



Qur'an **30 for 30**

The Companion Reader
Ramadan 1442 h. Edition

Dr. Omar Suleiman
& Sh. Ismail Kamdar

Introduction

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

All praise is due to Allah, and may His peace and blessings be upon the final Messenger Muhammad and all those who follow his way with righteousness until the end of time. Ramadan is a time for reflection, a month in which we recite, reflect on, and try our best to implement the glorious teachings of the Qur'an.

Allah says in the Qur'an, "Ramadan is the month in which the Qur'an was revealed. Guidance for humanity, and clear portents of guidance, and the Criterion."¹ As part of this reflection process, Yaqeen Institute started the Qur'an 30for30 video series in Ramadan 2020/1441 AH. The series benefited many people across the world. We hope to reach even more people with this written summary of it.

The following chapters are a summary of the core points covered in the 30for30 series. Each chapter focuses on a single *juz* of the Qur'an summarizing some of its core themes and lessons. The content is taken primarily from the 2020 30for30 YouTube series,² but also includes content from an earlier iteration in 2016.³ This is additionally boosted by selected quotes from other thematic *tafsir* books like *A Thematic Commentary on the Qur'an* by Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali and *Themes of the Qur'an* by Ismail Kamdar.⁴

The translation of the Qur'anic verses in this book are taken from *Qur'an: English Translation* by Talal Itani⁵ with slight modification when needed. The hadith translations and references are taken from Sunnah.com⁶ and AbuAminaElias.com.⁷

This book was designed to give a summarized *tafsir* of the Qur'an focused primarily on the themes and lessons that link the various verses and *surahs* of the Qur'an. We hope to build upon this series with each passing year as long as Allah gives us the ability to do so.

We ask Allah for acceptance of our deeds, forgiveness for our sins, and to make this book a source of continuous reward for the entire team at Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research.



Juz One

The Qur'an begins with a *du'a* for guidance, and an answer to that *du'a*. Guidance is the main theme that flows throughout the first *juz* of the Qur'an. The opening chapter of the Qur'an, Surah al-Fatiha, is a beautifully structured *du'a* for guidance. It begins with praising Allah by His beautiful names and attributes, then reminds us to worship Allah alone. This verse establishes our relationship with Allah as a relationship of worship. Allah is our Lord Who alone we worship and seek Divine Help from.⁸

This is followed by a *du'a* for guidance, in which we are shown the path of those whom Allah has favored. We are also shown the two paths that lead away from Allah: misguidance by blindly following wrong beliefs and arrogantly rejecting the truth when it is clear thus earning the anger of Allah.⁹

Surah al-Fatiḥah is immediately followed by a declaration that the Qur'an is a guidance for those who are conscious of Allah.¹⁰ The opening verses of Surah al-Baqarah clarify that the Qur'an is here to guide us, but we can only access that guidance if we are sincere in striving for righteousness. The rest of the *surah* builds on this theme by discussing various topics related to the theme of guidance.

The opening passages of Surah al-Baqarah describe the three ways in which people react to the guidance of the Qur'an. The righteous believe in it, embrace it, and strive to follow it. The disbelievers reject it and turn away from it. The third group, the hypocrites, get the most attention as this is a subtle dangerous path that people rarely realize they are upon. The hypocrites outwardly embrace the guidance of the Qur'an, yet internally reject it. They are Muslim on a surface level, yet their attitude towards the revelation is closer to that of the disbelievers. This passage calls on us to introspect and ensure we do not have any of the traits of the hypocrites.¹¹

Whether we embrace the guidance of the Qur'an or not depends on our attitude and intention towards it. People who approach the Qur'an with an antagonistic mindset are more likely to reject it. Those who sincerely seek the truth are more likely to follow it; this is why it is "Guidance for the God-conscious."

The various stories in Surah al-Baqarah show us the different reactions to Allah's guidance. Humans by our nature will slip up, but how we react to our own mistakes indicates our overall attitude towards Allah. The story of Adam ﷺ in Surah al-Baqarah is a reminder that the best of people also make mistakes, but in humility they acknowledge their mistakes and repent. This is the path of guidance.¹²

Contrast this with the stories of Iblis and Pharaoh. Both of them actively rejected the truth, even though they recognized it, because of their blind arrogance. Their arrogance

blocked them from the path of guidance and led them towards Hellfire. This is a strong warning against the evil trait of arrogance and its effects on the heart. Regarding this, Sufyan Ibn 'Uyaynah said, "Adam sinned out of desire, Satan sinned out of pride. The one who sins out of desire will find it easier to repent than the one who sins out of arrogance."

Another story mentioned in Surah al-Baqarah is the story of Sulayman عليه السلام. In this *surah*, Allah declares that Sulayman عليه السلام did not disbelieve; rather, it was the devils who disbelieved.¹³ Sulayman عليه السلام was blessed with every worldly privilege, but he did not allow any of these blessings to distract him from the purpose of life. Sulayman عليه السلام is proof that even people who have everything in this world can still pass the test of life if they are sincere.

The final story in this *juz* is about Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام. Ibrahim عليه السلام was guided and wanted guidance for his descendants. Allah praises his beautiful character in this *surah* with a special emphasis on the *du'a* he made for his descendants. Ibrahim عليه السلام wished for people from his descendants who would continue the work of calling towards Allah's guidance. Allah answered his *du'a* through his descendants Isma'īl, Ishaq, and their descendants who included Musa, 'Isa, Muhammad, etc.¹⁴

The *surah* ends with a reminder that we believe in all of these prophets and confirm everything that was revealed to each of them. Our *ummah* is called the balanced nation that will bear witness for every other nation, while our prophet is a witness over us. The next *juz* begins with the changing of the *qiblah* signifying the transition of revelation from the Isra'elite descendants of Ibrahim عليه السلام to his Ishmaelite descendants.

As Surah al-Baqarah is the longest *surah* in the Qur'an, its theme continues into the second and third *juz* in which we will explore other lessons related to guidance and misguidance.



Juz Two

The theme of guidance continues to run throughout the second *juz* of the Qur'an. The focus moves towards the laws Allah has revealed. In this *juz*, Allah explains to us various laws of Islam related to every area of life. The laws of fasting in Ramadan, Hajj, marriage, divorce, warfare, and criminal law are all detailed. The believer will strive to obey the law as it is guidance from our Creator.

The theme of guidance appears in the verses of Ramadan, in which Allah reminds us that He revealed the Qur'an in Ramadan as a guidance for humanity.¹⁵ Notice that Allah referred to the Qur'an as guidance for the God-conscious at the beginning of the *surah*. In the middle, He refers to it as guidance for humanity. This is because the message is meant for all of humanity and is accessible to anyone, but only the God-conscious will pay heed and follow it.

The theme of guidance flows throughout the verses of Ramadan. Allah revealed the book of guidance during the month of guidance and calls on us to thank Him for that guidance. This is followed by a verse reminding us about the importance of *du'a*. *Du'a* is another important theme that flows throughout the first three *juz* of the Qur'an.

In this *juz*, Allah reminds us, "Whenever My servant asks of Me, tell him I am near."¹⁶ This is a beautiful reminder to draw near to Allah through *du'a*. He also reminds us to "enter into submission completely, and do not follow the footsteps of Shaytan."¹⁷ Guidance cannot transform us if we pick and choose which aspects of it to follow. We must submit to Allah's guidance completely to experience its benefits.

The *juz* ends with the story of the children of Isra'īl when they asked for a king but refused to follow him. The few who followed him were successful, despite being outnumbered. This is a reminder that success lies in following the guidance of Allah, even if only a minority of people follow it. The truth will prevail and "how often have a small group defeated a larger group with Allah's permission. Indeed, Allah is with the patient."¹⁸

The *surah* concludes in the third *juz* but we will conclude our brief *tafsir* of it here so we can focus on Surah Al 'Imran in the next *juz*. Towards the end of Surah al-Baqarah, we find the greatest verse in the Qur'an known as Ayat al-Kursi.¹⁹ Ayat al-Kursi is both a *du'a* for protection and a reminder that Allah is the Greatest and we are constantly in need of Him.

The *surah* then ends with another *du'a*. The closing verses are a confirmation that we believe in the guidance that Allah has revealed to his prophets, followed by a *du'a* in which we admit that we are weak and often slip up. We ask Allah to keep us firm upon guidance and to overlook our mistakes and sins.²⁰

The *surah* comes full circle with this *du'a*. It begins by declaring that the Qur'an is guidance for the God-conscious, then explains the paths of guidance and misguidance through descriptions, stories, and laws. Finally, it ends with a *du'a* for protection from misguidance and losing our way, asking Allah for firmness upon the straight path.



Juz Three

Surah Al ‘Imran begins in the third *juz* of the Qur’an and continues into the fourth *juz*. Hence, it will be the focus of the next two chapters of this book. Surah Al ‘Imran was revealed in 3 AH and reflects the political climate of that year. During the third year after Hījah, the Muslims had to deal with delegations of Christians from Najran who wanted to learn about Islam and its stance on Jesus and Mary. They also had to deal with the Jews of Madinah, and most importantly the Battle of Uḥud. All three of these topics flow throughout this *surah*, giving us a glimpse of the challenges and events of that year.²¹ This *surah* addresses the people of the book more than any other *surah* in the Qur’an due to the high number of interactions that the Prophet ﷺ had with both Jews and Christians during that year.

A beautiful link between Surah al-Baqarah and Surah Al ‘Imran is the topic of piety. Surah al-Baqarah focuses on guidance towards piety, while Surah Al ‘Imran gives us multiple examples of piety in the families of ‘Imran and Zakariya’. Multiple stories are narrated throughout this *surah* giving us a glimpse of the piety, miracles, prayers, and attitudes of these righteous people.

The *surah* itself begins with a reminder about the core beliefs of Islam. We are reminded that the Gospel and Torah were revealed as guidance from Allah for those before us. This is followed by stories of those who followed this guidance. Allah begins the *surah* with this reminder, “He sent down to you the Book with the Truth, confirming what came before it; and He sent down the Torah and the Gospel. Aforetime, as guidance for mankind; and He sent down the Criterion. Those who have rejected God’s signs will have a severe punishment. God is Mighty, Able to take revenge.”²²

This is followed by the verse describing the unclear verses of the Qur’an and people’s attitudes towards these verses. The previous *surah* began with a description of the believers, disbelievers, and hypocrites. We see all three attitudes shown in those who believe in the unclear verses, those who reject them and those who seek to reinterpret them due to a “sickness in the heart”; i.e., hypocrisy. Allah says, “It is He who revealed to you the Book. Some of its verses are definitive; they are the foundation of the Book, and others are nonspecific. As for those in whose hearts is deviation, they follow the nonspecific part, seeking dissent, and seeking to derive an interpretation. But none knows its interpretation except God and those firmly rooted in knowledge say, “We believe in it; all is from our Lord.” But none recollects except those with understanding.”²³

This is immediately followed by a beautiful *du‘a* for guidance, continuing the theme of *du‘as* for guidance in Surah al-Fatihah and the closing verses of Surah al-Baqarah. “Our

Lord, do not cause our hearts to swerve after You have guided us, and bestow on us mercy from Your presence; You are the Giver.”²⁴

Through the stories of this *surah*, we are taught the beautiful manners, beliefs, and practices of Islam. We learn that Ibrahim عليه السلام was a Muslim and preached Islam.²⁵ We learn that Allah provides for whomever He wills without any limits.²⁶ He provided Mary with fruits that were out of season, and with a miracle child. He provided Zakariya’ with a miracle child when he asked Allah for an heir. He can provide for us too in such miraculous ways if we ask with conviction.²⁷

The stories of Mary and those around her form the central narrative of this *juz*. It is worth taking the time to read these stories and reflect on them as they are full of powerful lessons about piety and guidance, showcasing some of the greatest examples in the history of this world.

The *juz* ends with a beautiful reminder that piety involves spending from that which we love. “You will not attain virtuous conduct until you give of what you cherish. Whatever you give away, God is Aware of it.”²⁸ We will end this chapter with a beautiful story related to this verse.

Upon hearing this verse, Abu Talḥah, a notable Companion of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ donated his most cherished possession, a large date-palm grove with over 600 date-palm trees to the service of the poor in the city of Medina. He explained the reasons behind his gift to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ by saying that the date-palm grove was his most cherished possession and that he hoped that by gifting it to the poor that he would attain the status of true piety in the next life. Upon declaring his gift to those in need, in the presence of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Abu Talḥah returned home to find his wife and child relaxing in the grove. Abu Talḥah immediately informed his wife that he had gifted and endowed the grove to serve the poor of Medina in service of Islam. His wife asked him, “Did you do this in your name only or in our name collectively?” Abu Talḥah replied that he had done so in both of their names. His wife replied, “May God be pleased with you, Abu Talḥah! I was considering the exact same thing after having thought deeply about what to do for the poor in our midst. But I did not have the courage yet to do something about it. May God accept our offering and let us now leave the grove together.” This dedication of their most valuable real estate for the good of the poor of Medina, in service of Islam, became known as the first act of endowment (*waqf*) in Islam.²⁹



Juz Four

A central theme that flows throughout the fourth *juz* of the Qur'an is unity. These verses were revealed shortly after the Battle of Uḥud, during which the Muslims encountered their first military defeat due to a moment of disunity. Many of these verses address the aftermath of that battle, reminding the believers that victory is from Allah, and that disunity gets in the way of Divine Assistance.

Disunity is written in the destiny of this great *ummah*. The Prophet ﷺ said, "I asked my Lord for three things, and He has granted me two but has withheld one. I begged my Lord that my *ummah* should not be destroyed because of famine and He granted me this. And I begged my Lord that my *ummah* should not be destroyed by drowning [by deluge] and He granted me this. And I begged my Lord that there should be no bloodshed among the people of my *ummah*, but He did not grant it."³⁰

It is interesting to note that the previous three *juz* focused on the mistakes of past nations, yet this *juz* focuses primarily on the mistakes of Muslims, with our biggest weakness being our disunity. Disunity has always been a problem for the Muslim world. Internal problems continue to plague us even today, and the external enemies simply take advantage of this and utilize it to harm the *ummah*. The following verses in this *surah* all address different aspects of unity.

O you who believe! Revere God with due reverence, and do not die except as Muslims. And hold fast to the rope of God, altogether, and do not become divided. And remember God's blessings upon you; how you were enemies, and He reconciled your hearts, and by His grace you became brethren. And you were on the brink of a pit of fire, and He saved you from it. God thus clarifies His revelations for you, so that you may be guided. And let there be among you a community calling to virtue, and advocating righteousness, and deterring from evil. These are the successful. And do not be like those who separated and disputed after the clear proofs came to them; for them is a great punishment.³¹

These verses implore us to unite and work together, to call towards good and deter evil. This is emphasized further in the following verse in which Allah describes the best of this nation. "You are the best community that ever emerged for humanity: you advocate what is moral, and forbid what is immoral, and believe in God. Had the People of the Scripture believed, it would have been better for them. Among them are the believers, but most of them are sinners."³²

In this verse, we are informed that we are indeed the best of nations if we fulfill the obligations Allah has put upon us. Fulfilling these obligations requires unity and sincerity.

The verses of unity are followed by a series of verses describing the Battle of Uḥud and what went wrong at this battle.³³ The primary focus is on the lessons from this battle.

- These lessons include the following:
- The victory of Muslims is not because of numbers, it is dependent on the Assistance of Allah. We should never rely on numbers alone in battle.
- Allah grants us victory when we are united.
- Allah’s Mercy descends when we are united.
- When we are disunited, we are our own worst enemies.
- We are commanded to strive for Allah; even if the Prophet ﷺ passed away, the struggle for Islam continues.³⁴

The *juḥ* ends with a reminder that those who made mistakes at Uḥud were already forgiven by Allah. Allah did not reveal these verses to humiliate them. He revealed these verses so that we can reflect on these events and derive lessons from them. “Those of you who turned back on the day when the two armies clashed—it was Satan who caused them to backslide, on account of some of what they had earned. But God has forgiven them. God is Forgiving and Prudent.”³⁵



Juz Five

Surah al-Nisa' was revealed shortly after Surah Al 'Imran and continues its theme of addressing the aftermath of Uḥud. While Surah Al 'Imran focused primarily on the political and theological lessons, Surah al-Nisa' primarily focuses on social and legal matters that arose in the aftermath of Uḥud. Although the *surah* is named the Chapter of Women due to the high number of gender-related rules that appear in it, the core theme is really society and the laws of Islam related to various aspects of society.

