

ISL 311: Textual Study of Quran II

NOUN

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NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

**COURSE
GUIDE**

**ISL 311
TEXTUAL STUDY OF QURAN II**

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INTRODUCTION

ISL 311: Textual Studies of Qur'ān II, is a two-credit course prescribed as compulsory for the B.A. Degree in Islamic Studies of the National Open University of Nigeria. Emphasis is on the text, English translation and commentary on the chapters and verses of the *Hizb 'Amma* the 59th of the sixty parts of the Holy Quran based mainly on the Allamah Abdullah Yusuf Ali's universally acclaimed work: *The Holy Qur'ān: Text, Translation and Commentary*. The course guide gives you an overview of what you will come across when you are going through the course. It provides you with information on the organisation and requirements of the course.

COURSE AIMS

The main aim of the course is to make you understand the texts of *Hizb 'Amma*; i.e. the Quranic chapters [from *an-Naba'* to *at-Tāriq*], chapters 78 - 86. This main aim will be achieved by:

- making you go through the translation of the selected chapters
- providing you with detailed commentary of the chapters by Yusuf Ali
- assessing your understanding of the course as you progress section by section, unit by unit.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

To achieve the aims set out above, ISL 311 has overall objectives. In addition, each unit also has specific objectives. The unit objectives are at the beginning of each unit. You should read them before you start working through the unit. You may want to refer to them during your study of the unit to check your progress.

Here are the wider objectives for the course as a whole. By meeting the objectives, you count yourself as having met the aims of the course. On successful completion of the course, you should be able to:

- translate the chapters of the Quran from *an-Naba'* to *at-Tāriq* (78-86) into the English medium
- provide detailed and critical commentary of their verses

WORKING THROUGH THIS COURSE

To complete the course, you are required to read the study units and other related materials. You will also need to undertake practical

exercises for which you need a pen, a notebook, and other materials that will be listed in this guide. The exercises are to aid you in understanding the study being presented. At the end of each unit, you will be required to submit written assignments for assessment purposes. At the end of the course, you will write a final examination.

COURSE MATERIALS

The major materials you will need for this course are:

- Course guide
- Study units
- Assignments file
- Relevant books including the ones listed under each unit
- You may also need to visit the internet to browse through some relevant addresses including the ones listed under each unit.

STUDY UNITS

There are 13 units (of three modules) in this course. They are listed below:

Module 1

Translation and Commentary of *an-Naba'* and *a- Nāzi‘āt*

- | | |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Unit 1 | Translation and Commentary of <i>an-Naba'</i> : V 1-30 |
| Unit 2 | Translation and Commentary of <i>an-Naba'</i> : V 31-40 |
| Unit 3 | Translation and Commentary of <i>a-Nāzi‘āt</i> : V 1-26 |
| Unit 4 | Translation and Commentary of <i>a-Nāzi‘āt</i> : V 27-46 |

Module 2

Translation and Commentary of '*Abasa*, *at-Takwīr* and *al-Infīṭār*

- | | |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Unit 1 | Translation and Commentary of ' <i>Abasa</i> : V 1-16 |
| Unit 2 | Translation and Commentary of ' <i>Abasa</i> : V 17-42 |
| Unit 3 | Translation and Commentary of <i>at-Takwīr</i> |
| Unit 4 | Translation and Commentary of <i>al-Infīṭār</i> |

Module 3

Translation and Commentary of *al-Muṭaffifīn*, *al-Inshiqāq*, *al-Burūj* and *at-Tāriq*

- Unit 1 Translation and Commentary of *al-Muṭaffifīn*: V 1-17
- Unit 2 Translation and Commentary of *al-Muṭaffifīn*: V 18-36
- Unit 3 Translation and Commentary of *al-Inshiqāq*
- Unit 4 Translation and Commentary of *al-Burūj*
- Unit 5 Translation and Commentary of *at-Tāriq*

TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCES

Certain books and Internet addresses have been recommended in the course. As indicated above, the translation and commentary in this Course are based mainly on Allamah, Abdullah Yusuf Ali's universally accepted and acclaimed translation and commentary on the Holy Qur'ān. You may wish to purchase the book and that of his contemporary Mawlana Muhammad Ali and visit the website addresses provided for further reading.

ASSESSMENT FILE

An assessment file and a marking scheme will be made available to you. In the assessment file, you will find details of the works you must submit to your tutor for marking. There are two aspects of the assessment of this course: the tutor marked and the written examination. The marks you obtain in these two areas will make up your final marks. The assignment must be submitted to your tutor for formal assessment in accordance with the deadline stated in the presentation schedule and the assignment file. The work you submit to your tutor for assessment will count for 30% of your total score.

TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMAs)

You will have to submit a specified number of the TMAs. Every unit in this course has a Tutor-Marked Assignment. You are required to attempt all the questions and you will be assessed on all of them but the best three performances out of the four Tutor-Marked Assessments (TMAs) will be used for your 30% grading. When you have completed each assignment, send it to your tutor. Make sure each assignment reaches your tutor on or before the deadline for submissions. If for any reason, you cannot complete your work on time; contact your tutor for a discussion on the possibility of an extension. Extensions will not be granted after the due date unless under exceptional circumstances.

FINAL EXAMINATION AND GRADING

The final examination will be a test of three hours. All areas of the course will be examined. Find time to read the unit all over before your examination. The final examination will attract 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions which reflects the kinds of self assessment exercises and tutor-marked assignments you have previously encountered; all aspects of the course will be assessed. You should use the time between completing the last unit and taking the examination to revise the entire course.

COURSE MARKING SCHEME

The following table lays out how the actual course mark allocation is broken down:

Assessment	Marks
The best three of the Tutor-Marked Assignments submitted	Each Assignment carries 10 marks. Total obtainable 30%
Final Examination	70% of overall course score
Total	100% of course score

It is advisable that you do all you can to pass both your TMAs and the examination to give you good standing in your final grade.

The dates for submission of all assignments will be communicated to you. You will also be told the date of completing the study units and dates for examinations.

