

Lessons from Surah Ar-Rahman

Lessons learned from Shaykh Nouman Ali Khan
and Shaykh Yasir Qadhi

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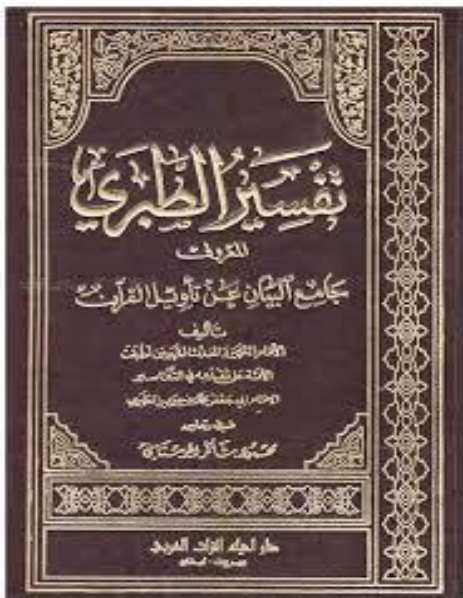
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Asbabun Nuzul

Thanks, and praises be to Allah, Lord of the Universe/Multiverse, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful. In few of our previous tazkirah series, we have covered a few stories of companions, divided into 3 groups, Ashara Mubashara (The Ten Promised with Jannah), Muhajirun and the Ansar. May Allah continue blessing us from our effort in doing these tazkirah sessions. In this session, we will insyaAllah explore the meaning of surah Ar-Rahman and the blessings which come with it.

When it comes to this surah, there are issues surrounding it, such as the cause of revelation, hadiths related to it, and the phrase **فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ** which was repeated 31 times. Shaykh Yasir Qadhi, in one of his lectures on this beautiful surah, mentioned that indeed there is no authentic explanation on why this blessed surah was revealed. However, some ulamas made an attempt on looking at its contents and inferred that when the Musyrikin idolaters for once heard of the name Ar-Rahman, some kind of commotion began. This surah was then revealed. Another narration mentions that this surah is an evidence or testimony that the verses are not at all the words of Rasulullah, as the second verse made an explicit mention that The Ar-Rahman Himself that is Allah taught the surahs and Quran.

Surah Ar-Rahman is surah (chapter) number 55, containing 78 ayats (verses), and is generally divided into 4 components. They are about Allah SWT's blessed creations, punishments and threats, the higher paradise and the lower paradise. It is among the first 20 surahs revealed in Islamic history. There are several hadiths related to this surah, particularly the ones narrated under the authority of Ibn Mas'ud and Jabir Ibn Abdullah. Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud was a great sahabah among the Muhajirin. He was known for his constant presence with Rasulullah SAW. He has a small figure, but a huge interest in the fields of Quranic knowledge.



Tafsir at-Tabari

Author: Muhammad Ibn Jarir al-Tabari

Denomination: Sunni

Born: Tabaristan, Abbasid Caliphate - 839

Died: Baghdad - 923

There is quite a big number of commentaries on exegeses, both from Sunni and non-Sunni. Therefore, there is a possibility for us to listen to interpretations from ulamas or ustadhs who referred to commentaries without mentioning the denominations of the ulama/scholar who provided the commentary on the Quran.

Surah Ar-Rahman, according to him, is the beginning of Mufassal. There was a hadith under the authority of Imam Ahmad which says that the Quran had been divided into four, the ones revealed to Nabi Musa which are among the first 7 long surahs called At-Thiwal, the ones where the contents are given to Nabi Daud (Zabur), Qal Al-Ma'in, the ones where the contents are given to Jesus as, Qal Al-Masani, and finally the ones given specifically to the Prophet SAW. This specific part is called the Mufassal, which, according to Ibn Mas'ud, starts from Surah Ar-Rahman. However, from a different angle, especially the one mentioned by Zaid Ibn Thabit, the Mufassal begins with surah 50, Surah Qaf. Rasulullah SAW, instead of being given Taurat, Zabur, and Injil, he was revealed the At-Thiwal, Al-Ma'in, Al-Masani and Mufassal.

Jabir Ibn Abdullah was a great sahabah among the Ansars. He became popular in the sirah of Rasulullah SAW due to his long dialogue with the Prophet, when Jabir and Rasulullah SAW was riding their camels on their way back from Ghazwah (wars involving Rasulullah SAW). The story was known as Jabir and the Camel and from this story a lot of fiqh ruling was derived, especially concerning business and family affairs. Jabir, for instance, narrated that in one occasion, Rasulullah made a tilawah of this surah from A to Z. The Prophet, among other things, mentioned that when these verses were read to a group of Jinns, they responded to the Prophet whenever the phrase **فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ** was presented to them. However, the humans responded with nothing. Among the responses made by the group of Jinns whenever the phrase was presented was "We do not reject your blessings ya Allah, and the praises go to You." It should be noted that besides human beings, dakwah Islamiyah was also be given by the Prophet to the Jinns community and this unusual dakwah mission will become clear insyaAllah when we discuss the hadith narrated by Ibn Mas'ud below. Ibnu Mas'ud, in one of his recounts mention that there was a period in which Rasulullah went missing in the evening. The companions went high and low in search of him. Only about the fajr time, Rasulullah appeared and when he was asked about his disappearance, he mentioned that he was with the Jinns group giving dakwah. This is to say that surah Ar-Rahman is targeted not only to human beings but to the Jinns as well.

The story of persecution and torture affecting Ibnu Mas'ud during the early period of Islam had always been mentioned by ulamas everytime they discuss this surah. There was a time a need to recite Quran in public became important, hoping some of them could get benefit and rahmah from listening to the Quran. Despite the disapproval from Rasulullah, Ibnu Mas'ud went to recite it in public in surrounding area of Kaabah. Ibnu Mas'ud was a Maula, a category that is discriminated and he could easily expose himself to heavy torture if he does so. As expected, he had been bitterly hit to the point of unconsciousness. The surah which he publicly recited is none other than this

surah, Ar-Rahman. As he regained his consciousness, the next morning he bravely recited the surah again indicating the high level of iman in his heart.



If it is true that many Muslims, especially in the West are leaving Islam and joining other faiths such as in the picture, then the common judgment given to them are apostates, wallahua'lam. In Islam, this happened immediately after the death of Rasulullah SAW, in which Abu Bakar had to spend a lot of time and resources to deal with this group known as ar-Riddah. The ones commonly known are such as Musaylamah al-Kazzab, in which the word "Tukazziban" and similar words also exists in Surah Ar-Rahman 31 times.

Let us now discuss the phrase of **فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ**. The translation is as follows:

"So, which of the favours of your Lord would you deny?"

"Your" in the verse refers to humans and Jinns although some ulama says differently. Some said the "your" here refers to men and women, some said it refers to Muslims and non-Muslims, some said the believers and nonbelievers and so forth. All the verses mentioned before this phrase are about the favours or nikmahs and the first verse mentioned after the phrase specifically describes the creation of mankind and Jinn together, hence, as stated by Shaykh Yasir Qadhi, the right interpretation for the word "your" here is mankind and Jinn.

Before we end today's session, let us discuss the importance of the Quran in our lives. We know that the Quran is the only surviving mukjizat. In those days during the Prophets' time, through mukjizat hissi the Prophets performed miracles to convince their believers. British-Czech philosopher and social anthropologist who died in 1995, Ernest Gellner, was said to have argued to the effect that if religious people can perform miracles, then it would've been easier for non-religious people to be convinced and follow them. This used to happen in the past, when the people

followed their Prophets because of such miracles (mukjizat). The question for us is, don't we still have the mukjizat of Quran? What is our attitude towards the Quran? Do we still read it, understand it and believe it as the surviving mukjizat that will continue to exist until Yaumul Qiyamah? This is the challenge for us and insyaAllah through this family tazkirah on the topic of the blessings of Surah Ar-Rahman we will try to learn from ulama' on what is the meaning of Quran and to use the Quran not only for our conviction of Islam and share it with others, but also bring back the spirit of the Quran as the mukjizat that can convince non-believers. But before that let us start with ourselves first. With that, we end today's session.

Some Important Concepts

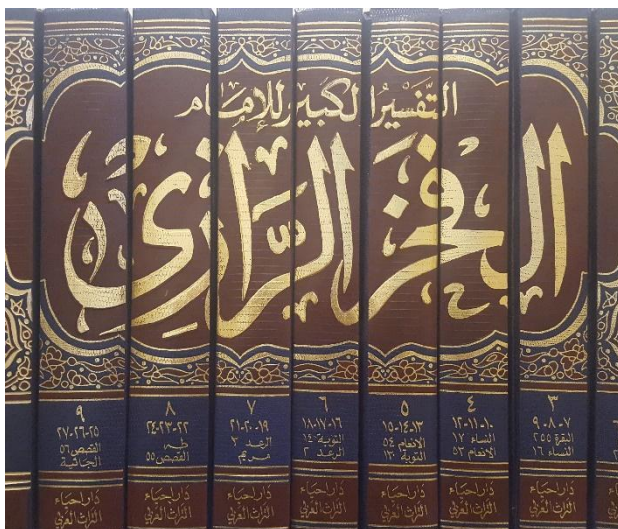
We thank and praise Allah, The Lord of the Universe, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful. May we be guided to the straight path. Aameen. In the previous session, we have discussed on some information's for the possible reasons or causes for the revelation of this 55th Chapter, or Surah Ar-Rahman. We have also stressed on the importance of the Quran as the Surviving Mukjizat. In today's session, we will, InshaAllah, deal with some important concepts mentioned in this surah. One of it is the phrase **فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ**. Other than that, we will discuss the punishments in Hell and rewards in Jannah

To begin with, let us say something about the concept of Al-Kazab, the word which also exists in the phrase, which is repeated 31 times, **فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ**, in the form of "Tukazzibaan". Perhaps, we are familiar with the false prophet, Musailamah al-Kazab, an enemy of Islam who was destroyed by Khalid Ibn al-Walid's infantry, in which, through the spear of Wahsyi who killed Hamzah, the same spear was used to kill Musailamah in battle. According to Shaykh Yasir Qadhi, Tukazzibaan in surah Ar-Rahman means 3 variations of al-Kazab. First, those who totally deny that the blessings of creation are directly from Allah SWT. Second, al-Kazab are those who admit the blessings of Allah but still worship others, objects, ideology of concepts or generally anything else other than Allah SWT. The third type means those who admit he/she is a result of blessings from Allah, but his/her heart still thinks about their own effort, money and power as a source of benefit and blessings that they have acquired in this world by themselves. There is a similar remark in verse 55 of Surah An-Najm which relates to the phrase **فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ** as shown below:

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكَ تَتَمَارَى

55. Then which of the favors of your Lord do you doubt?

InshaAllah, we will discuss more in this similar verse later on in the next session.



