

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

Period of Revelation: Makkan

Background of Surah:

About this Surah it has been recorded in Saheeh Bukhari and Muslim, on the authority of `Abdullah ibn `Abbas that once the Prophet *salAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* was visiting the Fair of Ukaz with some of his Companions *radhiAllahu `anhum* when the time for Fajr arrived, the Prophet *salAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* led the prayer. This was a moment when a company of jinns was passing by. When they heard the recitation of the Qur'an, they tarried and listened to it attentively. This Surah talks about that incident.

Theme and Subject Matter:

The Qur'an was revealed for the guidance of mankind. We read this Book every day, once a month or at least once in a lifetime but we do not consider it a major thing. Our reading is more like that of a habit. By revealing this Surah, Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* gives a jolt to mankind that: You take this Book for granted, look at the impact it had on My another creation.

Ayaat 1-15, narrate the feeling that a company of jinns experienced when they first heard the Qur'an. Some glimpses of their conversation with their fellow beings have been shared. It affirms their faith in the Oneness of God, abstinence from *shirk*, and revelation of the lies that they had been made to believe.

In *ayaat 16-18*, the people have been admonished to refrain from polytheism and instead follow the way of righteousness to receive Allah's blessings.

Ayaat 19-23 reproach the disbelievers of Makkah, as if to say: When the Messenger of Allah, *salAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* calls you towards Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*, you surround and mob him from every side, whereas the only duty of the Messenger is to convey the messages of Allah. He does not claim to have any power to bring any gain or cause any harm to the people.

Then, in *ayaat 24-25* the disbelievers have been warned that today you are trying to overpower and suppress the Messenger *salAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* seeing that he is helpless and friendless, but a time will come when you will know who in reality is helpless and friendless. Whether that time is yet far off, or near at hand, the Messenger *salAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* has no knowledge thereof, but it will come to pass in any case.

In conclusion, the people have been told that the Knower of the Unseen is Allah alone. The Messenger *salAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* receives only that knowledge which Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* is pleased to give him. This knowledge pertains to matters connected with the performance of the duties of Prophethood and it is delivered to him in such security which does not admit of any external interference whatever. The Messenger *salAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* does not have knowledge of the Unseen.

Tafseer Surah al-Jinn

Ayaat 1-5 – The Jinns listening to the Qur’an and their Belief in it

In the following *ayaat* we will read the comments that the jinns made upon listening the Qur’an. Since the mankind cannot see the jinns, it is Allah *subhanahu wa ta’ala* who informs the Messenger *salAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* of what happened when he recited the Qur’an. He says,

قُلْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ أَنَّهُ اسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْآنًا عَجَبًا -
يَهْدِي إِلَى الرُّشْدِ فَآمَنَّا بِهِ ۗ وَلَن نُشْرِكَ بِرَبِّنَا أَحَدًا - وَأَنَّهُ تَعَالَى جَدُّ
رَبِّنَا مَا اتَّخَذَ صَاحِبَةً وَلَا وَلَدًا - وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ يَقُولُ سَفِيهُنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ
شَطَطًا - وَأَنَا ظَنَنَّا أَن لَّنْ نَقُولَ الْإِنسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا

“Say (O Muhammad): It has been revealed to me that a group of jinns listened (to this Qur’an). They said, ‘Verily! We have heard a wonderful Recital! It guides to the Right Path, and we have believed therein, and we shall never join (in worship) anything with our Lord (Allah). And exalted be the Majesty of our Lord, He has taken neither a wife, nor a son. And that the foolish among us used to utter against Allah that which was wrong and not right. And verily, we thought that men and jinns would not utter a lie against Allah,’” [Surah al-Jinn 72: 1-5].

The Prophet *salAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* says, “**It has been revealed to me that a group of jinns listened (to this Qur’an),**” (72: 1). Here is a confirmation that he did not see it with his eyes but was rather informed by Allah *subhanahu wa ta’ala* about the incident that they listened to the Qur’an, believed in it, affirmed its truthfulness and adhered to it. **Nafr** [نَفَرٌ] is from the root letters **noon-fa-ra** and it is used for a group of people who are numbered between three to ten. This indicates that there might be three to ten jinns who listened to this recitation.