COURSE OVERVIEW AND PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

Unit	Title of Work	Week	Assessment (end of unit)
	Course Guide		Week 1
Module 1 Translation and Commentary of An-Naba' and An- Nāzi‘āt			
1	Translation and Commentary of <i>an-Naba'</i> :1-30	Week 1	
2	Translation and Commentary of <i>an-Naba'</i> : 31-40	Week 2	
3	Translation and Commentary of <i>an- Nāzi‘āt</i> :1-26	Week 3	
4	Translation and Commentary of <i>an- Nāzi‘āt</i> :27-46	Week 4	
Module 2 Translation and Commentary of ‘Abasa, at-Takwīr and al-Infiṭār			
1	Translation and Commentary of ‘Abasa: 1-16	Week 5	Assignment 1
2	Translation and Commentary of ‘Abasa: 17-42	Week 6	
3	Translation and Commentary of at-Takwīr	Week 7	Assignment 2
4	Translation and Commentary of al-Infiṭār	Week 8	

Module 3 Translation and Commentary of <i>al-Mutaṭaffifīn</i>, <i>al-Inshiqāq</i>, <i>al-Burūj</i> and <i>aṭ-Tāriq</i>			
1	Translation and Commentary of <i>al-Mutaṭaffifīn</i> :1-17	Week 9	Assignment 3
2	Translation and Commentary of <i>al-Mutaṭaffifīn</i> :18-36	Week 10	
3	Translation and Commentary of <i>al-Inshiqāq</i>	Week 11	
4	Translation and Commentary of <i>al-Burūj</i> .	Week 12	Assignment 4
5	Translation and Commentary of <i>aṭ-Tāriq</i>	Week 13	
Revision Examination		Week 14	
		Week 15	

HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM THIS COURSE

You will be required to study the units on your own. However, you may arrange to meet with your tutor for tutorials on an optional basis at the study centre. Also, you can organise interactive sessions with your course mates.

TUTORS AND TUTORIALS

Information relating to the tutorials will be provided at the appropriate time. Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments, keep a close watch on your progress and on any difficulties you might encounter and provide assistance to you during the course. You must take your tutor-marked assignments to the study centre before the due date. They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible.

Do not hesitate to contact your tutor if you need help. Contact your tutor if:

- you do not understand any part of the study units or the assigned readings
- you have difficulty with the exercises
- you have a question or problem with an assignment, with your tutor's comments on an assignment or with the grading of an assignment.

You should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only chance to have face-to-face contact with your tutor and ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn a lot from participating in discussion actively.

SUMMARY

The course guide gives you an overview of what to expect in the course of this study. The course acquaints you with the texts, translation and detailed commentary of *Hizb Amma* [from an Naba' to *at-Tāriq*], chapters 78 – 86.

We wish you success with the course and hope that you will find it interesting and useful.

**MAIN
COURSE**

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MODULE 1

- | | |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Unit 1 | Translation and Commentary of <i>an-Naba'</i> : Verses 1 – 30 |
| Unit 2 | Translation and Commentary of <i>an-Naba'</i> : Verses 31 – 40 |
| Unit 3 | Translation and Commentary of <i>an- Nāzi‘āt</i> : Verses 1 – 26 |
| Unit 4 | Translation and Commentary of <i>an- Nāzi‘āt</i> : Verses 27 – 46 |

UNIT 1 TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY OF AN-NABA': 1 – 30.

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- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Arabic Text of *an-Naba'*: 1 – 30
 - 3.2 Translation of *an-Naba'*: 1 – 30
 - 3.3 Commentary of *an-Naba'*: 1 – 30
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is the section one of the two sections of the chapter entitled *an-Naba'* or the [great news]. It is the 78th chapter of the *Qur’ān*. Its name is taken from verse two of its verses. It was revealed at *Makkah*. It has forty verses.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- translate *an-Naba'*: 1 – 30 into English
- comment in details on some of its verses.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Arabic Text of *An-Naba'*: 1 – 30

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

﴿عَمَّ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ - عَنِ النَّبِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ - الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ مُخْتَلِفُونَ - كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ - ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ - أَمَّ بَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ مِهَدًا - وَاجْهَالَ أَوْتَادًا - وَخَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا - وَجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُبَاتًا - وَجَعَلْنَا النَّهَارَ مَعَاشًا - وَبَيْنَاهَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعاً شِدَادًا - وَجَعَلْنَا سِرَاجًا وَهَاجَا - وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْمُعْصِرَاتِ مَاءً ثَجَاجًا - لَتُخْرِجَنَّاهُ بِهِ حَبَّاً وَنَبَاتًا - وَجَنَّتِ الْقَافَا - إِنَّ يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ كَانَ مِيقَاتًا - يَوْمَ يُنْفَحُ فِي الصُّورِ فَتَأْتُونَ أَفْواجًا - وَفُتُحَتِ السَّمَاءُ فَكَانَتْ أَبْوَابًا - وَسُيرِتِ الْجِبَالُ فَكَانَتْ سَرَابًا - إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا - لِلطَّغَيْنِ مَابَا - لِلثِّينَ فِيهَا أَحْقَابًا - لَا يَدْعُونَ فِيهَا بَرْدًا - وَلَا شَرَابًا - إِلَّا حَمِيمًا وَعَسَاقًا - جَزَاءً وِفَقًا - إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا لَا يَرْجُونَ حِسَابًا - وَكَذَّبُوا بِإِيمَانِنَا كِذَابًا - وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ كِتَابًا - فَدُوْقُوا فَلَنْ نَزِيدُكُمْ إِلَّا عَذَابًا﴾.

3.2 Translation of *an-Naba'*: 1 – 30

An-Naba' 1 – 30 (The Great News)

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

78: 1. Concerning what are they disputing?

78: 2. Concerning the Great News,

78: 3. About which they cannot agree.

78: 4. Verily, they shall soon (come to) know!

78: 5. Verily, verily they shall soon (come to) know!

78: 6. Have We not made the earth as a wide expanse,

78: 7. And the mountains as pegs?