Tafsir al-Kabir

Author: Fakhruddin ar-Razi

Denomination: Sunni

Born: Ray, Iran - 1150

Died: Herat, Afghanistan - 1210

For the record, it should be mentioned here that surah Ar-Rahman is among the surahs which the beauty of the language is unexplainable, and in the attempts of explaining it, scholars differ in their interpretations of its contents. Hence, in this tazkirah session on the blessings of surah Ar-Rahman, we will insert as many information and pictures on the Quranic Exegesis which have influenced Muslims over the span of nearly 1400 years, beginning with the earliest one by at-Tabari (as we have already inserted in the first session), to the latest one, by Asy-Sya'rawi. Another aspect of surah Ar-Rahman which is worth noting is about its duality.

It is not only talking about Allah and His creations but among the creations the verses indicate pairs such as man and jin, sun and moon, paradise and hellfire, high paradise and low paradise and many others. In addition to the points, a few verses, especially verses 2 (Allah taught the Quran) and 3 (Allah created the human beings), according to Shaykh Yasir Qadhi was referred to by the great Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal's generation to relinquish the Mu'tazila movement who believed in the createdness of the verses in Al-Quran. The fact that Allah has told us that He taught the Quran first prior to creating man is evidentiary of its uncreatedness.

It is Allah that taught mankind to know something and to obtain the ability of speech referring to the word Bayan in verse 4. This means that human beings are special, unlike other creations such as animals. Ulama' tells us that through such ability humans can understand on what is permissible and what is impermissible. Our metacognitive ability tells us that only human beings can ask questions such as why I think the way I think and why should I read this book and not that book etc (we will discuss some of these issues in the next session, Insyallah). Shaykh Yasir Qadhi when mentioning about the 31 times the phrase **فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ** is being repeated, narrated a piece of work done by an ulama' of the last century, Siddiq Hassan Khan (although Shaykh Siddiq Hassan Khan may be deemed controversial by some groups, we hope that the knowledge quoted by Shaykh Yasir Qadhi may bring us benefit, insyallah).

According to him the repeated phrases can be divided into 4 groups, the first (8) is about the blessings of the creations, the second (7) about the punishments, the remaining groups of 8 and another 8 are about the types of paradises.



Surah Ar-Rahman is about Allah SWT's infinite blessings. However, some people, including the muslims, question why is it that in such surah mentioning about Allah SWT's blessings that the image of punishments and hellfire is being described? According to Ustadh Nouman Ali Khan, Allah SWT mentions the punishment of fire in words in order to make us afraid of hell and fear Allah SWT. With such a threat, people will think rationally to either do good or bad. This is a great blessing, because the threat had been mentioned in advance, therefore the more accurate and real the terrifying punishments are described, the better.

Continuing on the discussion of Siddiq Hassan Khan above, whoever is sincere with their God-fearing, will get all the 3 components of rewards, the first, third and fourth groups of 8's, hence escaping the 7 remaining phrases under the group of threats and punishments. It is equally important to discuss here that Ibn Mas'ud mentioned that the Prophet SAW recited surah Ar-Rahman and An-Najm quite regularly during his Tahajjud prayers and we should try to emulate this. Some ulamas discussed the beauty of the surah and they in fact mentioned that this surah is the decoration of the Quran. It is interesting to note that the name Ar-Rahman is also quite frequently mentioned in other surahs such as surah Maryam, and the word Ar-Rahman exists more than 500 times. The names Allah and Ar-Rahman are ubiquitous in the Quran and more often than not, the two names are mentioned independently. Wallahua'lam.

There are two important points to be discussed before we end this session, concerning some issues, especially in the west about the contents of Surah Ar-Rahman. While these issues may not seem obvious in our society, but in the west, it has been openly debated. We hope through the explanations of ulamas and scholars such as Shaykh Yasir Qadhi, Ustadh Nouman Ali Khan and others, they will enlighten us more on this issue, insyaAllah. The first is about the descriptions of paradise and the fact that there exists the women (Houri) in paradise. We will discuss this issue, Insyallah in our following sessions, along with the fact that there are certain groups who began to question the rewards in paradise, which, according to them is only relevant for the Arabian society during the 7th century. The reward concerning women in Jannah has made some muslims and non-muslims, especially the women to begin to question the moral value the Quran is teaching its believers. May Allah SWT avoid us from plunging towards the groups that are increasingly skeptical about the authenticity of the Quran. May Allah SWT give us strength to read and memorize the surah and get benefits and blessings through it, Aameen. With that we end today's session.

a. **Knowledge, Human and Eloquence (1-4)**

We are beginning to discuss the contents of Surah Ar-Rahman by looking at the meanings from verse to verse. For this session we shall give focus on the first four verses of Surah Ar-Rahman, which is:

الرَّحْمَنُ - عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ - خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ - عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ

The meaning is as follows:-

الرَّحْمَنُ

[1] *The Most Merciful*

عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

[2] *Taught the Qur'an,*

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ

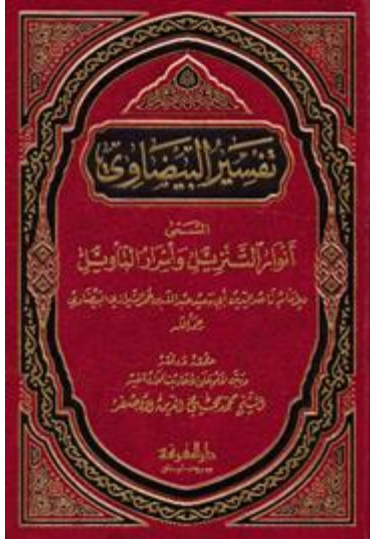
[3] *Created man,*

عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ

[4] *[And] taught him eloquence.*

InshaAllah we will slowly peel the meanings of the word, starting from the first verse, Ar-Rahman, *The Most Merciful*. Perhaps the word Merciful has been commonly associated with Ar-Rahman. However, according to Ustadz Nouman Ali Khan, there is a problem with using the term merciful, because the default position of the word merciful implies that someone must commit a mistake or crime and someone with the authority would show his mercy and pardon the person. The word Ar-Rahman would suit better as the Most Gracious. That is to say whether human beings or Jinn commit sins or otherwise, Allah SWT's mercy is beyond the creation of actions or words. In fact, Shaykh Yasir Qadhi mentions a few hadiths including, "There are 100 portions of Allah SWT's graciousness (of course hypothetically). 1% of it is the rahmah that Allah SWT gave to this world. The remaining 99% is in the world after.

In fact, the word Ar-Rahman as many of us know is Allah SWT's blessings to all of his creations, regardless of believers or non-believers, Muslim or kafir. It is said that Ibn Qayyim, when mentioning the bountiful of the word Ar-Rahman, would refer to Arrahmanu ala al-arsyistawa. The concept that Ar-Rahman, the person who owns the throne of Allah. In which the throne of Allah SWT is mentioned as the heaviest creation of Allah SWT. The word Ar-Rahman is mentioned more than 500 times in the Quran, and it is said that knowing Allah SWT is part of the Iman while the remaining is worshipping him.



Anwar al-Tanzil wa-Asrar al-Ta'wil/Tafsir al-Baydawi

Author: ibn 'Umar al-Baydawi

Denomination: Sunni

Born: Fars

Died: Tabriz ~ 1286

The status for those who studied the beautiful names of Allah SWT (Asmaul Husna) is obviously high. Those who study in the medical field is said to be higher than those who studied in the field of arts. What is then said about those who study the Asmaul Husna? One common analogy to explain about Ar-Rahman is to relate it to pregnant mothers, in which whatever situation, position or behavior of the fetus, the mother would always show her rahmah towards the fetus. The fetus would continue to obtain benefit even when the mother is in deep sleep, Wallahua'lam. Those with no hope of Allah SWT's rahmah are considered to be rejecting the blessing of Allah SWT, Wallahua'lam.

It is through the blessings and graciousness of Allah SWT, he has taught us the Quran (Allamahul Quran). The Quran as we know, comprises of 6236 verses, even though some groups would say the total is 6666, Wallahua'lam. What is important for us is to steer clear of the issue of createdness or uncreatedness of the Quran. When Allah SWT taught us the Quran, definitely it was taught in His Knowledge. Therefore, Quran is the Knowledge of Allah, therefore it can never be makhluk (createdness). We have mentioned in our previous session how Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal had given his life to defend the uncreatedness concept of Quran, which he had to struggle against the movement called Mu'tazilah, which some of them even said that it is just the word of Rasulullah SAW. It should be noted that majority of sunni, if not all, believe that the knowledge of the Quran is non-makhluk. The other group, besides the muktazilah, nearly all range of syiah reject the concept of the uncreatedness of the Quran. Perhaps it is of benefit to us to look at the debate among Christians on the concept of Jesus being either makhluk or god (uncreatedness). Simply because it bears close resemblance with the concept of Quran. Jesus is said to be holy, therefore he cannot be makhluk, very similar to what we say of the Quran.

However, even though we believe that the Quran is holy, because it is our knowledge, never we worship the Quran, as we give high respect to it. This is perhaps the difference between the holiness

of Jesus and the Quran. Now we turn our discussion on the concept of Halaqal Insan. We shall also slightly discuss the jinn in this section. Afterall, Surah Ar-Rahman was revealed targeting these two groups. The Quran explains the nature of human beings such as in Surah at-Tin, verse 4: -

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَن تَقْوِيمٍ

We have certainly created man in the best of stature;

In other verses Allah SWT also mentions that men and women are created in a stressed stage, such as in Surah Al-Balad, verse 4:-

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ

We have certainly created man into hardship.

Of course, there are many surah and hadith in the Quran mentioning the nature of humans, but we also know that Allah SWT has blown a soul into our body, as well as blessing us with high intellectuality, as compared to animals and other creations. As we are going to continue to discuss in the next session, there are specific verses in the Quran mentioning the materials used to create the humans, and the materials used to create the Jinn. Let us now look at some of the information pertaining to the Jinn as mentioned in the Quran. The Jinn were created from smokeless fire. It has some elements of Aql, or intellect.



We may have heard of some stories about the Jinn, such as the Genie in the bottle and others. Whether or not the story is true is none of our concern, but the fact that Surah Ar-Rahman tells us about the Jinn should convince us of their existence. In fact, it is in Surah Ar-Rahman that tells us that the Jinn were created from smokeless fire.

We also know from Surah Ar-Rahman, as mentioned by Shaykh Yasir Qadhi as having components of sexual desire. The story of angels and Jinn who were asked to bow down to the

prophet Adam AS in a story of first creation had been mentioned many times in the Quran. Surah Al-Baqarah verse 34 mentions how while the angels bowed down with obedience, the Iblis refused.

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ

[34] And [mention] when We said to the angels, "Prostrate before Adam"; so, they prostrated, except for Iblees. He refused and was arrogant and became of the disbelievers.

In Surah Al-Kahfi, Allah SWT mentions that the Iblis is from the species of Jinn and it has its own generation:-

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ الْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِ ۗ أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِي وَهُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ ۗ بِئْسَ لِلظَّالِمِينَ بَدَلًا

50. And [mention] when We said to the angels, "Prostrate to Adam," and they prostrated, except for Iblees. He was of the jinn and departed from the command of his Lord. Then will you take him and his descendants as allies other than Me while they are enemies to you? Wretched it is for the wrongdoers as an exchange.