And when they listened to the Qur’an, they said, “**Verily! We have heard a wonderful Recital!**” (72: 1). The word **ajaba** [عَجَبًا] is from the root **ayn-jeem-ba** and it means ‘**to marvel or to be amazed at something**’. This word can be further defined in two ways. One is when we find something *ajeab* (strange) and we leave it. Another is when we find something and we are astounded by it and want to delve further. It is a reality that the Qur’an is a wonderful recitation and unique both in its language and subject matter. It amazes its listener which is why there have been such incidences where people believed in

Islam upon hearing the Qur'anic recitation. This also reminds us what we learned in [Surah al-Muzzamil](#), to [recite the Qur'an slowly and in a pleasant style](#). We must all work on our tajweed and give respect to the Word of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*.

The jinns heard the Qur'an and immediately understood that this was not an ordinary thing. It was something special and Divine. Understanding its essence, they said, **"It guides to the Right Path..."** (72: 2). **Rushd** [رُشْد] means **'guidance or right conduct'**. The jinns affirmed that the Qur'an guides to the truth and tawheed as we read further. They said, **"...and we shall never join (in worship) anything with our Lord (Allah),"** (72: 2). They exalted Him and rejected any beliefs of polytheism. This in itself is amazing. The jinns heard only some part of the Qur'an and they immediately got the message that it is for our guidance, only Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* deserves to be worshiped, and He has no partners, a wife or children. How did they comprehend it all so well? Look at the words that Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* chooses to describe their listening, **"is'tama"** [اسْتَمَعَ]. Is'tama is **'listening attentively, paying attention to each word'**. Why would someone do that? So that they don't miss out any detail. This is known as active listening. Active listening helps in processing the information and taking benefit from it.

Therefore, when they heard the Qur'an they realized the error of their creed and knew that it was sheer ignorance to ascribe a wife and children to the High and Exalted Being of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*. It is the desire of mankind to have a companion and children, this does not suit Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*. Therefore, the jinns said, **"... the foolish among us used to utter against Allah that which was wrong and not right,"** (72: 4).

The word **safihuna** [سَفِيهُنَا] is the plural of the word **safi** from the root **seen-fa-ha** and it means **'to be foolish, incompetent, ignorant or unwise'**. The literal meaning of the word is being light in weight so **safi** is someone who is light minded and does not understand much or he may have knowledge but does not act on it. We read this word in [Surah al-Baqarah ayah 13](#), **"And when it said to them, 'Believe as the people have believed,' they say, 'Shall we believe as the fools have believed?'"** The hypocrites called the believers *sufaha* because they gave up their ties and wealth for this new religion called Islam. The hypocrites because of 'their' short-sightedness and ignorance could not see what beneficial trade believers had conducted.

The jinns here are calling their fellow jinns *safihuna* because they uttered outrageous lies against Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*. This may collectively mean a group of jinns or individually Iblees alone.

Why was Iblees called *safi*? He was teaching wrong things about Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*, inspiring people to worship him instead. He was arrogant and rude. When Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* commanded him to prostrate Prophet Adam *'alayhi salaam* he refused to do so. So, because he refused to give respect to Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* he lost his respect as well. And now the jinns were calling him the foolish one among them. He was their leader but he lost his respect. One who gives respect gets respect. We see this in the example of the angels. They spoke to Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* with honor and respect and so they are referred in the Qur'an as honorable and noble ones.

The jinns confess that they were misled by falsehoods because they were made to believe that men and jinns would not utter a lie against Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*. But after having heard this amazing Recital they know now that they were in fact liars. It is not easy to stand

up against falsehood and injustice. This in itself speaks about the truthfulness of their *emaan* [faith].

May Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* make us all among those who do not shy away from speaking the truth and may He give us the courage to live by the Qur'an, aameen.

Ayaat 6-7 – Man Seeking Protection from the Jinns

In the pre-Islamic days of ignorance when the Arabs had to spend a night in some uninhabited, desolate valley, they would shout out: We seek refuge of the jinn, who is owner of this valley. The following *ayaat* talk about this matter. Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* says,

وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِّنَ الْإِنسِ يَعُوذُونَ بِرِجَالٍ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَزَادُوهُمْ رَهَقًا -
وَأَنَّهُمْ ظَنُّوا كَمَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَن لَّن يَبْعَثَ اللَّهُ أَحَدًا

“And verily, there were men among mankind who took shelter with the masculine among the jinns, but they (jinns) increased them (mankind) in sin and disbelief. And they thought as you thought, that Allah will not send any Messenger (to mankind or jinns),” [Surah al-Jinn 72: 6-7].