Due to the large number of men who were martyred at Uḥud, a variety of issues arose related to widows, orphans, and inheritance. All these issues are addressed in this *surah*. The *surah* begins with a reminder that humanity originated from a single couple, and so due to our common ancestry we must maintain the ties of kinship.³⁶ This spirit of brotherhood and community runs throughout the *surah*. This verse is also a reminder that although men and women are equal in terms of spirituality and potential for salvation, Allah created them to play different roles in society. This is another theme that runs throughout the *surah*, the dual roles of men and women, which are meant to complement each other so that society functions smoothly.

The *surah* then reminds us of the permission for and restrictions on polygamy.³⁷ This verse was revealed during the aftermath of Uḥud, giving comfort to the widows and orphans of Uḥud that they would be taken care of and not forgotten. Although the permission for restricted polygamy is general, its roots have always been in societal and communal good, with a strong focus on the welfare of the women and children involved in such a family structure.

Surah al-Nisa' also continues the theme of defining this *ummah*. The previous two *juz* referred to this *ummah* as the balanced *ummah* and the best of *ummahs*, but in this *juz* we are told that our *ummah* is a witness over every other *ummah*, and the Prophet ﷺ is a witness over us.³⁸ There is a beautiful hadith narrated about this verse.

'Abd Allah Ibn Masud رضي الله عنه narrated: Allah's Messenger ﷺ said to me, "Recite [of the Qur'an] for me," I said, "Shall I recite it to you although it had been revealed to you?" He said, "I like to hear [the Qur'an] from others." So, I recited Surah al-Nisa' till I reached, "How [will it be] then when We bring from each nation a witness, and We bring you [O Muhammad] as a witness against these people?"³⁹ Then he said, "Stop!" And behold, his eyes were overflowing with tears.⁴⁰

Another beautiful theme that flows through this *surah* is the theme of ease. This *surah* is heavy on legal matters and this may feel overwhelming to many readers. In between all these laws, Allah assures us that He revealed these laws to make life easier for us and that He understands that humans are weak.

God intends to make things clear to you, and to guide you in the ways of those before you, and to redeem you. God is Most Knowing, Most Wise. God intends to redeem you, but those who follow their desires want you to turn away utterly. God intends to lighten your burden, for the human being was created weak.⁴¹

Another important lesson that is emphasized in this *surah* is the importance of obeying the Messenger ﷺ. This is a continuation of the lessons from the Battle of Uḥud. The defeat at Uḥud was primarily due to the archers disobeying the command of the Prophet ﷺ. Because of this, the importance of obeying the Messenger is repeated throughout Surah Al ‘Imran and Surah al-Nisa’ which includes the powerful command, “But no, by your Lord, they will not believe until they call you to arbitrate in their disputes, and then find within themselves no resentment regarding your decisions and submit themselves completely.”⁴²

Surah al-Nisa’ is the second longest *surah* in the Qur’an and flows through the fourth, fifth, and sixth *juz* of the Qur’an. The themes of law, society, the rights of the weak, and importance of obeying the law all flow throughout this powerful chapter of the Qur’an, giving us a lot to reflect on and more to practice.



Juz Six

The sixth *juz* of the Qur'an begins at verse 148 of Surah al-Nisa' and ends at verse 41 of Surah al-Ma'idah. Surah al-Ma'idah was revealed many years after Surah al-Nisa' at a very different stage in the Prophet's life ﷺ. Surah al-Ma'idah was one of the last *surahs* to be revealed during the final years of the prophetic era. It was revealed after the conquest of Makkah when Muslims were finally in a position of power. During this phase of power, the Prophet ﷺ began to send letters to the kings of various countries inviting them and their people to Islam. The themes of Surah al-Ma'idah reflect the time in which it was revealed.

The first few *surahs* of the Qur'an give us a glimpse of the Madinan phase of history. Surah al-Baqarah shows us what Islam was like before Badr, while Surah Al 'Imran and al-Nisa' show us glimpses of life after Uḥud. Surah al-Ma'idah then shows us the final phase of the *Da'wah*, the perfection of the law⁴³ after the conquest of Makkah. Surah al-Ma'idah essentially revolves around two themes, the final laws of Islam and the principles of *da'wah* to the people of the book and other nations.

As this was the final lengthy *surah* that was revealed, it contains a lot of details on the various laws of Islam. This includes dietary laws, marriage laws, pilgrimage laws, criminal law as well as the foundations and spiritual frameworks of these laws. The *surah* begins with a call on us to fulfill our covenant with Allah.⁴⁴ This is a call for us to take the law seriously and obey it. This includes fulfilling our covenants with people as that is part of obedience to Allah.

This is followed by a series of verses describing the final laws of Islam. In these verses, Allah informs us of the types of food that we are permitted to eat, as well as those that are prohibited. The permission to eat food slaughtered by the People of the Book and to marry chaste women of the People of the Book is also revealed in this *surah*.⁴⁵ These verses show us how Muslims lived in harmony with the People of the Book in a post-Hudaibiyah society.

The previous two *surahs* reminded us that victory lies in the obedience of Allah. This *surah*, revealed post-victory, includes a reminder that Allah fulfilled that promise with the conquest of Makkah.

And Remember God's blessings upon you, and His covenant which He contracted with you; when you said, we hear, and we obey. And remain conscious of God, for God knows what the hearts contain.⁴⁶

O you who believe! Remember God's blessings upon you; when certain people intended to extend their hands against you, and He restrained their hands from you. So, reverence God, and in God let the believers put their trust.⁴⁷

In between these two verses, Allah reminds us to remain firm upon justice, and not to allow our hatred for anyone to cause us to be unjust. It is significant that this verse was revealed after the Muslims were victorious as people often carry out injustices after gaining power. This verse is a powerful reminder to Muslims to remain committed to justice, especially when we have the power to oppress.

O you who believe! Be upright to God, witnessing with justice; and let not the hatred of a certain people prevent you from acting justly. Adhere to justice, for that is nearer to piety, and fear God. God is informed of what you do.⁴⁸

A large portion of this *surah* focuses on the story of Jesus عليه السلام, as the Muslims were interacting more with the Christians in this phase, reminders about *tawhid* and how to invite Christians to Islam are frequent throughout this *surah*.

Surah al-Ma'idah also includes the story of Cain and Abel, the two sons of Adam عليه السلام: the story of the first murder. This once again reminds us that power and greed should not corrupt us and cause us to oppress anyone. This passage includes the famous reminder that killing one innocent person is equivalent to killing all of humanity, and saving a single soul earns one the reward of saving all of humanity.⁴⁹

Surah al-Ma'idah is a reminder of how Muslims should operate when we are in a position of power. Justice, dedication to the law, *da'wah*, and the fulfillment of covenants all remain priorities for the believer no matter how much worldly power we attain.



Juz Seven

The seventh *juz* of the Qur'an begins at verse 83 of Surah al-Ma'idah and ends at verse 110 of Surah al-An'am. The *juz* begins by recognizing that many of the People of the Book were righteous and sincere. They recognized the message of Islam as being the same as that of the previous prophets and accepted it. This was specifically true for a group of Christians.

And you will find that the nearest in affection towards the believers are those who say, "We are Christians." That is because among them are priests and monks, and they are not arrogant. And when they hear what was revealed to the Messenger, you see their eyes overflowing with tears, as they recognize the truth in it. They say, "Our Lord, we have believed, so count us among the witnesses."⁵⁰

One of the greatest examples of this was Najashi, the ruler of Abyssinia at that time. He was a just Christian king who sheltered the Muslims. When the verses of Surah Maryam were recited in his court, his priests began to weep as described in this verse. Najashi secretly accepted Islam and the Prophet ﷺ prayed a *janazah* in absence for him when he passed away. He is an exemplary example of a sincere believer.

As the core theme of Surah al-Ma'idah include the laws of Islam, many of these laws are detailed in this *juz*. This includes the law of *kaffarah*. *Kaffarah* refers to the Islamic method of making up for a broken oath. It is part of the ease of Islam that Allah has given us this way out when we make oaths that we later realize we are unable to fulfill.⁵¹

This is followed by the prohibition of alcohol and gambling. These two vices were destructive norms in Arab society as they are in many societies today. The laws prohibiting alcohol were revealed slowly over time to allow for gradual change, teaching us the wisest manner of reforming a society. The final verse prohibiting alcohol completely is this verse in Surah al-Ma'idah, "O you who believe! Intoxicants, gambling, idolatry, and divination are abominations of Satan's doing. Avoid them, so that you may prosper."⁵² The next verse explains the reason for this prohibition, "Satan wants to provoke strife and hatred among you through intoxicants and gambling, and to prevent you from the remembrance of God, and from prayer. Will you not desist?"⁵³

With so many laws revealed in this *surah*, some believers may experience anxiety about their past sins. To comfort them, Allah revealed that He does not hold people accountable for the sins they committed before Islam or before the law was revealed. "Those who believe and do righteous deeds will not be blamed for what they may have eaten, provided they obey, and believe, and do good deeds, then maintain piety and faith, then remain righteous and charitable. God loves the charitable."⁵⁴

The remainder of the *surah* focuses on the stories of past nations. There is a comparison here between the stories of Moses and Jesus. The followers of Moses asked unnecessary questions out of mockery which led to the religion becoming stricter upon them. The disciples of Jesus, however, asked God for a table from Heaven to feast from. They asked this out of sincerity so that they could witness a miracle. Allah answered their prayers, and a beautiful feast was sent down from Heaven for them.

The *surah* ends with a reminder that there is only One God, and that Jesus is his messenger. Trinity is an unacceptable belief in Islamic theology, and the sincere followers of Jesus are called once more to abandon it and follow the pure message of monotheism.

The next *surah* in the Qur'an is Surah al-An'am. Here the reader will notice a major tonal shift in both style and content. This is because Surah al-An'am is an early Makkan *surah*, the first after a long series of Madinan *surahs*. While the Madinan *surahs* before it focused on laws and politics, Surah al-An'am focuses purely on the message of *tawhid*. This links up with the ending of Surah al-Ma'idah which called sincere Christians to *tawhid*; the next *surah* is all about the Oneness of God and His Noble Attributes.

Studying the differences between Surah al-Ma'idah and Surah al-An'am gives us a beautiful example of the differences between Makkan and Madinan revelation. Madinan revelation tends to be more focused on laws, while Makkan revelation focused only on beliefs as that is the foundation of the faith. Because of this, the content of Surah al-An'am is very different from the *surahs* before it. It focuses primarily on the Oneness of Allah, His Signs, and the story of Abraham's confirming the Oneness of Allah. It also lists all of the major prophets by name, teaching us not only what to believe about God, but which prophets we need to believe in as well.

Makkan revelation emphasizes the story of Abraham as he was an ideal role model of Islamic monotheism. Abraham submitted to God when everyone around him rejected monotheism, and his story became legendary. The Jews, Christians, and even the pagans of Makkah all knew his story well, so it served as a powerful reminder to all of them to return to the way of Abraham.

The *juz* ends with a reminder to always remain polite in our calling to the truth. We should avoid insulting the gods of other people, as in return they may insult Allah. Good manners, wisdom, and kindness are the foundations upon which pure Islamic *da'wah* are built.

Do not insult those they call upon besides God, lest they insult God out of hostility and ignorance. We made attractive to every community their deeds. Then to their Lord is their return, and He will inform them of what they used to do.⁵⁵



Juz Eight

The eighth *juz* begins at verse 111 of Surah al-An‘am and ends at verse 87 of Surah al-A‘raf. Both of these *surahs* were revealed during the early Makkan era. As a result, they share several themes and flow together as one discussion. One common theme that runs throughout these two *surahs* is Islamic theology (*‘aqidah*) and its various branches. Surah al-An‘am focuses more on the concept of monotheism, while Surah al-A‘raf continues this with further emphasis on the afterlife and the messengers. All of the primary beliefs of Islam can be found in this *juz* of the Qur’an, making it the *juz* of *‘aqidah*.

The *juz* begins with a firm reminder that those who reject the truth will do so regardless of the evidence provided to them. Allah says, “Even if We sent down the angels to them, and the dead spoke to them, and We gathered all things before them, they still would not believe, unless God wills; but most of them are ignorant.”⁵⁶ The problem, therefore, is not with the message but with the recipients of the message.

This verse condemns radical skepticism. This type of skepticism, when taken to its natural conclusion, will cause a person to doubt everything, even when the proofs are clear in front of them. It is the same with those who reject the truth. The miracle of the Qur’an and the proofs of prophethood are all clear and evident, yet they still disbelieve. Even if angels descended, they would claim it was a hallucination, bewitchment, or something else. Those who do not want to believe, will find no reason to do so.

We are then reminded that the truth is not always with the majority or the dominant powers. Truth has its own criterion and can often be found with minorities. “If you were to obey most of those on earth, they would divert you from God’s path. They follow nothing but assumptions, and they only conjecture.”⁵⁷ The reality is that truth is uncomfortable, and most people do not want to leave their comfort zones. We become complacent with the dominant culture and political correctness. This is easier than seeking the truth and following hard truths that the rest of society may reject.

The parables of truth and falsehood continue throughout the *surah* as Allah compares the guided to the living and the misguided to the dead. “Is he who was dead, then We gave him life, and made for him a light by which he walks among the people, like he who is in total darkness, and cannot get out of it? Thus, the doings of disbelievers are made to appear good to them.”⁵⁸

This verse shows us how Islam brings light to the hearts of people and can soften the hearts of even the biggest of critics. ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab رضي الله عنه is a good example of this. Initially, he was the harshest enemy of Islam, but when the light of Islam entered his heart, he became a beacon of light for others whose example continues to light our way today. The parable of guidance and misguidance continues in next few verses.

Whomever God desires to guide, He spreads open his heart to Islam; and whomever He desires to misguide, He makes his heart narrow, constricted, as though he were climbing up the sky. God thus lays defilement upon those who do not believe.⁵⁹

Concluding the section on guidance, Allah reminds us that He does not need anything. We are in constant need of His Sustenance, Mercy, and Guidance. Guidance can only come from Allah and He guides whoever proves worthy of guidance.

Your Lord is the Rich Beyond Need, the Possessor of Mercy. If He wills, He can do away with you, and substitute whomever He wills in your place, just as He produced you from the descendants of another people.⁶⁰

Surah al-An'am ends with a reminder to submit entirely to Allah. It is not enough to recognize that Allah is the Creator. To fulfill the purpose of life, we must submit entirely to Allah. Our entire lives must be dedicated to the service of Allah. Reminding us about this, the *surah* ends with a powerful set of verses.

Say, "My Lord has guided me to a straight path, an upright religion, the creed of Abraham the Monotheist, who was not a polytheist." Say, "My prayer and my worship, and my life and my death, are devoted to God, the Lord of the Worlds. No associate has He. Thus, I am commanded, and I am the first of those who submit."⁶¹

Surah al-A'raf continues this theme of theology and guidance. It begins with the story of Adam and the devil. Allah describes to us how the devil refused to prostrate because he believed that he was better than Adam. Arrogance led him astray. Arrogance remains the primary cause of misguidance. When a person is arrogant, they cling to their opinions and beliefs even when they know that they are wrong. Guidance then lies in purifying our souls from arrogance.

The devil promises to lead people astray and that the majority of people will be ungrateful. When describing the people of Paradise in this *surah*, Allah shows us that the devil will fail in this mission with the sincere believers. They will be in Paradise, praising Allah, expressing gratitude for all of His favors.

We will remove whatever rancor is in their hearts. Rivers will flow beneath them. And they will say, "Praise be to God, who has guided us to this. Had God not guided us, we would never be guided. The messengers of our Lord did come with the truth." And it will be proclaimed to them, "This is the Garden you are made to inherit, on account of what you used to do."⁶²



Juz Nine

The ninth *juz* of the Qur'an begins at verse 88 of Surah al-A'raf and ends at verse 40 of Surah al-Anfal. These two *surahs* follow very different themes. Surah al-A'raf is the second of two *surahs* focused on our theology. Surah al-Anfal is the first of two *surahs* focused on the military struggles of the Prophet ﷺ and his companions. Thus, the theme of theology runs through the first half of this *juz*, then there is a shift to military struggles. The shift is not disconnected though; the verses opening Surah al-Anfal ground it in Islamic theology and remind us that victory is from Allah, and to earn a blessed victory we must be true believers. The link between a strong theology and a successful military campaign connects these two chapters of the Qur'an.

There are many parallels between Surah al-An'am and al-A'raf. Surah al-An'am spoke about Allah sending worldly possessions as a punishment to those who disbelieved before snatching it all away with their destruction. Surah al-A'raf mentions how Allah blesses the worldly possessions of those who obey Allah. Surah al-An'am discusses the stories of the perished nations who enjoyed the blessings of this world and then were punished. Surah al-A'raf discusses the stories of those who obeyed Allah, and as a result, received blessings in this world and the next. The following two verses are a beautiful illustration of this.