78: 8. And (have We not) created you in pairs,

78: 9. And made your sleep for rest,

- 78:10. And made the night as a covering,
 78:11. And made the day as a means of subsistence?
 78:12. And (have We not) built over you the seven firmaments,
 78:13. And placed (therein) a Light of Splendour?
 78:14. And do We not send down from the clouds water in abundance,
 78:15. That We may produce therewith corn and vegetables,
 78:16. And gardens of luxurious growth?
 78:17. Verily the Day of Sorting out is a thing appointed,
 78:18. The Day that the Trumpet shall be sounded, and ye shall come forth in crowds;
 78:19. And the heavens shall be opened as if there were doors,
 78:20. And the mountains shall vanish, as if they were a mirage.
 78:21. Truly Hell is as a place of ambush,
 78:22. For the transgressors a place of destination:
 78:23. They will dwell therein for ages.
 78:24. Nothing cool shall they taste therein, nor any drink,
 78:25. Save a boiling fluid and a fluid, dark, murky, intensely cold,
 78:26. A fitting recompense (for them).
 78:27. For that they used not to fear any account (for their deeds),
 78:28. But they (impudently) treated Our Signs as false.
 78:29. And all things have We preserved on record.
 78:30. "So taste ye (the fruits of your deeds); for no increase shall We grant you, except in Punishment."

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give the English translation of verses 20 to 30 of *an-Naba'*.

3.3 Commentary on *An-Naba'*: 1 – 30

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

78. 2:

Great News: usually understood to mean the News or Message of the Resurrection or the Hereafter, about which there are various schools of thought among the Jews and Christians and other nations. There is practically nothing about the Resurrection in the Old Testament, and the Jewish sect of Sadducees even in the time of Christ denied the Resurrection altogether. The Pagan ideas of a future life-if any - varied from place to place and from time to time. Even in the early Christian Church, as we learn from Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, there were contentions in that little community (1, Corinthians, 1: 11), and some definitely denied the resurrection of the dead (ib., xv. 12). Great News may also be translated Great Message or a Message Supreme as I have translated at xxxviii. 67. In that case it would refer to the *Qur'ān*, or the Message of Revelation, or the Message of the Holy Prophet, about which there was great contention in those days. As this Message also lays great stress on the Day of Judgment and the Resurrection, the practical result by either mode of interpretation amounts to the same.

78. 6:

The spacious expanse of the earth may be compared to a carpet, to which the mountains act as pegs. The Signs of Allah are thus enumerated: the great panorama of outer nature (verses 6-7); the creation of Man in pairs, with the succession of rest and work fitting in with the succession of night and day (verses 8-11); the firmaments above, with their splendid lights (verses 12-13); and the clouds and rain and abundant harvests, which knit sky and earth and man together (verses 14-16). These point to Allah, and Allah's Message points to the Future Life.

78. 10:

The darkness of the night is as a covering. Just as a covering protects us from exposure to cold or heat, so this covering gives us spiritual respite from the buffets of the material world, and from the tiring activities of our own inner exertions. The rest in sleep (in verse 9) is supplemented by the covering of the night with which we are provided by Allah.

78. 11:

"Subsistence" in English only partly covers the idea of *ma'āsh*, which includes every kind of life activity. The Day is specially illuminated, so runs the figure of speech, in order that these life-activities of all kinds may be fully exercised.

78. 12:

The growth in the foetal stage is silent and unseen. The foetus is protected in the mother's womb like a king in a castle; it is firmly fixed, and gets the protection of the mother's body, on which it depends for its own growth until birth. (See commentary 5526 and 2876 of the first reference in 7.0).

78. 13:

That is, the sun.

78. 14:

Note how the evidences of Allah and His beneficence are set out in four groups. (1) Look to external nature on the earth around you (verses 6-7); (2) your own nature, physical, mental and spiritual (verses 8-11); (3) the starry heavens, and the glory of the sun (verses 12-13); and (4) the interdependence of earth, air, and sky in the cycle of water, clouds, rain, corn and gardens, all serving in their several ways to further the whole plan of the World as it affects us. Can you not then believe that a Creator who does this will sort out Good and Evil on an appointed Day with real justice and power?

78. 17:

The Day of Judgment is the Day of Sorting Out, as between Good and Evil.

78. 18:

The angel charged with the sounding of the Trumpet is Israfil. It will herald Judgment.

78. 19:

A sign that the present order of things will have ceased to exist, and a new world will have come into being. Such a figure applies to the heavens in this verse and to the earth in the next verse. The mystery of what is beyond the heavens will have vanished through the doors which

will then be opened. The solid mountains, as we suppose them to be, will have vanished like an unsubstantial mirage.

78. 21:

Hell, the embodiment of evil, is lying in wait like an ambush for everyone. We should be on our guard. For the transgressors, those who have wilfully rebelled against Allah, it will be a definite destination, from which there is no return, except, it may be, after ages, i.e., unless Allah so wills: Cf. vi. 128, and n. 951.

78. 25:

Hamīm boiling fluid: while ghassaq, is a dark, murky or intensely cold fluid, both indicative of the grievous penalty that results from rebellion against Allah. See commentary 1390 of the first reference in 7.0.

78. 26:

Their transgressions go on progressively as they refuse to repent and turn to Allah. The fire of misery begins to blaze forth more and more fiercely, and there is nothing to cool that blaze; their food and drink themselves are tainted with the disorder of contradictory elements,-boiling hot drink, with intensely cold, murky, and disgusting fluids. These are fitting punishments for their crimes, which are inconsistent with the pure and gentle mould in which Allah had originally cast their nature.

78. 27:

It was not isolated acts, but a continued course of evil conduct; they repudiated the moral and spiritual responsibility for their lives; and they impudently called Truth itself by false names and disdained Allah's Signs, which were vouchsafed for their instruction. These are not mere impressions; these are hard facts "preserved on record", so that every deed can have its due weight in making up the account.