It was the custom of the Arabs in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance to seek refuge with the greatest jinn of a particular place so that no harm or evil would afflict them. Like one would do if he entered into the land of his enemies, in the vicinity of a great and powerful man, he would seek the protection and guardianship of that man. So when the jinns saw that the humans were seeking refuge with them due to their fear of them, they increased them in *rahaq* which means fear, terror and fright. They did this so that the people would be more afraid of them and seek refuge with them even more.

As-Suddi said, “A man used to set out with his family (on a journey) until he came to a piece of land where he would settle. Then he would say, ‘I seek refuge with the master (jinn) of this valley from the Jinns, or that myself, my wealth, my child or my animals are harmed in it.’” Qatadah said, “When they sought refuge with them instead of Allah, the jinns would overcome them with harm because of that.”

Men who were sent on this earth as vicegerent were now seeking refuge with the jinns. They were humiliating themselves by asking protection from a created being. When the jinns saw this, it increased them in their transgression and arrogance. They became fearless and decided to play with mankind inspiring them to adopt erroneous beliefs. As Muslims, we must not seek refuge in anyone besides Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*. Shaytan has no authority on man unless man disobeys Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* or when *emaan* [faith] is weak. As long as we are obedient to Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* and recite our *adhkar* and the Qur'an, *shayateen* [devils] cannot harm us. Do not be afraid of the jinns. Keep clean, be in *wudhu* and obey Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*.

“And they thought as you thought, that Allah will not send any Messenger (to mankind or jinns),” (72: 7), as among human beings, so among the jinn too there were the people who denied both the Prophethood and the Hereafter. But they were proven wrong as narrated in the theme that follows.

This *ayah* tells us that both men and the jinns had corrupt beliefs and by sending this Qur’an Allah *subhanahu wa ta’ala* corrected their beliefs. May He allow us to take benefit from this Book and correct ourselves, aameen.

Ayaat 8-10 – Jinns Stealing Information and the Protection of the Qur’an

The jinns used to sit in the path of the angels to steal news from the heavens. When Allah *subhanahu wa ta’ala* decided to sent Muhammad *salAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* as His Messenger and reveal the Qur’an to him, He protected the communication of the Qur’an. The following *ayaat* talk about this event,

وَأَنَا لَمَسْنَا السَّمَاءَ فَوَجَدْنَاهَا مُلِئَتْ حَرَسًا شَدِيدًا وَشُهُبًا - وَأَنَا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ
مِنْهَا مَقَاعِدَ لِلسَّمْعِ ۖ فَمَنْ يَسْتَمِعِ الْآنَ يَجِدْ لَهُ شِهَابًا رَصَدًا - وَأَنَا لَا
نَدْرِي أَشَرٌّ أُرِيدَ بِمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا -

“And we have sought to reach the heaven; but found it filled with stern guards and flaming fires. And verily, we used to sit there in stations, to (steal) a hearing, but any who listens now will find a flaming fire watching him in ambush. And we know not whether evil is intended for those on earth, or whether their Lord intends for them a Right Path,” [Surah al-Jinn 72: 8-10].

The word *lamas* [لَمَسَ] is from the root *lam-meem-seen* and it means ‘to touch, feel with the hand, to stretch towards or seek with the hand’. The jinns stretched their hands to steal something from the Qur’an but they found it to be filled with *harasa* [حَرَسًا] and *shuhub* [شُهُبًا]. The word *harasa* is from the *ha-seen-ra* and it means ‘to guard, keep, preserve, take care or watch over’. The word *shuhub* is from the root *sheen-ha-ba* and it means ‘flaming fire, bright blaze, meteor or star’.

Among the ways that Allah *subhanahu wa ta’ala* protected the Qur’an was by filling sky with stern guards guarding it from all of its sides. Whoever liked to steal some information by listening, he will find a flaming fire waiting in ambush for him. It will not pass him or miss him, but it will wipe him out and destroy him completely. The devils were hence expelled from the places where they used to sit prior to that. This was so that they could not steal anything from the Qur’an and tell it to the soothsayers, thereby causing matters to be

confused and mixed up. If this happened it would not be known who was being truthful. Allah did this out of His kindness to His creation, His mercy upon His servants and His protection of His Mighty Book (the Qur'an).

It used to be that shooting stars occurred before this, however, it did not happen much, rather only occasionally. Ibn 'Abbas *radhiAllahu 'anhu* said, "While we were sitting with the Messenger of Allah *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* a shooting star flashing in the sky. So the Prophet said,

مَا كُنْتُمْ تَقُولُونَ فِي هَذَا؟

'What did you all used to say about this?' We replied, 'We used to say that a great person has been born and a great person has died.' The Prophet said,

لَيْسَ كَذَلِكَ، وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا قَضَى الْأَمْرَ فِي السَّمَاءِ

'This is not so, rather whenever Allah decrees a matter in the heaven...' and then he went on to narrate the rest of the hadeeth.

