

Summary Of The Qur'ân Majîd

By:

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Title : Summary of the Qur'ân Majîd

Original Urdu Rendering (Khulasatul Qur'ân): Hadrat Maulânâ Aslam Shaikûpûrî Sâheb (Damat Barakatuhum)

Translated By: Maulânâ Moosa Kajee

Translation Edited By: Maulânâ Ahmed Hansa

Publication No. : A - 289

Date of Publication: Jumâdal Ukh râ 1431
June 2010

Jointly Published By:

Madrasah Arabia Islamia

P.O. Box 9786
Azaadville 1750
South Africa
Tel: 0027 11 413-2786
Fax: 0027 11 413-2787
E-mail:
darululum@webmail.co.za

Zam Zam Publishers

Urdu Bazar
Karachi Pakistan
Tel.: 021-7760374
021-7761671
Fax: 021-7725673
E-mail:
zamzam01@cyber.net.pk
info@zamzampub.com

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P.O. Box 33319
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Ph: +260-95-880990

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Darul Uloom Al-Madania
182, Sobieski St. Buffalo
New York
14212-1506
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PREFACE

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

آلاء الله علي هذا العبد الضعيف لا تعدو ولا تحصى ، وأجلها التوفيق لفهم القرآن العظيم . ومنن صاحب النبوة والرسالة عليه الصلوة والسلام علي أحقر الامة كثيرة ، واعظمها تبليغ الفرقان الكريم . لقن النبي صلي الله عليه وسلم القرآن القرن الأول ، وهم أبلغوه للقرن الثاني ، وهكذا حتى بلغ حظ هذا الفقير كذلك من روايته ودرايته اللهم صلّ علي هذا النبي الكريم سيدنا ومولانا وشفيعنا ، أفضل صلواتك ، وأمين بركاتك ، وعلي آله وأصحابه وعلماء امته أجمعين يا ارحم الراحمين .

"The favours and bounties of Allâh Ta'âlâ upon this weak servant are limitless and cannot be enumerated. From amongst these innumerable favours and blessings, the greatest is that Allâh Ta'âlâ has bestowed this servant with the ability to understand the Qur'ân-e-Azîm. The favours of Rasûlullâh ﷺ upon this most insignificant individual ¹ of this ummah are very many. The greatest favour was his (ﷺ) propagation of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm. Nabî ﷺ taught the Qur'ân to the people of the first era. They in turn conveyed it to the people of the second era. It continued in this fashion until both its words and meanings reached this insignificant one in this manner. O Allâh! Bestow Your most highest mercies and greatest blessings upon our master, leader and intercessor, Nabî-e-

¹ Shâh Walîyullâh رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ is referring to himself in this manner out of humility.

Karîm ﷺ and upon his family, his companions and all the Ulamâ of his ummah, O Most Merciful of those who show mercy.”

This is the blessed khutbah (sermon) with which the great Imâm, Shaikh Walîyullah (May Allâh Ta'âlâ fill his grave with light) began his famous book “Al-Fawzul-Kabîr”, which expounds on the principles of tafsîr. If instead of لفهم القرآن العظيم (understanding the Qur'ân-e-Azîm), the words حب القرآن العظيم (love for the Qu'rân-e-Azîm) were used, then every single word of this khutbah would be a translation of the desires of this insignificant one, since this most lowest servant cannot claim to have an understanding of the Qur'ân, but can definitely claim to have love for the Qur'ân. It is the result of this love, that the following desire and du'â continuously resonates within the heart, that that Being (Allâh Ta'âlâ) Who is All-Powerful and has full choice over everything, that Being He who makes the impossible possible, and Who brings things from non-existence into existence, should create such means, that the tilâwat (recitation), service, teaching and spreading of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm becomes the purpose of my life as well as the lives of my children.

My pen, mind, heart, in fact, my entire existence should at all times remain enlightened with the light of the blessings of the Qur'ân, and the light of understanding and explaining the Qur'ân. My life should pass under the shadow of this great miracle of Nabî ﷺ and when my death comes, this Qur'ân should be on my tongue. It is this connection with this blessed book that was the cause for the compilation of this book. What had transpired was that at the commencement of Ramadhân-ul-Mubâarak 1424 Hijrî, the administration of the daily newspaper Islâm intended to publish a separate supplementary page daily, entitled “Ramadhân Special”. Besides a few other topics, the topic of “Khulâsat-ul-Qur'ân” (Summary of the Qur'ân) was also chosen for which I was requested to write the summary of one pâra (chapter) daily. I accepted this request, regarding it as my good fortune and the desire of my heart.

The purpose of this was that the namâzîs ² could at least study the subject matter of what they had heard the previous night in tarâwîh, the following morning. Even if all the subject matter could not be covered, but at least a few chosen portions, so that they could attain, to a certain extent, the good fortune of understanding the Qur'ân.

This series, which was started with the intention of benefiting the general public, was also greatly accepted by the khawâs (Ulamâ). In some masâjid, it would be photocopied and distributed. Certain imâms and huffâz kept it away, so that it could be used the following year. There had also been calls from various circles for it to be collated in a book form. This insignificant one was in favour of such an idea, because for some time now, a beneficial series has begun in Ramadhân where daily, a synopsis of the Qur'ân is given. It is obvious that this should be commended and those people who are bringing people closer to the teachings of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm should be appreciated.

However, an area of concern is that some people have begun conducting summaries according to their level of thinking and knowledge. After conducting a survey, this has come to light that most of them are such people who have never enrolled at any dînî (religious) institute, and nor have they formally studied under the tutorship of any expert Ustâd. In such a case, if the doors of unrestrained ijtihâd ³ are opened, or if tafsîr is done according to ones whims and fancies, then this is not unexpected. Thus, the need for such a book was felt in which a summary of the Qur'ân could be compiled, with the use of reliable tafâsîr (commentaries of the Qur'ân), from which the general people could benefit, and from which the Ulamâ could present to the namâzis during the blessed month of Ramadhân. How can I ever thank Allâh Ta'âlâ, who has

² Congregation following the Imâm in Salâh.

³ Ijtihâd refers to the extracting of religious injunctions from Qur'ân and Hadîth by one who is proficient in various sciences of the Sharî'ah

granted this weak and helpless servant the ability to fulfil a great necessity of the time? In compiling this summary, most of the subject matter has been confined to Allâmah Wahabatuz-Zuhaylî's "At-Tafsîr-ul-Munîr" and Shaikh Muhammad Alî Sâbûnî's "Qabs Min-Nuril-Qur'ân-il-Hakîm". This summary was written during the month of Ramadhân with great haste. Thus when I compiled it in the form of a book, to attain one uniform standard, I rewrote the summary of the first four pâras and besides rechecking the remaining pâras, I added some new subject matter. Efforts have been made within our abilities to correct all mistakes. Then too, which servant's work can be free from errors? This quality is only for that Being who is pure from all mistakes, faults, defects and forgetfulness. A special appeal to readers, that if any error, whether literal or figurative comes to the fore, then at once they should inform this weak one so that it can be corrected in the second edition. By informing us, this servant will be greatly pleased and du'â will be made for this person from the bottom of my heart.

Finally I wish to mention some points before commencing:

The first point is that every subject matter of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm is important. In the depths of every word and verse of this book of guidance, there is a world of meanings hidden. The truth is that there cannot be a summary of the Qur'ân. That which is being presented to you in the name of summary, is only a glimpse of its endless meanings and a few drops of its ocean of knowledge. This glimpse should be seen under the principle *ما لا يدرك كله لا يترك كله* (that which cannot be attained completely, should not be left out completely) so that person who cannot study the whole Qur'ân, can at least get a glimpse of its contents. The second purpose is that perhaps, through the blessings of a brief study, Allâh Ta'âlâ will create the desire in ones heart for a more detailed study.

The second point is that because in our masâjid, tarâwîh is recited according to pâras, therefore this summary has also been written according to pâras. Otherwise, the distribution shown to us by Nabî

ﷻ was according to sūrahs. The specification and division by pâras, nisf ($\frac{1}{2}$), thuluth ($\frac{1}{3}$), rubu' ($\frac{1}{4}$), rukûs, etc. was done later on. When any new verse was revealed, then Nabî ﷺ would give the command that it be placed in a certain sūrah. He would not command that it be placed in a certain pâra. This is apparent, that the command for it to be placed in a specific sūrah was due to the link it had with its subject matter. If the link and connection were not kept in mind, then we would have been given the choice to join those verses with any sūrah. Then in the 114 sūrahs, there would not be such disparity that one sūrah comprises of only 3 verses whereas another comprises of 286 verses. The purpose of mentioning this, is that it is necessary to keep in mind the sūrahs when explaining the summary. However, in tarawîh, since the recital takes place according to pâras, therefore this insignificant one has made an effort that this summary be written in such a way, that one keeps the sūrah in front, together with keeping in mind the order of pâras. At the end of each specific subject matter which has been written, the reference of the verse number has also been mentioned so that if any person wants to study this in more detail, he can refer to the books of tafsîr regarding that verse. (The reference of the verse numbers are according to the sūrahs and not the pâras).

The last point that I wish to mention is that the Qur'ân-e-Karîm is such a great book that any form of relationship with it, is not void of benefit, even if the relationship with it is just looking at it with love, or just holding it with respect and reverence. However, to benefit from this never ending ocean and this everlasting shade, two things are of great importance. One is that the grandeur of the Qur'ân must be embedded in the heart. This thought must be ever-present in the mind, that this is such a high-ranking book that Allâh Ta'âlâ has in different places taken oaths to explain its greatness. Take just one example. In Sûrah Wâqî'ah it is mentioned, "I take an oath by the stages of the stars. And if only you knew, this is a very huge oath. Indeed this is a very high-ranking book, which has been written in a protected book. Only those who are pure can touch it. It

has been revealed from the Rabb (Sustainer) of the universe. Then too do you deny this speech and make it your occupation to deny it?"

The second thing which holds importance in order to attain benefit from it, is that it should be recited with understanding. Keeping in mind the greatness of the Qur'ân and understanding the Qur'ân, plays a great role in the purification of the heart, cleansing one's character and habits, changing ones manner of life and for the descent of blessings and spiritual conditions.

Thus, after embedding its greatness in the heart, one should make an effort to read it with understanding, and then to spread this bounty. Know and understand well that there is nothing other than the Qur'ân for the future of the world. Those people who are entrapped in spiritual sicknesses, mental worries, political differences, quarrels and disputes, social evils and monetary problems will definitely be convinced one day, that the solution of all their problems lies in the Qur'ân. Besides the Qur'ân, there is no other spiritual nourishment for them. Come on! Let us do our duty in showing these thirsty people the road to this pure stream. One way is to assist us in delivering and conveying this weak effort in the form of Khulâsat-ul-Qur'ân to your friends and the Muslims of the whole world. Inshâ-Allâh Ta'âlâ, effort will be made to have this book translated into other languages.

In need of du'âs

Muhammad Aslam Shaikhûpûrî

FIRST PÂRÂ

Sûrah Fâtihah

The first pâra comprises of the whole of Sûrah Fâtihah as well as a portion of Sûrah Baqarah. There is consensus amongst the Ahle-'Ilm (Ulamâ) that Sûrah Fâtihah was revealed in Makkah Mukarramah and that it was revealed during the initial Makkan era. Despite it being concise, the primary aims of this noble book have been briefly mentioned here. That is why it has been called Ummul-Qur'ân and Asâsul-Qur'ân (the foundation of the Qur'ân). This sûrah holds the status of being the introduction as well as the summary of the Qur'ân. The basic themes of the Qur'ân are three : Tawhîd (the Oneness of Allâh Ta'âlâ), Risâlah (the prophethood of Nabî ﷺ) and Qiyâmah (the Day of Resurrection).

In the first two verses of this sûrah, as well as the fourth verse, the concept of tawhîd has been mentioned. Qiyâmah has been mentioned in the third verse. In the fifth and sixth verses, there is an indication towards risâlah. The names and qualities of Allâh Ta'âlâ have also been mentioned in this sûrah. A command has been given to worship Him alone, seek help from Him alone, and to make du'â for guidance and steadfastness (istiqâmat). On the one side, there is mention of the Ambiyâ and sulahâ (pious people). On the other side, we are instructed to stay away from the ways and behaviour of those nations who became worthy of Allâh Ta'âlâ's punishment and anger, due to their ilmî and amalî (theoretical and practical) deviation. This claim can be made, without fear of refutation that Sûrah Fâtihah is a unique du'â, a priceless treasury of ma'ârif (recognition) and a clear mirror of Qur'ânic knowledge, through which we can, in a short span of time, get a glimpse of the other 113 sûrahs. Perhaps, for us to get this glimpse over and over, every namâzî has been commanded to recite it in every rakât of every namâz.

Sûrah Baqarah

Sûrah Baqarah is the longest sûrah of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm. It comprises of 285 verses. Most of Sûrah Baqarah was revealed in the initial period immediately after migration to Madînah Munawwarah. The word "baqarah" in Arabic means cow. This sûrah has been called Sûrah Baqarah because the word 'Baqarah' is mentioned in this sûrah and the incident of the cow being slaughtered is also mentioned.

A wealthy person from amongst the Banî Isrâ'îl was killed by his nephew with the intention of receiving inheritance money. Then, in the darkness of the night, he placed the corpse at the door of someone's house. He then claimed that this person had killed his uncle. The families of the claimant and defendant came close to taking up arms against each other. Allâh Ta'âlâ commanded them, via Mûsa ﷺ, to slaughter a cow and to place a portion of the meat on the body of the murdered person. By doing so, the murdered person would come to life, sit up and point out his murderer. During that particular time, it so happened that there was also one group from amongst the Banî Isrâ'îl that was denying life after death. By this murdered person coming alive, not only, would the murderer be pointed out, but proof for the life after death would also be proved. Besides this, due to living a long time with the Egyptians, the love and respect of the cow had become embedded in the hearts of the Banî Isrâ'îl. In commanding them to slaughter a cow, there was a refutation of this belief, as well as degradation of this act of worship of theirs.

Besides this incident, the following important subjects are also discussed in the first pâra :

- (1) In the beginning of this sûrah, Rasulullah's ﷺ everlasting miracle, the Qur'ân-e-Karîm has been mentioned. Nabî ﷺ was

blessed with other perceivable and apparent miracles, but his greatest miracle was this ilmî (intellectual) one (i.e. the Qur'ân).

The sûrah commences with the hurûf-e-muqata'ât⁴ اَلَمْ. Beginning in this manner was uncommon to the Arabs. By using this method, their attention was drawn towards it and they were then compelled to listen to it with attention. Whichever sûrah of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm commences with the hurûf-e-muqata'ât, thereafter mention is also made of the grandeur, truthfulness, miraculousness and veracity of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm. Due to this, it is the opinion of the majority of the Ulamâ that these letters (hurûf) were brought to challenge those who claimed that the Qur'ân was a human effort, that if the Qur'ân-e-Karîm is the made-up speech of Muhammad ﷺ, then you too can also make up such speech from these letters (hurûf) which you use day and night. You people have great pride over your eloquence, oratory skills and command of the language due to which you call all other people ajam (dumb). However, history bears witness that the disbelievers of the past could not accept the challenge, nor is there anyone to accept it today and none will accept it till Qiyâmah.

- (2) People are of three types :
- a) Mu'min (believer).
 - b) Kâfir (disbeliever)
 - c) Munâfiq (hypocrite).

The outstanding qualities of a mu'min are five :

- (1) Imân bil-ghaib i.e. Believing in those realities which cannot be comprehended by the senses e.g. Jannah, Jahannum, resurrection, reckoning, recompense etc.

⁴ The hurûf-e-muqata'ât are those letters which appear in the beginning of many Sûrahs. According to the vast majority of Ulamâ, its meaning is known only to Allâh Ta'âlâ .

- (2) Iqâmat-e-Salâh (Establishing of Salâh) - To continuously performing salâh bearing in mind its conditions and etiquettes.
- (3) Discharging of zakât – Generally in the Qur'ân-e-Karîm, salâh and zakât are mentioned together, since salâh is the right of Allâh Ta'âlâ and zakât is the right of people. A person's î mân (belief) cannot be complete as long as he does not fulfil both types of rights.
- (4) Believing in all the heavenly scriptures which were revealed to the messengers in different eras.
- (5) To affirm belief in the hereafter in such a manner that no trace of doubt should occur.

The point to be noted here is that Allâh Ta'âlâ has mentioned the people of î mân in 4 verses, the disbelievers in 2 verses and the hypocrites in 13 verses. In these 13 verses, twelve qualities of the hypocrites have been mentioned. It is compulsory for Muslims to keep away and protect themselves from these evil qualities. These signs and qualities are mentioned hereunder :

Lies, deceit, unmindfulness, spiritual sicknesses (jealousy, pride, greed etc.), hatching evil plots against others, foolishness, mocking the commands of Allâh Ta'âlâ spreading corruption and mischief on earth, ignorance, deviation, doubt, making a mockery of the believers.

(3) The incident of Hadhrat Âdam and Hawwâ عليهم السلام which took place with the accursed Iblîs. In reality, this incident is a reflection of the whole of mankind as well as this world from the beginning of time till the end. This incident points to the eternal conflict between truth and falsehood, good and evil. It shows the high rank of Âdam عليه السلام. He was granted vicegerency on the earth and was granted such knowledge that was not even granted to the angels. The angels

were commanded to prostrate (make sajdah) before him. Due to attaining this rank of khilâfat (vicegerency), the children of Âdam ﷺ have been ordained to implement the commands of Allâh Ta'âlâ on earth and run the system of the world as Allâh Ta'âlâ desires.

(4) The Banî Isrâ'îl have been mentioned in numerous places in the Qur'ân-e-Karîm. However, the most detailed discussion concerning them is found in Sûrah Baqarah. Nearly, the entire first pâra makes mention of them. The first thing mentioned is that Allâh Ta'âlâ bestowed them with countless favours, both outward and inward, worldly and dînî (religious) e.g. many Ambiyâ were born amongst them; they had been given material prosperity; they had been favoured with the bounty of îmân and the belief of tawhîd (monotheism); they were freed from the oppression of Fir'awn; they migrated from Egypt under the leadership of Mûsa ﷺ; when Fir'awn pursued them, a path was made in the ocean for them; in front of their eyes, their oppressor together with his army were drowned; when they were without provisions in the Sinai Desert, mann (sweetmeats) and salwâ (quails) was granted as sustenance and provision of cool clouds were made for shade; and when searching for water to drink, twelve streams of water gushed out from a stone. Thereafter, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions that they did not appreciate these bounties. Gradually, they became involved in the sickness of ingratitude. Thus, they concealed the truth; denied the nubuwwat of the seal of the Ambiyâ (i.e. Nabî ﷺ); made a calf their deity; outwardly displayed impatience, greed and avarice in the Sinai Desert; entered the city of Arîhâ in a proud manner whereas they had been commanded to enter with humility; killed the Ambiyâ unjustly; time and time again, broke their covenants; their hearts had become hard, they interpolated both the words and meanings of the books of Allâh Ta'âlâ; they believed in some commands of the sharî'ah and rejected others; they became afflicted with the sicknesses of hatred and jealousy; their love for this material world reached the highest levels; they made apparent their dislike of high-ranking angels; they had shown a deep interest

for black magic and soothsaying; such amaliyât (charms) had gained general acceptance amongst them by means of which they would cause separation between husband and wife thus opening the way for illicit love affairs, and inspite of all their evil actions, they still claimed that they were the sole owners of Jannah; and with great conviction they would say that only the Jews will enter Jannah – this was also the claim of the Christians. Together with this, both these groups claimed that only they were on truth and the opposition had no proof. (We should ponder, and take lesson. Are there these evils not prevalent amongst us Muslims?)

After mentioning in great detail the favours bestowed to the Jews, their ingratitude and their sins, mention is made of Hadhrat Ibrâhîm عليه السلام, whose high status was accepted by both the Jews and Christians, and both groups would proudly affiliate themselves with him, whereas if they were true in their claims, then they would definitely follow our Master, Rasûlullâh ﷺ. The reason for this, is that Hadhrat Ibrâhîm Khalîlullah عليه السلام was given many tests and he was successful in every one. Whether it was in showing his displeasure to his father's idol-worship, clashing with his people, debating with Namrûd, being thrown in the fire, migrating from his homeland, leaving his wife and child in a desolate valley or fulfilling the command to slaughter his most beloved son with his own hands, at every juncture the friend of Allâh ﷻ (i.e. Ibrâhîm عليه السلام) remained steadfast and did not falter in the slightest. Due to the blessings of this steadfastness, his dû'as were accepted.

Makkah became a land of safety; the sustenance of fruit was made easily available for its inhabitants and the greatest du'â accepted was that Nabî ﷺ was born in the progeny of the Quraysh. After mentioning the praises and excellences of Hadhrat Ibrâhîm عليه السلام, Allâh Ta'âlâ states that only that person who is unfortunate, foolish and the slave of his desires turns away from millate-ibrahîmiyah (the path of Ibrâhîm عليه السلام). This was precisely the condition of the Jews and Christians, that they attributed themselves to Hadhrat

Ibrâhîm ﷺ, but they had the false notion that success did not lie in following hanafiyyat (the straight path i.e. Islâm) but rather it lied in following Christianity and Judaism. Allâh Ta'âlâ commanded Nabî ﷺ to invite them towards hanafiyyat i.e. the religion of Islâm which was the religion of all the Ambiyâ. If they accepted his call, then they would be rightly-guided. If they did not accept it, then their denial and deviation would not be because of any proof, but due to obstinacy and stubbornness. Then they should be left in the filth of their stubbornness. Allâh Ta'âlâ will take care of them. Allâh Ta'âlâ says, "If they believe (i.e. Jews and Christians) as you (the Sahâbah ﷺ) have believed, then they will be rightly guided. If they turn away (then do not be surprised because) stubbornness is their habit. (If they try to cause trouble and mischief then) Allâh Ta'âlâ is sufficient for them. Allâh Ta'âlâ is All-Seeing, All-Knowing." (137)

SECOND PÂRÂ

The second pâra begins with mention of the changing of the qiblah. After coming to Madînah Munawwarah, Nabî ﷺ performed salâh facing Baitul-Muqaddas for approximately sixteen months. However his desire was that the Ka'bah be declared the qiblah (direction of salâh) for the Muslims, which was an apparent and perceptible sign of millate-ibrahîm (the path of Ibrâhîm عليه السلام). Allâh Ta'âlâ fulfilled this desire of Nabî ﷺ by commanding the changing of the qiblah. After the revelation of this command, as usual the polytheists and hypocrites made baseless objections, but the Jews were in the forefront in this matter.

Outwardly they expressed surprise, but in reality, it was due to their stubbornness that they said, "What has turned them away from the direction towards which they used to face when performing ibâdat?" Allâh Ta'âlâ commanded His Nabî ﷺ, "Say (to them O Nabî ﷺ) All directions (whether it be) east or west belongs to Allâh." Thus He has the choice, that whichever direction He desires, He can stipulate to be the qiblah. In other words, all directions belong to Allâh Ta'âlâ. No direction by itself holds any virtue over another, nor does any direction have the ability to become the qiblah on its own. By the command of Allâh Ta'âlâ, a qiblah is stipulated. Therefore, their objections regarding the changing of the qiblah are baseless and hold no weight. The main thing of importance is not the facing of any specific direction, but rather it is turning to Allâh Ta'âlâ. By studying these verses, the beautiful conduct of Nabî ﷺ is shown, that due to his extreme love (for Allâh Ta'âlâ) and his anticipation for revelation, he used to continuously lift his blessed gaze towards the sky over and over again, but he did not ask for the direction of the qiblah to be changed since it was possible that Allâh Ta'âlâ's pleasure and decision was in not changing it. Perhaps due to this, immediately after commanding the change of the qiblah, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions the greatest favour which has been granted to the

people of imân in the form of a illuminated lamp, a warner and bearer of glad-tidings, Hadhrat Muhammad ﷺ. Specifying a direction is a great favour of Allâh Ta'âlâ and the sending of a Rasûl for guidance is also an unparalleled favour. (151)

Closing the discussion on the changing of the qiblah, the final and decisive point mentioned, is that the true yardstick for measuring piety is not turning towards the east and west, but rather it is that one's direction of beliefs (aqâ'id), actions (a'mâl), business transactions (mu'âmalât) and character (akhlâq) be correct. To please Allâh Ta'âlâ just by merely changing the direction of the face is not sufficient. One has to change one's heart and one's whole life. Allâh Ta'âlâ states : "Turning your faces towards the east and west is not piety, but true piety is (177)

The Ulamâ have given great importance to this verse. Approximately sixteen laws have been extracted from it. This verse also shows that Islâm is not just the fulfilment of a few religious practises which are done in places of worship and in the khanqahs (spiritual retreats), but dîn (religion) is related to every facet of our lives. It remains with a person at all places – in the home, market place, masjid, madrassah, in politics, government and in business and social dealings. Islâm keeps an eye on every Muslim at every place. It is necessary for Muslims to at every step look to the sharî'ah and act accordingly.

This verse is called آية البر – the verse of piety. All the laws and masâ'il mentioned thereafter are called أبواب البر – the chapters of piety. First, the principles (usûl) of good acts are mentioned briefly and thereafter the finer details and laws have been mentioned. These laws pertain to a Muslim's commercial, social, economical and marital life and as well as matters relating to Jihâd (warfare). Briefly, we will mention these laws (two have already been mentioned before the verse of البر).

(1) During the days of ignorance, two idols were placed on Safa and Marwa, which the idol-worshippers used to worship. Due to this, the Sahâbah-e-Kirâm ﷺ after accepting Islâm, used to abstain from making tawâf of Safâ and Marwâ. Thus Allâh Ta'âlâ informed them that there was no harm in making tawâf there. (158)

(2) The mushrikîn used to, of their own accord brand certain things as halâl (permissible) and harâm of their own accord. In refutation of this, Allâh Ta'âlâ revealed "(Harâm is not that which you people regard as harâm but) Allâh Ta'âlâ has only made harâm upon you carrion, flowing blood, the meat of swine and those animals upon which name of any deity or being besides Allâh is called out. However, that person who is forced to do so (due to extenuating circumstances like severe hunger), then there is no sin on him (if he eats a portion of it) on condition that his intention is not to obtain enjoyment and he does not consume more than necessary. Verily Allâh Ta'âlâ is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful." (173)

(3) The basis of Islâm is justice. For this reason qisâs (retaliation) has been ordained on the Muslims i.e. in lieu of the murdered one, the murderer can be killed no matter how much difference there is between the two with regards to social standing, status, wealth and physical appearance. In qisâs, there is life, for both the one who intends to commit murder and the potential victim of murder. When a person who intends to murder has conviction that he will be punished for his crime, then inspite of his severe anger, he will restrain himself from killing. Due to this, these two, in fact both families will be saved from killing and fighting. In handing out punishment for murder, Islâm has combined both mercy and justice. If the inheritors and guardians of the murdered one demand qisâs, then this will be justice. If they forgive, or are happy to accept diyat (blood money), then it will be kindness and mercy from their side. (178-179)

(4) When a person who possesses wealth, perceives that his death is imminent, then it is compulsory for him to make a bequest regarding his wealth. (186)

(5) Fasting is compulsory on every sane and mature Muslim. If a person fasts, keeping in mind all its etiquettes, then together with developing taqwâ in man, it also stirs up feelings for humanity. The month in which fasting had been declared compulsory (i.e. Ramadân), also holds the speciality and virtue that such a great and honourable book as the Qur'ân, had also been revealed in it.

(6) During the nights of Ramadân, it is permissible to engage in sexual relations with ones wife, but this is not permissible whilst in i'tikâf. (186, 187)

(7) Earning wealth in any impermissible and wrongful manner is not allowed whether it be by means of gambling, stealing, usurping the wealth and property of others, bribery or buying and selling through impermissible methods. (188)

(8) The lunar calendar is one of the shi'âr (distinguishing factors) of Islâm and its usage is fardhe-kifâyah. (If some use it, the responsibility will fall off the others. If completely left out, all will be sinful). Many forms of worship are based on having knowledge of it. (189)

(9) Jihâd and fighting in the path of Allâh are compulsory upon Muslims. The purpose of jihâd is i'lâ-e-kalimatullah (raising the name of Allâh Ta'âlâ). Since the conflict between truth and falsehood, good and evil has always existed and will always exist, therefore jihâd was always there and will always remain. It is necessary for the Muslims to be ready for jihâd at all times. Muslims should not make apparent their weakness in front of the enemy, because the punishment for weakness is nothing but a sudden death. (190-195)

(10) From amongst the fundamentals of Islâm, one important fundamental is that of Hajj. Allâh Ta'âlâ desires that Muslims from all over the whole world should gather together in the blessed land once a year, to practically demonstrate the concept of equality. Here, they should carry out the acts of Hajj according to the method which Allâh Ta'âlâ has shown. The ihrâm of Hajj can be tied only during the specific months of Hajj. However, umrah can be performed at any time during the year. During the period of Hajj, business and trade is permissible. During the era of ignorance, the mushrikîn had added many customs and innovations. One of them was that the Quraish would stay in Muzdalifah and would regard going to Arafât as below their dignity. They were commanded that like the other people, they should also go to Arafât and return, and should not have a separate identity. Also, the mushrikîn would gather at Minâ and speak of the achievements of their forefathers. Here a command is given that instead of ones forefathers, the remembrance (zikr) of Allâh Ta'âlâ should take place. (196-200)

(11) Under the topic of spending in the path of Allâh, we are shown that what is spent is not important, rather the important thing is where it is spent (and with which intention it is spent). Therefore, it is imperative that we spend the life and wealth given to us by Allâh Ta'âlâ in correct avenues. (215)

(12) The actions of that person who becomes a murtad (turns apostate from Islâm), become null and void. He is worthy of Jahannum (Hell) (In this world, the punishment is that if he does not return to Islâm, after being explained to, then he will be killed.) (217)

(13) Even though there are outward and material benefits in consuming alcohol and gambling, but the physical, intellectual, monetary, moral and social harms far outweigh the benefits. Nabî ﷺ has proclaimed alcohol as أمّ الخبائث – the mother and root of all evils and sin. (219)

(14) After mentioning some social sicknesses, certain family problems have been mentioned, since the family structure is the foundation for a good society. This starts with the relationship of marriage. In this regard, the first command given is that marriage to mushrik males and females is no way permissible. (221). However, a muslim male's marriage to a woman from the people of the book (Jews and Christians) will be valid, but instead of this it is better to get married to a Muslim woman. From this Qur'ânic injunction, we understand this point, that the basis of marriage should be character and religion, and not lineage, wealth and beauty since all these things are temporary. These will not guarantee one true peace and tranquillity, nor will they be a means of happiness.

During the journey of marriage, a pious and Allâh fearing partner will facilitate an easy journey through the many stages of ones journey (towards the hereafter). For this reason, Nabî ﷺ has likened a pious wife to a valuable treasure. (Tirmizî)

(15) Sexual intercourse with ones wife during her menses is not permissible, since many impurities and germs are found in menstrual blood, which can cause harm to the health of both the husband and wife. However touching, kissing, eating and drinking with each other is permissible. On the contrary the Jews do not give permission for this and the Christians do not even regard intercourse (in this condition) as reprehensible. As in many other matters, Islâm has also in this matter, taken the path of moderation instead of exceeding the limits or being too lax. (222-223)

(16) If a person takes an oath that he will not have relations with his wife for four months (or more), then as soon as four months pass, a divorce will automatically take effect. However, if he revokes it before this period, then the marriage will remain intact, but he will have to give kaffârah (expiation, recompense) for breaking his oath. (226-227)

(17) The depth and detail in which the masâ'il of divorce, iddat (waiting period for women after divorce or death of husband) and breast-feeding have not been mentioned in any other sûrah like they have been mentioned in Sûrah Baqarah. In this regard, it is necessary to know that inspite of divorce being disliked in the sight of Allâh Ta'âlâ, permission has been given for it due to specific cases and extenuating circumstances, since sometimes one of the two spouses can make the house a spectacle of hell due to their evil character, ways and rebellious habits, where there is no trace of peace and tranquillity. In such a case, there is no way out besides divorce. Together with allowing divorce, Islâm has brought about many reforms in this regard. During the days of ignorance, there was no fixed limit for divorce. People would give hundreds of divorces and then take their wives back. Islâm has not given permission for more than three divorces. After two divorces one can still take back his wife, but after the third divorce, he now cannot take her back. (229)

(18) Whatever the husband has given to the wife in the form of dowry cannot be taken back. However, there is permission for khulâ'. Khulâ' is when the woman is prepared to return all her dowry or part of it on condition that she is granted a divorce. The consent of both spouses is necessary for khulâ' to take place. (230)

(19) If a divorced woman (even if three divorces have taken place) gets married to another man, but for some reason the marriage does not last, then after getting a divorce from the second husband, she can marry the first husband again. This is called halâlah. Today in the name of halâlah, great evil is perpetrated. The one who does so and the one who requests someone to do it are both cursed in the hâdîth.

(20) After divorce, to take back the wife (rujû), just to make life difficult for her, is not permissible. (231)

(21) Islâm is a religion of justice and kindness. It does not allow one to oppress another, whether it be a child or an elderly person, man or woman. Therefore, it has also mentioned the rights of a suckling child. Today, there is such a fuss in the whole world that there is no substitute for breast milk, but Islâm commanded mothers to breastfeed their children at that time when the whole world was drowning in ignorance, and none knew the benefit of the mother's milk. Assuming that there is separation between husband and wife, then too the mother has the first right to bring up and breastfeed the child. It is not permissible to inflict the punishment of divorce and separation on this innocent child. (233)

(22) If divorce occurs, or one's husband passes away, then in both these instances the woman has to sit in iddat (confinement). The iddat of divorce is the passing of three haidh (menstrual periods), whereas the iddat for the death of one's husband is four months and ten days. (228-234)

(23) To take a promise of marriage from that woman who is in iddat, is prohibited. However, there is permissibility to entertain the idea in the heart and to make this desire apparent by means of allusions or signs. (235)

(24) The reformation of one's family and society at large holds great importance. For this, the preservation of truth and the upholders of truth are also necessary. The purpose of jihâd is for the preservation of truth and the standard-bearers of truth. Therefore, the Qur'ân-e-Karîm has laid a lot of emphasis on jihâd and has severely reprimanded those who flee from jihâd due to fear of death. In several places, the narrations of the past nations have been mentioned regarding this. Here at the end of the second pâra, two such incidents have been mentioned. The first incident is of those people who, due to fear of death, left their homes after the outbreak of a plague. However, their fleeing could not save them

from death. From this incident, we learn that no planning can save a person from taqdîr (pre-destination).

The second incident is of the Banî-Isrâ'îl and Hadhrat Tâlût ﷺ under whose leadership, a small army defeated an army many times larger. This incident was such that only a few special people of the Banî Isrâ'îl knew about it. The general masses were unaware of it. The blessed tongue of Nabî ﷺ mentioning this forgotten piece of history is a proof that his connection was with such a Being whose gaze was not unaware of any link of history and that he was definitely a truthful Rasûl (messenger). Therefore, at the end of this incident Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "These are the verses of Allâh, which we recite to you completely correct. And verily you are from amongst (Our) messengers." (The second pâra terminates on this verse).

THIRD PÂRA

In Sûrah Baqarah, together with Shar'î injunctions, the subject of nubuwwat and risâlat has also been mentioned. At the end of the second pâra, you have read that Allâh Ta'âlâ Himself gives testimony to the risâlat of Rasûlullâh ﷺ. Here, at the beginning of the third pâra, those specialities are mentioned which were granted to some Ambiyâ. One was granted leadership, another was granted the honour of speaking to Allâh Ta'âlâ without any means and one was assisted by clear and manifest miracles. Despite all these Ambiyâ occupying a very lofty status, all were not the same in rank and honour. Some had been given virtue over others. Just as some Ambiyâ have been given virtue over others, similarly their nations have been given virtue over others. Due to many specialities and outstanding characteristics, our Nabî ﷺ was given virtue over all other Ambiyâ. Therefore his ummat (nation) has also been blessed with virtue over all other nations.

While mentioning the virtues and different ranks of the Ambiyâ, this sûrah presents to us such a verse which is the most virtuous verse of the Book of Allâh. This is Âyatul-Kursî which comprises of fifty words and ten verses. The name of Allâh Ta'âlâ is mentioned seventeen times, sometimes clearly and sometimes by allusion.

In the third para, the incident of Hadhrat Ibrâhîm عليه السلام is also mentioned, when he debated with the rebellious and proud king, Namrûd Ibn Kan'ân. Also mentioned is the incident when he requested Allâh Ta'âlâ to show him a spectacle of how the dead are brought back to life. Likewise, when Uzair عليه السلام saw a ruined city, and the thought passed his mind that I do not know how the people of this city will be resurrected, death then overtook him and after one hundred years, he was brought back to life.

A study of Sûrah Baqarah shows that the subject of the dead being brought back to life is mentioned in five places.

- (1) The incident of the murdered person who came back to life after the meat of the cow was placed on his body.
- (2) The incident of those obstinate people of the Banî Isrâ'îl who asked to see Allâh Ta'âlâ.
- (3) The incident of those people who ran away from their homes trying to save themselves from a plague.
- (4) Hadhrat Uzair عليه السلام.
- (5) The incident of Hadhrat Ibrâhîm عليه السلام.

Besides the above-mentioned, the other important subjects which are mentioned , in Sûrah Baqarah, (in the 3rd pâra) are as follows :

(1) The religion of Islâm is a religion of humanity, spending in the path of Allâh, brotherhood, love, kindness and goodness. There is no aspect pertaining to the success and salvation of mankind towards which the Qur'ân has not invited, and there is no act of goodness towards which Islâm has not given encouragement. In Sûrah Baqarah, the virtue of spending in the path of Allâh Ta'âlâ has been mentioned in many different ways, together with its etiquettes.

Firstly, a person spending in the path of Allâh Ta'âlâ with sincerity and earning the reward thereof, is likened to a farmer who plants one seed in a field, from which seven ears emerge. In each ear, there are one hundreds seeds. Thus, planting one seed in a fertile land produces hundreds of seeds. This is the same condition of that person who spends one rand in the path of Allâh and earns not hundreds, but thousands and millions of rewards. (261)

On the other hand is that person who gives charity for show. He has been likened to that farmer who grows his crops on such a stone which is covered by a thin layer of sand. If there is a strong rain, then the seed as well as the sand flows away, thus destroying all his efforts. (264)

In mentioning the conditions and etiquettes of charity, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Saying a kind word and overlooking the indiscretions of others is better than that charity which is followed by causing hurt (to the beggar)." (263)

The second command given, "O People of Îmân! Spend of the pure things that you have earned, and of that which We produce for you from the earth. Do not intend (to spend in charity) the inferior things which you yourself would not have taken except with closed eyes." (267)

The third command given is, "If you give charity openly, then this is very commendable, and if you give the needy secretly, then this is better for you." (271)

(2) Amongst the sharî masâ'il mentioned in Sûrah Baqarah, one of the important mas'alas of our era i.e. the prohibition of interest is mentioned. The interest-taker is likened to that person who has become mad and has lost his senses due to the effects of Shaytân. In this world, the condition of interest-takers is just like that of mad people. On the Day of Judgement, they will arise in this condition from their graves. After this, such a warning is sounded regarding interest, that such a warning has not been sounded for any other major sins in the Qur'ân-e-Majîd. The following is stated, "O People of Îmân! Fear Allâh and forgo whatever interest remains on the people, if you are (indeed true) believers. If you will not do this, then (O Nabî ﷺ) announce a proclamation of war by Allâh and His Rasûl ﷺ." (278-279)

At this juncture, a point worthy of consideration is that after mentioning the virtues and etiquettes of charity, the Qur'ân immediately mentions the harms and destructiveness of interest. In reality, charity and interest are two opposing systems. In charity, there is kindness, purity and the desire to assist, whereas interest has stinginess, filth and selfishness concealed in it. In charity, one

does not have the intention to get back the wealth he has given whereas in interest, a condition is made of getting back more than one has given. In charity, mutual love grows whereas by interest, there is an increase in hatred. For the person giving charity, there is the announcement of Allâh's love for him and a promise of forgiveness, whereas for the one taking interest, there is a warning of being far from Allâh's mercy and a proclamation of war (with Allâh Ta'âlâ and His Rasûl ﷺ). The psychological, moral, economical and social harms of interest are now so clear that even the advocates of interest have begun to acknowledge it, albeit with a suppressed voice.

(3) After mentioning the prohibition of interest, the laws of loans, business, mutual transactions and mortgages have been mentioned. The verse in which these laws are mentioned is the longest verse in the Qur'ân-e-Karîm which shows how much of importance is given to monetary matters in the Qur'ân and that Islâm takes care of dîn (religious matters) and dunyâ (worldly matters); worship and business; and the body and soul.

Some of the laws mentioned in this verse are :

- (1) In matters of credit, a written document should be prepared.
- (2) When credit is given, the due-date should be stipulated and there should be no ambiguity in it.
- (3) During a journey, if one cannot prepare a document, then a loan can be given by taking something as mortgage.
- (4) In cash transactions, there is no need for a written document.

Because Sûrah Baqarah has mentioned many laws e.g. salâh, zakât, Hajj, fasting, charity, interest, iddat etc., at the end of this sûrah, this point is clearly mentioned, "Allâh Ta'âlâ does not burden any person more than he can bear." (285)

The sûrah ends with a comprehensive du'â in which Muslims are taught that they should supplicate in this manner in the court of Allâh Ta'âlâ, "O Allâh! If we have made any error in fulfilling Your commands, then forgive us." As long as the Muslims try to practise on the commands of Allâh Ta'âlâ according to their ability, together with seeking forgiveness for their weaknesses and shortcomings; and they continue turning to Allâh Ta'âlâ and making du'â to Him, then Inshâ-Allâh, they will continue to be saved from the evil end result of people like the Jews.

Sûrah Âle-Imrân

Eight rukûs of the third pâra are found in Sûrah Baqarah. Surâh Âle-Imrân begins in the ninth rukû. There is consensus amongst the Ulamâ that this sûrah is a Madanî sûrah. It has twenty rukûs and two hundred verses. Because the incident regarding the family of Hadhrat Imrân ؑ is mentioned, this sûrah has been named Âle-Imrân. Regarding the virtue of this sûrah, the following narration of Hadhrat Abû Umâmah ؓ is recorded in Sahîh Muslim, "I heard Rasûlullâh ﷺ saying, 'Read these two luminous sûrahs i.e. Sûrah Baqarah and Âle-Imrân.'"

There is a great connection between the contents of these two sûrahs. Nabî ﷺ declaring both these sûrahs as Zahrâwaiyn (the two radiant ones or the sun and moon) also makes the link between the two apparent. Besides this, both these sûrahs address the ahle-kitâb (the people of the book i.e. the Jews and the Christians). However, in Sûrah Baqarah, the Jews are generally addressed and in Âle-Imrân, the original address is to the Christians. Both the sûrahs commence with the hurûfe-muqata'ât هـ ا ي and both of them also commence proclaiming the truthfulness of the Qur'ân.

Approximately eighty verses of this sûrah were revealed when a delegation of Christians consisting of sixty people from Najrân came to Nabî ﷺ. These people began debating with Nabî ﷺ

regarding Hadhrat Îsâ ﷺ and made an effort to prove him to be the son of Allâh Ta'âlâ (نعوذ بالله). In this regard, they used those verses as proof in which Îsâ ﷺ was referred to as روح الله (the Soul of Allâh) or كلمة الله (the Word of Allâh). Answering their incorrect arguments, it was stated that Allâh Ta'âlâ's speech is made up of two types of verses. Some verses are those which are very clear in showing their meaning. These verses are called Muh'kamât. The major portion of the Qur'ân comprises of Muh'kamât. The second type of verses are those whose real and true meaning is not known by anyone besides Allâh Ta'âlâ or those verses in which there is some obscurity for some reason. These verses are called Mutashâbihât. Those seeking the truth always concern themselves with the Muh'kamât. Those in whose hearts, there is crookedness and in whose minds there is deficiency, continue making effort to give incorrect interpretations to the Mutashâbihât and in finding out its meanings. Words like روح الله and كلمة الله are from amongst the Mutashâbihât. Basing the building of polytheistic beliefs on the foundation of Mutashâbihât is nothing but attempting to draw a picture on water. The proofs of tawhîd and îmân are completely clear. Only that person can deny it who is completely devoid of insight. Every single thing in the universe including Allâh Ta'âlâ, His pure angels and the pious Ulamâ (scholars) all testify to tawhîd. (18) Just as Allâh Ta'âlâ testified to tawhîd, He also testifies that the most beloved dîn (religion) to Him is only Islâm. The Jews and Christians arguing regarding its truthfulness is nothing but disbelief and obstinacy.

In the following verses, there is continuous rebuking of the ahle-kitâb. Mention is also made of their sins. These were the people who killed the Ambiyâ, caused bloodshed and inflicted oppression on Allâh Ta'âlâ's pious servants. (21) Muslims are told not to make friends with the disbelievers, leaving aside the believers, because there is no relationship between Islâm and kufr, and a disbeliever can never be sincere to a Muslim. (28)

Three Incidents Containing Great Lesson

In the following verses, three exemplary incidents are mentioned. All these incidents are miraculous and point to the great power of Allâh Ta'âlâ. The first incident is the birth of Hadhrat Maryam عليها السلام, whom the Christians regard as the wife of Allâh, and her son as the son of Allâh Ta'âlâ, thus falling prey to the worst form of deviation.

Hadhrat Maryam عليها السلام's father, Hadhrat Imrân was a pious servant of Allâh. His wife, Hannah Binte-Fâqûdh (فاقد) was a pious woman and a person of good character. For a long while, she had no children. One day, she saw a bird feeding its young chick. On seeing this, her heart was moved. A desire to bear a child grew in her. In the court of Allâh Ta'âlâ she begged, requested and made a vow that if Allâh Ta'âlâ gave her a child she would endow him for the service of Baitul-Maqdis. Allâh Ta'âlâ accepted her du'â. A daughter was born to her. It was customary that only men and not women were accepted for the service of Baitul-Maqdis. In the meanwhile this newborn's father had already passed away. However, Allâh Ta'âlâ accepted this du'â of the wife of Imrân, contrary to the norm (of only men being accepted for the service of Baitul-Maqdis) and placed her under the responsibility and care of the best person of the time, Hadhrat Zakariyyâ ﷺ. Hadhrat Zakariyyâ ﷺ saw her miraculous feats and the out-of-season fruits (that would be found in her chamber). One day he asked her, "O Maryam! From where is this sustenance coming?" She answered, "It is from Allâh. Verily, Allâh Ta'âlâ gives unlimited sustenance to whomsoever He wishes." (37)

On hearing this answer which was based on strong î mân (faith) from this innocent child, the desire arose in the heart of Zakariyyâ ﷺ for children, whereas he was already over 100 years in age, and his wife too was very old, and barren. However, in spite of the outward means being adverse, he made du'â with great humility and submission "O my Rabb, grant me pious children through your

special favour. Definitely, You are the One who hears (and accepts) du'âs. (38) Allâh Ta'âlâ accepted this du'â which was made with a broken heart and gave him glad-tidings of such a son who would bear four qualities :

- (1) He will testify to Kalimatullah i.e. Îsâ ﷺ and will believe in him.
- (2) He will attain a rank of leadership in knowledge, piety, zuhd (abstinence) and ibâdat.
- (3) He will be very chaste. In spite of having power and strength, he will not even go near women.
- (4) He will be in the ranks of the Ambiyâ and the pious.

The third exemplary incident is the birth of Îsâ ﷺ. If the incidents of Hadhrat Maryam عليها السلام and Hadhrat Yahyâ ﷺ are amazing and a sign of the power of Allâh Ta'âlâ, since their parents gave birth to them when they had reached old-age, then the incident of Hadhrat Îsâ ﷺ is even more amazing because his birth was done miraculously without the agency of a father. When the angels informed Hadhrat Maryam عليها السلام about her son, she asked surprised, "How will my child be born, whereas no man has ever touched me?" The answer came from Allâh Ta'âlâ, "It will happen like this (because) Allâh Ta'âlâ creates whatever He wishes. If He decides a matter, then He says, "Be" then it comes into existence." (47)

Allâh Ta'âlâ had granted Sayyidinâ Masîh ﷺ many miracles, but the Jews, in spite of seeing them, were not blessed with the good fortune of accepting îmân, and they resolved to kill him. On the other side, Allâh Ta'âlâ planned to save him. However all saw that Allâh Ta'âlâ's planning was superior as Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "And they planned and Allâh planned, and Allâh is the best of planners." (54) The Jews claim is that they crucified Hadhrat Îsâ ﷺ and buried him in a grave. He remained there for three days. Then the grave opened and he went into the heavens to the Throne of his Rabb.

In India, a group following a claimant of nubuwwat claim that Îsâ ﷺ was injured on the cross. Thinking him to be dead, he was buried in a grave. His disciples treated him and he recovered. Then he migrated to Kashmir, where he passed away. Contrary to all these claims, is the statement of the Qur'ân and the unanimous belief of the Ahlus-sunnah wal-jamât that he was raised to the heavens alive. Close to Qiyâmat, he will descend from the heavens. After completing his life, he will die a natural death. In Sûrah Ale-Imrân the following is mentioned, "(Remember) when Allâh Ta'âlâ said, 'O Îsâ ! I will grant you death (when death is appointed for you) and (at present) I am lifting you to Me, and I will keep you pure (of the slander of the disbelievers) and I will give superiority to your followers over the disbelievers on the Day of Qiyâmah.'" (55)

The Christians of Najrân, who had come to Madînah Munawwarah to debate with Nabî ﷺ, were not prepared to accept the truth after hearing all the proofs. Nabî ﷺ, following the command of Allâh Ta'âlâ, invited them to a mubâhalah i.e. you bring your family and friends, and I will bring my family and friends. Then, we will all make du'â to Allâh Ta'âlâ with humility and submission that whosoever amongst us is a liar, may Allâh's curse be upon them. (61) None of this delegation of sixty people, including fourteen high-ranking religious leaders were ready for this mubâhalah. However, they were happy to pay jizya (protection tax).

After mentioning this incident, Sûrah Âle-Imrân invites all the Ahle-Kitâb i.e. the Jews and Christians to unite on such a phrase which all the Ambiyâ عليهم السلام taught and which is taught in all the four heavenly books as well as the smaller books (sahîfas). This phrase is kalimah-e-tawhîd لا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ – There is none worthy of worship besides Allâh. (64)

After mentioning the evil actions, faithlessness, lies and slander of the Jews and Christians, the pact which Allâh Ta'âlâ took with all the Ambiyâ عليهم السلام is mentioned that if the final messenger

Hadhrat Muhammad ﷺ has to come in their time, then they would have to believe in him. If he (ﷺ) does not come during their time, then their followers and nations have to believe in him. (81)

The pact with the Ambiyâ was in fact a pact for their nations. However, it is sad to say, the nations of those Ambiyâ did not fulfil this pact and instead of acceptance and assistance, they became firm on denial and opposition. This verse shows Rasûlullâh ﷺ to be Sayyidul-Ambiyâ (the leader of all the Ambiyâ). At the end of the third pâra, this point is clarified that îmân and kufr are two such conflicting ideologies which can never be reconciled. Therefore a scathing criticism has been made of those people who renege from Islâm (become murtad), give preference to misguidance over guidance and who pass away in the state of kufr (disbelief).

FOURTH PÂRA

From amongst the subjects mentioned with special importance in Sûrah Âle-Imrân, one is that of spending in the path of Allâh. At the beginning of the fourth pâra, an important instruction is given regarding this topic, which is, one cannot acquire the perfect degree of piety until he does not sacrifice those things which are beloved to him in the path of Allâh. To reach one's destination, selflessness and the sacrifice of things which are beloved to one are necessary.

Besides this, other important topics mentioned in the fourth pâra are as follows :

- (1) After the command was revealed for the changing of the qiblah and Nabî ﷺ started facing the Kâ'bah and not Baitul-Maqdis, then the ahle-kitâb began making a huge fuss. They said, "Baitul-Maqdis is more virtuous than the Kâbah, and this has the honour of being the first house of Allâh on the surface of the earth." Allâh Ta'âlâ, in refuting them, mentions three specialities of Baitul-Harâm (i.e. the Ka'bah)
 - a. It was the first place of worship on the surface of the earth.
 - b. There are clear signs found on it which point to its honour and virtue, including Maqâm-e-Ibrâhîm, Zamzam and the Hatîm.
 - c. Whoever enters the precincts of the Haram, attains safety and security.

One Allâhwâlâ (pious person) has mentioned, "There is no building in the whole universe more honourable than the Ka'bah. Allâh Ta'âlâ commanded that it be built, Jibraîl عليه السلام drew its plan, Hadhrat Ibrâhîm عليه السلام was its builder, and Hadhrat Ismâîl عليه السلام did work as an assistant. This is that place of worship which Muslims are commanded to journey towards to visit it. That person who can bear the expenses of travelling etc., and if the

other conditions which make Hajj compulsory are found, then immediately Hajj becomes fardh (compulsory) on him. If he delays without a valid reason, he will be sinful.

- a. Muslims are commanded to fear Allâh Ta'âlâ as He should be feared; hold firm onto the rope of Allâh and not break up into groups. Hadhrat Abdullâh Ibn Mas'ûd رضي الله عنه has said, "The right of taqwâ (حق تقته) is that Allâh Ta'âlâ should be obeyed, He should not be disobeyed, He should be remembered and not forgotten, He should be shown gratitude and not ingratitude for the favours which He has bestowed."
- b. The Muslim ummah is the best and most virtuous of all the other nations. The reason for this is that contrary to the other ummats they believe in all those things which Allâh Ta'âlâ has commanded that they should believe in, and added to this, amar bil-ma'rûf (commanding righteousness) and nahy anil-munkar (prohibiting evil) is a religious obligation on them. Hadhrat Umar رضي الله عنه has said, "Whoever's heart desires to be counted amongst this ummah, then he should fulfil this condition of Allâh Ta'âlâ." This statement of his was in reference to this verse in which the above three qualities of the religion of Islâm have been mentioned. As long as these three qualities remain in the ummah, they will be worthy of virtue and Allâh Ta'âlâ's special favour. If (Allâh forbid!) any group or person is deprived of these three qualities, they do not remain worthy of this virtue. Nabî ﷺ has said, "By Him in whose hand my life lies, continue commanding righteousness and preventing evil, otherwise Allâh Ta'âlâ will afflict you with His punishment, then you will make du'â to him, and your du'âs will not be accepted." (Tirmizî, Ibne-Mâjah)

- (2) To forge close friendships with the hypocrites and disbelievers is prohibited. Four reasons have been given :

- 1- They will leave no stone unturned in trying to cause harm to you.
 - 2- They desire from the bottom of their hearts that problems and difficulties afflict you in both worldly and religious matters.
 - 3- Hatred and enmity is apparent from their faces as well as their speech.
 - 4- The hatred and jealousy which is concealed within their hearts is far more worse than that which emits from their mouths.
- (3) After being prohibited from befriending the hypocrites and confiding in them, mention is made of the Battle of Badr, which has the honour of holding the crown of all Islâmic battles. Where on one hand, those who participated presented a unique example of bravery and fearlessness, on the other hand, they witnessed with their own eyes Allâh Ta'âlâ's power and unseen assistance. The Muslims were few in number. They were poorly equipped with weapons. Muslims have learnt two important lessons from this battle :
- 1- Victory in any battle cannot be solely attained on the basis of large amounts of weaponry or the strength of the army. Its fundamental condition is îmân and yaqîn (conviction), ittîbâ (obedience) and steadfastness.
 - 2- As long as Muslims remain steadfast on the truth and hold onto the rope of Allâh firmly (i.e. they obey the commands of Allâh Ta'âlâ), the help of Allâh Ta'âlâ will remain with such people and they will always be victorious.
- (4) The Battle of Badr has been briefly referred to in Sûrah Âle-Imrân, however at this point, the main focus is the Battle of Uhud, which is explained in 55 verses. In these verses, the causes and wisdoms of defeat have been mentioned. There are also verses containing warnings, explanation (of events), criticism and praise. One who has the slightest knowledge of Islâmic history will know that the Quraysh suffered a

humiliating defeat in the Battle of Badr. To avenge this defeat, they made full preparations and in Shawwâl, the third year of hijrî, under the leadership of Abû Sufyân, they attacked Madînah Munawwarah.