When they forgot the reminders, We opened the doors for all things they wanted. Once they were intoxicated, We seized them suddenly and they were left in a state of despair.⁶³

If only the people believed and feared Allah, We would have opened for them the *barakah*, but they denied so We seized them.⁶⁴

The *juz* begins in the middle of the story of Shu'ayb ؑ which gives us an example of both types of people. Shu'ayb ؑ was a wealthy trader whose wealth was blessed due to his piety. His people were wealthy traders who earned Allah's anger due to their cheating. In the end, Allah destroyed his people, yet he and the righteous were spared and continued to be blessed. This story teaches us that when Allah's punishment comes, worldly means have no benefit. Earning the blessings of Allah should be the priority of every believer.

The verse quoted above appears immediately after this story as a reflection on it. Had the people of Madyan believed, they would have experienced *barakah* in their wealth as Shu'ayb ؑ did. They feared that accepting Islam would cause them to lose their wealth. The reality is the opposite of what they feared. This story was very relevant to the people of Makkah as they shared the same fear. The Quraysh were wealthy traders who feared losing their wealth if they embraced Islam. Instead, Allah put *barakah* in the wealth of Muslims and made Makkah a center of blessed commerce, which it remains today.

Another story in this *juz* is the story of Moses عليه السلام and the magicians of Pharaoh. When the magicians witnessed the miracles of Moses, they immediately believed and gave up everything in this world for Allah. They were threatened and killed by Pharaoh but did not waver in their faith. The believer knows that the true blessings lie in the afterlife.

The next *surah* is a shift back to Madinan revelation. Surah al-Anfal was revealed shortly after the Battle of Badr as a reflection on the battle itself. It is the shortest *surah* in the first third of the Qur'an after al-Fatihah and is placed here due to its relation to Surah al-Tawbah which some companions considered an extension of it.

When the Qur'an was compiled, Ibn 'Abbas asked 'Uthman رضي الله عنه, "What is your reasoning with Surah Al-Anfal, which has less than a hundred verses, and Surah al-Tawbah, which has more than a hundred verses, yet you put them together without writing in the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful between them and you placed them with the seven long *surahs*. Why did you do that?"

Uthman رضي الله عنه responded, "Al-Anfal was among the first to be revealed in Medina and al-Tawbah was among the last of those revealed of the Qur'an and their discussions resemble each other, so we thought that they were part of each other. Then the Messenger of Allah died, and it was not clear to us if they were part of each other. For this reason, we put them together without writing in the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful and we included them with the seven long *surahs*."⁶⁵

Surah al-A'raf ended with the story of Moses and his followers defeating the Pharaoh. Surah al-Anfal was revealed after the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his companions defeated the Quraysh at Badr. There are many parallels between these stories. The followers of Moses had to flee Egypt; the companions had to flee Makkah. The Pharaoh was killed in this event; the Pharaoh of this nation, Abu Jahl, was killed at Badr. These stories give hope to the oppressed that Allah will grant them victory over their oppressors eventually. This is one of the core themes found throughout this *juz* of the Qur'an: the triumph of the oppressed over the oppressors.



Juz Ten

The theme of war and conflict flows throughout the tenth *juz* of the Qur'an. This *juz* begins at verse 41 of Surah al-Anfal and ends at verse 86 of Surah al-Tawbah. These two *surahs* are known as the wartime chapters and are often misquoted by Islamophobes to project a false image of Islam. There are many verses in this *juz* that are quoted out of context to make Islam look violent and intolerant. Yet there are many other verses in this *juz* that are ignored that balance or explain these verses and give the full picture.

Surah al-Anfal was revealed after the Battle of Badr; Surah al-Tawbah was one of the last Madinan *surahs* and was revealed after the expedition to Tabook. Both *surahs* were revealed during military campaigns and their verses reflect these circumstances. To take these verses out of context is dishonest. It also distracts from the many beautiful lessons we can derive from these two *surahs* as many people shy away from discussing them because of their association with the concept of jihad.

In these two *surahs*, we see the beginning and the end of the military campaigns of the Prophet ﷺ against the Quraysh. Surah al-Anfal reflects on their first victory reminding us that victory is from Allah, and piety is what matters most. Surah al-Tawbah was revealed after the biggest victory of the Muslims, the conquest of Makkah showing the Muslims at the height of their power. Between these two *surahs*, we see various reflections on how Muslims should behave during wartime, times of peace, and when in a position of power. In all situations, justice and piety take precedence over anything else.

An often-misquoted verse is verse 60 of Surah al-Anfal; “And prepare against them all the power you can muster, and all the cavalry you can mobilize, to terrify thereby God’s enemies and your enemies, and others besides them whom you do not know, but God knows them. Whatever you spend in God’s way will be repaid to you in full, and you will not be wronged.”⁶⁶

This verse is often portrayed as promoting violence against innocent civilians, yet its context clearly shows otherwise. The verse promotes the importance of the Muslim nation having a strong military presence so that it is not a target of tyrants and enemies. The goal is to avoid war by establishing a position of power. The following verse helps us understand its proper context, “But if they incline towards peace, then incline towards it, and put your trust in God. He is the Hearer, the Knower.”⁶⁷ This teaches us that the default is peace, and military strength is a means towards establishing peace and justice.

Another important verse in this Surah is verse 70 which was revealed about the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ ‘Abbas; “If God finds any good in your hearts, He will give you better than what was taken from you, and He will forgive you. God is Forgiving and Merciful.”⁶⁸

‘Abbas was forced to fight the Muslims at Badr, but he just stood there and allowed himself to be captured. He was captured by Abu Yusuf al-Sulami, a smaller man who tied him up. He was assisted by an angel in capturing ‘Abbas. Allah wanted ‘Abbas captured early, so he was not killed. It was painful for the Prophet ﷺ and his companions to see their loved ones as their captives. The Prophet ﷺ gave concessions to his uncle and out of justice, any concessions he gave to ‘Abbas, he gave to all the captives. He even started new methods of ransom including teaching people in exchange for freedom. The Prophet ﷺ asked ‘Abbas to ransom himself and he said that he did not have any money. The Prophet ﷺ told him about some money only he and his wife knew about. ‘Abbas immediately realized that he was a true prophet, and some narrators claim he accepted Islam then. This verse was revealed then promising goodness in both worlds to ‘Abbas and those like him. After paying that ransom, ‘Abbas grew wealthier every day and never lost wealth again.⁶⁹

Surah al-Tawbah was revealed around the time of the expedition to Tabuk and reflects the various political events that took place that year. It flows from Surah al-Anfal like one *surah* sharing a theme of military struggle. Tabuk was a long and brutal expedition in which the Prophet ﷺ and thirty thousand companions set out to face the Byzantine army. It was a long march through the desert in the middle of Summer. Leaving Madinah for this expedition was itself a test from Allah. Eventually, no battle took place as the Byzantine army did not show up. The Prophet ﷺ returned home with a strong psychological victory, but the event had exposed the hypocrites and those inclined to this world.

The *surah* also reflects on other events that took place that year, including the Battle of Hunayn. Hunayn is one of two battles mentioned by name in the Qur’an, the other being Badr. Allah reminds us that victory is not linked to numbers and is from Allah. At Hunayn, some companions assumed that their numbers would cause their victory. They faced an initial setback but eventually were victorious after remembering that victory is from Allah.

God has given you victory in numerous regions; but on the day of Hunain, your great number impressed you, but it availed you nothing; and the land, as spacious as it was, narrowed for you; and you turned your backs in retreat.⁷⁰

Throughout this *surah*, we are reminded that victory is from Allah and only He can assist us. We are reminded about the difficult migration journey and how Allah protected the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr ؓ in the cave during this journey. This *surah* provides a powerful example of true belief in the person of Abu Bakr ؓ and contrasts that with the weakness of the hypocrites who tried to cause multiple problems that year.

If you do not help him, God has already helped him, when those who disbelieved expelled him, and he was the second of two in the cave. He said to his friend, “Do not worry, God is with us.” And God made His tranquility descend upon him, and supported him with forces you did not see and made the word of those who disbelieved the lowest, while the Word of God is the Highest. God is Mighty and Wise.⁷¹

After the verse about the piety of Abu Bakr, the case of the hypocrites is discussed. They refused to march in the heat, and this exposed their true nature. The hypocrites are discussed multiple times throughout this *surah* as they caused many problems during that year. The following verses all expose some of the faults of these hypocrites.

Had the gain been immediate, and the journey shorter, they would have followed you; but the distance seemed too long for them. Still, they swear by God: “Had we been able, we would have marched out with you.” They damn their own souls, and God knows that they are lying.⁷²

Let neither their possessions nor their children impress you. God intends to torment them through them in this worldly life, and that their souls depart while they are disbelievers.⁷³

Those who criticize the believers who give charity voluntarily, and ridicule those who find nothing to give except their own efforts—God ridicules them. They will have a painful punishment.⁷⁴

Nor on those who approach you, wishing to ride with you, and you said, “I have nothing to carry you on.” So, they went away, with their eyes overflowing with tears, sorrowing for not finding the means to spend.⁷⁵

Two qualities of the hypocrites were exposed by these events. The first is that they mock the efforts of the believers while doing nothing productive themselves. Their lives revolve around criticizing others and they contribute nothing to society. The second quality is that they often have a victim mentality and blame all their problems on their circumstances. They use their circumstances as an excuse to avoid good deeds.

Surah Tawbah continues into the next *juz* and continues to contrast the qualities of the believers with those of the hypocrites, showing us both the path to righteousness and the paths of misguidance.



Juz Eleven

The eleventh *juz* begins at the 87th verse of Surah Tawbah, the bulk of the *juz* contains Surah Yunus, and it ends after the opening five verses of Surah Hud. There is another shift in themes from Surah Tawbah to Surah Yunus. While Surah Tawbah was one of the last *surahs* to be revealed in Madinah, Surah Yunus is an early Makkan *surah*, revealed in the second or third year after prophethood. The focus of the next few *juz* is primarily Makkan revelation.

The shifts between Makkan and Madinan *surahs* in the Qur'an have a lot of wisdom. One lesson we can take from this is to avoid complacency. Life is a series of ups and downs, times of ease and times of trial. Sometimes we experience difficult situations like the Makkan Era, at other times we experience victories like Badr. As life is constantly shifting between these two phases, the order of the Qur'an reflects the ups and downs of life.

Prophet Yunus عليه السلام was actually the first prophet mentioned by name in the Qur'an. His story is revealed as a reminder to the Prophet ﷺ not to give up and abandon his people. Prophet Yunus عليه السلام left his people, but eventually returned and they embraced Islam. The Prophet ﷺ was forced out by his people many years after this *surah* was revealed but also eventually returned and saw his people embrace Islam.

The next *surah* is named after Prophet Hud عليه السلام and his story contrasts with that of Prophet Yunus عليه السلام. While the people of Yunus عليه السلام eventually embraced Islam, the people of Hud عليه السلام were stubborn and were eventually destroyed. The enemies of the Prophet ﷺ in Makkah fell into both groups. Some were stubborn and died upon disbelief like Abu Lahab and Abu Jahl, yet others like Suḥayl ibn 'Amr and Abu Sufyan eventually softened, repented, and embraced Islam. There are elements of the story of both prophets' stories in the life of the final Messenger ﷺ.

A core theme that flows throughout this *surah* is the reactions of various types of people to the message of the prophets. Some embrace it and some reject it. Those who follow the Messenger will attain eternal bliss, while those who reject his message are responsible for their own choice and final destination. For many, it is their love of this world that holds them back from embracing the truth.

Those who do not hope to meet Us, and are content with the worldly life, and are at ease in it, and those who pay no heed to Our signs. These, their dwelling is the Fire, on account of what they used to do. As for those who believe and do good deeds, their Lord guides them in their faith. Rivers will flow beneath them in the Gardens of Bliss. Those who entered Jannah. Their call therein is, Glory be to You, our God. And their greeting therein is peace. And the last of their call is, Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds.⁷⁶

These verses offer us the two paths. Allah is Most Merciful but has the right to punish whomever He wills. To earn eternal Paradise, we must embrace the message of the prophets and submit to our Creator completely.



Juz Twelve

The twelfth *juz* begins at verse six of Surah Hud and ends at verse fifty-two of Surah Yusuf. The core theme that runs throughout this *juz* is the stories of the prophets. Both *surahs* are focused on stories of the prophets but with very different outcomes.

Surah Hud focuses on the stories of the destroyed nations who refused to listen to their messengers and were punished in this world. Surah Yusuf focuses on the story of Yusuf عليه السلام who attained success in both worlds. The first *surah* was sent as a warning to the Quraysh, and the second as glad tidings to the Prophet ﷺ. Together, they achieve the balance between warnings and glad tidings.

Surah Hud is an important *surah* that should make us all reflect. It is so powerful that reflecting on it caused visible aging on the face of the Prophet ﷺ. Ibn ‘Abbas رضي الله عنه narrates that once the Prophet ﷺ appeared looking older. Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه said, “O Messenger of Allah! You have become gray.” He replied, “I have gone gray from Surah Hud, al-Waqi‘ah, al-Mursalat, ‘Amma Yatasa’alun and Idha al-shamsu Kuwwirat.”⁷⁷

Surah Hud serves as a warning to all, initially the Quraysh, but to us as well. The stories in this *surah* focus on nations that rebelled against the prophets and were destroyed for it. The Muslim nation is not immune to this. We can be stripped of our blessings and punished in both worlds if we choose to live a life similar to these nations.

The first story mentioned in this *surah* is the story of Prophet Nuh عليه السلام which runs from verse twenty-five to forty-one. The story of Nuh عليه السلام and the flood is well known to everyone, not only Muslims. It was the first time that Allah destroyed a nation for their sins, and it has been recorded in the histories of every major nation.

This is followed by the stories of Hud, Salih, Lut, and Shu‘ayb عليه السلام and their nations. Each of these stories follows a similar format and they are often repeated together throughout the Qur’an. These nations were not chosen at random; they all existed in or near Arabia and the Arabs were familiar with their histories. The destruction of their nations was a reminder to the Quraysh and everybody that nobody can escape Divine Justice.

The final story in this *surah* is the story of Musa عليه السلام with a strong focus on the downfall of the Pharaoh. This ties in perfectly with the theme of the *surah*. Even the mighty king of Egypt who thought himself a god could not escape Allah’s Power and Justice. As the theme of punishment and destruction runs strongly throughout this *surah*, it is clear to see why it would cause the Prophet to worry about his nation.

There is another beautiful theme that flows through these three *surahs*. Surah Yunus gives us an example of a prophet who left his people, then returned to them. Surah Hud

gives us examples of prophets who stayed with their nations until their nations were destroyed. Surah Yusuf gives us an example of a prophet who was cast out by his people but they eventually returned to him. These three *surahs*, placed one after the other, show us the variety of reactions to the messages of the prophets.

The rest of this *juz* focuses on Surah Yusuf which is unique in many ways. It is the only story of a prophet told in one flowing manner in just one *surah*. It is considered by many the best of stories. It was revealed at a time when the Prophet ﷺ needed comfort and optimism (after Ta'if) and it is one of the most oft-recited and reflected-on *surahs* in the Qur'an today.

A powerful theme that runs throughout this *surah* concerns family. We see the Prophet Yusuf ﷺ facing the rejection of his family, and their eventual reconciliation after he rises to power. This mirrors the story of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Neither Yunus ﷺ or Hud ﷺ had to deal with their families rejecting them. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ at the time of the revelation of Surah Yusuf had just lost the protection of his tribe. His uncle Abu Talib had passed away, and Abu Lahab had taken over the tribe. For the first time, the Prophet ﷺ faced persecution without tribal support and this *surah* was sent to give him hope. As Yusuf eventually rose to power in Egypt, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was destined to rise to power in Madinah too.

The theme of jealousy also runs throughout this *surah*, and again mirrors the struggles of the Prophet ﷺ. As Yusuf had to deal with the jealousy of his brothers, entire tribes rejected the Prophet ﷺ because he was not from their tribe and they were jealous that the revelation had been sent to an orphan from Banu Hashim instead.

The parallels between the two stories continue throughout the *surah*. Yusuf ﷺ went through various stages in his life journey: favorite child, abandoned in a well, slavery, imprisonment, and eventually minister. The Prophet ﷺ went through similar phases: favorite, hated, exiled, leader, conqueror. The story reminds us that not all of Yusuf's ﷺ brothers were evil. Likewise, the family of the Prophet ﷺ included both allies and enemies. Yusuf ﷺ rejected temptation and was ready to face imprisonment instead. The Prophet ﷺ rejected multiple bribes and offers and accepted exile instead.