This is what caused the jinns to seek the reason for this occurrence. They set out searching in the east and the west until they found the Messenger of Allah *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* reciting the Qur'an while leading his Companions in prayer. Thus, they knew that this Qur'an was the reason for the sky being guarded. Therefore, some among them believed in it and the others became more rebellious in their transgression.

"And we know not whether evil is intended for those on earth, or whether their Lord intends for them a Right Path," (72: 10), shows that such extraordinary measures were adopted in the heavens only on two occasions. First, when Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* decides to inflict the dwellers of the earth with a torment, and the Divine will might be that before it was actually inflicted the jinn might not know and convey its news to warn their friendly human beings of the impending disaster. Second, that Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* might appoint a Messenger on the earth, and strict security measures might be adopted so that neither the messages being conveyed to him be interfered with by the devils nor should they be able to know beforehand what instructions were being given to the Messenger.

Thus, the saying of the jinn means: When we noticed that strict security measures had been adopted in the heavens for the safeguard of the news, and the meteorites were being showered profusely, we wanted to know which of the two things had happened: whether Allah had caused a torment to descend suddenly on some people of the earth, or a Messenger had been raised somewhere on the earth. We were on the lookout for the same when we heard the wonderful Revelation, which guides to the Right Path, and we came to know that Allah had not sent down a torment but had raised a Messenger to show the Right Way to the people.

Note that the *ayah* says, **"And we know not whether evil is intended..."** the jinns did not explicitly state that Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* has intended evil. This indicates the *adaab* [etiquette] of their speech. They did not attribute the evil to Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* but they attribute the good to Him.

May He enable us to hold good thoughts about Him and bring *adaab* in our speech while talking about Him, aameen.

Ayaat 11-13 – Jinns Testify that among Them are Believers and Unbelievers, the Guided and the Misguided

In the following *ayaat* we learn about the simplicity of the believing jinns' *emaan* [faith]. They said,

وَأَنَا مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ وَمِنَّا دُونَ ذَلِكَ ۖ كُنَّا طَرَائِقَ قِدَدًا - وَأَنَا ظَنْنَا أَنْ
لَنْ نُعْجِزَ اللَّهَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَنْ نُعْجِزَهُ هَرَبًا - وَأَنَا لَمَّا سَمِعْنَا الْهُدَى آمَنَّا
بِهِ ۖ فَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِرَبِّهِ فَلَا يَخَافُ بَخْسًا وَلَا رَهَقًا

“There are among us some that are righteous, and some the contrary; we are groups each having a different way. And we think that we cannot escape Allah in the earth, nor can we escape by flight. And indeed when we heard the Guidance (this Qur’an), we believed therein (Islamic Monotheism), and whosoever believes in his Lord shall have no fear, either of a decrease in the reward of his good deeds or an increase in punishment for his sins,” [Surah al-Jinn 72: 11-13].

“There are among us some that are righteous...” (72: 11), this could either mean that they have become righteous after hearing the Qur’an or they were believing jinns from before. Notice how they introduce themselves and others of their kind. They do not call them *munafiq* [hypocrite] or *kafir* [unbeliever], rather they say, “...and some the contrary,” (72: 11). We are learning about the *adaab* [etiquette] of their speech. They acknowledge their limitedness and are respectful of their fellow beings. May we modify our speech too and think before speaking about others, aameen.

They continue to say, “...we are groups each having a different way,” (72: 11). The word *taraiq* [طَرَائِقَ] is the plural of the word *tareeqa* which is from the root *tay-ra-qaf* and literally it means ‘a path’ but it can also be used to describe the culture, lifestyle, values and habits of a group. The word *qidad* [قِدَادَ] is the plural of the word *qidda* from the root *qaf-dal-dal* which means ‘different or diverse’. Here we learn that the jinns too have different identities among themselves either through language and religion or because of different thoughts and opinions just like the human beings. Such is the creation of Allah *subhanahu wa ta’ala*, He has made all of us different and unique. SubhanAllah!

Confessing to Allah’s Perfect Power, the jinns acknowledge their fearfulness of Him, “And we think that we cannot escape Allah in the earth, nor can we escape by flight,” (72: 12). They knew that the power of Allah *subhanahu wa ta’ala* is decisive over them and that they cannot escape Him in the earth. Even if they tried to flee, they knew that He has complete control over them and that none of them could escape Him.