The army of the Quraysh comprised of 3000 soldiers of which 200 were mounted on horses and 700 were shielded with armour. They also had 3000 camels. Five hundred women also accompanied them. In comparison to the 3000 Quraysh, the Muslims numbered only 700. Nabî ﷺ deployed a cavalry of 50 horsemen on a hill behind him under the leadership of Abdullâh Ibn Jubair ؓ. The hill is remembered by the name of "Jabal-ur-Rumât" (The Mount of the Archers). Nabî ﷺ emphasised to this group that they should under no circumstances leave their posts irrespective of whether they were victorious or not, so much so that if they saw the birds eating the corpses of their companions, then too they should not move. The Commander in Chief, Nabî ﷺ spread the Muslim mujâhidîn (warriors) in such a way that the Qurayshî army was forced to confront them face to face. Thus, it became impossible for them to use their conveyances. In individual combat, eight high-ranking Quraysh leaders were killed which caused the Quraysh to lose courage. The attacks of the brave and valiant warriors of Islâm, like Hadhrat Alî, Hadhrat Hamzâh and Hadhrat Abû Dujânah ؓ were so severe that the mushrikîn lost footing and began deserting the battlefield.

On seeing the defeat of the Qurayshî army, the archers of Jabal-ur-Rumât left their posts, and all besides ten mujâhidîn, became preoccupied in collecting the spoils of war. Khâlid Ibne-Walîd who was until now unsuccessful in attacking from the rear found a golden opportunity to do so. After disposing of the few remaining archers, he launched a powerful attack. The Muslims were caught out unawares by this severe attack. When the soldiers of the Qurayshî army who had fled the battlefield

got news of this attack, they returned to the battlefield. Now the Muslims fell prey to an offensive on two fronts.

Outwardly, due to a small error, the victory of the Muslims had turned into defeat. Twenty two mushrikîn were killed in this battle, whereas on the other side seventy Sahâbahh ﷺ were martyred, including Sayyidush-shuhadâ (the leaders of martyrs), Hadhrat Hamzah ؓ. The Qurayshî army were in such a position that had Allâh Ta'âlâ not changed their hearts, they would have completely destroyed the Muslim army. In spite of being presented with the opportunity, they sufficed on an incomplete victory and decided to return to Makkah. The hypocrites, in keeping with the inherent disposition (of creating mischief), began creating doubts (in the minds of people) that if the Muslims were indeed on the truth, they would not have been defeated. That is why after reviewing the Battle of Uhud in 55 verses, mention is made of the hypocrites in 25 verses, who would not let any opportunity to cause mischief go by.

After burying the martyrs of Uhud, Nabî ﷺ got news that Abu Sufyân on reaching Rawhâ, had realised his error, that he had returned without fulfilling the objectives of the battle and due to the criticism of his companions, was intending to launch a second attack on Madînah Munawwarah. Upon receiving news of this, Nabî ﷺ personally set out in pursuit of them. He also laid down the condition that only those mujâhidîn had permission to join him in the pursuit (of the mushrikîn) who had participated in the previous day's battle. Now judge for yourself what was the strength of the îmân, yaqîn (conviction) and loyalty of the Sahâbahh ؓ, that they had just buried 70 martyrs, and they were weak and injured, yet they were ready to answer the call of their beloved master Rasûlullâh ﷺ. With great speed they travelled to a place called "Hamrâ-ul-Asad", which is situated about 8 miles from Madînah Munawwarah. Allâh Ta'âlâ placed awe in the hearts of the mushrikîn and they quickly

turned back to Makkah Mukarramah. Due to the name of this place, this event is known as the battle of Hamrâ-ul-Asad. Allâh Ta'âlâ states while mentioning this battle, "Those people, inspite of being wounded, who answered the command of Allâh Ta'âlâ and His Rasûl, there is a great reward for them who are pious." (172)

- (5) In the last rukû of Sûrah Ale-Imrân, mention is made of the people of î mân who always remember Allâh, who ponder over the creation of the heavens and earth and who continuously make du'â to their Creator. (190-195)

At the end of the sûrah, the four principles of success have been mentioned :

- 1- Sabr – Stay firm on dîn, and let not the heart become constrained due to difficulties and problems.
- 2- Musâbarah – In front of the enemy, display more bravery and firmness than them.
- 3- Murâbatah – Prepare oneself to confront the enemies of dîn.
- 4- Taqwâ – In all conditions and places to fear Allâh. (200)

Sûratun-Nisâ

Approximately one quarter of Sûratun-Nîsâ is found in the fourth pâra. It is also a Madanî sûrah. It consists of 176 verses. It is called Sûratun-Nîsâ Kubra (the lengthy Sûratun-Nisâ). In the 28th pâra, Sûrah Talâq is called Sûratun-Nîsâ Qusrâ (the short Sûratun-Nisâ). It has been titled "Sûratun-Nisâ" because in this sûrah, many laws pertaining to nîsâ i.e. women have been mentioned. The portion of this sûrah which is in the fourth pâra includes the following important topics and laws :

- (1) Orphans should be handed over their wealth and no one should try to defraud them, nor should anyone try to exchange their valuable assests for worthless things. This applies for both orphan

boys as well as orphan girls. However, it is more often in the case of the inheritance of orphan girls that the unlawful usage of wealth takes place.

(2) It is permissible to get married to upto four wives. However, the condition is that the husband should have the ability to fulfil their rights and be just and fair to all of them. If the husband cannot do so, then he should suffice on one wife.(3)

The practice of having many wives existed before the advent of Islâm, however there were no rules and restrictions regulating this practice. Neither were the number of wives specified nor did the condition of justice and equality exist between the wives. A man could get married to ten or more wives. Then whoever's rights he wished to fulfil, he would do so, and whoever he wanted to keep in difficulty he would do so – neither would he divorce her, nor would he fulfil her marital and social rights. One could refer to her as a widow with a living husband. Islâm specified the number of wives and made it compulsory to fulfil their rights. The curse of western culture, which is trying to spread its influence over the entire world, does not legally regard it as lawful to have more than one wife. However, there is no prohibition to have illegitimate relationships with more than one woman. How sad is this reality that many so-called Muslims express agreement with this accursed culture in both thought and practice!

(3) Before the advent of Islâm, women were not given inheritance at all. The Arabs used to say, "How can we give wealth to such people who cannot ride a horse, lift a sword and face the enemy?" Due to this ignorant principle, women and children were deprived of inheritance. Islâm ended this oppression and granted the rights of inheritance to women and children. The giving of women a portion is not anyone's favour, but rather it is the right of a woman. (11-14)

(4) After mentioning the proper manner in which women should be treated as well as the share of inheritance to be given to them, mention is made of those women to whom one is prohibited from marrying due to the following relationships: kinship, lineage, relationship due to marriage or foster relationships. (23-24)

FIFTH PÂRA

At the end of the fourth pâra, mention is made of those women one cannot marry. At the beginning of the fifth pâra, in completing this discussion, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Besides these (women mentioned above), all other women are lawful for you (to marry, provided) that you seek (their hands in marriage) with your wealth (by paying the dowry) as properly married men (with the intention of preserving your chastity) and not as fornicators (merely to gratify your desires)."

From these last words, "From those women whom you derive benefit", some people try to prove the concept of mut'ah (temporary marriage). However, this deduction is completely incorrect. In this verse, shar'î nikâh is mentioned and not mut'ah. During the period of ignorance, mut'ah was prevalent. Because the laws of Islâm were revealed gradually, this custom remained during the initial period of Islâm. However, the prohibition of this was clearly announced later on. In Ibne-Mâjah a narration of Rasûlullâh ﷺ is recorded, wherein he says, "O people, I had granted permission for mut'ah, but Allâh Ta'âlâ has now made it harâm until Qiyâmah."

Other important topics in this pâra are :

(1) In the third rukû, a few basic guidelines have been mentioned to keep one's domestic system in place. The first guideline is that man has been given the rank of the leader and he is the responsible figurehead of the household, because that group or house in which there is no leader cannot be saved from confusion and division. This leadership does not mean that man is the master and the woman is his slave, but their relationship is like that of a king and his subjects. The second guideline given is that if the wife has a crooked disposition, is disobedient and rebellious, then there are three courses of action which could be adopted to try and bring her onto the straight path. The first thing to be done is that she should be

explained and warned of the harmful consequences of disobedience. If this advice does not have an effect, then the second thing to be done is that the husband should separate himself from the marital bed and should remain aloof from her. If still too, she does not understand, then as a final resort, in the case where she is in reality being rebellious and has strayed off the path, she may be physically disciplined within the bounds stipulated by the sharî'ah.

At this juncture, it is appropriate to remember that the Qur'ân addresses all types of people, be it village-dwellers, city-dwellers, people living in the desert or in the jungle, honourable people and people of ill-temperament, good people and evil people. Islâm has not given blanket permission to hit women, but only that woman who cannot understand any other language. This is apparent, that amongst the backward societies there are such women who cannot come right without being physically disciplined. However, the oppressive husband who beats his wife in a savage manner for small, insignificant matters, his oppression and excesses have no relationship with Islâm.

(2) After mentioning the ways of ensuring the correct functioning of the household and family system, in the fifth rukû, for the proper functioning of our social lives, the command of ihsân (goodness) in all things and in all works has been given. We are taught that the basis of ihsân (goodness) is mutual kindness, trust, justice and compassion. (58)

The reality is that Islâm is a religion of truth, justice and equality. It commands justice amongst all creation so much so that it does not give one permission to usurp the rights of even disbelievers. The story of Uthmân Ibn Talhâ is famous. He was the key-bearer of the Kâ'bah. At the time of the conquest of Makkah, the keys were taken away from him. Some Muslims made apparent their desire to attain this honour of being the bearer of the key. However Allâh Ta'âlâ

commanded that the keys of the Kâ'bah be returned. This incident led to him accepting Islâm.

This incident is also worthy of mention which the mufasssîrîn have mentioned as the reason of revelation of some verses in the 6th rukû. One so-called Muslim (who was in fact a hypocrite) and a Jew brought a case before Nabî ﷺ. He judged in favour of the Jew. The hypocrite now referred the matter to Hadhrat Umar ؓ, trying to get a ruling in his favour. Hadhrat Umar ؓ killed him by cutting off his neck. On this, the hypocrites kicked up a huge fuss. Allâh Ta'âlâ then clearly declared to the Muslims that a person's î mân cannot be perfect as long as he is not happy with the judgement of Allâh Ta'âlâ and His Rasûl ﷺ. The purpose of a messenger being sent was so that he should be followed. Obeying the Rasûl is in fact obedience to Allâh Ta'âlâ, however it is clear that the obedience to the Rasûl is very weighty on the hypocrites. (60-65)

(3) Thereafter, in the seventh rukû, firstly the Muslims have been commanded to prepare for jihâd and that they should have a sincere intention i.e. they should fight only for the pleasure of Allâh Ta'âlâ and for the upliftment of dîn. Then, in a very emphatic manner, they have been given encouragement for jihâd, "What excuse do you have not to fight in Allâh's way and in defence of the weak men, women and children who cry out (due to being oppressed), 'O Our Rabb! Remove us from this town of oppressors! Grant us a defender and helper from Your side!'" (75)

Since generally, the fear of death becomes a barrier for one coming out in the fields of jihâd, therefore we are told that death can descend anywhere, in the house also and in enclosed forts also. Neither does coming out in jihâd make death a certainty, nor does staying put in one's house guarantee one protection. (78)

(4) After giving encouragement for jihâd and fighting in the path of Allâh, Muslims have been commanded to remain wary of the

schemes and evil planning of the hypocrites. These are those hard-hearted people who don the attire of Islâm and then (covertly) continue afflicting harm to Islâm and the Muslims. In Madînah Munawwarah, where the first Islâmîc state was established, it was also this very group that was in the forefront in scheming and plotting against the Muslims. The Muslims were in doubt in passing judgement concerning these unfortunate people when this portion of Sûrah Nîsâ was revealed in which their disgraceful actions, secret schemes and their actions based on jealousy and hatred were exposed. A clear ruling was passed regarding them, that they have no relationship with Islâm and the Muslims, so that a clear distinction could be made between the people of Islâm and the people of hypocrisy and so that the Muslims could unite with one voice regarding the hypocrites, thereby leaving no differences.

Take note of the authoritative style of Allâh Ta'âlâ in this verse, "What has happened to you that you have become two groups regarding the hypocrites, and Allâh Ta'âlâ has turned them back because of the evil actions which they earned." (88) i.e. O Muslims ! Why have you divided into two groups regarding the hypocrites. One group is saying that they should be killed because they are our enemies. The other group is saying that they should be dealt with softly because they are our dînî (religious) brothers, whereas Allâh Ta'âlâ has returned them to kufr (disbelief) because of their hypocrisy and sinning.

Thereafter, exposing their reality we are told, "They (the hypocrites) desire that just as they are disbelievers, you too should become disbelievers, then you all will be equal, thus do not take any of them as friends until they do not migrate in the path of Allâh. If they turn away, then catch them, kill them wherever you find them and do not regard any of them as a friend or helper." (89)

(5) In the tenth rukû, the punishment for killing a believer intentionally has been mentioned. For this, a very severe tone has

been used. Allâh Ta'âlâ says, "Whoever murders a believer intentionally, his recompense shall be Jahannum, he will abide therein forever, Allâh will be angry with him and will curse him and Allâh has prepared for him a dreadful punishment."

(6) After mentioning the punishment for intentional murder, for a second time, the importance of jihâd and the virtues of the mujâhidîn have been mentioned. It is clearly mentioned that those who make jihâd in the path of Allâh and those who sit back with their hands folded can never be equal. The reason why attention is being repeatedly drawn towards jihâd, is that jihâd is the path of honour and success for the ummah. If the ummah abstains from jihâd, then none can save them from disgrace and humiliation.

(7) Together with jihâd, hijrat (migration) has been mentioned, because hijrat is also one form of jihâd from amongst the various different forms of jihâd. In the eleventh rukû, it is mentioned that the one who does not migrate from dârul-kufr (land of disbelief) to dârul-islâm (land of Islâm), inspite of having the means and he passes away in this condition, then his final abode is Jahannum. (97) In certain narrations it is mentioned, that when the verses of hijrat were revealed, then Hadhrat Hamzah Ibn Qays ؓ, who was severely ill, became extremely worried. He did not have the ability to walk. He told his sons, "Place me on a bed and carry me to Madînah. I will not even stay one night more in Makkah." They placed him on a bed and set out on the journey to Madînah Munawwarah. However, as soon as he left Makkah, he passed away. On this Allâh Ta'âlâ said, "And that person who comes out of his house, migrating towards Allâh and His Rasûl ﷺ, and then death overcomes him, Allâh has taken responsibility to reward him. And Allâh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful." (100)

(8) Since, during times of war and hijrat, there is a lot of fear, in the twelfth rukû, salâtul-khouf (salâh at the times of fear) and the salâh of a traveller have been mentioned. In the thirteenth rukû, there is

indication towards an incident wherein a man had committed theft, and thereafter accused a Jewish person. He and his close relatives tried to exert their influence over Nabî ﷺ with their sweet talk. Nabî ﷺ was close to passing judgement against the Jew when Allâh Ta'âlâ revealed these verses and forbade Nabî ﷺ from being in the company of those people and from representing them. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Do not dispute on behalf of the deceivers and seek forgiveness from Allâh Ta'âlâ. Verily Allâh Ta'âlâ is Most Forgiving, Most Kind."

In the history of justice and equity, these verses and this incident is worthy of being written in gold, that during an argument between a Jew and Muslim (who in reality was a hypocrite), when Nabî ﷺ inclined towards the Muslims, then Allâh Ta'âlâ did not only caution him (ﷺ), but He mentioned this incident in the Qur'ân which will remain till Qiyâmah. After the revelation of these verses, this person who had stolen ran away to Makkah Mukarramah and became a murtad (renegade). Thus, in the fifteenth rukû, we learn that in the sight of Allâh Ta'âlâ the greatest crime is kufr and shirk, and whoever passes away on kufr or shirk, there is no way that he can be forgiven. (116)

(9) After this, in many verses, the cause for man's rebelliousness has been mentioned. This is due to his obedience to Shaytân against Allâh Ta'âlâ and because he (Shaytân) takes man very far away from the path of guidance.

(10) Then, the father of the Ambiyâ, Hadhrat Ibrâhîm Khalîl عليه السلام is mentioned. The one who follows his way will attain guidance.

(11) In the sixteenth rukû, women have been mentioned once again, in which the oppression of women, as well as usurping their rights have been prohibited. If there are any differences between husband and wife, then they should try to reconcile with one another, because reconciliation is the best approach.

(12) In the last rukû of the fifth pâra, the hypocrites are once again reproached and a warning of severe punishment is sounded to them.

SIXTH PÂRA

At the end of the fifth pâra the hypocrites were criticized and a severe warning was sounded to them. Therefore, at the beginning of the sixth pâra, Allâh Ta'âlâ inform us that He does not like evil matters to be publicly disclosed, unless when there is fear of harm going to be caused, or so that the oppressor can be rebuked. Thus, there is nothing to be surprised about when Allâh Ta'âlâ conceals the hypocrites.

Other important points in this pâra are as follows :

(1) After criticism of the hypocrites, mention is made of the Jew's transgressions, because in (matters of) disbelief and misguidance they are the brothers of the hypocrites. Amongst their many crimes, one was their intention to kill Hadhrat Îsâ ﷺ. However Allâh Ta'âlâ protected him and lifted him to the heavens in an honourable manner. (158)

(2) After the Jews, the second group from the ahle-kitâb i.e. the Christians are mentioned. One of their totally distorted beliefs was that Allâh Ta'âlâ is not one, but made up of a trinity i.e. father, son and the holy ghost. The Christians are warned that they should not exceed the bounds in their religion and they should not raise Îsâ ﷺ above his original rank. They also should not say that Allâh Ta'âlâ is three. (171) When Îsâ ﷺ himself does not feel any disgrace in humbling himself and worshipping Allâh Ta'âlâ, but he regards it as his honour, then who are you people to regard him as Allâh? (172)

(3) At the end of Sûrah Nisâ, there is a repetition of the topic with which the sûrah commenced i.e. to give due regard to matters concerning women, as well as the rights of the heirs (in matters of inheritance).

Sûrah Mâ'idah

Sûrah Mâidah is a Madanî sûrah. It has 120 verses. Because the incident of the mâidah (table cloth) is mentioned therein, it has been given this name. This sûrah was revealed after the hirat to Madînah. From some narrations, it has been established that it was one of the last sûrahs to be revealed. In this sûrah, many laws pertaining to halâl and harâm have been mentioned, together with three other incidents. One speciality of this sûrah is that it includes that noble verse which was revealed to Nabî ﷺ during Hajjatul-Widâ'. In this verse, the announcement of the completion of dîn is made. This is that verse regarding which one Jew said to Hadhrat Umar ؓ, "O Amîrul-mu'minîn! If this verse had to be revealed to us, we would have declared it a day of Îd (celebration)." He answered, "I know the very day as well as the exact time when this verse was revealed to Rasûlullâh ﷺ. It was the night of Arafah and the day of Jumu'ah. It was as if we had two Îds on that day."

The portion of this surâh found in the sixth pâra has the following important points:

(1) At the beginning of the sûrah, the people of îmân are commanded to fulfil every permissible pact and promise, whether this pact is between man and His Creator or between two human beings. Thus, this verse also includes those commands which Allâh Ta'âlâ has made compulsory (fardh) on His servants, as well as all other dealings like buying, selling, partnerships, rental, marriage and oaths. From this, it is clear how much of importance Islâm has given to fulfilment of pacts and transactions.

(2) The prohibition of many edibles were announced which were regarded as permissible during the era of ignorance, because by eating them, harm is caused to ones health, body, thoughts, dîn and character e.g. carrion, flowing blood, swine meat and those animals which are slaughtered on the names of deities besides Allâh. However, in the case where one is compelled to e.g. when

there is a fear of losing one's life, then it is permissible to eat them. Besides these impure things, other pure and wholesome foods have been declared as halâl (permissible). (3-4)

(3) Thereafter, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions His favour and kindness upon the Muslims that He has purified them internally and externally by means of wudhû and ghusl (bath) so that they can be spiritually prepared to converse with Him. From amongst the many favours and bounties of Allâh Ta'âlâ on His servants, one is that when one does not have the ability to use water, permission to make tayammum has been given. This is because our Islâmîc shar'î'at is a very easy shar'î'at. Thus Allâh Ta'âlâ has taken consideration of His servant's difficulties at every step. Thus, in the 6th rukû of this pâra, He states, "Allâh Ta'âlâ does not wish to place upon you any difficulty, but He wishes to purify you and complete His favour upon you so that you can be amongst those who are grateful." (6)

(4) In the seventh rukû of this pâra, the cowardliness of the Jews, their corruption, disobedience and pride has been mentioned. The purpose of mentioning these qualities is that we as Muslims should protect ourselves from imbibing these qualities. Together with the Jews, the condition of the Christians has also been mentioned. A covenant was also taken from them to remain firm on the commands of Allâh Ta'âlâ, but they broke this pact due to which Allâh Ta'âlâ had placed hatred and enmity in their hearts. In spite of these two groups being involved in so many evils pertaining to faith, practise and character, then too they claimed that they are the children and beloved of Allâh Ta'âlâ. In refuting this claim, Allâh Ta'âlâ says, "If in reality you are the beloved of Allâh Ta'âlâ, then why will He punish you for your sins." (18) After this censure and refutation, they are called to the true religion and towards believing in the final Nabî (ﷺ).

(5) In the eighth rukû, we are informed that Hadhrat Mûsa (عليه السلام) first commanded the Jews to remember the favours of Allâh Ta'âlâ and

then encouraged them to enter the blessed land (Palestine), but these evil people, in answer to this encouragement, began mocking Mûsa عليه السلام and said, "O Mûsa! Verily we will never ever enter it as long as they (the Amâliqa) are there. You and your Rabb go and fight. We will sit here (and observe)." (24)

(6) After mentioning the rebelliousness and disobedience of the Banî Isrâ'îl in the ninth rukû, the incident of Adam's two sons Hâbil and Qâbil are mentioned. Qâbil, due to jealousy, killed his brother. This jealousy was also found in the Jews due to which they denied the risâlat (prophethood) of Nabî ﷺ, the final Nabî.

(7) Due to the close connection with this incident, the punishment of bandits and highway robbers, rebels and those who spread corruption in the world are mentioned. Some will be crucified, some will be killed and some of these people's hands and legs will be cut off from opposite ends. (33) In the tenth rukû, the command for the cutting of hands for male and female thieves has been given, since they constitute a danger to the peace and security of a country. Therefore, such a punishment is necessary through which others can take lesson. Here, this reality is given great importance and such a severe punishment has been stipulated for these dangerous people that just by thinking about it, a person will refrain from such a crime and such people who are proven to be a danger to society, will not be even given an opportunity to commit a crime. If by cutting off a few hands, there is peace and contentment for hundreds of thousands of people, then this is a small price to pay. The world today, which has become a spectacle of Jahannum (Hell), due to the abundance of crime, is actually screaming out and calling for the implementation of Islâmic laws and punishments.

(8) After mentioning the laws of highway robbery, theft and corruption, two major groups of corrupt people are mentioned i.e. the hypocrites and Jews. The first group has been mentioned briefly and the second group has been mentioned in detail. Allâh Ta'âlâ

says, "O Rasûl. Let not those people put you into grief who hasten to kufr, who say with their mouths, "We believe" whilst their hearts do not believe. And those who are Jews spy to speak lies and they spy for another nation who hasn't as yet come to you." (41) Mention is also made of the misguidance of the Christians. They were given the Tawrât and Injîl but they did not pass judgement according to their scriptures. (41)

(9) Thereafter the Qur'ân is mentioned which differentiates between guidance and misguidance, and that the Qur'ân is the protector of the other scriptures. There is no advice regarding belief, ibâdat, business dealings, character and work necessary for the success of mankind which is found in past scriptures and not found in the Qur'ân.

(10) After this, the Muslims are prohibited from becoming bosom friends with the Jews and Christians because they are the worst enemies of the Muslim ummah. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "O People of Imân! Do not take the Jews and Christians as friends. They are friends of one another. The one who befriends them from amongst you, then he is from amongst them. Verily Allâh Ta'âlâ does not guide the oppressive people." (51)

We can see with our own eyes the living miracle of the truthfulness of the Qur'ân, that inspite of severe religious and political differences, the Jews and Christians are united against the Muslims. The surprising thing is that the leaders of the Islâmîc world are very intimate with the Jews and Christians despite the clear guidance of the Qur'ân, and on their signal, these leaders oppress and harm "fundamentalist" Muslims.

(11) When bosom friendship is made with the kuffâr, then there is a fear of apostasy. In the following verses, the Muslims are warned to save themselves from irtidâd (apostacy) because by it, all of one's actions become null and void and the fire of Jahannum becomes

compulsory forever on such a person. Together with this, we are clearly told that Allâh Ta'âlâ's dîn is not in need of us. If we become murtad (apostates), then Allâh Ta'âlâ will raise people better than us for the service of His dîn, "O People of Îmân! If anyone from amongst you turns away from his dîn, then soon Allâh Ta'âlâ will bring such a nation whom He will love and they will love Him. They will be soft to the believers and harsh on the disbelievers. They will strive in the path of Allâh and they will not fear the criticism of those who criticise. This is the grace of Allâh, He grants it to whomsoever He wills. And Allâh is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing." (54)

(12) Together with prohibiting friendship with the Jews and Christians, the command has been given to make friends with people of true îmân. In explaining the evil of forging friendships with the kuffâr, Muslims are told that these people mock at the sha'â'ir (distinguishing features) of Islâm. Thus, having friendship with them is not permissible under any circumstances. Amongst the deviations of the Jews and Christians is that they regarded Islâm and the Qur'ân as false and some Christians regarded Îsâ ﷺ as God, as is mentioned in the 14th rukû of the 6th pâra, "Verily those people are disbelievers who said that Allâh is Masîh Ibn Maryam". Some of them regarded him as one of the trinity. The Qur'ân, in refuting their false belief states, "Îsâ ﷺ and his mother used to eat food." (75) It is apparent that the one who eats food will be in need of removing waste from his/her body. The one who is in need can never be a diety.

(13) The Jews and Christians are prohibited from exceeding the limits in matters of religion and from following their base desires because exceeding the bounds is the greatest cause of misguidance.

(14) In the last rukû of the 6th pâra, the reason for Allâh Ta'âlâ's curses being afflicted on the Jews is mentioned, "They disobeyed

Allâh Ta'âlâ, exceeded the bounds and they would not prevent one another from committing evil acts."

By mentioning the reason for the Jews being cursed, the Muslim Ummah, is in actual fact being advised that they should continue enjoining good and forbidding evil, otherwise they can also be liable for Allâh's curse, as was the case with the Banî Isrâ'îl. This was stated by Nabî ﷺ himself. In one narration in Tirmizî Sharîf it is mentioned that Nabî ﷺ said, "When the Banî Isrâ'îl became involved in disobedience and sin, then their Ulamâ (scholars) prevented them, but they did not stop. The Ulamâ continued sitting with them in their gatherings and would eat and drink with them. Thus, Allâh Ta'âlâ made their hearts one and they were cursed on the tongue of Dâwûd and Îsâ عليهما السلام. This is because they were disobedient and exceeded the bounds." Rasûlullâh ﷺ was at first leaning, but on saying this, he sat up straight and said, "By the oath of that Being in whose hands my life lies, none of your î mân can be complete nor can you be saved from Allâh's punishment unless and until you do not encourage people (by inviting them to the truth) to accept the truth (and prevent them from oppression and sin).

(15) In the final verse, we are informed that the Muslim's worst enemies are the Jews and mushrikîn. The whole history of the Jews is proof of this claim of the Qur'ân. However, those who are true and real Christians, they have a soft spot for the Muslims in their heart. Those Christians who we are coming across today are not in reality those Christians who practise on the teachings of Îsâ ﷺ. Most of them have been coloured with the dye of the Jews. With regard to their thoughts and actions, countless of them are atheists and irreligious. They are only Christians in name. The remaining few practice on a distorted form of Christianity. True Christianity cannot be found anywhere.

SEVENTH PÂRA

In the last verse of the sixth pâra, we are informed that those who are true Christians have a soft spot for the Muslims in their hearts. Now, in the beginning of the seventh pâra, mention is made of some Christians who upon hearing the verses of the Qur'ân could not hold back their tears which began flowing involuntarily. (83-85). This verse was revealed regarding the Christians of Habsha (Ethiopia) towards whom the Muslims had migrated. When they heard the verses of the Qur'ân emerging from the lips of the Muslims, they began crying uncontrollably, so much so that their beards became wet with the deluge of tears. There is so much effect in the speech of Allâh that if such a heart which is free from hatred and enmity, a heart which is filled with fear, hears these verses, then the hairs of one's body will stand up on end and tears will flow from one's eyes. After mentioning the effect of the speech of Allâh on the true Christians and their condition of crying, some sharî masâ'il are mentioned since Sûrah Mâ'idah is a Madanî surâh. In Makkî sûrahs, generally there is discussion on beliefs. In Madanî sûrahs, there is normally discussion on matters pertaining to religious injunctions, sometimes briefly and sometimes in detail.

The masâ'il and laws mentioned in this sûrah are as follows :

(1) The choice of stipulating something as halâl or harâm is exclusive to Allâh Ta'âlâ. Therefore the Muslims have been commanded that whatever Allâh Ta'âlâ has regarded as halâl, they should not regard it as harâm, and they should not abstain from its usage (87-88). Islâm is a religion of moderation. There is neither excess nor deficiency. Therefore Islâm does not approve of staying away from pure things, regarding this to be a means of taqwâ and perfection. On the other hand, Islâm does not allow the removal of the distinction between halâl and harâm, thereby using prohibited items that Allâh Ta'âlâ has regarded as harâm, without any care.

(2) There is no worldly retribution for a laghw oath. A laghw oath refers to that oath which a person takes regarding a certain act having taken place or not and according to his understanding, he is truthful whereas this act was contrary to his thoughts. However, there will be kaffârah (expiation) for those oaths which a person takes regarding doing or not doing a certain act in future and then he does not fulfil these oaths.

(3) Alcohol, gambling, idol worship and divination arrows are completely harâm (impermissible) and acts inspired by Shaytân. By means of these actions, Shaytân sows the seeds of enmity and hatred in the hearts of believers and prevents them from the zikr (remembrance) of Allâh and salâh. (90-92)

(4) In the state of ihrâm, to hunt terrestrial animals is not permissible. However, the hunting of sea and river animals in the condition of ihrâm is permissible. (94-96)

(5) Due to the connection with ihrâm, Allâh Ta'âlâ has also mentioned the Ka'bâh and the blessed city. A speciality of the Ka'bâh is that Allâh Ta'âlâ has declared it and the area around it as haram (sanctified). One can understand its sanctity and honour from the words of Hadhrat Umar ؓ in which he said, "If I have to see the killer of my father in the haram, then I will not raise my hand against him until he goes out of the boundaries of the Haram."

(6) During the era of ignorance, the mushrikîn regarded many animals as harâm on the basis of their own whims and desires. They would stipulate special names for them e.g. Bahîrah, Sâ'ibah, Wasîlah and Hâm. In verse 103 it is clearly stated that these are the lies and slander of the mushrikîn, because Allâh Ta'âlâ has not stipulated any of these animals as harâm.

(7) When a human perceives the coming of death, then he should make a wasiyyat (bequest) for those things which can be

bequeathed. Two trust-worthy men should be made witnesses so that if any differences appear later on, then judgment can be passed in light of their testimony. (106-108)

(8) After mentioning the masâ'il of halâl and harâm, the scene of Qiyâmah is presented. All the messengers will be gathered and asked "When you people conveyed My message to My servants, then what answer were you given?" In the questioning and answering of the Ambiyâ عليهم السلام, special mention of Hadhrat Masîh ﷺ has been made in great detail. On the Day of Qiyâmah, Allâh Ta'âlâ will remind Îsâ ﷺ of the favours bestowed upon him. From amongst these favours, the story of the Mâ'idah (the table-cloth) is also mentioned, when the hawâriyyîn (disciples) of Îsâ ﷺ requested him to supplicate to Allâh Ta'âlâ to send down a mâ'idah i.e. such a table-cloth laden with different types of heavenly foods and drinks. Due to this incident, the name of this sûrah is called "Mâ'idah". After enumerating His bounties, Allâh Ta'âlâ will ask, "O Îsâ , son of Maryam! Did you tell the people that they should take you and your mother as deities besides Allâh." Hadhrat Îsâ ﷺ will answer, "You are pure. It was not possible for me to say such a thing for which I had no right." Then he will say that he commanded them to worship one Allâh alone and that if they disobeyed him, then Allâh has a choice of either punishing them or forgiving them. (166-118) Surah Mâ'idah ends, drawing the scene of the Day of Qiyâmah and the all-encompassing sovereignty of Allâh Ta'âlâ.

Sûrah An'âm

After Sûrah Mâ'idah, in the 2nd quarter of the seventh pâra, Sûrah An'âm commences. This sûrah comprises of 165 verses and 20 rukûs. This is a Makkî sûrah. In Makkî sûrahs, generally the three basic tenets of belief are discussed i.e. tawhîd, risâlat and âakhirat. One outstanding speciality of this sûrah is that in refutation of the wrong beliefs of the mushrikîn, two methods are used :

- 1- Taqrîr (address)
- 2- Talqîn (persuasion)

The first method of address i.e. Taqrîr means that Allâh Ta'âlâ presents the proofs of tawhîd (His Oneness), His power and grandeur in the form of such accepted principles that such a person whom Allâh Ta'âlâ has bestowed with sound intelligence and an open heart can never deny it. Study this sûrah. At many places you will find such verses wherein mention is made of the presence of Allâh Ta'âlâ in the heavens and the earth, His power over His servants and His knowledge over apparent and hidden things. It is mentioned in such a manner as if the mushrikîn also accept these claims. These claims are not such that any proofs have to be given to prove them nor does one have to exert ones self mentally to understand them. When any intelligent person takes one glance at the universe, then he cannot go without conceding to the existence, greatness, power and majesty of Allâh Ta'âlâ. In the following verse, a glimpse of this method can be seen. "And in the heavens and in the earth, He is the one Allâh. He knows your hidden and open affairs and He has knowledge of all your actions." (3) "And He is dominant over His servants and has sent angels to protect you." (61) "And He is the one who seizes your soul when you sleep at night and He knows what you do during the day." (60)

The other method of talqîn (persuasion) means that Allâh Ta'âlâ teaches His unlettered messenger such proofs which his deniers have no answer for and due to which they become ashamed and lower their heads. Generally this method is found in a question-and-answer form. For example, in the 12 verse Allâh Ta'âlâ says, "Ask them O Nabî ﷺ, to whom does the heavens and earth belong?" It is apparent that in their hearts, the mushrikîn also accept that all belongs to Allâh, however they are unable to proclaim it with their tongues. Therefore, Allâh Ta'âlâ says "O Nabî ﷺ you tell them, "Everything belongs to Allâh." (12) In the 19th verse, He mentions "Ask them, whose testimony is the greatest. Say, "Allâh is a witness

between me and you.” (19) Both these methods of address and persuasion continue side-by-side in Sûrah Anâm.

This sûrah begins with the praise, greatness and oneness of Allâh Ta'âlâ. Together with tawhîd, the mention of risâlat is necessary. Thus, we are informed that the habit of the deniers is that whenever Rasûlullâh ﷺ presents any proofs to them, they turn away from it and in reply they say, trying to break his proof, “Why was an angel not sent with this Nabî?” After mentioning tawhîd and risâlat, there is mention of resurrection and recompense. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, “Definitely, Allâh will gather you on the Day of Qiyâmah, there is no doubt in it.” (16) These three subjects are mentioned one after the other by method of address and persuasion until eventually mention is made of the father of the Ambiyâ, Hadhrat Ibrâhîm ؑ. There is no doubt that Hadhrat Khalîl ؑ was a bright beacon of light in a world sinking in shirk (polytheism). When he refused to accept the sun, moon, stars and hand-made idols as deities, and when he announced belief in the greatness of one Rabb, first he had to face opposition from his father. However, he did not worry about this opposition and he continued the mission of calling towards tawhîd. (74-81) This same call was given by other Ambiyâ in their times. In Sûrah An'âm, the names of eighteen of these Ambiyâ are mentioned. (74-87) They were all blessed with wahî (revelation). Besides them, countless other Ambiyâ came, but their names are not mentioned in the Qur'ân. After mentioning nubuwwat and wahî, such proofs are mentioned which point to the existence of a Creator, His supreme knowledge, power, wisdom and perfection. By these proofs, we are shown that the main purpose is the recognition of the being, qualities and actions of Allâh Ta'âlâ. However, the disbelievers do not ponder over these proofs but continue demanding different forms of miracles saying, “If we are shown such and such a miracle, then we will accept and become believers.” However, their words were nothing more than mere lip service and to buy time. The reality is that a person who has desire (for the truth) does not ask for miracles. Whenever he lifts up his

gaze, he sees very clearly the signs of Allâh Ta'âlâ's presence and His power. In this universe, the believer as well as the disbeliever raise their gazes and look around. However there is a world of difference between these two gazes. When a disbeliever looks, he sees the whole universe running on material and outward means. However, when a believer looks, then in everything and at all stages, he sees the work of a great and powerful being. For example, a Muslim sees a fruit. He sees the difference in the colour and odour, in the size and in the taste. He sees how the fruit changes from one condition to another. Initially some fruits are bitter, others are tasteless and some are acidic. However, as it continues ripening, sweetness and taste continues coming into it. When a believer looks with the gaze of îmân and ponders, then he spontaneously calls out "سبحان الله" (O Allâh! You are pure from all defects). Thus Allâh Ta'âlâ, after mentioning the different produce which grows from the ground and the different fruits, says, "Look towards its fruits, when it produces and towards it when it ripens. Verily there are many signs in it for those people who have îmân." (99)

EIGHTH PÂRA

At the end of the seventh pâra, mention is made of the mushrikîn's request, that if they are shown a physical miracle, then they will believe. At the beginning of the eighth pâra, we are informed that they are liars. Even if they are shown a physical miracle, so-much-so that if a dead person from the grave comes to life and speaks to them, they will still not believe. Thereafter, Nabî ﷺ is consoled that he should not become worried about their opposition, mockery and denial. The Shayâtîn from man and jinn have always followed this pattern with every Nabî. Besides this, there is no need for the miracle they desire to prove your nubuwwat. Allâh Ta'âlâ has bestowed you with many miracles, the greatest being the Qur'ân-e-Karîm. Therefore, inspite of seeing and hearing this miracle if they deny, then do not be perturbed because many people living on earth are such that they leave guidance and incline towards misguidance." Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "If you have to follow most of the people in the world, they will lead you astray from the path of Allâh." (116) In this verse, there is negation of western democracy, because in it majority opinion is taken into consideration, even if it is contrary to the Qur'ân and Sunnah, whereas it is the unanimous belief of the Muslims that if all the people in the world are unanimous on anything which is against a clear judgement of the Qur'ân and Sunnah, then their unanimity will not be regarded and will be rejected.

Other important points mentioned in this sûrah :

(1) At the beginning of the 2nd rukû, we are told that the example of a believer is like a living person whom Allâh Ta'âlâ has given light and the example of a disbeliever is that of a dead person who is drowned in darkness. (122)

(2) Imân and guidance is only in the hands of Allâh Ta'âlâ., He grants it to whomsoever He wishes.

(3) After mentioning the guided and misguided groups, Allâh Ta'âlâ states that He will gather them all on the Day of Qiyâmah. Then every person will be rewarded or punished according to his actions. (128-129)

(4) From amongst the many foolish acts which the mushrikîn used to perpetrate, one was that from their animals and crops, they would allot a portion for Allâh Ta'âlâ and a portion for the partners which they had ascribed with Allâh Ta'âlâ. They would not allow that portion which was for their idols, to get mixed with that portion which was allocated for Allâh. However, if the portion which was for Allâh got mixed with that portion which was for their idols, then they would not regard it as bad. (136)

Another foolish act is they used to kill their daughters due to poverty or shame. (137) From amongst the great favours of Nabî ﷺ on women, one great favour was that he (ﷺ) explained verbally and practically that the presence of a daughter is not a source of shame nor is it a cause of increase in poverty.

The third foolish act of the mushrikîn which the Qur'ân shows, is that they divided their livestock into different groups. Some were kept especially for their fortune tellers and religious leaders. They regarded it as impermissible to ride some of them or to take benefit from them. Some animals were such, that at the time of slaughtering, they would not take Allâh's name but the name of their idols. (138)

A fourth act of foolishness was that if from their livestock a live animal was born, they regarded it as halâl for the men and harâm for the women. However, if it was stillborn, then it was regarded as halâl for both men and women. (139) After mentioning their foolishness, Allâh Ta'âlâ reminds them of His favours, that He is that Being who has created gardens and different types of fruit like

olives and pomegranates. He is that Allâh who created small and big animals for the purpose of carrying of loads, and for obtaining meat and milk. The choice of regarding these animals, as well as other edibles, as halâl and harâm lies only with Allâh. Whatever He wishes, He declares halâl and whatever He wishes, He declares harâm.

(5) After refuting the beliefs and claims of the mushrikîn, Allâh Ta'âlâ gives ten advices upon which all heavenly shar'îats are unanimous upon and which all religions call towards. By practising on them, man's success is guaranteed and he attains a life of respect and honour in this world and the hereafter which Allâh Ta'âlâ desires to grant him. The ten advices are :

- 1- Worship Allâh alone and do not ascribe any partner with Him.
- 2- Treat one's parents kindly and do not cause any verbal or physical harm to them.
- 3- Do not kill one's children due to fear of poverty or disgrace and shame.
- 4- Abstain from all types of immorality, inward and outward.
- 5- To kill any human being unjustly is harâm. This is an extremely grave sin.
- 6- Do not use the wealth of an orphan incorrectly.
- 7- To give in full when weighing or measuring.
- 8- Be just and fair to all humans, whether it be your close family person or enemy.
- 9- Fulfil your pledge with Allâh.
- 10- Follow the straight path (sirâte-mustaqîm) and abstain from following other paths.

After mentioning these advices, Allâh Ta'âlâ commanded Nabî ﷺ to proclaim openly, "Allâh Ta'âlâ, my Rabb, has granted me guidance to the correct path. This is the same straight religion of the father of Ambiyâ, Hadhrat Ibrâhîm ؑ and he was not from the polytheists. Say, 'Verily my salâh, my other forms of worship, my living and my

death (i.e. all my actions) are only for Allâh (and from these actions I desire the pleasure of Allâh), the Master of the universe. He has no partner. With this I have been commanded and I am first to submit.” The sûrah ends on this point that this world and whatever is in it is only as a trial and examination so that the believer and disbeliever, good and evil may be differentiated.

Sûrah A'râf

This is a Makkî sûrah. It comprises of 206 verses. Like other Makkî sûrahs, special importance is given to the three basic tenets of belief. At the beginning of this sûrah, Nabî ﷺ's everlasting miracle, the Qur'ân, is mentioned which is the greatest of Allâh Ta'âlâ's favours upon man. In this sûrah, man's attention is also turned to another favour of Allâh Ta'âlâ. All of mankind have been created from one father so that they may assist each other and so that they may remember that they are brothers. Similarly, in this sûrah, there is mention of the honour bestowed upon man by Allâh Ta'âlâ. He created man with His hands, blew His spirit into him and then commanded the angels to prostrate before him. Included in this incident, is advice to save ourselves from the tricks and evil planning of Shaytân since he is such a cunning enemy who is sitting at all roads trying to remove man from the straight path. The clash which Shaytân has with man, which began when he refused to prostrate before man, will continue till Qiyâmah and there will always remain in some form a clash between good and evil, truth and falsehood.

One speciality of Sûrah A'râf (worth mentioning), is that Allâh Ta'âlâ has addressed man four times continuously with the title of "يا بني آدم" O children of Âdam. In no other sûrah are these four vocations used. The first proclamation is in the 3rd rukû verse no. 26 in which Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions His favour of clothing. "O Children of Âdam! We have sent down upon you clothing which conceals your private parts and is a means of beautification. And the clothing of

taqwâ is better." The second proclamation is also in the 3rd rukû, verse no. 27 wherein we are warned by Allâh Ta'âlâ to save ourselves from the evil of Shaytân, "O Children of Âdam! Let not Shaytân deceive you as he had taken your parents out of Jannah, removing from them their clothing so that he can make apparent their private parts." The third proclamation is in the 3rd rukû, verse no. 31, "O Children of Âdam! Adopt (clothing of) beauty, at the time of every salâh. Eat, drink and do not waste. Verily Allâh Ta'âlâ does not like those who waste." The fourth proclamation is in the 4th rukû, verse no. 35, "O Children of Âdam! If a messenger comes to you from amongst you who conveys to you My verses, then he who chooses taqwâ and rectifies himself there will be no fear upon them, nor will they grieve."

This repeated address to the progeny of Âdam ﷺ is so that they can be saved from the tricks and wiles of Shaytân. It must not happen that we hear his deceitful words, and fall into deception. Shaytân is a very cunning enemy. Outwardly, he dons the clothing of a friend. He is a cunning fox who presents himself in the apparel of a well-wisher. He knows well the art of presenting truth as falsehood, falsehood as truth, good as evil, and evil as good. Those people in this world who do the same, are in reality the agents of Shaytân. A point to note here is that the first three proclamations refer to clothing. In the second proclamation, we are told that the accursed Iblîs was the cause for their clothing being removed and private parts being exposed. Thus, a great goal of Shaytân is to deprive the progeny of Âdam ﷺ of the clothing of shame and modesty, and to place them on the road of immorality and nakedness. Thus, clothing which fulfils the needs of covering one's private parts is the thing which creates a distinction between man and beast. Animals have been created naked and remain like this, whereas Allâh Ta'âlâ has granted man honour and virtue with clothing.

Today, when we see the deluge of immorality due to the western media, and the environment of shamelessness in the name of women's emancipation, then we will understand why Allâh Ta'âlâ in the Qur'ân has chosen this manner of repetition and emphasis regarding clothing.

Other important points in this sûrah are :

(1) The mushrikîn would make tawâf of Baitullâh naked. The proof for this evil action and other similar evils was that their ancestors would do the same. Sometimes they would say that Allâh Ta'âlâ had commanded them likewise. Refuting this claim, Allâh Ta'âlâ states that He does not command any action of immodesty. Therefore their claim is nothing but lies and slander. Islâm is a religion which fulfils all permissible demands of life. Therefore it is not possible that it will prevent one from wearing clothing and consuming pure and wholesome food. In here, there is also refutation of those people who follow monasticism and regard abstaining from halâl and pure things as a means of gaining Allâh's closeness. In reality, a complete and perfect believer is he who fulfils the permissible demands and needs of both body and soul in this world and the hereafter. When Hadhrat Salmân Fârsî ؓ came to know that Hadhrat Abû Dardâ ؓ would fast daily and stand up for salâh the whole night and his preoccupation with ibâdat was so much that he would not fulfil his wife's rights, he advised him saying, "Verily your Rabb has a right over you. Your nafs (body) has a right over you. Your family people have a right over you. Therefore, fulfil everyone's rights." Hadhrat Abu Dardâ ؓ mentioned Hadhrat Salmân ؓ' s advice to Nabî ﷺ who said, "Salmân has spoken the truth."

In the eleventh and twelfth rukû of this pâra (3rd and 4th of this sûrah), two such groups are mentioned who are completely opposite to each other in beliefs, thoughts, ideas and practise. One group has chosen the road of stubbornness, pride and kufr. Their final result is nothing else but Jahannum. The second group treads

the path of îman, obedience, submission and compliance. They are, by the kindness of Allâh Ta'âlâ, worthy of Jannah. When these groups reach their abodes, the Qur'ân-e-Karîm describes the conversation which will take place with each other. The people of Jannah will ask those in the fire, "Today, do you now have conviction in the truthfulness of Allâh's promises or not?" They will confess in their answer, "Yes, we have found the promise to be true and correct." When the people of Jahannum become agitated due to the intense heat, thirst and hunger, then they will stretch out their hands begging the believers to give some food and drink. However, it is apparent that their asking will be fruitless. This discussion is mentioned in the 12th and 13th rukû of this pâra.

There is also a third group, which the Qur'ân calls "Ashâbul-A'râf". They are such people who were believers, but remained behind in doing good actions. They will neither be entered into Jannah nor Jahannum. Their judgement will be delayed. Finally, Allâh Ta'âlâ will grant them permission to enter Jannah. There will also be a discussion between the people of Jahannum and "Ashâbul-A'râf" mentioned in the 13th rukû.

After this discussion, Allâh Ta'âlâ makes mention of 3 important proofs showing His oneness and power :

(1) The seven skies, one on top of the other. Each one of them is like a dome over the other. These seven skies, inspite of their vastness and greatness, are standing without any pillars.

(2) The vastness of Allâh's Arsh (divine throne) is such that all the heavens and earths cannot encompass it. None of us can even imagine its greatness and grandeur because the Kursî (divine chair) in relation to it is like a ring in a huge and vast desert. The Kursî's size is such that it encompasses the earth and heavens. So what must be the size of the Arsh! The Arsh and Kursî are amongst those realities which we believe in, but we do not know their condition.

(3) The third proof mentioned here is the creation of the sun, moon and stars. All these things are under the will and power of Allâh Ta'âlâ. They are orbiting around in such vast areas which we cannot comprehend. Neither do they clash, nor do they move away from their orbits.

Finally, the incidents of six Ambiyâ are mentioned briefly i.e. Hadhrat Nûh, Hadhrat Hûd, Hadhrat Sâlih, Hadhrat Lût, Hadhrat Shuayb and Hadhrat Mûsa عليهم السلام. The first incident is regarding Shaikhul-Ambiyâ, Hadhrat Nûh عليه السلام and the last is of Hadhrat Shuayb عليه السلام. Some of the wisdoms and lessons hidden in these incidents are :

- 1- To give solace to Nabî ﷺ over the difficulties inflicted by his enemies.
- 2- To show the evil end of proud people and the good ending of the pious.
- 3- To warn, that in the court of Allâh Ta'âlâ there is sometimes a wait for justice to be meted out (دير), but Allâh Ta'âlâ is not unaware (اندهير). Eventually, the oppressors will receive punishment for their oppression.
- 4- To present a proof of the truthfulness of Nabî ﷺ's nubuwat, that inspite of being unlettered, he (ﷺ) used to present the lost scrolls of history, in accordance with the facts.
- 5- To present (incidents from which man can take lesson) and to offer advice as well.

NINTH PÂRA

At the end of the eighth pâra, a portion of the incident of Shuayb عليه السلام was mentioned. The remaining portion of this incident is mentioned at the beginning of the ninth pâra. Hadhrat Shuayb عليه السلام prevented his people from evil, mischief and corruption. However the proud leaders warned him, "O Shuayb عليه السلام, we will expel you from our village together with those who have believed in you, unless you come into our religion." Shuayb عليه السلام answered, "This can never happen. Do what you want, we will place our trust only on Allâh."

After mentioning these incidents of the different Ambiyâ عليهم السلام, Allâh Ta'âlâ states that it is His way and practice that He tries to make those who deny understand in different ways. He sometimes puts them in difficulty and problems so that maybe they will turn to Him. However, when they still do not take heed, even after being either afflicted with punishment or given a reprieve, then suddenly Allâh Ta'âlâ seizes them with His punishment, whilst these people did not have the slightest inkling of what is going to hit them. At the end of these incidents, Allâh Ta'âlâ consoles Nabî ﷺ telling him not to be sad and grieved due to the pride and refusal of his people by saying, "These were the towns, the stories of which we have narrated to you. Their messengers came to them with clear signs. But they were unlikely to believe in those things which they had rejected previously. In this way, Allâh Ta'âlâ places a seal on the hearts of the disbelievers."

From the six incidents of the Ambiyâ عليهم السلام mentioned in Sûrah A'râf, Mûsa عليه السلام's incident is mentioned in great detail. This is because the ignorance of his people was greater than that of other nations. From amongst the nation he was sent to address, was one such individual who had laid claim to divinity. The miracles given to

him (i.e. Mûsa ﷺ) were more clearer compared to that of previous Ambiyâ, especially his staff and shining hand. These were two such miracles that even the darkest of dark hearts would have needed a great amount of obstinacy, stubbornness and bigotry in order to deny them. Fir'awn and his people i.e. the Coptics had enslaved the Banî Isrâ'îl and would afflict them with different and new types of oppression and punishments. The Banî Isrâ'îl had come to Egypt at that time when a severe drought had engulfed their villages and cities. Under the shadow of Yûsuf ﷺ, they then took up residence in Egypt. Their progeny grew day by day, until eventually they were the second largest population group in Egypt. Thereafter, various oppressive Pharaohs made them objects of oppression and victimisation during their rules. Hadhrat Mûsa ﷺ wanted the freedom of the Banî Isrâ'îl from this worst form of slavery and he wanted to take them to their homeland i.e. Shâm. Thus he made a request to Fir'awn, "Send Banî Isrâ'îl with me." (105-107)

When Mûsa ﷺ proclaimed in front of Fir'awn that he had been sent as a messenger from the Master of the Universe, Fir'awn mockingly said, "If you are truthful in your claim, then show us a miracle/sign." Mûsa ﷺ threw his staff on the ground, which suddenly turned into a ferocious-looking serpent. Then Mûsa ﷺ took out his hand from under his armpit. Such a light emanated from it that the area between the skies and earth illuminated. In some books of tafsîr like Tabarî and Ibn-Kathîr, a narration of Hadhrat Ibne Abbâs ؓ is mentioned that when Fir'awn saw the staff changing into a snake, he jumped up from his thrown and stood up to run away out of extreme fear. He then became fearful that it should not be that people believe in Mûsa ﷺ. Therefore, he said to his special advisors, "He is a sorcerer who wants to seize this land of yours. Therefore advise me what should we do." They said, "In our land there are powerful magicians and sorcerers. Gather them in one place so that Mûsa ﷺ can be defeated in an open gathering." This was then done. At one specific place and at an appointed time, thousands of people of Egypt congregated. In answer to the magic

of the sorcerers, Mûsa ﷺ showed his miracle. These sorcerers fell into sajdah (prostration) immediately and accepted îmân. Due to their acceptance of îmân, Fir'awn flew into a fit of rage and began swearing and threatening them. However, in a few moments, the roots of îmân had become so entrenched in the inner recesses of their hearts that the threats of Fir'awn could not create a dent in their firmness and steadfastness.

In response to the da'wat (call) of Mûsa ﷺ, Fir'awn and his people, continued with their proud and arrogant ways of disobedience, denial and oppression. Eventually, Allâh Ta'âlâ afflicted them with different forms of punishment one after the other. Allâh Ta'âlâ sent such a flood due to which all their farm-lands and crops were destroyed. Locusts came in swarms. They even ate the leaves of the trees. They became infested with so many ticks that it made all the stored-up grains unworthy of use. Frogs were sent as a form of punishment. There was such an abundance of them that if someone opened his mouth to talk, a frog would leap towards his mouth. The water of their rivers, streams and wells changed into blood. Whenever any punishment came, they would come begging Mûsa ﷺ and would make a pact that if Allâh saves them from this punishment, then they would believe. However, when the punishment was lifted, then they would go back to what they had been doing before. Thereafter, Allâh Ta'âlâ eventually granted salvation to the Banî Isrâ'îl from the difficulties of Fir'awn, when Mûsa ﷺ took them out of Egypt in the darkness of the night. Once freedom had been attained, a need was felt for a constitution and way of life. Allâh Ta'âlâ called his Nabî to mount Tûr. There, Mûsa ﷺ fasted for 40 days. He attained the great fortune of speaking to Allâh Ta'âlâ and was gifted the Tawrât as a constitution. In Mûsa ﷺ's absence, the Isrâ'îlis began worshipping a calf due to the deceit and encouragement of one person, Samiri. When Mûsa ﷺ returned, he was gravely hurt by this polytheistic act of theirs. The Isrâ'îlis were a strange people. On every step, they would falter. They would promise and then forget. They would mock the

commands of Allâh Ta'âlâ. They did not even abstain from wrongly interpreting and changing these commands. They were commanded to enter Baitul-Maqdis with their heads lowered in humility. However, they lifted their heads and entered dragging themselves on their behind. They were commanded not to do anything but the worship of Allâh on the Sabbath (i.e. Saturday). However, they would still catch fish on this day by employing certain tricks and excuses. The Mount of Tûr was placed over their heads and a promise was taken by them to practise on the Tawrât, but they were unsuccessful in fulfilling this promise. All these incidents are mentioned in detail in Sûrah A'râf.

