

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

26th Taraweeh, Ramadan 1447 Hijri

Summary of Verses 80:1-92:21

(Sura Abasa is a Makki Sura)

Sura Abasa (He frowned) (Verses 80:1-42)

Understanding the context of this Sura is important for perspective: One day, the Prophet (s.a.w) was engaged in a conversation with a group of prominent leaders of the Quraish tribe when he was interrupted by a blind Muslim named Abd Allah ibn Maktum. The Prophet's goal was to persuade the Quraish leaders of his message so they, in turn, could encourage their followers to accept Islam. The interruption annoyed the Prophet (s.a.w), especially because it came from someone not as high in social status as the Quraish leaders. He ignored the blind man and continued his discussion with the Makkan notables. This disrespect immediately prompted a Divine rebuke, reminding everyone, including the prophet himself, that all are accountable Allah: *"He (Muhammad) frowned and turned away when the blind man came towards him. But how would you (Muhammad) know that he might not be reformed, or that he might not take heed and benefit from your admonition?"* (80:1-4)

The Prophet (s.a.w) was attentive to the Quraish leaders who considered themselves self-sufficient, *"but as to him who came to you earnestly striving and with fear in his heart, of him you were unmindful!"* (80:8-10)

Allah (SWT) is telling us through His Prophet that we must be courteous to all sincere truth seekers, regardless of their social standing.

We need to ask ourselves: Do we ignore humble people—those considered unsuccessful from a worldly perspective—who seek our help or attention? Conversely, do we blindly cater to the needs of the rich and famous for some material benefit or in the hope that some of their fame will rub off on us? If the answer is 'yes' to either or both, we need to revise our priorities and heed the lessons of the Quran. We must also watch out for self-deception when we try to hide the envy of wealth as a virtue, thinking that we are standing against the love of money as the root of evil, when in fact, we are longing for money and wealth ourselves!

The Sura touches on the theme of resurrection through the renewal we witness in nature: *"Then let man reflect on his food. We pour down water from the sky, and We cause cracks to appear in the ground through which We cause to grow corn and grapes and fresh vegetation and olives and palm trees and gardens dense with foliage, and fruits and herbage for you and your animals to enjoy."* (80:24-32)

Just as Allah can bring life to the seemingly lifeless earth, He can also revive those with barren or dead hearts, as well as resurrect the physically dead.

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(Sura Takwir is a Makki Sura)

Sura At-Takwir (The Folding Up) (Verses 81:1-29)

The Sura lists twelve events that will indicate the onset of resurrection, leading to the Day of Judgment:

- 1) *"When the sun is folded up"* (81:1) (science tells us that when the sun uses up its hydrogen fuel in the nuclear fusion that generates its power, the star will start to die.)
- 2) *"When the stars fall"* (81:2)
- 3) *"When the mountains are annihilated"* (81:3)
- 4) *"When pregnant she-camels are abandoned"* (81:4)

- 5) *"When the wild beasts are gathered together"* (81:5)
- 6) *"When the oceans boil over and flare up"* (81:6)
- 7) *"When the souls and their bodies are paired once more"* (81:7)
- 8) *"When the daughter killed in infancy is made to ask for what crime she was killed"* (81:8-9)
- 9) *"When the scrolls are laid open"* (81:10)
- 10) *"When the sky is unveiled"* (81:11)
- 11) *"When hell is made to burn fiercely"* (81:12)
- 12) *"When paradise is brought into view."* (81:13)

What will happen then? *"Each soul shall know what it has put forward."*
(81:14)

Note verse 81:7: *"When the souls and their bodies are paired once more"*. Earthly death marks the end of the physical body but not the soul. The body is temporary, while the soul is eternal. However, when we are resurrected, each soul will be reunited with its respective body. In other words, we will be resurrected with both body and soul together in the same state as when we lived on earth until death. (For reference, see the 20th Taraweeh summary regarding the various limbs of sinners testifying against them on the Day of Judgment when bodies and souls are joined together.) Consider also the verse (39:42): *"It is Allah Who calls back the souls of people upon their death as well as the souls of the living during their sleep. Then He keeps those for whom He has ordained death, and releases the others until their appointed time. Surely in this are signs for people who reflect."*

Sleep is similar to death in that, in both cases, the body seems to lack consciousness, temporarily during sleep and permanently in death. The soul unites with the body when a person wakes and is separated when they do not. Also, see verses (2:28) and (67:2), which clearly indicate we experience two deaths and two lives, and in the second life, when we are resurrected,

our bodies and souls will be reunited. The overall message may be that a healthy mind resides within a healthy body. Therefore, while alive, we should spiritually nourish our souls with actions that please Allah and physically nourish our bodies with wholesome food and regular exercise so that at resurrection, we may hope to be in a state of bliss and grace.