The above similarities show us why this *surah* was revealed at that time. It provided the Prophet ﷺ with hope through the story of a great man who went through similar trials. Just as Yusuf ﷺ eventually was successful, it was a sign that the Prophet ﷺ would also one day be successful in his mission.



Juz Thirteen

The thirteenth *juz* begins at verse fifty-three of Surah Yusuf, contains all of Surah Ra'd, and ends with Surah Ibrahim. A common theme that runs from Surah Yunus to Surah al-Hijr is the greatness of the Qur'an itself. In fact, every one of these *surahs* begins with verses describing the greatness of the Qur'an, as a reminder to you, the reader, to take it seriously and reflect upon it.

This *juz* begins with a turning point in the life of Prophet Yusuf عليه السلام. His story in the previous *juz* focused on his trials. At this point, he begins to work for the king and eventually rises to a position of authority in the kingdom. It is at this stage that we see the amazing character of Ya'qub and Yusuf. Ya'qub عليه السلام shows us the most beautiful example of optimism and patience, while Yusuf عليه السلام shows us an incredible example of generosity and forgiveness. These are four powerful characteristics that their forefather Ibrahim عليه السلام was known for and we see all these characteristics in this *surah*.

The *surah* ends with the family reunited and all grudges forgiven. Ya'qub عليه السلام is not satisfied to learn that his son Yusuf عليه السلام is still alive; he is only satisfied when he learns that he is still a believer. The true passing of any test in life is to remain firm on the true faith throughout the test. Yusuf عليه السلام himself asks Allah to allow him to die a believer, fulfilling the supplication of his forefathers. In Surah al-Baqarah we learn that Ibrahim and Ya'qub both made *du'a* that their progeny would die upon Islam. Yusuf عليه السلام was one of many answers to that *du'a*.

A common theme that runs throughout this *juz* is the importance of patience and gratitude. Surah Yusuf gives us the example of beautiful patience in Ya'qub عليه السلام. Surah Ra'd reminds us that Paradise is earned through patience. "Peace be upon you because you endured patiently. How excellent is the Final Home?"⁷⁸

Both Surah Ra'd and Surah Ibrahim remind us of the crucial importance of gratitude in earning the mercy of Allah. "Those who believe, and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of God. Surely, it is in the remembrance of God that hearts find comfort."⁷⁹

And when your Lord proclaimed: "If you give thanks, I will grant you increase; but if you are ungrateful, My punishment is severe."⁸⁰

Do you not see how God presents a parable? A good word is like a good tree—its roots are firm, and its branches are in the sky. It yields its fruits every season by the will of its Lord. God presents the parables to the people, so that they may reflect. And the parable of a bad word is that of a bad tree—it is uprooted from the ground; it has no stability.⁸¹

This is the common theme that runs throughout this *juz*. The two paths to Paradise are patience and gratitude. We need to be patient with the trials of life, knowing that victory is from Allah and He does not test us beyond our capabilities. We also need to be grateful for every blessing in our lives. If we are, Allah will increase our blessings in both worlds. These two qualities can exist at the same time. At almost any time in our lives, there are trials to be patient with and blessings to be grateful for. Victory is achieved by constantly moving between patience and gratitude depending on the tests of the day.

Surah Ra'd is named after the thunder as this *surah* reminds us that even what we perceive as inanimate are creations of Allah that praise Him in ways that we cannot imagine. "The thunder praises His glory, and so do the angels, in awe of Him. And He sends the thunderbolts, striking with them whomever He wills. Yet they argue about God, while He is Tremendous in might."⁸²

Surah Ibrahim is named after Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام as it contains a powerful passage about the *du'as* of Ibrahim عليه السلام from which we can derive beautiful lessons. Below is the translation of this passage for us to reflect on.

Recall that Abraham said, "O my Lord, make this land peaceful, and keep me and my sons from worshiping idols. My Lord, they have led many people astray. Whoever follows me belongs with me; and whoever disobeys me, You are Forgiving and Merciful. Our Lord, I have settled some of my offspring in a valley of no vegetation, by Your Sacred House, our Lord, so that they may perform the prayers. So, make the hearts of some people incline towards them, and provide them with fruits, that they may be thankful. Our Lord, you know what we conceal and what we reveal. And nothing is hidden from God, on earth or in heaven. Praise be to God, who has given me, in my old age, Ishmael and Isaac. My Lord is the Hearer of Prayers. My Lord, make me one who performs the prayer, and from my offspring. Our Lord, accept my supplication. Our Lord, forgive me, and my parents, and the believers, on the Day the Reckoning takes place."⁸³



Juz Fourteen

Juz Fourteen contains two *surahs* in their entirety: Surah al-Ḥijr and Surah al-Naḥl. A common theme that runs through this *juz* concerns the amazing blessings from Allah, and the importance of showing gratitude for those blessings. Both *surahs* continue the theme from Surah Ibrahim of reminding us of the various reasons why we should be grateful to Allah. The greatest gift that Allah has given us is guidance to the straight path. Surah al-Ḥijr begins by showing the results of following that guidance and the results of neglecting it.

Perhaps those who disbelieve will wish they had been Muslims. Leave them to eat, and enjoy, and be lulled by hope. They will find out. We have never destroyed a town unless it had a set time.⁸⁴

The above verses remind us that those who choose to disbelieve are given ample time to seek the truth and embrace it. Allah does not punish them before giving them enough time to follow the truth, but many people are distracted by the pleasures of this world and never seek out the purpose of life. Allah then addresses the excuses of these people for rejecting the messengers.

And they said, “O you who received the message, you are insane. Why do you not bring us the angels, if you are truthful?” We do not send the angels down except with reason, and they will not be held back.⁸⁵

Just as the previous messengers were accused of insanity, falsehood, and magic, the Prophet ﷺ faced similar accusations. Allah, out of Divine Wisdom, sent human messengers to human societies and did not unleash His angels upon us. This is followed by a promise to preserve the message of Islam, a promise that Allah has fulfilled.

Surely, we revealed the Message, and We will surely preserve it.⁸⁶

Another interesting theme that runs through the next few *juz* is the story of Adam ﷺ which is repeated in multiple *surahs* with different focal points. In this *surah*, the focus is on the creation of Adam and how Allah blew the soul into him. “When I have formed him, and breathed into him of My spirit, fall down prostrating before him.”⁸⁷

Adam ﷺ was not praiseworthy because of his physical nature; it was because of his soul which is sacred and pure. This shows the value of the soul over the body. Iblis only looked at the exterior, not the interior, and that caused him to stray. In this way, Iblis was the first racist, judging another by his skin and not the purity of his soul. As the previous *surah* showed us, Satan will inform his followers that they are to blame for listening to him. In this *surah*, we see that Allah informed Satan that, “Over My servants, you have no authority, except for the sinners who follow you.”⁸⁸

The story of Adam is followed by a reminder that Allah is Most Merciful, but also has the Most Severe Punishment. This is similar to the previous *surah* in which Allah promised to increase the blessings of those who show gratitude, and to punish the ungrateful. “Inform My servants that I am the Forgiver, the Merciful. And that My punishment is the [most] painful punishment.”⁸⁹

The bulk of this *surah* again focuses on the stories of the perished nations. This is a theme that runs through multiple *surahs* of the Qur’an, each time focusing on a different lesson from these stories. Here the focus is on what happens to those who rejected the messengers, a timely reminder for the Quraysh but also a reminder for us.

Towards the end of the *surah*, Allah again reminds us of the greatness of the Qur’an, this time singling out Surah al-Fatiḥah for its greatness. “We have given you seven oft-repeated verses, and the Grand Qur’an.”⁹⁰ The seven oft-repeated verses are Surah al-Fatiḥah that we repeat in every unit of prayer multiple times a day.

The *surah* ends with comfort for the Prophet ﷺ when Allah says, “We are aware that your heart is strained by what they say. So, glorify the praise of your Lord, and be among those who bow down. And worship your Lord in order to attain certainty.”⁹¹

The next *surah* is al-Naḥl named after the bee. The bee and the honey that it produces are among the many great favors of Allah listed in this *surah*. The message of this *surah* is clear: Allah has blessed us with more than we can ever imagine, and we must be grateful for it. Surah al-Ḥijr reminds us of what happens to those who are ungrateful, while Surah al-Naḥl lists for us dozens of reasons for why we should be grateful to Allah.

The *surah* begins with a beautiful list of many blessings from Allah that we take for granted, followed by the powerful reminder, “And if you tried to enumerate the favors of God, you will not be able to count them. God is Forgiving and Merciful.”⁹²

This *surah* does not require a lot of explanation. It is sufficient to recite the verses, read their translations, reflect on them and express gratitude. To assist with this, some of these powerful passages have been translated below. Read them, reflect on them and marvel at the amazing gifts that Allah has blessed us with.

He created the heavens and the earth with justice. He is exalted above the associations they attribute. He created the human being from a drop of fluid, yet he becomes an open adversary. And the livestock—He created them for you. In them are warmth and benefits for you, and of them you eat. And there is beauty in them for you, when you bring them home, and when you drive them to pasture. And they carry your loads to territory you could not have reached without great hardship. Your Lord is Clement and Merciful. And the horses, and the mules, and the donkeys—for you to ride, and for luxury. And He creates what you do not know. It is for God to point out the paths, but some of them are flawed. Had He willed, He could have guided you all. It is He Who sends down for you from the sky water. From it is drink, and with it grows vegetation for grazing. And He produces for you grains with it, and olives, and date-palms, and grapes, and all kinds of fruits. Surely in that is a sign for people who think.

And He regulated for you the night and the day; and the sun, and the moon, and the stars are disposed by His command. Surely in that are signs for people who ponder. And whatsoever He created for you on earth is of diverse colors. Surely in that is a sign for people who are mindful. And it is He who made the sea to serve you, that you may eat from its tender meat and extract from it ornaments that you wear. And you see the ships plowing through it, as you seek His bounties, so that you may give thanks.⁹³

And there is a lesson for you in cattle: We give you a drink from their bellies, from between waste and blood, pure milk, refreshing to the drinkers. And from the fruits of date-palms and grapevines, you derive sugar and wholesome food. In this is a sign for people who understand. And your Lord inspired the bee: “Set up hives in the mountains, and in the trees, and in what they construct.” Then eat of all the fruits, and go along the pathways of your Lord, with precision. From their bellies emerges a fluid of diverse colors, containing healing for the people. Surely in this is a sign for people who reflect.⁹⁴



Juz Fifteen

The fifteenth *juz* of the Qur'an contains all of Surah al-Isra', also known as Surah Bani Isra'il, and the bulk of Surah al-Kahf, ending at verse seventy-four of Surah al-Kahf in the middle of the story of Prophet Musa عليه السلام.

Surah al-Isra' and Surah al-Kahf complement each other and flow together. Surah al-Isra' begins with *tasbih*, while Surah al-Kahf begins with *tahmid*, these are the two primary forms of *dhikr* by which we remember Allah. Both of these are Makkan *surahs* from the late Makkan period focused on miracles, answered *du'as*, and Allah's Power and Wisdom. These themes continue in the next *juz* with Surah Maryam and Surah Taha as well.

Surah al-Isra' is named in reference to the Prophet's night journey to Jerusalem in which he عليه السلام led the previous prophets in prayer, and then ascended to visit the world of the unseen. It was a turning point in his life as it established his status as the leader of the prophets. Surah al-Isra' is named after the amazing miracle of Prophet Muhammad عليه السلام, while the next few *surahs* focus on the miracles of past prophets and righteous people. The theme of miracles runs strong over the next few *surahs*.

A large portion of Surah al-Isra' focuses on the early laws of Islam. The bulk of Islamic law was revealed in Madinah but in Surah al-Isra' we get a glimpse of what laws were revealed in Makkah. A primary focus of these laws was the importance of respecting one's parents and treating them well. This remains a core component of our religion today.

Your Lord has commanded that you worship none but Him, and that you be good to your parents. If either of them or both of them reach old age with you, do not say to them a word of disrespect, nor scold them, but say to them kind words. And lower to them the wing of humility, out of mercy, and say, "My Lord, have mercy on them, as they raised me when I was a child." Your Lord knows best what is in your minds. If you are righteous—He is Forgiving to the obedient. And give the relative his rights, and the poor, and the wayfarer, and do not squander wastefully.⁹⁵

Notice how the verse flows from the rights of parents to the rights of relatives, the poor, and others. This shows the comprehensive teachings of Islam. We are called upon to treat everyone well, but our parents deserve a special level of kindness, especially when they reach old age. This kindness during their old age is one of the gateways to Paradise.

The story of Adam is repeated in this *surah* with a focus on the arrogance of Shaytan. It is repeated again in the middle of Surah al-Kahf, focusing on the origins of the devil. Surah al-Isra' shows us that the devil looked down upon Adam for being created from mud,⁹⁶ while Surah al-Kahf reminds us that the devil was a jinn,⁹⁷ which is not automatically better

than a human. The devil had no real reason to feel superior; this is the trap of arrogance, it involves a false sense of superiority.

The devil is then reminded that he has no authority over the righteous. It is only the rebellious who fall for the devil's tricks. "As for My devotees, you have no authority over them. Your Lord is an adequate Guardian."⁹⁸

Towards the end of the *surah*, we are reminded that the Qur'an is a mercy and a healing for us.⁹⁹ In the previous *surah*, Allah promised to preserve the Qur'an; in this *surah* He reminds us that the Qur'an was revealed for our benefit. Allah fulfilled His promise, and the Qur'an remains the primary source of spiritual healing and mercy for humanity today.

The *surah* ends with a series of verses about Prophet Musa عليه السلام.¹⁰⁰ Prophet Musa عليه السلام was the main prophet that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ communicated with during the night journey; he also resembled him the most in story and mission and is a primary focus of the next *surah*. In the story of Musa عليه السلام in Surah al-Isra', we see the punishment of Pharaoh and understand why Allah punishes tyrants in this world. In the story of Musa عليه السلام in Surah al-Kahf, we see good people facing trials and learn to understand why bad things happen to good people in this world.

Surah al-Isra' ends with praising Allah who has no son. Surah al-Kahf begins with similar verses. "Praise be to God, who has not begotten a son, nor has He a partner in sovereignty, nor has He an ally out of weakness, and glorify Him constantly."¹⁰¹ "Praise be to God, who revealed the Book to His servant, and allowed in it no distortion."¹⁰²

Surah al-Kahf focuses on four core stories, each dealing with a different test of life. The sleepers of the cave were tested for their faith, and Allah rewarded them through a miracle. The owner of the garden was tested with wealth, and it was taken away from him when he failed to show gratitude. The people in the story of Musa عليه السلام and Khidr عليه السلام were tested with a variety of trials. Their patience with these trials was the path to passing the test. Finally, Dhu al-Qarnayn was tested with power over others, and he passed this test by ruling with justice.

The core lesson in this *surah* is that each of us will face similar trials in life. Surah al-Kahf teaches us how to pass each of the tests. In this way, a weekly recitation of Surah al-Kahf on a Friday serves as a reminder and a guiding light for the rest of the week. Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever recites Surah al-Kahf on Friday will have a light between this Friday and the next."¹⁰³



Juz Sixteen

The sixteenth *juz* begins at verse 75 of Surah al-Kahf in the middle of the story of Musa and Khidr عليه السلام. The *juz* contains all of Surah Maryam and Surah Taha, ending at the conclusion of Surah Taha. The story of Musa عليه السلام is a theme that flows throughout this *juz*. It begins in the middle of the story of Musa's adventure with Khidr, the bond between Musa and his brother Harun عليه السلام is mentioned in Surah Maryam, and then Surah Taha focuses entirely on the story of Musa عليه السلام. In these three *surahs*, we see three different parts of the journey of Musa عليه السلام, as a student, a brother, and a messenger.

The theme of miracles is another theme found consistently throughout the *juz*. The *juz* begins with the miracles of Khidr عليه السلام and Dhu al-Qarnayn in the second half of Surah al-Kahf. Khidr عليه السلام was a prophet who was granted many miracles and a deep understanding of *qadar*. Through Musa's عليه السلام journey with him, they encountered many strange things and Musa عليه السلام learned the importance of trusting Allah's *qadar*. Dhu al-Qarnayn was a great leader who was given control over a large portion of the earth. As a miracle, Allah allowed him to construct a wall that protected the world from Gog and Magog.¹⁰⁴ Gog and Magog will remain hidden behind this wall until the end-times.