After mentioning the promise taken by the Banî Isrâ'îl, in the 12th rukû, it is mentioned that in the universe of the souls (âlame-arwâh) a promise was taken by Allâh Ta'âlâ from all human beings that they would fulfil the commands of Allâh Ta'âlâ. However, most people have forgotten this promise. The remainder of the sûrah has the following important points :

(1) The incident of Bal'am Ibn Bâ'ûrâ who had been granted knowledge and honour. However, this wretched one sold his knowledge for a few worthless coppers of this world. (175-178) From this incident, we learn that knowledge without practise and good character is of no value in the sight of Allâh Ta'âlâ. Therefore one Arab poet has said,

لو كان في العلم من دون التقى شرف لكان أشرف الخلق إل إبليس

If in knowledge without piety there was honour, then the most honourable of creation would have been Iblîs.

(2) The disbelievers are like animals because they cannot take benefit from their hearts intelligence, eyes and ears, resulting in them being deprived of îmân (179). Those who do not use their intelligence and brains for dîn are foolish. Those who do not hear the verses of Allâh are deaf and those who do not gaze with the eyes of insight are blind.

(3) Allâh Ta'âlâ has granted respite to the kuffâr in this world until a time will come when they will be punished suddenly. (182) Due to the period of respite, sometimes people are deceived and become more bold in committing sins.

(4) No-one has specific knowledge of when Qiyâmah will take place. (187)

(5) Allâh Ta'âlâ commands Rasûlullâh ﷺ to portray noble character "Adopt forgiveness (overlook the harm that your enemies cause to you), command acts of good and turn away from the ignorant ones." Included in this short verse is the beautiful character towards which Islâm calls. Advice to abstain from evil character is also mentioned which is necessary for a pious person.

Sûrah A'râf commenced with the grandeur of the Qur'ân. It also concludes mentioning the respect and etiquette that should be portrayed to the Qur'ân-e-Karîm "When the Qur'ân is recited, then listen to it attentively and remain silent so that mercy can be showered upon you." When a person listens attentively to the Qur'ân, keeping in mind it's grandeur, and he ponders over it's verses, then his heart becomes affected, the hair on his body stands on end and tears flow from his eyes.

Sûrah Anfâl

Sûrah Anfâl is a Madanî sûrah. It has 75 verses and 10 rukûs. As in other Madanî sûrahs, special importance has been given to explaining shar'î laws. The topic of jihâd in the path of Allâh is very conspicuous in this sûrah. This sûrah was revealed after the Battle of Badr, which was the foundation and the start of future battles in Islâmîc history. In this battle, the assistance of Allâh Ta'âlâ was witnessed openly when a small army defeated a much larger army, leaving them disgraced. This sûrah commences mentioning the law of booty since there were differences amongst the Muslims

regarding its distribution. Thereafter five qualities have been mentioned of true believers :

- 1- Fear of Allâh.
- 2- Increase in î mân by tilâwat (recitation) of the Qur'ân.
- 3- Having trust in Allâh.
- 4- Performing salâh correctly with all etiquettes.
- 5- Showing kindness to Allâh's servants (e.g. by spending wealth on them etc.).

This is followed by the battle of Badr in detail.

One speciality of sûrah Anfâl worth mentioning is that Allâh Ta'âlâ addresses the believers 6 times with words brimming with love يا ايها الذين آمنوا "O You who believe!" and then showed them such principles that if followed, they can pitch the flags of victory on the plains of jihâd. The first address is in verse 15 when Allâh Ta'âlâ says: "O You who believe! When you meet the disbelievers (on the battle-field), then do not turn your backs and flee." The second address is in verse 20 : "O You who believe! Obey Allâh and His Rasûl (ﷺ) and do not turn away from him whilst you are listening (to the Qur'ân and other advices)." The third address is in verse 23 : "O You who believe! Answer the call of Allâh and the Rasûl when they call you towards that which will grant you an eternal life (of happiness in the hereafter)." The fourth address is in verse 27 : "O You who believe! Do not betray Allâh and the Rasûl, and do not purposely misappropriate the trusts of one another." The fifth address is in verse 29 : "O You who believe! If you fear Allâh, He will grant you furqân (the ability to differentiate between truth and falsehood), He will remove from you your sins and He will forgive you. And Allâh is that Being who grants in abundance." The sixth address is in verse 46 which is in the tenth pâra, "O You who believe! When you face any group, then remain firm and remember Allâh in abundance so that you may be successful. Obey Allâh and His Rasûl, do not fight amongst yourselves, otherwise you will become cowardly and your strength will be lost, and be steadfast (have sabr). Verily Allâh is with those who are steadfast."

By following the commands in these verses and by abstaining from its prohibitions, the Muslims will definitely become the most powerful and firm nation in the world. Such a group can never be defeated who remain steadfast, who obey the commands of Allâh and Rasûlullâh ﷺ, who respond to such a call in which the life of the heart and the secret of success and honour is concealed, who neither commit breach of trust in religious matters nor in fulfilling the rights of others, who are imbued with the quality of taqwâ and the fear of Allâh, which is the greatest thing, and finally, they are those who in the rain of gunpowder and cannon-balls, continue remembering Allâh Ta'âlâ i.e. making zikr. Their kalimah is one, there is complete unity in their ranks and they are not embroiled in personal and tribal fights and arguments. Think carefully! Can any group in which theses qualities are found, ever face defeat? Definitely, they will always be victorious even if they have to face mountains.

TENTH PÂRA

A portion of Sûrah Anfâl is found in the tenth pâra as well. Anfâl is the plural of nafal which means spoils of war. In the first verse of this sûrah, an answer had been given to a question asked regarding booty. Now, at the beginning of the tenth pâra more detail has been given wherein it has been mentioned that $\frac{1}{5}$ of the booty should be given to Rasûlullâh ﷺ, his family, the orphans, poor people and travellers and the remaining $\frac{4}{5}$ should be distributed amongst the mujâhidîn (those who fought).

Thereafter, details of the Battle of Badr have been mentioned. The Qur'ân-e-Karîm in its unique style draws such a picture that it's listeners feel that they are seeing the conditions of this battle with their own eyes. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Remember the time when you were on the near side (close to Madînah) and they were on the far side while the caravan was below you (travelling along the coast). (42)

Some important points regarding the Battle of Badr mentioned in this sûrah are :

- When the two armies faced each other, then the kuffâr regarded the Muslim army to be very small in number. The Muslims too were made to appear very small in number for the kuffâr. This is because Allâh Ta'âlâ had decreed this battle and He did not want any group to run away, by becoming over awed when seeing the huge numbers of the other group. (43-44)

- After mentioning the assistance of Allâh Ta'âlâ during the Battle of Badr, He mentions the four basic elements needed to acquire the help of Allâh :

- (1) To be steadfast on the battle field.
- (2) To make the zikr of Allâh in abundance.
- (3) To abstain from differences and in-fighting.

(4) To have patience on unfavorable conditions when confronting the enemy. (46)

- During the Battle of Badr, Shaytân beautified the actions of the mushrikîn and continued presenting it to them. On the other hand, to assist the Muslims, angels descended from the heavens who inflicted severe blows on the faces and backs of the kuffâr. (48-51) Even though this verse is regarding the Battle of Badr, the mufasssîrîn have stated that its meaning is general. Thus at the time of death, every kâfir (disbeliever) is beaten.

- A great calamity overcame the Quraysh during the Battle of Badr when they were humiliated and disgraced. The reason given is that it is Allâh's system that whenever any nation, instead of being grateful, are ungrateful; and instead of being obedient, they adopt disobedience, then Allâh Ta'âlâ also changes conditions. In place of bounties, He inflicts punishment; and in place of ease, He involves them in calamities.

Keeping in mind the Battle of Badr, the Muslims have been advised to prepare completely against the enemies, militarily, materially and spiritually. It is apparent that during the Battle of Badr, material preparations could not be made completely. It was only the result of the special assistance of Allâh Ta'âlâ that He granted the Muslims victory inspite of material and military weakness, and the huge difference in size of the two armies. However, for the future, the Muslims have been commanded to prepare fully according to necessity and conditions so that the enemy will become over awed just by seeing the arms and ammunition of the Muslims and they will not have the courage to face the Muslim army. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Prepare against them whatever forces of strength you can muster, as well as trained horses with which you may strike fear into the enemies of Allâh, your enemies, and others besides them. You do not know them, but Allâh Ta'âlâ knows them." (60)

Here it is necessary to point out that inspite of the importance of material strength and power, spiritual power cannot be denied. In reality, spiritual and î mânî strength holds greater importance than other strengths in defeating the enemy. This is that strength which makes the weak strong, which gives courage to small armies to confront huge ones, which makes it easy to tread the path of martyrdom and gives such awe to people of î mân which makes even the brave and valiant quiver with fear. How should we acknowledge our collective weakness! Today the Muslims have become victims of spiritual, material and intellectual weakness.

- On one side where Muslims have been commanded to remain ever-ready for fighting, they have also been commanded on the other hand, "If they incline towards a peace-treaty, then you too should incline towards it." (61) In this verse, we learn that if a peace treaty is beneficial to the Muslims then they should make such a truce. Preparations and desire for jihâd does not mean that they must fight in every case, and that signing a truce is against the commands of Allâh Ta'âlâ. Nabî ﷺ himself, on various occasions made truces.

- Seventy mushrikîn were captured during the Battle of Badr. Nabî ﷺ, according to his usual habit, consulted (made mashwara) with the Sahâbah ؓ regarding their fate. Hadhrat Umar ؓ and some Sahâbahh ؓ were of the view that they should be killed whereas Hadhrat Abu Bakr ؓ and some other Sahâbah felt that they should pay a ransom and be freed. Nabî ﷺ preferred this latter opinion and freed the captives. On this, Allâh Ta'âlâ reprimanded, "If it were not for an order that Allâh has already preordained, a great punishment would have afflicted you on account of what you took." (68) In these type of verses where Nabî ﷺ is reprimanded there is proof of the truthfulness and veracity of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm. Hypothetically speaking, if the Qur'ân was not the word of Allâh, then these verses would never have found place in the Qur'ân. Also keep this in mind that inspite of reprimanding them, Allâh Ta'âlâ did not only give

permission to the Muslims to eat from the wealth of the ransom which was taken from the mushrik prisoners, but also stated it to be *halâl* and pure. At the end of the *sûrah*, those people have been regarded as friends, who migrate and make *jihâd* for the pleasure of Allâh, who give each other shelter and who assist one another. This *sûrah* commenced with *jihâd* and booty and ends with mention of *hijrat* (migration) and *nusrat* (assistance). It is as though the *sûrah* from beginning to end speaks about *jihâd*.

Sûrah Tawbah

Sûrah Tawbah is a Madanî *sûrah* which has 129 verses and 16 *rukûs*. It is also called *sûrah Barâ'ah*. The first word of this *sûrah* is "Barâ'ah". This *sûrah* was revealed in the ninth year of *hijrî* when Nabî ﷺ set out to punish the Romans. The battle is known as the Battle of Tabûk. It occurred at a time when there was extreme heat. The journey was very long. The fruits of the Sahâbah ﷺ had ripened, which was an important means of livelihood for them. In short, this battle was a great trial for the people of *îmân* and a test of their sincerity and truthfulness. By means of this battle, there would also be a distinction made between the believers and hypocrites. In reality, the basic aim of Sûrah Tawbah is twofold.

- (1) To mention the laws regarding *jihâd* against the mushrikîn and *ahle-kitâb* (Jews and Christians).
- (2) Keeping the Battle of Tabûk in view, to make a clear distinction between the people of *îmân* and the hypocrites.

Regarding the laws of *jihâd*, as an introduction, an announcement of the annulment of those pacts which the Muslims made with the mushrikîn was made. For them, the final period stipulated was four months. Also, the mushrikîn were prevented from making *Hajj* to the House of Allâh because these people had broken the terms of their treaty many times, and to stop the exponential growth of Islâm they were forming alliances with the Jews and were plotting against the Muslims.

After announcing this annulment with the mushrikîn, permission was given to fight the ahle-kitâb because deception, breaking of treaties, hypocrisy and lies had become an integral part of their nature. The Jewish tribes, be it Banû Qurayzah, Banû Nadîr or Banû Qaynuqa', did not leave any opportunity in causing harm to the Muslims. In approximately 20 verses, their internal filth and debased actions are clearly brought to light. The Muslims are told, "Fight those of the ahle-kitâb who do not believe in Allâh, and the final day (hereafter), who do not regard as harâm what Allâh and His Rasûl declare harâm, and who do not accept the true religion, until they give jizya (protection tax) while they are disgraced." (69)

As far as the second aim of this sûrah is concerned, the signs and internal evils of the hypocrites are mentioned in such a manner that they become disgraced and humiliated in front of everyone. Therefore, this sûrah is also called "Sûratul-Fâdhilah" i.e. the sûrah which disgraces. Before the revelation of this sûrah, they hid themselves behind the veil of verbal claims of Islâm. However this sûrah makes their inward so apparent that every person knew who was a hypocrite and who was a sincere believer. The Battle of Tabûk became the outward means of making conspicuous the weaknesses and faults of the hypocrites. As it is, jihâd is such a form of ibâdat where one places his life in danger. Here in the Battle of Tabûk, they were opposing the greatest army of their time and this too, in severe heat and with great poverty and hunger. During this battle, the actions done by the hypocrites can be judged by a glimpse of the following, which has been extracted from certain verses of Sûrah Tawbah.

- Allâh Ta'âlâ had already proclaimed, "The hypocrites will take oaths and say, 'If we had strength, we would have definitely come with you.'" (towards Tabûk) (42). This is exactly what happened. When Nabî ﷺ returned from Tabûk, then the hypocrites presented false excuses.

- Besides a handful, all the remaining sincere Muslims immediately prepared for participating in the Battle of Tabûk, whereas the hypocrites got permission to stay in Madînah by employing various tricks and schemes.
- Allâh Ta'âlâ has mentioned that it was better for the hypocrites not to emerge for jihâd. If on assumption, they had to participate, then they would have done nothing but create corruption and dissension amongst the Muslims. (47)
- Some of them (the hypocrites) were such that they presented such ludicrous and laughable excuses trying to attain permission to exclude themselves e.g. a person by the name of Ja'd Ibn Qays said, "Ô Rasûlullâh! I am very weak-hearted whereas the Roman women are very fair in complexion. I fear that if I proceed for jihâd, then I will see them and fall into evil." (49)
- There is nothing in their hearts for the Muslims but hatred and jealousy. (50) If the Muslims are victorious or receive booty, then they become perplexed. On the other hand, if any difficulty and calamity overcomes the Muslims, then they become overjoyed.
- They take oaths to convince others, "O Muslims! We are from amongst you." whereas this is not true. (56)
- Their gaze is only on wealth. If they get it, then they become happy. If they are deprived, then they even begin taunting the Nabî of Allâh.
- Since Nabî ﷺ would listen to the speech of everyone, therefore the hypocrites would say that he (ﷺ) is "only ears". (61)

- During the lifetime of Nabî ﷺ, they always had this fear that such a sûrah should not be revealed wherein their hollowness and the secrets of their hearts are opened. (64)
- Inviting others towards evil, stopping them from doing good, and miserliness are some of their conspicuous traits.
- The qualities and actions of the hypocrites are similar to that of the past kuffâr. (69)
- Their hearts are completely devoid of the love of Allâh, His remembrance, being grateful to Him and His grandeur. It is apparent that for those people whose hearts are bereft of the greatness of Allâh Ta'âlâ, for such people to commit sin and disobey Him is a matter of small consequence. (67) After showing the similarities between the hypocrites and the kuffâr, mention is made of the nations of Nûh, Âd, Thamûd, Lût, the nation of Ibrâhim ﷺ, and the people of Madyan.
- Right until the end of the tenth pâra mention is made of the hypocrites. Regarding them Allâh Ta'âlâ has mentioned, "O my messenger. If you seek forgiveness for them 70 times, then too Allâh Ta'âlâ will never forgive them." Allâh Ta'âlâ also mentioned, "And do not perform janâzah salâh over any of them who have passed away." (84) Together with mention of the hypocrites, Allâh Ta'âlâ speaks about those Muslims who could not participate in this jihâd due to old-age, severe sickness and not having the provisions to make jihâd. They had so much fervour to go in jihâd that when they could not participate, their eyes welled up with tears. Therefore, there is no sin upon these sincere believers for not participating.

ELEVENTH PÂRA

At the end of the tenth pâra, besides the sincere believers, mention was made of those hypocrites who inspite of having monetary means and transport, did not participate in the Battle of Tabûk. At the beginning of the eleventh pâra, mention is also made of the hypocrites. Allâh Ta'âlâ informed Nabî ﷺ on the road while returning from Tabûk that when he reaches Madînah, then the hypocrites will present different types of excuses. They will say they could not participate in the battle of Tabûk due to severe difficulties, otherwise they had strong intentions to join. This is exactly what happened. The hypocrites took oaths and tried to convince Nabî ﷺ that they were truthful. Nabî ﷺ, knowing the reality, kept quiet due to his sense of honour and did not call them liars. In contrast to the hypocrites, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentioned the qualities of the sincere Muslims and praised those people who admitted their mistakes, and did not speak lies trying to show their wrong to be right.

In between this, those hypocrites are also mentioned who built Masjid-e-Dirâr to cause harm to Islâm, to give rise to kufr and to create division amongst the Muslims. They requested Nabî ﷺ to inaugurate this masjid. However Allâh Ta'âlâ prevented His Nabî ﷺ from even allowing this masjid to stand. Thus, on his (ﷺ) command, it was burnt to ashes. In contrast to Masjide-Dirâr is Masjide-Quba and in contrast to the hypocrites are the people of î mân who have exchanged their lives and wealth in the path of Allâh for Jannah. Nine such qualities of the people of î mân are mentioned which every believer should strive to imbibe within himself i.e. to be one who repents, who worships, who praises Allâh, who fasts, who makes rukû, who makes sajdah, who commands towards righteousness, who prevents from evil actions and who protects the bounds of Allâh Ta'âlâ. (112)

From the people who were deprived of participating in the Battle of Tabûk were three such sincere Muslims regarding whose î mân and sincerity no-one had doubt i.e. Hadhrat Kâb Ibn Mâlik, Hadhrat Hilâl Ibn Umayyah and Hadhrat Murârah Ibn Rabî' ﷺ. They did not fabricate any excuse but openly admitted that in remaining behind, it was completely their error, laziness and weakness. Their matter was kept separate. They were boycotted for a period of fifty days. However, due to their truthfulness, they were honoured in such a way that the proclamation of the acceptance of their tawbah (repentance) was done through wahî (revelation). This proclamation was such a glad-tiding that Nabî ﷺ himself addressing Hadhrat Kâ'b ibne-Mâlik ﷺ said, "From the day your mother gave birth to you, there has been no day more better and blessed for you than this day." The acceptance of these people's repentance has been mentioned in verse 117 and 118.

In the following verse, four things have been emphasized for the people of î mân :

- 1- They should hold firm onto taqwâ, both inwardly and outwardly.
- 2- Staying far away from the hypocrites, they should choose the companionship of the truthful and righteous.
- 3- They should give preference to the Nabî of Allâh over themselves irrespective of whether there is an abundance or shortage of sustenance.
- 4- In reality, Allâh has promised from His side that every form of worship and obedience will be recompensed by Allâh Ta'âlâ Himself, and according to the amount of sacrifice and effort that is expended for Allâh's dîn, a person will accordingly be rewarded. (120-121)

Inspite of the great virtues and importance of jihâd, we have been commanded that not all the Muslims should proceed for jihâd. Some people should remain in the service of Rasûlullâh ﷺ so that they can gain an understanding of dîn from him. (122) Just as there

was a need for jihâd in the initial stages of da'wat, to break the strength of the enemies, similarly there was a need for such a foundation on which the buildings of an Islâmic empire could stand. For this purpose, the revelation of shar'î laws continued coming down and Nabî ﷺ continuously prepared such individuals who would become teachers, lecturers, guides, judges, rulers, leaders and administrators. Thus, this command was given that a sufficient amount of Muslims should remain in Madînah so that they could acquire an understanding of dîn. Leaving aside the necessity of knowledge to run an Islâmic state, the attainment of knowledge of dîn in itself is a very great action. Thus Nabî ﷺ has said, "For whomsoever Allâh Ta'âlâ wishes goodness, He grants him an understanding of dîn." This is also the statement of Nabî ﷺ, "One faqîh (one who has understanding of dîn) is more weightier on Shaytân than a thousand worshippers."

An important principle of jihâd has been outlined i.e. Jihâd should be done on the basis of closeness i.e. first jihâd should be made with those kuffâr who are close, and then the frontiers should be expanded. (123)

In the last verses of sûrah Tawbah, the munâfiqîn are criticized once again because these unfortunate people do not even take benefit from the Qur'ân. In fact their filth, with regards to their thoughts and actions, increases all the time. In the 2nd last verse of this sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ praises Nabî ﷺ and chooses two names for Nabî ﷺ from His own beautiful names i.e. Ra'ûf (the Most Compassionate) and Rahîm (The Most Merciful). There is no doubt that Nabî ﷺ was most compassionate and merciful, to not only his whole ummah, but to all of mankind. Hadhrat Ibn Abbâs ؓ states that from amongst His Names, Allâh Ta'âlâ has not combined these two names for anyone else besides Nabî ﷺ.

Sûrah Yûnus

Sûrah Yûnus is a Makkî sûrah. It has 119 verses and 11 rukûs. In this sûrah, the basic fundamentals and beliefs of îmân, and especially the Qur'ân-e-Karîm have been discussed. The sûrah commences with the mention of the Book of Allâh and the messenger of Allâh. None should be surprised about the nubuwwat and risâlat of the Last Messenger (ﷺ), because this is nothing new. To every nation, some or the other Rasûl has come. Thereafter, the reality of rubûbiyyat (the quality of sustaining), ulûhiyyat (divinity) and ubûdiyyat (servitude) as well as the relationship between the creator and created are mentioned. We are informed that only that Being who is the creator and sustainer, is worthy of being worshipped. All the systems of the universe testify to His quality of sustaining and His power. (6)

After pondering over these proofs and these systems, man becomes divided into 2 groups :

- 1- Those who deny.
- 2- Those who believe.

The final result of the deniers is the fire whereas the final abode of those who accept will be the everlasting gardens. (7) A major reason of denial is due to the haste inherent in man's nature that sometimes man even makes du'â for the destruction or punishment of himself or his progeny. (10) The conditions of these deniers is that they do not even refrain from denying the Qur'ân and mocking it. Mockingly, they say to the Nabî of Allâh, "Bring another Qur'ân or change this one." Nabî ﷺ is commanded to say, "I do not have any choice in the matter." I am also obliged to follow the revelation. Do you people think (Allâh forbid!) that I have made up this speech and I am attributing it to Allâh Ta'âlâ. I have spent forty years of my life amongst you people. Have you ever heard me speaking lies? Or have you seen me attaining knowledge from any tutor? If you have

not heard and seen these things, then how can I suddenly start speaking lies or how can I present such a miraculous speech in your presence? Is it possible that I do not lie to people, but I am brave enough to lie about Allâh? Nabî ﷺ's pure life and true tongue was such that even his enemies were forced to acknowledge it. When Heraculus, the Roman king asked Abu Sufyân (who at that time had not yet accepted Islâm), "Have you ever heard Nabî ﷺ speaking lies before claiming nubuwwat?", then Abu Sufyân was forced to reply in the negative in spite of him being a disbeliever and mushrik. Heraculus, on hearing his answer, remarked, "How can it be that he does not lie to people, but speaks lies about Allâh?"

Imam Râzi راجع عليه states that the mushrikîn had witnessed the life of Nabî ﷺ from childhood till the revelation of the Qur'ân. They knew that he never studied any book nor was he the student of any teacher. Forty years passed in this way. Suddenly, a great book came to him which included unique principles, the finer points of law, the beauty of the knowledge of character and the hidden facts of the incidents of the past. It was such a book that the great poets and literals could not dare challenge its eloquence and beauty. Whichever person has been given a clear mind will definitely know that this was not possible without the means of revelation.

In the following verse the idol-worshipping of the mushrikîn as well as the proofs of tawhîd are mentioned. We are informed that at the time of difficulties and hardships, the greatest of polytheists also forget their false gods and are forced to call the one true diety. (22) Nabî ﷺ is commanded to ask them in an instructive manner, "Who grants you sustenance from the heavens and earth? Or who is the owner of your ears and eyes? Who creates life from dead things and who gives death to living things? And who runs all matters?" They will soon say, "Allâh". Then ask them, "Do you not fear Allâh then." (32)

To prove the truthfulness of the Qur'ân, a challenge is issued to them that if this is human speech then bring forth any one such sûrah like it. For this purpose, call from the Arabs and non-Arabs whomsoever you wish to call. Thereafter, Allâh Himself mentions the reason for their denial i.e. man's nature is such that if he is ignorant of anything and does not understand its reality, then he denies it completely. A major reason for the denial of the mushrikîn of tawhîd, resurrection after death and the truthfulness of the Qur'ân was their ignorance. In this sûrah, sometimes in a rebuking manner, and sometimes in an advising manner, a call is made for them to leave their stubbornness and to believe in these three fundamental beliefs. Mentioning the high qualities of the Qur'ân, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "O People! An advice has come to you from your Rabb, a cure for the sicknesses which are in the heart, a means of guidance and a mercy for the people of î mân. Say, "This book has been revealed through the kindness and mercy of Allâh. Thus, let them be happy about this. This is much better than that (wealth and treasures) which they gather." (87)

After mentioning the proofs of tawhîd, the certainty of resurrection after death, the truthfulness of the Qur'ân and refutation of the false thoughts of the mushrikîn, three incidents are mentioned for advice and as a lesson. The first incident is of Shaikhul-Ambiyâ Hadhrat Nûh عليه السلام, whose life and period of propagation was longer than that of all the other Ambiyâ, but whose followers were very little. Then the incident of Hadhrat Mûsa and Hârûn عليهما السلام is mentioned who confronted a person like Fir'awn, who claimed divinity. The third incident is of Hadhrat Yûnus عليه السلام. This sûrah is named after him. In the Qur'ân-e-Karîm, Yûnus عليه السلام's name is explicitly mentioned four times, and in two places he has been addressed as "the person of the fish". He lost hope in his people accepting î mân. Being convinced that Allâh Ta'âlâ's punishment was about to descend, he left the land of Nineva. When he boarded a ship on his journey, the people of the ship threw him into the ocean due to the ocean becoming very rough and stormy. A huge

fish swallowed him. However Allâh Ta'âlâ kept him alive in the belly of the fish. Eventually, after a few days, the fish regurgitated him at the shore of the ocean. On the other side, the men, women, young and old of his people had gone out to the jungle where they cried, sought forgiveness and accepted î mân due to which Allâh Ta'âlâ's punishment was averted. After mentioning these three incidents, the mushrikîn are warned that if they do not refrain from kufr and shirk then a punishment may afflict them before Qiyâmah. Nabî ﷺ and the believers are given glad-tidings that Allâh's help is very close. This is Allâh's habit that eventually the people of î mân are given success. Just as Sûrah Yûnus commences with mention of the book full of wisdom, it ends commanding us to follow this truthful book. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Say, 'O People! Haq (truth i.e. the Qur'ân) has come to you from your Sustainer. So whoever will be guided shall receive guidance only for himself, and whoever will go astray shall go astray only to his own detriment. I am not a over-seer over you.' And (O Rasûlullâh ﷺ), follow that which has been revealed to you and be steadfast until Allâh passes a judgment. He is the best of those who passes judgment."

TWELFTH PÂRA

The twelfth pâra consists of two sûrahs – Sûrah Hûd and Sûrah Yûsuf. Only five verses of Sûrah Hûd are found in the eleventh pâra. The remaining sûrah is in the twelfth pâra. This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 123 verses and 10 rukûs. The sûrah commences explaining the greatness of the Qur'ân. With regard to its verses, meaning and contents, it is a strong unshakable book. No form of error or corruption can come into it nor is there any discrepancy or inconsistency found in it. The reason for it being so unshakable and strong is that its detail and explanation has come from that Being who is All-Wise and All-Knowing. His every command is based on some wisdom and He is fully aware of man's past, present and future conditions as well as his psychology, weaknesses and necessities.

After mentioning the greatness of the book of Allâh, there is a call to tawhîd which is the basis of belief and conviction. Thereafter, the proofs of tawhîd are mentioned which are spread out in the whole universe. We are informed that the sustainer of the entire creation is only Allâh, whether it be to humans or jinns, animals or birds, fish living in water or insects crawling on the earth. Only Allâh Ta'âlâ has created the heavens and earth. However, those people who do not ponder over these proofs and those who have placed a plaster of stubbornness and obstinacy on their eyes, deny tawhîd and deny accepting the Qur'ân to be the speech of Allâh, these deniers are challenged that if the Qur'ân is in reality some human effort, then they should create and produce just ten sûrahs likewise. (13) The deniers have been challenged thrice in the Qur'ân. The first time, they were challenged to bring something similar to the whole Qur'ân, the second time to bring only ten sûrahs and the third time, which is mentioned in Sûrah Baqarah, to bring just one similar sûrah. However, all three times they were unable to accept this challenge.

Besides this, other important points mentioned in sûrah Hûd are :

(1) Man is divided into two groups. The first group are those people for whom the sole objectives of their lives, actions and toils is only to acquire this world. At all times, they are concerned about making this world more and more comfortable for themselves. They do not remember the hereafter, even by mistake. The second group are those fortunate people who make effort also in this world but the basis of their efforts is the hereafter. Keeping the hereafter in mind, they pass this worldly life. (15-17) The example of the first group is, of blind and deaf people while the example of the second group is of those people who have been bestowed with the blessing of sight and hearing.

(2) One style of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm is that after refuting the thoughts of the kuffâr and mushrikîn by means of proofs, the incidents and narratives of the past Ambiyâ and their nations are mentioned. By doing so, the proofs are strengthened and diversity is created in the speech. Man's nature likes diversity. Just as Allâh Ta'âlâ has kept diversity in His signs in the universe i.e. in the physical and material world, similarly He has taken it into consideration in His sharî signs. Look around this physical world. At every moment, wherever you look, the sights, seasons and times are changing. Somewhere there is a flower, somewhere a thorn, somewhere a high mountain, somewhere a piece of flat land, somewhere violent waves of the oceans, somewhere flying dust particles. Sometimes it is cold, sometimes it is hot, sometimes it is summer, sometimes winter, sometimes spring and sometimes autumn. Sometimes it is morning, sometimes afternoon and sometimes evening. Similarly, in the legislative world, the subject matter continues changing. Laws and information with proofs, incidents and narratives together with advice, the spectacles of Jannah and Jahannum, together with glad-tidings, warnings and together with promises, threats are mentioned side by side. The speech continues changing from one style to another, one

spectacle to another, one incident to the next and one subject to another. The reciter and listener never falls prey to tiredness.

A glimpse of this special style of the Qur'ân is clearly seen in Sûrah Hûd. First, the truthfulness of the Qur'ân as well as proofs of the truthfulness of tawhîd and risâlat are mentioned. Thereafter, the narratives of Hadhrat Nûh, Hadhrat Hûd, Hadhrat Sâlih, Hadhrat Lût, Hadhrat Shuayb, Hadhrat Mûsa and Hadhrat Hârûn عليهم السلام are mentioned. All these narratives are brought to prove wahî, the truthfulness of the nubuwwat of Muhammad ﷺ and to show the miraculous nature of the Qur'ân. The mushrikîn of Makkah knew well that Nabî was ummî (unlettered). Neither could he read, nor was he aware of the method of writing, and nor was he the student of any teacher. However, in spite of all this, mentioning all these narratives so correctly, in such a fine and perfect detail was not possible without divine revelation. In order to turn our attention to this point, after mentioning the incidents of the Ambiyâ and messengers, the Qur'ân generally discusses wahî (revelation) and nubuwwat. In this sûrah, at the end of the narrative of Hadhrat Nûh عليه السلام, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "These (incidents and narrations) are from the information of the unseen which we reveal to you. Neither you nor your people knew of it from before. Thus, be patient. The final outcome is only in favour of the God-fearing." (49)

Also, after the incident of Hadhrat Mûsa and Hârûn عليهم السلام, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "These are from the incidents of those villages which We relate to you. Some of them remain and some have been completely destroyed." (100) In these incidents, there are great lessons and advice for people of intelligence, sight and hearing on one side, and on the other side, there is the lesson of steadfastness as well as consolation for Rasûlullâh ﷺ and the sincere people of îmân. Therefore, while mentioning these incidents, Nabî ﷺ is commanded to be steadfast, which in reality, is a command to the whole ummah. Steadfastness is one such law which is related to belief, speech, action and character. It is no easy thing but in fact a

very difficult quality which the special servants of Allâh attain. The meaning of istiqlâmat (steadfastness) is that one's whole life must be passed in accordance with those teachings which Allâh Ta'âlâ has commanded. Hadhrat Ibn Abbâs ؓ says that no verse more severer than this verse was revealed to Nabî ﷺ. The Sahâbah-e-Kirâm ؓ, on one occasion, saw a few white hairs on the blessed beard of Rasûlullâh ﷺ. They said, "O Rasûlullah ﷺ, old age is coming quickly." Nabî ﷺ said, "Sûrah Hûd and others similar to it have aged me." The Ulamâ (scholars) mention that he (ﷺ) was referring to this verse in Sûrah Hûd wherein he was commanded to be steadfast. The Ulamâ-e-Rabbâniyyîn (those who have a close relationship with Allâh) have regarded istiqlâmat (steadfastness) as a karâmat (miracle). In reality there is no greater miracle than istiqlâmat.

Keeping in mind the importance of steadfastness and making du'â to Allâh Ta'âlâ to acquire it, it is necessary to ponder over the incident of Hadhrat Mûsa ؑ in which Fir'awn is criticised in the following verse, "And like this is the punishment of Your Rabb when He punishes disobedient nations. Verily His punishment is very painful and severe. Verily in these (narratives) is a great lesson for the one who fears punishment in the hereafter." (102-103) Here we are told that the same Allâh Ta'âlâ who sent down punishment on disobedient nations of yesterday, can today also seize these disobedient people in His grip. Similarly, studying verse 116, we learn that generally Allâh Ta'âlâ punishes any nation when two evils have crept into them :

- 1- There does not remain any concerned and intelligent people amongst them who prevent them from disobedience and evils.
- 2- These people exceed the bounds in sin and luxurious living.

For Rasûlullâh ﷺ and the people of î mân, after the above-mentioned narratives, consolation, patience and steadfastness have been mentioned in the last few verses of this sûrah. In verse 120 is the following, "(O Muhammad ﷺ) all of these incidents of the

Ambiyâ which we narrate to you, we strengthen by means of it your heart. The truth has come to you in these narratives and advice and admonition for the believers.”

Sûrah Yûsuf

Sûrah Yûsuf is a Makkî sûrah. It has 111 verses and 12 rukûs. Since the incident of Yûsuf ﷺ is mentioned here, it has been named thus. In the Qur'ân-e-Karîm the narratives of the other Ambiyâ عليهم السلام are repeated. However, this repetition does not trouble the mind. At every place, there are new words, new construction of sentences, some new lessons and new advices found. These incidents are spread out in the Qur'ân in the form of small beautiful pieces. By joining these pieces, the whole incident is understood. However, the incident of Hadhrat Yûsuf ﷺ is not repeated. The whole incident, from beginning to end, is mentioned in this sûrah. In other sûrahs, Yusuf ﷺ's name is mentioned, but not even a small portion of this incident is mentioned there. The people of knowledge (ahle-ilm) have mentioned that the deniers can neither challenge the repeated narratives, nor the non-repeated ones. The Qur'ân-e-Karîm itself has called Sûrah Yûsuf “Ahsanul-Qasas” (the best of narratives) because the number of lessons and advices found in it are not found in other narratives.

Looking at its comprehensiveness, it encompasses many different subjects viz. dîn (religious matters), dunyâ (worldly matters), tawhîd, fiqh as well as history and biographies, the interpretation of dreams as well as the secrets of government and politics, man's psychology as well as planning for good economic conditions, the result of beauty and illicit love as well as the assistance of Allâh due to abstinence and piety. The Ambiyâ are mentioned, as well as the angels and Shayâtîn; man and jinn as well as birds and animals; the condition of kings, businessmen, learned and ignorant people as well as the immorality, scheming and plotting of women who have deviated from the right path. In this narrative, there is mention of

the ups-and-downs of life, obscurity as well as fame, poverty as well as wealth, honour as well as disgrace, patience and firmness as well as the servitude of desires.

One great beauty found in this narrative is that in it, a whole map is drawn of Rasûlullah ﷺ and his adversaries with regards to their present and future conditions. Like Yûsuf (عليه السلام), our Nabî ﷺ was the victim of jealousy by his Qurayshî brothers. They plotted to kill him. He had to leave Makkah Mukarramah. For three days, he had to hide in the cave of Thaur. From there, he migrated to Madînah. There, slowly, he (ﷺ) continued progressing until he became the leader of the first Islâmic state. When Makkah was conquered, then his Qurayshî brothers were ashamed. They had to lower themselves in front of Nabî ﷺ. Whether this was co-incidental or intentional, at this juncture Nabî ﷺ said, "I say to you what my brother Yûsuf said to his brothers, 'Go, you are free, there is no blame upon you.'"

The incident of Sayyidina Yûsuf (عليه السلام) is so famous that even the children of Muslim families know it by heart. Therefore, there is no need to go into detail. However, briefly we will mention it, placing special attention on the lessons and advices to be taken from this incident. Since Sûrah Yûsuf comes in both the 12th and 13th pâra and this narrative is mentioned in sequence, we will mention the crux of this narrative keeping this sequence in place. Then we will mention some advices and lessons.

Hadhrat Ya'qûb (عليه السلام) had 12 sons. From amongst them Yûsuf (عليه السلام) was exceptionally handsome. Due to the beauty of his character and looks, his honourable father had intense love for him. Another reason for his love for him and his brother Binyâmin, was that they were the smallest and their mother had already passed away. To love one's small children is part of the nature of human beings. Hadhrat Hasan (عليه السلام)'s daughter was asked, "From all your children, who do you love the most?" She answered, "The small one until he gets big, the absent one until he returns, and the sick one until he

regains his health.” Due to this love, his brothers became jealous. They took Yûsuf ﷺ into the jungle, telling their father that they were going out to play. They threw him in a well. A caravan passed there. To get water, they lowered a bucket into the well. Yûsuf ﷺ then climbed out of the well. These travellers took him to Egypt and sold him. The minister of Egypt bought him and kept him in his house. When he grew up, the minister’s wife became infatuated with him. She invited him to commit evil. He rejected this invitation. The minister, to save his name from disgrace, placed Yûsuf ﷺ in jail. In jail, he continued his call towards the oneness of Allâh (tawhîd), due to which the prisoners respected him. Due to correctly interpreting the dream of the king of the time, he became esteemed in the king’s eyes. He made Yûsuf ﷺ the independent minister of his treasury, business and kingdom. Due to the drought in Egypt and surrounding areas, his brothers came to Egypt to get food. After a few meetings, he informed them that he was their brother Yûsuf ﷺ. Then his parents also came to Egypt and they all began residing there.

THIRTEENTH PÂRA

The incident of Sayyidinâ Yûsuf (عليه السلام) has been mentioned briefly. Now, the lessons derived from it will be mentioned. However, it is necessary to note that these lessons and advices are not only from the portion which is mentioned in the 13th pâra, rather the lessons and advices have been taken from the narrative as a whole. They are as follows "

- (1) Sometimes a difficulty becomes a means of attaining a bounty or comfort. The incident of Yûsuf (عليه السلام) commenced with great problems for him. He was thrown into a well (and was left there) without any assistance. He was then sold in the slave market of Egypt. He had to face the trials and tribulations of women. For many years, he was locked in jail. However, in the end he became the leader of Egypt and attained respect and honour in both worldly and religious spheres.
- (2) Jealousy is an extremely dreadful sickness. If this sickness is found in even one's blood brothers, then it can have pitiful consequences.
- (3) Good character, beautiful qualities and good upbringing shows its colours. Hadhrat Yusuf (عليه السلام) was nurtured and brought up at the hands of a great Nabî who hailed from a family of Ambiyâ. He (عليه السلام) had attained a huge portion of his forefather's moral inheritance. Due to his ideal upbringing and perfection in character, he stood bravely in the face of great difficulties and trials, and due to this, the era of ease came after difficulty, and true honour came after apparent disgrace.
- (4) Chastity, trustworthiness and steadfastness are the roots of all goodness for men as well as women. Those who remain firm on dîn will definitely attain respect and honour one day. No matter

how much the reality and truth is hidden, eventually, it will become apparent.

- (5) The intermingling of men and women as well as being together in solitude is a great cause of mischief. If Zuleykhâ was not in solitude with Yûsuf عليه السلام, she would not have tried to make evil advances. Therefore, Islâm has rendered it harâm (impermissible) for a man and woman to be alone in solitude. In Tirmizî and Nasaî the following hadîth is narrated, "When a man and a woman are in solitude, then the third person there is Shaytân."
- (6) By believing in Allâh Ta'âlâ and having firmness in belief, it becomes easy to bear difficulties and save oneself from moral and spiritual impurities.
- (7) A Muslim should only turn towards Allâh Ta'âlâ at the time of every difficulty and problems. When the wife of the minister of Egypt threatened to throw Yûsuf عليه السلام in jail if he did not comply with her in evil, he called out to His Allâh giving preference to difficulty over sin, "O my Rabb, the jail is more beloved to me than what these women of Egypt are inviting me towards." It is mentioned regarding some awliyâ (friends of Allâh) that when they were consoled regarding any problem or sickness, then they would say,

الحمد لله! بصيتي كرفا دم نہ بصيتي

All praise is due to Allâh that I am involved in difficulty
and not in sin.

- (8) A true dâ'î (inviter) is not negligent of his duty of inviting (towards Dîn) even in the most difficult and trying of times. Sayyidinâ Yûsuf عليه السلام, even in jail, did not lose the opportunity of da'wat and tablîgh (inviting and propagating) and reformation. Those who came to ask him for the interpretation of the

dreams, were first given the da'wat of tawhîd before he interpreted their dreams. It has been mentioned that the prisoners of the jail were affected by his da'wat and accepted Islâm together with the king of Egypt.

- (9) In general, every Muslim and especially leaders and dâ'îs (inviters to dîn) should make great effort to keep themselves free from any form of defamation of character. When Yûsuf ﷺ was freed after remaining many years in jail then he refused to step out of the jail until an announcement and acknowledgement of his innocence and chastity was not made. It should not happen tomorrow that someone remarks (Allâh protect!) "You were a criminal, but were freed due to the mercy (of someone) or because you were felt sorry for."
- (10) From this incident, one gets conviction of the virtues of patience and its beautiful results. From the darkness of the well till the solitude of the jail, and from the minister of Egypt's house till he forgave his brothers, at every opportunity, Yûsuf ﷺ held steadfast onto patience. The result of this patience is clear for one and all to see. There is no doubt that patience is the key to the doors of ease and bounties, it is half of îmân and an important means of drawing the help and mercy of Allâh Ta'âlâ.
- (11) By studying this narrative, many testimonies to the chastity and innocence of Hadhrat Yusuf عليه السلام came forth. The first testimony is of Allâh, the Rabb (Master) of the universe. The second is that of Shaytân who took an oath in front of Allâh and said, "By the oath of your honour, I will mislead all of them except your chosen servants." What doubt is there that Yûsuf عليه السلام was not a chosen one? Thus, to deviate him from the straight path was not possible according to this statement of Shaytân. The third testimony is of Hadhrat Yûsuf عليه السلام himself. As mentioned before he had said, "O my Rabb! The jail is more beloved to me than what these women of Egypt are inviting me towards." The

fourth testimony is of the wife of the minister of Egypt when she clearly stated, "Now, the truth has become manifest. I made an effort to seduce him and he was from the truthful." The fifth testimony is from a family member of the minister of Egypt who said, "If the kurtâ is torn from the front, then she is truthful and he is from the liars (Allâh forbid!), and if the kurtâ is torn from the back, then she is lying and he is from the truthful." When the shirt was seen, it was torn from the back. The sixth testimony is from the women of Egypt who cut their fingers. In testifying to the purity of his actions they said, "We do not know of any evil in him." By all these testimonies, the innocence of Hadhrat Yûsuf عليه السلام is conclusively proven. Now, if any person with a black heart ascribes evil to him, then there can be no bigger ignoramus and fool than him.

- (12) The twelfth advice we learn from this incident is that if Allâh Ta'âlâ decides to afflict anyone with difficulty, then none can avert His decision, and if He decides goodness and respect for anyone then none can stop Him.

Sûrah Yûsuf ends with this verse, "In their (the Ambiyâs) narratives are lessons for people of intelligence. This (Qur'ân) is not some fabricated tale, but a confirmation of the scriptures revealed before it, and a detailed explanation of all things, and a means of guidance and mercy for the believers."

In it, our attention is drawn to this point that the same Allâh who took Yûsuf عليه السلام from the well, and seated him on the throne, also has the power to grant Muhammad ﷺ respect and can make the dîn which he has brought, dominant over all other religions.

Sûrah Ra'd

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 43 verses and 6 rukûs. In this sûrah, the three fundamentals i.e. tawhîd, risâlat and resurrection after death, has been discussed. In the first verse of this sûrah, mention is made of the truthfulness of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm. This point is worthy of note that whichever sûrahs begin with the hurûfe-muqatta'ât, then generally mention of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm is made thereafter. This gives credence to the view that these hurûf are brought to challenge those opposed to the Qur'ân-e-Majîd, who regard it as (معاد الله) a human effort.

Important points mentioned in this sûrah are as follows:

(1) The proofs of Allâh's existence and oneness are mentioned at the beginning of this sûrah. He alone is the creator of the heavens and earth, sun and moon, day and night, mountains and rivers, grains and fruits of different colours, tastes and smells. Life and death, benefit and harm is only in His hands.

(2) Resurrection and recompense on the Day of Judgment has been proven. This was one such point which the mushrikîn could not fathom. They affirmed the existence of Allâh as well as He being the creator of the heavens and the earth, but they denied coming back to life a second time after death. They could not understand that after the decaying of bones and the flesh turning into sand, how could man come back to life a second time. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, that the mushrikîn are surprised how will life come into the lifeless bones whereas in reality this resurrection after death is not something to be astonished about, but waiting for it to come is astonishing. (5)

(3) Allâh Ta'âlâ has appointed such angels who protect us by the command of Allâh Ta'âlâ.

(4) A basic principle has been mentioned that if Allâh Ta'âlâ deals with any people in a certain way, then He does not change His

manner of dealing with them as long as they do not change their condition. When these people make themselves worthy of problems and difficulties instead of bounties and ease, then they should leave these means of disgrace and choose the means of honour and respect. To attain respect and honour just by vain hopes and desires is not possible.

(5) Falsehood and the people of falsehood have been likened to the foams of a flood which outwardly covers everything but eventually it dries up and disappears. Truth and the people of truth are likened to gold and silver which remains on land. Then, they are placed in fire and purified. All dirt and impurities are removed from it. (17) The material form of falsehood which is seen on the rise in the whole world, will settle down and disappear itself. The condition however is that those who are on truth must stand up against it. But, what we are now witnessing is that those who call themselves the people of truth have chosen some ways of the people of falsehood and the people of falsehood have chosen some ways of the people of truth.

(6) The people of taqwâ and truly intelligent people are distinguished by 8 qualities :

- 1- They fulfill the pact made with Allâh Ta'âlâ and do not break it.
- 2- They enjoin ties with those family members whom Allâh has commanded to join ties with.
- 3- They fear their Rabb.
- 4- They fear an evil reckoning.
- 5- They are patient and steadfast in seeking the pleasure of Allâh.
- 6- They perform salâh correctly.
- 7- They spend the wealth which Allâh Ta'âlâ has granted secretly and openly.
- 8- They answer evil with goodness. (20-24)

In contrast to them are three clear qualities of unfortunate people :

- 1- They break pacts made with Allâh.
- 2- They break off ties with those people whom Allâh has commanded to join.
- 3- They spread mischief on the earth. (25)

(7) The Ambiyâ are also humans like other humans. They also have wives and children. Regarding the mu'jizât (miracles) which they bring forth, this is not their own achievement. It comes into existence by the command of Allâh. Those people who deny nubuwwat, because of the Nabî being a human, are unaware of the status of nubuwwat.

(8) At the end of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ Himself gives testimony of the nubuwwat and risâlat of Nabî ﷺ. Similarly, those Jews and Christians also give testimony who are free from prejudice.

Sûrah Ibrâhîm

This is a Makkî sûrah which has 52 verses and 7 rukûs. This sûrah also commences with the hurûfe-muqatta'ât and like other sûrahs similar to it, it is followed by mention of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm. In the first verse the wisdom and purpose of revelation of the Qur'ân is explained, "This is a book which We have revealed to you to remove people from multitudes of darkness, taking them towards light by the command of Your Rabb, to the path of the Mighty, the One worthy of praise."

Important points mentioned in Sûrah Ibrâhîm are as follows:

- (1) The three fundamental beliefs i.e. tawhîd, risâlat and belief in the hereafter are mentioned.
- (2) Rebuking of the disbelievers and a warning of Jahannum for them, whereas Jannah has been promised for the believers. (2-23, 28-31)

(3) To console Nabî ﷺ, the incidents of the past Ambiyâ are mentioned showing that their people chose the same way of turning away, rejection, enmity and opposition which his (ﷺ) people have chosen. (9-12, 13-18) In this regard, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions a conversation which took place between some Ambiyâ and those who belied them. These deniers presented three doubts in response to the call of the Ambiyâ.

- Doubt in the existence of Allâh Ta'âlâ which becomes apparent in these words of the mushrikîn, "We are in strong doubt with regards to that which you call us towards." In reply to this doubt, the Ambiyâ said, "O Servants of Allâh! Are you in doubt regarding Allâh, who is the creator of the heavens and earth?" i.e. the proofs of Allâh's existence and oneness are so clear that there is no need to present any proof for it. Every atom and every movement of the universe is a proof of His oneness. When the sun rises, is there any other proof needed to prove the existence of the day?
- The mushrikîn were of this opinion that a messenger (Rasûl) cannot be a human being. The Ambiyâ answered, "We are definitely humans. For a human to be a Rasûl is not impossible. A Rasûl is one upon whom revelation descends and revelation descends upon us. The demand of Allâh's wisdom is that a Nabî be sent to humans in the form a human. If angels were living on earth, then an Angel would have been sent as a messenger."
- A great cause for the mushrikîn being deprived of guidance was their blind-following of their forefathers. They were not prepared to leave their forefather's ways. The Qur'ân, in many places, has refuted this.

(4) Allâh Ta'âlâ's system and promise is that He grants those who make shukr (appreciate) much more, and for the ungrateful ones

His punishment is severe. (7) The reality of shukr is that man acknowledges the kindness of that Being who grants it to him, praises Him and uses that bounty for the purpose which it was given for e.g. the demand of the bounty of knowledge is that it should be practiced upon, and instruction should be given to those who are ignorant. On this, other favours can be deduced.

(5) In this sûrah, those du'âs of Ibrâhîm ؑ are specially mentioned which he made for the people of Makkah, his children and family, after building the House of Allâh. In these du'âs, he requested security, sustenance, inclination of hearts towards it, establishment of salâh and forgiveness for his family people. (25-41)

(6) The words of truth and îmân have been likened to a pure tree and the words of falsehood and misguidance to an impure/evil tree. When kalimah-e-tayyibah (pure words) enters the heart truly, then its roots are very strong and fruits very sweet. However, an evil word has no stability and does not produce any fruit or benefit. (24-27)

(7) In the final rukû of Sûrah Ibrâhîm, a scene of Qiyâmah is presented and mention is made of the severe punishment of Jahannum.

(8) As the sûrah began with the wisdom of the Qur'ân being revealed, in the last verse, the purpose of revelation is mentioned, "This (Qur'ân) is a message for people so that they can be warned thereby, so that they can know that He is one deity and so that the intelligent people take lesson." (52)

FOURTEENTH PÂRA

Sûrah Hijr

Sûrah Hijr is a Makkî sûrah which has 99 verses and 6 rukûs. Since the inhabitants of the valley of Hijr i.e. nation of Thamûd is mentioned, this sûrah has been named Sûratul-Hijr. The valley of Hijr is situated between Madînah and Shâm (Syria). Only the first verse of this sûrah is in the thirteenth pâra. The remaining part of the sûrah is in the 14th pâra. This sûrah also begins with the hurûfe-muqatta'ât and in the first verse the Qur'ân is praised and described. The proofs of the basic beliefs of Islâm are also found in this sûrah. The important points mentioned in this sûrah are as follows :

(1) On the Day of Judgment, when the disbelievers will witness the severity and ferociousness of the punishment, then they will desire, "If only we were Muslims." However, it is apparent that believing or desiring î mân (on this day) will not benefit whereas today, when the messenger of Allâh calls them to accept î mân, they call him mad and a lunatic. In opposition to the call of î mân, they choose that manner of mockery and rejection which the past nations had chosen.

(2) One salient feature of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm is that Allâh Ta'âlâ himself has taken responsibility to protect it whereas the responsibility of protecting the other divine books were entrusted to their followers. It is for this reason that the other heavenly books could not be protected from alteration whereas the Qur'ân-e-Karîm is pure and protected from every type of change, addition or deletion, despite so many centuries having passed. The Qur'ân Sharîf's miraculousness is due to many factors, of which one is its quality of being protected and preserved. For its protection, Allâh Ta'âlâ has made it easy to memorize it. There is no land on earth where a hafiz of Qur'ân is not found. Small, innocent children who

cannot memorize a few pages of a book in their mother tongue, keep such a huge book protected in their hearts.

(3) In different verses of this sûrah, proofs of Allâh Ta'âlâ's power and oneness are mentioned, which openly proclaim and testify to the existence and greatness of a creator. These proofs are spread out all over in the form of the skies, the earth, the moon, stars, mountains, fields, oceans, rivers, trees and birds. In one place Allâh says, "We have placed in the skies, huge stars and beautified it for those who see." (16) After two verses Allâh says, "We have spread out the earth and We have placed on it firm mountains and grown in it a measured amount of every suitable thing." (19) In one place Allâh Ta'âlâ says, "We send you the winds that fill the clouds with water, and we send down the rains from the skies from which We give you to drink, and you do not have the ability to store it." (22) These winds carry on their shoulders thousands of tons of water. Then, wherever Allâh commands, it sends it down. In these winds, pollen is carried and transported from one tree to another, thus germinating.

(4) After mentioning those proofs of tawhîd and Allâh's power which are witnessed in the created world, the incident of man's creation has been mentioned which became manifest in the creation of the first human in the world, the father of mankind, Hadhrat Âdam ﷺ. His creation was definitely a manifestation of the divine power of Allâh Ta'âlâ. A being created from lifeless soil which can move, wake up, sit, walk, think, understand, use the elements of nature and in a world of possibilities has the ability to progress according to his potential, is definitely a very great proof of Allâh Ta'âlâ being All-Powerful and All-Wise. Hadhrat Âdam ﷺ's incident is not of an individual but of the whole of mankind. Just as Âdam ﷺ was honoured when Allâh created him with His hands, blew His soul into him, commanded the angels to prostrate before him and opened up the secrets of His power and marvels of His wisdom, so too were his children honoured in these things. When

the angels were commanded to prostrate, then all prostrated besides Iblîs. According to the Ulamâ, the most correct and preferred view is that Iblîs was not an angel but a jinn, who lived amongst the angels. Due to refusing to prostrate, he was expelled from the heavens and became worthy of everlasting damnation. To take revenge on Âdam ﷺ, he sought respite till Qiyâmah which he was granted. He asked for this respite so that he could lead the progeny of Âdam ﷺ astray. He openly proclaimed his aim by saying, "O My Rabb! Because you have misguided me, I will certainly beautify (misguidance) for them on the earth and I will lead them all astray." (39) He was told, "Your scheming will not work on those who are My servants. Yes, those who are evil-natured and forever despised, will follow you. I have prepared Jahannum for them which has seven doors. For every door, groups will be divided." (44)

Since the style of the Qur'ân is that together with warning, encouragement is also mentioned and together with Jahannum, Jannat is mentioned, therefore after mentioning the followers of Shaytân, those fortunate people are mentioned who will be in a place of safety and peace i.e. Jannah. There, there will not be any tiredness, difficulties and worries. The heart of every person will be clean, and free from animosity for another.

(5) After mentioning Jannah which is a place of such peace, contentment, rest and ease, Sûrah Hijr mentions the favours, bounties and mercies of Allâh on His servants. A servant, no matter what a great sinner he may be, should never become despondent of the mercy of Allâh because Allâh Ta'âlâ can forgive all sins, and His mercy overpowers His anger. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "O Nabî ﷺ, inform My servants that I am All-forgiving, Most Merciful and that My punishment is a painful punishment." (48-50)

These verses contain both the emotions of hope and fear. In the heart of a believer there should be fear of Allâh Ta'âlâ as well as having hope in His mercy.