How was this proven? When they went up to the skies to steal a part of the Qur'an and found it well-guarded. And later when they heard the Divine Revelation through the recitation of Muhammad *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* they could recognize their error. After recognizing the Right Path, they could not have the courage and boldness to persist in the beliefs that their foolish people had spread among them.

“And indeed when we heard the Guidance (this Qur'an), we believed therein (Islamic Monotheism),” (72: 13), indicates their moment of pride. They heard some portion of the Qur'an and instantly recognized their mistakes. This in itself speaks of their righteousness and good character.

“...and whosoever believes in his Lord shall have no fear,” (72: 13). Ibn 'Abbas *radhiAllahu 'anhu* and others said that this means anyone who believes in Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* should not fear that the reward for his good deeds will be decreased or that he will be burdened with anything other than his sins. This is the justice of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* He neither deprives a person from what he deserves nor burdens him with what he does not deserve. May He allow us to have good thoughts about Him, aameen.

In these *ayaat* we have learned about plain and uncomplicated *aqeeda* of the believing jinns. They acknowledge that their fellow beings can have different thinking and opinions. They admit to their weakness before Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* and know that they can never outsmart Him. They heard the Qur'an and immediately submitted to its teachings recognizing it to be the truth. They hold a good opinion about Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* and know that He is Just. He will neither deprive nor burden a being. May we correct our *aqeeda* as well and take from the Qur'an the message that it intends to spread, aameen.

Ayaat 14-16 – The Different Groups

وَأَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ وَمِنَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ ۖ فَمَنْ أَسْلَمَ فَأُولَئِكَ تَحَرَّوْا رَشَدًا -
وَأَمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَكَانُوا لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا - وَأَنْ لَوْ اسْتَقَامُوا عَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ
لَأَسْقَيْنَاهُمْ مَاءً غَدَقًا

“And of us some are Muslims, and of us some are Al-Qasitoon (disbelievers those who have deviated from the Right Path)’. And whosoever has embraced Islam, then such have sought the Right Path. And as for the Qasitoon, they shall be firewood for Hell. If they (non-Muslims) had believed in Allah, and went on the Right Way We should surely have bestowed on them water (rain) in abundance,” [Surah al-Jinn 72: 14-16]

The Jinns said, **“And of us some are Muslims, and of us some are Al-Qasitoon,”** (72: 14), meaning, among us there is the Muslim and the *Qasit*. *Qasit* is he who behaves unjustly with the truth and deviates from it. This is the opposite of the *muqsit*, the one who is just. And the greatest injustice that one does is against himself only. When a person does

not submit to the commands of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* but rather follows his ego or desires he is doing *zulm* [injustice] upon himself.

When a person is in search of the truth, he is guided to the right way. When a person does not bother to find out or make an effort to learn the truth he does not reach anywhere. Therefore, it was said, **"And whosoever has embraced Islam, then such have sought the Right Path,"** (72: 15), meaning, they sought salvation for themselves. As for the deniers, they will be used as fuel to kindle the Fire. May Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* protect us from such an end, aameen. Some people ask, "If the jinns have been created from the Fire, how will the Fire harm them?" One needs to bring to mind what happens when a clay brick hits a man. Man is made of clay but when a brick hits him, does he not feel the pain? Yes, he does. It is because although the entire body of man has been made from earthly substances, when these materials are molded, he becomes an entirely different thing from those substances. When the same material is molded into something else now that thing has properties different from that of man. Therefore, when a clay brick hits a man he will feel the pain.

The address ends with the statement that if the unbelievers had believed in Allah, and stood firm in His path, they would have been awarded with abundant provision.

May Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* allow us to be grateful for the blessing of *emaan* that we have and be firm in it, aameen.

Ayaat 17-20 – Remember Allah and Shun Shirk

The conversation of the jinns has come to an end and now Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* begins His address. He says,

لَنُفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ۚ وَمَنْ يُعْرِضْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ رَبِّهِ يَسْلُكْهُ عَذَابًا صَعَدًا - وَأَنَّ
الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا - وَأَنَّهُ لَمَّا قَامَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ يَدْعُوهُ
كَادُوا يُكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِ لَيْدًا - قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَدْعُو رَبِّي وَلَا أُشْرِكُ بِهِ أَحَدًا

"That We might try them thereby. And whosoever turns away from the Reminder of his Lord, He will cause him to enter in a severe torment. And the mosques are for Allah (Alone), so invoke not anyone along with Allah. (It has been revealed to me that) When the slave of Allah (Muhammad) stood up invoking (his Lord Allah) in prayer to Him they (the jinns) just made round him a dense crowd as if sticking one over the other (in order to listen to the Prophet's recitation). Say (O Muhammad), 'I invoke only my Lord (Allah Alone), and I associate none as partners along with Him,'" [Surah al-Jinn 72: 17-20].