Surah Maryam gives us two miraculous births in Yahya عليه السلام and 'Isa عليه السلام. Yahya عليه السلام was granted to his parents at an old age after his father made *du'a* for an heir. 'Isa عليه السلام is the only human created from a mother without a father.¹⁰⁵ The core lesson in these stories is to never lose hope in Allah's Mercy and to ask Allah for whatever we need as He is capable of all things. The miracles of Musa عليه السلام are then listed in Surah Taha as well.

Surah Maryam is an early Makkan *surah* that was revealed before the migration to Abyssinia. We know this because Ja'far عليه السلام recited this *surah* in the court of the Najashi. The *surah* has a powerful rhythmic flow that really touches the heart. The message of the *surah* likewise is deep and touches the heart. A core message in this *surah* is the Mercy of Allah, which is repeated throughout. The name *al-Rahman* appears in this *surah* sixteen times.¹⁰⁶

In the stories of Maryam عليه السلام and Khidr عليه السلام, there is an interesting contrast. Khidr عليه السلام took away the child of a couple to protect them from the child growing up to harm them. They viewed losing their child as a tragedy and were unaware that it was actually to protect them. Maryam عليه السلام was blessed with a child that was initially viewed as a test. She did not realize then that her child would be a great blessing for her. In these two stories, we see how both gaining and losing a child can be perceived differently. Both can be tests from Allah, and whatever Allah wills for us is best for us.

In the story of Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام, we have an excellent role model of how to call people to Islam. Throughout the story, Ibrahim عليه السلام calls on his father with compassion

and wisdom, despite his father's rejection and harshness towards him. This passage in Surah Maryam should be recited and reflected on for lessons in *da'wah* methodology.¹⁰⁷ The Prophet ﷺ sees in Ibrahim عليه السلام an optimistic message. Ibrahim's father rejected his message, yet others would later embrace it. Likewise, the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ had rejected his message, but many were going to embrace it in the future.

A variety of other prophets are mentioned in Surah Maryam. The brotherhood between Musa and Harun, the steadfastness of Isma'il عليه السلام, and the raising up of Idris عليه السلام are all listed as examples of Allah's blessings on various prophets. The message is clear: obey Allah and He will take care of you in both worlds.

Surah Taha revolves around the story of Prophet Musa عليه السلام with a strong focus on his journey as a messenger. Other repetitions of this story in the Qur'an focus on the reactions of the Pharaoh or his people. Here the focus is on his journey and personal struggles, which parallel those of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Surah Taha holds an important place in the hearts of believers. It was the opening verses of this *surah* that caused 'Umar's رضي الله عنه heart to open towards Islam, paving the way to victory for the Muslims.¹⁰⁸ The conversion of 'Umar رضي الله عنه was the most important conversion of the early Makkan period, and this *surah* was central to that powerful event.



Juz Seventeen

The seventeenth *juz* of the Qur'an contains two *surahs* in their entirety, Surah al-Anbiya', and Surah al-Hajj. The focus of this *juz* is on the third and fourth pillars of faith; the messengers and their messages. Surah al-Anbiya' focuses on the messengers, their stories, and struggles. Surah al-Hajj focuses on the message of the prophets: a message of monotheism, worship, and righteous conduct. The Hajj is focused on as a symbol of all three; Hajj is the ultimate act of worship based on pure monotheism that builds in us the best of character.

Surah al-Anbiya' gives us a snapshot of the lives of sixteen prophets and a glimpse of how each of their stories ended. Every prophet is briefly mentioned except Ibrahim عليه السلام who is a primary focus of both of these *surahs*. The pagans of Makkah considered themselves followers of Ibrahim عليه السلام so a lot of early Makkan revelation focused on reminding them of the true message of Ibrahim عليه السلام, which was exactly the same as the message of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Both *surahs* begin with strong warnings about the end of times. These passages serve as firm reminders to embrace the message quickly before The Hour occurs. Mankind does not have the luxury of time to wait and make excuses for rejecting the truth.

Mankind's reckoning has drawn near, but they turn away heedlessly. No fresh reminder comes to them from their Lord, but they listen to it playfully. Their hearts distracted, the wrongdoers confer secretly, Is this anything but a mortal like you? Will you take to sorcery, with open eyes?¹⁰⁹

O people be conscious of your Lord. The quaking of the Hour is a tremendous thing. On the Day when you will see it: every nursing mother will discard her infant, and every pregnant woman will abort her load, and you will see the people drunk, even though they are not drunk—but the punishment of God is severe.¹¹⁰

A core theme of Surah al-Anbiya' is that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was not the first prophet, and the claims made against him were not made for the first time. Every excuse made by the Quraysh is tackled and they are reminded that every messenger before him was also a human just like them. It is not the way of Allah to send angels as messengers. Allah reminds them further that the message of Muhammad ﷺ is consistent with the message of those who came before him. The *surah* leaves no excuse for disbelieving in the truth.¹¹¹

The core focus of this *surah* is the prophets of the past and their similarities to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in message and challenges. We learn about the struggles of Lut, Nuḥ, Musa, Dawud, Ayyub, and Yunus عليه السلام, along with many others. In all these stories, the end is the same, victory was given to the prophet and those who followed him. This *surah* was re-

vealed as both a warning to the Quraysh and a source of hope and optimism for the Prophet ﷺ and his followers.

Towards the beginning of Surah al-Ḥajj is a beautiful verse that summarizes our lives on earth. It is worth taking time to reflect on this verse and its implications for how we live our lives.

O people! If you are in doubt about the Resurrection—We created you from dust, then from a small drop, then from a clinging clot, then from a lump of flesh, partly developed and partly undeveloped. In order to clarify things for you. And We settle in the wombs whatever We will for a designated term, and then We bring you out as infants until you reach your full strength. And some of you will pass away, and some of you will be returned to the vilest age, so that he may not know, after having known. And you see the earth still; but when We send down water on it, it vibrates, and swells, and grows all kinds of lovely pairs.¹¹²

Surah al-Anbiya' reflects on the creation of the heavens and earth, while this *surah* calls on us to reflect on our own existence. Between the two, we are given a lot to reflect on, all of which should lead to the same conclusion; we must devote our lives to serving our Creator.

There are different opinions on whether Surah al-Ḥajj is Makkan or Madinan. The strongest opinion seems to be that it is a mixture of Makkan and Madinan verses. The *surah* was most likely revealed around the time of the *Hijrah* with part of it revealed before and part of it after. This explains why it is difficult to categorize. The second half of the *surah* focuses on the test of life, an important reminder for the migrants who had just left Makkah in exile.

The story of Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام is once again a central focus of this *surah*. The story of how he built the Ka'bah and called people for Hajj is mentioned as a sign of hope. Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام did not see the multitudes arriving for Hajj during his lifetime. Today, millions of people respond each year to his call. This was a powerful and hopeful reminder to the Prophet ﷺ that he too would one day be successful and return to Makkah.



Juz Eighteen

The eighteenth *juz* of the Qur'an begins with Surah Mu'minun, contains all of Surah Nur, and ends at verse twenty of Surah Furqan. This *juz* focuses on the qualities of the true believer. All three *surahs* emphasize the qualities and characteristics that are expected from Muslims. The closing verse of Surah al-Hajj was the first verse to refer to this nation as Muslims;¹¹³ the next *surah* begins with a description of the true believers.

Successful are the believers. Those who are humble in their prayers. Those who avoid nonsense. Those who work for charity. Those who safeguard their chastity. Except from their spouses, or their women, for they are free from blame. But whoever seeks anything beyond that—these are the transgressors. Those who are faithful to their trusts and pledges. Those who safeguard their prayers. These are the inheritors, who will inherit Paradise, wherein they will dwell forever.¹¹⁴

The qualities of the believer are all interconnected. Someone who concentrates on their *salah* will avoid vain talk. Those who avoid vain talk also avoid the paths to fornication. Abstaining from fornication is a way of fulfilling one's contract with Allah, which leads us to fulfill our contracts with people. All of these qualities are connected and flow together to form the personality of the true believer. The *surah* ends with a beautiful *du'a*, "And say, My Lord, forgive and have mercy, for You are the Best of the merciful."¹¹⁵

Surah Nur takes its name from the verse of light found in this *surah*. This is a deep powerful verse that would require another book to explain. It is a parable of the greatness of Allah and how He guides the hearts of the believers through the message of Islam. Surah al-Mu'minun described the primary characteristics of the believer; Surah Nur teaches us the practical ways of living by these characteristics and how we are tested in these areas.

A primary focus of this *surah* is sexual morality. This *surah* contains the prohibition of fornication and adultery, the obligation of covering the *'awrah*, the prohibition of slander, the command to lower the gaze, the command to seek permission before entering someone's home, and the prohibition of listening to gossip and slander. All of these rules work towards the same primary purpose: the establishment of a community that is morally pure.

Surah Nur was revealed due to the incident of the slander. This is a well-known incident in which hypocrites started a slanderous rumor against the prophet's wife 'A'ishah (Allah be pleased with her), so Allah revealed verses in this *surah* clarifying her innocence, as well as rules to prevent such incidents from becoming common. The majority of people who spread the slander were not evil hypocrites, they were believers who had a bad habit of gossiping. This incident should serve as a firm warning against spreading gossip and unverified information, a habit that has become even more common with social media.

An additional lesson from this story is the importance of maintaining family ties and forgiving our relatives for their slip-ups. One of the primary gossipers who spread the slander was a relative of 'A'ishah (Allah be pleased with her) who was being supported financially by her father. When Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه learned about this, he decided to cut off all monetary support to the man who had slandered his daughter. In response, Allah revealed this powerful verse.

Those of you who have affluence and means should not refuse to give to the relatives, and the needy, and the emigrants for the sake of God. And let them pardon and let them overlook. Do you not love for God to pardon you? God is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.¹¹⁶

One of the primary methods of protecting ourselves from spreading slander is to keep our tongues and minds focused on remembering Allah. This message is repeated throughout this *surah*, especially in the following passage.

In houses [homes or *masjids*] which God has permitted to be raised, and His name is celebrated therein. He is glorified therein, morning and evening. By men who neither trading nor commerce distracts them from God's remembrance, and from performing the prayers, and from giving alms [the same qualities that were mentioned in Surah Mu'minun]. They fear a Day when hearts and sights are overturned. God will reward them according to the best of what they did, and He will increase them from His bounty. God provides for whomever He wills without reckoning.¹¹⁷

Surah Furqan contains another powerful description of the true believers, herein referred to as the true worshippers of the Most Merciful. This description will be discussed in the next chapter.



Juz Nineteen

The nineteenth *juz* of the Qur'an begins at verse twenty-one of Surah Furqan, contains all of Surah al-Shu'ara', and ends at verse fifty-five of Surah al-Naml. Surah Furqan completes the theme of qualities of the true believers covered in the previous two *surahs*.

Surah al-Shu'ara' and Surah al-Naml focus on stories of the prophets. But they each contain different types of stories of prophets. Surah al-Shu'ara' focuses on the perished nations who disobeyed the messengers, while Surah al-Naml focuses on the success of Prophet Sulayman عليه السلام in his mission. Between the two, we see the different endings of those who follow the messengers and those who reject them.

The opening verse of the *juz* is a reminder of the kind of excuse the disbelievers make for not following the truth. "Those who do not expect to meet Us say, 'If only the angels were sent down to us, or we could see our Lord.' They have grown arrogant within themselves and have become excessively defiant."¹¹⁸

This is followed by a series of verses describing the regrets of the disbelievers and the hypocrites, ending with the complaint of the Prophet ﷺ that his people did not take the Qur'an seriously. We ask Allah to make us from those who take the Qur'an seriously.

On that Day, the wrongdoer will bite his hands, and say, "If only I had followed the way with the Messenger. Oh, woe to me; I wish I never took so-and-so for a friend. He led me away from the Message after it had come to me; for Satan has always been a betrayer of man." And the Messenger will say, "My Lord, my people have abandoned this Qur'an."¹¹⁹

It may be difficult to comprehend why some people reject the message of truth even when it is clear to them. The Qur'an reminds us here that many of them are like cattle, which means that they simply follow their leaders without critical thinking or self-reflection. "Or do you assume that most of them hear or understand? They are just like cattle, but even more errant in their way."¹²⁰

This ties in the closing verse of the *surah* reminding us that Allah does not need us, but we need Him, and rejecting the truth only harms us. "Say, what are you to my Lord without your prayers? You have denied the truth, and the inevitable will happen."¹²¹

The closing passage of this *surah* highlights the qualities of the true believers, which we can summarize as humility, avoiding arguments, praying the night-prayer, reflecting on the afterlife, generosity, avoiding major sins, repenting for past sins, avoiding wasting time, and praying for guidance for oneself and one's family.¹²² These qualities comple-

ment the ones mentioned in Surah al-Mu'minun and help one attain a higher level of spirituality.¹²³

Surah al-Shu'ara' is a beautifully poetic story focused on the stories of the perished nations. Each story is told in a powerful rhythmic tone with an emphasis on how the people rejected their messenger and the end result of that rejection. This *surah* is a retelling of the stories of Musa, Ibrahim, Nuḥ, Hud, Salih, Lut, and Shu'ayb with a focus on how their people rejected them and the result of rejecting the messengers. This is a Makkan *surah* revealed to show the disbelievers of Makkah the end result of rejecting the messenger.

In Surah al-Furqan, we see how the Prophet ﷺ will complain on the Last Day about those who did not take the Qur'an seriously. Surah al-Shu'ara' begins with a reminder to the Prophet ﷺ not to stress too much over such people as each person is responsible for their own choices. "Perhaps you will destroy yourself with grief because they do not become believers."¹²⁴

A unique feature of this *surah* is the repetition of the following verses after every story. "In that, there is a sign, but most of them are not believers. Surely, your Lord is the Almighty, the Merciful."¹²⁵

In these verses, both the Mercy and Power of Allah are emphasized with His Names Al-'Aziz (Almighty) and Al-Raḥim (The Merciful). This is a reminder to us that in each story, we see both Allah's Mercy to the prophets and those who believed in them, and his wrath against those who disbelieved. It is easy to look at this *surah* entirely from the perspective of punishment, forgetting that in each story, Allah saved the believers and gave them victory demonstrating both His Power and His Mercy.

The *juz* ends in Surah al-Naml which focuses on the story of Prophet Sulayman ﷺ. This *surah* will be explained in detail in the next chapter.



Juz Twenty

The twentieth *juz* begins with verse fifty-six of Surah al-Naml and ends at verse forty-five of Surah al-‘Ankabut. In between, we have Surah Qasas. The stories of the prophets continue to flow through this *juz* as a core theme but the focus shifts to the tests of life and how to deal with them.

Surah al-Naml focuses on the beautiful story of Prophet Sulayman عليه السلام and his *da‘wah* to the people of Sheba. This is a powerful story worth reflecting on. A primary lesson we can extract from this story is the importance of gratitude during times of ease. When Sulayman عليه السلام was granted blessings and victory, he always responded with gratitude.

He smiled and laughed at her words, and said, “My Lord, direct me to be thankful for the blessings you have bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and to do good works that please You. And admit me, by Your grace, into the company of Your virtuous servants.”¹²⁶

Verses fifty-nine to sixty-six are a beautiful passage about the majesty of Allah. Take some time to recite these verses, read their translations and reflect on their meanings.

Say, “Praise God, and peace be upon His servants whom He has selected. Is God better, or what they associate?” Or Who created the heavens and the earth, and rains down water from the sky for you? With it We produce gardens full of beauty, whose trees you could not have produced. Is there another god with God? But they are a people who equate. Or Who made the earth habitable, and made rivers flow through it, and set mountains on it, and placed a partition between the two seas? Is there another god with God? But most of them do not know.

Or Who answers the one in need when he prays to Him, and relieves adversity, and makes you successors on earth? Is there another god with God? How little you pay attention. Or Who guides you through the darkness of land and sea, and Who sends the winds as heralds of His mercy? Is there another god with God? Most exalted is God, above what they associate. Or Who originates the creation and then repeats it, and Who gives you livelihood from the sky and the earth? Is there another god with God? Say, “Produce your evidence, if you are truthful.” Say, “No one in the heavens or on earth knows the future except God; and they do not perceive when they will be resurrected.” In fact, their knowledge of the Hereafter is confused. In fact, they are in doubt about it. In fact, they are blind to it.¹²⁷

In verse eighty-nine, Allah says, “Whoever brings a virtue will receive better than it, and they will be safe from the horrors of that Day.”¹²⁸ This verse relates to the story of Prophet Musa عليه السلام who will be safe from the horrors of the Last Day due to his righteousness. The

previous *surahs* began and ended with descriptions of the horrors of the Last Day. This *surah* shows us how to protect ourselves on that day.