(6) Thereafter, mention is made of Hadhrat Ibrâhîm عليه السلام's guests who were actually celestial angels in the form of humans. They had come to convey to Ibrâhîm عليه السلام glad-tidings of a son. It is mentioned that he was 120 years old at that time. His wife was also very old. Outwardly this was not the age of bearing children. Therefore, upon hearing this good news, Ibrâhîm عليه السلام was happy as well as surprised. When he expressed his surprise to the angels they said, "We are informing you of a true glad-tiding, so do not be from those who lose hope." (58) He answered, "(How can I lose hope in Allâh?) Only the misguided people lose hope in the mercy of their Rabb." (56) The purpose of my question was to find out whether we will be given a child in our old-age or will we be returned to youth, and will it be with this wife or after getting married to another woman?

(7) The angels after informing Ibrâhîm عليه السلام of the good news, proceeded to Hadhrat Lût عليه السلام and told him to leave that area at night together with his family members since the people of that area had exceeded all bounds in sinning. Allâh Ta'âlâ had passed a decision to clean the earth of their impure existence. This decision came to pass. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "A loud scream apprehended them at the time when the sun was rising. We made (this area upside-down by making) the upper area the bottom area and we rained upon them coarse pieces of stone." (74)

(8) The inhabitants of the valley of Hijr i.e. the nation of Hadhrat Sâlih عليه السلام had also taken the path of oppression and excesses. In spite of being explained to over and over, they were not ready to leave idol-worship. They were shown different miracles, especially the miracle of the birth of a she-camel from a mountain rock, which in reality was a collection of many miracles : a she-camel coming out of a rock, upon coming out it gave birth, it was unusually big in size, and it gave a lot of milk. However, these evil people did not appreciate this miracle. Instead of seeing it and believing, they killed this camel. Soon, they were overtaken by a punishment from

Allâh Ta'âlâ. At the end of sûrah Hîjr, mention is made of the bounty of the Qur'ân. Whoever attains this bounty, should never raise his gaze towards wealthy people. Nabî is commanded to openly proclaim the whole message which is revealed to him. Just like other sûrahs, this sûrah commences and ends with mention of the Qur'ân.

Surâh Nahl

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 128 verses and 16 rukûs. Nahl means bee. Because the bee has been mentioned in this sûrah, it has been given this name. The bee is just like any other insect, but by the command of Allâh it accomplishes such astonishing feats that human intelligence becomes shocked. Whether it is building the hive, dividing responsibilities or attaining a drop of honey, one by one, from far-off trees, gardens and fields, their every action is amazing. In the hive which they build, there are approximately 20-30 thousand rooms. These rooms are hexagonal (6 sided shape). Today, if it is measured by any modern instrument, then there will not be a hairs-breadth difference in the sides. In this hive there are different places for gathering honey, a "maternity home" for giving birth to the offspring and a storage room for excess honey.

A queen bee rules over the thousands of bees. In this small kingdom, her orders are followed and according to her commands, duties are distributed. The bees working in the hive have different duties. Some fulfill the duty of guarding the hive, some protect the eggs, some look after the small immature bees and some are involved in engineering and building the hive. When any bee finds nectar at any place during its hunt, then it returns and points out to its companions, by a special type of dance, the way of reaching that place. However, also as a precaution it leaves a special sign by that plant from where it has taken an extract so that those workers coming thereafter do not waste their time on it. If any bee mistakenly sits on filth or brings some poisonous substance, then

those guards who are appointed to keep check stop it outside and as punishment for its crime they make him an example of it by killing it. Allâh Ta'âlâ states that all the work of the bee is done by His command and that there are great lessons in it for those who ponder. (69) If any unprejudiced person ponders deeply over the life of the bee, then he will be forced to accept the existence, power and wisdom of Allâh.

Sûrah Nahl is also called Sûrah Ni'am because many of Allâh Ta'âlâ's ni'mats (favours and bounties) are mentioned. In the beginning of the sûrah mention is made that Qiyâmah is close. (2) Then the favours of Allâh Ta'âlâ are mentioned, that He has made the earth a carpet and the sky a roof, He has created man from a drop of sperm, He has created livestock which has many benefits and which is a means of beauty and honour for its master; He has created horses, donkeys and mules which carry heavy loads and are also a means of beauty and embellishment; He sends down rains and by means of it olives, dates, grapes and many other fruits and grains grow; He has placed in the service of man day and night, the sun and moon; He provides tasty meat (i.e. fish) and precious stones from the rivers and oceans; and boats and ships move in the ocean by His command. After mentioning these and other bounties Allâh Ta'âlâ rightly states, "If you wish to enumerate the bounties of Allâh, you cannot do so, verily Allâh Ta'âlâ is Most-Forgiving, Most-Merciful." (18) If man cannot even count the bounties of Allâh, then how can He be thanked. Take man's body and its different parts. If any defect or injury comes anywhere, then the enjoyment of one's whole life comes to an end. Man then thinks that if all the wealth and goods of this world are spent to remove this defect it will be cheap. If there is an ulcer in the stomach, one's urine is blocked or a person is continuously afflicted by indigestion, then there is no enjoyment found in food and drinks. If one's liver is affected, one's arteries become clogged or there is an obstacle in the creation of blood, then so much of pain is experienced that man desires death. Unmindful man does not even know how the system of his body is

functioning. If only a superficial glance is made of the internal and bodily bounties, then one will be astounded and will be forced to confess that definitely, these bounties cannot be enumerated, then what to speak of the outward bounties!

The Most Comprehensive Verse

In this sûrah an extremely comprehensive verse regarding which Hadhrat Abdullah ibne-Mas'ûd ؓ has said, "This verse of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm is the most comprehensive verse of good and evil." This is that verse which on hearing it, an enemy of Islâm Walîd ibne-Mughîrah was forced to praise it. Due to its comprehensiveness, from the era of Hadhrat Umar Ibn Abdul-Azîz, every khâtib recites it during the khutbah of Jumu'ah. This is the 90th verse of Sûrah Nahl. Three things are commanded and three things are prohibited. Adl (justice), ihsân (goodness), and giving to relatives have been commanded and fah'sha (every immoral word and action), munkar (every action which the sharî'ah prohibits) and baghy (exceeding the bounds e.g. pride, oppression, jealousy etc.) have been prohibited.

(1) The command of adl (justice) is general. In law as well as business dealings, fairness is necessary. It is also necessary in farâ'idh and wâjibât, with one's children, with friends and enemies, with ones close friends and with one's wife, non-relatives servants and workers.

(2) Every good action is ihsân. The command of ihsân is related towards Allâh Ta'âla, with one's family and group and even animals.

(3) Every deserving person is worthy of assistance, however assisting a destitute relative earns one a double reward.

(4) Every action whose evil is completely apparent is fahshâ e.g. fornication, homosexuality, drinking of liquor, gambling etc.

(5) Munkar are such acts which are regarded as evil in the sharî'ah and which every sound-natured person detests.

(6) Baghy means to oppress someone with regards to his honour, wealth or life.

At the end of the sûrah, Hadhrat Ibrâhîm ؑ is praised. During his whole life he remained steadfast on pure monotheism (tawhîd). Nabî ﷺ is commanded to follow his millat (way), to invite people towards Allâh with wisdom and beautiful advice and to be patient over the difficulties which will afflict him in this path. The beginning of the sûrah was revealed in answer to those who were seeking punishment quickly. By such superfluous requests, Nabî ﷺ's disposition would definitely become disturbed. The last verse advises him to be patient and not to be distressed. Thus the connection between the first and last verse is completely clear.

FIFTEENTH PÂRA

Sûrah Isrâ

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 111 verses and 12 rukûs. Isrâ means to travel at night. This sûrah is called Sûrah Isrâ because mention of the incident of Mi'râj is made in this sûrah, wherein Nabî ﷺ was taken at night first from Masjidul-Harâm to Masjidul-Aqsâ and then from there to the heavens. This incident is a great miracle of Nabî ﷺ and a great honour for him. Besides Nabî ﷺ (no other human) was granted this honour. This incident occurred whilst Nabî ﷺ was awake. If it occurred (in a dream) whilst sleeping, then it would not have been mentioned with so much of importance in the Qur'ân-e-Karîm, nor would the mushrikîn have denied it, since in a dream man sees more stranger and amazing incidents and sights than this one, and no-one calls him a liar. In the first verse of this sûrah, there is reference to this incident. Besides mi'râj, other important points mentioned in this sûrah are :

(1) The Banî Isrâ'îl were warned from before that they will spread corruption in the land of Shâm twice, and both times Allâh would place His servants over them as a punishment. Thus the first time, when they opposed the Tawrât and killed Ambiyâ (unjustly) like Shuayb عليه السلام, Bukhte-Nasr and his army were let loose over them. They spread from one corner of the land to the other killing their Ulamâ and the leaders. They burnt the Tawrât, made Baitul-Maqdis desolate and captured and took away many Isrâ'îlis. The second time the corruption and evil of the Jews had reached this height, was when they martyred Hadhrat Zakariyyâ and Yahyâ عليهم السلام and exceeded the bounds in sinning. This time, a king of Babûl, remembered by the name of Berdaus or Khardaus was placed over them. This evil and corruption has remained the history of the Jews. During the era of Nabî ﷺ, when they chose the path of sin and scheming, then as according to the narrations of their forefathers, they were overpowered by the Muslims, who Banished them from

the Arabian Peninsula. In the near past, Hitler proved to be a divine whip for them when he killed and burnt countless Jews. Today also, their corruption and evil has reached great proportions. We will now wait and see when Allâh Ta'âlâ will send down His punishment on them.

(2) After mentioning the greatness of the Qur'ân, the quality of haste being an integral part of human nature has been mentioned. Together with this, the actions of man and the inevitable results of his actions have also been mentioned. Thereafter, about 13 Islâmic etiquettes of social life have been mentioned. In reality, it is only due to character and etiquettes that an individual or group becomes worthy of respect and honour. Some have mentioned these etiquettes to be the message of mi'râj. These etiquettes, which are mentioned from verse 23 to 39, are mentioned hereunder :

Do not worship anyone besides Allâh, show kindness to one's parents, fulfill the rights of relatives, poor people and travellers, do not waste wealth in extravagance; do not be stingy nor so generous that you regret thereafter; do not kill your children out of fear of poverty; do not fornicate; do not kill any person unjustly; do not use the wealth of the orphans unlawfully; fulfill promises made; weigh and measure in full, do not become involved in those things which have not been investigated; do not walk on the earth proudly, (and finally for a second time we are commanded) do not make anyone besides Allâh your object of worship.

(3) The following points have been mentioned regarding the mushrikîn. They attribute daughters to Allâh (40), deny the hereafter and utter with great surprise, "When we die and our bones have decayed and we are in pieces, will we be created again?" (49-98) They demand physical miracles from Nabî ﷺ – sometimes they say, "We will only believe when you make streams flow from the earth;" sometimes they say, "Make gardens of dates and grapes bloom", sometimes they say, "Make a piece of sky fall on us" or "Bring Allâh and the angels in front of us", and sometimes

they say, "Build a house of gold for yourself" or "Go to the sky in front of us and bring a book for us from there." (90-93)

Besides this, other points mentioned in this sûrah are :

- The greatness and truthfulness of the Qur'ân, the purpose of its revelation and it being a miracle. (9,82,88)
- Man being honoured by Allâh (61-65)
- Man being given bounties such as his life and a soul. (85)
- Nabî ﷺ being commanded to perform taHajjud namâz. (78-79)
- The incident of Hadhrat Mûsa عليه السلام and Fir'awn . (101-104)
- The wisdom of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm being revealed bit by bit. (105-106)

At the end of the sûrah, mentioned is made that Allâh Ta'âlâ is free from any partner and children, and He is described with beautiful names.

Sûrah Kahf

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 110 verses and 12 rukûs. Kahf means cave. Since the incident of the people of the cave is mentioned here, it is called Sûrah Kahf. Many ahâdîth have been narrated regarding the virtue of this sûrah. Imâm Ahmed, Nasaî and Muslim have mentioned the narration of Hadhrat Abû Dardâ رضي الله عنه, "The person who recites the last ten verses of Sûrah Kahf will be protected from the evils of Dajjâl." The scholars have mentioned that it is sunnah to recite Sûrah Kahf either on Thursday night or Friday because Nabî ﷺ has said, "That person who reads Sûrah Kahf on Friday, will be illuminated with light till the next Friday."

Sûrah Kahf is one of those 5 sûrahs which commences with الحمد لله. The other four are : Fâtihah, An'âm, Sabâ and Fâtir. Hadhrat Maulâna Alî Mia (نور الله مرقدہ) has written a separate book on the explanation of this sûrah in which he states, "I have reached this

conclusion after much thought and pondering, that the theme of this sûrah is 'the battle between î mân and materialism'." This sûrah has great connection with the evils of the last era, its greatest standard-bearer being Dajjâl. This sûrah prepares the Muslims to confront the trials of Dajjâl. All the incidents, examples and indications in this sûrah explain the conflict between î mân and materialism. In Sûrah Kahf, three incidents and three parables are mentioned.

As'hâbe-Kahf (The People of the Cave)

The first incident is of As'hâbe-Kahf. They were a few young men who had î mân. A king by the name of Duqyânûs tried to force them to worship idols. He would kill all those people who would not accept his polytheistic call. On one side, these youngsters were promised huge sums of wealth, high posts and a high standard of living and on the other side were threatened with their lives. These youngsters understood the protection of î mân to be the most important thing. Thus, they fled until they reached a cave in a mountain far from the city. They intended to seek refuge there. When they entered it, Allâh Ta'âlâ placed them into a deep slumber. They slept there for 309 years. When they awoke from their sleep, they wanted food. One of them came to the city to buy food. There he came to know the reality of the situation. Conditions had changed in 3 centuries. The rule of the people of shirk had come to an end a long time ago and now a muwahhid (monotheist) had taken leadership. These youngsters, who had left their homes due to fear for their î mân were given the status of heroes by these people. From this incident, we learn that a believer should have great feeling for his î mân. If (Allâh protect us) a stage comes where one has to choose between î mân and materialism, then he should definitely give preference to the protection of î mân over every material thing.

Hadhrat Mûsa عليه السلام and Hadhrat Khidr عليه السلام

The second incident is of Hadhrat Mûsa عليه السلام and Hadhrat Khidr عليه السلام. When Sayyidinâ Mûsa عليه السلام was informed by Allâh Ta'âlâ that there is such a person who stays close to the shore of the ocean, who has such knowledge which he did not possess, then he set out in search of him. Journeying by foot, he finally reached the shore of the ocean. Here, he met Hadhrat Khidr عليه السلام. He sought permission to stay with him. Hadhrat Khidr عليه السلام gave permission on condition that Mûsa عليه السلام does not ask any questions. Then three amazing incidents occurred. In the first incident, Hadhrat Khidr عليه السلام caused damage to a ship which the owners had allowed him to travel in free of charge. In the second incident, he killed an innocent child. In the third incident, he built up an old wall which was on the verge of collapsing, in a village whose inhabitants refused to give them food. Hadhrat Mûsa عليه السلام could not keep quiet at these three times and asked, "Why did you do this?" After the third time, Hadhrat Khidr عليه السلام announced their separation, "From now you cannot travel with me." However, he also explained the reality behind those three incidents. He said, "I broke a plank of the ship because the employees of one oppressive king were waiting ahead. They would confiscate every new and perfect ship. When I damaged it, it was saved from falling into the hands of this oppressor. Thus, the means of sustenance of these poor people was protected. The child was killed because if he grew up, he would have been a great trial for his parents, due to which it is possible that they would have fallen into the filth of kufr. Allâh did not wish that these very pious parents should be deprived of îmân due to love for their son. Therefore Allâh Ta'âlâ has passed this decision that he should be killed, and in place of him, these parents will get pious, loving and obedient children. The reason why I repaired the falling wall is because it was the property of two orphans. Their parents were pious people. Under the wall a treasure was hidden. If the wall fell, then the people would have stolen the wealth and these two orphans of pious parents would have been deprived. We repaired the wall so

that they could remove their wealth from under, after reaching age, so that it could benefit them."

From the incident of Hadhrat Mûsa ﷺ and Hadhrat Khidr ﷺ we learn that whatever occurrences are happening in front of us daily - death comes to someone in youth or childhood; someone is involved in an accident and becomes injured; someone's building falls down; someone's business becomes bankrupt, behind all these occurrences very wonderful and amazing wisdoms and realities are hidden. There is a great difference between the apparent and hidden things in the world. Man's gaze is only focused on outward things. His intelligence is unable to fathom internal and hidden secrets. These incidents refute the flag-bearers of materialism who regard the outward as everything, and deny the presence of the great wisdom of that Being who is All-Wise and All-Knowing, working behind the scenes.

The third incident is of Zhul-Qarnayn, which we will mention about in the 16th pâra.

Three Parables

Besides these three incidents, three parables are also mentioned in Sûrah Kahf. The first has been presented in the form of an incident. This incident is of a man who was the owner of two very valuable and fruit-bearing gardens. Besides this, he had many other forms of wealth and possessions. The abundance of wealth had made him proud and arrogant. He began making huge claims. He was caught up in this wrong notion that this wealth and riches will remain with him forever, and would never come to an end. He also thought that Qiyâmah would never take place and even if it did, then he would also live in great ease in the hereafter. His friend who possessed îmân made an effort to explain to him that he should not regard asbâb (means and causes) as Allâh. He should not consider means to be everything and forget Allâh. Whatever happens in this world, happens by His wish.

However, wealth had blinded him to such an extent that he could not see the reality of the situation, which was in fact clearer than the sun. Thereafter Allâh's punishment came and his gardens were burnt to ashes. After everything had been destroyed, he began regretting saying, "O how I wish I did not make shirk and I did not give means (asbâb) the rank of Allâh." However, his sorrow did not benefit him in the least bit. It is clear that this man believed in Allâh and he had a vague picture of Qiyâmah in his heart. This which he mentioned, "O how I wish I did not make shirk", refers to "shirk fil asbâb" i.e. to understand the means to be everything and to forget Musabbibul-asbâb (The Creator of causes and means). If an impartial analysis is made, then we will be forced to admit that never mind those non-muslims who are involved in this shirk, many Muslims are also involved in this form of shirk. There is no doubt that to use means is not against îmân and tawakkul (trust in Allâh), but to take the means to be the actual cause of conditions will negate îmân.

The second example which Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions, "And mention to them the example of this worldly life which is like water which we have sent down from the skies, then the vegetation of the earth mixes with it (making lush vegetation), thereafter it becomes bits and pieces and the wind scatters it. And Allâh has full power over everything." (45) i.e. in destruction and mortality, this worldly life is like that rain which comes down from the skies due to which the whole land becomes lush, the crops and fruits grow and the flowers bloom. From all sides beautiful scenery is witnessed. Thereafter, deterioration in this perfection begins to set in. The flowers begin drooping, leaves begin falling off the trees, fruit are cut off. Thereafter, everything is trampled upon, shredding it to bits and pieces which the winds blow away. This is the condition of the bounties of this world which eventually comes to an end. Health, youth, life, happiness, ease and comfort are all temporary conditions. Only ignorant and foolish fall prey to the deception caused by these bounties. An intelligent person knows that all of

these are only material possessions and beauties of this worldly life. Those things which will remain forever and which will assist one in the everlasting life are good actions like charity, zikr and tilâwat, good character and having true compassion for other humans.

The third example is of pride and arrogance, which is mentioned in the incident of Hadhrat Âdam ﷺ and Iblîs when he refused to prostrate before Âdam ﷺ due to his pride and arrogance, even though it was Allâh's command. He thought that he was more virtuous, "How can one more virtuous bow down to one less in rank?" In this incident, man is made to understand that he should never become involved in pride and arrogance and that he should never go against the command of Allâh using his logic because servitude demands obedience and surrender and not refusal and objection.

SIXTEENTH PÂRA

The remaining incident of Hadhrat Mûsa and Khidr عليهما السلام are mentioned in the beginning of the 16th pâra. Thereafter Zul-Qarnayn is mentioned. The commentators have different views regarding him. Many have regarded Alexander Macedonî as Zul-Qarnayn. However, the correct view is that to regard Alexander as Zul-Qarnayn is difficult because he was a man devoid of î mân and fear of Allâh whereas the personality mentioned in the Qur'ân was a king who not only relied on outward means, but possessed î mânî qualities. He used the means which Allâh Ta'âlâ had granted him against oppressive and tyrant kings, to save mankind and to establish justice. Some other commentators have tried to prove other kings besides Alexander as the Zul-Qarnayn which the Qur'ân mentions. However, if any particular person is not specified, then too there is no problem in understanding these verses because the purpose of the Qur'ân is not to mention historical details, particulars and personalities. Its purpose is to transfer the lessons and advices found in these narratives to the reciter.

By studying the Qur'ân, we learn that Zul-Qarnayn had been granted material power by Allâh Ta'âlâ as well as spiritual and î mânî strength. The circumference of his conquests was very vast. On one side he reached the final shores of the east and on the other side he reached the tip of the west. During his conquests, he passed by a certain nation who lived between some mountains. They were always the target of one barbaric tribe which the Qur'ân refers to as Yâjuj Mâjuj. On the request of these oppressed people, Zul-Qarnayn built such a firm and solid wall due to which they were protected from the attacks and invasions of Yâjuj Mâjuj. This wall will break into pieces close to Qiyâmah and Yâjuj Mâjuj will spread in the whole world. Zul-Qarnayn, inspite of abundant material possessions, had î mân in Allâh Ta'âlâ whereas the materialists and kings regarded outwards means as everything. At this time,

western culture is at the forefront in the worship of materialism. The biggest mouthpiece of this culture will become apparent which (in the language of nubuwwat) is called Dajjâl. It seems that his appearance is not very far away because a short time remains for the final battle to occur between î mân and materialism. Blessed are those people who are successful in protecting their î mân from the culture of Dajjâl and at the time when Dajjâl makes his appearance. At the end of sûrah Kahf, it seems as though those people who regard outward means and materialism as everything are being addressed, "So whoever expects to meet His Rabb, should perform good actions and should not make anyone a partner in the worship of his Rabb." (110)

Sûrah Maryam

Sûrah Maryam is a Makkî sûrah. It has 98 verses and 6 rukûs. As in other Makkî sûrahs, in Sûrah Maryam, Allâh's existence, His oneness, resurrection and retribution has been discussed. In this sûrah Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions the incidents of many Ambiyâ عليهم السلام. The first incident mentioned is of Hadhrat Zakariyyâ ﷺ who had become old. His bones were weak and his hair had turned white. His wife was also old and barren. Hadhrat Zakariyyâ ﷺ was 120 years old and his wife was 98 years old. Outwardly, it did not seem possible to bear offspring at this age. Then too he raised his hands in front of Allâh. Before asking for a son, he placed forth the following three matters in the court of Allâh, the Lord of the Universe.

- 1- I am very weak.
- 2- I have not lost hope because you have never rejected my du'â.
- 3- By this du'â, my purpose is to benefit dîn. Then in clear words, he asked for a son who would succeed him in dîn. Together with this, he requested that the son should be such that Allâh would be happy with him as well as the people. Allâh Ta'âlâ accepted this du'â and granted him a

very pious son, who did not have love for the world, who was a devoted worshipper of Allâh Ta'âlâ, and was also granted nubuwwat. (1-15)

The Incident of Hadhrat Îsâ ﷺ

After mentioning the incident of the birth of Hadhrat Yahyâ ﷺ an even more amazing incident is mentioned i.e. the birth of Sayyidinâ Îsâ ﷺ. Without doubt, Hadhrat Yahyâ ﷺ's birth occurred in an amazing way because his parents had passed the age of bearing children, but Hadhrat Îsâ ﷺ's birth was without the agency of a father, and his mother was a virgin. Here, in Sûrah Maryam, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions in detail how this strange incident occurred, how Hadhrat Maryam رضى الله عنها separated from her family and went to the eastern corner of Baitul-Maqdis to engage in worship, how Jibrâ'îl ﷺ came to her, blew into her collar, and how she fell pregnant and how a severe condition of grief and sadness overtook her.

After giving birth, when she brought forth her child to her people, the tongues of the Jews started wagging and they started laying accusations against her. Hadhrat Maryam رضى الله عنها pointed to her son by the command of Allâh. The boy, lying in his mother's lap began to speak. The first words he uttered were, "إني عبد الله" Verily I am the servant of Allâh". On entering this world, at that time of his life when he had not even reached the age of speaking, he uttered such words miraculously which not only proved the innocence of his mother but which was also sufficient to cause the polytheistic edifices which hard-line Christians had created to crash to the ground. In this miraculous speech of his he mentioned that Allâh Ta'âlâ had bestowed him with six favours :

- 1- I am a slave; not Allâh nor His son.
- 2- I have been granted nubuwwat and wahî (divine revelation).
- 3- Allâh has made me blessed. My presence is a means of blessings and mercy for people. I am a teacher of goodness and I am beneficial to the ummah.

- 4- I am obliged to fulfill shar'î responsibilities as well as to worship (my Lord). From this, he specifically mentioned salâh and zakâh which shows the greatness and importance of these two forms of worship.
- 5- I am obedient to my mother, and I serve my family members. Humility is an inherent part of my nature. I am neither proud nor haughty.
- 6- I have been given glad-tidings of peace and safety in this world and the hereafter. (16-36)

This miraculous birth of Hadhrat Îsâ ﷺ became a cause of difference between the Jews and Christians. The Christians called him Ibnullâh (son of Allâh) whereas the Jews felt no shame in regarding him as illegitimate (معاذ الله).

The Incident of Hadhrat Ibrâhîm ؑ

After the birth of Hadhrat Îsâ ﷺ and the differences of the ahle-kitâb regarding him have been mentioned, Sûrah Maryam moves to the incident of Sayyidinâ Ibrâhîm ؑ which occurred with his father, so that a glimpse of the lies, pride, haughtiness, ignorance, obstinacy, foolishness and misguidance found in shirk (polytheism) may be shown. Another purpose is to make apparent the character and beautiful qualities of Hadhrat Ibrâhîm ؑ, especially his forbearance, wisdom and compassion so that an example of a true inviter can be seen by the inviters of truth, which they can take as a role-model. Similarly, we learn from this incident that due to inviting towards the truth and being steadfast on it, so much rains of mercy descended on Hadhrat Ibrâhîm ؑ. From his progeny, a great nation was born. From his progeny, Ambiyâ and pious people were born, especially khâtamun-nabî (ﷺ). Very amazing is the fact that every nation and every group in the world feels proud to be related to him. Surâh Maryam tells us that when Hadhrat Ibrâhîm ؑ opened his eyes of understanding, he found his father involved in idol-worship. When he was granted nubuwwat, he began his call of tawhîd and reformation in his own house. He attempted to

explain to his father with love and softness. In spite of his father being a mushrik, Ibrâhîm عليه السلام kept consideration of respect in his speech. His father Âzar, however began threatening him and said, "If you do not stop (speaking ill of the idols), then I will stone you. Leave me alone for a long period." (96) When after continuously being invited (to the truth), Âzar did not come onto the straight path, nor did his nation understand the call of Ibrâhîm عليه السلام, then for the pleasure of Allâh he Ibrâhîm عليه السلام migrated from Irâq to Shâm. In reward for leaving his people and family for Allâh, Allâh Ta'âlâ granted him better progeny and comforters in the form of Hadhrat Ismâ'îl, Hadhrat Is'hâq and Hadhrat Ya'qûb عليهم السلام. (41-50)

Thereafter in Sûrah Maryam, Hadhrat Mûsa, Hadhrat Hârûn, Hadhrat Ismâ'îl and Hadhrat Idrîs عليهم السلام are mentioned. (51-58) The successors of these Ambiyâ however were such people who neglected salâh and choose the path of worshipping their carnal desires and whims. Thereafter, mention is made of the mushrikîn who reject resurrection and recompense. They will definitely be gathered around Jahannum. At the end of the sûrah, we are informed that Allâh Ta'âlâ places love in the hearts of the believers and the present sinners will be destroyed like those before them. Those people who crush their desires for the pleasure of Allâh Ta'âlâ and become solely His, Allâh Ta'âlâ creates love for them in the hearts of the people, which is in reality the result of the love of Allâh Ta'âlâ for them, as is mentioned in a narration of Bukhârî, Muslim and Musnad-e-Ahmad that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "When Allâh Ta'âlâ loves a servant of His, then He informs Jibrâ'îl عليه السلام, "I love so-and-so a servant, you also love him"." Jibrâ'îl عليه السلام then begins loving him. He announces in the heavens, "Allâh loves so-and-so a servant. You also love him." Thereafter, all the inhabitants in the heavens begin loving him. Then his love and acceptance is placed into the hearts of the inhabitants of earth. On the other hand, when Allâh Ta'âlâ is displeased with someone, He also informs Jibrâ'îl عليه السلام. Jibrâ'îl عليه السلام then begins hating him. He informs all the inhabitants of the heavens. They then begin despising him. The effects of hate

become apparent on the earth and the people of earth begin despising him.”

Sûrah Tâhâ

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 135 verses and 8 rukûs. Hadhrat Ibn Abbâs ؓ has narrated that Sûrah Tâhâ was revealed after Sûrah Maryam. Between both sûrahs there is a great link with regards to the subject matter. The incident of Hadhrat Mûsa ؑ which is mentioned briefly in Sûrah Maryam is mentioned in detail in Sûrah Tâhâ. Similarly, in Sûrah Maryam, only the name of Hadhrat Âdam ؑ is mentioned whereas in this sûrah, his incident is mentioned with a bit of detail. In this sûrah, the principles of dîn have also been discussed. Tâhâ is one of the names of Nabî ؑ and here, he (ﷺ) is addressed through this name and told, “We have not revealed the Qur’ân upon you to cause you difficulty.” (2) The reason for this was that Nabî ﷺ would bear tremendous strain in the tilâwat of the Qur’ân and in da’wat (propagation). He (ﷺ) would recite such lengthy qirât in salât at night that his blessed feet would become swollen. Then he (ﷺ) would place his life in jeopardy in propagating and conveying the message of the Qur’ân to the people. When they did not turn an attentive ear to him, he (ﷺ) would become very grieved. Therefore Allâh Ta’âlâ in many places, consoles him (ﷺ). Here too, Nabî ﷺ is being advised that he should not place himself in too much hardship. The heart of every person can not be affected by this Qur’ân. It is only “advice for that person who has fear (of Allâh in his heart)”. After explaining this, Allâh Ta’âlâ mentions some of His qualities so that Nabî ﷺ can get satisfaction and consolation in his heart that Allâh is with me, He will protect me and He will never leave me alone in any condition. After this clarification, as an example, the incident of Mûsa ؑ is mentioned to show how Allâh Ta’âlâ makes special arrangements for the protection of His special servants.

Sayyidina Mûsa ﷺ

The incident of Hadhrat Mûsa ﷺ has been mentioned with much more detail in the Qur'ân and is repeated much more in comparison to that of other Ambiyâ, since there are wonderful and amazing lessons and allusions contained in it, which invites man to ponder over the favours and power of Allâh Ta'âlâ. Perhaps in this repetition, one wisdom is that in every era there is some Fir'awn, whom the people of î mân must be ready to face and combat. Here in Sûrah Tâhâ from approximately verse 9 to 98, many incidents in the life of Hadhrat Mûsa ﷺ have been mentioned. However, it is not in chronological order. For example, his incident begins with his return from Madyan, seeing a fire, speaking with Allâh Ta'âlâ and receiving nubuwat. The incident of him being placed in the box after his birth has been mentioned later whereas with regards to sequence, the first incident occurred later and the second incident occurred first. A major reason for this is tafannun (variation in style) i.e. the Qur'ân mentions one incident many times changing the style so that the reciter does not become bored. Another reason is so that one's gaze does not remain focused on the minor details of the incident, but rather on attaining the advices and lessons. Portions of his life story which have been mentioned in Sûrah Tâhâ can be placed under the following headings to impress upon the mind i.e. speaking with Allâh Ta'âlâ, being placed in the river, the command of Allâh to him and his brother to go to Fir'awn, his discussion with Fir'awn in line with the principles of giving beautiful advice, the gathering of the magicians to oppose him, the victory of Hadhrat Mûsa ﷺ, the magicians accepting î mân, the Banî Isrâ'îl leaving Egypt in the night under the leadership of Allâh's Nabî, Fir'awn's pursuit together with his army and their destruction, the ingratitude of the Banî Isrâ'îl in response to the favours of the Most Kind and Merciful, Sâmiri's making of a calf and the misguidance of the Banî Isrâ'îl, the return of Mûsa ﷺ from Mount Tûr with the Tawrât and his expressing of anger on his brother. By studying these verses, seven special favours of Allâh Ta'âlâ on Hadhrat Mûsa ﷺ come to fore.

- 1- Protection from the oppression and harm of Fir'awn, whose men were searching and killing new-born babies.
- 2- Placing his love in the hearts of people so much so that whoever saw him, would begin loving him.
- 3- Taking special care and supervision of his upbringing and nurturing.
- 4- Returning him to his real mother, to be breastfed by her, with full honour and respect.
- 5- Protecting him from being killed in retaliation after he killed a Coptic.
- 6- Granting him nubuwwat on his return from Madyan.
- 7- Granting him the honour of speaking to Him and choosing him for His closeness and love.

At the end of this incident, the wisdoms of the revelation of Qur'ânic narratives are mentioned as well as the punishment which the people who turn away from the Qur'ân will have to face on the Day of Qiyâmah. Then, in line with this, the frightening conditions of Qiyâmah are explained from verse 106 to 112. To teach us that error is part of human nature, the forgetfulness of Hadhrat Âdam عليه السلام is first mentioned followed by the incident which took place with Iblîs. (115-122)

There is a warning for those who turn away from the Qur'ân. Their life will be straitened and on the Day of Qiyâmah they will be raised up blind. Surprise is expressed on the condition of those stubborn people who despite seeing such a great miracle like the Qur'ân demand miracles like the staff and camel. (132) In the last verse, Nabî ﷺ is commanded to tell these hostile people, "Say, 'Everyone is waiting (for the results of their actions), thus you wait as well. Soon you will know who is treading the straight path and who is rightly-guided (towards Jannat).'"

SEVENTEENTH PARA

Sûrah Ambiyâ

The seventeenth pâra commences with Sûrah Ambiyâ which has 112 verses and 7 rukûs. The reason for its name is that approximately 17 Ambiyâ are mentioned in it. In Sahîh Bukhârî Hadhrat Abdullah Ibne Masûd ؓ narrates, "Sûrah Banî Isrâ'îl, Kahf, Maryam, Tâhâ and Ambiyâ were amongst the early sûrahs to be revealed and are my old treasure and earnings."

Sûrah Ambiyâ consists of the following important points :

(1) At the beginning of Sûrah Ambiyâ, a picture of the temporary nature of this worldly life is drawn. We are informed that the time for Qiyâmah and reckoning is very close. However, man is totally negligent and oblivious of this frightening day (2), neither does he prepare for it and nor does he do such actions which will benefit him on that day. When any verse is presented to him, he mocks at it and rejects it. He does not know with what seriousness, dignity and humility this great speech should be listened to.

(2) The mushrikîn used to speak amongst themselves regarding Nabî ﷺ, "This man who claims risâlat (prophethood) is not a Rasûl, but is a human like us and he is unable to bring forth material miracles like the other Ambiyâ." The Qur'ân answers that those Ambiyâ who came from before were all humans. They would eat, drink and fulfill all other human needs. No Nabî was such that he was free from human needs. Regarding miracles, what can be a greater miracle than the Qur'ân? One reason for its miraculousness is that people of different thoughts, beliefs, character and actions can judge themselves in the mirror of the Qur'ân. It has made mention of every nation and person, either clearly or by indication. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Definitely, we have revealed to you a book in which mention of you is made. Do you not understand?" (10)

It is mentioned of the famous Tâbiî and Arab leader, Hadhrat Ahnaf Ibn Qays رضي الله عنه that once while sitting, he heard someone reciting this verse. He became startled and said, "Bring the Qur'ân-e-Majîd. Let me look for those verses wherein mention is made of me, so that I can then see which group of people do I belong to and who do I resemble." He continued turning the pages of the Qur'ân and reading the conditions of different people. First, he read those verses wherein the fortunate people are mentioned. Some of them had sacrificed their lives in the path of Allâh, some had spent all their wealth, some stayed away from the bed the whole night and some did not go close to any evil. Then he read those verses in which the hypocrites, sinners, disbelievers and polytheists were mentioned. After reading both types of verse he said, "O Allâh! I am not from both these groups." Then he recited the verse of Sûrah tawbah in which such people are mentioned who had done evil as well as good actions. After reciting this, he said, "Yes, this is where mention is made of me."

One of the laughable and foolish actions of the mushrikîn was that they were not unanimous on one opinion regarding the Qur'ân. Sometimes they would say, "This is magic." Sometimes they would say, "This is poetry." At other times they would say, "This is confused dreams," "Nabî (ﷺ) concocted it up," or "Someone has taught him." The Qur'ân mentioning their differences and confusion says, "In fact they say, 'This (Qur'ân) is confused dreams.' Nay, but in fact they say, 'He has concocted it. Nay but he is a poet (and the Qur'ân is poetry).' Let him bring to us such an (outward) sign as were sent to the people of the past." (5) Thereafter, the Qur'ân turns our attention to the final result of the oppressive nations which Allâh has made to serve as admonition for people of insight. When these nations that were destroyed saw the signs of Allâh's punishment descending, they attempted to flee. Allâh Ta'âlâ did not grant them respite and He turned them into a heap of ashes. (11-15) It was said to them, "Now, do not attempt to flee, but return to that ease and comfort which you were so intoxicated about, and

return towards those lofty palatial homes which you were so proud of, and towards those areas and districts where you used to strut about arrogantly. Go there, so that when the people ask about the sight of the descent of punishment, then you will be able to answer." Hadhrat Qatâdah رحمۃ اللہ علیہ states, "These words have been said to them to mock and disgrace them."

(3) In this clear book, countless proofs of the oneness of Allâh Ta'âlâ in the universe are spread out. In the universe, whatever forms there are i.e. the earth, heavens, sun, moon, day and night etc., Allâh Ta'âlâ has not created them in vain but with wisdom and with the purpose that man ponders over them and derives lesson. In this world of colour and smell, everything is involved in the obedience and tasbîh of Allâh Ta'âlâ besides the disbelieving humans who have made disobedience and negligence their way of life. (16-20)

(4) The mushrikîn, who lower themselves before inanimate objects, leaving aside Allâh Ta'âlâ, have been criticized and reprimanded. A proof is sought from them regarding their belief that idols are worthy of worship (21-24) It is apparent that there is no intellectual or narrated proof for the permissibility of idol-worship and shirk.

Six Proofs

(5) After refuting the incorrect theories of the mushrikîn, six proofs have been mentioned regarding the existence of one creator and powerful being. All of these are proofs of the amazing system of the world which can be witnessed with the eye and which people of knowledge have accepted after investigating its reality.

- a- The first proof given is that the heavens and the earth were both joined together. Allâh Ta'âlâ separated them. He made the heavens the abode of the angels and the earth the abode of humans. The theory which the Qur'ân presents of the heavens and earth being joined was not known by the people of that time nor did they claim it to be wrong. Now, approximately 200 years ago, the experts of

geology and astronomy, after great research and observance, have come to this conclusion that all objects in orbit whether it be the sun, stars, earth or moon were all fused together, then they were separated, whereas the Qur'ân mentioned this reality 1400 years ago without fear of refutation. What else can this be called but a miracle of the Qur'ân?

- b- The second proof is that Allâh Ta'âlâ created everything from water. This is a great revelation made on the lips of an unlettered person. Today, all scientists accept that water has the rank of being the basic element of the existence of all living things. Without water, life is impossible. Every living being, whether it be an animal, a tree or a plant, are in need of water. Look at the moon. It is similar to the earth in form, but since there is no water there, it is impossible to live on its surface.
- c- The third proof given is that Allâh Ta'âlâ has placed mountains on the earth so that the earth does not shake due to (the weight of) people. If the mountains were not there, then the earth would be struck with continuous earthquakes and disturbances and would not be protected from the fire raging within the recesses of the earth. Now too, we find such volcanic mountains through which the earth at times releases heat. The lava coming out of it makes life impossible.
- d- The fourth proof is that Allâh Ta'âlâ has made wide roads in the earth so that people can travel on them. Leave alone flat plains, look at mountain ranges which are found from country to country. Allâh Ta'âlâ has made wide valleys and roads between these mountains so that man has no difficulties during his travels.

- e- The fifth proof is that Allâh Ta'âlâ has made the heaven a protected roof. In this roof are thousands of stars, the sun and moon which are moving at a tremendous speed in their orbits. Neither do they collide, nor do they become entangled. If even one star moves out of its orbit, then there would have been chaos in the system of the universe. Who is the being controlling this whole system and who does not allow anyone of these celestial bodies to alter from their specified course and speed? Is it Uzza and Manât? Is it Lât and Hubul? No, it is none but Allâh, the Master of the universe.

- f- The sixth proof is that Allâh Ta'âlâ has created day and night, the sun and moon. These are all orbiting in the skies just as fish swim in water. There is no strain in their continuous movement, and they never stop. They continue moving. Their life is only in movement. (30-33) The Qur'ân presented this theory of the movement of day and night, sun and moon, stars and celestial bodies at such a time when the intelligent people of that time were unaware. Modern science corroborates this Qur'ânic statement. Scientists have understood this reality after years and years of investigation using huge telescopes and modern machinery in ready laboratories. The question is, besides the means of wahî (divine revelation) what other way was there for an unlettered Nabî to gather such information and offer this information to the whole world? Is the explanation of these realities on the blessed tongue of an unlettered Nabî not proof of his truthfulness? Definitely it is, but it is necessary to remove the bandages of obstinacy and prejudice to accept these proofs.

(6) After mentioning the proofs of tawhîd, nubuwwat, resurrection and recompense, the incidents of 17 Ambiyâ are mentioned i.e. Hadhrat Mûsa, Hadhrat Hârûn, Hadhrat Ibrâhîm, Hadhrat Lût,

Hadhrat Ishâq, Hadhrat Ya'qûb, Hadhrat Nûh, Hadhrat Dâwûd, Hadhrat Sulaymân, Hadhrat Ayyûb, Hadhrat Ismâ'îl, Hadhrat Idrîs, Hadhrat Zul-Kifl, Hadhrat Yûnûs, Hadhrat Zakariyyâ, Hadhrat Yahyâ and Hadhrat Îsâ عليهم السلام (48-91). The call of all these Ambiyâ was one, "Whoever does good actions and he is a believer, then his efforts will not be wasted" (94) From these 17 Ambiyâ, the incidents of 6 of them have been mentioned with a bit of detail.

- a- Hadhrat Ibrâhîm عليه السلام, who due to calling towards tawhîd and refuting shirk, was thrown into the fire. However Allâh Ta'âlâ protected him.
- b- His nephew, Hadhrat Lût عليه السلام who was sent as a Nabî to a very evil nation.
- c- Hadhrat Nûh عليه السلام, who was called Shaikhul-Ambiyâ, due to his old age and due to his patience and forbearance in the path of Allâh. He fulfilled the duty of da'wat for 950 years.
- d- Hadhrat Dâwûd عليه السلام and his son Hadhrat Suleymân عليه السلام who were both Nabîs and kings. They were both granted spiritual and material bounties.
- e- Hadhrat Ayyûb عليه السلام, who was tested by difficulties and sickness. He displayed such patience, that his patience has become proverbial. He continuously turned his attention to Allâh Ta'âlâ during his difficulty and sickness. His attention to Allâh Ta'âlâ turned the mercy of Allâh Ta'âlâ to him. His du'âs were accepted and the period of trial was brought to an end.
- f- Hadhrat Yûnus عليه السلام whom the fish swallowed. From within its stomach, he called out to Allâh Ta'âlâ. His call was heard and he was saved from grief. Verily Allâh Ta'âlâ saves those who call out to him in sadness and grief.

(7) Yâjuj and Mâjuj who have been mentioned in Sûrah Kahf are mentioned once again here. Close to Qiyâmah, they will be released and will descend from every high place. (96)

(8) The mushrikîn and their idols will be the fuel of Jahannum on the Day of Judgment. They will not be able to assist each other.

(9) After mentioning the incidents of the past Ambiyâ, we are informed that Muhammad Rasûlullâh ﷺ is a mercy for the whole universe in worldly matters and in dîn. Nabî ﷺ has conveyed Allâh's message to mankind. When after presenting all types of proofs and still people did not understand, then he (ﷺ) made du'â to Allâh Ta'âlâ, "He said, "O my Rabb! Pass judgment for the truth. And our Rabb is very merciful, help is sought from Him in those things which you people mention." Allâh Ta'âlâ accepted his (ﷺ) du'â. During the Battle of Badr, Allâh Ta'âlâ's punishment descended on the mushrikîn. On this du'â, Sûrah Ambiyâ terminates.

Sûrah Hajj

Sûrah Hajj is a Madanî sûrah. It has 78 verses and 10 rukûs. This sûrah is called Sûrah Hajj because the announcement of the compulsion of Hajj on the tongue of Hadhrat Ibrâhîm ؑ is mentioned in it. Our honourable readers have read this over and over that in Makkî sûrahs, generally beliefs are discussed, whereas masâ'il and laws are discussed in Madanî sûrahs. However, this does not mean that beliefs are not discussed in Madanî sûrahs. The above-mentioned principle is only with regards to that subject matter which is predominant. It is not a general and uniform rule. Take Sûrah Hajj as an example. Even though it is a Madanî sûrah and such shari laws like hijrat (migration), jihâd, Hajj and qurbânî are found in it, more of the subject matter of Makkî sûrahs are found in it i.e. the belief of tawhîd, warnings and threats, resurrection and recompense, Jannah and Jahannum, the scenes of Qiyâmah and its horrors.

The sûrah commences with such words that one's heart begins to shiver and one's body begins to quake. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "O people, fear your Rabb. Verily the tremor of Qiyâmah is a very great

thing. On that day you will see that every breastfeeding mother will forget her suckling infant, every pregnant woman will abort her foetus and you will see the people drunk whereas they will not be drunk, but the punishment of Allâh is severe." On seeing it, people will lose their senses.

(1) Thereafter resurrection is proven.

The main proof is the different stages of human creation. Man passes through seven stages in his creation and coming into existence.

- 1- The father of man, Hadhrat Âdam ﷺ was created directly from sand. Every human, indirectly, has a relationship with sand.
- 2- Every human is created from a drop of semen. Semen is made from blood which is made from food, which is made from sand. The secret of life is hidden between sand and semen.
- 3- In the third stage, a clot of blood is formed.
- 4- In the fourth stage, a piece of flesh is formed, sometimes complete and sometimes incomplete.
- 5- In the fifth stage, a child is born. Its senses are very weak.
- 6- In the sixth stage, he becomes a young man and reaches perfection in strength and intelligence.
- 7- In the seventh stage, he either passes away in youth or reaches old age where he begins thinking like a small child or baby.

How can those people, who themselves go through these stages then say that Allâh does not have the power to create a second time? This is more so for the people of today who know that Allâh Ta'âlâ has hidden all human characteristics in one drop of semen. How can those people who have so much of information then deny a second life after death?

(2) Some people are completely astray (8-10). Some are such that they are confused. If they attain worldly benefits, then they remain

in worship and are firm on dîn. However instead of benefit, if they are faced with any trial, then they turn away. (11) It is as if these foolish people have regarded dîn and î mân as currency. They judge its purity or falseness by worldly benefit and harm.

(3) If a review is taken of the different religious groups, then they can be divided into 6 groups :

- 1- Muslims who follow Rasûlullâh ﷺ and believe in the Qur'ân.
- 2- Jews, the followers of Hadhrat Mûsa عليه السلام, who believe in the Tawrât.
- 3- Christians, the followers of Hadhrat Îsâ عليه السلام, who believe in the Bible (Injîl).
- 4- Sâbi. It has been mentioned that this group was found during the era of Hadhrat Ibrâhîm عليه السلام. They used to worship the stars.
- 5- Majûs (Zoroastrians). They do not follow any heavenly religion. They worship the sun, moon and fire.
- 6- Mushrik (polytheists). They worship idols. Five of these groups are Shaytâns and only the first one is Rahmân's (i.e. Allâh). Judgment will be passed between these groups on the Day of Judgment. (17)

(4) Hadhrat Ibrâhîm عليه السلام built the house of Allâh (baitullâh) by the command of Allâh Ta'âlâ. Thereafter, he stood on Mount Abu Qays and made the announcement of Hajj. Allâh Ta'âlâ, through His complete and perfect power, conveyed this call to all the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth, and all heard it. Because of the connection to Hajj and the rites of Hajj, we are also informed that to honour the prohibitions of Allâh (i.e. not to do wrong) is a sign of î mân. Just as there is great reward in doing good actions, similarly there is great reward in abstaining from those things and actions which Allâh has declared as harâm (prohibited) (30).

(5) A true believer has four qualities :

- 1- Fear of Allâh.
- 2- Patience in difficulties.
- 3- Punctuality in salâh.
- 4- Spending in good causes.

(6) After commanding the sacrifice (qurbânî) of animals, we are informed that their blood and meat do not reach unto Allâh, but the taqwâ (piety) of the person reaches Him. (37) The person in whose heart there is taqwâ, will abstain from sins and will perform good actions only for the pleasure of Allâh.

(7) After mentioning the rites of Hajj, permission for jihâd and fighting is granted to the Muslims because the disbelievers prevented the Muslims from the dîn of Allâh and from entering Makkah. In the early stages of Islâm the Muslims were commanded to be patient and to overlook. However, when the Muslims were established in Madînah and in spite of their patience and forbearance, the evil and excesses of the mushrikîn continued, then through this verse (39) of Sûrah Hajj, permission was given to make jihâd. It is the opinion of many Sahâbahh and Tâbi'în that after approximately 70 verses which were revealed advising not to retaliate, this was the first verse in which permission for fighting was given. Together with this, the wisdom of jihâd has also been mentioned. The wisdom is that if Allâh did not grant permission for jihâd, then the enemies would have conquered them and the people of kufr would have gained an upper hand over the people of Islâm, due to which places of worship would have become deserted. However, when they fear that they will get a stone in response to a brick, then they will think 100 times before attacking. (How sad is it that the disbelievers do not have fear of a Muslim attack, nor do they have any worry to defend themselves. That is why they move around Islâmîc countries without hindrance like wild animals).

(8) Like the other Ambiyâ عليهم السلام, the purpose of Nabî ﷺ being sent was to convey Allâh's message. (49) Nabî ﷺ remained steadfast in fulfilling the purpose of his coming. The mushrikîn continued in their work of mockery, rejection and creating of doubts in his call. This line of action has occurred with every Nabî. On the other hand, Allâh has His system where He continues removing the whisperings and doubts created by Shaytân (52-53) (Today also, the west has kept alive the methods of Shaytân from past eras and by means of the media, continue creating doubts in Islâmic beliefs and practices).

(9) After mentioning the proofs of Allâh's power and refuting the false deities of the kuffâr, the speech turns a second time towards Islâmic laws and commands. The people of î mân are commanded to make jihâd in the path of Allâh, perform salâh and give zakâh. Sûrah Hajj terminates with these commands.

EIGHTEENTH PARA

Sûrah Mu'minûn

The 18th pâra commences with Sûrah Mu'minûn. This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 118 verses and 6 rukûs. In this sûrah, the principles of dîn are discussed. In the beginning nine verses, seven such qualities of the believers have been mentioned due to which they will become worthy of Jannatul-Firdaus. These seven qualities are mentioned hereunder.

- 1- They have true îman which is free from of hypocrisy and ostentation.
- 2- They have khushû in salâh i.e. they stand in front of Allâh with humility and fear.
- 3- They refrain from laghw. Laghw refers to every such statement and action in which there is no benefit.
- 4- They discharge their zakât in a perfect manner. Thus they fulfill the rights of people as well as the rights of Allâh.
- 5- They protect themselves from adultery and immoral acts.
- 6- They fulfill their promises and protect those things which have been entrusted to them.
- 7- They protect their salâh. They bear in mind its times as well as its etiquettes and fundamentals.

After mentioning the qualities of the believers, the proofs of îman found in the life of man and the different stages of his creation are mentioned. The Qur'ân had mentioned the different stages of man's creation in the womb of the mother hundreds of years ago when the Arab and non-Arab philosophers and scientists did not have the courage to utter anything regarding it. Today's modern science and medical research also verifies these stages. After mentioning the proofs of îman found in man, 3 proofs found in the physical word are mentioned :

- 1- The creation of the seven heavens and the amazing creations that exist within.

- 2- The falling down of rain and the growing of different grains and plants due to it.
- 3- The creation of livestock and benefits in them like milk, meat, wool, being able to ride on them and to load goods on them.

After mentioning the proofs of Allâh's power and oneness, the sûrah now moves to the incidents of the Ambiyâ عليهم السلام. In this regard, the incidents of Hadhrat Nûh, Hadhrat Hûd, Hadhrat Sâlih, Hadhrat Mûsa, Hadhrat Hârûn and Hadhrat Îsâ Ibn Maryam عليهم السلام have been mentioned. (23-50) All these Ambiyâ had one call, one program and one purpose. It seems as if all of them were sent in one era and to one place. However, after these Ambiyâ left this world, their nations divided into different groups and parties. Every group was happy with their ways and ideologies. How sad it is that Muslims today have fallen into this same condition! The Qur'ân is one, Nabî is one, qiblah is one but the Muslims are not one. Diverse talks, fatwâs of kufr and fisq (open sinning), in-fighting and arguments. There is only one solution to these differences i.e. every group lowers themselves before the Qur'ân and Sunnah.

On one side are those people who are involved in fighting and arguing with each other and their hearts are drowned in ignorance and negligence. On the other side are those pious servants of Allâh who have love for each other. Their hearts are alive and enlightened with the light of guidance. There are four outstanding qualities in these people.

- 1- They fear the punishment of Allâh Ta'âlâ.
- 2- They believe in the signs of Allâh, be it His laws or His signs in the world.
- 3- They abstain from show and do every action solely for the pleasure of Allâh.
- 4- They have the quality of ihsân i.e. inspite of doing good actions they are fearful, not knowing if their actions are accepted by Allâh or not? (57-61)

In contrast to these sincere believers are those unfortunate and deprived ones who mock the Qur'ân and Rasûlullâh ﷺ. The Qur'ân mentions 3 major reasons for their mockery and disobedience.

- 1- They do not use their intelligence. Instead of pondering over the Qur'ân, they reject and mock it.
- 2- They falsify the messenger of Allâh only due to obstinacy and stubbornness. It is not that they did not know him (ﷺ). They knew very well his truthfulness, trustworthiness, his family lineage, status and his personality. They knew that Nabî ﷺ would never speak lies.
- 3- The third reason is mentioned in an interrogative method. Do they see the signs of madness in Nabî ﷺ (معاذ الله)? Definitely some of them used attribute of madness to him. However, the actual reason of falsifying him was not that they (معاذ الله) regarded him to be mad. The main reason was that they did not like the truth and they wanted to see the truth subservient to their desires whereas if truth had to follow their desires, then there would have been disorder in the system of the universe. (68-71)

After proving tawhîd and refuting shirk, at the end of the sûrah we are informed that on the Day of Qiyâmah, man will be divided into 2 groups :

- 1- Those who are fortunate.
- 2- Those who are unfortunate.

The book of deeds of the fortunate (سعداء) will be weighty while the book of deeds of the unfortunate (أشقياء) will be light. There, contacts will not be of assistance. The disbelievers will desire to return to this world. It is obvious that their desires will not be fulfilled. They will be reminded that they used to mock the people of îmân, thus today there is nothing but loss for them. Then they will be questioned, "How many years did you live in the world?" They will say, "We lived for a day or part of a day, ask those who counted." Allâh Ta'âlâ will say, "You did not live but for a short while, if only you knew." i.e. if

there was some intelligence and understanding in you then you would have known that this world was despicable and but for a short while. The purpose of asking them this question will be to afflict them in extra sorrow and to explain the lowliness of this worldly life in comparison to the everlasting life of the hereafter. On this day, they will also experience the lowliness and confinement of this worldly life.

