Malik***' means the Ultimate King and Owner of All things, sans any partner. The word '***Al-Quddus***' stands for the One (SWT) who is free from any defect and is 'Holy' in His (SWT) person as well as attributes and actions. The word '***Al-Aziz***' signifies the mighty and powerful entity (SWT), Whose decrees cannot be prevented by any power in the world or elsewhere from being enforced, Whom no one can oppose and resist, Who has to be obeyed by everyone whether one likes it or not and Whose rebels cannot escape His (SWT) accountability and punishment, while the word '***Al-Hakeem***' signifies that whatever He (SWT) does is done with wisdom. His creation, His administration and rule, His commands and guidance, all are based on wisdom. None of His (SWT) works is tarnished by any tract of folly or ignorance.

Verses 62:2

“He (SWT) it is who has sent unto the unlettered people a messenger (SAW) from among themselves, to convey unto them His (SWT) messages, and to cause them to grow in purity, and to impart unto them the divine writ as well as wisdom—whereas before that they were indeed, most obviously, lost in error.”

Here the word ‘ummi’ (unlettered or gentile) has been used as a Jewish term and therefore has in it a subtle derision coupled by a severe divine warning to the nation of Jews. The verse means that the All-Mighty and All-Wise Allah (SWT) has raised a Messenger (SAW) among the Arabs whom the Jews contemptuously consider the gentiles and much below themselves. The Messenger (SAW) has not risen of his own wish and will, but has been raised by Him (SWT) Who is the Sovereign of the universe and beyond and Whose (SWT) power and authority can be resisted and opposed only to one’s own loss and peril.

The word 'Ummi' in this verse has been used as a synonym of the Hebrew word goyim, which has been translated as 'gentiles' in the English version of Bible. In the old testament it implies all the non-Jewish or the non-Israelite people of the world.

The dimension of the Holy Prophet’s (SAW) mission referred to in this verse have been mentioned at four places in the Qur’an and everywhere with a different objective yet a universal string attaching them to a greater and wholesome meaning. The capstone meaning of all four places implies that the mission of the Messenger of Allah (SAW) is not just words but comprises actions being performed right in front of your very eyes. He (SAW) is reciting the Revelations of Allah (SWT), the language, themes and style of which testify that these have indeed been Divinely revealed. He (SAW) is purifying and reforming the lives of the people, cleansing their morals and habits while dealing with all evil elements of the society, and adorning the believers with the finest moral qualities. The verse also calls unto the Jews, a people who were well acquainted with the qualities that a Prophet possesses, and rattles their consciences by demanding them to quit their stubborn attitude with which they were refusing to recognize and believe in this Messenger of Allah (SWT) merely because Allah (SWT) had not raised him (SAW) among them (the Jews) but among the people whom they (the Jews) called the ‘ummis’ (gentiles). Moreover, it also implies that the messenger-ship of Muhammad (SAW) is not restricted only to the Arabs but is meant for other nations and races as well and stands valid for all times to come, till the Hour is established.

The verse ends with the mention of Allah’s (SWT) favor unto mankind by sending His (SWT) last Messenger (SAW) and warns those who choose not to believe in him (SAW) as being in grave error, for whom a severe torment of Hellfire awaits in the Hereafter

On this note, the Ameer concluded the recap of the introduction to the Surah and the elucidation of its first 2 verses. He also Supplicated to Allah (SWT) to bestow on us the understanding of the Qur’an and make it easy for us to follow His (SWT) commandments and lead a righteous life. He coupled the supplication with Aameen!