Some scholars interpret verse (81:7) differently. According to them, the verse means, "When all souls are sorted out (based on their deeds)." We learned in (56:7) (also found in verse (78:17): "Surely the Day of Sorting is a thing appointed.") that "... you will be sorted into three classes," followed by verses (56:8-56) in Sura *Al-Waqia* that describe these three classes: a) Those foremost in faith who will be closest to Allah and enjoy the highest bliss, b) Companions of the Right Hand who will also experience bliss but not as much as those foremost in faith, and c) Companions of the Left Hand who will face torment. These broad categories are outlined in Sura *Al-Waqia*. However, the implication of verse (81:7), according to these scholars, is more extensive. During earthly life, good is mixed with evil, knowledge with ignorance, wealth and power with arrogance, love with hate, justice with injustice, humility with hubris, and so on. In the Hereafter, all true values will be restored, and similar things will cluster together — the best with the best, the better with the better, the good with the good, the bad with the bad, the worse with the worse, and the worst with the worst. Allah knows best.

As curious beings, we want to understand what happens when Time and life come to an end. When a TV series that spans several seasons or years captivates us, we keep watching it weekly until we see how the story concludes. Even though we are unlikely to witness what happens at the end of Time, which may extend far beyond the 70-80 years of an average lifespan, the Quran reveals what will happen in the verses quoted above. The Book provides us with knowledge of the past through stories of prophets

and their people in ancient times. It offers knowledge of the present, as in this example: *"The mutual rivalry for piling up the good things of this world diverts you from the more serious things."* (102:1) And it gives us insight into the future, as seen in the first few verses of Sura 81. Even if we are not alive then, Allah tells us how the story will end. What a miracle the Quran is!

The Quran affirms Prophet Muhammad's (s.a.w) mission as a guidance for all mankind: *"I swear by the shining star that recedes by day, and by the stars that rise and set, and by the night when it spreads its darkness and the dawn as it breathes away the darkness, that this is the word of a most honorable messenger."* (81:15-19)

Just as dawn breathes away the darkness of the night, so a soul's spiritual darkness gradually awakens to its spiritual dawn through Revelation.

"So, where are you going?" asks the Quran (81:26). It is a profound question (Latin equivalent: "Quo Vadis?") that we especially need to reflect on during Ramadan. Are we on the Straight Path? Are our words and deeds aligned with the good pleasure of Allah, the summit of success as stated in verse 9:72, or are we frittering our time away in frivolous pursuits and going astray from a combination of ego, envy, ingratitude, avarice and other failings? Ramadan is the month to take stock of where we are in life and apply corrections as needed.

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(Sura Infitar is a Makki Sura)

Sura Al-Infitar (The Cleaving Asunder) (Verses 82:1-19)

The theme of this Sura continues that of the previous one: The physical world as we know it will be destroyed before the Day of Judgment, when true reality will emerge. *"When the sky is cleft asunder, when the stars are scattered, when the oceans are suffered to burst forth, and when the graves*

are turned upside down, then each soul shall know what it has sent forward and what it has kept back.” (82:1-5)

Allah has given us human beings limited free will: *“He who created you, fashioned you in due proportion and gave you a just bias.” (82:7)* If we properly exercise the faculties of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch we have been blessed with, and use our power of reasoning and spiritual faculties, we will do what is right in the sight of Allah because of our inherent ‘just bias.’ If we err, we must accept responsibility and make amends so that we are again on the Straight Path.

What defines the Day of Judgment? Allah tells us: *“And, and what will explain to you what the Day of Judgment is? Again, what will explain to what the Day of Judgment is? It will be the Day when no soul shall have power to do anything for another, for the Command that Day will be with Allah alone.” (81:17-19)*

One theme of Divine revelation is that in the end, we will all return to Allah, as emphasized in verses ((36:83) and (81:19).