Ibn-Kathîr رحمہ اللہ mentions a narration that once Nabî ﷺ gave a sermon to the Sahâbah-e-Kirâm رضی اللہ عنہم in which he said, "When Allâh Ta'âlâ will enter the people of Jannah into Jannah and the people of Jahannum into Jahannum, then He will ask, 'O people of Jannah! How many years did you live on earth?' They will say, 'One day or part of the day.' Allâh Ta'âlâ will say, 'In that day or part of the day which you received, you had done some very profitable business. You bought My mercy, My pleasure and My Jannah. Now reside therein forever.' Then the people of Jahannum will be questioned, 'How many years did you live in the world?' They too will give the same answer, as the people of Jannah had done. Allâh Ta'âlâ will say, 'Your business ran at a loss in the time which you received. You have bought My fire and My anger. Now, remain therein forever.'"

In the last verse, Allâh Ta'âlâ teaches all of mankind, through the means of Nabî ﷺ, that we should supplicate to Him with the following du'â, "O My Rabb! Forgive me, have mercy on me and You are the most merciful of those who show mercy."

Sûrah Nûr

Sûrah Nûr is a Madanî sûrah. It has 64 verses and 9 rukûs. It is called Sûrah Nûr because the word نور is mentioned in it, in the verse **اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ**. The second reason for its name is that such etiquettes, virtues, laws and rules are mentioned which lightens and brightens the road of social life. In this sûrah, mostly those laws are mentioned which are related to chastity and modesty. Therefore, a

special command has been given that women should be taught this sûrah. Hadhrat Mujâhid رحمہ اللہ states that Rasûlullâh ﷺ has said, "Teach your menfolk Sûrah Mâ'idah and your womenfolk Sûrah Nisâ." Sayyidina Ayesha رضي الله عنها also emphasized the teaching of this sûrah to women.

Those religious injunctions regarding chastity and the rectification of domestic and social life that have been mentioned in this sûrah are as follows :

Laws and Etiquettes

The first and second law is regarding the punishment meted out to fornicators. An unmarried fornicator will be given one hundred lashes which is mentioned in the Qur'ân. If a fornicator is married, then he will be stoned to death as has been mentioned in a mutawâtir hadîth. An inherent trait of fornicators has been mentioned i.e. only those people are ready to be their partners in life who themselves are fornicators and evil people. The third law is of hadde-qadhif i.e. if any person falsely accuses any intelligent, mature, chaste man and woman of adultery or fornication, then that person will be lashed 80 times. (4-5) The fourth law is of li'ân, which applies only for a husband and wife. If a husband accuses his wife of adultery and he does not have four witnesses, then they will curse each other and will be separated.

The fifth thing mentioned in the form of a story is the incident of Ifk. Ifk means slander and lies. This law was revealed when some hypocrites slandered Sayyidinâ Ayesha رضي الله عنها. This was a very great slander uttered against a noble personality i.e. the pure wife of Rasûlullâh ﷺ and the spiritual mother of the Muslims. Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions this incident in ten verses. In these verses, the hypocrites are criticized. Muslims are cautioned never again to become part of these types of false accusations, and the purity and chastity of the wife of the Nabî is declared. This is the first time in the history of

mankind that the purity of any personality has been mentioned via wahî (revelation). This is one of the specialities of Hadhrat Ayesha رضي الله عنها.

The sixth command is regarding the permission and etiquettes of entering the home. We should not enter anyone's house without permission. It is mustahab that salâm be offered before seeking permission. (67-69) The seventh command has been given to men and women of îman that they should lower their gazes and protect their private parts. Women have been granted permission to make apparent their zînat (beauty) to their husbands, fathers, fathers-in-law, son's, husband's sons (from other marriages), brothers, nephews (brother's and sister's sons), women, slave-girls, those men who have no desire for women and those children who are not aware of the affairs of women. Besides these people, it is not permissible for them to expose their beauty to anyone else. (Beauty refers to hands, feet, arms, neck, face, hair and legs beneath the knee – Translator)

The eighth command given is that the marriages of free men and women as well as slaves who can fulfill the rights of marriage should be performed. Also encouragement has been given regarding the marriages of slave-girls. In Islâm, fornication cannot be tolerated at all. However, it can never be stopped as long as marriage is not made easy. Islâm has made marriage easy and has encouraged it. (32) The ninth command is regarding slaves and slave-girls. Before the light of Islâm spread in the world, there was the custom of making prisoners of war slaves. Great oppression was meted out to this group who were without support and strength. Islâm made revolutionary reforms in this custom. It closed the doors of oppression completely. It gave rights to them like other humans. Freeing them was a way to attain Allâh's pleasure. A command was given to free them as expiation for different sins. One important guideline given was that if any slave or slave-girl wanted to gain

freedom by paying some money then this pact should be accepted. In technical terms, this pact is called mukâtabat.

The tenth command comes as a refutation of one completely harâm manner of earning wealth during the days of ignorance. Before the revelation of the Qur'ân, some oppressive and greedy people used to force their slave-girls to fornicate in exchange of money (i.e. prostitution). A chief like Abdullah Ibn Ubay, who had already made complete preparation to become king of Madînah before the migration of Nabî ﷺ, had also kept such slave-girls. Here he was prohibited from doing so. This in no way means that if they are ready to fornicate happily, then it is permissible. Both cases are impermissible and harâm. The purpose is to show that these women, inspite of being slaves, had severe dislike for such an action. Thus those who are free, to a greater extent, should have hatred for it. (33)

After mentioning these 10 laws and etiquettes, mention is made of beliefs, îmân and the light of truth, by means of which Allâh Ta'âlâ guide the creation. To make this clear 3 examples have been given. This is one special style of the Qur'ân that it gives physical examples to explain its purport. The first example is of the people of îmân and yaqîn (conviction). The second and third example is of the people of falsehood. In the first example, the light found in the heart of a believer is likened to the light of that lamp which is made of clear and transparent glass. This has been placed in a small recess in the wall so that its light remains focused in a specified direction where there is a need for it. The oil used in this lamp has been attained from the olive tree which contains such a glimmer that without even lighting it, the glimmer can be seen. (35) This is the condition of the heart of the mu'min that before attaining knowledge, he is ready to practice on guidance. Now when knowledge comes, then there is light upon light. Yahya Ibn Salâm رحمه الله عليه has said, "The heart of a believer understands the truth before it is explained to him because his heart was in conformity with the truth from before."

From the two examples mentioned for those on falsehood, the first is regarding their actions which they regard as good. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "The example of their actions is like a mirage. A thirsty person looking at a mirage from a distance thinks it to be water. However when he comes close, he does not find a trace of water." This is the condition of the disbeliever who regards his actions as beneficial, but when he will have to face Allâh Ta'âlâ after death, then there will be nothing for him. His actions will turn into dust and fly away. (39)

In the second example, their beliefs have been likened to the layers of darkness of the ocean, where man cannot even see his own hand. This is the condition of a disbeliever who is wandering around lost in the darkness of disbelief and misguidance. (40)

After mentioning the examples of the people of truth and falsehood, mention is made of the proofs of Allâh's presence and oneness found in the forms of the changing of night and day, the falling of rain, the creation of the heavens and earth, the flight of birds, and the creation of the different types of livestock. (41-45)

Thereafter, a comparison is made between two groups i.e. the believers and hypocrites. The hypocrites make false claims of îmân and obedience. However in practical life, when any such occasion occurs where there will be personal harm if they accept the command of Allâh and His Rasûl ﷺ, then they turn away whereas the believer is ready to obey at all times. Allâh has promised the true believers that He will grant them khilâfat (vicegerency) on earth. Allâh Ta'âlâ has already manifested this promise. The Muslims gained power over the Arabian Peninsula, the lands of the east and west came under their control and they demolished two powerful kingdoms i.e. the Persian and Roman kingdom. (47-55)

After mentioning the proofs of tawhîd, the comparison between the believers and hypocrites and the promise of khilâfat (vicegerency), three more laws of social life have been mentioned. This first is regarding small children and those male and female slaves who live in the house. If they wish to enter one's private room before Fajr, in the afternoon at siesta time and after 'Ishâ, then they should seek permission and enter because during these three times formal clothing is removed and sleepwear is worn. The second command is that when the children mature, then like other mature people, it is compulsory on them that whenever they come home, they should seek permission or they should in any other way inform of their coming e.g. by coughing or making a sound with their shoe. The third command is regarding those women who are very old and have passed the age of marriage. If they remove the outward clothing of purdah, then there is no harm. Adding these three to the ten mentioned before, a total of 13 laws and etiquettes have been mentioned. The fourteenth etiquette is that when entering one's house, salâm should be made. The fifteenth etiquette is that when sitting in any gathering regarding community consultation, then one should not leave without permission. The sixteenth etiquette is that Allâh's messenger should not be called as people call one another.

The sûrah terminates with the message the whole universe is under the power and knowledge of Allâh Ta'âlâ. Allâh Ta'âlâ knows the conditions and actions of all. On the Day of Qiyâmah, every person will be informed regarding the actions that he used to do.

NINETEENTH PÂRA

Sûrah Furqân

Sûrah Furqân is a Makkî sûrah. It has 77 verses and 6 rukûs. The first two rukûs of this sûrah are found in the eighteenth pâra. The sûrah begins with mention of the Qur'ân regarding which the mushrikîn levelled different types of doubts and which they falsified. One group regarded it as fables of past nations. Another group claimed that it was the creation and making of Nabî ﷺ and that the ahle-kitâb had assisted him. The third group felt that it was clear sorcery. (1-6)

After the Qur'ân, there is mention of Sâhib-e-Qur'ân i.e. Nabî ﷺ. Stubborn and antagonistic people would belie him. They felt that a messenger (Rasûl) cannot be a human but had to be an angel. If, supposing any human attained nubuwat or risâlat, then the wealthy and people of high-standing would have attained it. No poor or orphan would ever receive it. (7-9) Allâh Ta'âlâ refutes their misgivings and false claims by clear proofs.

The nineteenth pâra commences with the claims, objections and futile demands of the mushrikîn e.g. sometimes they used to say, "Why have angels not come down to us or why is it not such that we can see our Rabb?" (21) In answer to this, Allâh Ta'âlâ states that they will see the angels at the time when they will come to remove their souls. When they will see the angels, then there will be no glad-tidings for them. Since they are void of the basic condition for the acceptance of good actions i.e. îmân, on the Day of Judgment their actions will be of no benefit and they will turn into dust and fly away. This day will be very severe on them. Due to grief they will bite their fingers and say, "O if only we followed the way of the messenger." On this day Allâh's Rasûl ﷺ will lodge a complaint to Allâh, "O my Rabb, verily my nation had forsaken this Qur'ân."

Imâm Ibn Qayyim رحمته اللہ علیہ states that they are several ways of forsaking

- 1- To listen to the Qur'ân, and not to believe in it.
- 2- To read and believe in it but not to practice on it.
- 3- Not to make it a judge in one's dealings and disputes in life.
- 4- Not to ponder over its meaning.
- 5- Not to attain cure from spiritual maladies.

My honourable readers! Before continuing further, ponder for a short while and then make an important decision regarding yourself and the entire ummah. How have we forsaken the Qur'ân today! Also ponder, inspite of being involved in destructive spiritual and moral sicknesses, neither do we abstain from them nor do we take benefit from the heavenly medicine in which there is a definite cure, then can anyone be saved from its harmful result which is an increase in sicknesses and destruction? Never ever!

The mushrikîn also raised the objection "Why is the Qur'ân not revealed at one time just as the Tawrât and Injîl were revealed at one time?" It is obvious that there are many wisdoms hidden in the Qur'ân being revealed gradually e.g. it is easy to memorise it, understand its meaning, remember the laws and practise on it. Here Allâh Ta'âlâ has mentioned one wisdom and that is the purpose being revealed gradually, was so that Nabî ﷺ's blessed heart could be continuously illuminated with the light of the Qur'ân. Through its knowledge and realities, Nabî ﷺ's soul would attain strength and spiritual nourishment. People of intellect know that rain which falls down suddenly will destroy a field. However, the rain which comes down gradually at the correct time, and which is soaked into the earth gives great benefit.

After these objections, the nations of Hadhrat Mûsa, Hadhrat Hârûn, Hadhrat Nûh, Hadhrat Hûd and Hadhrat Sâlih عليهم السلام have been mentioned to give consolation to Nabî ﷺ. Besides this, proofs of Allâh's power and oneness have been mentioned. (45-49) At the end of this sûrah 13 qualities of (Rahmân's special servants) have been mentioned i.e. humility, turning away from ignorant people,

salâh and ibâdah at night, fear of punishment of Jahannum, being moderate in spending - neither extravagant nor stingy, complete abstinence from shirk (polytheism), staying away from unlawful killing, protecting oneself from fornication and immorality, abstaining from false oaths, turning away from gatherings of music and evil, listening to the book of Allâh and being affected by it and taking benefit from it, making du'â to Allâh Ta'âlâ for a pious wife and children, and that He should make them a means of guidance as well as rightly-guided themselves. (63-74)

Dear readers! Before studying the following sûrah, let us make the following du'â to Allâh Ta'âlâ, "O Rahîm and Karîm, create in us these 13 qualities by Your mercy and kindness and include us in the list of عباد الرحمن (the servants of Rahmân).

Sûrah Shu'arâ

Surâh Shu'arâ is a Makkî sûrah. It has 227 verses and 11 rukûs. This sûrah commences with the hurûfe-muqatta'ât طسم. Immediately after this, according to the normal habit, mention is made of Allâh's great favour which is in the form of the Qur'ân. Nabî ﷺ felt such a sense of responsibility regarding the Qur'ân, that he exhausted himself in conveying its knowledge, explanations and laws. In his (ﷺ) heart was such a pain for the guidance of mankind that it seemed that he would lose his life. (2-3) On the other hand was the habit of these antagonists, that when advice and guidance was presented to them, they would regard it as necessary to turn away. (5-6) Thereafter, the incidents of many Ambiyâ have been mentioned. These incidents commence with that of Mûsa عليه السلام. Allâh Ta'âlâ granted him nubuwwat and commanded him to go to Fir'awn.

In fulfilling the command of Allâh, he reached the court of the false claimant of divinity. At this juncture, Allâh has mentioned a few glimpses of the conversation which transpired between him and

Fir'awn. First Fir'awn mentioned his favours that, "I had nurtured you." Mûsa عليه السلام said, "How do you have the right to boast of your favours when you made my people slaves?" Then Fir'awn reminded him of the incident of a killing which took place at his hands unintentionally. Mûsa عليه السلام answered, "I did not purposely kill, but this action occurred by mistake." Fir'awn asked with pride and in a mocking tone, "What is رب العلمين ? The Rabb (Creator and Sustainer) of the universe?" Mûsa عليه السلام said, "The Rabb of the universe is He who has created the earth and heavens. These two move according to His command. He has created you and your forefathers. He causes the sun to rise from the east and sets it in the west." Fir'awn continued uttering nonsense but Mûsa عليه السلام introduced Allâh to him and mentioned the definition of رب العلمين in detail. Then Fir'awn began levelling threats. He requested Mûsa عليه السلام to bring forth a miracle. On his request, Mûsa threw down his staff which changed into a serpent. He took out his hand from beneath his clothing and it shone like the sun. Due to its brightness, the eyes of Fir'awn and his courtiers were dazzled. Fir'awn immediately attributed it to magic.

He gathered all the famous magicians of Egypt to destroy Mûsa عليه السلام. In a huge field in front of hundreds of thousands on the annual day of celebration of the Egyptians, the contest began. The sticks and staffs thrown by the magicians seemed to be like snakes. Hadhrat Mûsa عليه السلام threw down his staff which swallowed all the snakes, and cleared up the field. The magicians immediately understood the truth and fell down in prostration as believers in front of the Lord of the Universe. In spite of Fir'awn's warnings, they remained firm on imân. Banî Isrâ'îl came out of Egypt in the darkness of the night by the command of Hadhrat Mûsa عليه السلام. In the morning, Fir'awn together with a huge army set out in pursuit of them. Finally, at the edge of the ocean they caught up with Banî Isrâ'îl. In the ocean, roads were formed through which the Banî Isrâ'îl attained salvation. Fir'awn and his army were drowned. In this incident, we learn the

lesson that the people of truth are eventually successful and there is nothing other than destruction destined for the oppressors. (10-28)

The second incident is of Hadhrat Ibrâhîm ؑ whose father was Âzar and whose nation used to worship idols. With great wisdom, he invited his people to î mân and tawhîd. He mentioned five proofs and five qualities of Allâh Ta'âlâ :

- 1- He is my creator and guide.
- 2- He sustains me.
- 3- He gives cure from sickness.
- 4- He gives death and then gives life.
- 5- He forgives sins in this world and the hereafter.

In line with these 5 qualities, he made 5 du'âs which shows his perfection in î mân and true conviction :

- 1- O Allâh, grant me knowledge and understanding.
- 2- Let people speak good of me.
- 3- Grant me a place in Jannah.
- 4- Forgive my father (this du'â was made when his father's disbelief was not completely clear to him).
- 5- Do not disgrace me in the hereafter.

From this incident of Hadhrat Ibrâhîm ؑ, we learn that people should at all times turn their attention to Allâh. (69-104) The third incident is of Hadhrat Nûh ؑ who gave the call of î mân for 950 years. However, his people did not accept. Thereafter, all were drowned. From here we learn this lesson that only whom Allâh wishes will gain guidance. (105-122) The fourth incident is of Hadhrat Hûd ؑ who went to the nation of Âd. These people, were a nation blessed with great bodily strength, long-life and good conditions. Without necessity, they built huge palaces. They also rejected the call of î mân. Thus, the punishment of Allâh came upon them. From this incident, we learn that the end result of extravagance, show, pride and building without necessity is never beneficial. (123-140)

The fifth incident is of Hadhrat Sâlih عليه السلام. His people had many material possessions, abundance of wealth and great peace and security. They lived in lush gardens and beautiful lands, however they were ungrateful for Allâh's favours. Soon, they were destroyed by means of an earthquake. This is the result of every ungrateful nation. (141-159) The sixth incident is of Hadhrat Lût عليه السلام whose nation had exceeded the bounds in evil, immorality, following of desires and acts of filth. They used to do such an action (i.e. homosexuality) which none had done before them and which even animals detest. Stones were rained down from the heavens on them and they were completely destroyed. At the end of the incident, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions the following which He also mentions at the end of the other incidents. "Verily in this is a sign. Most of them do not believe." The sign and lesson is that the final result of those people and nations who have exceeded the bounds in fulfilling their lustful desires is never good. (160-175)

The seventh incident is of Hadhrat Shuayb عليه السلام. Allâh Ta'âlâ had granted his people many favours. They owned dense forests, gardens full of fruit and springs of sweet water, but were involved in the disobedience of Allâh Ta'âlâ. From amongst the many sins, one major sin is that they would fall short in fulfilling the rights of fellow human beings. When they did not stop, inspite of being warned, Allâh Ta'âlâ passed His decision to punish them. For many days, there was a severe heat wave. Then clouds appeared. The people gathered under it to gain coolness and shade. Fire began raining down from the clouds. There was an earthquake on land, and these people were burnt to ashes. (176-191) The incident of the people of Shuayb عليه السلام teaches us that to usurp people's rights is an action which incites Allâh's punishment and anger. As the sûrah had commenced with mention of the Qur'ân, it ends off refuting the false objections from the side of the mushrikîn regarding the Qur'ân. (221-227)

Sûrah Naml

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 93 verses and 7 rukûs. The sûrah begins with the hurûfe-muqatta'ât طس. Naml means ant. Since the incident of the ant is mentioned here, it has been given this name. One speciality of this sûrah is that it is from amongst those three sûrahs that have been placed in the Qur'ân-e-Karîm in exactly the same sequence that it was revealed, i.e. Shu'arâ, Naml and Qasas. As with other sûrahs which commence with the hurûfe-muqatta'ât, this sûrah also commences with an introduction to the Qur'ân-e-Karîm and the greatness of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm. The Qur'ân is a book of guidance for those who are people of îman. (1-3) Thereafter, the incidents of Hadhrat Mûsa, Hadhrat Sâlih and Hadhrat Lût عليهم السلام are mentioned briefly, while the incidents of Hadhrat Dâwûd and Hadhrat Sulaymân عليهما السلام are mentioned with a bit of detail. Allâh Ta'âlâ had made humans, jinns and birds subservient to Hadhrat Sulaymân عليه السلام. He also knew the language of the birds. A few glimpses of his life which Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions regarding him is mentioned hereunder.

One day, Hadhrat Sulaymân عليه السلام, together with his army, passed by a valley of ants. He heard one ant telling the others, "Enter your houses, it should not be that Sulaymân and his army unwittingly crush you." Sulaymân عليه السلام heard this, smiled, and thanked Allâh Ta'âlâ that He had granted him so many favours, amongst which he could understand the speech of the animals and birds. (18-19) In the court of Sulaymân عليه السلام, from amongst the birds that were always present, one was the hoopoe bird. One day he informed Sulaymân عليه السلام about the Queen of Sabâ and her people that they used to worship the sun. Sulaymân عليه السلام sent a letter to this queen inviting her to present herself in his court. The queen of Sabâ had a lot of pride over her material possessions. However, when she saw the palaces and most modern equipment of Sulaymân عليه السلام, she realized the worthlessness and weakness of her power and strength. Thus

she accepted î mân. After Hadhrat Sulaymân ؑ, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions the incidents of Hadhrat Sâlih and Lût ؑ briefly. Hadhrat Sâlih ؑ invited his people towards î mân. They became divided into two groups i.e. believers and disbelievers. Amongst the disbelievers were nine leaders who took oaths and declared that they will attack him suddenly at night and they will kill the Nabî of Allâh. However, before bringing their intentions into action, they became entangled in the punishment of Allâh Ta'âlâ. There remained no-one now to even take their names. (45-53)

In front of the eyes of Hadhrat Lût ؑ's people, such darkness enveloped and their hearts became so dark that they regarded the worst evil in the world as good. In their eyes, that person was an evildoer who prevented them from this evil. Those who were drowned from head to toe in the filth of this sin were regarded as intelligent by these people. This is exactly the case today. Those who tread the straight path are called old-fashioned and many other names, whereas those who are always doing evil are regarded as intelligent and progressive. When the matter reached such a stage, then their towns were lifted up and thrown back to the earth. Thereafter stones rained down upon them. They became a sign of admonition for all. (54-59)

TWENTIETH PÂRA

The twentieth pâra commences with mention of 5 proofs of Allâh's power and oneness. All five are mentioned in an interrogative mode.

First proof : Is that Allâh who has created the heavens and earth and who has sent down rain from the skies, creating beautiful and lush gardens better or those partners attributed to Allâh Ta'âlâ?

Second proof : Allâh is that true benefactor who has made the earth a place of tranquillity, He has made rivers flow on its chest, He has placed heavy mountains on its back and He has placed a barrier between sweet and bitter water preventing them from mixing. Is it justice to equate idols to this benefactor and powerful being? (61)

Third proof : At the time of difficulty, oppression, sickness and hardship who is called? Lifeless idols or the Lord of the universe? (62)

Fourth proof : Who shows the way in the darkness of the land and sea? Who sends cool winds before sending down rain? Is it Allâh Ta'âlâ or hand-crafted statues?

Fifth proof : Who created humans the first time and who will create them a second time? Besides Allâh Ta'âlâ, is there any other deities which you can present? (64)

The Qur'ân's general style is that it deduces the divinity and oneness of Allâh Ta'âlâ by the realities of human life and universal spectacles. It makes the whole universe a field of discussion and thought, until even it's antagonists are forced to accept that besides Allâh Ta'âlâ there is none who can do all these works. (60-64) After the belief of tawhîd, the second fundamental issue which the mushrikîn could not understand was the issue of a second life. They used to say, "How it is possible that when we and our forefathers are sand, then we will be resurrected a second time? (67) In answer to their silly and hollow objection, Allâh Ta'âlâ consoles His Nabî ﷺ

and warns the mushrikîn that whatever has happened to the past mushrikîn can happen to them also. "Travel in the lands and see what was the plight of the sinners." Thereafter some scenes of Qiyâmah are mentioned. (83) The universe will only remain until the time when the trumpet (sûr) is blown. When Hadhrat Isrâfîl ﷺ blows the trumpet the first time, then fear and awe will overcome all of creation in the heavens and earth. The second time the trumpet is blown, death will come to everything in the universe. When it is blown the third time, then all will arise alive from their graves. As the sûrah began with the mention of the greatness of the Qur'ân, at the end we learn that it is man's good fortune if he holds firmly to the teachings of this blessed book.

Sûrah Qasas

Sûrah Qasas is a Makkî sûrah. It has 188 verses and 9 rukûs. The major portion of this sûrah deals with the incident of Mûsa ﷺ and Fir'awn. The sûrah begins with the hurûfe-muqatta'ât طسم and immediately thereafter discusses the truthfulness of the Qur'ân. Then, the beginning of the incident of Mûsa ﷺ is mentioned. Sûrah Qasas informs us that Fir'awn was very powerful in Egypt. He had exceeded all bounds in pride, oppression and injustice. He had divided the people of Egypt into different ranks and groups, like the colonialists and imperialists of today, so that the leaders would not face any fear of a uniform collective strength of the general masses. The Banî Isrâ'îl, who had become the largest minority in Egypt, were the main targets of this oppression and injustice. Allâh Ta'âlâ intended to raise the weak and make those who were subservient, the leaders.

In these conditions, Mûsa ﷺ was born. His mother was troubled because she knew that if Fir'awn's henchmen came to know, they would not leave this newborn child alive. Allâh who is All-wise and All-Knowing guided her. She built a box, placed the beloved of her heart in it and handed it over to the waves of the River Nile. Floating

on the water, the box was lifted by one of Fir'awn's servants who placed it on the lap of his wife, Hadhrat Âsiya. Fir'awn wanted to kill this innocent child. However Allâh's decision was something else. Definitely only that occurs which He decides. Man's planning, schemes and programs all come to naught. Âsiya spoke in such a way that the hard-hearted tyrant's heart melted. On the other side, due to excessive grief, the child's mother was in such a condition that she had no tranquillity and rest at all. In her thoughts, she could only see the box falling into the hands of Fir'awn's people and the blood spurting out from the child's neck. Allâh, who is Most Merciful and Most Kind, gave comfort to her disturbed heart and promised her that He would return the child to her. How did this miracle become manifest? How did the impossible become possible? This is not man's work, but His work.

Many wet-nurses attempted to breastfeed this hungry child, but he was not prepared to drink anyone's milk. His sister, pretending to be a stranger, was watching this scene. On her advice, the distressed mother was called and (taking her to be a wet-nurse) the child was placed in the lap which it had been desiring. Fir'awn had made such a system, according to his thoughts, that no Isrâ'îlî child could drink from its mother. From the beginning, this plan was destroyed. Allâh Ta'âlâ's decision was that the child which was to become a threat to the greatest oppressive leader of the time, must be nurtured under the care of his rule and at his expense. Thus, that which the True Lord, Allâh had decided, had occurred. The plans of the false claimant of divinity were unsuccessful. When Mûsa ﷺ had grown into a young man, he mistakenly killed a Copt. On the advice of a loyal person, Mûsa ﷺ left Egypt and took the road to Madyan. Here he knew none, there was no place of residence, nor any means of earning. He spread out his hand to that Being who nurtures by means of a poisonous snake and a man-eating wolf. He said, "O my Rabb! Verily I am in need of that goodness which You sent down to me." This du'â of his can be likened to an ocean in a teacup. Everything which man is in need of is included in this du'â. Man is in

need of shade as well as the sunshine. Man is in need of being awake as well as sleep.

Whilst sitting under the shade of a tree, two modest and honourable women came along, herding their goats. Due to his kindness, he drew out water from the well for them and gave water to the goats to drink. The girls were intelligent. They went to their father Hadhrat Shuayb عليه السلام and praised the strength, piety and trustworthiness of this unknown traveller. Mûsa was called by means of one of these girls. Not only did he get an honourable and comfortable place to stay, a proposal of marriage was presented to him with a few conditions. After marriage, Mûsa was once returning to Egypt with his wife when he saw a blazing fire in a very cold jungle. He went forward to get fire. Here he was granted nubuwwat. The Being who granted him nubuwwat also granted him the miracle of the staff and shining hand and commanded him to speak words of truth to the one who had made the earth straitened for the servants of Allâh and who was not prepared to accept any being greater than himself. The words of truth were conveyed to him. Fir'awn did not want to accept, thus he did not accept. Allâh Ta'âlâ lifted him and his army of troops and handed them over to the wild waves of the sea, together with their slogan of material progress. Only Allâh's name remained! The incidents of Hadhrat Mûsa عليه السلام, Fir'awn and the Banî Isrâ'îl, a part of which has been mentioned here and the remaining part in different places in the Qur'ân, has many valuable lessons and advices. Maulânâ Hifzur-Rahmân Sewhâî رحمته اللطيف has mentioned them in Qasas-ul-Qur'ân. We are mentioning a summary of these here in our own words for general benefit.

(1) If people are patient over difficulties and problems, then in this world and the hereafter, good results will be attained.

(2) Whichever person places his trust in Allâh Ta'âlâ in his matters, Allâh Ta'âlâ will definitely ease his difficulties.

(3) Whoever acquires the quality of *ishq* (severe love) with Allâh Ta'âlâ, the largest forces of falsehood are insignificant in front of him.

(4) If any servant stands up with the banner of truth and has complete steadfastness, then, he will gain supporters and assistants, even from his enemy's party.

(5) The person whose heart is saturated with *îmân*, is prepared to sacrifice everything, even one's life, for his *îmân*.

(6) The greatest effect of slavery is that man is deprived of the soul of courage and determination. (That is why the Banî Isrâ'îl refused to enter the blessed land).

(7) Being vicegerents on the earth is the right of those people who remain steadfast in the field of endeavour and toil.

(8) No matter how powerful the force of falsehood is, eventually it is compelled to face defeat.

(9) It is Allâh Ta'âlâ's habit that whichever nation is regarded as low and despised, will eventually be made the vicegerents of the land by Allâh Ta'âlâ.

(10) That person or group who turns away from accepting the truth purposely, then Allâh Ta'âlâ snatches away from them the ability to accept the truth. This is what happened to Fir'awn and his cohorts.

(11) Great deviation is when due to following the truth, man is granted success and then he himself turns away from it. This is what the Banî Isrâ'îl did.

(12) Another very great deviation is that instead of following the truth, man tries to make the truth conform to his desires. In spite of being prohibited from fishing on Yaumus-Sabt (Saturday), the Isrâ'îlis tried to evade it by their own schemes.

(13) Whether anyone accepts the truth or not, it is the duty of the *dâ'î* (inviter) to continue fulfilling his duty of inviting. Some people of truth, continued prohibiting the disrespect of the Sabbath Day, till the end.

(14) Due to the evil actions of people, oppressive rulers are appointed over them.

(15) Saving their nations from the slavery of humans is the sunnah of the Ambiyâ عليهم السلام.

After mentioning the incident of Mûsa عليه السلام and the end-result of Fir'awn the people of Makkah are given a warning in many different ways. (47) From amongst the ahle-kitâb, those who believed are praised. (52-55) Mention is made of the ignorance and foolishness of the mushrikîn. (57) Advice is given to abstain from being deceived with the wealth and possessions of this transitory world. (60-61) Some scenes from Qiyâmah are drawn. (62-66) Mention is made of Allâh Ta'âlâ's power of creating and of having full control and choice in everything. (68)

After these subjects, another proud and disobedient person like Fir'awn is mentioned. His name was Qârûn. Regarding his lineage, he was from the family of Mûsa عليه السلام. Majority of the Ulamâ have mentioned him to be the paternal cousin of Mûsâ عليه السلام. Perhaps he was more wealthier than even the international capitalists of today. Never mind his treasures, there was a need for a huge group of strong men just to lift the keys to his treasure vaults. This abundance of wealth made him proud and arrogant. Hadhrat Mûsa عليه السلام explained to him that he should not be boastful over his wealth and riches because Allâh Ta'âlâ does not like those who boast. He advised him that he should spend his money which Allâh had granted him to attain His pleasure. As Allâh had shown kindness to him so too should he show kindness to Allâh's slaves. He should not oppress anyone, nor should he use his wealth in unlawful avenues. However, he did not pay any heed to these advices. He gave that answer which every foolish and proud rich person gives, "I have achieved this wealth due to my intelligence." (78)

When those people who were drowning in the love of this world, saw the splendour and beauty of Qârûn, then their mouths began watering and they desired to be like him. It so happened that Allâh Ta'âlâ caused the earth to swallow him together with his treasures.

This punishment of Allâh Ta'âlâ opened the eyes of the worshippers of the world. Then they conceded, "If Allâh had not favoured us, then he would have made the earth swallow us." At the end of the incident of Qârûn, the Qur'ân gives an advice which every Muslim should always remember, "We have prepared the hereafter for those who do not desire greatness in the land and do not intend mischief. The final result is for the pious ones. (83)

(Today, the sickness of becoming great is not only found in the general public, but also amongst the Ulamâ as well. Those involved in this sickness should at all times keep this verse in front).

In the last verse of this sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Everything will be destroyed besides Allâh. All decisions rest with Him and towards Him you will be returned." The exemplary final result of a king like Fir'awn and a rich person like Qârûn is a proof of this claim. "Everything will be destroyed besides Allâh."

Sûrah Ankabût

Sûrah Ankabût is a Makkî sûrah. It has 69 verses and 7 rukûs. The subject matter of this sûrah is the same as that of other Makkî sûrahs. The theme of this sûrah is "sunnate-ibtîlâ" i.e. in life, tests and trials are definitely going to come. In the Makkî life, the Muslims had to face many difficulties and trials. When the clouds of oppression and injustice did not stop after continuously raining down, then according to human nature, some people became worried. To make them understand, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, that it is His old system and way to test people of îmân so that a differentiation is made between the true and false, the believer and the hypocrite. A person of îmân shows steadfastness in front of great trials, whereas the feet of those who claim to have îmân with their tongues, falter. Some of them become apostates (معاد الله) to save themselves from worldly difficulties. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "And amongst people are those who say, "We believe in Allâh", then

when they are put through trials and tribulations in the path of Allâh, they make the difficulty of the people seem like it is the punishment of Allâh. And if help from Your Rabb comes, then they say, "Verily we were always with you". "Does Allâh not know what is in the hearts of the people of the universe." (10)

From amongst the people of î mân, the greatest trials came to the Ambiyâ عليهم السلام. Therefore in this sûrah, the incidents of Hadhrat Nûh, Hadhrat Ibrâhîm, Hadhrat Mûsa and Hadhrat Hârûn عليهم السلام have been briefly mentioned, so that the people of î mân will know that trials and tribulations will come to the people of truth, but these tests are not forever. Eventually, the people of truth attain victory while their opponents are defeated.

At the end of the sûrah, the idols of the mushrikîn have been likened to a spider. Just as it's web is so weak that it can neither save the spider from cold and heat, nor can it defend it from strong winds, similarly the mushrikîn's idols are weak. Neither can it save them from harm nor can it provide any benefit.

TWENTY-FIRST PÂRA

The important points of Sûrah Ankabût mentioned in the 21st pâra are as follows:

(1) In the first verse of the 21st pâra, which is the 45th verse of Sûrah Ankabût, a command has been given to make tilâwat of the book of Allâh and to be punctual with salâh. The benefit of salâh mentioned, is that it prevents one from immorality and evil. (45) The reality is that which the Most wise and All-knowing Being has declared, that when salâh is performed keeping in mind all its conditions and etiquettes, then its benefits and rewards will definitely be attained. Then it becomes a barrier between the person performing salâh and sin. Imam Abul-Âliyah رحمہ اللہ states, "In salâh, three qualities are found : Ikhlâs (sincerity), fear of Allâh and zikrullâh, which is the Qur'ân. This commands him to do good and prevents him from evil. That salâh in which any of these three qualities are not found, is not in reality salâh." There is no harm if we pause for a while and take a stock of our salâh. By taking stock of this, it will become easy for us to understand why our salâhs are so lifeless and in spite of the masâjid being full of people performing salâh, floods of sin still engulf our houses and market places.

Is it not a reality that amongst us there are countless people who perform salâh but also speak lies, break promises, exploit and oppress others, and are involved in immorality, cast evil-glances and do not allow their wives to veil their faces from strange men? Looking at the lives of people in their homes, shops and market places, one will never know that they are performers of salâh or not. The reason is that they keep salâh and its effects confined to the masjid. They keep their individual, social, collective, economical, political and moral lives completely separate from salâh.

(2) One clear sign that has been mentioned, from amongst the many signs of the truthfulness of Nabî ﷺ was that he was ummî

(unlettered) i.e. he did not know how to read or write. If he (ﷺ) knew how to read or write, then the followers of falsehood would have fallen into doubt that perhaps he attained this knowledge from the other heavenly scriptures. In spite of this clear and living miracle, the deniers object that why were miracles which they had asked for, not becoming apparent on the hands of Nabî ﷺ. Allâh Ta'âlâ asks, "Is the Qur'ân not a sufficient proof for them?" (51) The Qur'ân is the miracle of all miracles, for which their most eloquent people were completely helpless in bringing something similar to it. In the presence of the Qur'ân, to seek any other miracle is nothing but ignorance and obstinacy. Their foolishness had reached such a stage that at times they would ask for punishment to descend upon themselves. (53-54)

The Qur'ân was a miracle yesterday and is a miracle today. The scientific facts which the Qur'ân alluded to was difficult for the village dwellers of the Arabs and for the non-Arab intellectuals to understand. However, man can easily understand it today. Therefore, it is the opinion of this insignificant one that as man's information and investigations increase, so much more will the miraculous nature of the Qur'ân become apparent. The purpose of mentioning this is to show that the Qur'ân being a miracle is more clearer today than before, and it can be easily understood. It is possible that the Arabs could easily understand the Qur'ân to be a miracle in past times, but the non-Arabs could have had some difficulties. However, in this age of the spreading of knowledge, every person, be it Arab or non-Arab, Indian or European, finds himself forced to confess its miraculousness. The only condition is that a person must read and ponder over it.

(3) After mentioning the condition of the antagonists, the pious people are mentioned. Allâh Ta'âlâ advises them to be patient in their hijrat (migration) and on difficulties coming in the path of dîn. (56-59) Those people who leave their homeland, will definitely have concerns over a means of survival. They fear how are they going to

earn a livelihood in a foreign land. To console them, they are told that Allâh who grants sustenance to weak animals, will also provide for them. Therefore, there is no need to fear poverty when migrating.

(4) It can be said that the crux of this entire sûrah has been mentioned in the last verse by Allâh Ta'âlâ, "We will definitely show Our avenues to those who exert themselves for our cause. Verily Allâh Ta'âlâ is certainly with those who do good." Those people who strive against their nafs, Shaytân and the enemies of Islâm only for the pleasure of Allâh, Allâh Ta'âlâ grants them the ability to reach the road of success in this world and the hereafter.

Sûrah Rûm

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 60 verses and 6 rukûs. One of the major causes of the Qur'ân being miraculous is it's foretelling of events. At the beginning of this sûrah one such prediction is made which took place exactly as the Qur'ân has stated. This prediction was regarding the Romans becoming victorious. It seemed very farfetched for this prediction to be fulfilled.

At the time when the Qur'ân gave this information, the Persians had fully subdued the Romans. At this time, the Roman empire was involved in a struggle for life and death. Besides the challenges faced on its borders, even the internal conditions were very bad. In the whole of Europe, there was treachery. The Roman king, Heraculis, in front of the violent winds of decline, had become helpless and had already signed a pact of disgrace and death. Since the Persians were mushrikîn and fire-worshippers whereas the Romans were believers in God, the mushrikîn of Makkah heard of the victory of those of their religion, and out of happiness began beating their drums. In these trying circumstances, the Qur'ân predicted that the Romans will overpower the Persians within a period of nine years. The mushrikîn mocked this announcement and

notification of the Qur'ân. However, this great prediction of the Qur'ân was fulfilled within nine years. The Romans trampled the grandeur of the Persians under their feet, and laid the Roman flag in the heart of the Persian Empire.

Besides the above-mentioned prediction, other important points mentioned in Sûrah Rûm are as follows :

(1) Sûrah Rûm shows the reality of the conflict which has been running since time immemorial between Hizbur-Rahmân (the party of Allâh) and Hizbus-Shaytân (the party of Shaytân). This conflict of truth and falsehood, kufr and î mân will continue until the Day of Judgment. On this day, not only will the conflict come to an end, but both groups will be sent to their separate destinations. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "And on the day when Qiyâmah will take place, they will be divided into separate groups." The people of î mân will be sent to Jannah while the people of kufr (disbelief) will be punished.

(2) Allâh Ta'âlâ has mentioned 7 proofs of His existence and greatness:

- 1- Allâh Ta'âlâ creates one thing from its opposite. Life and death are opposites of each other. However, Allâh through His complete power creates a living human being from a drop of sperm, a chicken from an egg, a tree from a seed and vice versa. (19)
- 2- He has created man from lifeless soil. Man refers either to Âdam عليه السلام who was directly created from soil or every human because his bodily and dietary needs are created from the soil. (20)
- 3- He creates such love between husband and wife that one feels that they are part of each others bodies, whereas in some cases, they had not even been introduced to each other before marriage.
- 4- He has created the skies and the earth and whatever is in between them. He has created different languages and complexions. Someone speaks Arabic, someone speaks

Persian or English, another speaks French, Urdu or Japanese. Some people's complexions are dark, whilst some are red etc. (22)

- 5- Through sleep, He grants man rest during the day and night. Man's body is one such machine that if it does not get time for rest during his busy schedule, then this machine will get damaged. (23)
- 6- The lightning strikes in the sky, due to which fear is created in the heart, as well as hope. Then the rain falls, giving life to dead land. (24)
- 7- The perfect system of the heavens and earth are a living proof of Allâh Ta'âlâ's existence. The roof of the heavens stands without any pillars and the stars move around in their orbits. There are neither collisions nor any noises. The earth also is continuously moving, but those living on the face of the earth cannot even perceive it.

(3) This sûrah shows that in every era, Allâh Ta'âlâ's sunnah (way) is that He grants victory to truth over falsehood. (47) If the people of truth are overpowered at any time, then they should take a stock of themselves. It should not be that they have adopted the ways of the people of falsehood and the people of falsehood have adopted some principles of truth.

(4) In this sûrah, there are numerous universal proofs and observances mentioned which testifies to Allâh's greatness and power. (19-27 and 46-50) At the end of the sûrah, mention is made of the people of Makkah who were like dead people. Neither would they listen, see or ponder over the signs of Allâh Ta'âlâ, nor would they accept it. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "And we have mentioned to the people every type of excellent subject in this Qur'ân. And if you bring to them a miracle, then definitely the disbeliever will say, 'You are merely people of falsehood.'" (58)

Sûrah Luqmân

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 34 verses and 4 rukûs. This sûrah begins with mention of the greatness of Nabî ﷺ's everlasting miracle i.e. the Qur'ân, which is the divine constitution of guidance. Regarding it, man is divided into two groups. One group is of the believers who accept every verse of this book of guidance. The second group is of the disbelievers who on hearing these verses, turn their faces away proudly as if they had not heard anything. (2-7) Thereafter Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions four proofs of His power and oneness.

(1) He has created the heavens without any pillars whereas there are bright stars in it as well as the sun and moon, satellites and galaxies. The world in space is so vast, that this earth on which we are living, in relation to the universe, is like the size of an atom.

(2) Allâh Ta'âlâ has placed mountains to keep the equilibrium of the earth in place. If there were no mountains, then this earth would continuously shake, due to the water and winds.

(3) The third proof is the countless types of animals, livestock and insects. Besides them, in the atmosphere and ocean there are thousands of other living beings, whose colour, shape and characteristics are not known by anyone but Allâh Ta'âlâ. Man's weakness is such that he cannot even make something similar to an ant or fly, never mind a walking, talking and understanding person.

(4) He sends down rain from the skies through which every type of exquisite things grow. (10)

The rain coming down from the skies is one wonder from amongst the other wonders of the world and it is one great proof of Allâh's power. However man does not ponder over it. All the water that fills the oceans, rivers and lakes come from the skies. Then, flowers, plants, grains, medicinal herbs and trees grow by means of this

water. Thousands of pages will be too little to explain all of this in detail.

Besides this, the important points mentioned in Sûrah Luqmân are as follows:

(1) Hadhrat Luqmân was not a Nabî but Allâh Ta'âlâ had granted him great wisdom and intelligence. His words were treasures of advice and lesson. His speech was eloquent, his silence was contemplation and his statements were advice.

Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions the five advices he gave to his son. These are very valuable and comprehensive advices which concern beliefs, worship, behaviour and character.

- The first advice was, "O My beloved son! Do not ascribe partners with Allâh. Verily shirk is a very great oppression." The result of shirk is destructive. Thereafter Allâh Ta'âlâ Himself commands good relations with one's parents.
- The second advice is regarding the hereafter. The crux of it is that nothing is hidden from the knowledge of Allâh. Allâh Ta'âlâ will bring forth on the Day of Judgment every sin, no matter how small and no matter in which hidden place it was committed.
- The third advice is regarding turning to Allâh Ta'âlâ. A few forms of turning towards Allâh Ta'âlâ have been mentioned i.e. perform salâh in a perfect manner, inviting people to do good actions and preventing them from all evil actions, being patient over difficulties and tests.
- In the fourth advice to his son, he prohibited him from pride and ostentation.
- In the fifth advice, he turned his son's attention to good character i.e. choose moderation in your walking and lower your voice when speaking. (12-19)

(2) There is a refutation of the mushrikîn, that inspite of witnessing the proofs of tawhîd, they persist on shirk, whereas if they are

asked who created the heavens and the earth, they will also testify to Allâh Ta'âlâ being the creator.

At the end of the sûrah, we are informed that the knowledge of five things is only by Allâh :

- 1- When will Qiyâmah occur?
- 2- Where and how much rain will fall?
- 3- What qualities does the baby in the womb of the mother possess?
- 4- What will man do tomorrow?
- 5- Where and when will death come? None besides Allâh has knowledge of these five things. Nabî ﷺ has mentioned these five things to be the keys of the unseen.

Sûrah Sajdah

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 30 verses and 3 rukûs. The important points mentioned in this sûrah are :

(1) In the beginning of the sûrah, mention is made of the truthfulness of the Qur'ân, whose miraculousness is clear. The proofs of its veracity are clear. Its manner of explanation is completely different from human speech. However inspite of this, the disbelievers of Makkah accused Nabî ﷺ that he had fabricated this speech. (1-3)

(2) This sûrah mentions the proofs of Allâh Ta'âlâ's oneness and power i.e. He has created the heavens and the earth. He plans all matters. Do you not ponder over one despised drop of water i.e. sperm, how He has caused change from sand to sperm, from sperm to a blood-clot, from a blood-clot to a piece of flesh, from a piece of flesh to a bone and then how He makes an attractive human being in appropriate height and appearance.

(3) This sûrah shows the condition of both believers and sinners. The sinners on the Day of Judgment will stand up with their heads

lowered in shame. Disgrace will encompass them. They will desire, "O, if only we were returned to the world, then we would do good actions." On the other hand, the believers, in this world lowered themselves in front of Allâh Ta'âlâ. At nights, their sides remained aloof from their beds. They feared Allâh's punishment and had hope in His mercy. Besides this, they spent the wealth which Allâh Ta'âlâ has bestowed them with for the pleasure of Allâh. Allâh Ta'âlâ states regarding them, "No soul knows what coolness of the eyes has been kept hidden for them (in the hereafter). This is a recompense for that which they used to do." (16-19) Without ostentation, they quietly did good actions. Allâh Ta'âlâ has hidden such bounties for them which has not even crossed the thoughts of any person's mind. As it is, the true reality of the bounties of Jannah cannot be understood by anyone. There is only similarity in words between the bounties of this world and the bounties of the hereafter. In reality, the difference between them is greater than the sky and the earth.

At the end of the sûrah, mention is made that Hadhrat Mûsa عليه السلام had been granted the Tawrât, showing that there is similarity in the risâlat of Hadhrat Muhammad ﷺ and Hadhrat Mûsa عليه السلام.

Sûrah Ahzâb

This is a Madanî sûrah. It has 73 verses and 9 rukûs. In this sûrah three subjects have been discussed :

- 1- Social etiquettes.
- 2- Shar'î laws.
- 3- Mention of some battles e.g. the Battle of Ahzâb, the Battle of Banû Qurayzah. In these 2 battles, mention is made of the hypocrites and their actions.

The important points of this sûrah are mentioned hereunder :

(1) In the first two verses, via Nabî ﷺ, the ummah has been given four commands, which in reality are the elements of success and good fortune :

- 1- Continue fearing Allâh.
- 2- Do not follow the opinions of the disbelievers and hypocrites.
- 3- Continue following divine revelation.
- 4- Have trust in Allâh Ta'âlâ.

A point worthy of consideration is that in the whole Qur'ân, Allâh Ta'âlâ has never addressed Nabî ﷺ by "O Muhammad". Here also, Allâh Ta'âlâ addresses him by "O Nabî" whereas Allâh Ta'âlâ addresses the other Ambiyâ by their names e.g. O Âdam, O Nûh, O Mûsa, O Îsâ , O Zakariyyâ.

(2) Some beliefs and habits from the days of ignorance have been refuted. Some are logically incorrect and some are evil according to the shari'ah. Here, in verse 4, three ignorant thoughts and ideologies have been rejected.

- a- The people of ignorance were under this notion that some people have two hearts in their chests. In refutation of this, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Allâh Ta'âlâ has not placed two hearts within the chest of one man." The heart is only one. Either there is îmân in it or there is disbelief in it. In one heart, îmân and kufr can never come together. This is also in refutation of the hypocrites who have stipulated a third rank of hypocrisy which is between îmân and kufr.
- b- During the times of ignorance, if a man told his wife أنت علي كظهر أمي "You are unto me like the back of my mother," then due to saying these words, his wife would become prohibited for him forever. The Qur'ân showed that by giving kaffârah (expiation), one's wife will become permissible for him.

- c- Before Islâm, an adopted son was given the same treatment as a real son. The Qur'ân refutes this incorrect view. (4)

(3) When the concept of the adopted son had been refuted and it was shown that Nabî ﷺ does not hold the status of being the true father of Hadhrat Zayd Ibn Hârithah ؓ, then Nabî ﷺ being a father in general for the whole ummah and the noble wives of Nabî ﷺ being their spiritual mothers was announced. Their honour and respect is compulsory and to marry them is impermissible.

(4) Thereafter, in 19 verses, the Battle of Ahzâb and Banû Qurayzah has been mentioned. The Battle of Ahzâb occurred in Shawwâl 5 hijrî when 10000 to 15000 soldiers of the mushrikîn laid siege to Madînah. These warriors were related to different tribes. Two Jewish tribes, Banû Nadhîr and Banû Qurayzah, who had a peace treaty with the Muslims and had promised not to assist the enemies of the Muslims, went completely against this pact and assisted Abû Sufyân. The Muslims were only 3000. Acting on the opinion of Hadhrat Salmân Fârsî ؓ, a trench was dug in the north western side of Madînah where there was a fear of the enemy attacking. That is why it is also called the Battle of Khandaq (i.e. trench). It is called Ahzâb (groups) because there were people of different tribes and parties in the army which attacked Madînah. These warriors laid siege to Madînah for approximately one month. Then through the efforts of Na'îm Ibn Mas'ûd Ghatfânî ؓ, differences arose between the Jewish, Qurayshî and Ghatfânî armies. From the side of Allâh Ta'âlâ, a gale wind blew due to which their tents were uprooted, their animals began fleeing and their resolve was weakened. The Quraysh, Ghatfân and other tribes then began to flee without completing their evil objectives. After Abu Sufyân and his assistants left, the Muslims laid siege to the Banû Qurayzah and gave them an exemplary punishment, due to them breaking their pact. Allâh Ta'âlâ, in these verses, mentions the conditions and scenes of both these battles and gives glad-tidings to the Muslims that very soon,

they will attain more victories. Thus the Muslims conquered not only Persia and Rome but many other countries and thousands of cities. (Inshâ-Allâh, after making a strong connection with the Qur'ân and firmly establishing î mân, they will conquer the whole world). Definitely this prediction of Allâh Ta'âlâ will come to pass that, "I have sent My final messenger so that his religion overpowers all other religions." This victory is certain. No person of î mân should have any doubt in it. Outwardly, conditions are unfavourable. However, when the time comes for this prediction to be fulfilled, then the conditions will become suitable and those individuals will be created who will remind one of the Muslims of the first century with regard to their actions and character. There is no doubt that the present-day Muslims do not have the capability to be the "conquerors of the world" looking at their î mân, character, dealings and actions. However, does Islâm and the Qur'ân not have this ability? I take an oath by the Lord of the Kâ'bah! In it, there is complete ability to conquer the world and be the conquerors of the world. By the Owner of the universe! The world will soon see this spectacle.

TWENTY-SECOND PÂRA

In the last few verses of the 21st pâra, the pure wives of Nabî ﷺ are addressed. Since this address continues in the 22nd pâra, it was not touched on in the 21st pâra. It was felt that these verses should be mentioned together. The background of these verses has been mentioned in the Ahâdîth, that when the era of conquests began, the pure wives of Rasûlullâh ﷺ requested him to slightly increase their allowance and stipend. At this occasion these verses were revealed in which they were given a choice of one of two things, either they choose separation from Nabî ﷺ so that they can live a life of comfort, or else they spend their life in poverty and difficulty and focus their attention on the enjoyments of the hereafter. When Nabî ﷺ gave them this choice, they all gave preference to the hereafter. At this juncture, while mentioning the virtues of the pure wives of Nabî ﷺ, they have been commanded seven things :

- 1- When speaking with men (out of necessity), then they should not use a sweet tone.
- 2- Without necessity, they should not venture out of their homes because the protective and safe havens of Muslim women are their homes.
- 3- They should not emerge like the women of the days of ignorance exposing their satr (any portion of their body) and beauty.
- 4- They should be regular on salâh.
- 5- They should give zakâh.
- 6- They should obey Allâh and His Rasûl (ﷺ).
- 7- They should recite the Qur'ânic verses and revise the ahâdîth.

Besides this, other important points mentioned in Sûrah Ahzâb in this portion of the 22nd pâra are as follows :

(1) They are ten qualities which grants a Muslim a distinguished and outstanding status in society and which creates an identity for him.

These ten qualities, whether found in a man or woman, makes them worthy of forgiveness and a great reward. These are Islâm, î mân, qunût (everlasting obedience), sidq (truthfulness), sabr (patience), khushû (humility), charity, fasting, protection of private parts and making an abundance of the zikr of Allâh. (3-5)

(2) Sûrah Ahzâb also alludes to a famous incident due to which the opponents of Rasûlullâh ﷺ made him a target of severe criticism, taunting and reproaching. When Nabî ﷺ's adopted son Hadhrat Zayd Ibn Hârithah ؓ and his (ﷺ) cousin Hadhrat Zaynab رضي الله عنها were not happy with each other and a separation took place, then by the command of Allâh Ta'âlâ, Nabî ﷺ himself married Hadhrat Zaynab رضي الله عنها. There was huge uproar that Muhammad had married his adopted son's wife, since according to the notion of the times of ignorance, the marriage was improper. Allâh Ta'âlâ states that He made the marriage of Nabî ﷺ to her so that in future there is no difficulty for the Muslims in getting married to the divorced wife of their adopted children. (37)

Here, by the way, this point should be noted that the antagonists of Islâm and Nabî ﷺ have made evil attempts to regard lust as the primary factor for Nabî ﷺ's many marriages. If two basic points are kept in mind, then the futility of these objections will become apparent. The first point is that Nabî ﷺ spent his whole youth with such a woman who was almost double his age. As long as she lived, Nabî ﷺ did not accept any other woman in his marriage. Besides Hadhrat Khadijah رضي الله عنها, whichever other women Nabî ﷺ married it was after he had entered the doorstep of old-age i.e. 50 years of age.

The second point is that besides Hadhrat Ayesha رضي الله عنها, none of his other wives were virgins. If (معاد الله) Nabî ﷺ's purpose of many marriages was due to following his lust, then he would have got married while young and he would have married young virgin girls.

In reality there are many social, political, educational and religious wisdoms in having many wives. However this summary does not allow us to go into detail.