78. 30:

Just as there is a progressive deterioration in the sinner's soul when he surrenders himself to evil, so there is a progressive increase in the Penalty which he suffers.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Explain the state in which the unbelievers shall find themselves on the day of decision.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This section of the chapter refutes the unbelievers' denial of the occurrence of the Day of Judgement which it refers to as the day of decision. It mentions Allah's power and ability to resurrect the dead. It explains the day of decision and what occurs during it. It states the punishment that awaits the sinners as well as the reward that awaits the righteous.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit we have gone through the translation and detailed commentary of *an-Naba'*: 1 – 30, by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. List some of the natural occurrences that confirm Allah's ability to resurrect the dead.
- ii. Mention some of the happenings that will occur on the day of decision.
- iii. Explain the state in which the unbelievers shall find themselves on the day of decision.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Abdullah, Yusuf Ali (1990). *The Holy Qur'an (Arabic Text, English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary)*. al-Madina al-Munawwara, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Holy Quran Printing Complex.

Maulana, Muhammad Ali (2002). *The Holy Qur'an (Arabic Text with English Translation and Commentary)*. Ohio, U.S.A.: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore Inc.

UNIT 2 TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY OF A-NABA': 31 – 40

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 - 3.2 Translation of *an-Naba'*: 31 – 40
 - 3.3 Commentary of *an-Naba'*: 31 – 40
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is the section two of the two sections of the chapter entitled *an-Naba'* or the [great news]. It is the 78th chapter of the *Qur'ān*. Its name is taken from verse two of its verses. It was revealed at *Makkah*. It has forty verses.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give the translation of *an-Naba'*: 31 – 40 in English
- explain some of its verses in a detailed commentary.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Arabic Text of *An-Naba'*: 31 – 40

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴾

﴿إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا - حَدَّاقَ وَأَعْنَابًا - وَكَواعِبَ أَتْرَابًا - وَكَأسًا دَهَاقًا - لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا كِذبًا - جَزَاءً مِّنْ رَّبِّكَ عَطَاءً حِسَابًا - رَّبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الرَّحْمَنِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ خِطَابًا - يَوْمَ يَقُولُ الْرُّوحُ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ صَفَّا لَا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا - ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمُ الْحَقُّ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ إِلَى رَبِّهِ مَابًا -﴾

إِنَّا أَنذِرْنَاكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا يَوْمَ يَنْظُرُ الْمَرءُ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ وَيَقُولُ الْكَافِرُ يَأْتِينِي كُنْثٌ
ثُرَابًا

3.2 Translation of *an-Naba'*: 31 – 40

An-Naba' 31 – 40 (The Great News)

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

- 78:31. Verily for the Righteous there will be a fulfilment of (the heart's) desires;
- 78:32. Gardens enclosed, and grapevines;
- 78:33. And voluptuous women of equal age;
- 78:34. And a cup full (to the brim).
- 78:35. No vanity shall they hear therein, nor Untruth:-
- 78:36. Recompense from thy Lord, a gift, (amply) sufficient,
- 78:37. (From) the Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all between, (Allah) Most Gracious: None shall have power to argue with Him.
- 78:38. The Day that the Spirit and the angels will stand forth in ranks, none shall speak except any who is permitted by (Allah) Most Gracious, and He will say what is right.
- 78:39. That Day will be the sure Reality: Therefore, whoso will, let him take a (straight) return to his Lord!
- 78:40. Verily, We have warned you of a Penalty near, the Day when man will see (the deeds) which his hands have sent forth, and the Unbeliever will say, "Woe unto me! Would that I were (metre) dust!"

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give the translation of verses 31 to 40 of *an-Naba'* in English.

3.3 Commentary on *an-Naba'*: 31 – 40

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

78. 31:

This is true Salvation. It is not only safety and felicity, but the attainment of the final Goal, the supreme Achievement, the Fulfilment of the highest in human nature, the satisfaction of the true and pure desires of the heart,-seeing the "Face of Allah".

78. 32:

The supreme Achievement, or the Fulfillment of the Heart's Desires, spoken of in the last verse, is now described in three illustrations (verses 32-34), as further explained by two negatives (verse 35). The first is the enclosed Fruit-Garden, represented by the Grape. The Garden in its many aspects is the most frequent expression adopted for Bliss. The most carefully-tended Garden is a Fruit-Garden, with walls all round to protect it, and the most characteristic fruit mentioned here is the luscious Grape.

78. 33:

The second is voluptuous women of Equal Age.

78. 34:

The third, the Cup, takes us partly to the Grapes mentioned in verse 32 and partly to the Springs or Rivers mentioned with the Garden in so many places.

78. 35:

The explanation of the three illustrations is made further clear by the two negatives. (1) There will be no talk of vanities, such as are usually associated on this earth with pleasant Gardens, Companions of equal age, or generous Cups owning in Assemblies. (2) There will be no Untruth or Falsehood. Insincerity or HOLLOWNESS there. Everything will be on a plane of absolute Truth and Reality.

78. 36:

The Recompense is not exactly a Reward in proportion to merit, but is rather a Gift or a Bounty from the Merciful - a Gift most amply

sufficient to satisfy all desire on that plane of purity. "A Gift (amply) sufficient" might almost be translated: a liberal and bountiful gift.

78. 37:

No one has the right or the power to argue with Allah about the Gifts which He may bestow on His devotees beyond their deserts, (verse 36 above) or about the Penalty which His justice may inflict for sin or wrong-doing. He is high above all Creation. But He is also Most Gracious. Therefore He may permit special Dignitaries, of honour in His eyes, to plead for sinners, but they will only plead in truth and righteousness: see verse 38 below.

78. 38:

Some Commentators understand by "the Spirit" the angel Gabriel as he is charged specially with bringing Messages to human prophets.

No one has the right to speak before the Judgment-Seat; but certain great Dignitaries may be given permission to plead for mercy for sinners, and they will only so plead if the mercy is not inconsistent with Allah's universal justice.

78. 39:

Judgment is sure to come, and Truth will then be free from all veils. Why should not man, therefore, now in this life of probation, turn back to Allah, and understand and do His Will?