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(Sura Mutaffifin is a Makki Sura, although some scholars think it is a Madani Sura)

Sura Al-Mutaffifin (Those Who Deal in Fraud) (Verses 83:1-36)

Every society includes individuals who focus solely on their selfish interests and will do anything to increase their profit and pleasure. Morality and ethics hold no influence on the actions and dealings of these hedonists and solipsists. The Quran warns them: *“Woe unto those who give short measure, those who, when they are to receive their due from other people, demand full measure, but when they must measure or weigh whatever they owe others, give less than what is due. Do they not know that they will be raised*

from the dead and called to account on an awesome day, the day when everyone will stand before the Sustainer of the world?" (83:1-6)

These verses are not limited to business transactions alone. What about someone who demands his rights and privileges from his spouse and children but is indifferent or negligent when it comes to fulfilling his responsibilities? The point is: just as we have rights over others, others have similar or even greater rights over us, especially of our parents and family.

Note that following the rules of Islam goes beyond what is called the Golden Rule in Western culture: 'Do as you would be done by.' For all good deeds we do, our intention is for the pleasure of Allah alone (76:9, 9:62). Also, in verse (83:1-3), It is implied that Islam surpasses the Golden Rule because we are expected to give what is fully owed to us, regardless of whether we expect or want to receive full consideration from others.

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(Sura Inshiqaq is a Makki Sura)

Sura Al-Inshiqaq (The Rending Asunder) (Verses 84:1-25)

The theme of this Sura continues the themes of Suras 81 and 82: the arrival of the Day of Judgment and the beginning of True Reality. Those who suffered in this life because of their righteousness will rejoice, while those who were self-indulgent and oppressive in this life, believing they would never have to return to their Lord, will weep. *"O you man! Surely you are toiling on toward your Lord, painfully toiling, but you shall meet Him. Then he who is given his record in his right hand, soon his account will be taken by an easy reckoning, and he will turn to his people rejoicing. But he who is given his record behind his back, soon he will cry in perdition, and he will enter a blazing fire. Truly he went about among his people rejoicing. Truly did he think that he would not have to return to Us!" (84:6-14)*

The patterns and rhythms we observe in nature should deepen our faith as we progress through different stages in our spiritual journey: *"So I do call to witness the crimson glow of sunset, the night and its homing, and the moon in her fullness, you shall surely travel from stage to stage."* (84:16-19).

(If we observe and reflect on all the wondrous phenomena in nature, we can sense the connections that unite them. As the English poet Francis Thompson (1859-1907) wrote: "All things by immortal power/Near of far, to each other linked are/that you cannot stir a flower without troubling of a star." After all, whose heart has not been lifted by the sight of birds returning to their nests at dusk? As the seasons change, we observe birds migrating to distant shores for warmth and food, their journeys reflecting the enduring mystery of Allah's creation.)

To be successful on the Final Day, belief and action must go together: *"... those who believe and work righteous deeds, for them is a reward that will never fail."* (84:25)

(The phrase *"Believe and do good"* occurs 61 times in the Quran, while *"Do good"* by itself occurs 12 times in the Quran.)

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(Sura Buruj is a Makki Sura)

Sura Al-Buruj (The Constellations) (Verses 85:1-22)

Allah offers chances after chances to sinners, tyrants, and oppressors to repent and find redemption, guiding them back to the straight path. Their destinies are contrasted with action-driven believers, who are promised ultimate success: *"Those who persecute the believers, men and women, and do not turn in repentance, will have the chastisement of hell, the chastisement of the burning fire. For those who believe and do righteous*

deeds, will be gardens beneath which rivers flow: This is the supreme triumph!" (85:10-11)

As we read in numerous verses throughout the Quran, belief and good deeds go together: *"For those who believe and do righteous deeds will be Gardens beneath which rivers flow. That is the supreme triumph!" (85:11)*

The Sura concludes with the gift of the eternal and immutable Quran for believers: *"... This is a glorious Quran, in a tablet preserved!" (85:21-22)*
We see this sublime truth stated also in verses (15:9).

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(Sura Tariq is a Makki Sura)

Sura At-Tariq (The Night-Visitor) (Verses 86:1-17)

The glorious star of Allah's revelation shines brightly during nights of spiritual enlightenment: *"By the sky and the night-visitant; and what will explain to you what the night-visitant is? It is the star of piercing brightness."*

(86:1-3)

Allah provides guardians over all human beings to record their deeds. *"Every soul has a guardian."* (86:4) Allah's sublime creation is suggested with poetic precision: *"By the firmament which gives the returning rain, and by the earth which opens out, behold, this is the Word that distinguishes good from evil."* (86:11-13)

Gentle forbearance with evil shows our trust in Allah. This does not mean compromising with evil or failing to fight it when we have the power. It means patience and humility – thus, complete trust in Allah - when we are powerless to prevent evil.