(3) Here we are reminded of the great favour which Allâh Ta'âlâ has granted the believers in the form of Nabî ﷺ. Five outstanding qualities of Nabî ﷺ have been mentioned :

- 1- Nabî ﷺ will give testimony regarding his ummah and other ummahs on the Day of Judgment, because all the people of the world are included in his (ﷺ) ummah. Those who accept î mân are called ummate-ijâbat (the ummah who has accepted) and those who do not accept î mân are called ummate-da'wat (the ummah which was invited).
- 2- For the people of î mân, Nabî ﷺ conveys glad-tidings of Jannah and success.
- 3- It is his (ﷺ) responsibility to warn the disbelievers and sinners of Allâh's punishment and destruction.
- 4- Nabî ﷺ calls to piety, reformation, good character and steadfastness. His call was not towards the world, leadership, gathering of booty and neither to nationalism or tribalism but was only for the pleasure of Allâh Ta'âlâ, the purpose of which was nothing but goodness and reformation. What doubt can there be that the greatest action of the Ambiyâ عليهم السلام was da'wat (inviting and calling to Allâh)? Allâh Ta'âlâ himself says, "And whose words can be better than the one who calls to Allâh, does good actions and says, "Definitely, I am from the Muslims" (Fusilat)
- 5- Nabî ﷺ is sirâjum-munîr (a bright sun). Due to the illuminated presence of Nabî ﷺ, darkness was removed and doubts were expelled. (45-47) Allâh Ta'âlâ gives a similarity of Nabî ﷺ to a bright sun because by means of Nabî ﷺ, Allâh Ta'âlâ removed the misguidance of shirk and deviation and He gave guidance to those who were astray. This is exactly like the sun, that when it becomes bright, then the darkness

of the night is expelled and it becomes easy for one to reach one's destination.

(4) Sûrah Ahzâb mentions etiquettes which people during the days of ignorance were unaware of. Here, 3 of these etiquettes are mentioned :

- 1- Do not enter any house without permission.
 - 2- If you have been invited to someone's house for meals, then after finishing, leave. Do not become involved in talks, wasting the time of the owner of the house.
 - 3- If there is a need to ask for something from a non-mahram woman, then ask behind a veil (curtain). Do not come in front of them while they are unveiled. However, coming in front of mahram women who are not veiled is permissible.
- (53-55)

(Note : Non-mahram women are those whom one is allowed to marry e.g. cousins, sisters-in-law, uncle's wife, nephew's wife etc. Separation from them is compulsory in Islâm. However, many people are completely unaware of this. If they are aware, then too purdah is not observed from them. Translator)

(5) After mentioning the sanctity of the pure wives of Nabî ﷺ, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions the greatness and honour of Nabî ﷺ and He commands the people of î mân to send durûd and salâm to Nabî ﷺ. By reciting durûd and salâm, in reality, this is an honour for us, a means of elevating our ranks and a means of cleansing our sins. (56)

Hadhrat Abu Talhah ؓ narrates that once Rasûlullâh ﷺ emerged. The signs of happiness were apparent on his blessed face. The Sahâbah ؓ said, "O Rasûlullâh ﷺ, today we can see (unusual) signs of happiness on your blessed face." Nabî ﷺ said, "Today an Angel came to me and said, "O Muhammad! Are you not pleased? Allâh Ta'âlâ has said that, 'From amongst your ummah, whoever sends durûd upon you, I will send down ten mercies upon him and whoever send one salâm to you, I will send down ten times salâms

(salutations) for him.' I replied to the angel, 'Yes, I am happy.'" (Musnad-e-Ahmad, Nasâi)

(6) First, the compulsion of hijâb was revealed to the ummahâtul-mu'minîn (the Mothers of the believers). Thereafter, in general, every Muslim woman has been commanded to observe hijâb, whether she is a wife, daughter or mother. Hijâb is a protector of the honour and respect of a woman and is a means of exaltation and reverence. It is necessary to keep in mind certain conditions for the shar'î hijâb.

- 1- The hijâb must be such that it covers the entire body.
- 2- The hijâb must not be attractive and eye-catching.
- 3- The hijâb must not be so thin by which the colour or shape of the body could be discerned.
- 4- It should be loose. It should not be so tight that it makes apparent those limbs which could lead to evil.
- 5- It should not be so perfumed that its fragrance can be smelt by others.
- 6- It should not resemble the clothing of men.
- 7- It should not be such clothing which is a trademark of the disbelieving and mushrik women.
- 8- It should not be such clothing worn merely for show and name. There are severe warnings for this in the hadîth.

(7) At the end of the sûrah, the importance of farâ'idh, wâjibât and other shar'î laws are mentioned. These laws are part of a trust which Allâh Ta'âlâ has placed on His servants. The skies, earth and mountains refused to lift the weight of this trust because they did not have the ability to bear it. However, since Allâh Ta'âlâ had granted man intelligence, thought and the ability to differentiate between good and evil, he has lifted this burden, but then too he could not fulfill its rights.

Sûrah Sabâ

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 54 verses and 6 rukûs. The sûrah commences with Allâh Ta'âlâ's praises, that Being who has created all creation, established an orderly system for the universe and has an all-encompassing knowledge in running the system of the universe. None of His actions are without wisdom. Thereafter, the mushrikîn are mentioned who deny reckoning, recompense and life after death. Allâh Ta'âlâ commands Nabî ﷺ to take an oath by His Rabb that Qiyâmah is definitely going to come. The pious will definitely be rewarded and the evil ones will be punished. (2) Besides this, other important points in this sûrah are :

(1) Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions His bounties on Hadhrat Dâwûd and Hadhrat Sulaymân عليهما السلام and the people of Sabâ, thus making a comparison between the grateful and ungrateful people. The first two mentioned were Allâh's Nabîs, grateful servants and involved in the remembrance of Allâh Ta'âlâ.

Allâh Ta'âlâ had granted Hadhrat Dâwûd ﷺ a miraculously beautiful voice. When he would make tasbîh (glorification) of Allâh, then the mountains and birds would join him. When he would recite the Zabûr, animals would listen to his recital and would begin crying. Allâh Ta'âlâ made iron soft for him. He could shape it as he wished and he would manufacture whatever he wanted. He had a "factory" in which he would make strong chains of iron. This could be called the first steel-mill in the world. As Allâh Ta'âlâ had granted special favours to Hadhrat Dâwûd ﷺ, similarly He blessed Sulaymân ﷺ. Allâh Ta'âlâ taught him the language of the birds. Copper would take the form of flowing streams. From it, he could make whatever he wanted easily. The jinns were under his control. He would use them to build for him and to carry out the difficult tasks of carrying loads and transporting them. The wind was subservient to him. As there are aeroplanes today, he also had a kind of throne which would cover the distance of two months in a

portion of the day. In spite of such amazing bounties, the father and son did not fall prey to pride and haughtiness, whereas generally man is such that very few of Allâh's servants are grateful.

The second incident mentioned here is of the people of Sabâ. If the first incident is a bright lighthouse for the people of îmân and gratitude, then the second incident is a dark glimpse of the people of kufr and evil. The people of Sabâ were given bounties like an abundance of sustenance, healthy water and air, lush lands and fruit-laden gardens. These gardens were found on both sides of the road for a long distance. Neither would hunger and thirst trouble them nor heat and sunshine. There was also a dam to store water, which is remembered by the name of Sadde-Ma'ârib. However these people were not appreciative of these bounties, but became ungrateful. That which happens to every ungrateful nation befell them. Punishment was meted out to them. The dam broke, and the water caused great destruction. The gardens and towns became destroyed and were washed away. In the place of flowers and plants, nothing remained besides weeds and thorny trees. Mention of the people of Sabâ remains only as a legend. (15-21)

(2) In this sûrah, the beliefs and theories of the mushrikîn have been continuously refuted and disproved by means of both logical and naqlî (traditional) proofs. At a certain place they are requested to call those who they regard as solvers of their problems and needs besides Allâh, to see if they grant them any benefit. At a certain place, in a persuasive tone, a command has been given to pose to them the following question, "Who grants them sustenance from the heavens and earth?" At another place, they are asked to bring forward those whom they regard as partners to Allâh in worship, so that it can be seen if they have such qualities in them which makes them worthy of worship. (22-27)

Going forward in sûrah Sabâ, the fundamental reason of disbelief and disobedience of the disbelievers and mushrikîn has been shown

to be wealth and riches. They had so much of pride in it that they thought that people with so much wealth and children like them, cannot be punished in this world, nor in the hereafter. In the words of the Qur'ân, "They said, 'We possess more wealth and more children than you. We can never be punished.'" They would make presumptions regarding matters of the hereafter based on analogies with this world. They thought that just as Allâh Ta'âlâ had granted them ease and comfort in this world, this would also be granted to them in the hereafter. They are answered in this verse, "Say, 'For whomsoever He wishes, My Rabb widens sustenance and (for whomsoever he wishes He) straitens it. However, most people do not know.'" (36) The pride and arrogance over wealth and riches lead them to mock and despise Rasûlullâh ﷺ, and they would not abstain from calling him (ﷺ) معاذ الله mad and foolish. For this reason, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Say, 'I advise you one thing, that for Allâh's sake, you stand in twos or individually, and then you think. (Definitely, you will admit, after sober thought that) your companion (i.e. Nabî ﷺ) is not insane. He is but a Warner to you in front of a severe punishment.'" (47) In the last verse, this is mentioned that they will want to accept in the hereafter. However a veil will be placed between them and their desires. Thus, they will remain deprived of îmân.(54)

Sûrah Fâtir

Sûrah Fâtir is a Makkî sûrah. It has 45 verses and 5 rukûs. In this sûrah, there is a call to the oneness of Allâh, proofs of His existence, destruction of the foundations of shirk and emphasis to remain firm on the true religion. In the beginning of the sûrah, is the blessed mention of the Being who is the Creator and Originator, and who has created the universe, man, angels and jinns. Man's gaze has been directed to those universal signs which are spread out in every page of the book of this world. The life after death has been mentioned with such open and practical proofs which every city-dweller and village-dweller can understand. Allâh Ta'âlâ gives life to

the dead land by means of rain. He brings day and night one after the other. That Being who makes man pass through different stages can give life again to a dead person. (9) This sûrah also differentiates between î mân and guidance, kufr and misguidance by means of perceivable examples. This sûrah shows that just as a blind and sighted person, a dead and living person, darkness and light, sun and shade cannot be equal, similarly a believer and disbeliever can never be equal. (19-22)

Thereafter, this sûrah discusses the proofs of Allâh's oneness and power for a second time. In the different colours and varieties of flowers, white, red and black mountains, different shades, languages and temperaments of people and in the thousands of types of birds, fish, insects and animals are countless signs of His power. However, on seeing these signs, only those will get fear in their hearts who have knowledge, those who can think deeply and who can remove the veils which obscure reality, because according to the amount of recognition (ma'rifat) there is in the heart, respect and greatness will be found accordingly. For this reason, the heart of Rasûlullâh ﷺ contained the most amount of respect and awe for Allâh compared to other people, as Nabî ﷺ himself said, "By Allâh! In my heart, I have more fear and respect for Allâh than any of you."

The people of knowledge mention that the word "Ulamâ" does not refer to the learned scholars of dîn and shar'ah only, but also to those scholars who have knowledge of the universe i.e. medicine, astronomy, botany, knowledge of the atmosphere and geology. They are also included in it, because if they place a gaze on the secrets of the universe, with a correct frame of mind, then this gaze will force them to acknowledge the oneness and power of Allâh Ta'âlâ. This acknowledgement finally becomes a means of creating the fear and honour of Allâh Ta'âlâ. Then the sûrah turns away from كتاب منظور (the seen book of the universe) toward كتاب مسطور (the written book i.e. the Qur'ân). Those people who make tilâwat (recite) of the Qur'ân have been praised. (29-30) After their praises,

the virtue of the ummah of Nabî ﷺ has been mentioned in general, upon which Allâh Ta'âlâ revealed this book.

However, after revelation of the Qur'ân, this ummah has been divided into three groups :

- 1- ظالم (Oppressor). He is that sinning Muslim whose sins are more than his virtues.
- 2- مقتصد i.e. that believer whose good and evil actions are equal.
- 3- سابق i.e. that true believer who excels others in obedience and worship.

However the final and everlasting abode of all three is Jannah. Some will go directly to Jannah and some will go after being punished for their sins. At the end of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ's forbearance is mentioned that He does not immediately punish a person for his sins. If this was so, then no human, animal and bird would have remained alive on earth. He has kept a specified time for reward and punishment. When that time comes, then He will bring into motion His system of perfect justice.

Sûrah Yâsîn

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 33 verses and 5 rukûs. Our Muslim brothers recite it for easiness of the pangs of death, but very few practise on it, whereas the real purpose, reward and means of attaining Allâh's closeness is by practising on it. In the beginning of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ takes an oath by the Qur'ân on the truthfulness of Nabî ﷺ's risâlat (being sent as a messenger). (2-4) Then the disbelievers of the Quraysh are mentioned who have exceeded the bounds in their disbelief and misguidance due to which they became liable for Allâh Ta'âlâ's punishment. Thereafter, mention is made of people in a certain town who had falsified three Ambiyâ of Allâh Ta'âlâ, one after the other. When a person on the truth, who was sincere tried to explain to them, they martyred him. (13-21) A portion of the speech of this adviser, is found in the beginning of the 23rd pâra, which we shall present there (إن شاء الله).

TWENTY-THIRD PÂRA

At the end of the 22nd pâra, mention has already been made of those Ambiyâ who were sent for the guidance of people of a certain town. However, they were not ready to follow the road of guidance. When the townspeople falsified all three Ambiyâ, one person from amongst the inhabitants of that place, whose name the commentators have mentioned as Habîb-Najjâr, came running to warn his people of Allâh's punishment on them if they caused any harm to the Ambiyâ. He advised them to follow the Ambiyâ. When he explained to them and proclaimed his belief in front of all the people, they attacked and martyred him. After martyrdom, he was honoured with entrance into Jannah. When he saw the bounties of Allâh Ta'âlâ with his own eyes, which Allâh has prepared for the people of îmân, then these words emerged spontaneously from his mouth "O if only my people had known the reason why My Rabb has forgiven me and made me from among the honoured people." (27)

Hadhrat Ibn Abbâs ؓ states, "This believer was a well-wisher of his people during his life and after death also." Thereafter, Allâh Ta'âlâ expresses pity over His servants, that whichever messenger came to them, they mocked him. Besides the above-mentioned, other important points in Sûrah Yâsîn are mentioned here-under.

(1) Here, from amongst the many universal proofs of Allâh's existence, oneness and power which have been mentioned over and over in the Qur'ân, three types of proofs are mentioned :

- 1- The dead land which is given life by rain.
- 2- The day and night, sun and moon.
- 3- The boats and ships which move in the oceans.

Together with these proofs, Sûrah Yâsîn has also proclaimed such a reality which the great people of knowledge were unaware of, at the time of the revelation of the Qur'ân. In verse 36, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Pure is that Being who has created pairs from that which

the earth grows, from themselves and from those things which they do not know.” (36) It was the ideology of the people of the past that pairs were only found in humans and animals. The present-day scientists, after lengthy investigations and after much mental exertion have proven that “pairs” are not only found in humans, but also in plants, inorganic matter, and in the whole universe, so much so that the atom which is the smallest particle of matter is also made up of two parts i.e. the electron and proton. These two parts are similar to the male and female. Besides Sûrah Yâsîn, in Sûrah Dhâriyât also, this scientific point had been shown centuries before. There Allâh Ta’âlâ states, “And from everything we created pairs so that you may take heed. (49-51)

(2) Thereafter Sûrah Yâsîn describes the horrors of Qiyâmah and the blowing of the Sûr (trumpet). When the Sûr will be blown for the first time, people will be immersed in their daily activities and in buying and selling. On hearing the Sûr of Isrâfîl, a condition of fear and bewilderment will overcome them. This is called نفخة فرع. When the Sûr will be blown for the second time, death will come to everything and everyone, besides Allâh who is Hayy (Alive) and Qayyum (The Being who keeps others in existence). When the sûr will be blown for the third time, all will rise from the grave and will stand in front of the True Judge. There, none will be oppressed. The pious believers will be favoured with Jannah and the favours of Jannah, whereas the sinners, who would reside amongst the pious in the world, will be separated. A seal will be placed on their mouths and their limbs will testify against them. (49-66)

Since this sûrah discusses mainly life after death, therefore it concludes also on this topic. Allâh Ta’âlâ states, “Does the one who created the heavens and earth not have the power to create others like them? Why not, when He is the prolific creator and All-Knowing. When he wills anything, His only command is to say, ‘Be’ and it comes into being.” (81-82)

Sûrah Sâffât

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 182 verses and 5 rukûs. The sûrah begins with mention of those angels always busy with the worship, praises and glorification of Allâh Ta'âlâ. Then, the jinn are mentioned, who make effort to eavesdrop over reports of the angels in the heavens. A blazing star pursues them and puts them to flight. Sûrah Sâffât discusses the issue of resurrection and recompense and mentions that the stand of the mushrikîn regarding life after death is very amazing. They mock at this belief and they cannot understand how a human being can be resurrected after decomposing and mixing with the soil. Allâh Ta'âlâ says that the work which they regard as difficult, but rather impossible, is not at all difficult for Allâh Ta'âlâ. When Isrâfil will blow the Sûr (trumpet) for the third time, then all will rise out of their graves. (19) Then, with great regret and sorrow, they will say, "This is the day of recompense of one's actions which we used to mock." They will then be thrown into Jahannum. There, they will fight amongst themselves and each one will try to place the blame on the other for his misguidance. (20-35)

Besides the mutual discord of the people of Jahannum, this sûrah also makes us listen to a conversation of the people of Jannah. When they have been pleased with every type of bounty and they will be sitting on thrones of respect and honour, millions of times more happier than princes, they will think of their past. One of them will say, "I had one friend who used to say to me that, 'It is very surprising that you believe in the hereafter. How can it be that once we are sand and bones we will be resurrected? How can a reckoning be taken of our whole life and then we be punished or rewarded for it? I cannot understand these things. I do not know why do you have so much conviction in such things contrary to logic.'" This believer in Jannah will then ask his companions, "Do you want to see him?" They will rise and look. They will see this worshipper of his intellect

and denier of the hereafter burning in the centre of Jahannum. This believer will say, "By Allâh, you almost destroyed me. If it was not for the bounty of my Rabb, then I too would have been from amongst those brought forward to be punished." (56-57)

Thereafter, this sûrah discusses the incidents of some Ambiyâ عليهم السلام. The first incident is of Shaikhul-Ambiyâ, Hadhrat Nûh عليه السلام, whose people belied him. These people were eventually drowned. The second incident is of Hadhrat Ibrâhîm Khalîl عليه السلام. Two trying stages of his life are mentioned. The first stage is of his call to tawhîd i.e. how he called his people to îmân, how he made apparent his inability to participate in the yearly festival, how he destroyed their idols with his two hands, what plans the mushrikîn made to burn him alive and how Allâh Ta'âlâ saved him. (83-98) The second stage is of the famous incident of slaughtering his son. This incident is only mentioned in Sûrah Sâffât even though other incidents of Hadhrat Ibrâhîm عليه السلام have been mentioned in many places in the Qur'ân. Hadhrat Ibrâhîm عليه السلام's whole life passed in trials and tests for the pleasure of Allâh. However this test, compared to the others, was most terrifying and difficult. In a dream, Ibrâhîm عليه السلام was commanded to slaughter his son. He, being an embodiment of obedience and willingness, immediately got ready. He told his son the dream which he immediately accepted. He placed his son down on his forehead and began slaughtering him. Immediately, revelation came from Allâh Ta'âlâ, "O Ibrâhîm, verily you have brought the dream to a realization. In this way, we reward those who do good. Verily this was a difficult and bitter test. Leave the child and slaughter the ram which is standing by you, in place of him." (110)

The third incident is of Hadhrat Mûsa and Hârûn عليهم السلام. The fourth incident is of Hadhrat Ilyâs عليه السلام who was sent as a Nabî to a nation in Shâm. They used to worship an idol by the name of Ba'l. On the name of this idol, a city was named "Ba'la bakka", whose relics can be found even today in the west of Damascus. The fifth

incident is of Hadhrat Khalîl ﷺ's nephew, Hadhrat Lût ﷺ. He was sent to take the message to the people of Sodom which is on the outskirts of Jordan. However they had become blind and deaf, being involved in the worst form of disbelief and following of desires. They were not prepared to listen to the message of guidance. Finally, they were engulfed in an exemplary punishment. The sixth incident is of Hadhrat Yûnus ﷺ, who had to stay in the stomach of a fish for some period, and whose people on seeing the signs of punishment, immediately sought forgiveness.

At the end of the incidents of the Ambiyâ, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Verily Our word has been decreed for our servants who have been sent. Verily they will be assisted and verily Our army will remain victorious." (171-173) At the end of the sûrah, Nabî ﷺ is commanded to turn away from antagonists. The praises and purity of Allâh is mentioned.

Sûrah Sâd

Sûrah Sâd is a Makkî sûrah. It has 188 verses and 5 rukûs. In the beginning of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ takes an oath on this great Qur'ân. This oath is either on the Qur'ân being a miracle or on the truthfulness of Nabî ﷺ. The important points of this sûrah are :

(1) Mentioning the takwînî (universal) signs of Allâh Ta'âlâ's oneness and greatness, we are told that the mushrikîn are involved in pride, foolishness and ignorance. They are surprised that a man like them has been made a Nabî and has been sent to warn and explain to them. Also surprising to them is that they have chosen different gods for different tasks, whilst this Nabî claims that one Allâh is sufficient for the whole system of life and death of all mankind.

(2) After showing the foolish and ignorant thinking of the disbelieving Quraysh, Sûrah Sâd shows the outcome of the proud people and the idol-worshippers of past nations, who due to denial

and disobedience, became worthy of the punishment of Allâh Ta'âlâ. (12-14)

(3) While showing the outcome of the proud people and deniers of past nations, Nabî ﷺ is instructed to exercise patience on one side, and on the other side is commanded to remember Hadhrat Dâwûd عليه السلام, whom Allâh Ta'âlâ bestowed with outward, inward, worldly and religious strengths. Every consecutive day he would fast. Half the night he would sleep and half the night he would spend in worship. He was the king of a vast empire and a high-ranking Nabî also. He had been granted a heart involved in the remembrance of Allâh, a grateful tongue and a captivating voice. When he would recite the Zabûr, birds would stop in the air. When his tongue was moist with the praises of Allâh Ta'âlâ, the mountains would also become involved in His praises. Together with Dâwûd عليه السلام, good mention is made of his son Hadhrat Sulaymân عليه السلام. His kingdom, with regards to means and resources, was even more vast and splendid than his fathers. The wind and jinn were made subservient to him.

(4) In Sûrah Sâd, the third incident is of Hadhrat Ayyûb عليه السلام. He was from the progeny of Hadhrat Yâqub عليه السلام. He had an abundance of wealth and riches. He owned gardens, mansions, agricultural lands, cattle, servants and many children. Tests came from Allâh, so everything was taken away. His children passed away. His cattle died. His gardens were ruined. The agricultural lands were destroyed. His friends and relatives changed their attitude towards him. In place of wealth and riches, poverty overtook him. He became afflicted with sickness and difficulty. In some commentaries, it is mentioned that this test remained for 18 years. However Hadhrat Ayyûb عليه السلام did not change his behaviour, remained steadfast on patience and gratitude. Finally, the era of test came to an end and Allâh Ta'âlâ granted him more than before.

(5) Besides Hadhrat Ayyûb عليه السلام, Sûrah Sâd makes a brief mention of Hadhrat Ibrâhîm, Hadhrat Ishâq, Hadhrat Ya'qûb, Hadhrat Ismâîl,

Hadhrat Yasâ' and Hadhrat Zul-Kifl عليهما السلام. They are all praised by Allâh Ta'âlâ. Finally the incident of Hadhrat Âdam ﷺ and Iblîs is mentioned with some detail. At the end of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ commands His Nabî ﷺ that he should mention the purpose and reality of his call, "(O Nabî ﷺ) Say, 'I do not ask you for any wage and nor am I from those who show artificial behaviour. This is only an advice for the people of the world. You will come to know of its condition after some time.'" (86-88)

Sûrah Zumar

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 75 verses and 8 rukûs. The central and original theme of this sûrah is the belief of tawhîd, because belief in the oneness of Allâh Ta'âlâ is original îmân. The sûrah commences with mention of Nabî ﷺ's great miracle, the Qur'ân-e-Karîm. We are informed that this book has been revealed from that Allâh who is All-Powerful and All-Wise. Then all the Muslims are commanded, via Nabî ﷺ, to keep the worship of Allâh unadulterated. We should never allow a mixture of show etc. in it. In the following verses, changing the style, takwînî (universal) proofs are mentioned on the oneness of Allâh Ta'âlâ, and a full refutation of shirk is made. Here one point of note is that when Allâh Ta'âlâ mentioned the creation of man in the mother's womb, He also mentioned that He has created us in three layers of darkness in the womb. (6)

This is an intellectual miracle of the Qur'ân that it has mentioned such a medical reality so many centuries before, which the doctors and specialists have only come to know now in the 20th century. Doctors say that outwardly it seems that there is only one covering in which the foetus remains, however in reality there are three veils. The Qur'ân refers to these 3 veils as three layers of darkness because these veils protect the child from light. While proving tawhîd and refuting shirk, Allâh Ta'âlâ gives an example of a muwahhid (monotheist) and a mushrik (polytheist). The example of a mushrik is of a slave who is owned by many partners. In

temperament, all the partners are different. There is no unity, love or harmony amongst them. One of them sends the slave to the right, another one sends him to the left. One commands him to stand while another commands him to sit. The slave is confused. He does not know who to follow and who not to follow. The example of a muwahhid (one who believes in the Oneness of Allâh) is of a slave who has one owner, whose character is good and who considers the sentiments of the slave. (29) Definitely this slave will serve his master with sincerity and will have hope of goodness and kindness from his master. Now when the master is Allâh, the Master of the Universe, and the slave becomes His, then definitely kingdoms can be sacrificed on this_slave's tranquility of the heart and His master's compassion on him.

TWENTY-FOURTH PÂRA

We present a few glimpses of the points of Sûrah Zumar which appears in the 24th pâra.

(1) The Qur'ân divides all of mankind into two groups. The one group is of the disbelievers who speak lies regarding Allâh and who belie the Qur'ân and Rasûlullâh ﷺ. Their abode is the fire. The second group is the Ambiyâ and their followers. Their reward is Jannah. (32-34)

(2) From amongst the special mercy, favours and kindness of Allâh Ta'âlâ is that He leaves the door of repentance open for sinners, wrong-doers and disbelievers, and He himself invites them to repent and turn towards Him. He does not make the sinners lose hope but lights the lantern of hope in their hearts. Allâh Ta'âlâ commands Nabî ﷺ, "Say, 'O My servants who have oppressed themselves, do not lose hope in the mercy of Allâh. Verily Allâh Ta'âlâ forgives all sins. Verily He is most Forgiving, Most Merciful.'" Then Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions, "And turn towards your Rabb and submit yourselves to Him before a punishment comes to you, then you will not be assisted." (53-55)

(3) After inviting Allâh's servants to repent and turn towards Him, this sûrah mentions different scenes of Qiyâmah when the faces of those who spoke lies about Allâh will be blackened, the Sûr (Trumpet) will be blown, all will be standing in front of Allâh, reckoning of one's life will be taken, the disbelievers will be dragged into Jahannum, the people of Jannah will be called to enter Jannah, the angels will welcome them with salâm, and they will enter their abodes while praising Allâh Ta'âlâ. (60-73)

Sûrah Ghâfir

Sûrah Ghâfir is a Makkî sûrah. It has 82 verses and 9 rukûs. This sûrah is also called Sûrah Mu'min. By studying this sûrah, a person will reach the conclusion that the theme of this sûrah is to mention the battle between truth and falsehood, guidance and misguidance. The sûrah commences with mention of Nabî ﷺ's everlasting miracle i.e. the Qur'ân which still testifies to the truthfulness of Nabî's nubuwwat, inspite of so many centuries passing. There is no effect of antiquity or ancientness in the knowledge of Allâh Ta'âlâ. Today also, it is a fresh and vibrant speech. Scientific progress and new research testify to the intellectual realities mentioned in it. The more man's knowledge increases, the more he will have to admit that the Qur'ân is a divine message and a miracle. The only condition is that he must have a clean heart and he must ponder, rising above hatred due to jealousy and racial prejudice. After mentioning that the Qur'ân is divine revelation from Allâh Ta'âlâ, four qualities of Allâh Ta'âlâ are mentioned in one verse i.e. he forgives sins, accepts repentance, is severe in punishment and bestows favours upon His servants. (3)

A few of the other subjects, found in this sûrah, are mentioned here-under :

(1) Those angels, who have the honour of being *حَمَلَةُ الْعَرْشِ* (the carriers of the Divine Throne) and who surround the Throne, together with mentioning Allâh's praises and purity, they also make du'â for the people of îmân. They request, "O our Rabb, Your mercy and knowledge encompass all things, thus forgive those who repent and who follow Your path, and save them from the punishment of the Fire. O our Rabb, enter them into the everlasting gardens which You have promised them and (enter) their parents, wives and children who were pious (also). Verily You are All-Powerful, All-Knowing. And save them from punishment. The one who is saved

from punishment on this day, then definitely You have showered mercy upon him. And this is the greatest success.” (7-8)

(2) The special style of the Qur'ân is that after encouragement, warnings are given, after Jannah, Jahannum is mentioned, and after the people of î mân, the people of disbelief are mentioned. This is found here also. First, we were informed that the high-ranking angels make du'â for the people of î mân. Now the condition of the disbelievers and sinners are being mentioned, that when they will be entered into the blazing fire, and they will see the result of their evil actions, they will have severe hatred for themselves and will try to present an excuse while reprimanding themselves. They will forget their airs which they had in this world and will request to be taken out of the flames of the fire with great humility and disgrace. Their request will be rejected. The door-keepers of Jahannum will say to them, that just as you are making apparent your disgust for yourselves after seeing the severity of the punishment today, to a greater extent Allâh Ta'âlâ detested you when you were invited to î mân, but you disbelieved, due to pride and disobedience, and you completely refused to accept î mân. (10-12) This day of Qiyâmah is a day of justice and fairness between people. On this day, every person will attain the recompense of his good and evil actions.

(3) While mentioning the punishment of Allâh on the disbelievers, the incident of the famous oppressor and disobedient one, Fir'awn, which took place with Mûsa ﷺ is mentioned, explaining the reality that the outcome of oppressors and proud people is never good. Mûsa ﷺ's incident comes in many sûrahs. However, in Sûrah Ghâfir, one believing servant has especially been mentioned. Due to his mention, the other name of this sûrah is "Sûrah Mu'min". This person secretly accepted î mân. When a counsel was held to discuss the killing of Mûsa ﷺ, this person of î mân stood up in his defence and said, "Will you kill a man only because he says, 'My Rabb is Allâh', whereas he has brought to you clear signs and miracles from your Rabb?" However, Fir'awn remained obstinate on his stance

and he said, "Only my opinion is correct and the decision which I have made is that Mûsa عليه السلام must be killed. Nothing less than this will be accepted." (Respected readers, if you had to review the conditions around us, you will find that the dictators of today have the same temperament which the dictators of yesterday had. Whatever comes out from their mouths, they regard it as the final say. The whole of mankind is surrounded by such dictators. Even, on the necks of the Muslim Ummah, such proud and arrogant people are in charge, who regard themselves as having perfect intelligence. They will never accept the opinion of the greatest scholar and learned person).

The lecture of this believing man was so effective that Fir'awn feared that perhaps his courtiers would get affected by those words which had emitted from that man's heart. First he mentioned his decisive judgment, "Now I cannot tolerate the existence of Hadhrat Mûsa and Hârûn عليهما السلام." Then to mock the heart-rending lecture of this believing man, he commanded his minister Hâmân to construct a high building so that he could see where is the deity of Mûsa عليه السلام. (This is the manner of cunning leaders, that at times they threaten and at times, they make the opinion of their opponents an object of ridicule so as to drop its status in the eyes of people). In spite of Fir'awn's mockery and rebelliousness, this believing servant continued with his advice. However, it is apparent that Fir'awn did not move closer to accepting îmân nor did he allow his close ones to accept. The result was that this servant of Allâh was saved from the punishment, while Fir'awn, together with his helpers and assistants became entangled in punishment. This punishment will not leave them in their graves. It is presented to them morning and evening. In the hereafter, they will have to face a most severe type of punishment. (28-46)

(4) After an admonitory mention of an ungrateful, proud and oppressive person like Fir'awn, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions some of His bounties. Allâh Ta'âlâ has made the night for rest and the day for

earning and for seeing, He has made the earth for living on and the sky as a roof. He has given beautiful forms and granted pure things as sustenance. These are all His bounties, but man does not appreciate them. For those purposes which Allâh Ta'âlâ has granted a bounty, man does not use it for that nor, does He ponder over it and recognize his creator. (61-65) If man ponders over his own creation, let alone pondering over the outside world, then he will recognize Allâh Ta'âlâ. Man passes different stages during his creation. Every stage is very wonderful and astonishing. His beginning is from lifeless soil, to sperm, to a blood-clot, to a piece of flesh, to bones, to a full skeleton, then life, intelligence, sight, the web of veins spanning thousands miles spread out in the body, the blood-circulation, movement of the heart and 360 joints.

When he is born, he is completely weak. He does not have the ability of speech, nor the ability to differentiate and understand. Allâh grants him understanding, intelligence, strength and comprehension. After childhood, he enters the bounds of being a man. Then old-age comes to him and man becomes as he was during childhood. His eyes are weak, he has difficulty in understanding, there is weakness in the limbs, the senses do not function, he is unable to walk, and get up or sit, until death comes to him. Death is also one stage of these many stages of creation. After death, life will be granted again so that the remaining stages of this creation can be completed. On one side is this amazing functioning of human life and a living proof of Allâh's power. On the other side is the rejection and turning away of those who argue regarding the signs of Allâh, forgetting the stages they have passed from i.e. from sand and sperm to old-age and death, and forgetting that Being who oversees all these stages. For this reason, after mentioning man's creation, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Have you not seen those people who dispute about the verses of Allâh Ta'âlâ? Where are they heading?" (67-69)

At the end of the sûrah, Nabî ﷺ is firstly commanded to be patient. Thereafter, those who deny are instructed to travel in the earth and see the outcome of destroyed nations. These nations had great pride over their outward strength and material possessions. They disbelieved in the miracles of the Ambiyâ and the clear proofs of their truthfulness. When they saw Allâh's punishment with their own eyes, they accepted tawhîd and made apparent their dislike of idol-worship. However this acceptance and assertion came to be of no benefit to them because this is Allâh's system with the proud and disobedient ones that, after seeing the punishment, their îman is not accepted. (77-85)

Sûrah Fussilat

Sûrah Fussilat is a Makkî sûrah. It has 54 verses and 6 rukûs. Since there is a sajdah of tilâwat in this sûrah, it is also called Hâ-Mîm Sajdah. The sûrah begins with the hurûfe-muqatta'ât حم. There are seven sûrahs altogether which commence with حم. Technically, they are called آل حم and حواميم سبعة. They were revealed in the same order as found in the Qur'ân. Hadhrat Ibn Masûd ؓ regarded these sûrahs as the beauty of the Qur'ân. Hadhrat Ibn Abbâs ؓ said, "Everything has an essence and the essence of the Qur'ân is آل حم."

حواميم سبعة are :

- 1- Mu'min.
- 2- Hâmîm sajdah.
- 3- Shurâ.
- 4- Zukhruf.
- 5- Dukhân.
- 6- Jâthiyah.
- 7- Ahqâf.

This sûrah begins with mention of this great Qur'ân and says that it has been revealed by such a Being who is very gracious and Most-Merciful. The laws and meanings, topics and objectives, incidents

and advices, commands and examples, promises and warnings are all completely clear. There is no obscurity or doubt in them. However, inspite of its clarity and explanation, many people turn away from it and these unfortunate ones liken themselves to blind and deaf people. They say, "Our hearts are veiled from what you call us towards and there are props in our ears. There is also a barrier between you and us, so do (as you please), we shall do (as we please)." In answer to the blabbering and futility of the mushrikîn, Allâh Ta'âlâ commands Nabî ﷺ to introduce himself and explain the purpose of him being sent. "Say, 'I do not claim to be an angel or any other creation. I am a human like you in human needs and necessities, but Allâh Ta'âlâ has distinguished me with revelation and risâlat.'" (2-6)

Thereafter, this sûrah expresses surprise on the disbelief and shirk of the mushrikîn, who inspite of witnessing the signs of Allâh's greatness and majesty, still deny. Together with mentioning these proofs, the denial, falsification and final result of the nations of Âd and Thamûd have been mentioned. The nation of Âd had been granted amazing bodily strength. Their strength was such that one person from them could break a rock from the mountain and separate it. The demand of this was that they should have remained grateful to Allâh over this power and strength. However instead of gratitude, they became haughty. In a boastful manner, they would challenge, "Who is stronger than us?" (15) Expressing surprise over their foolishness and ignorance, Allâh Ta'âlâ answering them states, "Have they forgotten the strength and power of that Being who created them? Have they forgotten the reality that their power holds no weight in front of the greatness, power and grandeur of Allâh Ta'âlâ." Thereafter a punishment of a fierce and bitterly cold wind was let loose over them. For seven consecutive days, the wind blew. It lifted them up and threw them as if they were insignificant insects and pieces of dirt.

The nation of Thamûd also gave preference to disbelief over î mân, misguidance over guidance and blindness over sight. One day, whilst they were intoxicated in their luxuries, a piercing scream sounded that caused their ear drums to burst, followed by an earthquake which destroyed everything. (18-19)

After mentioning the worldly punishment of disobedient nations like Âd and Thamûd, mention is made of the punishment in the hereafter, when Allâh's enemies will be presented before Him and their limbs, and even their skin, will testify against them. (19-22) In contrast to the proud people and the rejectors, this sûrah also mentions the sincere believers, whose outstanding feature is steadfastness on î mân. After having proclaimed just once, that their Rabb is Allâh, then for their entire lives, they remain firm on this statement of theirs. This steadfastness is wilâyat (sainthood) and the greatest miracle of all miracles. The people of steadfastness will be granted a place in Jannah and told, that they can live their lives there as they desire. This is a reward for living their life in the world according to how Allâh Ta'âlâ desired. (30-31)

From the people of steadfastness, the most honourable and appreciated people by Allâh are those people who call towards Allâh Ta'âlâ with sincerity and wisdom, and they bear the difficulties in this path for the pleasure of Allâh. (33-35) This pâra ends off with mention of Allâh's justice, "Whoever does a good deed, does so for his own benefit, and whoever commits a sin, it will be to his own detriment. Your Rabb never oppresses His bondsmen." (46)

TWENTY-FIFTH PÂRA

At the end of the 24th pâra, Allâh's perfect justice was mentioned due to which no one will be oppressed on the Day of Qiyâmah. At the beginning of the 25th pâra, we are informed that the knowledge of the exact date of Qiyâmah is known only to Allâh. People will be involved in buying, selling and personal enjoyments when suddenly Qiyâmah will take place. On this day, Allâh Ta'âlâ will question the mushrikîn, "Where have my partners gone which you used to worship?" They, will with great regret answer that, today they do not have any such individual who they can declare to be a partner of Allâh Ta'âlâ. (47)

At the end of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ promises His servants that He will inform them of secrets in the universe and in man himself. When these secrets open up, then every person will know that this is a book on truth. (53) Allâh's promise is true and for the past 1400 years, this promise is being fulfilled. Such discoveries are being made in man and the universe which people of the past could not even imagine. This is an era of discoveries, investigations and inventions. No day passes without some new investigation or discovery being brought forth. Whoever thought that man will reach the moon? And that they can go around the earth? It did not even cross anyone's mind that the voice of the people of the east would reach the people of the west and vice-versa. Never mind voices, today their forms and movements can be seen.

At one time, man regarded the sun as the greatest object of the universe thus prostrating before it. Today, we learn that the sun we see is only a small globe in the universe. There are many millions of suns present like it. Man has gone into the depths of the oceans and rivers. He has seen what is hidden in it's depths. Man has learnt a lot regarding his body, his make-up, his specialities and the secrets and mysteries of his body. Many things have been unveiled regarding

man's psychology. However, inspite of all this, can any person claim that he knows every fine detail of the universe and man, and can anyone claim that he has reached perfection in scholarly research and scientific progress? No other religious book besides the Qur'ân can keep up with the speed of this knowledge and research. This proves the everlasting miraculousness of the Qur'ân. This is not a material miracle like the staff of Hadhrat Mûsa عليه السلام and the flying carpet of Hadhrat Sulaymân عليه السلام. This is a literal and intellectual miracle and has been revealed for an intellectual era. As man's knowledge increases, the truthfulness of the Qur'ân will open up more and more to him. A time will come when every person of knowledge who is not bigoted will submit himself in front of the Qur'ân. (إن شاء الله)

Sûrah Shûrâ

Sûrah Shûrâ is amongst the Makkî sûrahs. It has 53 verses and 5 rukûs. As with other Makkî sûrahs, it discusses theoretical issues. However, in this Sûrah, more importance has been given to the issue of revelation and risâlat. To declare the miraculousness of the Qur'ân and to show the helplessness of its opponents, the sûrah commences with the hurûf-e-muqatta'ât. These are the same letters which have been joined to form the Qur'ân. If in reality, this Qur'ân is a human effort, then you people can also join these letters and form a speech like the Qur'ân. If you cannot imitate the whole Qur'ân, then at least bring forth one short sûrah. The greatest benefit of this task, if you do it (معاذ الله), is that you won't have to make propaganda to prove Nabî ﷺ to be a liar, neither will you be forced to use monetary means and nor will you have to cast your children and brothers in the fire of wars. However, neither the deniers of yesterday accepted this challenge, nor are the deniers of today prepared to accept it.

Immediately after commencing the sûrah with the hurûf-e-muqatta'ât, Nabî ﷺ is addressed, "In this way, Allâh who is All-

Powerful and All-Wise sent down revelation to you and those before you." Thus the fountain head of revelation has remained one, for both the early and latter day generations. After mentioning the grandeur and greatness of Allâh in-between, the Qur'ân and revelation is again discussed. "And in this way, we have revealed to you a Qur'ân in the Arabic language, so that you may warn the inhabitants of the big city (i.e. Makkah) and those around it." (7)

To give more emphasis to the topic of risâlat, we are informed that by Allâh there is one dîn (religion). All the Ambiyâ came to this world to invite to one dîn. Even though all the shari'ahs were different, their dîn was one i.e. Islâm. Hadhrat Nûh, Hadhrat Ibrâhîm, Hadhrat Mûsa and Hadhrat Îsâ عليهم السلام were sent into this world with this call and invitation, and their followers were severely warned not to cause disunity. However, the ahle-kitâb became involved in disunity only due to jealousy and obstinacy. To remove their differences and dissension, and to make them hear the decisive judgment, Allâh Ta'âlâ sent Our master (ﷺ) and commanded him, "Invite towards this dîn and hold firm onto it as you have been commanded, hold firm onto it, do not follow the whims and desires of those people and say to them, 'I believe in the book that Allâh Ta'âlâ has revealed.'" (15)

As the sûrah progresses, its relationship with revelation and risâlat becomes clearer. Besides the theme of wahî (revelation) and risâlat, the mind is also directed towards the proofs and universal signs of îmân in this material world. The following distinguishing qualities of the people of îmân are mentioned hereunder.

- They have trust on their Rabb.
- They abstain from major sins and acts of shamelessness.
- When they are angered, they forgive.
- They are obedient to Allâh.
- They are punctual with salâh.
- They do their work with mutual consultation.

- They spend in the path of Allâh from that wealth which Allâh Ta'âlâ has given them.
- If anyone oppresses them, then they retaliate in a befitting manner.

If the Muslims of today create these qualities in themselves then they can prepare the road of change in their individual and social lives. In the last two verses, mention is made of wahî and risâlat. Just as the sûrah commenced, so too does it terminate.

Sûrah Zukhruf

Sûrah Zukhruf is a Makkî sûrah. It has 189 verses and 7 rukûs. It is called Zukhruf because this world is mentioned in this sûrah which means gold and beauty. The theme of this sûrah is the principles of dîn. This sûrah, as with the other "حواميم" begins with mentions of Nabî ﷺ's enduring miracle i.e. the Qur'ân-e-Karîm. Allâh Ta'âlâ takes an oath on this illuminating and clear book and says, "We have made it a Qur'ân in the Arabic language so that you may understand. And verily it (the Qur'ân) is in the Original book (i.e. Lawh-e-Mahfûz) by us, and it has great virtue and wisdom."

Thereafter, sûrah Zukhruf discusses the proofs of Allâh's power. The blue roof of the sky, the carpet of the earth, the lofty mountains, the flowing rivers, the spread-out oceans which are as far as the eye can see, the drops of rain falling from the sky, the fully laden ships and boats on the surface of the water, the different types of animals which can be eaten, and which have proven to be the best means for transportation purposes, these are all living proofs of the power and wisdom of their creator and maker. The city-dweller as well as the bedouin can understand them. These proofs were there yesterday and are still here today. The only thing needed, are such ears which can hear the testimony of truth, such eyes which can see it and such a heart which can accept it.

This sûrah also discusses one extremely despicable belief found during the days of ignorance. On one side, their psychology was such that they had severe hatred for daughters. If a daughter was born to them, then they would hide their faces from people and would think of ways to bury this small child alive. On the other hand, they would ascribe daughters to Allâh Ta'âlâ and would regard the angels to be the daughters of Allâh Ta'âlâ. (15-16)

Sûrah Zukhruf makes mention of the father of the Ambiyâ Hadhrat Ibrâhîm ؑ regarding whom the mushrikîn claimed that they were on his sharî'ah and millat (religion). Here this claim is refuted. With what face do these devotees of idols claim to be followers of his sharî'ah, whereas he was the flag-bearer of tawhîd whilst these people are drowned in the filth of idol-worship from head to toe?

Hadhrat Ibrâhîm ؑ left this kalimah of tawhîd for his progeny. (26-28) When Khâtamun-Nabîyyîn ﷺ invited the mushrikîn to this same kalimah, they began calling him a magician and his call, magic. Their idea of a messenger of Allâh was based on great ignorance and foolishness. "And they said, 'Why has the Qur'ân not been revealed upon any great person from the two cities?'" Did Allâh only find a poor man and an orphan to make a Nabî? Why did He not choose any leader from amongst the leaders of Makkah and Tâ'if? These are answered, the crux of which is that they do not have any choice in the means of their livelihood and they are not fully in control over their sustenance. When they do not have any choice in the distribution of sustenance, then how can they be given the choice of choosing and distributing such a lofty position as nubuwwat? (32)

Thereafter, Mûsa ؑ's incident is mentioned which gives a glimpse and portrayal of the foolishness and ignorance of the mushrikîn. Fir'awn had lot of pride over his authority, wealth and freedoms. He regarded himself as the true owner of the lands and rivers of Egypt. He looked at Mûsa ؑ with eyes of contempt. It so happened that

he was drowned in those very rivers which he felt could not flow without his permission. (46-56) At the end of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, commanding His messenger to turn away from the ignorant and to be patient, "Ignore them and say salâm (to them). They will soon come to know. (89)

Sûrah Dukhân

Sûrah Dukhân is a Makkî sûrah. It has 53 verses and 3 rukûs. Dukhân means smoke. This sûrah is called "Dukhân" because mention is made in it of smoke which the mushrikîn thought they were seeing during a drought, due to severe hunger. In the beginning of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ takes an oath of the كتاب مبین "Clear book". This book is clear with regards to its miraculousness and with regards to explaining its laws and subject matter. Allâh Ta'âlâ takes an oath saying "We have revealed it on a blessed night." This refers to Laylatul-Qadr which is the most virtuous night. Allâh Ta'âlâ has revealed this book due to His mercy because Allâh Ta'âlâ is not in need of our worship. The demand of Allâh's nurturing is that He does not deprive His servants of guidance. (1-8) However the mushrikîn and disbelievers were in doubt regarding the Qur'ân and life after death. (9)

The Fir'awns and tyrants of Nabî ﷺ's time are warned of the result of Fir'awn who opposed Mûsa. In his kingdom, he had plenty of gold, an abundance of gardens, plenty of palaces, goldmines, thousands of male and female servants and an army consisting of hundreds of thousands. In short, whatever was found in Egypt, was his. He regarded himself as owner of every living and non-living object. However, all of this was of no benefit to him. He was drowned in the unmerciful waves of the sea in front of his subjects and those whom he oppressed. He died saying آمَنْتُ آمَنْتُ (I believe, I believe). Those words could not help him now. Whatever he left back, the Banî Isrâ'îl inherited. Yesterdays ruled became today's rulers, and yesterday's slaves became today's masters. (17-29) At

the end of the sûrah, mention is made of the frightening punishment which the disobedient will have to face and those bounties which Allâh's pious servants will be granted, such bounties which the small intellect cannot encompass.

Sûrah Jâthiyah

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 37 verses and 4 rukûs. Our honourable readers should be aware by now that most sûrahs which commence with the hurûf-e-muqatta'ât, are followed by mention of Nabî ﷺ's greatest miracle, the Qur'ân-e-Karîm. This is also found in sûrah Jâthiyah. Jâthiyah means "to sit on one's knees". On the day of Qiyâmah, people will be on their knees in the court of Allâh due to fear and awe. Since this sûrah mentions this fearful sight, it is called Sûrah Jâthiyah. After mentioning the greatness of the Qur'ân, this sûrah mentions those signs in the universe, of which every single one of them is a living witness to the greatness, grandeur, power and oneness of Allâh Ta'âlâ. (3-6)

This sûrah then brings forth the disliked faces of the sinners who do not leave their pride and denial inspite of listening to the divine signs. They pretend as if though they cannot hear it. (7-9) Besides this, this sûrah also makes mention of those bounties which Allâh Ta'âlâ granted to the Banî Isrâ'îl in the form of a book, wisdom, nubuwwat, pure sustenance, virtue and honour over the people of the world. The demand of this was that after being showered with these bounties, they should have chosen the path of humility and obedience. However, they gradually came onto the path of disobedience and sin. (16-17)

Incidents of the past are mentioned to make the disbelievers of Makkah, in fact, the disbelievers of all times understand. The main reason of disbelief and denial, whether it was the disbelievers during the time of Nabî or of present times, is that they regard the worldly life as everything, (24-25), whereas the Qur'ân emphasizes

over and over again believing in that day when the good and evil people will be given their dues for their actions. The Qur'ân's style is sometimes commanding and sometimes advising, sometimes it has an informative style and sometimes it has a compositional style, sometimes it comes in a question and answer format and sometimes it draws a picture, as if the reciter of the Qur'ân is actually witnessing the scenes of Qiyâmah in this very world. At the end of the sûrah, this style of drawing a scene has been chosen. It seems as if Qiyâmah is already taking place. On the plains of resurrection, people due to fear, have fallen to their knees. Allâh Ta'âlâ addresses His servants. It is said to them, "You had forgotten the Day of Qiyâmah, today you will be forgotten. You used to mock the divine signs. Today, you will become the object of ridicule." (28-35)

TWENTY-SIXTH PÂRA

Sûrah Ahqâf

This is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 35 verses and 4 rukûs. The theme of this sûrah, like other Makkî sûrahs, is proving the three fundamental Islâmic beliefs. The sûrah commences with the truthfulness of the Qur'ân, the proofs of tawhîd and resurrection and refutation of the idols which the mushrikîn regard as deities whereas they cannot see or hear, benefit and harm is not in their control, and they cannot accept the supplications of those who worship them. (2-6)

Besides the above, the following important points in Sûrah Ahqâf are as follows:

(1) When the Qur'ân is recited in front of the mushrikîn, they lay various objections and doubts regarding it. Sometimes they say it is magic, at other times they regard it as a fabricated speech. At times, they speak about the people of î mân, that if î mân was something good, then these poor, destitute and working-class people would not have preceded us in accepting î mân. After mentioning their objections, silencing answers have been given to them. (7-11)

(2) Sûrah Ahqâf presents to us two opposing examples. The first is of a pious son, whose heart is illuminated with the light of î mân and his feet are firmly established on the path of the sharî'ah. After his parents bring him up and he reaches physical and intellectual maturity, he makes three du'âs:

- 1- O Allâh, grant me the ability to be grateful for Your bounties.
- 2- Grant me the ability to do such actions with which You will be pleased.
- 3- Make my children pious.

For such children, Allâh Ta'âlâ promises Jannah. (15-16)

The other example is of a disobedient and unfortunate son whose parents invite him to accept îmân. He answers with great pride. "Woe unto you! Are you telling me that I will be taken out (brought back to life from the earth), whereas many nations have passed before me. (None of them have come back to life in front of me.)" (17) The first example is of the people of îmân and guidance whereas the second is of the people of disbelief and transgression. Both will attain the recompense for their actions.

(3) After mentioning these two opposing examples, Sûrah Ahqâf mentions the incident of the nation who belied Hadhrat Hûd عليه السلام. The result of this was that they were destroyed. A cloud was sent to punish them. Since there had been a severe heat wave for many days, the people got happy on seeing this cloud. They became convinced that there would be an abundance of rain. Out of happiness they emerged from their homes. Together with this cloud becoming apparent, a severe and fast wind began blowing. The people of Âd were tall and big-built people. The wind lifted them up and took them into the air. It seemed as if small insects were flying about. Then they were crushed to the earth. They remained lying dead on the floor in such a manner that it seemed like hollow trunks of the palm trees were lying around. After mentioning this incident, the people of Makkah are warned that they are not stronger than the people of Âd. If they choose to be disobedient, then they will also be engulfed in divine punishment. (21-26)

(4) At the end of the sûrah, it is mentioned that the same Allâh who has the power to create the heavens and earth can also give life a second time to those who have passed away. (33) In the last verse, Nabî ﷺ is commended to be patient like the other resolute Ambiyâ. The result of patience is always good.

Sûrah Muhammad

Sûrah Muhammad is a Madanî sûrah, which has 38 verses and 4 rukûs. Our noble master's (ﷺ) name is only mentioned in 4 sûrahs in the Qur'ân viz. Sûrah Ale-Imrân, Ahzâb, Muhammad and Fatah. Besides these four places, in all other places, his (ﷺ) qualities are mentioned. This sûrah is also called "Sûrah Qitâl" because the laws of fighting against the disbelievers are mentioned. The theme of this sûrah is jihâd and fighting. At the beginning of the sûrah, the difference between the disbelievers and believers are mentioned. The disbelievers follow falsehood while the people of îmân follow the truth. (1-3) Wherever these two groups are found, then conflicts and clashes will take continuously take place between them. At times, war will eventually occur. Therefore, Allâh Ta'âla states, "When you confront the disbelievers, then strike at their necks. When you have eventually slain them, then fasten a tight bond (i.e. take the survivors as prisoners of war.) Thereafter it is conditional freed or ransom." (4) These prisoners can be freed as a kind gesture or they can be given freedom after paying fidyah (ransom).

A third choice is that they can be exchanged for Muslim prisoners of war. The fourth possible option is that they can be made slaves. However, enslaving these prisoners does not hold the status of being compulsory (fardh or wâjib). At the time when permission was granted to make prisoners into slaves, this custom was not only prevalent, but the oppressive people would even turn free people who had no powerful or wealthy family (to support them) into slaves. These oppressed people were deprived of all human rights. Islâm stipulated their rights. It mentioned the virtues of freeing them and protected their lives. Due to Islâm granting them their due rights, we find that in history mention is made of so many slaves who became commentators of the Qur'ân (مفسر), transmitters of ahâdîth (محدث), conquerors, ministers and sovereigns. The Muslims never looked at them with eyes of contempt due to them

previously being slaves. The Muslims also regarded assistance to slaves and buying and setting them free to be a worthy cause of spending wealth. The Muslims of the first era would attain much pleasure in freeing slaves. We can get an idea of it from the following narration in which it is mentioned that only one Sahâbî ؓ of Nabî ﷺ bought and freed 30 000 slaves.