78. 40:

Is Judgment very near? Yes. There are three stages of Judgment. (1) Many of our sins and wrong-doings find their penalty in this very life. It may not be an open or striking event, but it corrodes the soul and conscience all the time. Let us therefore turn back to Allah in repentance and ask for forgiveness. (2) Where the Penalty is not actually perceived or is not visible in this life, Death is considered the Lesser Judgment for each individual soul: see n. Death may come to anyone at any time, and we must all be ready for it. (3) Then there is the final Judgment, when the whole of the present order passes away, and there is a New World. Time as we know it will not exist. Fifty thousand years as we reckon now will be but as a Day. According to those standards even this Final Judgment is quite near, and we must prepare for it. For it will be too late then for repentance. The Unbeliever, the Rejecter of Allah, will then find himself in a world of absolute Reality, in which there will be no place for him. He will neither live nor die. He will wish that he could be reduced to nothingness, but even that would not be possible.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Explain the state in which the believers shall find themselves on the day of decision.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This section of the chapter explains that authority on the day of decision lies only with Allah and it states the rewards that await the righteous.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit we have gone through the recitation of the Arabic text of section two of *an-Naba'*, its translation and detailed commentary by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Explain the state in which the believers and unbelievers shall find themselves on the day of decision.
- ii. Mention some of the happenings that will occur on the day of decision.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Abdullah, Yusuf Ali (1990). *The Holy Qur'an (Arabic Text, English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary)*. al-Madina al-Munawwara, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Holy Qur'an Printing Complex.

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UNIT 3 TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY OF A-NĀZI'ĀT: 1 - 26

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Arabic Text of *an-Nāzi'āt*: 1 – 26
 - 3.2 Translation of *an-Nāzi'āt*: 1 – 26
 - 3.3 Commentary of *an-Nāzi'āt*: 1 – 26
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is section one of the chapter entitled *an-Nāzi'āt* or [those who tear out]. It is the 79th chapter of the *Qur'an*. Its name is taken from verse one of its verses. It was revealed at *Makkah*. It has forty-six verses.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give the translation *a-Nāzi'āt*: 1 – 26 in English
- explain some of its verses in a detailed commentary.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Arabic Text of A-Nāzi'Āt

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴾

- سَبْقًا فَالسَّبِقَتِ - سَبْحاً وَالسَّبِحَتِ - نَشْطًا وَالنَّشِطَتِ - غَرْقاً وَالنَّزِعَتِ
 أَبْصَرُهَا - وَاحِفَةً يَوْمَئِذٍ قُلُوبٌ - الرَّادِفَةُ تَتَبَعُهَا - الرَّاجِفَةُ تَرْجُفُ يَوْمَ - أَمْرًا فَالْمَدْبُرِ
 كَرَّةً إِذَا تِلْكَ قَالُوا - نَخْرَةً عَظِيمًا كُنَّا أَءَدَا - الْحَفْرَةُ فِي لَمَرْدُودُونَ أَءَنَا يَقُولُونَ - خَشْعَةً
 نَادَاهُ إِذْ - مُوسَى حَدِيثُ أَتَاكَ هَلْ - بِالسَّاهِرَةِ هُمْ فِي إِذَا - وَحِدَةً رَجْرَةً هِيَ فِي إِنَّمَا - خَسِرَةً
 وَأَهْدِيكَ تَرَكَى أَنَّ إِلَى لَكَ هَلْ فَقْلٌ طَغَى إِنَّهُ فِرْعَوْنَ إِلَى اذْهَبْ طُوْيَ الْمُقَدَّسِ بِالْوَادِ رَبُّهُ

فَقَالَ فَنَادَى فَحَشَرَ يَسْعَى أَدْبَرَ ثُمَّ وَعَصَى فَكَذَّبَ الْكُبْرَى الْأَيَّةَ فَأَرَاهُ فَتَخْشَى رَبِّكَ إِلَى
يَخْشَى لَمْنَ لَعْبَرَةَ ذَلِكَ فِي إِنَّ وَالْأَوَّلَى الْآخِرَةِ نَكَالَ اللَّهُ فَأَخَدَهُ الْأَعْلَى رِبُّكُمْ أَنَا

3.2 Translation of *an-Nāzi‘at*: 1 – 26

An-Nāzi‘at: 1 – 26 (those who tear out)

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

- 79: 1. By the (angels) who tear out (the souls of the wicked) with violence;
- 79: 2. By those who gently draw out (the souls of the blessed);
- 79: 3. And by those who glide along (on errands of mercy),
- 79: 4. Then press forward as in a race,
- 79: 5. Then arrange to do (the Commands of their Lord),
- 79:6. One Day everything that can be in commotion will be in violent commotion,
- 79: 7. Followed by oft-repeated (commotions):
- 79: 8. Hearts that Day will be in agitation;
- 79: 9. Cast down will be (their owners') eyes.
- 79:10. They say (now): "What! shall we indeed be returned to (our) former state?
- 79:11. "What! - when we shall have become rotten bones?"
- 79:12. They say: "It would, in that case, be a return with loss!"
- 79:13. But verily, it will be but a single (Compelling) Cry,
- 79:14. When, behold, they will be in the (full) awakening (to Judgment).
- 79:15. Has the story of Moses reached thee?
- 79:16. Behold, thy Lord did call to him in the sacred valley of Tuwa:-
- 79:17. "Go thou to Pharaoh for he has indeed transgressed all bounds:

79:18. "And say to him, 'Wouldst thou that thou shouldst be purified (from sin)?

79:19. "'And that I guide thee to thy Lord, so thou shouldst fear Him?'"

79:20. Then did (Moses) show him the Great Sign.

79:21. But (Pharaoh) rejected it and disobeyed (guidance);

79:22. Further, he turned his back, striving hard (against Allah).

79:23. Then he collected (his men) and made a proclamation,

79:24. Saying, "I am your Lord, Most High".

79:25. But Allah did punish him, (and made an) example of him, - in the Hereafter, as in this life.

79:26. Verily in this is an instructive warning for whosoever fears (Allah).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give the translation of verses 1 to 14 of *an-Nāzi‘āt* in English.

3.3 Commentary on AN-NĀZI‘ĀT: 1 – 26

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

79. 1:

The beginning of this Sura may be compared with the beginning of S. lxxvii. A translator's task in such passages is extremely difficult. He has to contend, again and again, with verities of a realm beyond man's normal range of experience expressed in elliptical language and he has to render them in another language with words of precision intelligible to readers. It is therefore necessary for him to put in part of the Commentary in the Translation in such cases. The evidence of five things is here invoked in verses 1-5, in order to lead to the conclusion in verse 6 and those following. Or, if we treat verses 3-5 as three stages of the same thing, there are three things to be considered in five stages. What are they? And what is the conclusion? See the following notes.