InshaAllah we know a little of the nature of Jinn from the Quran, so we know how to act on ourselves and how to react when having to confront the Jinn, Wallahua'lam. The last part of today's tazkirah session is about Allah SWT teaching us the eloquence of speech. Let us first look at the difference between other species. Of course, animals have brains and we know that the Jinn besides having sexual desire also has the ability to decide whether or not to bow down. What made the humans special is that the brain that they have are extraordinarily powerful and when Allah SWT said that eloquence was taught to us, at least during the first part of Surah Ar-Rahman, Allah SWT mentions only the creation of humans and teaching us the eloquence of speech. Therefore, in all creations, only mankind is able to not only speak, with language, humans are able to share and improve their knowledge.

Astoundingly, human beings have knowledge as to why they have the knowledge. Humans can ask meta-collective questions such as why they believe the things they believe. Or of similar questions. It should be noted that not only the arabic language is the only taught language by Allah SWT, according to Shaykh Yasir Qadhi and Ustadh Nouman Ali Khan, Surah Ar-Rahman is proof that all forms of speech, language or communication are taught by Allah SWT. Wallahua'lam. One important point is that in this first part of Surah Ar-Rahman, not only did Allah SWT tells us that He taught the Quran, Allah SWT also taught us the eloquence of speech. According to Shaykh Yasir Qadhi, there is a close relation between these two, therefore humans should optimize or master their knowledge to further understand the Knowledge of Allah, that is the Quran. May Allah SWT give us taufiq and hidayah and forgive us for the sins and mistakes we have committed. With that we end today's session.

b. The Blessings of Space and Land (5-16)

May Allah SWT continue to endow us with the strength and knowledge to insyaAllah do good to this world while bringing benefits to ourselves in the Hereafter, Amin. We are now moving to the fourth session of our Tazkirah of Surah Ar-Rahman. InshaAllah we will be discussing the Blessings of Allah SWT, especially his creations that exists in space and land. In the next session we will discuss his blessings in the ocean, InshaAllah. Surah Ar-Rahman in many ways is similar to Surah Yasin.

First, it deals with the stubborn Musyrikun who refuse to believe of the coming Resurrection day, Yaumul Qiyamah. It also the fact that it is Allah SWT created everything and he gives blessings to His creations. Second, in both Surahs Allah SWT mentions about the signs of his rahmah and power by describing what exists in space land and ocean. For instance, verses 33-36 of Surah Yasin clearly highlights the sign of Allah's power and mercy of the trees and other creations:

وَآيَةٌ لَهُمُ الْأَرْضُ الْمَيِّتَةُ أَحْيَيْنَاهَا وَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهَا حَبًّا فَمِنْهُ يَأْكُلُونَ

[33] *And a sign for them is the dead earth. We have brought it to life and brought forth from it grain, and from it they eat.*

وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا جَنَّاتٍ مِنْ نَخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ وَفَجَّرْنَا فِيهَا مِنَ الْعُيُونِ

[34] *And We placed therein gardens of palm trees and grapevines and caused to burst forth therefrom some springs -*

لِيَأْكُلُوا مِنْ ثَمَرِهِ وَمَا عَمِلَتْهُ أَيْدِيهِمْ أَفَلَا يَشْكُرُونَ

[35] *That they may eat of His fruit. And their hands have not produced it, so will they not be grateful?*

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا مِمَّا تُنْبِتُ الْأَرْضُ وَمِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمِمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

[36] *Exalted is He who created all pairs - from what the earth grows and from themselves and from that which they do not know.*

However, the difference between these two verses lies on the fact that Surah Ar-Rahman not only deals with human beings but also with the Jinn. The level of stubbornness and disgruntled of these two are very high that Allah mentions the verse رَبِّكُمَا تُكذِّبَان up to 31 times (according to some interpretations). Another peculiarity of Surah Ar-Rahman is, given its diverse and deep meanings, scholars offer different interpretations. InshaAllah in today's session we will look at how these different interpretations apply to explain verse 5-16. Let us look at verses containing existence in space, which is from verse 5-7.

الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ بِحُسْبَانٍ

[5] *The sun and the moon [move] by precise calculation,*

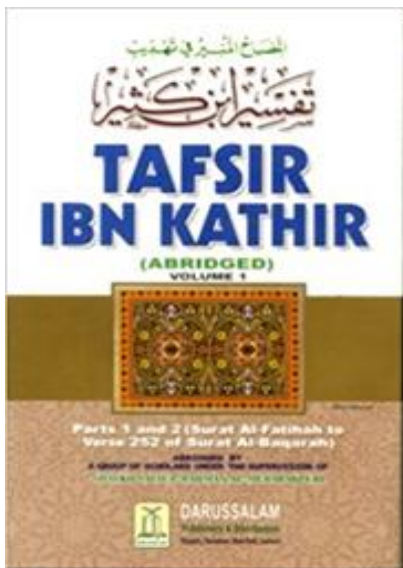
وَالنَّجْمُ وَالشَّجَرُ يَسْجُدَانِ

[6] *And the stars and trees prostrate.*

وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ

[7] *And the heaven He raised and imposed the balance*

There are interpretations that gives a direct meaning which is quite clear, except with some added information. For instance, when the sun and moon move by precise calculation, it is a blessing from Allah SWT, because from it we can understand about time and space and create our own calendar. Even the stars and trees follow what Allah SWT instructed them to do so that we can obtain benefits from them. Can we imagine if the stars and trees were to not follow its nature (prostrate with Allah's order)? The world would be chaotic.



Tafsir Ibn Kathir

Author: Ismail ibn Kathir

Denomination: Sunni

Born: Bosra, Mamluk Sultanate - 1300

Died: Damascus, Mamluk Sultanate - 1373

However, other interpretations of the word Najm as a different type of tree. Whatever the case, both prostrate to Allah SWT and brings benefit to mankind. Allah SWT also mentions that He has raised the sky in balance, hence we can get benefit from it as well. Another different interpretation that quite differs sharply from the above mentions the verse in the context of resurrection. For instance, the word Husban in verse 5 was interpreted as a time of destruction. This is because the word also means to destroy in Arabic language. For instance, in Surah Al-Kahfi, verse 40 (referred as calamity):

فَعَسَىٰ رَبِّي أَن يُؤْتِيَنِي خَيْرًا مِّنْ جَنَّتِكَ وَيُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهَا حُسْبَانًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَتُصْبِحَ صَعِيدًا زَلَقًا

[40] *It may be that my Lord will give me [something] better than your garden and will send upon it a calamity from the sky, and it will become a smooth, dusty ground,*

The word Hasiban (Husband) in the second part of the man with the two gardens. According to this interpretation, Allah SWT has already won those who refuse to believe on Yaumul Qiyamah that the sun and the moon is going to be destroyed and the stars and trees are going to fall. (Sujud or prostrate). Wallahua'lam. Now we move to the next verse after Allah SWT mentions that he has raised the sky in balance, Allah SWT orders his creation, the humans in particular, to keep things in balance in this world. Allah SWT also asks us to do justice. Ustadz Nouman Ali Khan in this context mentions how important it is to be balanced and just in a family setting, workplace, etc. The following is the verse:-

أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ

[8] *That you do not transgress within the balance.*

وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ

[9] *And establish weight in justice and do not make deficient the balance.*

After Allah SWT asks the human beings and in other narrations also the Jinn, to keep balance and do justice, Allah SWT continues by describing the blessings of the Earth. According to Shaykh Yasir Qadhi, we will find in the Quran of Allah SWT mentioning date farms a lot. It should be understood that date trees are a symbol of our religion and therefore we should take the idea of dates as the food of jannah.



Phoenix dactylifera, more commonly known as date or date palms should be seen by muslims unlike the other trees. In the Quran, there are countless mentioning of the date tree and according to Shaykh Yasir Qadhi, it is a symbol of our religion of Islam and we should remind ourselves every time we were to hear of or see the tree, know that it is the tree is similar to that as the ones in paradise, wallahua'lam.

The following is the verses of the blessings on Earth.

وَالْأَرْضَ وَضَعَهَا لِلْأَنَامِ

[10] *And the earth He laid [out] for the creatures.*

فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَالنَّخْلُ ذَاتُ الْأَكْمَامِ

[11] *Therein is fruit and palm trees having sheaths [of dates]*

وَالْحَبُّ ذُو الْعَصْفِ وَالرَّيْحَانُ

[12] *And grain having husks and scented plants.*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[13] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

If you noticed, this is the first time Allah SWT mentions the phrase *فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ*. We have discussed how the scholars interpret the meaning of this verse in our previous session. Today we only highlight how in other Surahs Allah SWT also use different verses but with similar effect. For example, verse 55 of Surah An-Najm:

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكَ تَتَمَارَى

55. *Then which of the favors of your Lord do you doubt?*

Before we end today's session, let us look at the last part of verses in today's session concerning the material that Allah SWT used to create humans and Jinn. After all, these verses concern the issue of rewards and punishments given to humans and Jinn. The verses are as below:

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ كَالْفَخَّارِ

[14] *He created man from clay like [that of] pottery.*

وَخَلَقَ الْجَانَّ مِنْ مَّارِجٍ مِنْ نَارٍ

[15] *And He created the jinn from a smokeless flame of fire.*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[16] So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?

The verses are very clear and straightforward, especially on the materials of Jinn. However, we may notice in some verses where Allah SWT mentions that men are created from Turab, water etc. Shaykh Yasir Qadhi when explaining this, refer to a hadith by Imam Bukhari which explains the creation of human being, to come from a combination of many things. Surah Ar-Rahman mentions the sub-component of the material used, especially during the end-stage of forming the physical body of humans, Wallahua'lam.

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), the true and truly inspired said, "(The matter of the Creation of) a human being is put together in the womb of the mother in forty days, and then he becomes a clot of thick blood for a similar period, and then a piece of flesh for a similar period.

With that we end today's session.

c. The Blessings of the Ocean (17-30)

Thanks, and praises to Allah, Master of the Universe, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful, Owner of the Day of Reckoning. We are entering the next component of surah Ar-Rahman, discussing about the blessings of the ocean. In our previous sessions, we have discussed on Allah's blessing of His creations on space and land, which we ended up discussing on the creation of human beings and the genies.

Let us first mention a few important points before plunging into this topic. First, who is the direct target of audience for this revelation besides the Muslims? Majority of the ulamas agree that surah Ar-Rahman is a Makkiyah surah, hence the important audience of these verses is the Musyrikun. Besides that, the Djinn community is also part of the larger audience of this surah. Second, the phrase *فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ* is mentioned multiple times (31) explaining on the fact of how stubborn or disgruntled the audiences are, especially on acknowledging the blessings of Allah's creations (in space, land or the ocean). Another equally important thing is on their rejection on the coming of the Resurrection Day (Yaumul Kiamah). Third, there are, obviously, different interpretations of the surah, partly because of its meaning is so deep (deeper than the deepest ocean). Hence, it is not a strange thing if different scholars or ustadhs may explain the meaning differently. For instance, those who use the earlier commentary of Quranic exegesis by at-Tabari and Fakhruddin Razi may have different information of interpretation from those who used the latest tafseer, such as by Imam al-Alusi, Rasyid Ridha and not to mention those contemporary ones like asy-Syahrawi.