Sûrah Qitâl tell us that if the Muslims show steadfastness on the religion of Allâh and stand up to assist it, then Allâh Ta'âlâ will help them and keep them firm. (7) Allâh Ta'âlâ also gives a glimpse of Jannah in this sûrah, which Allâh Ta'âlâ has promised the people of î mân. (12-15) In contrast to the people of î mân, the condition of the hypocrites is mentioned. On hearing the verses of fighting, the î mân of the Mu'minîn increases whereas a death-like unconsciousness overtakes the hypocrites. (20-21) After giving encouragement for jihâd, fighting and spending in the path of Allâh, we are warned at the end of the sûrah, "And if you turn away, He will substitute you with another nation who will not be like yourselves." (38)

Sûrah Fatah

Sûrah Fatah is a Madanî sûrah. It has 29 verses and 4 rukûs. This sûrah was revealed at the time when Rasûlullâh ﷺ was returning from Hudaibiyah. In Bukhârî and Tirmizî, Hadhrat Umar ؓ narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "Tonight, such a sûrah has been revealed to me which is more beloved to me than this world and whatever it contains." Thereafter, Nabî ﷺ recited a portion of the beginning verses. To easily understand the contents of this sûrah, it seems appropriate to mention briefly the treaty of Hudaibiyah and the Bay'at-e-Ridwân. Nabî ﷺ saw a dream in Madînah Munawwarah that they were entering Makkah and making tawâf of the house of Allâh. When Nabî ﷺ mentioned this dream to the Sahâbah ؓ, they became extremely pleased because they knew that a Nabî ﷺ's dream was true. In Zul-Qa'dah, the 6th year of hijrî Nabî ﷺ set out

with 1400 or 1500 Sahâbah from Madînah Munawwarah with the intention of performing umrah. When Nabî ﷺ was between Makkah and Madînah, Bishr Ibn Sufyân informed him that the people of Makkah had got news of his departure, and were preparing for a full-scale war. Nabî ﷺ then sent Hadhrat Uthmân ؓ as an envoy to explain to the people of Makkah that they were not coming with the intention of war. Their only purpose was umrah and ziyârat (visiting). The rumour then spread that Hadhrat Uthmân ؓ had been martyred. Nabî ﷺ sat under a tree and took a pledge from his Sahâbah of not fleeing (and of taking revenge until death). This pledge is called Bay'at-e-Ridwân (بيعت رضوان) because Allâh Ta'âlâ has mentioned that He is pleased (رضوان) with all the participants of this pledge. (18) This rumour proved to be a false.

Then discussions began. Suhayl Ibn Amr came on behalf of the Quraysh and discussions continued. Finally, a peace treaty was drawn up in which both parties agreed to stay with peace and not to fight with each other for ten years. Some parts of this treaty outwardly portrayed the weakness of the Muslims. However, Allâh Ta'âlâ declared it an open victory. At this juncture, some Muslims could not understand this treaty to be a clear victory. However, later, conditions proved that definitely it was an open and clear victory, and that from the beginning of Islâm until now, there had been no greater victory. This can be judged from the fact that at the time of Hudaibiyah, the Muslims were approximately 1400, whereas after just 2 years, in the 8th year of hijrî, when the Muslims conquered Makkah, the number of soldiers under the leadership of Nabî ﷺ was 10 000. This revolution took place due to the peace treaty. When after the treaty, the mushrikîn began interacting and dealing with the Muslims, then the mature conduct of the Muslims, their truthfulness, chastity and clean business dealings forced the mushriks to ponder over which hidden force has turned yesterday's drunkards and highway robbers into such abstinent and pious people. It is apparent that this strength was only îmân. After understanding this reality, they automatically submitted to

accepting î mân. Sûrah Fatah was revealed after the peace treaty of Hudaibiyah. Therefore, in this sûrah, there is an indication to those incidents which have a relationship and connection to it. In the opening verses, Nabî ﷺ is informed of the glad-tidings of this great victory, a promise of Jannah is given to the believers and there is a warning sounded to the disbelievers and hypocrites. (1-6)

Then this sûrah mentions two contrary groups. The first is of those sincere believers, who inspite of being far from their homeland and being unarmed, not worrying about the circumstances, took the pledge of jihâd on the blessed hands of Rasûlullah ﷺ and took an oath that under his leadership, they would fight until victory or death and would not desert the battle field. Allâh Ta'âlâ loved their sentiments and said, "Verily those who pledge allegiance to you, verily they are pledging allegiance to Allâh. Allâh's hand is over their hands." (10) After a few verses Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "(O Rasûl!) Definitely Allâh was pleased with the believers when they pledged allegiance to you under the tree, He knew that (î mânî fervour) which was in their hearts, then He caused tranquillity to descend upon them and He granted them a close victory." (18)

The second group is of the hypocrites who were not with Nabî ﷺ during Hudaibiyah. Their false thoughts were that Nabî ﷺ and the Muslims who went with him would never return safely alive from Makkah. Allâh Ta'âlâ informed Nabî ﷺ regarding those hypocrites that when he (ﷺ) returns, they will present false excuses for them remaining behind. (11-12) Sûrah Fatah also mentions the dream which Nabî ﷺ saw regarding entering Masjid-e-Harâm. (27) At the end of this sûrah, three things are mentioned.

- a. Allâh Ta'âlâ has sent Nabî ﷺ with guidance and the true religion so that he can make it prevail over all other religions (Inshâ-Allâh, before Qiyâmah, this will come to pass. With regards to intellectual mastery and proofs, today too, Islâm prevails over all other religions of the world). (28)

- b. Nabî ﷺ's Sahâbah have been praised. They are very stern against the kuffâr but have great mercy amongst themselves. They all seek divine pleasure.
- c. A promise of forgiveness and great reward has been mentioned for those who believe and do good actions (O Allâh! Make us from amongst them).

Sûrah Hujurât

Sûrah Hujurât is a Madanî sûrah. It has 18 verses and 2 rukûs. Hujurât is the plural of hujr which means house or room. This sûrah is called Hujurât because mention is made of the bedouins and village-dwellers, who due to not being aware of etiquettes, would call out to Nabî ﷺ from outside his room in the manner that you would call out to an ordinary person. This sûrah is also called Sûratul-Akhîlâq wal-Âdâb because noble character is mentioned in it. In this sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ addresses the people of îmân five times with "O You who believe." The important points of this sûrah mentioned in sequence are as follows :

(1) In the beginning, the respect of Allâh and His Rasûl (ﷺ) have been mentioned. That is, a believer as long as he does not know the command of Allâh Ta'âlâ and Rasûlullâh ﷺ, should not express his own opinion and decision. Similarly, in practical life, he should not pass his own judgment, turning away from the Qur'ân and Sunnah. In the following verse, the Muslims are commanded that at the time of addressing Allâh's Nabî ﷺ, they should lower their voices. Also they should not call out to him by mentioning his (ﷺ) name or by his kunyat (i.e. the name of one's child preceded by Ab or Umm e.g. Abul-Qâsim) in the manner that they address one another. (1-2)

(2) Mentioning social etiquettes, Muslims have been urged not to lend an ear to rumours and gossip. If any unreliable person conveys a message, then it should be investigated. Together with mentioning the command of investigating information, the Sahâbah are addressed and praised, "But Allâh has made beloved

to you îmân and has beautified it in your hearts and He has made disbelief, sin and disobedience abhorrent to you.” (7)

(3) To rely and have faith in rumours which are circulating around sometimes leads to fighting and killing. Therefore, we are told if the two Muslim groups fight amongst themselves then try to make peace between them because all the Muslims of the world, whether black or white, rich or poor, Arab and non-Arab are brothers.

(4) Thereafter six social evils and ills have been pointed out which affects mutual relationships. Those people involved in it are not regarded as pious in the sight of Allâh.

- 1- To mock at one another. Generally one person mocks another when he looks at him with contempt and regards himself as better. Therefore we are told that it is possible that the one you mock at is better than you in the eyes of Allâh.
- 2- To find fault, to taunt and disgrace someone.
- 3- To address someone with an evil title or to spoil his name.
- 4- To think ill of someone. Allâh’s Nabî ﷺ regarded thinking ill of someone as the worst of all lies.
- 5- To search for the faults and weaknesses of Muslims and to investigate secretly. Hadhrat Abu Barzah Aslamî ؓ narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ stood before us and addressed saying, “O people who believe with their tongues, but îmân has not entered your hearts. Do not search for the faults of Muslims. Whoever does so, Allâh Ta’âlâ will disgrace him in his own house.”
- 6- The sixth social evil which we have been prevented from is backbiting. Allâh Ta’âlâ has likened backbiting to eating the flesh of one’s dead brother. (11-12) Allâh has mentioned such a comparison of backbiting which every sound-minded person detests.
 - The person who backbites is not eating the flesh of any animal, but a human being.

- The person whose flesh he is eating is not a stranger, but his own brother.
- The flesh is not of someone living, but a dead person.

(5) A great cause of destruction of mutual relationships is to have pride and arrogance over one's status, lineage and wealth. Therefore Sûrah Hujurât curbs these evils from the root and clearly explains that involuntary things like one's nationality, tribe, caste or colour does not make anyone honourable or beloved in the sight of Allâh Ta'âlâ. The only basis of honour according to Allâh is taqwâ i.e. to abstain from every type of shirk and sin and to obey Allâh and Rasûlullâh ﷺ. Rasûlullâh ﷺ has mentioned in a hadîth, "O people! Verily Allâh Ta'âlâ has ended the arrogance of the days of ignorance and having pride over one's forefathers. People are of two types : One group is those who are pious, God-fearing and honoured by Allâh Ta'âlâ. The other are those who are disgraced in the eyes of Allâh. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Verily, the most honourable amongst you according to Allâh are the most pious."

(6) In the concluding verses, we learn that verbal and outward îmân are not considered. By Allâh, that îmân is considered which is entrenched in the heart and which prepares the believer to sacrifice his life and wealth.

Sûrah Qâf

Sûrah Qâf is a Makkî sûrah. It has 45 verses and 3 rukûs. This sûrah consists of the fundamental beliefs of Islâm. Generally, Nabî ﷺ used to read this sûrah in huge gatherings like Jumu'ah and 'Îd salâhs. At the beginning of the sûrah, an oath is taken on the Qur'ân. However the concluding clause of this oath is not mentioned, but rather it is implied i.e. ليعيشن (definitely people will be given life for a second time). This sûrah shows that the mushrikîn were very astonished that they would be given a second life and that a human being could be a Nabî (2-3), whereas in this physical world, there is no

shortage of such wonders and creations, over which man can ponder and come to know of Allâh Ta'âlâ's unlimited powers. (6-11)

Before this, the nation of Nûh, the nation of Thamûd, the nation of Âd, the nation of Lût and the nation of Shuayb had chosen the path of disbelief like them and were eventually destroyed. (12-14) This sûrah creates the awareness in man that he will be held accountable (for his actions) and that whatever thoughts and whispers passes through his heart, Allâh is aware of it. Together with every person, two angels have been appointed, who keep an eye on his actions and speech. When death comes to a person, they fold up his book of deeds and then man has to give an account and answer for his actions on the plains of Qiyâmah. (16-37) At the end of the sûrah, Nabî ﷺ is advised to be patient over the futile speech of the mushrikîn and to make Allâh's tasbîh and worship Him morning and evening. (39-40) In the last verse, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "We know best what they say, and you are not one to force them. Then warn by means of this Qur'ân those who fear My warning." (4-5)

Sûrah Dhâriyât

Sûrah Dhâriyât is a Makkî sûrah. It has 60 verses and 3 rukûs. In the beginning of the sûrah, an oath is taken on four types of winds after which Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions, "Verily that which you have been promised is true, and the Day of Justice will definitely occur." (1-6) Then an oath is taken on the skies and Allâh says, "Verily you are on contradictory statements." The disbelievers of both yesterday and today are not unanimous on one thing. Regarding Qiyâmah, the Qur'ân and Rasûlullâh ﷺ their views are all contrary to each other. This sûrah then mentions the final result of the pious as well as their noble qualities i.e. they perform good actions, sleep less at night (engaging in the worship of Allâh Ta'âlâ), seek forgiveness and pardon at the time of sehrî (pre-dawn), and a portion of their wealth is given to both those who ask and those who do not ask.

Thereafter, 3 proofs of Allâh Ta'âlâ's greatness and power are mentioned :

The first sign is the earth. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "And in the earth are many signs for those who have conviction." (20) In spite of the earth being globe shaped, it has been spread out like how bedding is spread out. In it there are roads for travellers, there are fields, mountains, oceans, rivers, humming springs and hidden minerals like iron, steel, gold, silver, coal and oil. Allâh Ta'âlâ has placed on earth all the necessities which man requires for his survival.

The second sign is man himself, who in reality is the most amazing of all marvels. From billions of humans, everyone's form, colour, manner of walking, tone, voice, temperament and intellectual level is different. For hearing, seeing, talking, breathing, feeling, thinking, digesting, circulation of blood, network of veins and muscles, such a delicate and perfect system has been granted to us that the latest and most modern automated machines can never match it. Therefore Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "And within yourselves (there are signs). Can you not see?" (21) Hadhrat Qatâdah رحمہ اللہ said, "That person who ponders over his creation, will definitely come to know that he has been created and his limbs and joints will become subservient for worship."

The third sign has been mentioned is as follows, "And in the heavens is your sustenance and that which you have been promised." (22) Man's life and the acquiring of his needs required for his existence are greatly dependent on the skies. The rain falls by which every living and growing thing, including man, attains life. If the sun did not rise, then no crops would have grown, nor would any animal give milk. This proves that man's life is dependant on rain as well as the appearance of the sun and moon. The changing of the seasons is also connected to them, which has a special effect on the growing and ripening of crops. In the last few verses of the 26th pâra, those angels are mentioned who came to Hadhrat Ibrâhîm عليه السلام in the form of guests. Regarding them to be humans, he immediately slaughtered and prepared a calf for meals, according to his noble habit. (24-27)

TWENTY-SEVENTH PÂRA

At the end of the 26th pâra, those angels were discussed whom Ibrâhîm ﷺ regarded as ordinary guests. When the reality opened up to him and he came to know that these were angels, he asked them, "What important task did you come for?" They told him that they had been sent to rain down stones and destroy the nation of Lût. Besides the nation of Lût, Sûrah Dhâriyât mentions the end result of Fir'awn, the nation of Âd, Thamûd and Nûh ﷺ and thereafter turns our attention to the creation of the heavens and earth. Allâh declares this scientific reality that Allâh Ta'âlâ has created everything in pairs. At the end of the sûrah, the purpose of man and jinn's creation have been mentioned which is the recognition and worship of Allâh Ta'âlâ. We are informed that Allâh Ta'âlâ is responsible for the sustenance of all creation. A warning of punishment on the Day of Qiyâmah is sounded out to the disbelievers and mushrikîn.

Sûrah Tûr

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 49 verses and 2 rukûs. In the beginning of the sûrah, after taking an oath on five things, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions, "Verily the punishment of your Rabb will definitely take place. None can escape it." (1-8) Under the commentary of these verses, some commentators have mentioned the incident of Hadhrat Jubayr Ibn Mut'im ؓ, to show the powerful effect of the Qur'ân on hearts. He came to Madînah Munawwarah, whilst he was still a disbeliever, to discuss the prisoners of Badr. When he reached there, Nabî ﷺ was reciting Sûrah Tûr in Maghrib salâh. Nabî ﷺ read the 7th verse the translation of which is, "Verily the punishment of your Rabb will definitely take place." Hadhrat Jubayr ؓ says that on hearing it I felt as if my heart was going to burst. Therefore I accepted Islâm due to fear of the punishment descending. When Nabî ﷺ recited the 35th and 36th verse, in which Allâh Ta'âlâ asks,

"Were they created without a creator or are they the creators themselves? Or did they create the heavens and the earth? The fact is that they have no conviction." He says that on hearing these verses, the thought crossed my mind that my heart and senses were going to collapse.

It is mentioned regarding Hadhrat Umar ؓ that one night while he was walking around the streets and alleys of Madînah Munawwarah, he passed by a Muslim person's house who was reciting the beginning verses of Sûrah Tûr in salâh. When he reached this verse, "Verily the punishment of your Rabb will definitely take place," Hadhrat Umar ؓ got off his mule and for a long time, he sat down leaning against a wall. Thereafter, for a period of one month, he remained within the confines of his home. People came to visit him but found no apparent cause for his illness. Countless incidents of the effect of the Qur'ân can be presented, but the gathering of all these incidents is not the purpose here. The main aim is that we should take lesson from it and we should recite and listen to the Qur'ân with concentration and pondering so that our hearts are affected.

Thereafter this sûrah mentions the everlasting abode of the pious i.e. Jannah where-in they will be granted bounties such as hûrs (maidens of Jannah), young boys (as servants) tasty fruit, meat and glasses of wine filled to the brim. While speaking amongst themselves, they will say, "Before this, we used to be fearful among our families. However, Allâh favoured us and saved us from the punishment of the scorching winds." (26-28) In the following verses, this sûrah clarifies the standpoint of the mushrikîn regarding the call of Rasûlullâh ﷺ. They would taunt him and regard him as a fortune-teller and mad. Allâh Ta'âlâ commands Nabî ﷺ that he should continue his work of calling and reminding because they cannot cause any harm. At the end of the sûrah, the false notions of the mushrikîn are refuted. Proofs of Allâh's divinity and oneness are shown and those foolish people who say that the angels are the

daughters of Allâh are rebuked. Nabî ﷺ is commanded to be patient in propagation and inviting and to glorify and praise Allâh (tasbîh and tahmîd). Allâh Ta'âlâ asserts that He will protect Nabî ﷺ, and the oppressors will have to face two punishments. One is the worldly punishment and one is the punishment of the hereafter. (47)

Sûrah Najm

This is a Makkî sûrah. It has 62 verses and 3 rukûs. The important points mentioned in this sûrah are :

(1) In the beginning of this sûrah, an oath is taken on the falling stars mentioning Nabî ﷺ's truthfulness. The miracle of Mi'raj is mentioned, where Nabî ﷺ witnessed the wonders and marvels of Allâh's power and kingdom. He saw Hadhrat Jibrâ'il ﷺ in his original form. He visited such places like Jannah, Jahannum, Baitul-Mamûr and Sidratul-Muntahâ. (1-18)

(2) Sûrah Najm criticizes the mushrikîn who worship idols such as Lât, Uzzâ and Manât and who regard the angels to be Allâh's daughters. (19-23)

(3) This sûrah discusses Qiyâmah, where the good and evil actions of man will be fully recompensed. Mention is made of the pious, that they abstain from major sins and acts of shamelessness, whereas the disbelievers turned away from Islâm. (32-35)

(4) Every person is individually responsible for his own actions. The burden of one's sins will not be carried by another. The man, who praises himself, will not be accepted. (42-43)

(5) This noble sûrah mentions some proofs of Allâh's power and oneness e.g. Allâh makes us laugh, He makes us cry, He takes away life and gives life, He creates males and females, it is His task to create us a second-time, He makes us wealthy and grant us

possessions and it is He who has destroyed disobedient nations. (43-55)

At the end of the sûrah, the actions of the mushrikîn regarding the Qur'ân are mentioned, "Are you then surprised with this speech, as you laugh instead of crying and do you continue behaving arrogantly? Now prostrate to Allâh and worship Him." (59-62)

Sûrah Qamar

Sûrah Qamar is a Makkî sûrah. It has 55 verses and 3 rukûs. In this sûrah, there are promises as well as warnings. There are glad-tidings for the believers and warnings for the disbelievers. There are advices and lessons in it as well as fundamental beliefs like nubuwwat, risâlat, resurrection and taqdîr (predestination). A glimpse of a few important points of this sûrah :

(1) In the first verse of this sûrah, mention is made of the closeness of Qiyâmah and the splitting of the moon. The meaning of the closeness of Qiyâmah is that the era after Nabî ﷺ's nubuwwat is very little compared to the era before it. In a narration of Bukhârî and Muslim, Nabî ﷺ lifted up his index and middle finger and said, "Qiyâmah and I have been sent like this." The splitting of the moon is Nabî ﷺ's famous miracle. When the people of Makkah asked him for a miracle, he pointed towards the moon which split into two. However, where would those in whose share guidance was not written accept this? Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "And if they see any miracle, they turn away and say, "Magic will soon vanish." (3) Allâh Ta'âlâ commands Nabî ﷺ to turn away from them and to wait for that day when they will arise from their graves. Their eyes will be lowered, the blackness of disgrace will envelop their faces, they will go towards the caller (i.e. Isrâfîl عليه السلام) running and will say, "This is a very difficult day for us." (8)

(2) Thereafter, this sûrah warns the disbelievers of Makkah. It should not happen that they are afflicted with such a punishment

which had come to the past nations because of their involvement in those sins which those people were involved in. Here, after mentioning all the nations which had been destroyed, this question is posed, "Then, how was My punishment and My warning?" Immediately after this question, we are informed, "Undoubtedly we have made the Qur'ân simple to take lesson from, so is there anyone who will take lesson?"

The meaning of the Qur'ân being easy, is that to recite it, memorize it, take advice from it and to practice on it is easy. The result of this is that a simple bedouin who cannot read a small booklet in his native language, can easily recite the Qur'ân-e-Karîm. Small, innocent children memorize it in their hearts keeping in mind all its laws and finer points. When pure-hearted people recite and hear it, then their eyes well up with tears and the desire for practise becomes alive in their hearts. The Qur'ân being easy does not imply that any person after studying it, can start extracting laws from it and can sit back and become a mujtahid. (A Mujtahid is one who is an expert in all those branches of knowledge required for the proper understanding of Qu'rân and Hadîth. In this day and age, such people are non-existent. Translator)

(3) At the end of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "We have created everything by measure." (49) Everything that happens in this universe, whether good or evil, is the creation of Allâh and it is all according to the demands of wisdom and order. Whatever is going to happen, is all written in the lawhe-mahfûz (the protected tablet). Allâh Ta'âlâ knows what is going to happen before it comes into existence. The Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamâ'at have proven the belief of taqdîr (predestination) from this verse. In these verses, we learn that every small and big action has been noted in the lawhe-mahfûz, and that the kirâman-kâtibîn are writing them down. Therefore, one should never regard any sin as small and perpetrate it, nor should one regard any act of goodness as petty and leave it out. In the end, glad-tidings of a good result, earning the pleasure

of Allâh and a place of honour have been mentioned for the pious.
(52-55)

Sûrah Rahmân

This is a Madanî sûrah. It has 78 verses and 3 rukûs. Its other name is "Urûsul-Qur'ân". Hadhrat Ali كرم الله وجهه has mentioned that Nabî ﷺ has said, "Everything has an urûs (bride, beauty), the bride (beauty) of the Qur'ân is Sûrah Rahmân." In this sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ has mentioned His favours, the first of which is the revelation of the Qur'ân and teaching it to His servants. Definitely, this is a great favour. No material favour can ever compare with it. Every bounty has some substitute or the other, but nothing can ever substitute the Qur'ân. Its every verse and every letter is better than the whole world and whatever it contains. The Qur'ân is the protector, gatherer and abrogator of the contents of all other heavenly scriptures.

Allâh Ta'âlâ commences this sûrah with His quality of الرَّحْمَن (the Most Merciful), as if to inform us that all of Allâh Ta'âlâ's bounties, especially the bounty of the Qur'ân is due to the blessings and effects of His mercy. Due to Him being Rahmân, He has mercy on His servants. He grants them all types of bounties. For their instruction and guidance, He has revealed the Qur'ân. To show the greatness and honour of the Qur'ân, the teaching of the Qur'ân has been mentioned before the creation of man. Thereafter, this sûrah mentions Allâh Ta'âlâ's bounties which are spread out throughout the universe : the sun and moon which move about in their orbits according to Allâh Ta'âlâ's set pattern; the stars and trees which are prostration in front of Allâh; the earth which has been spread out like a carpet; different fruits, grains and flowers from which man takes benefit from; rivers of sweet and bitter water which flows in their respective places; those pearls and emeralds which are extracted from these oceans; ships that are high and wide as

mountains which move in the ocean, and which were, and are the best means of transportation and freighting. (5-24)

Besides these worldly bounties, the bounties of the hereafter as well as punishments have been mentioned. Mention is made of the flames and smoke of the fire of Jahannum wherein one cannot breathe properly, Jahannum whose one spark is sufficient to burn man, the boiling water which the people of Jahannum will be constrained to drink and which will cut through their intestines. On the other side, for those who fear Allâh, there (is a promise) of two lush and dense gardens, flowing streams, two types of every type of fruit and spread out carpets. The people of Jannah will sit reclining on pillows of thick silk. Besides the above mentioned gardens, there will be two other gardens which are lower than the first two. Two streams will gush forth from them. There will be different types of fruit as well as such hûrs (maidens of paradise) who will be an embodiment of modesty and beauty. After mentioning all these bounties of this world and the hereafter, Allâh Ta'âlâ asks this question 31 times in this sûrah فَبَايَ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تَكْذِبَانِ "So which favours of Your Rabb do you deny?"

If there are one or two or even ten or twenty bounties, they can be denied. However when the condition is such that the bounties are uncountable, then to deny them is impossible.

If this sûrah is studied properly, it will be seen that Allâh Ta'âlâ has in the beginning mentioned the amazing nature of His creation. This verse has been mentioned 8 times in between them. Thereafter Jahannum and its punishment are mentioned wherein this verse is mentioned 7 times. One who has studied the Qur'ân knows that Jahannum has 7 doors. Thereafter, mentioning the gardens of Jannah and the inhabitants of Jannah, this verse has been mentioned 8 times. The doors of Jannah are eight. Finally, those gardens are mentioned which are lower in rank than the first ones. Here too, this verse is mentioned 8 times. The people of

knowledge have extracted this result from this order and division that the person who has firm belief in the first eight and practices according to its demands, Allâh Ta'âlâ will save him from the seven doors of Jahannum and will make him worthy of the two types of Jannah. Some crooked-minded people have raised this objection, "How can the punishment of the hereafter be a bounty of Allâh Ta'âlâ?" This can be answered in two ways :

- 1- Punishing the oppressors and disobedient ones is the demand of Allâh Ta'âlâ's justice and is a mercy and favour in the right of the oppressed.
- 2- Warning His servants of the result of kufr, shirk, disobedience and sin, before it becomes apparent is a great favour of that Being who is Merciful and Kind. Is this not surprising that if someone informs us of the coming of any danger or calamity in this world, then we regard him as our benefactor, but we do not regard Our Master as our benefactor who has informed us in this world of the dangers of the hereafter, whereas there stands no comparison between the life of this world and the hereafter and the dangers of this world in comparison to the hereafter.

At the end of the sûrah Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "The name of Your Rabb is full of blessings who is the Most Magnificent, the Most Kind." The Ulamâ state that the name referred to is the same which Allâh Ta'âlâ commences the sûrah with. This is an indication that the creation of the heavens and earth; and the existence of Jannah and Jahannum and whatever else has been mentioned in this sûrah is the result of the mercy of Ar-Rahmân (The Most Merciful)

Sûrah Wâqî'ah

Sûrah Wâqî'ah is a Makkî sûrah. It has 96 verses and 3 rukûs. It is also called Sûratul-Ginâ (sûrah of wealth). Hadhrat Abdullâh Ibn Mas'ûd ؓ has narrated "Whoever recites Sûrah Wâqî'ah every night, will never face poverty." (والله اعلم بالصواب) This sûrah informs us that

when Qiyâmah takes place, then an earthquake will take place on the earth. The mountains will be razed to dust. Man will be divided into three groups :

- 1- As'hâbul-Yamîn (those who will be in Jannah).
- 2- As'hâbush-Shimâl (those who will be in Jahannum).
- 3- Sâbiqûn (The special believers who surpassed others in the good actions).

After dividing man into three groups, the recompense of every one is mentioned in detail. (1-56)

After this, the sûrah brings forth proofs of the existence, unity and perfect power of Allâh Ta'âlâ as well as proofs of resurrection and reckoning. Allâh, who creates man from a drop of liquid, who creates trees and plants from seeds placed in the soil, who cause rain to fall from the clouds, and who creates fire from trees can also bring a dead person back to life. After mentioning His power, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions the greatness of His speech. Thereafter, He takes an oath on the falling stars. Regarding this oath, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "This is undoubtedly a great oath if you knew." (76) After taking this oath, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Verily this is the honourable Qur'ân in a protected tablet. Only pure people should touch it. It has been revealed from the Rabb of the universe." (77-80)

Allâh Ta'âlâ has regarded the oath of stars as great. Today science has made apparent such investigations and wonders of thousands of stars by which we learn that definitely it is a huge oath. The scientists state that the universe is made up of 500 million galaxies. Each galaxy is made up of approximately 100 000 million stars. All these galaxies are in constant motion. The moon also orbits continuously. The earth rotates on its orbit at the speed of 1000 miles per hour. The sun orbits at a speed of 600 000 miles per hour. Amongst the stars, some move in their orbits at a distance of 8 miles per second, some at 33 miles per second and others at 84 miles per second. If these orbiting bodies have to clash with each other, then the whole system of the universe will go into chaos. Similarly, if there is a change in the speed of these celestial bodies,

then our day night and even our seasons would change. Keeping all these details in front, one can judge what a huge oath Allâh Ta'âlâ has taken. The connection between the stars and the Qur'ân is that just as by means of stars, one is guided in the darkness when one is on land and in the ocean, by the verses of the Qur'ân, guidance is attained from the darkness of ignorance and misguidance. Just as all the amazing facts of the stars are not open to man as yet, similarly man is not aware of all the hidden knowledge in the verses and sûrahs of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm. At the end of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions regarding the recompense of all three groups which have been mentioned, "This is most definitely the irrefutable truth. So glorify the name of Your Majestic Rabb." (95-96)

Sûrah Hadîd

This is a Madanî sûrah. It comprises of 29 verses and 4 rukûs. Hadîd means "steel". Since it is mentioned in this sûrah that Allâh Ta'âlâ has created steel, this sûrah has been named Sûrah Hadîd. Basically, this sûrah has 3 main topics :

(1) Whatever is in the universe belongs to Allâh. He is the Creator and Owner of everything. Everything in the universe praises and glorifies Him. Man and animals, trees and rocks, jinns and angels, plants and stones, in short everything, either verbally or by action testifies to His greatness and majesty. When there was nothing, He was in existence. When nothing remains, then too He will be there. He overpowers everything. Nothing can overpower Him. He is so apparent that in everything He manifests Himself and He is so hidden that no mind can comprehend His reality and no senses can perceive Him. (1-6)

(2) The command is given to believe in Allâh and His Rasûl ﷺ and of sacrificing one's life and wealth for the upliftment of dîn. Allâh Ta'âlâ encourages spending in the path of Allâh, "Why is it that you do not spend in the path of Allâh when the inheritance of the heavens and the earth belongs to Him?" (10) After your death, He alone will be the owner of your wealth, goods, gold, silver and

precious material. Thereafter Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Who is there who will grant Allâh Ta'âlâ a beautiful loan, so that Allâh Ta'âlâ will multiply it for him so that he may have a generous reward." (11) Together with encouragement of spending in the path of Allâh, the conditions of the true believers and the hypocrites are also mentioned. (12-15) Thereafter, the believers are warned in a severe tone that they should not be deceived by the life and outward attractions of this world like the hypocrites, Jews and Christians. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Has not the time come for the believers to submit to Allâh's remembrance and to the truth which has been revealed. And do not be like those who had been given the Book before, when after a long period of time elapsed, their hearts hardened. A large number of them are sinners." (16)

(3) Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions the reality of this world to man so that he does not become deceived by its outward glamour and beauties. We are made to understand that this world is a mirage, a deception, a place of play and futility. People of low intelligence are proud of their abundance of wealth and children, they have airs over their lineage and ancestry. They spend their whole life and all their abilities in gathering the goods of this world. The example of this world is that of a field whose greenery and beauty pleases the farmer. People become envious of it. Then a time comes when everything becomes destroyed and disperses in the air. This is the condition of this world. It is transitory and everything here will also come to an end. The life of the hereafter is everlasting and the bounties of the hereafter also will remain forever. (20) Thus the believers are commanded to compete with each other and to hasten towards the forgiveness of Allâh Ta'âlâ and towards Jannah. (21)

At the end of the sûrah a promise of a double reward is given to those who fear Allâh and believe in Rasûlullâh ﷺ as the bestowal of a light by means of which they will be able to navigate the darkness of the hereafter. (28) May Allâh Ta'âlâ grant all of us this light. (Amîn).

TWENTY-EIGHT PÂRA

Sûrah Mujâdilah

This is a Madanî sûrah. It consists of 22 verses and 3 rukûs. As in other Madanî sûrahs, mention is made of certain shar'î regulations and of the hypocrites. In the beginning of the sûrah, there is reference to the incident of Hadhrat Khawla Binte Tha'lab رضي الله عنها who came to complain about her husband Hadhrat Aws Ibn Sâmî who had made zihâr with her. (Zihâr - to regard one's wife to be harâm upon one's self like one's mother). Her complaints were done in such a manner that it seemed as though she was arguing. Thus she is referred to as mujâdilah (the woman who argued). This sûrah has also been named as Mujâdilah keeping in view this incident. During the days of ignorance, zihâr fell under same law of divorce. Due to it, the wife would become forbidden for her husband forever. The Qur'ân-e-Karîm laid down a limit for this action which would come to an end by kaffârah (expiation). (1-4)

Other important subject matter found in Sûrah Mujâdilah are as follows :

(1) This sûrah mentions the laws of whispering i.e. if two or more people begin speaking in each others ears in front of others, then what is the command? In a Hadîth Sharîf it is mentioned that in the case where there are 3 people, it is against the etiquettes of the gathering for two to converse quietly since the third person may gain the wrong impression that perhaps these two are conversing about me. However here, prohibition is made of that whispering which was the habit of the Jews. Just to anger the Muslims, they would whisper to each other and when greeting Nabî ﷺ, they would change the form of their face and say السام عليك يا ابا القاسم (Death be unto you, O Abul-Qâsim). In these verses, they are rebuked for their evil actions. However, permission has been given for whispering

and private discussions which are held regarding piety and good actions.

(2) From amongst the social etiquettes, one etiquette of a gathering is that when you are asked to make space in the gathering, or if you are commanded to wake up from the gathering, then comply. (11) This command is not specific with the gathering of Nabî ﷺ, but it is for every respectable gathering which takes place with regards to any branch of dîn. However, this is not compulsory, but mustahab (preferred). If a person was sitting first in the masjid or in another gathering, then he has a greater right to sit in that place. However, if it is possible, then he should create space for his Muslim brothers who come afterwards.

(3) This sûrah also mentions those hypocrites who befriended the Jews on one hand and took oaths of their being believers on the other hand. In spite of their huge claims, Allâh Ta'âlâ regards them as Hizbush-Shaytân (the party of Shaytân). Allâh Ta'âlâ then mentions four blessings for those fortunate souls who do not befriend the enemies of Allâh Ta'âlâ and Rasûlullâh ﷺ in any way, whether it be their parents, children, brothers or fellow tribesmen. (1) Allâh Ta'âlâ has established îmân in their hearts. (2) There is unseen assistance for them. (3) They will be entered into Jannah. (4) Allâh Ta'âlâ is pleased with them and they are pleased with the favours of Allâh Ta'âlâ. (14-22)

Sûrah Hashr

This is a Madanî sûrah, comprising of 24 verses and 3 rukûs. The important points mentioned in this sûrah are :

(1) In the beginning, we are informed that everything in the universe glorifies and praises Allâh Ta'âlâ and testifies to His oneness, power and majesty.

(2) Thereafter this sûrah discusses some signs and living proofs of Allâh Ta'âlâ's power. From amongst them, one was that the Jews who had been living for a long time in Madînah Munawwarah, had constructed strong forts for their protection. All the economic power was in their hands. They had tied the people of Madînah in the golden chains of interest-bearing loans. They thought that none could remove them from there. However, due to their evil actions, the punishment of Allâh Ta'âlâ descended on them and twice they were expelled.

The first expulsion was from Madînah Munawwarah to Khaybar and the second expulsion was when Hadhrat Umar ؓ forced them to leave Khaybar and go to Shâm. The Jews leaving Madînah and Khaybar was such an incident that never mind the Jews, even the Muslims were completely taken by surprise. Due to their economic well-being, defence systems and strong social structure, none could ever imagine that they would be forced to leave Madînah Munawwarah and Khaybar with so much of disgrace and humiliation. However, when Allâh Ta'âlâ passed judgment of their expulsion due to their breaking of pacts, rejection, pride, rebellion, then outward means could not benefit them in the least bit. Allâh Ta'âlâ's judgment definitely comes to pass. (2-5)

(3) When the Jewish tribe of Banû Nadhîr were driven out of Madînah Munawwarah then a lot of booty fell into the hands of the Muslims. That booty which is gained without actual fighting is known as "fay". Regarding this wealth, the command was given that the warriors (mujâhidîn) have no rights in it. Only Nabî ﷺ has the right to distribute it. He will distribute it amongst the poor, weak ones, those in need and family members. Even though mention is made here of the distribution of the wealth of "fay", an important philosophy of Islâmic economics is mentioned here and that is Islâm does not like that "wealth circulates in the hands of a few rich individuals" but Islâm desires to spread this money in society so that no person or branch of society remains deprived.

In the distribution of zakât, sadaqât, inheritance and khums (a form of land tax) etc. this frame of thought is found. Besides this great economical philosophy, the basis and foundation of law is explained and that is, "That which the Rasûl grants you, then take it and whatever he prevents you from, then abstain from it." (7) It is compulsory to follow all the laws, principles and matters which Rasûlullâh ﷺ has brought from Allâh Ta'âlâ, whether it be in the form of the Qur'ân or in the form of the established Sunnah. To prescribe any form of law, not bearing in mind the Qur'ân and Sunnat, is not permissible.

(4) In Sûrah Hashr, where on one side Allâh Ta'âlâ praises the muhâjirîn, the ansâr and those who follow them till Qiyâmah because of them giving preference to the happiness of Allâh Ta'âlâ over everything, He also condemns the hypocrites who continued to convince the Jews of their assistance in difficult times. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "The plight of these two groups (the Jews and hypocrites) is that they will be in the Fire of Jahannum, residing therein forever. And that is the punishment of the oppressors." (9-17) In the final rukû of Sûrah Hashr, the people of î mân are commanded to fear Allâh Ta'âlâ. They are commanded not to become like the Jews and Christians who forgot the rights of Allâh Ta'âlâ. The punishment of this was that Allâh Ta'âlâ made them forget the rights of their own selves and the hereafter, resulting in them being engaged in fulfilling their carnal desires like animals.

To turn the attention of the people of î mân to the greatness of the book of Allâh Ta'âlâ, Allâh Ta'âlâ informs us that if the mountains had been given perception and intelligence by Allâh Ta'âlâ and then He revealed the Qur'ân unto them, they would have shattered into pieces due to the fear of Allâh Ta'âlâ. How lamentable is it that man is unaware of the greatness of this unique book, and does not fulfil its rights! At the end of the sûrah, the grandeur and majesty of Allâh Ta'âlâ is portrayed in His beautiful names. The last verse repeats those words which were found at the beginning "Whatever is found

in the heavens and earth glorifies Allâh Ta'âlâ. He is the Mighty, the Wise"

Sûrah Mumtahinah

This is a Madanî sûrah, comprising of 13 verses in 2 rukûs. The beginning portion was revealed regarding Hadhrat Hâtib Ibn Abi-Balta'ah ؓ who attempted to secretly send a message to Makkah Mukarramah to warn the people of Makkah of Nabî ؐs coming so that they would be indebted to him (and look after his family. Translator). He had participated in the Battle of Badr and he was a sincere Sahâbî, but he committed this serious error which was disliked by Allâh and Rasûlullâh ؐ. Thereafter he regretted his actions and repented with a sincere heart. This repentance was accepted. In these circumstances, these verses were revealed in which Allâh Ta'âlâ commanded the people of îman not to take the disbelievers as friends, those people who are in fact Allâh's enemies and the enemies of the Muslims. Those were hard-hearted people who had made life difficult for the believers in Makkah Mukarramah, eventually forcing them to emigrate. Today also, their hearts brim with the fire of anger and they do not allow any opportunity to pass by without causing harm and pain to the Muslims, whether it be verbally or physically. Those family relations which you regard as important, and inspite of your accepting îman, you keep their benefit in mind, on the Day of Qiyâmah, they will not benefit you at all. There, father and son, and brothers will be separated. When this is the condition of these relations, then where is there intelligence in being disloyal to Allâh and His Rasûl ؐ for their sake and to reveal the secrets of the Muslim group.

In corroboration with this message, the incident of Hadhrat Ibrâhîm ؑ is mentioned who openly distanced himself from his polytheistic nation for the sake of Allâh Ta'âlâ. It is thus compulsory for his followers and adherents, that if they love anyone, then it should

only be for the sake of Allâh and if they turn away from anyone, then too, it should be for the sake of Allâh. (1-6)

When Allâh Ta'âlâ commanded the Muslims to cut off ties with the disbelievers, they did not delay in fulfilling this command. Fathers broke off relations with their sons and brothers broke off relations with their brothers. Thus the truthfulness of their claims of Îmân became completely clear. However blood-relations and one's homeland are such things that Allâh Ta'âlâ has placed love and inclination for them in one's nature. The Qur'ân, taking into consideration man's natural feelings, mentions one glad-tiding and gives permission in one matter. The glad-tiding announced is, "Perhaps Allâh Ta'âlâ will create love between you and your enemies. Allâh is All-Powerful and Allâh is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful," i.e. it is possible that your family members will be granted the ability to accept îmân, then your enemies of today will become your friends of tomorrow. And so it happened. Countless mushrikîn (polytheists) were granted the ability of submitting in front of the truthfulness of Islâm. (7)

The matter in which permission was given was that the Muslims were not prevented from showing good character to those who had not fought against the Muslims, due to their acceptance of îmân and (these mushrikîn) had not expelled them from their houses. (8) Islâm actually is a religion of love and peace. It does not give permission for war unnecessarily and without valid religious reasons. It actually encourages assistance and good character with non-Muslims who dislike war and wish to live in peace.

Sûrah Mumtahinah also gives guidance regarding those women who after accepting îmân had migrated and came to Madînah Munawwarah. The command given regarding them is that they should be tested. After testing to see if they truly emigrated due to îmân, and satisfaction is felt, then they should not be returned to the disbelievers. (The sûrah has been called Mumtahinah due to

imtihân (test) having been mentioned). The Mufasssîrîn have written that this command was revealed when Nabî ﷺ's severest enemy Uqbah Ibn Mu'ît's daughter, Umme-Kulthûm رضي الله عنها migrated to Madînah Munawwarah. Her father, came to Madînah Munawwarah to take her back, according to the Treaty of Hudaibiyah. Nabî ﷺ sent him back empty-handed saying that the treaty only referred to returning Muslim men and not women. At the end of this sûrah, emphasis is again placed, "O people of î mân, do not befriend such people with whom Allâh Ta'âlâ is angry, and who have lost hope in the hereafter just as the disbelievers in the grave have lost hope."

Sûrah Saff

Sûrah Saff is a Madanî sûrah in which there are 14 verses in 2 rukûs. The subject matter of this sûrah is jihâd and qitâl (fighting in the path of Allâh Ta'âlâ). After mentioning the praises and purity of Allâh Ta'âlâ, the Muslims have been severely warned to remain firm on their pacts and to practically demonstrate what they say with their tongues. Thereafter, in encouraging the Muslims to make jihad, this sûrah instructs us to stand united and firm like a leaden wall in opposition to the enemies and in protecting the unity of the Muslim ummah. (1-4) Thereafter the Banî Isrâ'îl are mentioned, who opposed Hadhrat Mûsa عليه السلام when he commanded them to wage jihâd against the Amâlîqah. Hadhrat Îsâ عليه السلام conveyed to them the glad-tidings of the coming Nabî and commanded them to follow him, but the Banî Isrâ'îl did not obey this command. (5-6)

This sûrah also conveys glad-tidings that Islâm will overpower all other religions. With regards to proof, from day one, Islâm has attained this dominance. That day is not far when Islâm will definitely gain dominance over the whole world monetarily, politically and outwardly. (9) In the following verse, Sûrah Saff invites the Muslims to such a business deal in which there is no possibility of loss, because the other party in this business is Allâh Ta'âlâ, Who is such that whoever deals with Him, will never incur a

loss. The business is to believe in Allâh Ta'âlâ, His Rasûl ﷺ and to make jihâd with one's wealth and life. The expected profits are forgiveness of sins, entrance into Jannah, Allâh Ta'âlâ's assistance and dominance over the disbelievers in this world. O if only the Muslims drowning in worldly benefit and loss, and material trade could engage in this business also! They will see that their disgrace will be replaced with respect and their being dominated will be replaced by their dominance. At the end of the sûrah, the people of îmân are encouraged to stand up to assist and to call towards the dîn (religion) of Allâh Ta'âlâ just as the hawâriyyîn (disciples) stood up to assist Hadhrat Îsâ ﷺ. In the beginning of the sûrah we have been prohibited from uttering empty words and making hollow claims and at the end we are commanded to be ready to assist the dîn of Allâh and to practically engage ourselves to do something. In this way a complete connection is found between the beginning and ending of this sûrah.

Sûrah Jumu'ah

This is a Madanî sûrah. It contains 11 verses and 2 rukûs. The axis of this sûrah upon which the entire sûrah revolves, is the trust that was placed on the shoulders of the Banî Isrâ'îl. However they could not fulfil it. Their example is that of a donkey upon which very blessed and intellectual books are placed. Due to its weight, the donkey's back becomes bent. However it is completely unaware of the knowledge, pearls and secrets found in these books and thus does not take any benefit from them. Sûrah Jumu'ah commences with the praises and purity of Allâh Ta'âlâ. Thereafter Nabî ﷺ's qualities and the purpose of him being sent are mentioned i.e. tilâwat of the Qur'ân, tazkiyah (purification of the nafs), teaching of the Qur'ân and hikmah (Sunnah). (1-3)

The Jews, who due to not practicing on the laws of the heavenly revelation i.e. the Tawrât, are compared to a donkey upon which blessed books are loaded. The Jews are challenged that if they are

in fact the friends of Allâh, then they should desire death because this world is a prison for the friends of Allâh and in the hereafter, there is every form of bounties, favours and enjoyments. The prophecy is also given that they will never desire death. (5-7) This prediction has proven itself to be completely true. The sûrah ends with mention of the compulsion of Jumu'ah. The command is given that as soon as the azân is called out, every type of business dealing and trade should be stopped and all should hasten towards the remembrance of Allâh. However, after completion, there is permissibility to once again engage in earning one's sustenance.

Sûrah Munâfiqûn

This is a Madanî sûrah comprising of 11 verses in 2 rukûs. In this sûrah, the character of the hypocrites as well as their lies, plotting and hatred for the Muslims and the complete contrast between their external and internal character has been mentioned. The ugly face and despicable qualities of the hypocrites have been mentioned in other sûrahs also, but it seems as if this sûrah has been especially reserved for rebuking them. The sûrah commences with mention of the qualities of the hypocrites, the most conspicuous being their lies, deception, plotting and the contrast of their external and internal i.e. there is one thing in their hearts and another on their tongues. (1-3) O sincere friends who are studying this book! While reading over these qualities of the hypocrites, ponder for a moment and close your physical eyes. Open the eyes of your heart and take a stock of yourselves, your leaders and the entire Ummah. Are these conspicuous qualities not found in us? Do we not see the filth of deception and lies all around us? Is the conflict between external and internal, and action and words not the biggest problem today? The lectures are eloquent, the writings are enjoyable and words are powerful, but there is no practise. There are only empty drums which are being beaten and whose frightening noises are reaching far-off distances. However, if one tears the hearts open, one will find it completely bare! There is no

îmân, no yaqîn (conviction), no trust, no love, no recognition of Allâh, no sacrificing for others, no kindness and no fear. There are no qualities of îmân whereas hypocrisy continues oozing like the filth of gutters.

Thereafter we are informed that the hypocrites outwardly are full of attraction, they are strong in physique, there is eloquence on their tongues i.e. they know the way of speaking very well, but inside they are hollow. They are so cowardly that if they hear a loud sound, they become perplexed thinking that death is about to befall them. (4) In front of Nabî ﷺ and the Muslims they do not tire in praising them, but behind their backs they utter such foul words (May Allâh protect us!). (7-8) At the end of the sûrah, the Muslims are warned that they should not become so preoccupied with their wealth and children like the hypocrites, that they become unmindful of the remembrance of Allâh and His obedience. They are encouraged to spend their wealth before death comes because after death, nothing remains besides regrets. (How regrettable it is that Muslims have discarded this advice and console themselves by saying that this is not in criticism of us and is not regarding us but is a criticism of people like Abdullah Ibn Ubay who lived 1400 years ago, as if some verses and sûrahs of the Qur'ân have no relationship with today's times).

Sûrah Taghâbun

Sûrah Taghâbun is a Madanî sûrah comprising of 18 verses in 2 rukûs. Even though this is a Madanî sûrah, it is more characteristic of the Makkî sûrahs. In the beginning of the sûrah, after being informed that everything in the universe glorifies and praises Allâh, we learn that man has been divided into two groups i.e. those who appreciate the favours of Allâh Ta'âlâ and those who are ungrateful. (1-2) Thereafter, mention is made of past nations who did not believe in the messengers of Allâh Ta'âlâ, the result being that they were forced to taste the punishment of Allâh Ta'âlâ. (5-6) This sûrah

also mentions the deniers of the Day of Qiyâmah, and then takes an oath that definitely Qiyâmah is coming, whether anyone believes it or not. The matters of life after death are true and definite. (7) In this sûrah, the day of Qiyâmah is referred to as Yaumut-taghâbun i.e. the day of loss. On the Day of Qiyâmah, never mind the disbelievers who will see their great loss, even the Muslims and worshippers will regret that, "O, if only I had been more obedient and if only I engaged in more worship." (9)

This sûrah warns the people of î mân of the trial of their wealth, children and spouses, and advises them to be wary with regards to these matters. Sometimes, man destroys his life in the hereafter due to them. Due to their love, he cares not for halâl and harâm (permissible and impermissible), nor does he take care to fulfil his religious rights and obligations. Due to love for them, he remains deprived of jihâd and hijrat (migration). At the end of the sûrah, the people of î mân are commanded to fear Allâh Ta'âlâ, spend in His path and to abstain from miserliness. (16-17)

Sûrah Talâq

This is a Madanî sûrah comprising of 12 verses in 2 rukûs. In line with the general temperament of Madanî sûrahs, some shar'î laws have been expounded, especially those laws relating to marital and family life. Most of the forms of divorce as well as other such laws relating to the iddat (waiting period for the woman), maintenance and place of residence which follows as a result of divorce, is found in this sûrah. In the beginning of the sûrah, the shar'î manner of divorce is mentioned. If it becomes difficult to sustain one's marriage and there is no other way out besides divorce, then one should give his wife one talâq-e-raj'î (revocable divorce) and then leave her. This divorce should be given during the period of purity when one did not have sexual relations with her. After divorce, she should be left till the end of her iddat (waiting period). This is called "talâq-e-sunnî". These conditions and restrictions point to the fact,

that divorce is an action which is severely disliked by Allâh Ta'âlâ. If it had not been for some cases of exception, the shar'at would not have given permission at all, because divorce causes cracks in the foundations of families, whereas Islâm emphasises strong family units. Thereafter, Sûrah Talâq clearly outlines the iddat of different types of divorced women i.e. yâis – an old lady who does not get her monthly menses; saghîrah – a young girl who got married before becoming mature; and a pregnant woman who was given divorce during her pregnancy.

Besides the duration of iddat, the laws regarding their maintenance expenses, and the laws regarding where they will reside during their iddat have also been mentioned here. (1-7) While mentioning these laws, the word taqwâ (fear of Allâh) is mentioned four times.

- 1- And fear Allâh who is your Rabb (creator and sustainer).
- 2- And who fears Allâh, Allâh Ta'âlâ will make a way out for him (from his difficulties).
- 3- And he who fears Allâh, Allâh will create easiness for him in his matters.
- 4- And he who fears Allâh, Allâh will forgive his sins and will grant him a great reward. (1-2-4-5)

From here, we can judge and see how much importance Allâh Ta'âlâ gives to taqwâ and how different the style of the Qur'ân is from other books. This is not a dry book of laws. There are, in many places, encouragement and warnings to urge one to practise on its laws. At the end of the sûrah, a severe warning is given not to disobey and go against Allâh Ta'âlâ's revealed laws. As a lesson, those nations have been mentioned who chose disobedience, thus becoming worthy of exemplary punishment. (8-10) In the last verse, there is an indication towards the power of Allâh Ta'âlâ in the creation of the heavens and earth. (12)

Sûrah Tahrîm

This is a Madanî sûrah, comprising of 12 verses in 2 rukûs. Most of the laws mentioned in this sûrah relate to the pure wives of Nabî ﷺ, the mothers of the believers رضي الله عنهن. The first verse refers to an incident which took place with Nabî ﷺ when he made his slave girl Mâriah Qibtiyyah, or honey forbidden for himself. Thus a reproach is given in a very loving manner, "O Nabî ﷺ! In seeking the pleasure of your wives, why do you declare unlawful that which Allâh Ta'âlâ has made lawful for you? And Allâh is Most forgiving, Most merciful." (1)

When Nabî ﷺ informed one of his pure wives (Hadhrat Hafsa رضي الله عنها) of the secret of this prohibition, she disclosed it to Hadhrat Ayesha رضي الله عنها causing such severe anguish to Nabî ﷺ that he intended to divorce some of his pure wives. (However this did not take place). Allâh Ta'âlâ warning the pure wives stated, "If Nabî ﷺ divorces you, then there is nothing to be surprised if your Rabb grants him better wives than you." (5) Thereafter this sûrah commands the people of îmân, "Save yourselves and your families from the fire of Jahannum," and "Repent to Allâh Ta'âlâ with a clean heart." (8) At the end of the sûrah, two examples are given. The first example is of disbelieving wives married to pious husbands i.e. Hadhrat Nûh and Lût عليهما السلام. The second is of a believing woman married to a disbeliever i.e. Fir'awn. By these two examples, it is clear that if a person is not a believer and pious, then the close family lineage of any believer will not benefit him. (10-11)

TWENTY-NINTH PÂRA

Sûrah Mulk

This is a Makkî sûrah, comprising of 30 verses in 2 rukûs. Many ahâdîth testify to the virtues of this sûrah. Amongst them one is the narration of Hadhrat Abu Hurayrah ؓ which has been mentioned in Ibn-Mâjah, Nasai, Abû Dâwûd and Tirmizî Sharîf that Nabî has stated, "There are 30 verses of the Qur'ân which will intercede for it's reciter, thus he will be forgiven." This sûrah has also been called "Al-Mânî'ah" and "Al-Munjiyah" i.e. saviour of the punishment of the grave. Thus, the practise of most mashâikh is that they recite this sûrah after 'Ishâ salât with great punctuality.

Basically, three themes are discussed in Sûrah Mulk

(1) The true kingship of the heavens and earth lies in the control of Allâh. In His hands lies the system of life and death, respect and disgrace, richness and poverty, giving and taking. He is All-Knowing and All-Aware. He has knowledge of every atom. He has created roads in the earth for travelling. He is the Being who keeps the birds flying in the air. He alone grants sustenance to all. This theme is mentioned in different verses of this sûrah (1-2-13-14-15-19-21)

(2) There are open and clear proofs of the existence and oneness of Allâh Ta'âlâ. The sky acting as a roof, the bright stars found in it, the earth as a carpet and the flowing streams all point to the existence of one Wise and All-Aware Being. (3-5)

(3) The final result of the disbelievers of the hereafter is mentioned i.e. the fire of Jahannum which will be raging in such a manner that it will seem that it is about to explode due to anger. (7-8) When this punishment will be seen from a close angle, the disbeliever's faces will change and it will be said to them, "This is what you used to ask for." (27)

Sûrah Qalam

This is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 52 verses in 2 rukûs. Since Allâh Ta'âlâ takes an oath on the pen in the beginning of the sûrah, it has been called "Sûrah Qalam" (The sûrah of the pen). This oath makes apparent the greatness of the pen and it being a great bounty. The greatness of the pen has also been mentioned in the hadîth sharîf. Hadhrat Ibn Abbâs ؓ narrates, "The first thing which Allâh Ta'âlâ created was the pen. After being created, it was said to it, 'Write'. It asked, 'What should I write?' The answer was given, 'Write taqdîr i.e. whatever is going to happen.' Thus the pen wrote down whatever would happen from that day till the Day of Judgment." Then Allâh Ta'âlâ created nûn i.e. the inkpot. It is by means of this pen that the knowledge of our predecessors have been transmitted to us, and it is a means of spreading information in the whole world.

The Qur'ân had mentioned the importance of the pen, learning and teaching in such an environment which was unfamiliar with writing and using pens. However, since the Qur'ân is the final heavenly scripture, and the Being who revealed it knew that the coming eras would be one of knowledge, information and research, therefore it has turned the attention of the Muslims towards the importance of the pen. If one ponders carefully, he will realise that the computers and internet etc. are only modern forms of the pen.

In Sûrah Qalam, 3 fundamental themes have been discussed :

(1) Nabî ﷺ's status and his character have been mentioned. Right in the beginning, Allâh Ta'âlâ takes an oath and states that, "By the Grace of Your Rabb, you are certainly not insane" as his (ﷺ) adversaries used to claim. "Indeed you will have a reward that will never come to an end. Verily you are stationed on a very lofty level of character". (3-4) In Muslim, Abû Dâwûd and Nasai, a narration of Hadhrat Ayesha رضي الله عنها is mentioned that when she was asked regarding the character of Nabî ﷺ to which she replied, "His

character was the Qur'ân" Whatever was mentioned in the Qur'ân was practically found in his (ﷺ) life. Nabî ﷺ pure life was a practical explanation of the Qur'ân-e-Karîm and why should this not be, when he (ﷺ) was sent to complete and perfect noble character.