'There is much difference of opinion among the Commentators as to the five things or beings mentioned in these verses. I follow the general opinion in my interpretation, which is that angels are referred to as the

agency which in their dealings with mankind show clearly Allah's Justice, Power, and Mercy, which again point to the Judgment to come, as a certainty which none can evade. The first point, referred to in this verse, is that the souls of the wicked are loath to part with their material body at death, but their Will will not count: their souls will be wrenched out into another world. Who will then deny Resurrection and Judgment?

79. 2:

The second point is that in contrast with the wicked, the souls of the blessed will be drawn out gently to their new life. They will be ready for it. In fact death for them will be a release from the grosser incidents of bodily sense. To them the approach of Judgment will be welcome.

79. 3:

At all times there are errands of mercy and blessing and errands of justice, which the angels are prompt to execute by order of Allah. There are three features of this, thus giving the third, fourth, and fifth points. (3) Their movement is compared to that of gliding or swimming (*sabhan*). In xxi. 33 this verb is applied to the motion of the celestial bodies: they all "swim along, each in its rounded course". (4) In hurrying on their errands the angels press forth as in a race. (5) And thus they promptly execute the orders of their Lord.

79. 6:

The evidence of the wonderful working of the angels having been invoked in the first five verses, the conclusion is now drawn and stated. It is certain that one great Day, the whole world as we now see it in our lower life will be in violent revolution. It will be like an earthquake destroying all land-marks. But that will affect only things subject to change: they will suffer violent convulsions as a preliminary to their disappearance. But Allah and His divine order will not change: His "Face" abideth for ever, full of Majesty, Bounty, and Honour (Iv. 27).

79. 7:

The Commotion will be repeated again and again in the transitory world, to make way for the new world that will then come into being.

79. 8:

All hearts will be in agitation: those of the blessed ones to see the beginning of the fulfillment of their Lord's Promise; those of the Rejecters of Allah for fear of His just Judgment.

79. 9:

Similarly all eyes will be cast down: those of the blessed ones in humble modesty, and those of the Rejecters of Allah, in utter humiliation, sorrow, and shame, for their arrogance and insolence in their probationary life.

79. 10:

The Unbelievers say now, in their arrogance, insolence, and mocking defiance: "Surely death here is the end of all things! When we are dead and buried, and our bones are rotten, how can we be restored again?" They add, "If that were so, then we should indeed be in a turn of dreadful luck! Instead of gaining by the Resurrection, we should be in terrible loss (with our rotten bones)!" They mean this in biting mockery. But there will indeed be an Account taken, and they will indeed be in a terrible loss, for they will go to perdition!

79. 13:

Judgment will be inaugurated with a single compelling Cry in a single mightily Blast seemingly referring to the sinners being cut off in this life and plunged into the other world where they will be further judged.

79. 14:

They will have been more or less dormant before the Great Judgment, as contrasted with the Lesser Judgment. When the resurrection comes, they will come fully into the new world, the old heaven and earth having then completely passed away, not only for them but absolutely.

79. 15:

This is just a reference to the story of Moses told more fully in S. xx. 9-76. The lessons drawn are: (1) That even to an arrogant blasphemer and rebel against Allah's Law, like Pharaoh, Allah's grace was offered through a major Prophet Moses; (2) that this rejection brought about his signal downfall even in this world; and (3) that his humiliation and punishment will be completed in the Hereafter at Judgment.

79. 19:

Even for such a one as Pharaoh, intoxicated with his own power and greatness, guidance and grace were offered through Moses.

79. 20:

What was the Great Sign? Some Commentators understand by it the "White Shinning Hand": Others think it was the miracle of the rod that became a "snake active in motion": These were among the Greater Signs: xx. 23. In xvii. 101 there is a reference to nine Clear Signs given to Moses. The fact is, there were many Signs given, "openly self-explained," but Pharaoh and his men "were steeped in arrogance,-a people given to sin" (vii. 133). The preeminently Great Sign was therefore the fact of Moses being sent to Pharaoh, which subsequently converted the magicians and the more learned Egyptians to the true God (xx. 70-73), though Pharaoh and his Chiefs resisted and suffered for their sins.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Mention the functions of some of the angels of Allah.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This section of the chapter starts by invoking the evidence of three or five different groups of angels which leads to the conclusion that the day of resurrection will begin with a commotion. It narrates the downfall of Pharaoh who claimed to be god and faced the music.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit takes us through the Arabic text of *an-Nāzi‘āt*: 1 – 26, its translation and detailed commentary by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Describe one of the events that will lead to the day of resurrection.
- ii. Mention the functions of some of the angels of Allah.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Abdullah, Yusuf Ali (1990). *The Holy Qur’ān* (Arabic Text, English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary). al-Madina al-Munawwara, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Holy Quran Printing Complex.

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UNIT 4 TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY OF AN-NĀZI‘ĀT: 27 - 46

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Arabic Text of *an-Nāzi‘āt*: 27 – 46
 - 3.2 Translation of *an-Nāzi‘āt*: 27 – 46
 - 3.3 Commentary of *an-Nāzi‘āt*: 27 – 46
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is section two of the chapter entitled *an-Nāzi‘āt* or [those who tear out]. It is the 79th chapter of the *Qur’ān*. Its name is taken from verse one of its verses. It was revealed at *Makkah*. It has forty-six verses.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give the translation of *an-Naziat*: 27 – 46 in English
- explain some of its verses in a detailed commentary.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Arabic Text of *An-Nāzi‘āt* – 27 - 46

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿أَءَنْشُمْ أَشَدُ خَلْقًا أَمِ السَّمَاءَ بَنَهَا - رَفَعَ سَمْكَهَا فَسَوَاهَا - وَأَغْطَشَ لَيْلَاهَا وَأَخْرَجَ ضُحَّاهَا - وَالْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ دَحَّاهَا - أَخْرَجَ مِنْهَا مَاءَهَا وَمَرْعَاهَا - وَالْجِبَالَ أَرْسَاهَا - مَتَعًا لَكُمْ وَلَا نَعْمِلُكُمْ - فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الطَّامِةُ الْكُبْرَى - يَوْمَ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنْسَنُ مَا سَعَى - وَبُرَرَتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِمَنْ يَرَى - فَأَمَّا مَنْ طَغَى - وَعَاثَرَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا - فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَى - وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَى - فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَى -﴾