Surah al-Qasas focuses on the story of Prophet Musa عليه السلام. This story shows us the power and decree of Allah. Musa عليه السلام as a helpless baby in the water is protected by Allah. Pharaoh with all his wealth and power is drowned by that same water. This shows us that whoever Allah wishes to protect, nobody can harm, and Allah is in control of everything.

But We desired to favor those who were oppressed in the land, and to make them leaders, and to make them the inheritors.¹²⁹

Surah Qasas showed us the tests that Musa عليه السلام and his followers went through before attaining victory with Allah's assistance. Similarly, Surah al-'Ankabut begins with a reminder that we too will be tested to separate the truthful from the hypocrites.

Have the people supposed that they will be left alone to say, "We believe," without being put to the test? We have tested those before them. God will surely know the truthful, and He will surely know the liars.¹³⁰

Surah al-Qasas gave us the example of Pharaoh who had a false sense of security in his own power, Haman who had a false sense of security in Pharaoh's power, and Qarun who had a false sense of security in his wealth. All three lost everything overnight. Surah al-'Ankabut at the end of this *juz* gives us the perfect parable of this false sense of security: the spider's web.

The likeness of those who take to themselves protectors other than God is that of the spider. It builds a house. But the most fragile of houses is the spider's house. If they only knew.¹³¹



Juz Twenty-One

The twenty-first *juz* begins at verse forty-six of Surah al-‘Ankabut, contains all of Surah Rum, Surah Luqman, and Surah Sajdah, and ends at verse thirty of Surah al-Aḥzab. As we progress into the final third of the Qur’an, the *surahs* get shorter. The bulk of the *surahs* in this *juz* are Makkan *surahs* focused on the test of life, monotheism, and Islamic character. Surah al-Aḥzab is the only Madinan *surah* in this *juz*.

Surah al-‘Ankabut closes with a powerful reminder about the importance of the inner *jihād*. “As for those who strive for Us, we will guide them in Our ways. God is with the doers of good.”¹³² We cannot expect guidance to the straight path without struggle along the way; the path to paradise is paved with trials.

A theme that runs throughout Surah al-Rum is the mention of the proofs for the existence of Allah. Allah calls on us throughout this *surah* to reflect on a variety of things we take for granted. These range from the universe to marriage, from human origins to the diversity of languages.¹³³ In everything around us are signs of the existence of Allah.

This *surah* is also one of the strongest pieces of evidence that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was a true messenger. The *surah* was revealed at a time when the Roman Empire seemed to be on the brink of collapse. The Persians were taking over and it looked like the end of the Roman Empire. The opening verses of the *surah* predicted that within a few years, the Romans would be victorious, and the believers would also be victorious.¹³⁴ A few years later, the Romans defeated the Persians and took back their lands. That same year, the Muslims were victorious at Badr.

Surah Luqman focuses on the story of Luqman The Wise and his advice to his son. Luqman was a wise man who was known to the Arabs. He was the subject of many of their anecdotes. In this *surah*, Allah reminds the Arabs that Luqman was also a monotheist and his advice to his son was the same as the message of Islam. The passage containing Luqman’s advice to his son should be studied by every parent as a great example of what we must focus on when teaching our children Islam. Luqman taught his son monotheism, humility, prayer, patience, and moderation.

We endowed Luqman with wisdom: “Give thanks to God.” Whoever is appreciative is appreciative for the benefit of his own soul. And whoever is unappreciative—God is Sufficient and Praiseworthy. When Luqman said to his son, as he advised him, “O my son, do not associate anything with God, for idolatry is a terrible wrong.”

We have entrusted the human being with the care of his parents. His mother carried him through hardship upon hardship, weaning him in two years. So, give thanks to Me, and your parents. To Me is the destination. But if they strive to have you associate with Me something of which you have no knowledge, do not obey them. But keep them company in this life, in kindness, and follow the path of him who turns to Me. Then to Me is your return, and I will inform you of what you used to do.

“O my son, even if it were the weight of a mustard seed, in a rock, or the heavens, or on earth, God will bring it to light. God is Kind and Expert. O my son, observe the prayer, advocate righteousness, forbid evil, and be patient over what has befallen you. These are the most honorable traits. And do not treat people with arrogance, nor walk proudly on earth. God does not love the arrogant showoffs. And moderate your stride and lower your voice. The most repulsive of voices is the donkey’s voice.”¹³⁵

Surah al-Sajdah is another strong reminder about the oneness of Allah, and the signs of Allah that exist all around us. Throughout this *surah*, Allah reminds us about all of the powerful proofs of His Existence and calls on us to worship Him. The *surah* also includes another reminder that the believers will be tested and that those who reject the truth will cause them a lot of pain. It ends with a reminder that the ultimate victory is on the Last Day, and that victory is for the believers.

And they say, “When is this victory if you are truthful?” Say, “On the day of victory, the faith of those who disbelieved will be of no avail to them, and they will not be granted respite.” So, turn away from them, and wait. They too are waiting.¹³⁶

After three short and powerful Makkan *surahs*, the next *surah* is a slightly longer Madinan *surah*. Surah al-Ahzab was revealed after the battle of Ahzab and reflects on lessons from this battle. A primary focus of this *surah* is the importance of obeying the Messenger. There are several passages throughout this *surah* about the greatness of the Prophet ﷺ and the importance of obeying him.



Juz Twenty-Two

The twenty-second *juz* of the Qur'an begins at verse thirty-one of Surah al-Aḥzab. It includes all of Surah Saba' and Surah al-Fatir and ends at verse twenty-seven of Surah Yasin. Aside from Surah al-Aḥzab, the rest of this *juz* are Makkan *surahs* focused on the Oneness of Allah and the pillars of faith. The core theme that runs through all four *surahs* concerns the fundamental pillars of belief, primarily our relationship with Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.

Surah al-Aḥzab focuses heavily on the rights of the Prophet ﷺ and his wives. In this *surah*, we are taught that the Prophet ﷺ is the perfect role model, who was sent as a witness and a bringer of glad tidings and warnings. We are commanded to send *salawat* upon him and obey him. We are taught that his wives are our mothers and have special rules they need to follow because of this status. All these verses focus on the rights of the Messenger ﷺ.

At the end of the *surah*, we are reminded of how some nations in the past disrespected their messengers and we are commanded not to be like them. "O you who believe! Do not be like those who abused Moses, but God cleared him of what they said. He was distinguished with God."¹³⁷

The *surah* ends with a deep verse about the responsibility that lies upon mankind. Other types of creation refused to take up this responsibility, but humanity accepted it. We must use our free will to obey Allah and fulfill the trust upon us.

We offered the Trust to the heavens, and the earth, and the mountains; but they refused to bear it and were apprehensive of it, but the human being accepted it. He was unfair and ignorant.¹³⁸

The next *surah* gives us two examples of how humanity deals with the responsibilities Allah gives them. In Dawud and Sulayman ﷺ, we see the correct response. They were given authority over large kingdoms and responded with gratitude and justice. "O House of David, work with appreciation, but few of My servants are appreciative."¹³⁹

The people of Saba' were gifted with great wealth, but they abused that wealth and were ungrateful for it, so it was taken away from them. The test of abundance is passed by expressing gratitude. When we are grateful, Allah gives us more. When we are ungrateful, then the blessings are removed. All success then lies in living a life of gratitude.

Surah al-Fatir is a powerful reminder of the greatness of Allah. It is a short powerful *surah* focused on monotheism. Both Surah Saba' and Surah al-Fatir begin with *al-ḥamdu lillah*; these are the final two out of five *surahs* that begin with this important phrase. As

both *surahs* focus on gratitude towards Allah, they both begin with a reminder of the most common way of expressing our gratitude, by saying *al-ḥamdu lillah*.

The *juz* ends near the beginning of Surah Yasin. Surah Yasin is a *surah* that is close to the heart of every Muslim and is often recited in our homes. It focuses on the three central pillars of faith: belief in Allah, His Messenger, and the afterlife. The *surah* begins with a story about a nation that rejected its messengers, and the consequences of having done so. This is a firm reminder to us to obey the Messenger. This is followed by beautiful passages about the signs of Allah and ends with a reminder of the Last Day. The primary beliefs of Islam can all be extracted from this *surah*. Its true importance lies in understanding these verses.

The *juz* ends in the middle of the story of the three messengers. The people of the town rejected all three messengers and only one person believed in them. This individual called his people towards the truth and was eventually murdered for it. Even after death and experiencing paradise, he remained concerned about his people and wished they could see his ending so that they would believe. This is the true heart of the believer; it is always concerned with the guidance of others and wants only good for them.

It was said, “Enter Paradise.” He said, “If only my people knew. How my Lord has forgiven me and made me one of the honored.” After him, we sent down no hosts from heaven to his people; nor would We ever send any down. It was just one Cry, and they were stilled.¹⁴⁰



Juz Twenty-Three

The twenty-third *juz* of the Qur'an begins at verse twenty-eight of Surah Yasin. It contains all of Surah al-Saffat and Surah Sad and ends at verse thirty-one of Surah Zumar. These are all Makkan *surahs* focused on our primary beliefs. The core themes that flow through this *juz* are faith, repentance, and preparing for the afterlife.

The theme of the afterlife is strongly emphasized throughout this *juz*. Surah Yasin contains several passages about the afterlife and Surah al-Saffat and Surah Sad both describe the afterlife in detail. Surah al-Zumar ends with a powerful series of verses describing how people will enter Paradise and Hell. A unique feature found in all four *surahs* are narrations of the conversations of people in Paradise and Hell.

In Surah Yasin, we learn about the man whose people refused to believe him and killed him instead. Even in Paradise, he thinks about them and wishes they could see his reward so that they would believe. The next *surah* shows us the regret of the disbelievers for following their leaders. Their excuse will not hold up as each of us have been gifted with free will and a conscience. Choosing to blindly follow leaders down the wrong path is a choice that people will be held responsible for.

They will come to one another, questioning one another. They will say, "You used to come at us from the right." They will say, "You yourselves were not believers. We had no authority over you. You yourselves were rebellious people. The Word of our Lord has been realized against us. We are tasting it. We seduced you. We were seducers." On that Day, they will share in the punishment. Thus, we deal with the sinners.¹⁴¹

The same theme continues in Surah Sad. The followers who end up in the fire will curse their leaders and ask Allah to increase their punishment. They will say, "Our Lord, whoever brought this upon us, give him double torment in the Fire."¹⁴²

In Surah al-Zumar we see the excuses that people will make for not following the truth, excuses that do not hold up in the afterlife.

So that a soul may not say, "How sorry I am, for having neglected my duty to God, and for having been of the scoffers." Or say, "Had God guided me; I would have been of the pious." Or say, when it sees the penalty, "If only I had another chance, I would be of the virtuous."¹⁴³

The regret of the people of the Hellfire is a common theme that appears throughout the *juz*, but Allah does not leave us without hope. In the middle of all of this lies the verse of hope, the most optimistic verse in the Qur'an.

Say, “O My devotees who have believed, keep your duty to your Lord. For those who do good in this world, is goodness. And God’s earth is vast. The steadfast will be paid their wages in full, without reckoning.”¹⁴⁴

This verse is a firm reminder that as long as we are alive, we have an opportunity to repent and work towards Paradise. The conversations of the people of Hell should serve as a deterrent against sin and should push us towards repentance and righteousness. As long as we live, the door of repentance remains open.

These *surahs* discuss Paradise as well. The flow of the Qur’an creates a balance between hope and fear. We require this balance to try and avoid sin, while not losing hope in Allah’s Mercy. As humans with weaknesses, we cannot function optimally without a balance between hope and fear. To build this balance, these *surahs* contain beautiful descriptions of Paradise and the people of Paradise as well.

This is a reminder. The devout will have a good place of return. The Gardens of Eden, with their doors wide open for them. Relaxing therein and calling for abundant fruit and beverage. With them will be attendants with modest gaze, of the same age. This is what you are promised for the Day of Account. Such is Our bounty, inexhaustible.¹⁴⁵



Juz Twenty-Four

This *juz* begins at verse thirty-two of Surah al-Zumar, contains all of Surah Ghafir, and ends at verse forty-six of Surah Fussilat. A common theme that runs throughout these three *surahs* are the conversations of angels with or about the believers. Surah al-Zumar ends with the angels greeting the believers at the gates of Paradise, Surah al-Ghafir mentions the angels under the Throne making *du'a* for the believers, and Surah Fussilat shows us the glad tidings of the angels to the righteous at the time of death.

Surah al-Zumar ends a descriptive passage about the groups of people entering Hell and Paradise, and how the guardians of both places will greet these two different groups.

Those who disbelieved will be driven to Hell in groups. Until, when they have reached it, and its gates are opened, its keepers will say to them, “Did not messengers from among you come to you, reciting to you the revelations of your Lord, and warning you of the meeting of this Day of yours?” They will say, “Yes, but the verdict of punishment is justified against the disbelievers.” It will be said, “Enter the gates of Hell, to abide therein eternally.” How wretched is the destination of the arrogant?

And those who feared their Lord will be led to Paradise in groups. Until, when they have reached it, and its gates are opened, its keepers will say to them, “Peace be upon you, you have been good, so enter it, to abide therein eternally.” And they will say, “Praise be to God, who has fulfilled His promise to us, and made us inherit the land, enjoying Paradise as we please.” How excellent is the reward of the workers? And you will see the angels hovering around the Throne, glorifying their Lord with praise. And it will be judged between them equitably, and it will be said, “Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds.”¹⁴⁶

Another theme flowing through this *juz* is repentance. Surah al-Zumar contains the verse of hope, and the next *surah* is named al-Ghafir. Al-Ghafir is one of Allah’s Beautiful Names. It means the Most Forgiving. Many of Allah’s names and attributes related to punishment and forgiveness are mentioned in this *surah* creating that balance between hope and fear.

So be patient. The promise of God is true. And ask forgiveness for your sin and proclaim the praise of your Lord evening and morning.¹⁴⁷

At the beginning of this *surah*, we have a powerful passage about the angels around the Throne of Allah and the *du'a* they make for the believers.

Those who carry the Throne, and those around it, glorify their Lord with praise, and believe in Him, and ask for forgiveness for those who believe: “Our Lord, you have encompassed everything in mercy and knowledge; so, forgive those who repent and follow Your path, and protect them from the agony of the Blaze. And admit them, Our Lord, into the Gardens of Eternity, which You have promised them, and the righteous among their parents, and their spouses, and their offspring. You are indeed the Almighty, the Wisest. And shield them from evil deeds. Whoever You shield from the evil deeds, on that Day, You have had mercy on him. That is the supreme achievement.”¹⁴⁸

Surah Fussilat describes the angels that meet the believer at the time of death and the glad tidings they bring with them.

Surely, those who say: “Our Lord is God,” and then go straight, the angels will descend upon them: “Do not fear, and do not grieve, but rejoice in the news of the Garden which you were promised. We are your allies in this life and the Hereafter, wherein you will have whatever your souls desire, and you will have therein whatever you call for. As Hospitality from an All-Forgiving, Merciful One.”¹⁴⁹

Themes of redemption, forgiveness, the unseen, and punishment all flow together throughout this *juz*. Central to all of this is the story of Musa عليه السلام in Surah Ghafir. There is a unique focus in this *surah* on a member of Pharaoh’s family who believed in Musa عليه السلام and followed him, showing how Allah’s guidance and forgiveness reach the hearts of the sincere, no matter what family they come from.

A believing man from Pharaoh’s family, who had concealed his faith, said, “Are you going to kill a man for saying, ‘My Lord is God,’ and he has brought you clear proofs from your Lord? If he is a liar, his lying will rebound upon him; but if he is truthful, then some of what he promises you will befall you. God does not guide the extravagant imposter. O my people! Yours is the dominion today, supreme in the land; but who will help us against God’s might, should it fall upon us?” Pharaoh said, “I do not show you except what I see, and I do not guide you except to the path of prudence.”¹⁵⁰



Juz Twenty-Five

The twenty-fifth *juz* begins at verse forty-seven of Surah Fussilat. It includes Surah al-Shura, Surah al-Zukhruf, and Surah al-Dukhan, ending with Surah Jathiyah. A theme that flows throughout this *juz* is the status of the Qur'an and the importance of revelation. All five *surahs* begin with verses about the Qur'an's status.