"We might try them thereby," (72: 17) refers to the trials and tests a person faces in his life. Sometimes a bad incident happens. Sometimes the devils whisper evil thoughts into our

hearts. These are all tests from Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* to determine our reaction. Are we going to go astray or will we be patient and stay on the Right Path?

Moreover, blessings are also a test of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*. Wealth and children can be a trial, as we read in the Qur'an, **"Do they think that in wealth and children with which We expand them, We hasten unto them with good things? Nay, but they perceive not,"** (23:55-56). The purpose of sending these blessings is to test how man intends to use them. Will he use his wealth and power to become tyrant and arrogant like Pharaoh and Hamoon? Will he begin considering his fellow human beings as inferior because he is richer and mightier than them? Will he use his children to compete with others? Or will he strive to raise them as pious Muslims submissive to Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*?

Trials also mean that one has to pass through certain difficulties for a better life afterwards. Things are not beautiful from the very beginning. If a person remains patient and bears the difficulties with perseverance Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* will eventually grant him success as we saw in the lives of many Sahabahs *radhiAllahu 'anhum*. 'Umar *radhiAllahu 'anhu* used to say to himself, "O 'Umar recall what you were once, and what you are today." From an ordinary person he became the Ameer-ul-Mumineen [the leader of the faithful]. Things do not always remain the same therefore a person should neither be boastful nor hopeless.

Turning away from the remembrance of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* means rejecting His Message or not giving it any importance. It can also mean people who study the Qur'an and once the course is over return to their old ways. People memorize the Qur'an and then leave it. They neither act on the knowledge they have gained nor share it with others. Such a person will face a harsh, agonizing punishment. Sa'ad means harsh having no relaxation in it. Ibn 'Abbas *radhiAllahu 'anhu* reported that sa'ad is a mountain in Hell. May Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* not make us from the losers, aameen. Whoever remembers Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* is awarded abundant blessings, if not in this world then certainly in the next, and whoever turns away the loss is only his in both the worlds.

"And the mosques are for Allah (Alone)," (72: 18), the commentators explain the 'mosques' mentioned in the *ayah* here refer to the places of worship. Hasan Basri said, "The entire earth is a place of worship, and the *ayah* means to say: polytheism ought not be committed anywhere on Allah's earth." Ibn Katheer interprets, Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* commands His servants to single Him out alone for worship and that none should be supplicated to along with Him nor should any partners be associated with Him. It also means that we should not prostrate before anyone other than Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*.

Qatadah said, "Whenever the Jews and Christians used to enter their churches and synagogues, they would associate partners with Allah. Thus, Allah (*subhanahu wa ta'ala*) commanded His Prophet to tell them that they should single Him out alone for worship." Ibn Jareer recorded from Sa'eed ibn Jubayr that the jinns said to the Prophet of Allah, "How can we come to the Masjid while we are distant – meaning very far away – from you? And how can we be present for the prayer while we are far away from you?" So Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* revealed this *ayah*. One should also note that the mosques are not places for trade or business. During the time of Rasoolullah *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* if someone announced that they have lost their such and such thing in the masjid, the Prophet would say, "May you never find it." Why? It is because masajid are not built for this purpose. If someone wanted to talk or recite poetry he was asked to go outside and do so because it is disrespect to the masjid because **"the mosques are for Allah (Alone),"** (72: 18), and only He should be remembered there.

The next ayah says, **“When the slave of Allah stood up invoking in prayer to Him they (the jinns) just made round him a dense crowd as if sticking one over the other,”** (72: 19). The word *libada* [لِبْدًا] means ‘one above the other’. Imagine something going on in the street that everyone wishes to watch. What will happen? People will be climbing others’ shoulders. Bringing in chairs or rocks to stand. Pushing one another and so on. This is *libada*, a dense crowd where one is over the other. When the jinns heard the Prophet *salAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* reciting the Qur’an they almost mounted on top of him due to their zeal. This is similar to the crowding of the angels when they descend to attend a gathering of remembrance of Allah *subhanahu wa ta’ala*. They are eager to watch the servants of Allah *subhanahu wa ta’ala* engaged in *dhikr* [remembrance] while they have a choice and freewill to do anything else.