Therefore, InshaAllah, as we discuss today's session, we will try as much as we can, with Allah's permission, to mention the different meanings as mentioned by Shaykh Yasir Qadhi and Ustad Nouman Ali Khan. Let us start the first verse for today's session, and, as usual, we will include the phrase *فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ* together as we discuss each verse. Allah mentions that he is the Rabb of the two easts and wests, as follows:

رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ وَرَبُّ الْمَغْرِبَيْنِ

[17] *[He is] Lord of the two sunrises and Lord of the two sunsets.*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[18] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

Specifically, on this verse, there are at least 3 different interpretations, all of them valid, following the rules of Arabic. One interpretation said that there are different points of sunrise and sunset, at different times in a year, and the verse refers to those two ends during the sunrise and the other two points of sunset during the year. Other interpretations mention that the duality refers to the world of human beings and Djinn, and each one of them have different ideas of active time and

resting time. Day time is the active time for the human beings but resting time of the Djinns, vice versa. This interpretation become strong when the previous sentence on the creation of human beings and Djinns were referred. The third interpretation discusses on the concept of duality itself, which can not only mean two, but even many. Hence, the verse, according to this interpretation, refers to the Rabbul Alamin, all points of direction. Wallahua'lam.



Tafsir al-Manar

Author: Rashid Rida

Denomination: Salafi

Born: Ottoman Syria, Ottoman Empire - 1865

Died: Cairo, Egypt - 1935

Allah SWT, in the following verses mention about the blessings of the ocean by first asking his creation to observe the phenomenon which happens in the ocean. Not only do the seas merge but can also be separated itself. Of course, this is quite complex. Let us have a look at the verses itself:

مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيَانِ

[19] *He released the two seas, meeting [side by side];*

بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَا يَبْغِيَانِ

[20] *Between them is a barrier [so] neither of them transgresses.*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[21] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

One interpretation of the verses, especially according to Shaykh Yasir Qadhi, among the classic scholars, refer to the Arab land itself, in which the water in the red sea is separated by the land from merging with the water in the Persian gulf. This interpretation became less popular and some interpretations refer to the separation of saltwater and freshwater from merging. Shaykh Yasir Qadhi informed the Muslims to be cautious when using such interpretations because saltwater and freshwater definitely merge when we put together, and the phenomenon of Halocline is not the general rule.



In Surah Ar-Rahman verse 20, Allah SWT mentions the separations of two bodies of water. Some scholars try to understand the sentence by relating it to scientific logic by saying that it is a separation between the sea and fresh water, which would produce a phenomenon known as hallucination. However, such interpretations must be taken with great caution, simply because according to Shaykh Yasir Qadhi, not only it is not the general rule for haloclines to happen when two different waters meet, but also the fact that the Quran was revealed not for scientific inquiries, but rather to warn people on the importance and existence of Judgement Day. wallahua'lam.

Ustadh Nouman Ali Khan refers to interpretations which stick to the context of the verses, which is the ocean of the Djinn and human beings being separated and there is no way they can merge even if you put them together. Wallahua'lam. The following few verses are specifically about some of the blessings of the ocean, including the freshwater area to some interpretation. It discusses about the blessings of Allah SWT from the lowest point of the depths of the earth to the surface of the water. The deepest point which humans can get pearls and the highest point where ships are used. The verses are as follow:-

يُخْرِجُ مِنْهُمَا اللُّؤْلُؤَ وَالْمَرْجَانَ

[22] From both of them emerge pearl and coral.

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[23] So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?

وَلَهُ الْجَوَارِ الْمُنشَآتُ فِي الْبَحْرِ كَالْأَعْلَامِ

[24] And to Him belong the ships [with sails] elevated in the sea like mountains.

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[25] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

This is a blessing of Allah SWT, which even below the lowest and above the highest points people can still obtain resources and benefit. When Allah SWT finishes explaining the benefits from the land and ocean, Allah SWT brings our attention to the main aim of the verses, that is to tell us that this world will soon be destroyed, and we will be resurrected. All creations depend on Allah SWT and Allah SWT knows every detail that happens in this world. The following few verses mentions the details:

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ

[26] *Everyone upon the earth will perish,*

وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

[27] *And there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor.*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[28] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

يَسْأَلُهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ

[29] *Whoever is within the heavens and earth asks Him; every day He is bringing about a matter.*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[30] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

Perhaps it is important for us to discuss a few meanings of the verse “And there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor/Nobility.” Ustadz Nouman Ali Khan when mentioning this verse refers to the atheists, who claims that the concept of the selfish god to ask humans to praise and worship him. The verse clearly mentions that even though everything is destroyed, the owner of Majesty and Nobility, Allah SWT remains eternal. That is to say, if we accept that we are slaves, not only do we rely everything on our master, but we have no rights to say anything. Definitely our master knows what he is doing, and he knows who should be rewarded or punished. The next component of Surah Ar-Rahman discusses about punishments and rewards which we will insyaAllah discuss in our next tazkirah session. With that we end today’s discussion from verse 17-30 and may Allah SWT bless us.

d. The Terrifying Image of Judgement Day (31-45)

We thank Allah SWT for his knowledge. May we be guided towards the straight path and may we don't become among those who are arrogant, but rather among those who are humble, Amin. InsyaAllah, we will continue our discussion session on some important lessons of Surah Ar-Rahman. In today's session, we will be directing our focus to verses 31-45, InsyaAllah. A few things concerning the previous session is that, moving to the last part, we were told by Allah SWT that every living thing will perish. This is a clear indication that Allah SWT is informing us about the coming Judgement Day.

The first sentence of today's session is specific towards the two groups, human beings and jinn, in which the whole of Surah Ar-Rahman is basically revealed for them. After Allah SWT mentions His Rahmah (Graciousness) by demonstrating everything that he created in the space, land and sea and later on tells us that everything will be destroyed, Allah now singles out these two groups. The first two verses are as below:-

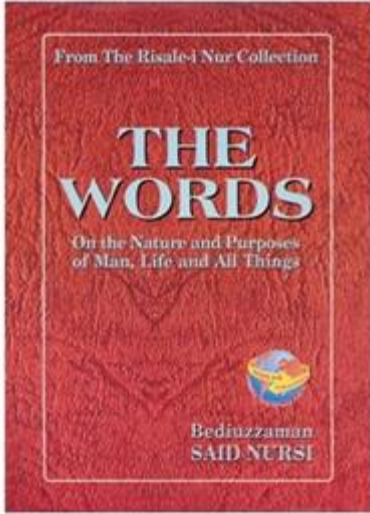
سَنَفْرُغُ لَكُمْ أَيَّةَ التَّقْلَانِ

[31] *We will attend to you, O prominent beings.*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[32] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

In these verses, the prominent beings refer to the humans and jinn, to which Allah SWT mentions only specifically once in an earlier verse on the materials used to create them. The human generally from clay whereas the jinn from smokeless fire. According to Shaykh Yasir Qadhi, Ibnu Abbas mentions about the terrifying moment that these two creations should be terrified of when these two verses are revealed to them. This is because these verses discuss about these two groups, not only challenging them but also details the punishments that they will face during Judgment Day. The word prominent in Arab, "*Takhalan*", basically refers to heavy and loaded items placed on the camel. Allah SWT refers human beings and jinn as loaded items in this world, while some ulama' define that it is because of their value while others define as the degree of sin that these two groups might have committed in this world, Wallahua'lam. Surah Ar-Rahman has been interpreted with many meanings. According to Shaykh Yasir Qadhi and Ustadz Nouman Ali Khan, insyaAllah all the meanings are valid. After all, they are within the allowable border of interpretation of arabic language.



Risale-I Nur

Author: Said Nursi

Denomination: Sunni

Born: Bitlis Vilayet, Ottoman Empire -1877

Died: Urfa, Turkey -1960

For instance, we will find that the next two verses have been interpreted with many ways and the verses are as follows:-

يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ تَنْفُذُوا مِنْ أَقْطَارِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ فَانْفُذُوا ۚ لَا تَنْفُذُونَ
إِلَّا بِسُلْطَانٍ □

[33] O company of jinn and mankind, if you are able to pass beyond the regions of the heavens and the earth, then pass. You will not pass except by authority [from Allah].

□ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ □

[34] So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?

Let us discuss what is commonly understood, based on the above verses (33-34). The first interpretation states that Allah SWT challenges the jinn and mankind to travel as far as they can, beyond the fair skies or the depths of the Earth. To be sure, no jinn or human is able to do it, unless with strength and will of Allah SWT. According to this interpretation, there are humans and jinn that can travel beyond space. Not only can the jinn travel beyond space, the jinn's power was only limited to certain places beginning from the birth of Rasulallah SAW. Definitely, Rasulallah SAW had traveled beyond space. For example, during Isra' Mi'raj. The so called sufist groups had different interpretations.

According to Shaykh Abu Bakr Sirajuddin, this verse states that there is human being that can travel far beyond. Sufists that have performed certain practice and meditation has potential to make such travels to go beyond space. However, based on Ustadz Nouman Ali Khan's reading, he provides a more different interpretation. According to him, verses 35-41 asks specifically on Judgement Day. During Judgement Day, when all the Jinn and Humans are gathered, they will be put in a place monitored by a thousand angels and Allah SWT will challenge the jinn and humans

at that point. This will be the point where all the jinn and humans will be scared by the threat of Allah SWT. If a father were to say to his son, after knowing that his son can no longer do anything, probably because of a broken leg after stubbornly refusing to listen to his father's advice and broke his leg during football. The father would say, now go whichever place you want. This goes to say that the father was certain that there is nothing that the child can do but obey.

According to Nouman Ali Khan, the verse basically refers to this case, where in Yaumul Mahsyar, when the Jinn and humans are threatened with harsh punishments due to their sins and they know that they can do nothing other than be quiet and obedient, this verse will be used as a challenge for them to go wherever they want. Its next following verse, **فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ** also changes its rhetorical meaning. In previous sessions, the meaning of an ayat was to tell the Humans and Jinn to reflect and ponder on the favours given to them. But for this specific section on Yaumul Kiyamah, the sentence carries a more threatening element towards the Jinn and humans. Notice that Allah SWT also mentions the Jinn first before the human beings, while in previous sessions Allah SWT would mention the humans before the jinn.

According to ulama', this was to show that if it were something related to threats and hellfire, the human beings were better than the jinn, and the jinn would be the first to be under trial, Wallahua'lam. When everyone is gathered at Yaumul Mahsyar, Allah SWT, after challenging the jinn and humans, will tell the angels to bring flames of fire and smoke to the gathering, until none of them can escape from their sins. This fairly explains just how terrifying that moment would be, as already mentioned by Ibnu Abbas on the first part of this Yaumul Kiyamah verse. The following verses explains how they are brought to them:-

يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا شَوْاظٌ مِّنْ نَّارٍ وَنُحَاسٌ فَلَا تَنْتَصِرَانِ

[35] There will be sent upon you a flame of fire and smoke, and you will not defend yourselves.