A Scripture whose Verses are detailed, a Qur'an in Arabic for people who know.¹⁵¹

Thus, we inspired you with an Arabic Qur'an, that you may warn the Central City and whoever is around it and to warn of the Day of Assembly, of which there is no doubt; a group in the Garden, and a group in the Furnace.¹⁵²

By the Book that makes things clear. We made it an Arabic Qur'an, so that you may understand. And it is with Us, in the Source Book, sublime and wise.¹⁵³

We have revealed it on a Blessed Night, We have warned.¹⁵⁴

The revelation of the Book is from God, the Exalted in Might, the Wise.¹⁵⁵

Verse 7 in Surah al-Shur'a is really powerful. Fatimah bint 'Abd al-Malik narrates that when her husband 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz would recite this verse, he would cry and ask, "Which group am I a part of?" 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz was the eighth Umayyad Caliph and one of the most pious rulers in the history of Islam. Yet he feared his deeds were not good enough to get him into Paradise. Such are the hearts and minds of the righteous.

Besides verses praising the Qur'an, Surah al-Shura also addresses the criticisms of the Quraysh against the Qur'an. Their arguments about whom the Qur'an was revealed to and why it was revealed to him were directly addressed in the following verses.

It is not for any human that God should speak to him, except by inspiration, or from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger to reveal by His permission whatever He wills. He is All-High, All-Wise. We thus inspired you spiritually, by Our command. You did not know what the Scripture is, nor what faith is, but We made it a light, with which We guide whomever We will of Our servants. You surely guide to a straight path.¹⁵⁶

Against in Surah al-Zukhruf, Allah addresses those who doubted the message, drawing our attention to the real reasons they rejected Islam: tribalism and arrogance. They were upset that the message was revealed to a man from Banu Hashim and not one of the elite tribes of Makkah or Ta'if.

They also said, “If only this Qur’an was sent down to a man of importance from the two cities.” Is it they who allocate the mercy of your Lord? It is We who have allocated their livelihood in this life, and We elevated some of them in rank above others, that some of them would take others in service. But your Lord’s mercy is better than what they amass.¹⁵⁷

The theme of the greatness of the Qur’an flows throughout this *juz*. Allah addresses all of the arguments raised by the Quraysh against the Qur’an while reminding us of its importance and virtues. In Surah al-Dukhan, Allah reminds us that the Qur’an was revealed on a blessed night referring to Laylat al-Qadar (The Night of Power) in Ramadan. This is a reminder that the Qur’an is blessed in every way, including the date chosen for its initial revelation.

The *juz* ends with Surah al-Jathiyah, a powerful reminder about what happens to those who reject this message in the afterlife. It concludes with a warning that those who reject the book of Allah in this world will face serious consequences on the Last Day. The message is clear; believe in the revelation and follow it as it is the only path to salvation.

And it will be said, “Today We forget you, as you forgot the encounter of this Day of yours. Your abode is the Fire, and there are no saviors for you. That is because you took God’s revelations for a joke, and the worldly life lured you.” So today they will not be brought out of it, and they will not be allowed to repent. Praise belongs to God, Lord of the heavens, Lord of the earth, Lord of humanity. To Him belongs all supremacy in the heavens and the earth. He is the Majestic, the Wise.¹⁵⁸



Juz Twenty-Six

The twenty-sixth *juz* contains six *surahs*, all of which represent a variety of themes. These include three Makkan *surahs*; Surah al-Aḥqaf and the last two *surahs* in the *juz*, Surah Qaf and Surah al-Dhariyat. The other three *surahs* in this *juz* are Madinan *surahs*: Surah Muḥammad, Surah al-Fatḥ and Surah al-Ḥujarat. Each *surah* has its own theme and many powerful lessons.¹⁵⁹

Surah al-Aḥqaf is the final *surah* in a string of *surahs* focused on the importance of the revelation of the Qur'an. It begins with a reminder that Allah did not create the Heavens and Earth without a purpose, and that the Qur'an was revealed to show us our purpose.

The sending down of the Scripture is from God, the Honorable, the Wise. We did not create the heavens and the earth and what lies between them except with reason, and for a finite period. But the blasphemers continue to ignore the warnings they receive.¹⁶⁰

The *surah* includes a mention of the people of 'Ad and the consequences of their rejecting the message. This story was relevant to the people of Makkah as they were aware of 'Ad and what had happened to them. The *surah* was a warning that they would face the same consequences if they rejected the truth.

We had empowered them in the same way as We empowered you, and We gave them hearing, and sight, and minds. But neither their hearing, nor their sight, nor their minds availed them in any way. That is because they disregarded the revelations of God; and so, they became surrounded by what they used to ridicule.¹⁶¹

The next three *surahs* are short Madinan *surahs* focused on a variety of Madinan themes. Surah Muhammad highlights the differences between the believers and hypocrites. Believers are expected to be brave, righteous, and steadfast. In return, they are promised Paradise. The hypocrites, in contrast, pretend to be pious while their hearts are full of cowardice and malice. Their end is disgrace in both worlds. We are supposed to reflect on the two descriptions and ensure we fall on the right side of this description.

Surah al-Fatḥ was revealed after the treaty of Ḥudaybiyah. In this *surah*, Allah declared the treaty a clear victory. This was difficult for the companions to understand at that time as the treaty seemed unfair against them. Yet it did prove to be the greatest victory as it opened the doors to peace, expansion, mass conversion, and eventually the conquest of Makkah.

This *surah* also includes a powerful testimony of Allah's acceptance of the deeds of the companions. This verse is considered among the strongest evidence for the high status of the companions in Islam.

God was pleased with the believers when they pledged allegiance to you under the tree. He knew what was in their hearts, and sent down serenity upon them, and rewarded them with an imminent conquest.¹⁶²

Surah al-Ḥujarat is also known as the chapter of manners. It is an amazing *surah* that summarizes the core manners of Islam in nineteen short powerful verses. These verses include the prohibition of gossip, spreading fake news, name-calling, backbiting, spying, unwarranted suspicions, and racism. If all Muslims implemented the teachings of this *surah*, it would transform society and rid us of most of our communal problems.

Surah al-Hujarat also includes a warning that the revelation cannot conform to our desires. Had it conformed to our desires, that would defeat its purpose. The Prophet ﷺ had the mission of conveying the message and implementing it in the land. It was not his job to listen to everyone and treat their opinions as equal to the revelation.

And know that among you is the Messenger of God. Had he obeyed you in many things, you would have suffered hardship. But God has given you the love of faith, and adorned it in your hearts, and made disbelief, mischief, and rebellion hateful to you. Those are the rightly guided servants.¹⁶³

The *juz* ends with a return to the Makkan themes. Surah Qaf begins a new string of *surahs* focused on the afterlife. This remains the core theme for the remaining sections of the Qur'an. Both Surah Qaf and Surah al-Dhariyat contain powerful imagery about the afterlife. The *juz* concludes at verse thirty of Surah al-Dhariyat.



Juz Twenty-Seven

The twenty-seventh *juz* of the Qur'an focuses heavily on the afterlife. This theme is clear in every *surah* in this *juz*, especially in the middle portion, the two famous *surahs*: Surah al-Raḥman and Surah al-Waqi'ah. The *juz* begins at verse thirty-one of Surah al-Dharyyat. It includes the following *surahs*, Surah al-Tur, Surah al-Najm, Surah al-Qalam, Surah al-Raḥman, Surah al-Waqi'ah, and ends with Surah al-Ḥadid.

This *juz* marks the beginning of the al-Mufasssal *surahs*. These are the short comprehensive *surahs* of the Qur'an mentioned in the famous narration by 'A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her).

The first thing that was revealed thereof was a *surah* from al-Mufasssal, and in it was mentioned Paradise and the Fire. When the people embraced Islam, the verses regarding legal and illegal things were revealed. If the first thing to be revealed was: "Do not drink alcoholic drinks," people would have said, "We will never leave alcoholic drinks," and if it had been revealed, "Do not commit illegal sexual intercourse," they would have said, "We will never give up illegal sexual intercourse."¹⁶⁴

The majority of the *surahs* in this *juz* focus on the descriptions of Paradise and Hell. Surah al-Raḥman and Surah al-Waqi'ah are unique in their descriptions. These are the only two *surahs* in the Qur'an that describe two different levels of Paradise one after the other. It is from these *surahs* that we learn that there are various levels of Paradise linked to one's level of piety. The righteous will enjoy rewards that the average Muslim will not have access to, but everyone will be content and happy with what they receive.

Surah al-Rahman first describes the Paradise of those who fear their Lord,¹⁶⁵ then describes a Paradise that is lower than it.¹⁶⁶ Surah al-Waqiyah likewise first describes the Paradise of the forerunners in piety,¹⁶⁷ then describes the Paradise of the people who receive their books in their right hands.¹⁶⁸ Both *surahs* also contain detailed descriptions of the Hellfire to balance the message of hope with fear of sin.

Surah Tur also describes Paradise in vivid details.¹⁶⁹ One of the most comforting descriptions mentioned in this *surah* is that we will be with our families and loved ones in Paradise.

Those who believed, and their offspring followed them in faith—We will unite them with their offspring, and We will not deprive them of any of their works. Every person is hostage to what he has earned.¹⁷⁰

Every *surah* in this *juz* calls on us to urgently embrace the message of truth and follow it completely. Surah al-Najm reminds us about the moment the Prophet ﷺ first saw Jibril. This is followed by a strong warning to embrace the truth revealed in such a powerful

rhythmic manner that even the pagans among the Quraysh fell in prostration when they first heard this *surah* recited.

Surah al-Qamar reminds us that the Quraysh were shown a clear sign in the splitting of the moon and still rejected the truth. Everyone had been given a clear sign in the Qur'an about which we are repeatedly told throughout this *surah*, "We made the Qur'an easy to learn. Is there anyone who would learn?"¹⁷¹

The *juz* ends with Surah al-Ḥadid, a powerful reminder of the importance of true belief and the dangers of hypocrisy. This *surah* includes the heart-shaking verse that changed the life of Fudayl Ibn Iyad.

Is it not time for those who believe to surrender their hearts to the remembrance of God, and to the truth that has come down, and not be like those who were given the Book previously, but time became prolonged for them, so their hearts hardened, and many of them are sinners?¹⁷²

Fudayl Ibn Iyad was a thief who repented upon hearing this verse and changed his life. He became a great scholar of Islam and a saint. This verse should shake the hearts of the believers as it is addressed directly to all of us.



Juz Twenty-Eight

The twenty-eighth *juz* of the Qur'an consists of nine *surahs*. Most of these are Makkan *surahs*. As these *surahs* are short and were revealed at different points in time, their themes are diverse. The *surahs* in this *juz* span everything from family life to warfare, and from society to business. The primary focus is on being truthful to our promises and fulfilling the rights of others.

The *juz* begins with Surah al-Mujadilah, the only *surah* in the Qur'an that has the name Allah in every verse. The *surah* is about a woman whose husband was emotionally abusing her by keeping her in a suspended state. This was a violation of the rights of the spouse and the good conduct expected in such a relationship. Allah responded and defended the woman, giving her rights and showcasing how the law of Islam defends the rights of women.

Surah al-Hashr focuses on the believers who love Allah and assist the immigrants and the Prophet, even though they themselves are in need. "And those who, before them, had settled in the homeland, and had accepted faith. They love those who emigrated to them and find no hesitation in their hearts in helping them. They give them priority over themselves, even if they themselves are needy. Whoever is protected from his natural greed—it is they who are the successful."¹⁷³

This verse is about the Ansar. They went beyond what was expected of them and risked everything to protect the Prophet ﷺ and the Muhajirun. The immigrants were in a vulnerable state and the kindness of the Ansar helped and saved them. Contrary to this we see the attitude of the hypocrites who violated their promises and harmed the Prophet ﷺ.

In Surah Saff, Allah admonishes those who say that which they do not do. When making a contract with Allah, be sure to honor it. Compare the heroes of Uḥud to the hypocrites who abandoned the army at Uḥud. The example is given in this *surah* of the disciples of Jesus and their loyalty to him. In this *surah*, Allah praises both the Ansar of Muhammad and the Ansar of Jesus.

O you who believe! Be supporters of God, as Jesus son of Mary said to the disciples, "Who are my supporters towards God?" The disciples said, "We are God's supporters." So, a group of the Children of Israel believed, while another group disbelieved. We supported those who believed against their foe, so they became dominant.¹⁷⁴

The next *surah* discusses the hypocrites who broke their promises and undermined the mission of the Prophet. In Surahs al-Saff and Munafiqun, we see two opposite types of

people: those who obey Allah and those who betray Islam. The focus is on the covenant and fulfilling the rights of Allah and the rights of the believers.

In between these two *surahs* is Surah al-Jumu‘ah, reminding us to leave our business and rush to remember Allah on Fridays. In these verses, Allah is telling us to remember to enjoy Jumu‘ah, not to drag our feet with our minds still in our businesses. Those who pursue this world will undermine their commitments, and those who focus on the after-life will pursue it with *ihsan*.

O you who believe! When the call is made for prayer on Friday, hasten to the remembrance of God, and drop all business. That is better for you, if you only knew.¹⁷⁵

Yet whenever they come across some business, or some entertainment, they scramble towards it, and leave you standing. Say, “What is with God is better than entertainment and business; and God is the Best of providers.”¹⁷⁶

The *juz* ends with Surah Talaq and Surah Taḥrim. Surah Talaq teaches us not to mistreat our spouses, and to be kind, even when getting a divorce. Surah Mujadilah discussed a form of emotional abuse; *talaq* is a legitimate divorce with proper ethics and mercy. This *juz* teaches us both the right and the wrong ways of dealing with marital problems and ending a marriage.

Surah Taḥrim teaches us about the kind of people who cling to this world because of those who they associate with, thinking they will protect them. These people are deluded. The example is given of the wives of Lut and Nuḥ, their association with their husbands did not protect them in this world or the next, as they were hypocrites.

This is in contrast with Asiyah and Maryam who fulfilled their covenants with Allah. Asiyah was married to the worst man but still earned Paradise through her righteousness. She sacrificed everything for Allah. The *juz* begins and ends with a story of a woman making *du‘a* about her husband mistreating her, and Allah answering her *du‘a*.



Juz Twenty-Nine

The twenty-ninth *juz* contains eleven *surahs*, most of which are Makkan *surahs* focused on the afterlife and other aspects of theology. The majority of the early revelation is in this *juz* including Qalam, Muzzammil and Muddaththir. The core theme running through all these *surahs* is the afterlife and the reality of the day of judgment.

The *juz* begins with Surah Mulk telling us to look at the sky and see how flawless the sky is and calling on us to ponder over what is beyond that. This is a *juz* that is meant to wake us up to the reality of life. We are supposed to recite Surah Mulk before sleeping to remind us about the reality of life. It reminds us about the greatness of Allah, the beauty of this universe, the difference between those connected to Allah and those who ignore the signs of Allah all around them. The entire *surah* is a reminder of the signs of Allah that we take for granted.

Say, “Have you considered? If your water drains away, who will bring you pure runningwater?”¹⁷⁷

The *surah* begins with the bigger signs (the universe) and ends with the daily signs we take for granted (running water). Just as our drinking water is connected to the oceans, and the oceans to the rain, the rain comes from Allah. Surah al-Mulk is a reminder of Allah’s blessings, our ending, and how we will be held accountable for what we did with those blessings.

Surah al-Qalam tells us about the insults people made towards the Prophet ﷺ and compares them to how Yunus عليه السلام was treated by his people. This was an early *surah*, when the insults were new, and the Prophet ﷺ took it hard. He was not accustomed to being treated like this and it was an entirely new situation for him. He is told not to be like Yunus عليه السلام who left his people, but to be patient with them and Allah will assist him. An example is given of the Quraysh to the people of the garden who were greedy and refused to help the poor and lost everything.

The people of the garden are given as an example to the Quraysh of their ending if they follow in their footsteps, while Yunus is given as an example to the Prophet as what not to do, while reminding us that Yunus was elevated and forgiven.

Surah al-Haaqah discusses the faith of the perished nations and compares them to the Quraysh. Surah Qalam demonstrates the greed of the Quraysh, while al-Haaqah focuses on the bigger picture of the destruction of nations. Surah Qalam mentions the insults against the prophets; Surah Haaqah refutes these claims.¹⁷⁸

Surah Ma'arij discusses the qualities of the true believers and how their character sets them apart from their opponents. This is followed by Surah Nuḥ giving a clear example of people who abandoned their prophet and how Allah destroyed them. The next *surah* is Surah Jinn showing that not only humans, but even jinn can replace us as true believers and worshippers of Allah.

The next two *surahs* are Surah Muzzammil and Surah Muddaththir. Surah Muzzammil begins by calling to *tahajjud*, Surah Muddaththir begins by calling to *da'wah*, the two sides of the believers: private worship and public calling to the truth. In these two *surahs*, the foundations of the *da'wah* are laid.

The last three *surahs* of this *juz* give us a description of three main parts of the afterlife. Surah al-Qiyamah describes the Last Day. Surah al-Dahr describes Paradise in great detail. Surah al-Mursalat describes the Hellfire in detail. The three together give us a strong glimpse of the afterlife.