Together with mentioning Nabî ﷺ's character, the low character of his opponents, their wretchedness and crooked thinking have also been mentioned. Allâh Ta'âlâ says to Nabî ﷺ, "And do not obey the one who take oaths in abundance, who is despicable, who takes out the faults of others, who carries tales, who prevents from good, who exceeds the bounds, who sins, who is harsh and together with this, he is illegitimate. The reason for His disobedience is only because he has an abundance of wealth and children." (10-14) The commentators have mentioned that these verses were revealed regarding Walîd Ibn Mughîrah, one of the leaders of the Quraysh.

(2) The second theme which has special importance in this sûrah is the incident of As'hâbul-Jannah (the people of the Garden) which was famous amongst the Arabs. This garden was close to Yemen. The owner of this garden used to spend on the poor from its produce. After passing away, when his sons inherited this garden, then using their expenses and difficulties as an excuse, they planned to deprive the poor and to gather and cart away all the crops. Allâh Ta'âlâ destroyed this garden. (17-18) In this incident, there is great lesson for those people who wish to benefit alone from their wealth. Their stinginess does not allow them to benefit anyone else with their wealth and goods. After mentioning their exemplary parable, this sûrah explains the final result of the pious and asks, "How can the good and evil, obedient and disobedient, loyal and traitor ever be equal?" (34-41)

(3) The third important theme mentioned is regarding the hereafter. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "On that day, when the shin will be exposed and they will be called to make sajdah (prostrate) but will be unable to do so." (42) In this world, they were granted the

opportunity to make sajdah, but did not do so. In the hereafter they will desire to make sajdah, however their strength and the power of choice will be taken away from them. "Kashf-e-Sâq" i.e. the exposure of the shin has been explained by the Ulamâ to mean the severities and horrors of the Day of Qiyâmah. These are amongst the mutashâbihât whose reality and true meaning is known by none except Allâh Ta'âlâ. At the end of the sûrah, Rasûlullâh ﷺ is instructed to be patient over the difficulties inflicted by the mushrikîn (polytheists).

Sûrah Al-Hâqqah

This is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 52 verses in 2 rukûs. Al-Hâqqah is one of the many names of Qiyâmah. Hâqqah means that which will definitely occur. Since Allâh Ta'âlâ's promises and warnings will definitely occur on the Day of Qiyâmah, this sûrah has been named such. The main theme of this sûrah is the truthfulness of Nabî ﷺ. The sûrah commences with mention of the horrors of Qiyâmah and the disastrous results of nations like Thamûd and Âd, as well as Fir'awn and his people. (1-12) Thereafter, this sûrah discusses those events which will take place before Qiyâmah i.e. the Trumpet (Sûr) will be blown, the earth and mountains will disintegrate, the skies will split asunder, the angels will descend and man will be completely surrounded by them. (13-17)

When Qiyâmah takes places, man will be brought in front of Allâh Ta'âlâ. Those who were pious will receive their book of deeds in their right hand. Due to happiness, they will show it to others. Those people who were sinners will receive their book of deeds in their left hand. With great anguish, they will exclaim, "O, if only I had not been given my book of deeds and I had not known what my reckoning is! Alas, if only death had been my end! My wealth did not benefit me. My power has disappeared from me." (25-29) Then they will be thrown into Jahannum. Allâh Ta'âlâ has mentioned some salient qualities of the unfortunate ones :

- 1- They do not believe in Allâh.
- 2- They do not encourage the feeding of the poor. (23-34)

Allâh Ta'âlâ, after mentioning the consequences of the fortunate and unfortunate ones, takes an oath on the truthfulness of Nabî ﷺ and the Qur'ân-e-Karîm, "I take an oath on that which you see and on that which you cannot see, verily the Qur'ân has been brought by an honourable messenger. It is not the speech of any poet. Few are those who have conviction. Neither is it the speech of any fortune-teller. Few are those of you who understand. This is a revelation from the Master of the universe." (38-43)

Sûrah Ma'ârij

This is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 44 verses and 2 rukûs. In the beginning of the sûrah, we are informed that the disbelievers are mocking Rasûlullâh ﷺ and his message. They demand from him that he should quickly bring the punishment which is coming, so that their matter can be settled in this world before the hereafter. (1-3) Thereafter this sûrah draws a picture of Qiyâmah and explains the conditions of the sinners there. On that day, the heavens will be like the residue of oil and mountains will be like coloured cotton-flakes. No friend or relative will speak to each other. All will be running trying to save their lives. (8-14) This sûrah informs us that the nature of man is such that he is very greedy. When difficulty afflicts him, he screams and shouts out; and when he is granted favours, he becomes proud. If wealth comes to him, he becomes stingy. However, true musallîs (those who perform salâh) are excluded from them.

Allâh Ta'âlâ has mentioned eight of their qualities :

- 1- They are punctual on salâh.
- 2- In their wealth there is a right for those who ask and for those who do not ask. Thus by salâh, they fulfil the right of Allâh and by zakât, they fulfil the rights of man.

- 3- They testify to the day of recompense and judgment i.e. they have no doubt in its occurrence.
- 4- In spite of worshipping and obeying Allâh Ta'âlâ, they fear His punishment.
- 5- They keep themselves pure from zinâ (adultery and fornication) and other sexual indecencies. They suffice on that which is permissible and do not lift their gazes towards harâm (impermissible things).
- 6- They fulfil trust and oaths. Neither do they deceive in their trusts, nor do they break their promises.
- 7- They testify justly and only to that which is the truth.
- 8- They perform their salâh on its time and fulfil the compulsions and etiquettes of salâh. (22-34)

Allâh Ta'âlâ says regarding those who have such qualities, "These will be honoured in the gardens (Jannah)." (35) At the end of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ takes an oath that resurrection is a reality. There is no doubt in it. Allâh Ta'âlâ has the power to destroy these people and to create others better than them who will worship Allâh Ta'âlâ in great abundance. (40-41) In every era, a practical demonstration of this power of Allâh Ta'âlâ is found. When any nation chooses the path of negligence and laxity in the dîn of Allâh, then He creates people better than them who appreciate this dîn. Today, we also see that those new Muslims who accept Islâm prove to be better Muslims than us Muslims who have inherited Islâm from our parents. Every one of us, at every moment, should keep this in our mind that the dîn of Allâh Ta'âlâ is not in need of us.

Sûrah Nûh

Sûrah Nûh is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 28 verses in 2 rukûs. In this sûrah, only the incident of Nûh عليه السلام is mentioned. He is also called "Shaikhul-Ambiyâ" since his life-span was the most of all the Ambiyâ and he was the first messenger to the people of the world after Hadhrat Âdam عليه السلام. He invited his people to the worship and

obedience of Allâh Ta'âlâ and in the line of calling, he exerted himself fully. He invited his people at night and during the day, covertly and openly. The more he called them, the further they turned away. (1-6) Hadhrat Nûh عليه السلام advised his people to seek forgiveness (istighfâr) and told them that if they sought forgiveness and abstained from sinning, Allâh Ta'âlâ would send upon them an abundance of rain, He would grant them wealth, children and gardens and He would make rivers flow for them. Then he reminded them of Allâh Ta'âlâ's favours He had created the seven heavens, made the moon shine and made the sun a bright lamp. However, this explanation, inviting and advice had no effect on his people. They were not prepared to leave their idols, Wadd, Suwâ, Yaghûth, Yaûq and Nasr. Nûh عليه السلام eventually made du'â for their destruction in which he said, "O my Rabb (Creator and Sustainer) do not leave any disbeliever on the earth." His du'â was accepted and these disbelievers were destroyed in the flood.

Sûrah Jinn

This is a Makkî sûrah, comprising of 28 verses in 2 rukûs. In this sûrah, reference is made to the jinns, who like humans are also subjected to shar'î laws. Amongst them are believers and disbelievers, good and bad. This sûrah commences by telling us that a group of jinns heard the Qur'ân and became very affected by it. This occurred at that time when the jinns perceived a few changes in the system of the world. When they attempted to go to the heavens, a blazing star would pursue them. Nabî ﷺ was going with a few Sahâbah رضي الله عنهم to the market-place of Ukkâz. At a place called Nakhla, Nabî ﷺ was performing Fajr salâh where this group of jinns arrived. When they heard the Qur'ân Sharîf being recited, they immediately understood the reason for the changes, their hearts trembled and they submitted to the truthfulness of the Qur'ân. (1-2) They did not only believe, but went back to their people inviting them to îmân. In front of their people, they mentioned the grandeur and honour of Allâh and they regarded as foolish those who claimed

that Allâh had children. They also confirmed that everyone is not of the same belief. Some are believers; some are disbelievers; some are obedient and some are disobedient; some are intelligent and some are foolish; some will go to Jahannum and some will go to Jannah. (14-17)

While mentioning the jinns, this sûrah mentions the da'wat (invitation) of Rasûlullâh ﷺ that he (ﷺ) according to the command of Allâh Ta'âlâ, invited man to îmân and tawhîd; and regarding himself he (ﷺ) said, "I only call out to Allâh and I do not ascribe any partner to Him. I do not have the power to harm or benefit anyone. My work is only to convey to you the message of Allâh Ta'âlâ, and Allâh Ta'âlâ knows that I have conveyed His message to His servants. (20-32)

Sûrah Muzzammil

Sûrah Muzzammil is a Makkî sûrah, comprising of 20 verses and 2 rukûs. In this sûrah, different aspects of Nabî ﷺ's life is mentioned : his (ﷺ) tabattul (turning only to Allâh ta'âlâ), worship, obedience, standing in salâh, tilâwat and his (ﷺ) sacrifices. The name of this sûrah itself makes apparent, that in this sûrah the personality of Nabî ﷺ is to be discussed. Muzzammil means "the one covered by a châdar (sheet)". When these verses were revealed, Nabî ﷺ was lying down wearing a châdar. Allâh Ta'âlâ addressed him (ﷺ) in a loving manner, "O one who is wrapped in a châdar". During the day, he (ﷺ) would invite to dîn, and during the night, he would stand for long periods in salâh and would make tilâwat of Qur'ân Sharîf. Sometimes, he (ﷺ) would stand the whole night in salâh, due to which his (ﷺ) blessed feet would become swollen. Allâh Ta'âlâ gave Nabî ﷺ a choice to stand half the night or slightly more or less. (1-4) This standing in the night has proven to be very effective for one's spiritual upbringing. For this reason, after mentioning the command of qiyâmul-layl (standing in the night for salâh), Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Verily soon, we will place upon you a heavy word" "A

heavy word” refers to the Qur'ân-e-Karîm, which has a special awe and grandeur. Only that person can bear it whose nafs has become enlightened with the light of knowledge and recognition. To attain spiritual light, performing tahajjud salâh (qiyâmul-layl) has special significance.

In the following verse, Nabî ﷺ is instructed to have patience on the difficulties afflicted upon him (ﷺ) by the mushrikîn, in the line of calling them to dîn. They would cause harm to Nabî ﷺ, physically and verbally. (10-13) This sûrah thereafter, (to warn the disbelievers) mentions the incident of Fir'awn whom Allâh Ta'âlâ afflicted with a severe punishment due to his disbelief and transgression. At the end of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ announces a reduction for Nabî ﷺ and the believers. One manner of reduction is that now it is not necessary to stand 1/3, 1/2 or 2/3 of the night in salâh, but one should make ibâdat for that amount that one can bear. The other ease and manner of reduction is that now it is not compulsory to perform tahajjud, but it's command has changed to mustahab. (20)

Sûrah Muddathir

This is a Makkî sûrah which comprises of 56 verses in 2 rukûs. In the beginning, Nabî ﷺ is commanded to invite to Allâh Ta'âlâ, to warn the disbelievers and to exercise patience over their difficulties. (1-7) Thereafter, this sûrah warns the sinners and adversaries of the punishment of that day which will prove to be very severe upon them. (8-10) In the following verses, Nabî ﷺ's severest enemy is mentioned whose name was Walîd Ibn Mughhîrah. This person would listen to the Qur'ân and recognized it to be the speech of Allâh Ta'âlâ, but due to his haughtiness, he denied and disbelieved it and called the Qur'ân magic (معاد الله) (26-27) Jahannum and its guards are then mentioned which the disbelievers will have to face one day. These door-keepers will have no mercy in their hearts for the disbelievers. (27-31) For more emphasis and warning, Allâh

Ta'âlâ takes an oath on the moon, night and morning saying that Jahannum is the greatest of calamities. (32-37) This sûrah clarifies the responsibility of every person that every person will be questioned regarding his actions. All will be prisoners of their actions except those whose book of deeds will be given in the right hand. On the day of Qiyâmah, they will ask the sinners, "What has entered you into Jahannum?" They will mention 4 reasons :

- 1- We never used to person salâh.
- 2- We would not feed the poor.
- 3- We were deeply involved in assisting in deviation and falsehood.
- 4- We would deny the hereafter. (38-48)

At the end of the sûrah, we are told that the Qur'ân is an advice. Whoever wishes, can take heed of this advice, however the decision and will of Allâh Ta'âlâ must also be there. (54-56)

Sûrah Qiyâmah

This is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 40 verses in 2 rukûs. As the name indicates, this sûrah discusses life after death which is one important fundamental from amongst the fundamentals of îmân. This sûrah mentions the difficulties, hardships and punishments of Qiyâmah. It draws a picture of man's condition at the time of death. At the beginning of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ takes an oath by nafse-lawwâmah on the occurring of the hereafter. (Nafse-lawwâmah is that nafs which rebukes man on his sins and encourages him to do good deeds). In the hereafter, the nafs of every person, whose conscience is awakened will continue rebuking him.

A point worth mentioning here is that Allâh Ta'âlâ has specially mentioned that He has full power to reconstruct the fingertips of every person. Every person's fingertips are a master piece of Allâh's creation that in such a tiny place, the lines and marks of every person is different from the next. For this reason, in the whole

world, trust is placed on fingerprints to identify someone. Allâh Ta'âlâ states that He will recreate the fingertips in the same form and manner in the hereafter as He had made in this life. To clarify this point Allâh Ta'âlâ did not say that, "we will create it", but He said, "We will reconstruct it," (It is not known how many other realities like this are found scattered in the Qur'ân. Every such reality proves that this is not the fabricated speech of the unlettered (ummî) Nabî, but is the speech of the Master of the universe. However, many people inspite of accepting these realities, do not believe in its truthfulness and veracity). Thereafter this sûrah mentions some signs and frightening occurrences of Qiyâmah, "When the eyes will stare, the moon will lose its light and the sun and moon will collide, man will say on this day, 'Where is the place of escape today?'" (10)

The following verse shows that Nabî ﷺ took great pains in memorizing the Qur'ân. Whilst Jibrâ'îl ؑ was reciting, he (ﷺ) would make a concerted effort to memorize it so that no portion was missed by him (ﷺ). Therefore, Nabî ﷺ would attempt to read quickly and memorize after Jibrâ'îl ؑ. Allâh Ta'âlâ informed Nabî ﷺ not to place himself into difficulty because it is His promise that no portion of the Qur'ân will be lost. He has taken responsibility to gather, protect, ensure its existence and explain it. (16-19) This sûrah explains to us that in the hereafter there will be two parties. On one side will be the fortunate ones, and on the other side the unfortunate ones. The faces of the fortunate will be resplendent and they will be honoured with the meeting of Allâh Ta'âlâ. The faces of the unfortunate ones will be black and dark. They will know that today they will be thrown into Jahannum. (20-25)

This sûrah also mentions the condition of man at the time of death as well as the difficulties which the disbeliever will have to face. (26-30) At the end of the sûrah, we are told that man has not been created in futility. It cannot happen that there be no reckoning, nor any punishment and reward. Finally a perceptible proof is

mentioned for resurrection i.e. Allâh who has created man the first time also has the power to create him a second time. For Allâh Ta'âlâ, to create the first and second time there is no difference. However here, Allâh Ta'âlâ speaks to us according to our understanding since our thinking and experience is such that to create a second time is much more easier than creating the first time.

Sûrah Insân

Sûrah Insân is a Madanî sûrah comprising of 31 verses in 2 rukûs. In spite of being Madanî sûrah, the subject matter of this sûrah is similar to the Makkî sûrahs. Jannah, the bounties of Jannah, Jahannum and the punishment of Jahannum is mentioned here. A narration of Muslim Sharîf shows that Nabî ﷺ used to recite this sûrah on the Day of Jumu'ah (Friday) in Fajr salâh. The sûrah commences with mention of the great power of Allâh Ta'âlâ He has created man in different stages and then bestowed him with ears, eyes and intelligence so that he can fulfil all his responsibilities of obedience and worship which he has been commanded and so that he can populate the land with the worship of one Allâh. However, man is divided into two groups some are grateful while others are ungrateful. For the disbelievers, Allâh Ta'âlâ has prepared chains, iron-collars and blazing fires in the hereafter. For the grateful servants, Allâh Ta'âlâ has prepared goblets of wine which have been mixed with camphor. Here, three signs of the grateful servants have been mentioned :

- 1- When they take a vow, they fulfil it.
- 2- They fear the Day of Judgment.
- 3- They feed the poor, orphans and prisoners only for the sake of Allâh.

The result of their good actions and their patience is that they will be granted Jannah in which there is neither heat nor cold, nor sorrow or grief. (1-13) At the end of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions His great gift which has no similitude or equal. Allâh Ta'âlâ states,

(O Muhammad ﷺ) verily we have revealed the Qur'ân to you in stages. Remain steadfast on the command of your Rabb and do not obey any sinful or ungrateful one from amongst them. Take the name of your Rabb morning and evening. Prostrate before Him at night and glorify Him for a long portion of the night." (23-26) The purpose of these verses is to show that zikr, ibâdat and sabr (patience; steadfastness) are compulsory on one who is inviting towards Dîn, so that he attains strength in the heart against the enemies of Allâh. The salâh at night, is an especially important means of strengthening î mân and for ones spiritual progress. In the last few verses of this sûrah, the mushrikîn are severely warned that if Allâh wishes, He can destroy them and can create someone else in place of them.

Sûrah Wal-Mursalât

This is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 50 verses and 2 rukûs. Allâh Ta'âlâ takes 5 oaths saying, "That which you have been promised is certainly going to occur" i.e. the matters of Qiyâmah, reckoning and recompense will definitely come to pass and there is no way of avoiding it. Thereafter this sûrah explains some of the signs which will happen just before Qiyâmah i.e. the stars will lose their light, the heavens will be split, mountains will disintegrate into small pieces which will be scattered all over and the messengers will be brought on the appointed times. (8-11) Allâh Ta'âlâ has called Qiyâmah "Yumul-Fasl" (Day of Judgment) because on this day, fair and just judgment will be passed between creation. Then Allâh Ta'âlâ says regarding the deniers of the day of Judgment "ويل يومئذ للمكذبين" "Destruction on that day to the deniers". These words are repeated 10 times in this sûrah. The purpose of this repetition is to create fear and to sound a warning. Besides this, this sûrah also mentions the sinners of the past whom Allâh Ta'âlâ destroyed. He asks, "Did We not create you from despicable water?" Then We took you through different stages making you a beautiful human being. A few perceptible proofs of life after death are also

mentioned here, which proves that Allâh who can populate the outer surface of the earth with living organisms and can populate the inner surface of the earth the dead, and can grant us sweet water, can also create us a second time. In the following verses, the different end results of the pious and deniers are mentioned. The deniers will be taken towards a blazing fire while the pious will be given place close to flowing streams and under cool shade. In the last verses the sinners are again warned, "Eat and enjoy yourself for a short while!" Finally there will be nothing for you, save destruction and ruin.

THIRTHIETH PÂRA

Sûrah Nabâ

Sûrah Nabâ is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 40 verses and 2 rukûs. The subject matter of this sûrah is resurrection after death. The sûrah commences with the question posed by the mushrikîn, in a mocking and denying manner about Qiyâmah "What do they ask about? About the great news, the news regarding which they differ?" (1-3) Some believe in it, some reject it, others are in doubt and some prove it. Hadhrat Mujâhid رحمته اللہ علیہ says that (The great matter) refers to the Qur'ân-e-Karîm. What doubt is there that the greatest matter and greatest speech is the Qur'ân-e-Karîm? However, looking at the general theme of this sûrah, the view that this refers to Qiyâmah seems to be the most preferred view.

In the following verses, proofs of Allâh Ta'âlâ's power, different scenes of Qiyâmah and Jannah and Jahannum are discussed. We are shown that Allâh who has made the earth a carpet, the mountains as pegs, humans in pairs, sleep as a means of rest, the night a covering, the day as a time of earning and He who has made in the sky a bright lamp (sun) over the whole world (6-16) – can also give life a second time; and He can establish such a court in which all of mankind will be gathered and judgment will be fairly administered between them. (17) After a fair reckoning, the abode of some will be in Jannah while others will be in Jahannum. (21-37)

At the end of the sûrah, we are told that the Day of Judgment is true (there is no doubt in its occurrence). In spite of Allâh Ta'âlâ's unlimited kindness and Him being the Most merciful, none will have the ability to speak in front of Him. On this day, every person's book of deeds will be placed in front of them and a decisive judgment will be passed. On hearing the judgment, the disbelievers will desire, "O if only I was sand!" (39-40) One meaning of being sand is that they will wish that they were not created at all. A second meaning is that

they will wish they were not proud and they had chosen humility and submissiveness like sand. The third meaning is that they will wish that they were animals and not human beings and that they will be turned into sand like the animals after being resurrected. Then they will be saved from the punishment of the fire. This desire will occur when the disbelievers will see that like humans, the animals have also been resurrected, however, after their matters have been sorted out, they will once again be turned into soil.

Sûrah Nâzi'ât

This is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 46 verses and 2 rukûs. This sûrah also discusses the different conditions and horrors of Qiyâmah. In the beginning, Allâh Ta'âlâ takes an oath on five types of angels who have been allocated different tasks. However the جواب قسم (concluding clause to the oath) has not been mentioned. Looking at the context, it seems that, the جواب قسم (concluding cause) is "لنبعثن" "You will definitely be resurrected on the Day of Judgment." Sûrah Nâzi'ât informs us that on the Day of Qiyâmah the condition of the deniers of Qiyâmah will be that their hearts will be awe-stricken, and their gazes will be lowered due to fear, disgrace and sorrow. (8-9) However today in this world, they sit like Fir'awns (tyrants) and are not prepared to accept the speech of the Nabî. Perhaps they do not know the final result of Fir'awn. (15-26) These people, void of intelligence, and very foolish never stop to ponder that Allâh who can create firm skies, who can establish a system of day and night, who can make the earth a carpet and the Being who can use the mountains as pegs – can also create them a second time. (27-33)

At the end of the sûrah, the question posed by the mushrikîn (polytheists) regarding Qiyâmah is mentioned since they regarded Qiyâmah as an impossibility. The reason for asking this question is that they had become enamoured with the worldly life and they felt that the worldly life is the true and everlasting life. However, "That

day when they will see Qiyâmah, it will seem as if they lived for only an evening or morning.” (46)

Sûrah Abas

This is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 46 verses. From this sûrah till the end of the Qur'ân all sûrahs are only one rukû. Therefore there remains no need to repeatedly mention this. In the beginning of the sûrah, the incident of a blind Sahâbî, Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Umî Maktûm ؓ, is mentioned who once came into the presence of Nabî ﷺ in search of knowledge. At this time, Nabî ﷺ was engaged in inviting the leaders of the Quraysh towards Islâm. Due to his arrival whilst Nabî ﷺ was engaged in such an important mission caused him (ﷺ) natural unpleasantness and he (ﷺ) did not answer him. These verses of Sûrah Abas were revealed in which Allâh Ta'âlâ cautioned Nabî ﷺ.

Thereafter, whenever Nabî would see Hadhrat Ibn Umî Maktûm ؓ he would welcome him saying, “This is the same one due to whom Allâh Ta'âlâ cautioned me” and he (ﷺ) would say, “If you have any work, then inform me.” In spite of being blind, Nabî ﷺ appointed him as the leader of Madînah during 2 battles. This incident and others similar to it, wherein Nabî ﷺ is cautioned in the Qur'ân are proofs of his truthfulness and veracity. If Allâh forbid! The Qur'ân was made up by Nabî ﷺ, then he would never have mentioned such verses in which he was taken to task. After mentioning this incident of Hadhrat Ibn Umî Maktûm ؓ, this sûrah shows the ingratitude of man. He forgets his origin and chooses rebelliousness in front of Allâh Ta'âlâ. (17-20) In the following verses the proofs of Allâh Ta'âlâ's oneness and power are mentioned. (24-32)

At the end of the sûrah the frightening scene of Qiyâmah is portrayed when man will forget his closest relative due to overwhelming fear. Every person will be concerned about himself.

None will have concern for another. On the faces of some people the light of success will be found; and on many others the darkness and disgrace of failure will encompass their faces. (33-42)

Sûrah Takwîr

This is a Makkî sûrah of 29 verses. This sûrah has two portions. The first portion, consisting of 14 verses, makes mention of the frightening changes that will take place in the universe due to which nothing in the universe will remain protected. Everything will change. The sun, stars, mountains and oceans will be utterly destroyed. On this day every person will know how much trouble he is going to be in and what he has brought forward. Sins or virtues! May Allâh Ta'âlâ save us!

In the second portion, consisting of 15 verses, Allâh Ta'âlâ takes 3 oaths on the veracity of the Qur'ân and the nubuwwat and truthfulness of Nabî ﷺ. The foolish ones, who regarded Nabî ﷺ (Allâh forbid) to be insane, are explained to with great feeling. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Your companion is not mad. He is a true Nabî conveying the message of Allâh Ta'âlâ to His servants." This has also been mentioned in Sûrah A'râf (verse 184) and Sûrah Sabâ (verse 46) that if you ponder properly then your heart will testify that this great personality who passes by you day and night is completely sane. He has come to teach the mad people wisdom. Regarding the Qur'ân, Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "This is not the word of any accursed devil. So where are you heading? It is only a great advice for the people of the universe, for those who wish to tread the straight path. And you cannot intend anything without the will of Allâh, the Rabb of the Universe."

Sûrah Infitâr

This is a Makkî sûrah of 19 verses. In this sûrah, first those changes are mentioned which will occur to the system of the universe when Qiyâmah will take place. (1-5) Then, in a loving tone, a complaint is made of man "O man, what has cast you into deception concerning your most generous Rabb?" You forget His favours and fall into disobedience and ungratefulness. The main reason is because you do not have conviction on the Day of recompense whereas it is to definitely come. Kirâman-Kâtibîn (angels writing your actions) will present all your deeds. Then you will be divided into two groups

- 1- Abrâr (pious).
- 2- Fujjâr (sinners).

The abrâr will go to Jannah, an abode of enjoyment, whereas the fujjâr will go to Jahannum, an abode of punishment.

Sûrah Mutaffifîn

This is a Makkî sûrah consisting of 36 verses. The fundamental beliefs are discussed in this sûrah also. The conditions and horrors of the Day of Qiyâmah are especially mentioned.

However, in the beginning verse, those people are criticized who are involved in moral weaknesses like tatfîf. Tatfîf means to cheat in weight and measure. Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "Destruction be to the cheaters, who when they take measure from mankind, they demand in full. If they measure or weigh for people, they give less." Some Ulama have made the scope of tatfîf very large. Imâm Qushayrî رحمہ اللہ states that tatfîf is in weights and measures as well as in exposing and concealing faults and giving and taking fairly. That person who desires complete fairness for himself but is not fair to others, is also in the sight of Allâh a mutaffif (one who gives less). Similar is that Muslim who does not like for his Muslim brother what he likes for himself, he who sees the faults in people but cannot see

his own faults, and he who seeks his rights from people but does not fulfil their rights. All of these people are deserving of this warning. The warning here for these mutaffifîn, is indeed a very severe warning. What then do you think about those who without weighing and measuring usurp the wealth of people? Thereafter the final result is mentioned of those evil-hearted and sinful people who make all efforts to extinguish the light of Allâh Ta'âlâ. (7-17) In contrast to them, those pious and God-fearing servants are also mentioned who will be bestowed with everlasting bounties in the hereafter. (22-28) At the end of this sûrah, we are told that these evil-hearted people used to mock and make fun of Allâh's servants. However on the day of Qiyâmah, the matter will be turned around. Now the pious will mock at those evil people. (29-36)

Sûrah Inshiqâq

Sûrah Inshiqâq is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 25 verses. In these four sûrahs i.e. Mutaffifîn, Inshiqâq, Infitâr and Takwîr, the conditions of Qiyâmah are mentioned in different styles. In the opening verses of Sûrah Inshiqâq, mention is made of the changes which will take place in the universe, at the time of Qiyâmah. (1-5) After Qiyâmah takes place, man will be divided into two groups, after passing the stages of reckoning. Some will be granted their book of deeds in their right hands and others will be granted it behind their backs. (6-15)

In the following verses, three oaths are taken on the following, "Definitely you will proceed from phase to phase," i.e. on the Day of Qiyâmah, you will have to face different stages and difficulties and each stage will be more severe than the previous one. (16-18) However, those people who believed and performed good actions will be saved from these difficulties and different punishments. (25)

Sûrah Burûj

This is a Makkî sûrah consisting of 22 verses. In the beginning of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ takes three oaths stating, "The people of the trench have been destroyed." In Sahîh Muslim, the incident of the people of the trench has been ascribed to the last of the Hamîr kings Dhu-Nawâs Yahûdi who was an idol-worshipper. He commanded that about twenty thousand people must be thrown and burnt in a trench full of fire. These people had become Christians. They had left worshipping idols and refused to worship them now. Similarly, in Sahîh Muslim and other books, the incident of a magician, a young boy and a pious person is mentioned. On seeing the steadfastness of one boy, thousands of people accepted îmân. Despite the threats of the king of the time, the people were not prepared to leave their îmân. All of them were then thrown into a blazing fire in trenches. (1-9)

If a person studies history, he will come to know of many such incidents wherein some people burnt others due to religious and theoretical differences. People of today, who are proud to regard themselves as modern, cultured and progressive use daisy cutters and even more destructive bombs on Muslims which destroy whole villages and towns, reducing them to ashes. Was the destruction which occurred in Hiroshimah and Nagasaki, any less than the fires in the trenches? Are the fires which have been lit in Irâq and Afghanistan before our eyes, any lesser in rank than the fire of Dhu-Nawâs? No, in fact, these fires are many times more destructive and dangerous than those fires. Young and old; men, and women as children who recite the kalimah have been made the target of these punishments. What is happening in Palestine? A fire is raining on the Muslims and for a continuous fifty years, it has been raining on them. The purpose of mentioning this is that none should be surprised that how can 20 000 people be burnt alive.

A warning is sounded to such people, "Those who harm the believing men and believing women, and they do not repent thereafter, Jahannum will be their punishment and for them is a blazing fire. (10) At the end of the sûrah, mention is made of Allâh Ta'âlâ's greatness and His power to punish. His grasp is very severe and when he afflicts someone with punishment, this person can never escape. The proof of this claim is the final result of Fir'awn . (12-22)

Sûrah Târiq

Sûrah Târiq is a Makkî sûrah which has 17 verses. Allâh Ta'âlâ, in the beginning of the sûrah, takes an oath on the sky and the shining stars that on every person an angel has been appointed by Allâh Ta'âlâ as a custodian. The word حافظ can either mean watching or it can mean protecting. Here both meanings can be taken. With every person, are such angels who watch and supervise his actions and as long as Allâh Ta'âlâ wishes, they protect him. (1-4) On man's first creation, his resurrection can be deduced. (5-8) In the following verses we learn that when man will stand in the court of Allâh on the Day of Qiyâmah, then his hidden matters will be made apparent. (9-10) At the end of the sûrah, an oath is taken on the truthfulness of the Qur'ân and on it being a decisive speech; and the disbelievers are sounded a warning. (11-17)

Sûrah A'lâ

Sûrah A'lâ is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 19 verses. Three important subjects have been discussed.

(1) In the beginning verses, the command of glorifying and expressing the purity (tasbîh) of Allâh Ta'âlâ with regards to His being and qualities, have been mentioned. He has created man, granted him a beautiful form and shown him the road of success and îman. (1-3)

(2) This sûrah mentions the Qur'ân-e-Karîm and mentions the glad-tidings of it being easy to memorize. Nabî ﷺ is commanded to advise, by means of the Qur'ân, for the reformation of the nafs and for the correction of character. Those in whose hearts there is the fear of Allâh, will definitely accept the advice. (6-10)

(3) At the end of the sûrah, we are informed that the person who keeps himself pure from the filth of sin, and adorns himself with good thoughts and feelings, creates within his heart the greatness and grandeur of Allâh Ta'âlâ and does not give preference to this world over the hereafter, will be successful. These are the principles which have been mentioned in all scriptures and sharî'ahs. (14-19)

Sûrah Ghâshiyah

Sûrah Ghâshiyah is a Makkî sûrah consisting of 26 verses. One of the names of Qiyâmah is Ghâshiyah which means "that which covers". Qiyâmah is called "Ghâshiyah" because its horrors will encompass all of creation. This sûrah shows that on this day some faces will be covered with disgrace. They had made great efforts due to which they will seem to be exhausted. The Ulamâ mention that this refers to those people who, in the world, engaged in an abundance of worship and spiritual exercises. However, since their beliefs were not in order, all of this worship will be of no avail to them. These faces will become the fuel for the blazing fire. Other faces will be bright and radiant, these are the faces of those people who made effort in the correct line and there is no trace of falsehood in their beliefs. Their abode will be lofty gardens.

The second important subject mentioned in this sûrah is the universal proofs of the oneness of Allâh Ta'âlâ. Amongst them is the camel which is also called the ship of the desert. In spite of being so tall, a small child can hold onto its reins and take it wherever he wishes to go. The camel is such a forbearing animal that it can withstand thirst for upto ten days at a time. Its food is very simple. It fills

its belly with such branches which no other domestic animal is prepared to eat. The other proofs mentioned are : the lofty skies, which stands without any pillars; the earth, which has been flattened in such a way that it is both easy to walk on and farm on as well; and the mountains which prevent earthquakes. Allâh Ta'âlâ, after turning the attention of the deniers of tawhîd to these proofs, consoles Nabî ﷺ that his responsibility is only to advise the people. After completing his task, he should leave their matter to Allâh Ta'âlâ.

Sûrah Fajr

This is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 30 verses. In the beginning of the sûrah, four oaths are taken stating that the punishment of Allâh Ta'âlâ will definitely descend on the disbelievers. Thereafter 3 important matters are mentioned in Sûrah Fajr :

(1) The incidents of the proud and evil people like the nation of Âd, Thamûd and Fir'awn has been mentioned in brief, who due to their evil and disobedience became worthy of Allâh Ta'âlâ's punishment. (6-14)

(2) Allâh Ta'âlâ's system is such that He tests man in this worldly life with various conditions i.e. good and evil, poverty and wealth, sickness and health. Man's nature is such that he does not appreciate the grace and favours of Allâh Ta'âlâ and he does not spend that wealth which Allâh Ta'âlâ has granted, in His path. Man is very greedy in the love of wealth. His stomach is never satiated with it. (15-20)

(3) While mentioning the earthquakes and the frightening conditions on the Day of Judgment, we are informed that man will be divided into two groups. The unfortunate people will be worthy of Allâh Ta'âlâ's anger and the believer's soul called nafse-mutmainnah will be told to return to it's Master and will be told to enter Jannah. (21-30)

Sûrah Balad

This is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 20 verses. The theme of this sûrah is the success and failure of man. The sûrah commences with Allâh Ta'âlâ taking three oaths saying that, "We have created man in great difficulty i.e. his life is another name for toiling, striving and sometimes man is afflicted with poverty, sometimes with sickness and pain, sometimes with problems, then eventually man becomes old, he dies, he has to answer Munkar and Nakîr and then has to bear the horrors of Qiyâmah. In short from man's beginning to end, there is only difficulty upon difficulty. (1-4)

Thereafter, those disbelievers are mentioned who were very proud of their strength. They used to spend their wealth for the sake of pride and show. These people are reminded of Allâh's favours like their eyes, tongue and guidance. (1-5) Thereafter, the severity and horrors of Qiyâmah are mentioned wherein nothing but îmân and good actions will save a person. At the end of the sûrah, man is commanded to climb the "high valley". By this is meant those actions which are very difficult on one's nafs (carnal desires) and that is to free some-one from slavery, jail and from the fire of Jahannum, as well as to feed orphans and poor people. Together with this, a few qualities are also necessary i.e. belief in Allâh and to advise one another to adopt patience and be merciful.

Sûrah Shams

Sûrah Shams is a Makkî sûrah of 15 verses. The main object of this sûrah is to encourage good actions, to prevent sins and to sound a warning (to the rebellious). In the beginning of the sûrah, an oath is taken on seven things found in the universe which points to the power and oneness of Allâh Ta'âlâ i.e. the sun, moon, day, night, skies, earth and the nafs (carnal self) of man. After taking these seven oaths, Allâh Ta'âlâ states that if man fears Allâh and purifies

his nafs then he will be successful. If he does not take heed from encouragement, and continues to allow it to remain in dirt and filth, then he will be unsuccessful. (1-10)

Allâh Ta'âlâ has kept the ability of good and evil in man. Now it is left to man to bring forth these abilities. This sûrah then mentions the incident of the nation of Thamûd as an example, who did not purify their nafs, but engulfed it in sin, due to which they were destroyed.

Sûrah Layl

Sûrah Layl is a Makkî sûrah. There are 21 verses in it. The subject matter of this sûrah is the different types of actions and efforts of man. When the direction of man's actions and efforts are different, then its results will appear differently. In the beginning verses, 3 oaths are taken whereupon Allâh Ta'âlâ states, "O man, your efforts are different." Some are pious and some are wretched, some are believers and some are disbelievers; some spend their wealth in Allâh's path and some are stingy; some fear Allâh Ta'âlâ and some choose to be independent; some verify the truth and some deny it; whichever road men chooses for himself, Allâh Ta'âlâ makes it easy for him to tread on this path. (1-10)

At the end of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ informs us that He will save the people of î mân from Jahannum. For this, the incident of a pious person is mentioned who used to spend his wealth only for the pleasure of Allâh Ta'âlâ. In all commentaries, it is mentioned this verse was revealed regarding Hadhrat Abu Bakr Siddîq ؓ whose wealth was used for preparation of jihâd, the assistance of Nabî ﷺ and for emancipating those slaves who were made targets of oppression due to their acceptance of Islâm.

Sûrah Duhâ

This is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 11 verses. The subject matter of this sûrah is the personality of Nabî ﷺ and four subjects are mentioned :

(1) Addressing Nabî ﷺ, Allâh Ta'âlâ takes an oath that he has not deserted Nabî ﷺ nor is Allâh angry with him (ﷻ). (1-3) If his opponents speak such words due to jealousy and enmity, then they are speaking lies.

(2) Nabî ﷺ has been given two great glad tidings :

- 1- One is that his future condition will be better than his present condition or his hereafter will be better than this worldly life.
- 2- Allâh Ta'âlâ will grant him (ﷻ) so much in this world and in the hereafter that he will be pleased.

(3) Thereafter Allâh Ta'âlâ reminds us of His three favours on Nabî ﷺ he was an orphan, Allâh Ta'âlâ granted him refuge; he was uninformed, Allâh Ta'âlâ showed him the straight path and Nabî ﷺ was poor, Allâh Ta'âlâ made him wealthy. (6-8)

(4) Nabî ﷺ has been instructed to follow these three advices in gratitude for these three favours ie. do not be harsh on the orphans, do not turn away the beggars, and make mention of the favours of Your Creator and Sustainer.

Sûrah Inshirâh

This is a Makkî sûrah comprising of 18 verses. In this sûrah, the personality, greatness and status of Nabî ﷺ is mentioned. In this sûrah, four points are mentioned :

(1) Three favours of Allâh Ta'âlâ on Nabî ﷺ have been mentioned :

- 1- Sharhe-sadr – Allâh Ta'âlâ has filled his (ﷻ) heart with light and wisdom and has kept it free from sin and dirt.
- 2- Allâh Ta'âlâ has removed the weight which has made the back of Nabî ﷺ heavy i.e. the weight of nubuwwat and risâlat and the fulfilment of it's responsibilities.
- 3- Allâh Ta'âlâ has elevated his (ﷻ) mention. Whenever Allâh Ta'âlâ's name is mentioned, Nabî ﷺ is also mentioned whether it be the azân, iqâmat, tashahhud or khutbah. (1-4)

(2) Allâh Ta'âlâ promises to make easy all difficulties and to remove all worries. (5-6)

(3) Nabî ﷺ is commanded that after fulfilling the responsibilities of da'wat and tablîgh (propagation), then he should, as gratitude to Allâh, engage in His worship, and he should exert himself in it.

(4) After doing all this, he (ﷻ) should place his (ﷻ) trust in Allâh, and turn to Him in all matters.

Sûrah Tîn

Sûrah Tîn is a Makkî Sûrah of 8 verses. Three matters are mentioned in this sûrah relating to man and his belief :

(1) The honour of the human race. This is from different perspectives. Here one perspective is mentioned i.e. man has been created with a lot of beauty. This beauty is with regards to the outward and bodily form as well as intellectual and spiritual perfection.

(2) When man does not fulfil the demands of humanity and chooses the path of ungratefulness, then he becomes the lowest of the low. By making his objective a life of fulfilling carnal and animalistic desires, man falls to a level lower than animals. However, those who believe and perform good actions are saved from this lowliness.

(3) Allâh Ta'âlâ who has created man in such a beautiful form from one drop of semen, can create man a second time. Giving life to man a second time, taking a reckoning from him and recompensing him is the demand of His being a just ruler.

Sûrah 'Alaq

This is a Makkî sûrah consisting of 19 verses. The ulema mention that in all the short sûrahs from Sûrah 'Alaq till the end of the Qur'ân, the crux of the Qur'ânic teachings has been mentioned. The first few verses of this sûrah were the first verses revealed. Three important matters have been mentioned :

- (1) The wisdom of Allâh Ta'âlâ's creation of man. He has granted virtue to man over all creation by virtue of reading and writing. (1-5)
- (2) Due to wealth, disobedience of Allâh Ta'âlâ, denial and forgetfulness of His favours occurs. (6-8) One important cause for mans pride and disobedience is wealth. When one's treasury and stomach is filled, then he does not regard other humans as human and he does not regard Allâh as his diety and one worthy of prostrating before.
- (3) The incident of the Fir'awn of this ummah, Abû Jahl who used to threaten Nabî ﷺ and prevent him from worship. (9-19)

Sûrah Qadr

Sûrah Qadr is a Makkî sûrah, comprising of 5 verses. At the beginning of this sûrah, the great favour of Allâh Ta'âlâ is mentioned which is in the form of revealing this clear book. Similarly, in this sûrah, the virtue of Laylatul-Qadr is mentioned. The first virtue is that one night of worship on this night is equal to one thousand months of worship.

The second virtue is that during this night, from sunset to dawn, the angels continue descending with the message of peace, mercy and blessing. Note that the meaning of the revelation of the Qur'ân on this night is that the revelation commenced on this night.

Sûrah Bayyinah

This is a Madanî sûrah consisting of 8 verses. Three important matters have been discussed in this sûrah :

(1) The viewpoint of the ahle-kitâb regarding the risâlat of Nabî ﷺ. These people were awaiting his arrival. However, they thought that this final Nabî will be from Banî Isrâ'îl. When this did not happen, they denied his nubuwwat. In this sûrah, Nabî ﷺ is mentioned to be regarded as a clear proof. What doubt is there that the life of Nabî ﷺ is in itself a great miracle and a clear proof of his truthfulness? He lived for forty years in a society plagued with adultery, murder, fighting, drinking, idol-worship and highway robbery. He neither lived in the jungles nor in solitude. He passed his life in this society as an active participant but not a smallest spot of evil or dirt can be found in his history. Even his worst enemies did not have the courage to point a finger at his (ﷺ) actions.

(2) This sûrah explains the foundation of dîn and î mân i.e.ikhâlâs (sincerity). No action is accepted without î mân and neither is î mân accepted without sincerity. Every Nabî called his nation towards this fundamental point. (5)

(3) This sûrah mentions the end result of the fortunate and unfortunate i.e. the believers and disbelievers. (6-8)

Sûrah Zilzal

This is a Madanî sûrah consisting of 8 verses. In spite of being a Madanî sûrah, the subject matter resembles that of the Makkî sûrahs. This sûrah comprises of 2 main objectives :

(1) The earthquake which will take place before Qiyâmah is mentioned. All of mankind will arise from their graves. The earth will testify regarding man's actions.

(2) All of mankind will be presented before Allâh Ta'âla for reckoning. According to their actions, they will be divided into two groups. Some will be unfortunate and some will be fortunate, and everyone of them will be given retribution for their actions, whether it be big or small.

Sûrah 'Âdiyât

This is a Makkî sûrah consisting of 11 verses. Three important subjects have been mentioned.

- 1- Taking an oath on the horses of the mujâhidîn (warriors in the path of Allâh), Allâh Ta'âla states that man is very ungrateful. His actions are a proof of his ungratefulness. A horse remains loyal to its master. To please its master, it is prepared to rush into a storm of arrows raining down as well as unsheathed swords. Man, on the other hand despite being the most honourable of all creation is very disloyal to his Master.
- 2- Man's nature is portrayed. He possesses severe love of wealth. If he owns one valley of gold, then he seeks a second. If a second is attained, he seeks a third. Nothing besides the sand (of his grave) can satiate him.
- 3- Man is encouraged to do such actions which will benefit him when he will be brought forward for reckoning and recompense. Whatever secrets are concealed within the hearts of man will be laid bare.

Sûrah Qâri'ah

This is a Makkî sûrah consisting of 11 verses. In this sûrah, man has been warned of the horrors of Qiyâmah, that when Qiyâmah occurs massive changes will occur in the system of the universe leaving man in complete shock and bewilderment. (1-5) At the end of the sûrah, we are informed that on the Day of Qiyâmah, actions will be weighed. Some people's good actions will be heavier and some

people's evil actions will be heavier. According to this will be the outcome of man.

Sûrah Takâthur

This is a Makkî sûrah consisting of 8 verses. In this sûrah, such people have been criticized who have made the worldly life their purpose and objective, and who are always engrossed in gathering the wealth of this world. When one looks at how deeply absorbed they are (in this dunya) it seems that they are going to live forever in the world. However death suddenly overtakes them, due to which all their planning comes to naught. They are taken from their palatial mansions to the grave. These people are warned that on the Day of Qiyâmah, they will be questioned regarding all their actions. (3-4) Then they will be definitely shown Jahannum and they will be questioned regarding the favours of Allâh Ta'âlâ ie. how were the bounties of security, health, free time, food and drink, residence, knowledge and wealth etc. used?

Sûrah 'Asr

Sûrah 'Asr is a Makkî sûrah consisting of 3 verses. This concise sûrah explains clearly the great principles of Islâm and the constitution of man's life. Regarding this sûrah, Imâm Shâfi'î رحمه الله has mentioned that if people only ponder over this sûrah, then it would be sufficient for their salvation. In the beginning of the sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ takes an oath on time saying that all of mankind are in loss even if they have been bestowed with much material and outward possessions. However, those who are imbued with four qualities will be saved from this loss i.e. îmân, good actions, advising one another on truth (haqq), advising one another to be steadfast (sabr).

Sûrah Humazah

Sûrah Humazah is a Makkî sûrah consisting of 9 verses. Three sicknesses and ailments of man have been pointed out in this sûrah:

(1) Mentioning a fault of some-one in his absence. This is termed as ghîbah (backbiting) which is a major sin.

(2) Mocking someone or poking fun at his lineage, religion or outward features. This was the habit of the hypocrites. They would mock the poor Muslims. Similarly the Jews and Christians would mock the true religion.

(3) Having love of the world – when man gets involved in it, he forgets the rights of Allâh Ta'âlâ as well as the rights of man. Noplace remains in his heart for the love of Allâh Ta'âlâ. Hadhrat Miâ Nûr Muhammad Saheb رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has so aptly said :

بھر رہا ہے دل میں حب جاہ و مال کب سماے اس میں حب ذو الجلال

“The love of fame and wealth has engulfed the heart
When can the love of Zul-Jalâl encompass it.”

At the end of the sûrah, the outcome of those wretched people who are involved in these ailments is mentioned. (5-8)

Sûrah Fîl

Sûrah Fîl is a Makkî sûrah consisting of 5 verses. In this sûrah, the famous incident, known as As'hâb-e-fîl (the people of the elephant) has been mentioned. When the governor of Sanâ, Abrahâ, attacked the Ka'bah with a herd of elephants, and approximately 6000 warriors, the Quraysh were incapable of opposing him. Allâh Ta'âlâ sent small birds with stones. These stones destroyed them with power like the bombs of today. This incident occurred in that year in which Nabî ﷺ was born. This incident pointed to the fact that soon the true protector of the Ka'bah will be born.

Sûrah Quraysh

Sûrah Quraysh is a Makkî sûrah consisting of 4 verses. In this sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions 2 great favours of His on the Makkan people. The first is that without fear they could travel to Shâm (Syria) in summer and to Yemen in winter for business trips which was a huge source of income for them. The second favour is that they were protected and were in safety and security in the sacred land (i.e. Makkah Mukarramah). After mentioning these favours, they are commanded to abstain from self-deception, vanity and nationalism and to worship the Master of Baitullah who has granted them these favours.

Sûrah Mâ'ûn

Sûrah Mâ'ûn is a Makkî sûrah of 7 verses. Two groups of men have been briefly mentioned in this sûrah :

(1) The first are those disbelievers who do not believe in the day of Judgment, they usurp the rights of orphans and act harshly towards them, and they neither feed the poor nor encourage others towards it. In short, their matters are neither correct with Allâh Ta'âlâ nor with Allâh's servants.

(2) The second group are those hypocrites. Three evil qualities of theirs have been mentioned :

- 1- They are negligent regarding salâh – This neglect is in two ways. One is they do not perform salâh. The other is that if they do perform, they do not perform it punctually, nor do they have concentration.
- 2- They do actions for show.
- 3- They are so stingy that they refuse to give basic necessities in charity.

Sûrah Kawthar

Sûrah Kawthar is a Makkî sûrah consisting of 3 verses. Three important points have been brought up in this sûrah :

(1) The kindness and favours of Allâh Ta'âlâ on Nabî ﷺ has been mentioned that He has granted Nabî ﷺ Kawthar. This is a river of Jannah from which Nabî ﷺ will grant his ummah cups filled to the brim to drink from. Since kawthar means "an abundance of goodness" nubuwwat, the book, knowledge, the right of intercession, Maqâm-e-Mahmûd, miracles and the Qur'ân-e-Karîm have been also referred to as Kawthar.

(2) Nabî ﷺ is commanded to show gratitude for such a great favour like Kawthar by performing salâh and sacrificing for Allâh Ta'âlâ.

(3) This glad tiding is conveyed to Nabî ﷺ that his enemies will be disgraced and their names will be obliterated. This is exactly what happened.

Sûrah Kâfirûn

Sûrah Kâfirûn is a Makkî sûrah consisting of 6 verses. This sûrah was revealed when the mushrikîn requested Nabî ﷺ to make a pact with them that for one year they would worship his god and for one year he should worship their god. This sûrah has laid down a decisive line between îmân and kufr, and between the monotheists and polytheists. It shows that tawhîd and shirk are two opposing systems. They can never reconcile. Thus the hopes of the disbelievers were dashed and forever it was clarified that kufr and îmân could never merge.

Sûrah Nasr

Sûrah Nasr is a Madanî sûrah consisting of 3 verses. This sûrah alludes to the conquest of Makkah. This sûrah was revealed in the 10th year of hijrî. After this sûrah was revealed, Nabî ﷺ lived only for 70 days. When this sûrah was revealed, Nabî ﷺ said, "I have been informed of my death." This was because the purpose of Nabî ﷺ's coming was complete. When Nabî ﷺ began his call, only a few accepted his call. However, now groups upon groups, and tribes upon tribes were entering the fold of Islâm. Thus Nabî ﷺ was commanded to make shukr to Allâh Ta'âlâ for these conquests and favours, together with praising and glorifying Him.

Sûrah Lahab

Sûrah Lahab is a Makkî sûrah, consisting of 5 verses. This sûrah shows the outcome of Nabî ﷺ's uncle, who was his severest enemy, and his wife Umme-Jamîl. He had great pride over his wealth and children; however they could not save him from Allâh's punishment. Both this husband and wife were disgraced and had an evil end.

Sûrah Ikhhlâs

Sûrah Ikhhlâs is a Makkî sûrah, consisting of 4 verses. This sûrah discusses the fundamental beliefs of Islâm ie. Tawhîd. Tawhîd is of three types :

(1) Tawhîde-rubûbiyat i.e. The Creator, Master and Sustainer is Allâh Ta'âlâ. Even the disbelievers affirm this.

(2) Tawhîde-ulûhiyat i.e. Whatever worship the servant does, whether it be du'â, qurbânî (sacrifice) or taking a nazr (vow), then it should be done for Allâh Ta'âlâ. The mushrikîn used to also worship beings other than Allâh Ta'âlâ, even though their purpose was to attain the closeness of Allâh Ta'âlâ. However, it is apparent that this is shirk (polytheism).

(3) Tawhîde-zât wa asma wa sifât – This third form of tawhîd is such that most people have erred. They establish such knowledge, power, seeing, hearing and actions which are in reality only for Allâh Ta'âlâ, for those being besides Allâh Ta'âlâ. If a person ponders, he will see that in Sûrah Ikhhlâs, more emphasis has been placed on this third form of tawhîd.

Sûrah Falaq

Sûrah Falaq is a Madanî sûrah, consisting of 5 verses. In this sûrah, Allâh Ta'âlâ mentions one quality of His, thereafter commanding us to seek protection from the evil of four things:

- (1) From the evil of the creation.
- (2) From the evil of darkness (generally thieves, Shaytân, jinns, magicians and insects do their work at night)
- (3) From the evil of those women who blow when doing magic and spells. Even though men also do this work, women are more involved in tâwiz (amulets), thus the Qur'ân has especially mentioned women.
- (4) From the evil of jealous ones.

Sûrah Nâs

Sûrah Nâs is a Madanî sûrah, consisting of 6 verses. This is the 2nd sûrah of the muawwadhatin (the other being Sûrah Falaq). Many ahâdîth have been narrated regarding the virtues of these two sûrahs. In Sahîh Muslim, Hadhrat Uqbah Ibn Amir رضي الله عنه narrates that Nabî ﷺ said, regarding these 2 sûrahs, “Do you not know that today two such sûrahs have been revealed which have no equivalent?” i.e. these two sûrahs are without equal in seeking protection from Allâh Ta'âlâ. Imâm Ibn Qayyim رحمته الله states that none are independent from these two sûrahs. These sûrahs are very effective in removal of physical and spiritual problems.

There is a very strong relationship in sûrah Fâtiha being brought in the beginning of the Qur'ân and these 2 sûrahs being brought at the ending. In sûrah Fâtiha, Allâh Ta'âlâ's assistance is sought, and this subject matter is also found in these two sûrahs. There is an indication in this that a servant from beginning to ending should turn to Allâh Ta'âlâ and should continue seeking His help.

In sûrah Nâs, 3 qualities of Allâh Ta'âlâ are mentioned: Rubûbiyat (Sustaining), Mâlikiyat (Ownership), Ilâhiyat (Divinity). After mentioning these three qualities, a command has been given to seek protection from one thing i.e. the evil of the whispering one. This proves how dangerous and destructive the disease of waswasah (doubts) is. Shaytân as well as human beings create doubts in one. Today, the whole western media is involved in creating doubts regarding îmân in the hearts of Muslims. This sickness of doubts has become very common. Thus there is a need that these two sûrahs should be recited in abundance as a common practise (ma'mûl).

Here, understand this point also that in Sûrah Falaq, one quality of Allâh Ta'âlâ is mentioned and one seeks protection from four calamities. Here, four qualities of Allâh Ta'âlâ are mentioned and protection is sought from one calamity. The reason for this is that in the first sûrah, the protection of the body is desired, whereas in the second sûrah, one desires protection from harm to his dîn (religion). The smallest harm to dîn is more harmful than the greatest calamities of the world.

If we create a true relationship with the Qur'ân, and we continue trying to read, understand, practise and fulfil its rights, then Inshâ-Allâh, our dîn and the dîn of our future generations will be protected.