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[36] So which of the favours of your Lord would you deny?

Allah SWT after telling us of the terrors of Yaumul Kiyamah, continues to describe how the skies will open with red like the colors of pried open animal skins, while others mentioning it to look like the colors of rose-colored oil. There are also narrations telling us that the sky would reflect what is happening on the Earth. We can see now that the sky is blue, reflecting the colours of the ocean. The sky would be read to show just how bloodied the event would be, and the sky will turn red to reflect their sins, Wallahua'lam. Not only that, Allah SWT mentions that neither the sins of the human beings or the jinn would be asked on that day, and the following is the verse mentioning the event:-

فَإِذَا انشَقَّتِ السَّمَاءُ فَكَانَتْ وَرْدَةً كَالدِّهَانِ

[37] And when the heaven is split open and becomes rose-colored like oil –

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[38] So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny? –

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يُسْأَلُ عَنْ ذَنْبِهِ إِنْسٌ وَلَا جَانٌ

[39] Then on that Day none will be asked about his sin among men or jinn.

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[40] So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?

It is a strange thing that the above verses mentioned that no humans or jinn would be asked of their sins. The ulama' has also interpreted this case variously as well. Some states that it would be obvious that the sins they had done would be prominently seen on their scared, shivering faces. There would be no need of asking, for their faces and gazes would show just how visible their sins were because they are all aware of the sins that they had done. Other interpretations state that their sins would not be asked, because their body parts would speak of the sins they had committed. Their hands, legs and other parts of their body would speak of their sins.



We speak a lot, generally to tell truths and we each time we speak we hope to speak no lie. However, during Judgement Day, not only is the mouth a chatterbox (known as mulut murai in Malay), but if it were to be kept shut, and the body would confess of our sins we have committed. The legs will tell Allah SWT where we bring ourselves to, astaghfirullahalazim.

Allah SWT tells us of the terrifying moments during Judgement Day and how the jinn and humans were punished. The image of punishment is so grueling and scary, and this is only for the Mujrimun, those who committed sins or criminals. The following are the verses:-

يُعْرَفُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ بِسِيمَاهُمْ فَيُؤْخَذُ بِالنَّوَاصِي وَالْأَقْدَامِ

[41] *The criminals will be known by their marks, and they will be seized by the forelocks and the feet.*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[42] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

هَذِهِ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِي يُكَذِّبُ بِهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ

[43] *This is Hell, which the criminals deny.*

يَطُوفُونَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ حَمِيمٍ آتٍ

[44] *They will go around between it and scalding water, heated [to the utmost degree].*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[45] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

Shaykh Yasir Qadhi and Ustadz Nouman Ali Khan when commenting this ayat, explains to us that not only it is terrifying during the situation of punishment, but also mentions us on the benefits in Surah Ar-Rahman. Before we discuss about the latter, we shall discuss the punishments dealt to the criminals or sin-committers. First, their feet and their head would be seized, the way animals are captured before they are to be brought to the flames of Hell. Allah SWT tells us that Hellfire is even worse. According to Ustadz Nouman Ali Khan, they will surround a hot body of water, and when they feel themselves hot due to the fires, they would jump into the water and they would realize that the boiling waters are as hot and terrible as the water. They would run back to the fires, where they would think that the waters would again save them and jump back into the water. This cycle would repeat, and it shows one of many forms of horrendous punishments in Hellfire. We might have heard that not only the non-Muslims, but even the Muslims of today say that why would Allah SWT, The Most Merciful and Most Gracious create such horrible punishments.

In fact, some would even quote Surah Ar-Rahman, saying just how Allah SWT would tell us how horrible the punishments are. According to Ustadz Nouman Ali Khan, the most terrifying graphic image of the horrors of Hellfire is in Surah Ar-Rahman. To be sure, everything that Allah SWT does has its reasons. And we as slaves should not question them. But there are explanations by ulama' pertaining this issue. First, In Surah Ar-Rahman, Allah SWT mentions the terrifying

punishments of Hellfire in the form of words. The information is given in advance as a form of warning and this is considered as great rahmah to the humans and jinn. By knowing of the consequences, they would do good deeds and avoid evil actions. In fact, the more gruesome the imagery the better because only then can we make proper and serious preparation. This is what makes Surah Ar-Rahman great and all the details of the Hellfire is obviously a form of rahmah to His creations. InsyaAllah we will know more in detail in the next section of Surah Ar-Rahman on the rewards of Jannah. We can also learn that the worst image of Hellfire mentioned in Surah Ar-Rahman is just perfect, considering Allah SWT explains the rewards of Jannah after. With that, we end our session. May Allah SWT forgive us of our many sins. To be sure we have done a lot of mistakes. Again, May Allah SWT forgive our sins.

e. The First Paradise: The Meaning of Jannah (46-61)

May Allah SWT continues to give us taufiq and hidayah so that we can be a good Muslim and Mukminin. May Allah SWT reward us with Jannah (paradise) and save us from the punishments of Hellfire, Amin. We are moving to the next part of Surah Ar-Rahman from verses 46-61, discussing on the Rewards of Paradise. While it is common for Allah SWT to describe Jahanam (hellfire), the people who entered Hellfire are discussed in one general rule. However, when there are descriptions of paradise, Allah SWT mentions them in more than one group, generally in two groups.

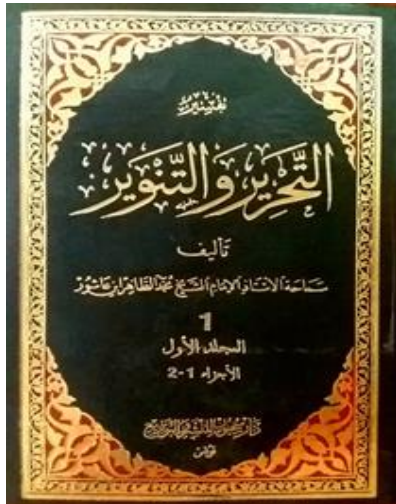
In Surah Ar-Rahman verses 46-61, there are explanations of a type of paradise and in ayat 62-78 another type of paradise is explained. Surah al-Waqiah also mentions of the paradise rewarded to two groups, As-Sabiqun (the winning race) and Ashabul Yamin (The Right sahabas) and the other group will be punished in Hellfire, they are the Ashabul Shimal (The People of the Left).

The same can be said from Surah al-Fathir verse 32:

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مُقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ بإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ

[46] Then we caused to inherit the Book those We have chosen of Our servants; and among them is he who wrongs himself, and among them is he who is moderate, and among them is he who is foremost in good deeds by permission of Allah . That [inheritance] is what is the great bounty.

Now we turn our focus to discussing paradise as mentioned in verse 46, and as usual we will discuss the following ayat, *فِي أَيِّ آيَةٍ رَبِّكُمْ تَكْذِبُونَ*, alongside it. Before we do that let us recall what we have discussed on our previous session when Allah describes the horrendous punishments of Hellfire. The image is important because, immediately after Allah SWT tells us of the harsh punishments, Allah SWT tells us that whoever is afraid of Allah SWT, there will be paradise for them.



Tafsir al-Tahrir Wat Tanwir

Author: Muhammad al-Tahir Ibn Ashur

Denomination: Sunni

Born: Tunis - 1879

Died: 1973

The following is the verse:-

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّاتٌ

[47] *But for he who has feared the position of his Lord are two gardens –*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[48] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

Shaykh Yasir Qadhi mentions the way Ibn Abbas' student, Mujahid Ibn Jabbar, explains this verse. According to Mujahid, whosoever has the opportunity to commit sins, and whenever they commit sins, will remember Allah's fear and punishments. For this type of people, there's jannah for them. Again, the meaning of فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ changed when Allah SWT mentions paradise, as opposed to hellfire in previous sessions. The meaning is of more sourced as a way to prove to the believer about the favour of Allah SWT. We have to discuss a few things before we proceeded, because the following interpretation of ayat in Surah Ar-Rahman are quite straightforward.

There are many issues concerning paradise, as well as hellfire as we discussed previously. Non-muslim scholars who studied about Islam explained that the paradise as mentioned in the Quran is an imaginary place that is suitable for the arabian people in those days. That is to say, even the modern arab people may have no such imagination, aiming to be rewarded for a place mentioned in the Quran. At least there are four components in paradise that is commonly mentioned. There are free running waters, furniture (couch) and also women (Hoor or Hourai). InshaAllah we will be focusing on the components of paradise except on Hoor. We will discuss about Hoor specifically when we discuss the second part of paradise from ayat 62-78 in our next discussion inshaAllah. For today's session we will focus on the debate of the imagination of paradise itself. Let us observe the following verses to further look into the words of Allah SWT about the paradise.

ذَوَاتَا أَفْنَانٍ

[49] *Having [spreading] branches.*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[50] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ تَجْرِيَانِ

[51] *In both of them are two springs, flowing.*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[51] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

فِيهِمَا مِنْ كُلِّ فَاكِهَةٍ زَوْجَانِ

[52] *In both of them are of every fruit, two kinds.*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[53] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

مُتَّكِنِينَ عَلَىٰ فُرُشٍ بَطَائِنُهَا مِنْ إِسْتَبْرَقٍ ۗ وَجَنَىٰ الْجَنَّتَيْنِ دَانٌ

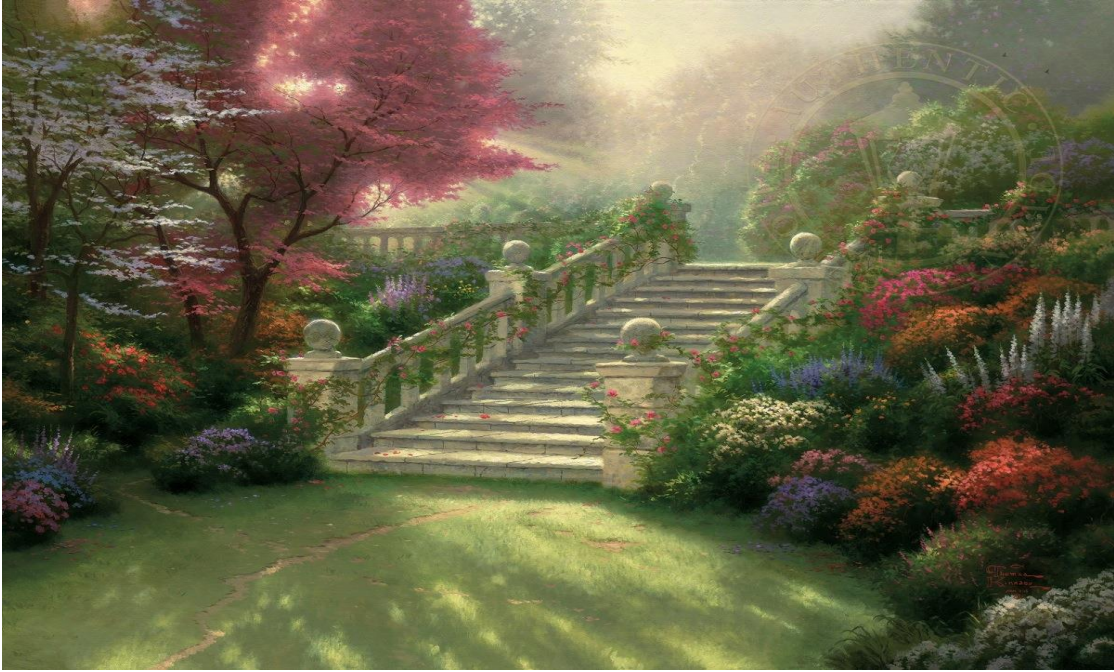
[54] *[They are] reclining on beds whose linings are of silk brocade, and the fruit of the two gardens is hanging low.*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[55] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

As we have read, we notice that Allah SWT tells about tree branches, flowing water, fruits hanging low in gardens and also unique beds or couches. It should also be noted that Allah SWT tells them in duality, representing two jannahs. The discussions about the Jannah are many. Some scholars mention about the jannahs having one meant for humans the other for jinn. Some mention jannah for families and another jannah for newer families with women in jannah (Wallahua'lam). Let us continue by discussing how there are discussions on how the paradise is an imagination of classical arab people and it has nothing to do with the modern imagination of the best places for reward.