Juz Thirty

The final *juz* of the Qur'an contains thirty-seven *surahs*; most of these are Makkan *surahs* focused on various aspects of *aqidah*. The short *surahs* of the Qur'an that are commonly memorized are compiled in this *juz*. Due to the high number of *surahs* in this *juz*, most of these *surahs*' themes will be summarized in one or two sentences each.

Surah al-Naba' is like a summary of the *juz* covering all the themes found throughout it. Surah al-Naba' teaches us that this is an important delivery of news with consequences in both worlds. The next *surah*, an-Nazi'at, teaches us how Pharaoh rejected this message and was punished for it. Later in the *juz*, Surah al-Buruj gives us the story of people who embraced this message and were tortured for it in this world.

Allah tells us that the great news is the Last Day which is the focal point of this *juz*. On that day, everyone will get what they deserve. The righteous will have what they earned, and the disbelievers will have what they earned. Many *surahs* in this *juz* discuss the rewards and punishments on that day.

In this *surah*, Allah refers to the last day as *Yawm al-Fasl* (Day of Sorting) and shows us how everything is perfectly sorted in this world, leading to the conclusion that Allah will sort things perfectly on the Last Day.

Surah al-Nazi'at reminds us of the story of Musa and Pharaoh in a powerful rhythmic manner. Surah 'Abasa teaches us not to ignore the weak while focusing on the arrogant oppressors. Our message should reach everyone, especially those whose hearts are open to hearing it.

Surah al-Takwir and Surah al-Infitar discuss details about the Last Day. Surah al-Mutaffifin discusses the importance of ethics in business, and not cheating. It also covers the consequences of poor business ethics on the Last Day. Surah al-Inshiqaq discusses the tearing up of this world at the end of time.

Surah al-Buruj reminds us of the story of the oppressed people of the past. Surah al-Tariq reminds us that they plan and Allah plans, but His plan will prevail. Surah al-A'la and Surah al-Ghashiyah remind us that the next life is better than this world.

Surah al-Fajr reminds us about the Last Day and the good ending of the righteous believer. Surah al-Balad is a reminder about Allah's favors and how to use them in a way that is pleasing to Him. Surah al-Shams and Surah al-Layl discuss the perfection of day and night, and various contrasts in Allah's creation. Surah al-Duḥ'a and Surah al-Shahr discuss hope and optimism. Every *surah* in this *juz* discusses the proofs of Allah, death, and the afterlife.

Surah al-Tin is a reminder that we are responsible for our deeds on the Last Day. Surah al-‘Alaq calls on us to read, reflect, and follow the message. Surah al-Qadar highlights the virtues of Laylat al-Qadar (The Night of Power). Surah al-Bayyinah explains the necessity of embracing the true religion. Surah al-Zilzal, Surah al-‘Adiyat, and Surah al-Qari‘ah all describe the Last Day in poetic visuals.

Surah al-Takathur is a reminder against materialism. Surah al-‘Asr is a reminder that our time on earth is limited. Surah al-Fil and Surah al-Quraysh focus on Allah’s blessings to the Quraysh. Surah al-Ma‘un reminds us that the small deeds also matter. Surah al-Kawthar reminds us of the high status of the Prophet ﷺ.

The last few *surahs* starting with Kafirun are in a specific order. Kafirun confirms the negation part of the *kalimah*; i.e., the rejection of polytheism. Surah Ikhlas is the confirmation part of the *kalimah*; i.e., the confirmation of monotheism.

Surah al-Nasr discusses the improbable victory of the believers, and Surah al-Masad discusses the humiliation of the one who rejected this message. These two *surahs* are in between the *surahs* of *tawhīd* showing the consequences of belief and disbelief.

The Qur’an ends with the two protectors which we use to ask Allah for protection from the trials of this world and the next. The closing *surahs* are a reminder that we are constantly tested and need to ask Allah for protection daily. The Qur’an began with a *du‘a* for guidance (Surah al-Fatiḥah), and ends with a *du‘a* for protection from misguidance (Surah al-Nas). The Qur’an itself is guidance for those who are conscious of Allah, and our guidance lies entirely in understanding, reflecting on, and living by the teachings of the Qur’an.

May Allah make us from the people of the Qur’an, grant us proper understanding of it, and forgive us our shortcomings.

Endnotes

Introduction

- 1 Surah al-Baqarah 2:185.
- 2 https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQ02I-YL5pmhGHDxALfwRLA7EvEV-z_ryD.
- 3 <https://www.facebook.com/wat.ch/219543788065670/442756146080522>.
- 4 <https://www.amazon.com/Themes-Qur'an-Ismail-Kamdar/dp/1730905854/>.
- 5 <https://www.quranful.com/>.
- 6 <https://sunnah.com/>.
- 7 <https://www.abuaminaelias.com/dailyhadithonline/>.

Juz One

- 8 Surah al-Fatihah 1:5.
- 9 Surah al-Fatihah 1:6–7.
- 10 Surah al-Baqarah 2:2.
- 11 Surah al-Baqarah 2:3–20.
- 12 Surah al-Baqarah 2:30–39.
- 13 Surah al-Baqarah 2:102.
- 14 Surah al-Baqarah 2:124–36.

Juz Two

- 15 Surah al-Baqarah 2:185.
- 16 Surah al-Baqarah 2:186.
- 17 Surah al-Baqarah 2:208.
- 18 Surah al-Baqarah 2:249.
- 19 Surah al-Baqarah 2:255.
- 20 Surah al-Baqarah 2:285–86.

Juz Three

- 21 Ismail Kamdar, Themes of the Qur'an (Durban: Islamic Self Help, 2016), 18; Muhammad al-Ghazali, A Thematic Commentary on the Qur'an (London: IIIT, 2000), 30.
- 22 Surah Al 'Imran 3:3–4.
- 23 Surah Al 'Imran 3:7.
- 24 Surah Al 'Imran 3:8.
- 25 Surah Al 'Imran 3:67.
- 26 Surah Al 'Imran 3:27, 37.
- 27 Surah Al 'Imran 3:35–50.
- 28 Surah Al 'Imran 3:92.
- 29 Khalil Abdurrashid, "Financing Kindness as a Society: The Rise and Fall of Islamic

Philanthropic Institutions (Waqfs)," Yaqeen, August 20, 2020, <https://yaqeeninstitute.org/khalil-abdurrashid/financing-kindness-as-a-society-the-rise-fall-of-islamic-philanthropic-institutions-waqfs>.

Juz Four

- 30 Sahih Muslim, no. 2890.
- 31 Surah Al 'Imran 3:102–5.
- 32 Surah Al 'Imran 3:110.
- 33 Surah Al 'Imran 3:121–29.
- 34 Surah Al 'Imran 3:144.
- 35 Surah Al 'Imran 3:155.

Juz Five

- 36 Surah al-Nisa' 4:1.
- 37 Surah al-Nisa' 4:4.
- 38 Surah al-Nisa' 4:41.
- 39 Surah al-Nisa' 4:41.
- 40 Sahih al-Bukhari, no. 4582.
- 41 Surah al-Nisa' 4:26–28.
- 42 Surah al-Nisa' 4:65.

Juz Six

- 43 Surah al-Ma'idah 6:3.
- 44 Surah al-Ma'idah 6:1.
- 45 Surah al-Ma'idah 5:3–5.
- 46 Surah al-Ma'idah 5:7.
- 47 Surah al-Ma'idah 5:11.
- 48 Surah al-Ma'idah 5:8.
- 49 Surah al-Ma'idah 5:27–32.

Juz Seven

- 50 Surah al-Ma'idah 5:82–83.
- 51 Surah al-Ma'idah 5:89.
- 52 Surah al-Ma'idah 5:90.
- 53 Surah al-Ma'idah 5:91.
- 54 Surah al-Ma'idah 5:93.
- 55 Surah al-Ma'idah 6:108.

Juz Eight

- 56 Surah al-An'am 6:111.
- 57 Surah al-An'am 6:116.
- 58 Surah al-An'am 6:122.

- 59 Surah al-An'am 6:125.
 60 Surah al-An'am 6:133.
 61 Surah al-An'am 6:161-63.
 62 Surah al-A'raf 7:43.

Juz Nine

- 63 Surah al-An'am 6:46.
 64 Surah al-A'raf 7:96.
 65 Sunan al-Tirmidhi, no. 3086, grade: saḥiḥ.

Juz Ten

- 66 Surah al-Anfal 8:60.
 67 Surah al-Anfal 8:61.
 68 Surah al-Anfal 8:70.
 69 Musnad Aḥmad, no. 948.
 70 Surah Tawbah 9:25.
 71 Surah Tawbah 9:40.
 72 Surah Tawbah 9:42.
 73 Surah Tawbah 9:55.
 74 Surah Tawbah 9:79.
 75 Surah Tawbah 9:92.

Juz Eleven

- 76 Surah Yunus 10:7-10.

Juz Twelve

- 77 Sunan al-Tirmidhi, no. 3297, grade: saḥiḥ.

Juz Thirteen

- 78 Surah Ra'd 13:24.
 79 Surah Ra'd 13:28.
 80 Surah Ibrahim 14:7.
 81 Surah Ibrahim 14:24-26.
 82 Surah Ra'd 13:13.
 83 Surah Ibrahim 14:35-41.

Juz Fourteen

- 84 Surah al-Hijr 15:2-4.
 85 Surah al-Hijr 15:6-8.
 86 Surah al-Hijr 15:9.
 87 Surah al-Hijr 15:29.
 88 Surah al-Hijr 15:42.
 89 Surah al-Hijr 15:49-50.
 90 Surah al-Hijr 15:87.
 91 Surah al-Hijr 15:96-99.
 92 Surah al-Nahl 16:18.
 93 Surah al-Nahl 16:3-14.
 94 Surah al-Nahl 16:66-69.

Juz Fifteen

- 95 Surah al-Isra' 17:23-26.
 96 Surah al-Isra' 17:61.
 97 Surah al-Kahf 18:50.
 98 Surah al-Isra' 17:65.
 99 Surah al-Isra' 17:82.
 100 Surah al-Isra' 17:101-2.
 101 Surah al-Isra' 17:111.
 102 Surah al-Kahf 18:1.
 103 Al-Sunan al-Kubrā, no. 5856, grade: saḥiḥ.

Juz Sixteen

- 104 Surah al-Kahf 18:94-99.
 105 Surah Maryam 19:2-34.
 106 Al-Ghazali, Thematic Commentary on the Qur'an, 323.
 107 Surah Maryam 19:41-50.
 108 'Ali al-Sallabi, Umar Ibn al-Khattab: His Life and Times (Riyadh: Dar-us-Salam, 2010), 54.

Juz Seventeen

- 109 Surah al-Anbiya' 21:1-3.
 110 Surah al-Ḥajj 22:1-2.
 111 Surah al-Anbiya' 21:8-41.
 112 Surah al-Ḥajj 22:5.

Juz Eighteen

- 113 Surah al-Ḥajj 22:78.
 114 Surah al-Mu'minun 23:1-11.
 115 Surah al-Mu'minun 23:118.
 116 Surah al-Nur 24:22.
 117 Surah al-Nur 24:36-38.

Juz Nineteen

- 118 Surah al-Furqan 25:21.
 119 Surah al-Furqan 25:27-30.
 120 Surah al-Furqan 25:44.
 121 Surah al-Furqan 25:77.
 122 Surah al-Furqan 25:63-76.
 123 Kamdar, Themes of the Qur'an, 59.
 124 Surah al-Shu'ara' 26:3.
 125 Surah al-Shu'ara' 26:67-68, 103-4, 121-22, 139-40, 158-59, 174-75, 190-191.

Juz Twenty

- 126 Surah al-Naml 27:19.
 127 Surah al-Naml 27:59-66.
 128 Surah al-Naml 27:89.
 129 Surah al-Qasas 28:5.
 130 Surah al-'Ankabut 29:2-3.

131 Surah al-ʿAnkabut 29:41.

Juz Twenty-One

132 Surah al-ʿAnkabut 29:69.

133 Surah al-Rum 30:20–25.

134 Surah al-Rum 30:1–5.

135 Surah Luqman 31:12–19.

136 Surah al-Sajdah 32:28–30.

Juz Twenty-Two

137 Surah al-Aḥzab 33:69.

138 Surah al-Aḥzab 33:72.

139 Surah Saba' 34:13.

140 Surah Yasin 36:26–29.

Juz Twenty-Three

141 Surah al-Saffat 37:27–34.

142 Surah Sad 38:61.

143 Surah al-Zumar 59:56–58.

144 Surah al-Zumar 59:10.

145 Surah Sad 38:49–54.

Juz Twenty-Four

146 Surah al-Zumar 39:71–75.

147 Surah al-Ghafir 40:55.

148 Surah al-Ghafir 40:7–9.

149 Surah Fussilat 41:30–32.

150 Surah Ghafir 40:28–29.

Juz Twenty-Five

151 Surah Fussilat 41:3.

152 Surah al-Shura 42:7.

153 Surah al-Zukhruf 43:2–4.

154 Surah al-Dukhan 44:3.

155 Surah al-Jathiyah 45:2.

156 Surah al-Shura 42:51–52.

157 Surah al-Zukhruf 43:31–32.

158 Surah al-Jathiyah 45:34–37.

Juz Twenty-Six

159 Kamdar, Themes of the Qur'an, 77.

160 Surah al-Aḥqaf 46:2–3.

161 Surah al-Aḥqaf 46:26.

162 Surah al-Fatḥ 48:18.

163 Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:7.

164 Saḥīḥ al-Bukhari, no. 4993.

Juz Twenty-Seven

165 Surah al-Raḥman 55:46.

166 Surah al-Raḥman 55:62.

167 Surah al-Waqi'ah 56:10–26.

168 Surah al-Waqi'ah 56:27–40.

169 Surah Tur 52:17–28.

170 Surah Tur 52:21.

171 Surah al-Qamar 54:17, 22, 32, 40.

172 Surah al-Ḥadid 57:16.

Juz Twenty-Eight

173 Surah al-Ḥashr 59:9.

174 Surah al-Saff 61:14.

175 Surah al-Jumu'ah 62:9.

176 Surah al-Jumu'ah 62:11.

Juz Twenty-Nine

177 Surah al-Mulk 67:30.

178 Surah al-Haqqah 69:38–50.

About the Authors

Dr. Omar Suleiman

Dr. Omar Suleiman is the Founder and President of the Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research, and an Adjunct Professor of Islamic Studies in the Graduate Liberal Studies Program at SMU (Southern Methodist University). He is also the Resident Scholar at Valley Ranch Islamic Center and Co-Chair Emeritus of Faith Forward Dallas at Thanks-Giving Square.

Dr. Omar Suleiman is the author of *Allah Loves*, *40 on Justice*, *Prayers of the Pious*, and *Angels in Your Presence*.

Sh. Ismail Kamdar

Ismail Kamdar graduated from the 'Alimiyyah program in 2006 and completed a BA in Islamic Studies at International Open University in 2014. He specializes in the fields of Fiqh, Tafsir, and History, is the founder of Islamic Self Help, and the research manager at Yaqeen Institute.

Ismail Kamdar is the author of *Productivity Principles of Umar II*, *Time Management & Barakah in Islam*, *Self-Confidence: The Islamic Way*, *Themes of the Qur'an*, and several other books about Islam and personal development.

About Yaqeen Institute

Islam has a centuries-long tradition of inspiring its adherents to contribute to humanity based on conviction in its tenets. Previous generations of Muslims were on the forefront of contributing to medicine, philosophy, architecture, and governance among other areas. We are an institute aiming to rekindle this tradition.

Constant negative portrayals of Islam have put Muslims in a defensive position in which they constantly have to justify their convictions, while fighting off the natural doubts and insecurities that arise in such a climate. As such, young Muslims should be intellectually equipped and spiritually anchored in a way that empowers them to deal with the onslaught of doubt-inducing claims routinely leveled against Islam.

We aim to actively participate in the current discourse touching on all topics that are related to establishing conviction in the hearts and minds of young Muslims. The institute aims to be the trusted source regarding these topics by generating well-researched Islamic content that is disseminated through various formats including articles, infographics, animations, videos, and cutting-edge app technology. This content is also carefully assembled into curricula that can be used by various educators and community leaders to help anchor young Muslims in their faith and produce thoughtful societal contribution.

The Institute is a non-profit research initiative that makes all of its content free and accessible. This allows everyone looking for answers, and those tasked with giving answers, to always have a comprehensive resource readily available to them.

We believe that telling our own story is the only way to counter the narrative that has been forced upon our community.