When this crowding of the jinns was happening, the Prophet *salAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* was unaware of it. Angel Jibreel [Gabriel] *‘alayhi salaam* came and informed him through this Surah (as we read in the first ayah).

Another interpretation of this ayah (72: 19) is that the humans and the jinns both crowded together over this matter (of recitation of the Qur’an or Prophethood) in order to extinguish it. However, Allah *subhanahu wa ta’ala* insisted upon helping it, supporting it and making it victorious over those who opposed it. When the jinns and humans harmed Prophet Muhammad *salAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, opposed him, denied him and stood against him in order to thwart the truth he came with, and to unite against him, he said, **“I invoke only my Lord, and I associate none as partners along with Him,”** (72: 20) meaning O people why do you oppose me when I am only worshiping my Lord alone, and He has no partners. I seek His help and I put my trust in Him so do whatever you wish to do in my opposition.

Ayaat 21-24 – It is Only Obligatory on the Messenger to Convey the Message

قُلْ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا رَشَدًا - قُلْ إِنِّي لَنْ يُجِيرَنِي مِنَ اللَّهِ أَحَدٌ
وَلَنْ أَجِدَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مُلْتَحَدًا - إِلَّا بَلَاغًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِسَالَاتِهِ ۚ وَمَنْ
يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّ لَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا - حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَوْا
مَا يُوعَدُونَ فَيَسْئَلُونَ مَنْ أضعفُ ناصِرًا وَأَقَلُّ عَدَدًا

“Say, ‘It is not in my power to cause you harm, or to bring you to the Right Path.’ Say, ‘None can protect me from Allah’s punishment, nor should I find refuge except in Him. (Mine is) but conveyance (of the truth) from Allah and His Messages, and whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, then verily, for him is the Fire of Hell, he shall dwell therein forever.’ Till, when they see that which they are promised, then they will know who it is that is weaker concerning helpers and less important concerning numbers,” [Surah al-Jinn 72: 21-24].

Meaning I am only a man like you all and I have received revelation. I am only a servant among the servants of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*. I have no control over the affairs of your guidance or misguidance. Rather all of these things are referred to Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*. No one can save me from the punishment of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* as well if I was to disobey him. The power to guide or the power to misguide is with Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* only and my responsibility is only to convey.

The word ***mul'tahada*** [مُلْتَحَدًا] is from the root *lam-ha-dal* which means 'to make a niche or receptacle for corps such as a trench' and it can also mean 'lodging, refuge, concealment or protection'. *Lahad* is also used for grave because it is shaped as a trench and provides protection to the deceased. Imagine the humiliation the deceased would have had to face if people could see what's happening to him after his death. May Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* forgive our dead and allow us to be *sadaqa* for them, aameen.

"...and whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, then verily, for him is the Fire of Hell," (72: 23) meaning whoever disobeys after learning the truth, then his reward will be the fire of Hell wherein he will abide forever. There will be no escape from it. [Maulana Maududi](#) adds that this does not mean that every sin and act of disobedience will cause one to live in Hell forever, but in view of the context in which this has been said, the *ayah* means that the one who does not accept the invitation of tawheed given by Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* and His Messenger *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* and does not refrain from polytheism will suffer in Hell forever.

"Till, when they see that which they are promised, then they will know who it is that is weaker concerning helpers and less important concerning numbers," (72: 24) meaning until the promised Day of Judgment. The background of this *ayah* is that those of the Quraysh who used to mob and surround the Prophet *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* and opposed his message were under the delusion that they were stronger because of their larger number whereas the Prophet *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* had only a handful of men with him. They believed because of their larger number they would easily overwhelm him. Therefore, Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* warns them through this *ayah* that today you find the Messenger *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* helpless and friendless but when that evil Day comes of which you are being warned then you will know whose helpers are weaker and fewer in number.

Here is a lesson for us too; we should not be deceived by the numbers of our opponents. If what we are following is according to the Qur'an and Sunnah then there is nothing to be afraid of. Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* does not abandon righteous believers, as Qur'an teaches us. Have complete tawakkal on Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* and be strong in your Deen.

May Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* help and protect the oppressed Muslims wherever they might be especially those who are being persecuted because of their following of the Deen. May He give them strength and perseverance to bear it all for His sake, aameen.