Shaykh Yasir Qadhi says that the fact is that human nature as described in Surah Ar-Rahman are still obvious. When people desire for big houses, palaces and mansions, they'd desire running waters in their houses, the best cushion and with beautiful gardens. In fact, when people want to go for vacations, they would still crave for that kind of environment. Whatever the case, Shaykh Yasir Qadhi clearly said that even though people have different ideas about paradise, the fact to the matter is that all the objects in paradise match the desire people from various places in the world are looking for. This is because in paradise, everything is attainable. We as muslims should not be confused or skeptical with the descriptions of paradise as mentioned in the Quran. In fact, the image mentioned in Surah Ar-Rahman should increase our iman because it tells us the indifference of human nature. Another important point about Jannah in Surah Ar-Rahman, for instance in verse 46 mentioned earlier, where although the word jannatan (two gardens) is present, the jannatan can either mean two or many in arabic language. Lastly, ulama's also differ in terms of level, whether the image of paradise as stated in verse 46 is for the elite (as-Sabiqun) or for the coming verses 62-78. Shaykh Yasir Qadhi mentions that for the first mentioned paradise is for the as-Sabiqun and for the other for the Ashabul Yamin, Wallahua'lam.



Many people have different imaginations of paradise, wallahua'lam. In Surah Ar-Rahman, there are at least four important things that is told to exit in paradise. Trees, flowing water, reclining beds and the fair ones. Non-muslim scholars and even some muslims argue such imagination of paradise is no longer relevant to the current times. Na'uzubillahiminzalik. Shaykh Yasir Qadhi promptly said that in whatever civilization that we might be in, the aims for rich people is to not only have big houses such as mansions or castles, but they would like flowing waters in the mansion with beautiful gardens, etc. The stories of paradise in the Quran should by right increase our iman. May Allah SWT forgive us.

The following verses talks about the women in Jannah or Hoor, that also sparked a few controversies and critics, not only by non-Muslims but even by some muslims especially the women. The following are the verses:-

فِيهِنَّ قَاصِرَاتُ الطَّرْفِ لَمْ يَطْمِئِنَّهُنَّ إِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌ

[56] *In them are women limiting [their] glances, untouched before them by man or jinni*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[57] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny? –*

كَأَنَّهُنَّ الْيَاقُوتُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ

[58] *As if they were rubies and coral.*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[59] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

The verses concerning the Hoor in Jannah explains how beautiful and obedient the women are. The word فُقَصِرَاتُ refers to women who lower their gazes and only for their husband in Jannah. The word could also mean that her beauty would make their husband would look at no one else but her only, Wallahua'lam. The fact that the verse also mentions jinn explains that even among the jinn there is sexual desire and the women in Jannah had never been touched by humans or jinn. The women are said to be beautiful and metaphorically referred to as rubies and corals. The stories of Jannah end with the statement that whosoever does good deeds will be rewarded, as shown in the verse below:-

هُلْ جَزَاءُ الْإِحْسَانِ إِلَّا الْإِحْسَانُ

[60] *Is the reward for good [anything] but good?*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[61] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

We will insyaAllah discuss in detail about the Hoor or women in Jannah in our next tazkirah session. Perhaps mentioning how women during Rasulullah SAW's time responded to these verses compared to us today. Obviously, there are many issues we can discuss and insyaAllah we shall do so in our next tazkirah session. With that we end today's session.

f. Paradise and the Fair Ones (Houri) (62-78)

May Allah continue give us strength that we can do good things in this world, a strength that can bring benefit to the world after. Aameen. InshaAllah we will continue our discussion on Surah Ar-Rahman today and we will look at the second part of a revelation concerning jannah from verse 62-78. In our previous session, we have discussed about the first part of revelation concerning jannah (paradise), ayat 46-61. In today's and previous session the general components of paradise are basically similar (on trees, flowing water, fruits, furniture (couch or reclining bed) and women of jannah) as we have decided in previous session that While in the previous session we exclusively give priority to the issue and concept of paradise, in this session, we will give priority to exclusively discuss the women of jannah or the fair ones (Hoor or Hourī in Arabic).

Before we start unpacking the issue of women in jannah, let us go through a few verses which mention different types of paradise in which it is full of trees which shows their dark blue colour. As usual, we will discuss the phrase *فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ* together. Similar with the previous jannah, the components of flowing water and fruits are also mentioned. The verses are as follows:

وَمِنْ دُونِهِمَا جَنَّتَانِ

[62] *And below them both [in excellence] are two [other] gardens –*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[63] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny? –*

مُدْهَامَتَانِ

[64] *Dark green [in color].*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[65] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ نَضَّاخَتَانِ

[66] *In both of them are two springs, spouting.*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[67] *So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?*

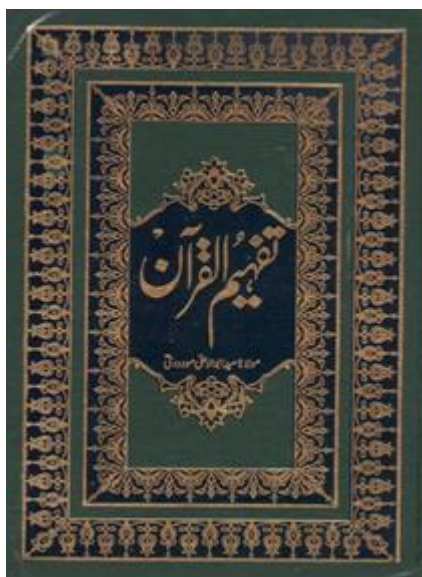
فِيهِمَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَنَخْلٌ وَرُمَّانٌ

[68] *In both of them are fruit and palm trees and pomegranates.*

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[69] So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?

Scholars differ in terms of the level of jannah mentioned in ayat 46-61, as opposed to the ayat that we are going to discuss in today's session, 62-78. Although we have discussed some of the issues in previous session, here we give some details why some scholars mentioned the second jannah as higher in level. In fact, according to Ustaz Nouman Ali Khan, this jannah is generally meant for assabikun like sahaba, in which the type of trees such as dates from farms and pomegranate were said to be their favourite. Other scholars mentioned that all people are given access to enter any paradise. It depends on their piety or taqwa to Allah.



Tafheem ul-Quran

Author: Syed Abul A'la Maududi

Denomination: Sunni

Born: Hyderabad State, British India - 1903

Died: Buffalo, New York, U.S. - 1979

Before we discuss the Hour, which created some controversial not only to Muslims but also non-Muslim, let us look at the verse itself which mention not only how pure (inner and outer) the women in paradise but also mention the environment they live as well as the attraction they have. Following is the ayat:

□ فِيهِنَّ خَيْرَاتٌ حِسَانٌ

[70] So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?

□ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[71] In them are good and beautiful women –

□ حُورٌ مَّقْصُورَاتٌ فِي الْخِيَامِ

[72] Fair ones reserved in pavilions –

□ فَيَأْيِ آلاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[73] So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny? –

□ □ لَمْ يَطْمِئْتُهُنَّ إِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌ

[74] Untouched before them by man or jinni –

□ فَيَأْيِ آلاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[75] So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny? -

In general, the discussion about the fair ones in paradise are similar in the first jannah except the word hoor is specifically mentioned here. According to Yasir Qadhi, the word hoor come from the word hawar, meaning those who have contrast eyes (black and white) or can be any other types of contrast. The fair ones are said to have a very pure heart and exceedingly beautiful. Now, let us seriously explain the issue of hoor which was mentioned by many, which was clearly mentioned in the Al-Quran. There are many questions arising about this issue. Do women also have the fair ones in paradise? Why the issue of sexual desire is given priority in Islam? What was the response of women during Rasulullah's time on this issue? Don't husband and wife will rejoin in paradise? This question and many others may need to have pages of discussion but as long that we are really sincere and honest on our questions and always ask for Allah's guidance, insyaAllah we will have no issue with the issue of fair ones in paradise.

To begin with, many scholars start be the general rule, which is, make sure we do something in this world so that we can be in paradise. As we are already in the paradise, we can get what we want. There was one single lady asked a scholar whether she will find a husband in jannah. The answer is already in the general rule - once you are already there, you can get what you want. In paradise, there is no such thing as jealousy or envy, etc. and we should not bring our worldly experience to apply into the experience of people in paradise. It won't work at all. It is said, Aishah when discussing about this issue mentioned that we Muslims pray and fast and those who fast and pray have a high status in the eye of Allah.

If we are good mu'minah, there is no way that the hoor can compete with mu'minah in paradise. Aishah had demonstrate a very excellent way in approaching Al-Quran, even though in this issue. Perhaps we can compare our attitude with Rasulullah's wife attitude. It is said that never Rasulullah SAW in his life jokes or teased women by mentioning hoor. What is important is to be good and to be in jannah and get what we want when we are already there. Do Muslim men also have this attitude? On general note, there was also a question by a lady, asking, if she married twice in this world, with which husband will she be in paradise? Ulama' has two opinion and both are equally valid. The first opinion said she will be with the last husband and the second said whichever

husband you want. Obviously, we have many other issues about the hour and the psychology as well as men's sexual desire in this world.



Allah SWT tests humans in this world differently. Marriage is the best solution to avoid ourselves from failing important tests, which many people in the west no longer find sacred. That is why families are important.

InshaAllah we will discuss about this but let us finish the few verses left of Surah Ar-Rahman. The following verses mentioned about the reclining bed, which is extraordinary in paradise and the surah Ar-Rahman end up with a verse on the barakah of Allah's name - al-jalaliwal ikram. Following is the ayat:

مُنكَبِينَ عَلَى رَفْرَفٍ خُضْرٍ وَعَبْقَرِيٍّ حِسَانٍ

[76] Reclining on green cushions and beautiful fine carpets.