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَهَا - فِيمَ أَنْتَ مِنْ ذُكْرَاهَا - إِلَى رَبِّكَ مُنْتَهَهَا - إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنْذِرٌ مَنْ يَخْشَهَا - كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبُسُوا إِلَّا عَشِيهَةً أَوْ ضَحْكَهَا ﴿٤٦﴾

3.2 Translation of *An-Nāzi‘Āt*: 27 – 46

An-Nāzi‘āt: 27 – 46 (Those Who Tear Out)

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

79:27. What! Are ye the more difficult to create or the heaven (above)?

(Allah) hath constructed it:

79:28. On high hath He raised its canopy, and He hath given it order and perfection.

79:29. Its night doth He endow with darkness, and its splendour doth He bring out (with light).

79:30. And the earth, moreover, hath He extended (to a wide expanse);

79:31. He draweth out therefrom its moisture and its pasture;

79:32. And the mountains hath He firmly fixed;-

79:33. For use and convenience to you and your cattle.

79:34. Therefore, when there comes the great, overwhelming (Event),-

79:35. The Day when man shall remember (all) that he strove for,

79:36. And Hell-Fire shall be placed in full view for (all) to see,-

79:37. Then, for such as had transgressed all bounds,

79:38. And had preferred the life of this world,

79:39. The Abode will be Hell-Fire;

79:40. And for such as had entertained the fear of standing before their Lord's (tribunal) and had restrained (their) soul from lower desires,

79:41. Their abode will be the Garden.

79:42. They ask thee about the Hour,-'When will be its appointed time?

79:43. Wherein art thou (concerned) with the declaration thereof?

79:44. With thy Lord in the Limit fixed therefor.

79:45. Thou art but a Warner for such as fear it.

79:46. The Day they see it, (It will be) as if they had tarried but a single evening, or (at most till) the following morn! will see (the deeds) which his hands have sent forth, and the Unbeliever will say, "Woe unto me! Would that I were (metre) dust!"

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give the translation of verses 27 to 33 of *a-Nāzi‘āt* in English.

3.3 Commentary on *An-Nāzi‘āt*: 27 – 46

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

79. 27:

If man grows arrogant or forgets his accountability to Allah, in his ignorance or thoughtlessness, he is reminded that he is only an insignificant speck in Allah's spacious Creation. All the excellence that man acquires is the gift of Allah. Who has bestowed on him a high Destiny if he fulfils the purpose of his creation: ii. 30-39. Then follows a nature passage, pointing to the glory of the heavens and the earth, and how they are both made to serve the life of man.

79. 28:

The mystery of the heavens with their countless stars and the planets obeying the laws of motion, and the sun and moon influencing the temperature and climates of the earth from thousands or millions of miles, illustrate the order and perfection which Allah has given to His Creation. Can man then remain exempt from his responsibility for his deeds, endowed as he is with a will, or deny the Day of Sorting Out, which is the Day of Judgment?

79. 29:

Its of course refers to the starry heaven. Both the Night and the Day have each its own beauty and its utility for man, as has been frequently pointed out in the Qur'ān. The night is a period of darkness, but it has also its splendours of light in the moon, or the planets Jupiter or Venus, or stars like Sirius or the Milky Way. These countless lights of night

have their own beauty, and by day there is the splendour of the sun for us, which in Creation as a whole, is just one of countless stars.

79. 30:

Moreover: or, more literally, after that.

79. 31:

The underground springs and wells of water as well as rivers and glaciers in northern climates are due to the different levels of highlands not lowlands. They spread the moisture evenly as wanted, and give corn, fruits, and vegetables to man, and pastures and feeding grounds to beasts of the fields. For the wonderful circuit or cycle of water between heaven and earth, see notes 3106 (xxv. 49) and 3111 (xxv. 53).in Yusuf Ali's commentary on the Holy Qur'ān.

79. 32:

The "eternal hills" are the main reservoirs for the storage and gradual distribution of water, the very basis of the life of man and beast.

79. 33

This clause I construe to apply to verses 30, 31, and 32 above. Everything on earth has, by Allah's bountiful providence, been arranged to subserve the use and convenience of man and the lower life which depends upon him. The intermediary between Allah's providence and the actual use made of Allah's other gifts is man's own intelligence and initiative, which are also gifts of Allah.

79. 34:

The Judgment, the time for sorting out all things according to their true, intrinsic, and eternal values.

79. 35:

The Judgment will be not only for his acts but for his motives, "all he strove for". In this life he may forget his iii-deeds, but in the new conditions he will not only remember them, but the Fire of Punishment will be plainly visible to him, and not only to him, but it will be "for all to see". This will add to the sinner's humiliation.

79. 38:

The abiding Punishment will be for those who had wilfully and persistently rebelled against Allah, "transgressing all bounds", and had given themselves up to the vanities and lusts of this lower life. This Punishment will not touch those who had repented and been forgiven, nor those guilty, through human frailty, of minor sing, whose deeds will be weighed in the balance against their good deeds: ci. 6-9.

79. 40:

The contrast is complete and parallel: the persistent rebels against Allah's Law, who preferred the lower life, are to dwell in the Fire of Punishment, while those who humbly feared the punishment of sin and believing in their Lord's warnings restrained their lower desires, will dwell in the Garden. See last note.

79. 42:

Only Allah can reveal it. But were it known, "heavy were its burden through the heavens and the earth".

79. 44:

Our time has no sort of comparison with the timeless state in the new spiritual World in which the final Judgment will take place. Nor can its limits-how long it will last-be set except in the Will of Almighty Allah. Lord of Supreme Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness: xi. 107-108.

79. 45:

The warning is only effective for those who believe in Allah and in the Final Account. Such men immediately turn in repentance to Allah, and it is to lead such men and help them, that Prophets are sent.