Ayaat 25-28 – The Messenger Does Not Know the Unseen

In these *ayaat* Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* clears a misconception that Muslims have even today. The Messenger *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* only knew as much as Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* chose to inform him about. He did not know about the *ghayb* [unseen]. Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* says,

قُلْ إِن أَدْرِي أَقْرِبُ مَّا تُوعَدُونَ أَمْ يَجْعَلُ لَهُ رَبِّي أَمَدًا - عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ
فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَى غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا - إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَى مِنْ رَسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُ يَسْلُكُ مِنْ
بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ رَصَدًا - لَيَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ أَبْلَغُوا رَسُولَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ
وَأَحَاطَ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ وَأَخْصَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عَدَدًا

“Say, ‘I know not whether which you are promised is near or whether my Lord will appoint for it a distant term. (He Alone) the All-Knower of the Unseen, and He reveals to none His Unseen. Except to a Messenger whom He has chosen, and then He makes a band of watching guards to march before him and behind him. [He (Allah) protects them (the Messengers)], till He sees that they have conveyed the Messages of their Lord (Allah). And He (Allah) surrounds all that which is with them, and He keeps count of all things,” [Surah al-Jinn 72: 25-28].

Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* commands His Messenger *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* to say to the people that he has no knowledge of when the Hour will be and he does not know whether its time is near or far.

Whenever the Messenger of Allah *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* was asked about the time of the Hour he would not respond. When Jibreel [Gabriel] *'alayhi salaam* appeared to him in the form of a Bedouin Arab, one of the questions he asked the Prophet *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* was, “O Muhammad! Tell me about the Hour?” The Prophet *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* replied

مَا الْمَسْئُولُ عَنْهَا بِأَعْلَمَ مِنَ السَّائِلِ

“The one questioned about it knows no more than the questioner.”

Only Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* knows the Unseen and the Seen. No one of His creation can attain any of His knowledge except that which Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* allows him to have. **“Except to a Messenger whom He has chosen,”** (72: 27) this includes the angelic Messenger and the human Messenger. The Messenger by himself is no knower of the Unseen, but when Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* chooses him to perform the mission of Prophethood, He grants him the knowledge whatever He seems fits. **“...and then He makes a band of watching guards to march before him and behind him,”** (72: 27),

the guards referred here are the guardian angels protecting the Prophet *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*. When Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* sends down the knowledge of the Unseen realities to the Messenger *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, He appoints angels on every side to safeguard it so that the knowledge reaches the Messenger in a safe condition, free from every kind of adulteration. This is the same thing as we read in earlier *ayaat* (8-9) where the jinns found the doors of heavens to be closed and strict security measures adopted.

About this *ayah* Ibn Jareer reported from Sa'eed ibn Jubayr that he said 'a band of watching guards' referred in the *ayah* are four guardians among the angels along with Angel Jibreel [Gabriel] *'alayhi salaam*.

"...till He sees that they have conveyed the Messages of their Lord (Allah)," (72: 28) can have three meanings:

1. that the Messenger may know that the angels have delivered the messages of Allah to him precisely and accurately;
2. that Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* may know that the angels have conveyed the messages of their Lord to His Messenger *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* precisely and accurately; and
3. that Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* may know that the Messenger *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* has conveyed the messages of his Lord to His servants precisely and accurately.

The words of the *ayah* are comprehensive and may possibly imply all the three meanings. Besides, the *ayah* also points out two other things: first, that the Messenger *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* is given that knowledge of the Unseen, which is necessary for him to perform his mission of Prophethood; second, that the angels keep watch that the Revelation reaches the Messenger *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* safely and also that the Messenger conveys the messages of his Lord to His servants accurately.

We can conclude by saying that the meaning of this is that He protects His Messengers through His angels so that they will be able to convey His Messages. He protects what He reveals to them of revelation so that He will know that they have indeed conveyed the Messages of their Lord.

Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* ends the Surah by saying, **"And He surrounds all that which is with them, and He keeps count of all things,"** [Surah al-Jinn 72: 25-28], (72: 28). Such is the power of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*! That He encompasses the Messenger *salAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* as well as the angels that if they swerve even a little from His will, they can be detected immediately. Moreover, a complete record has been kept of each letter of the messages sent down by Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*. The Messengers and the angels cannot dare add or subtract even a letter from them.

May Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* allow us to give His Book the haq [right] that it deserves. May we not be of those who learn the meaning of His Book and then ignore the lessons learnt until we forget them completely. May we not become those who read His Book from cover to cover and are not moved by its message. May we submit to the commands of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* as the believing jinns did upon hearing the truth, aameen.

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