"Therefore, grant a delay to the unbelievers. Give respite to them gently for a while." (86:17)

(Note how the fundamental idea of complete trust in Allah for a believer is stated in verse 9:129: *"But if they turn away, say, 'Allah is sufficient for me. There is no God but He. On Him is my trust. He is the Lord of the Throne Supreme!'"*)

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(Sura A'la is a Makki Sura)

Sura Al-A'la (The Most High) (Verses 87:1-19)

The Prophet (s.a.w), and by extension his *ummah*, was reminded to *"Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High, Who has created and given order and proportion, Who has measured and granted guidance."* (87:1-3)

(Sura A'la is among the most recited Suras during the Friday Jumuah prayers. Tradition holds that the Prophet (s.a.w) used to recite this Sura with its stirring opening verses (87:1-3) during Jumuah.)

The Quran instructs the believer: *"So always remind with the Quran, even if the reminder is beneficial only for some. Those in awe of Allah will be mindful of it. But it will be shunned by the most wretched."* (87:9-11)

Who will be successful? *"Successful indeed are those who purify themselves, remember the Name of their Lord, and pray."* (87:14-15)

But those *"deniers who prefer the life of this world"* (87:16) are told in unambiguous terms that *"... the Hereafter is better and more enduring. And this is in the Books of the earliest revelations, the Books of Ibrahim and Musa."* (87:17-19)

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(Sura Ghashiya is a Makki Sura)

Sura Al-Ghashiya (The Overwhelming Event) (Verses 88:1-26)

On the Day of Judgment, the faces of wrongdoers will be *"laboring and weary"* while *"other faces that Day will be joyful, pleased with their striving."* (88:8-9)

We are asked to look at the wonders of Allah's creation and recognize His majesty and power: *"Do they not look at the camels and how they are made? And at the sky, how it is raised high? And at the mountains, how they are fixed firmly? And at the earth, how it is spread out?"* (88:17-20)

The Prophet's (s.a.w) role as a messenger is made clear: *"... Do remind, for you are one to remind but you are not one to manage their affairs."* (88:21-22) This echoes what the Quran tells us in verse (87:9): *"of use is the reminder."*

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(Sura Fajr is a Makki Sura)

Sura Al-Fajr (The Dawn) (Verses 89:1-30)

The Sura is suffused with symbols and allusions, the full meanings of which are known to Allah alone.

"By the dawn, by the ten nights, by the even and odd contrasted, and by the night when it passes away, considering all this, could there be, to anyone endowed with reason, more compelling evidence of the truth?" (89:1-5)

The break of day signifies not only the physical dawn but also our spiritual awakening. Many scholars believe that "the ten nights" refer to the first ten nights of the sacred month of Dhul-Hijjah, the twelfth and last month of the Islamic calendar. A few scholars also suggest that the "ten nights" refer to the last ten nights of Ramadan. The "even and the odd" or "the One" contrasts the Oneness and uniqueness of the Creator with the multiplicity of

His creation. And "the night when it passes away" perhaps signifies the night of spiritual darkness that disappears when we accept the light of truth by becoming conscious of Allah and obeying His commands.

Allah tests us in ways He alone deems best. The characteristics of those who fail His tests are indicated in these verses: *"Now, as for man, when his Lord tries him, giving him honor and gifts, then he says, 'My Sustainer has justly been generous to me.' But when He tries him by restricting his means of livelihood, he says in despair, 'My Lord has humiliated me!'"* (89:15-16)

Who are these people? They are those *"... who do not honor orphans, nor encourage the feeding of the poor, who devour the inheritance of others and who excessively love wealth!"* (89:17-20)

Allah evaluates us based on criteria only He knows. He tests us through poverty and wealth, victory and defeat, success and failure, to determine our standing in the Hereafter. To be successful in His eyes, we need to adopt positive habits like honoring orphans, encouraging each other to feed the hungry, and not seizing others' inheritances. (See also verses (69:34), (90:14-16), and (107:3))

The last verses of this Sura pour joy into the heart of believers: *"To the righteous soul, Allah will say, 'O you who have attained inner peace, return to your Lord, well pleased yourself and pleasing Him! Enter you, then, with My other servants. Yes, enter you to My Heaven!'"* (89:27-30)

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(Sura Balad is a Makki Sura)

Sura Al-Balad (The City) (Verses 90:1-20)