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

[77] So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?

تَبَارَكَ اسْمُ رَبِّكَ ذِي الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

[78] Blessed is the name of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor.

While generally the reclining bed or couch is basically similar but there was a mentioned of the word abkari. Abkari generally means genius but the word originally means the city that belongs to jinni. When we mentioned about abkar referring to reclining bed, it mentioned the quality of the bed which means extra special. Surah Ar-Rahman end up with discussion of the name barakah. This surah also begins with the name Ar-Rahman and end up with the name al-Jalal and al-Ikram. The point is, even the name of Allah Himself has barakah (increase in goodness). There are many ways that scholars explain the concept of barakah. One way is by showing the multiplying effects of one's good deeds. For instance, due to the sincerity of one guru to teach Al-Quran, millions get benefits in a short period of time. Another way is to look on the rezki that Allah blessed to us. If it is never in our life, feeling or thinking it is not enough, even though it is too little and never will be waste it when it is a lot is also a sign of barakah. Wallahua'lam.

As we mentioned earlier, we are going to discuss about the issue of hoor in paradise in some details. From discussions by ulama' or scholars on this issue, it is said that while both men and women are tested in this world on their sexual desires, Hayak (feeling of shyness) is given more to the women than men. Hence, men are more open to succumb with temptations. Therefore, the right incentive for men who always remember Allah SWT as a way of avoiding these temptations of the world, these rewards of paradise is told to them. Scholars also mention that although the women are also open to similar temptations, because of the nikmah and blessings of Hayak given to them, it is not appropriate to talk of the women's incentives in paradise the way Allah SWT mentions of the incentives of men, wallahua'lam. The fact that Allah SWT does not mention the incentives of women in paradise is a great blessing for the women. Therefore, this surah should instead increase our iman, wallahua'lam. Before we end, this is an example of a verse (Yasin verse 57) which mentions that we can get what we want in paradise:

لَهُمْ فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَلَهُمْ مَا يَدَّعُونَ

For them therein is fruit, and for them is whatever they request [or wish]

With that we end today's session, may Allah SWT open the floodgates of rahmah to us, Amin.

The Meaning of Ar-Rahman

We thank Allah for revealing to us the Quran, especially Surah Ar-Rahman, and we thank Allah for having sent to us many prophets, especially Prophet Muhammad SAW. We thank Allah as well for giving us strength to complete the discussions on Surah Ar-Rahman from the first verse to the last verse, verse 78. Alhamdulillah. Astaghfirullahal azim. Specifically, on today's session, we will put our attention to the meaning of Ar-Rahman (The Most Gracious) as one of the 99 commonly known Asma al-Husna (The Beautiful Names of Allah).

Before we get into it, let's first ask ourselves a very basic question, "Why should we learn about Allah or the names of Allah, such as Ar-Rahman?" We learn what we should know - from mathematics to physics in pure science, and from economics to politics in social science. Alhamdulillah, all the knowledge we have is from Allah SWT and we pray to Allah to grant barakah on the little knowledge we have. Learning about Allah the one that grants knowledge to us His name obviously has immeasurable benefits and blessings. Shaykh Yasir Qadhi mentioned that by knowing or developing our knowledge on Allah, The Rabb, we naturally get benefits, the increase of iman from our knowledge. The knowledge about Allah is open to us, for instance, the study of the 20 attributes and the 99 names.

For the record, Greek philosophers such as Aristotle had ideas on God and his idea is hugely influential in many regions of the Western areas, both in Europe and North America. Though they believe in the existence of God, they presumed that the human intellect cannot conceive it or know it or access to it, hence, no one knows about it and any attempt to talk about God would be destined misleading. However, we know about Allah, obviously. Allah Himself revealed about his name and attributes in the Quran and the Prophet had been told about Him.

The word Ar-Rahman, according to Shaykh Yasir Qadhi, comprises of five meanings with similar roots. They are Ar-Rahman, Ar-Rahim, Ghairur Rahimin, Arhamar Rahimin and Zur Rahman. The basic meaning of Ar-Rahman is being gracious for the sake of graciousness to grace others. The word Ar-Rahman has no equivalent meaning with other languages. Some use the word "The Most Merciful", "The Most Beneficent," etc. One way to understand the meaning of Ar-Rahman, which we have mentioned in our previous session, is by imagining ourselves in the stomach of our mother during pregnancy. Due to our mother's rahmah, it does not matter.

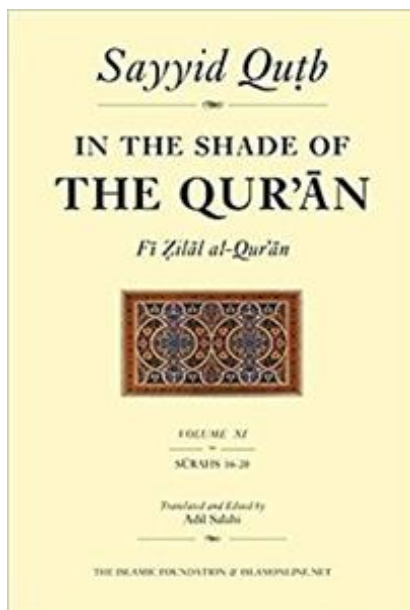


The story of the woman who helped a thirsty dog by using her shoe to scoop up water in a well is well heard of in Islam. She practiced the great attitude of rahmah, even towards dogs. According to many stories of her, Allah SWT blessed rahmah upon her, although it is said that she was not known for her piety, wallahua 'lam.

We will get the benefits of water, oxygen, food, doesn't matter if she is happy or unhappy, whether she is asleep or awake, whether she is sitting or etc. In this world, it is due to Allah's rahmah that we get everything that we want, just like babies in their mother's womb during pregnancy. We do not know, maybe we feel hot or painful because mother drinking hot water or taking a medicine, but we will definitely get benefits from what our mother is doing. The same might apply when we feel unhappy with the hot environment, pain, earthquake, thunderstorm, etc. in this world. In fact, in Surah Ar-Rahman, the surah that mentioned Allah "The Most Gracious", the scary graphic image of hellfire and punishment is illustrated to us, which we might think, how could The Most Gracious punish the creations so terribly and nastily. The fact that we have been told about the scary image so vividly in this world implies Allah's rahmah itself, so that we can make preparations and do good things and avoiding the evil ones.

Shaykh Yasir Qadhi mentioned about a hadith which described that the rahmah we receive in this world is only one portion of Allah's rahmah, from the first moment of creation until the trumpet is blown. The remaining 99 portions will be granted in the hereafter. In fact, if non-Muslims understand the rahmah of Allah, they too will be optimistic if the rahmah of Allah will be granted to them as well. So, always remember Allah and his name Ar-Rahman at the time of happiness or misery because if we really understand that Allah is Ar-Rahman, we can feel that in both situations, we are under His Graciousness or Mercifulness or his Beneficence. We are familiar with the story of a very caring and merciful lady who happened to be a prostitute helping a thirsty dog in a desert. She went down a well and used her shoe to get water, put the shoe in her mouth to climb the well and later gave the water to the dog.

Because of her rahmah to the dog, Allah showed rahmah to her. The Prophet SAW was once visited by a Bedouin who noticing the Prophet throwing Husin and Hassan, showing he's full of rahmah, while kissing and hugging them. Thinking about his handsomeness, he said to the Prophet, I have ten children, none of them that I touched. The Prophet replied among other thing that little that I can do, and Allah has removed a sense of rahmah from your heart. There was also a story, a generation from the Prophet Muhammad's generation in which a man asked his worker to collect debt, mentioning that if they cannot pay, just be merciful to them so may Allah grant his mercy to me. The story was narrated by the Prophet and he said, it is Allah that give his mercy to the mercy that he gave to those who could not pay the debt and it is also Him who give mercy to the men (the men who asked the worker to collect the debt).



Fi Zilal Al-Quran

Author: Sayyid Qutb

Denomination: Sunni

Born: Asyut Governorate, Khedivate of Egypt -1906

Died: Cairo, Egypt - 1966

At the very minimum, there are two things that we should practice from the name of Allah Ar-Rahman. First, we should learn how to practice the good character such as being gracious, merciful, or being good not only to human being, especially our family members but also to animals as shown by the lady and be good to other creations as well. Second, everytime we make doa, we have to call and invoke the name of Allah and Ar-Rahman as a way to get our doa responded by Allah. Obviously, there is specific names of Allah or specific request, such as as-Safi, if we ask for good health or al-Wahab, if we want to ask for children or looking for a wife or husband, etc.

Ulamas say that the name of Allah and Ar-Rahman is the two general names of God which we can always call every time we make doa, to ask Allah to answer our request. Certainly, there are other names of Allah in Surah Ar-Rahman, such as al-Jalal (The Most Glorious) and al-Ikram (The Most Nobel). But for the purpose of today's session, we would only able to talk about Ar-Rahman specifically. We end our today's tazkirah by asking Allah to open his floodgate to rahmah for us and our family and friends . Aamiin.

More reading materials can be found on god-consciousness.wixsite.com

The Quran as a Mukjizat (Al-Qamar, Ar-Rahman and Al-Waqi'ah)

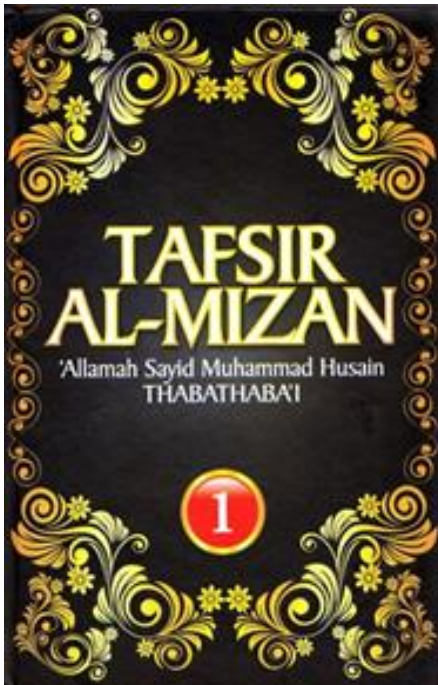
Thanks, and praises to Allah, The Master of the Universe, for allowing us to continue our tazkirah on surah Ar-Rahman. May Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful open the floodgate of rahmah to all of us. Aameen. Laymen like us, more often than not, are facing a lot of difficulties to understand the Quran better, even one surah, let alone one whole book. Obviously, every page of the Quran is highly connected, and their interconnectedness should not be taken for granted. Otherwise, we will lose a lot of the intended meanings of the messages of the Holy Quran.

With that in mind, we will look at surah Ar-Rahman, the 55th chapter, together, in general with the surah before it, Al-Qamar (54th) and the surah after it, Al-Waqiah (56th). We know that the Quran is the only surviving mukjizat which contains the message of warnings and reminders. In surah Al-Mulk, for instance, Allah SWT informed the Prophet SAW to say that all knowledge belongs to God, and his (Rasulullah SAW) role is to warn them.

قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَإِنَّمَا أَنَا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ

Say, "The knowledge is only with Allah, and I am only a clear warner."

That is to say that the Quran is not necessarily only a mukjizat, but it is also a message full of reminders. Unlike other kitabs such as Taurat, Injil and Zabur, which are messages themselves, the Quran is a mukjizat. Ustadh Nouman Ali Khan, when discussing about the interconnectedness of these three chapters, Al-Qamar, Ar-Rahman and Al-Waqi'ah, mentioned very important information. Among other things, the previous prophets were given mukjizats separated from the messages (kitabs). The Prophet, Moses, for instance, was given a staff which changed into a snake as a great miracle to prove his prophethood. The Prophet, Jesus, for instance, was given a lot of mukjizats, such as turning things into pigeons and bringing dead bodies back to life. Unlike them, Prophet Muhammad, as mentioned previously, was given Al-Quran as a mukjizat, and unlike them as well, it is in the mukjizat which Allah SWT revealed the message of Islam. While in the case of Moses and Jesus AS, they were given mukjizats different and separated from the books.



Tafsir al-Mizan

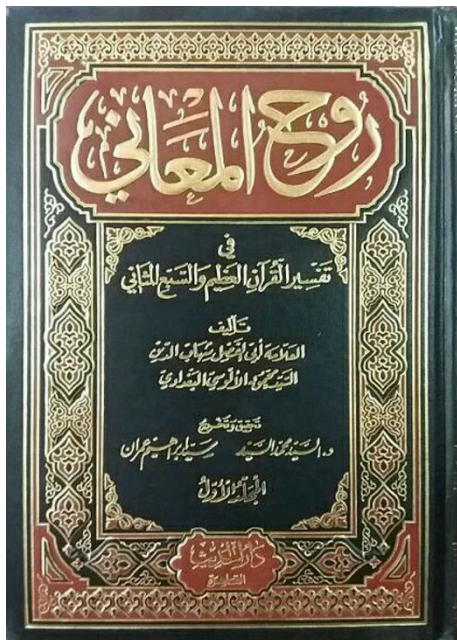
Author: Sayid Muhammad Husain Thabathaba'i

Denomination: Shia Twelver

Born: Tabriz, Iran - 1903

Died: Qom, Iran - 1981

It is said that the Shia group in some ways still use a similar Quran. Although their appointed imam may in certain occasions communicated with their hidden imam (Al-Mahdi), which might come out with their own Quran, wallahua'lam.



Ruhul Ma'ani

Author: Mahmud al-Alusi

Denomination: Sunni

Born: Baghdad, Ottoman Empire - 1802

Another important point is that there are a lot of stories about the previous prophets in which their people refused to follow The Message despite seeing the mukjizat with their own two eyes, and Allah SWT destroyed them. A classic example would be how Fir'aun and his people were destroyed. However, unlike the ummah of the Prophet SAW, although many of us still refuses to

follow the message of the Quran despite having seen the mukjizat for many years, Allah, with His mercy, we can still continue living with the way we want in this world. This bring us to the meaning of Ar-Rahman, The Most Gracious in the surah Ar-Rahman. It was The Most Gracious who taught us on the mukjizat of Al-Quran, and because He is Ar-Rahman, we were given mercy to continue doing what we want. Because of His mercy too, even though we do not seriously take initiative to learn and understand Al-Quran, we are not being punished yet in this world.

We will deal with these two issues later, InsyaAllah.

Let us come back to the issue regarding the interconnectedness between Al-Qamar, Ar-Rahman and Al-Waqi'ah in general. The first verse of surah Al-Qamar not only deals with the issue of The Hour (Judgement Day), but also the issue of one of the Prophet's mukjizat, concerning the splitting of the moon. According to Ustadh Nouman Ali Khan, there are other records, such as by the Persians, mentioning about the splitting of the Moon, in which, in their life, they had experienced it. We are interested to discuss about the splitting of the moon as a small mukjizat in surah Al-Qamar compared to the big mukjizat, the Al-Quran in surah Ar-Rahman.

أَقْتَرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَانْشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ

The Hour has come near, and the moon has split [in two].

In surah Al-Qamar, there are a lot of stories from the previous generations who were destroyed because they refused to acknowledge the Message from Allah, despite the miracles of mukjizat being presented in front of them. However, we should be thankful to the Ar-Rahman, because despite seeing the Quran (mukjizat) as we mentioned earlier, we are still taking it for granted by delaying what had been commanded and doing what had been prohibited in the Message of the Quran. In surah Ar-Rahman, because of His Most Graciousness, our generation is still surviving until The Hour comes. It is in surah Ar-Rahman the worst image of punishments in the hereafter are graphically shown. This is obviously due to His rahmah, so that we have a lot of time to prepare and become a good Muslim, hence avoiding the punishment. This opportunity was not given to the previous generations, as mentioned in surah Al-Qamar.

Now we turn to surah Al-Waqi'ah, mainly on the organization of the surah. Like surah Ar-Rahman, surah Al-Waqi'ah is divided into 5 sections, the first being on the rewards for the As-Sabiqun As-Sabiqun (The Elite and Pious Muslims, such as Rasulullah and the sahabas). The second is about the stories of the Ashabul Yamin, the group of the right hands who will also be rewarded with Jannah The third section of Surah Al-Waqi'ah is about Ashabul Shimal, those who are on the left hand, who will be punished in Jahannam. The fourth is about the creations of Allah (Who Created The Creations). The fifth and final part is about Allah, The Ar-Rahman. Interestingly enough, the fifth section is surah Ar-Rahman consists of the same 5 sections, but in reversed order. The most beautiful thing about these surahs is that surah Ar-Rahman starts with the name of Allah, Ar-Rahman, meanwhile surah Al-Waqi'ah ends with a name of Allah, Al-Azim, as shown below:

فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ

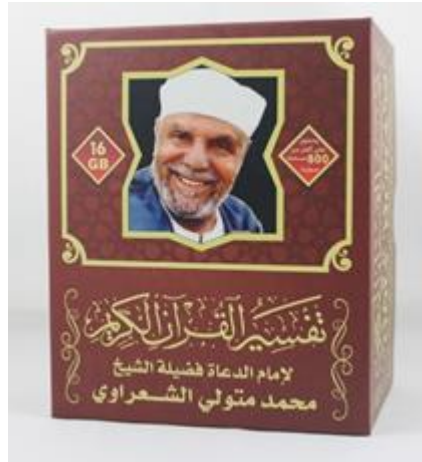
So, exalt the name of your Lord, the Most Great.

The first section is about Ar-Rahman, Who taught Quran to us, created the human beings and taught us eloquence. The second is about the creation, then the threat of punishment in section three, which is pretty much similar to the third section of the whole surah, which is about Ashabul Shimal.



We know that Moses AS was given the torah (taurah, the guided book) and the ability to turn his walking stick into a snake was one of his mukjizat. However, Rasulullah SAW was given two in one, the Quran as the guided book and the Quran itself is the mukjizat. The Quran is the only surviving mukjizat to continue to exist until Yaumul Qiyamah, wallahua'lam.

The remaining section of Ar-Rahman is about the first and second type of Jannah, which some ulama said that the second is the highest and some said otherwise. We only dealt with one issue, about Allah Who taught us the Quran. Can we imagine how would the human who teaches Quran would behave if majority of their students not only refused to listen, but also make jokes of it, and worse, step or burn the Quran. It is Allah Himself who taught and teaches Quran. And because He is Ar-Rahman, we can still continue to inhale and exhale the air which he created freely, and because He is Ar-Rahman, we are still allowed, or at least this ummah is still not destroyed even though we do not put serious effort to follow what had been commanded and what had been prohibited in the Quran. InsyaAllah, we have learned something about the interconnectedness between the three and may Allah SWT teach us not to be a person who takes His Graciousness for granted. May Allah give us strength, so when we teach Quran, we will practice to be rahman, the way Allah has been with us. With that, we end our tazkirah on Ar-Rahman from session 1 to session 10. May Allah open the floodgate of rahmah to all of us. Aameen, Aameen Ya Rabbal Alamin.



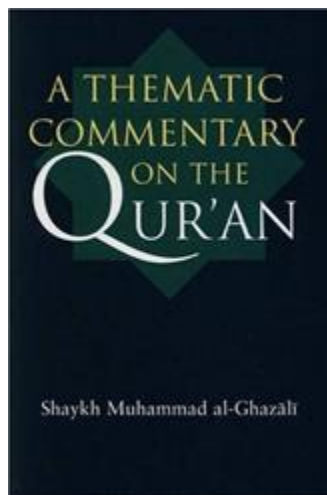
Tafsir al-Sha'rawi

Author: Muhammad Mutawali Al-Sha'rawi

Denomination: Sunni

Born: Egypt - 1911

Died: Egypt - 1998



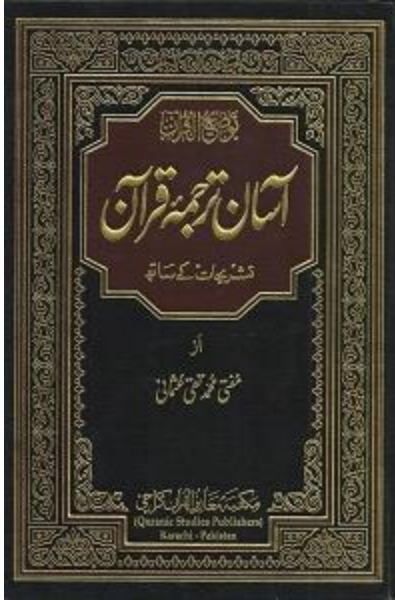
A Thematic Commentary on the Qur'an

Author: Mohammed al-Ghazali

Denomination: Sunni

Born: al-Buhayrah, Egypt -1917

Died: Medina, Saudi Arabia - 1996

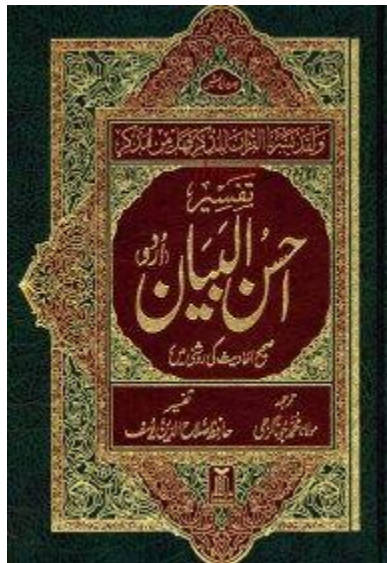


Aasan Tarjuma Quran

Author: Mufti Taqi Usmani

Denomination: Sunni

Born: Deoband, British India - 1943



Ahsanul Bayan

Author: Muhammad Idrees Dahiri

Denomination: Sunni

Born: Sindh, Pakistan 1947

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9. Fi Zilal Al-Quran by Sayyid Qutb.
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