The city here refers to Makkah, where the Prophet (s.a.w) was born and lived until he migrated to Madinah and then returned triumphantly. The Surah highlights eternal truths and the choices we make to either give or fail

to give meaning to our lives. Life is difficult. *"Surely We have created humankind into toil and struggle."* (90:4) On the Day of Judgment, we will have to account for how we earned our wealth and how we spent it, and whether we chose the difficult path of virtue or the easy path of vice and rejection of Allah. *"... Does he think that no one has power over him? He may boast: 'I have squandered wealth in abundance.' Does he think no one sees him? Have We not given him a pair of eyes and a tongue, and a pair of lips? And shown him two highways?"* (90:5-10)

The steep path is difficult, but it is also the path to success: *"And what will explain to you the path that is steep? It is freeing someone, giving food on a day of privation to the orphan with claims of relationship or the hungry and the poor in the dust."* (90:12-16) They will be the successful ones, *"... those who believe, and enjoin patience and self-restraint, and enjoin deeds of kindness and compassion. Such are the companions of the right hand."* (90:17-18)

(In Sura Waqiah also, we read about the people of the right hand: *"the people of the right, how 'blessed' will they be!"* (56:8), (56:27))

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(Sura Shams is a Makki Sura)

Sura Ash-Shams (The Sun) (Verses 91:1-15)

The sublime order, beauty and intricacy of the universe are signs of the Omnipotence and Omnipresence of the Creator. Consider the three pairs: *"By the sun and its glorious splendor, by the moon as it follows it; by the day as it reflects the sun's glory, by the night as it conceals it; by the firmament and its wondrous architecture, by the earth and its wide expanse."* (91:1-6)

Only a sealed heart will fail to sense the presence of the Divine in these signs.

Allah creates the soul and gives it order, balance, scale, and the ability to distinguish right from wrong, truth from falsehood. *"By the soul, and the proportion and the order given to it, and its inspiration as to its wrong and its right, truly he succeeds who purifies it, and he fails who corrupts it."* (91:7-10)

It is within our ability to keep the soul pure and to use Allah's gifts to perform good deeds that please Him. It is also within our ability, given our limited free will, to tarnish the soul, go astray, and invoke His displeasure. This is illustrated by the example of the Thamud (details in 7:73-79), who rejected prophet Salih's message of humility and justice while oppressing the poor through greed and arrogance. *"The Thamud rejected their prophet through inordinate wrongdoing"* (50:11) and so *"Their Lord crushed them for their sin and leveled them."* (50:14)

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(Sura Lail is a Makki Sura)

Sura Al-Lail (The Night) (Verses 92:1-21)

We identify ourselves through our beliefs and actions. Good deeds, as the Quran describes, lead to success and happiness, while bad deeds cause misery and suffering.

The diversity of Allah's creation, and the choices we make and their consequences, are suggested in these verses: *"By the night as it conceals the light, by the day as it appears in glory, by the mystery of the creation of male and female, surely the ends you strive for are diverse. So he who gives in charity and fears Allah and in all sincerity testifies to the best, We will indeed make smooth for him the path to bliss. But he who is a miser and*

thinks himself self-sufficient and gives the lie to the best, We will indeed make smooth for him the path to misery, nor will his wealth profit him when he goes to his grave." (92:1-11)

Behold Allah's magnificent design of balance in the cycle of night and day, and in the creation of male and female. Those who give generously to anyone in need and possess *Taqwa*, comprising at least three categories: obedience to Allah, mindfulness and remembrance of Allah, and gratitude to Allah, will receive the best and highest reward from Allah. *Taqwa* involves an unwavering belief that good will always come from Allah. It embodies the mentality of "Allah above all else." (For a comprehensive description of *Taqwa*, see the 2nd Taraweeh summary)

Believers should remain optimistic about receiving the highest reward from Allah when *Taqwa* becomes their character. It is to trust in the certainty of the reward to come. When we work to please Allah, without being fooled by the false and the temporary, we attain *Taqwa*. Allah assures us ease after difficulty.

The contrast between the unsuccessful and the successful is made vivid:

"Therefore do I (Allah) warn you of a blazing fire. None shall burn therein but the most unfortunate ones, who give the lie to Truth and turn their backs. But those most devoted to Allah will be removed far from it."
(92:14-17)

Who are the fortunate ones?

(92:18) *"Those who spend their wealth for increase in self-purification"*
(*Allazi Yu'tee Ma' Lahu Yatazakka*. The Arabic root word *zaka* implies both increases in, and purification of, wealth.)

(92:19) *"And have in their minds no favor from anyone for which a reward is expected in return."* (This is the purification of intent: Charity is for the

pleasure of Allah alone.)

(92:20) *“But only desire the countenance of their Lord, Most High.”*

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