79. 46:

Cf. x. 45, where the expression used is: "it will be as if they had tarried but an hour of a day." Here the metaphor used is "a single evening, or, at most, till the following mom". Death is like sleep, and may be compared to the evening of life. In sleep we do not know how the time passes. When we wake up from the sleep of Death at the Resurrection, we shall not know whether it was the following moment or the following hour after we slept, but we shall feel that it is morning, for we shall be conscious of all that goes on, as one awakened in the morning.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Describe one of the events that will lead to the day of resurrection.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This chapter starts by asserting that the creation of the heavens and the earth is more difficult than the creation of man. It mentions the two abodes of the hereafter, viz. hell and paradise, the former for the transgressors and the latter for the righteous it says. It ends with the fact that no one has the knowledge of the end time except Allah.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit takes us through the Arabic text of *an-Nāzi‘at*: 27 - 46, its translation and detailed commentary by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Describe one of the events that will lead to the day of resurrection.
- ii. Mention the creatures that are more difficult to create than man.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Abdullah, Yusuf Ali (1990). *The Holy Qur’ān (Arabic Text, English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary)*. al-Madina al-Munawwara, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Holy Qur’ān Printing Complex.

Maulana, Muhammad Ali (2002). *The Holy Qur’ān (Arabic Text with English Translation and Commentary)*. Ohio, U.S.A.: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha‘at Islam Lahore Inc.

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MODULE 2

- | | |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Unit 1 | Translation and Commentary of ‘Abasa: Verses 1 – 16 |
| Unit 2 | Translation and Commentary of ‘Abasa: Verses 17 – 42 |
| Unit 3 | Translation and Commentary of <i>at-Takwīr</i> |
| Unit 4 | Translation and Commentary of <i>al-Infītār</i> |

UNIT 1 TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY OF ‘ABASA: 1 - 16

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Arabic Text of ‘Abasa: 1 - 16
 - 3.2 Translation of ‘Abasa: 1 - 16
 - 3.3 Commentary of ‘Abasa: 1 - 16
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is part one of the chapter entitled ‘Abasa or [he frowned]. It is the 80th chapter of the *Qur’ān*. Its name is taken from verse one of its verses. It was revealed at *Makkah*. It has forty-two verses.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give the translation of ‘Abasa: 1 – 16 in English
- explain some of its verses in a detailed commentary.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Arabic Text of ‘Abasa: 1 – 16

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴾

﴿عَبَسَ وَتَوَلََّ - أَن جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَى - وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعْلَهُ يَزَّكِي - أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنَفَّعُهُ الذِّكْرِي - أَمَّا مَنِ اسْتَغْنَى - فَأَنْتَ لَهُ تَصَدِّي - وَمَا عَلَيْكَ أَلَّا يَزَّكِي - وَأَمَّا مَنْ جَاءَكَ يَسْعَى - وَهُوَ يَخْشَى - فَأَنْتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهَّى - كَلَّا إِنَّهَا تَذَكِّرَةٌ فَمَنْ شَاءَ ذَكَرَهُ فِي صُحُفٍ مُّكَرَّمَةٍ مَرْفُوعَةٍ مُّطَهَّرَةٍ بِأَيْدِي سَفَرَةٍ كَرَامٍ ﴾

بِرَرَةٌ

3.2 Translation of ‘Abasa: 1 – 16

‘Abasa (He Frowned): 1 – 16

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

- 80: 1. (The Prophet) frowned and turned away,
- 80: 2. Because there came to him the blind man (interrupting).
- 80: 3. But what could tell thee but that perchance he might grow (in spiritual understanding)?-
- 80: 4. Or that he might receive admonition, and the teaching might profit him?
- 80: 5. As to one who regards Himself as self-sufficient,
- 80: 6. To him dost thou attend;
- 80: 7. Though it is no blame to thee if he grow not (in spiritual understanding).
- 80: 8. But as to him who came to thee striving earnestly,
- 80: 9. And with fear (in his heart),
- 80:10. Of him wast thou unmindful.

80:11. By no means (should it be so)! For it is indeed a Message of instruction:

80:12. Therefore let whoso will, keep it in remembrance.

80:13. (It is) in Books held (greatly) in honour,

80:14. Exalted (in dignity), kept pure and holy,

80:15. (Written) by the hands of scribes-

80:16. Honourable and Pious and Just.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give the translation of verses 17 to 32 of '*Abasa* in English.

3.3 Commentary on '*Abasa*: 1 – 16

Below is the narration of the incident to which this part of the chapter refers to:

More than one of the scholars of *Tafsir* mentioned that one day the Messenger of Allah was addressing one of the great leaders of the *Quraysh* while hoping that he would accept Islam. While he was speaking in direct conversation with him, a blind man, *Ibn Umm Maktuum* came to him, and he was of those who had accepted Islam in its earliest days. He [*Ibn Umm Maktuum*] then began asking the Messenger of Allah about something urgently beseeching him. The Prophet hoped that the man would be guided, so he asked *Ibn Umm Maktuum* to wait for a moment so he could complete his conversation but he, the Messenger of Allah, frowned at *Ibn Umm Maktum* and turned away from him in order to face the other man. Thus, Allah revealed these verses to caution His Messenger.

80. 1:

The lesson is that neither spiritual worth nor the prospect of effective spiritual guidance is to be measured by a man's position in life. The poor, or the blind, the halt, or the maimed, may be more susceptible to the teaching of Allah's Word than men who are apparently gifted, but who suffer from arrogance and self-sufficiency.

80. 4:

It may be that the poor blind man might, on account of his will to learn, be more likely to grow in his own spiritual development or to profit by any lessons taught to him even in report than a self-sufficient leader. In fact it was so. For the blind man became a true and sincere Muslim and lived to become a governor of Madinah.

80. 5:

Such a one would be a Pagan Quraish leader, whom the holy Prophet was anxious to get into his fold, in order that the work of preaching Allah's Message might be facilitated. But such a Message works first amongst the simple and lowly, the poor and despised folk, and the mighty ones of the earth only come in when the stream rushes in with irresistible force.

80. 7:

Allah's Message is for all, but if the great ones arrogantly keep back from it, it is no fault of the preacher, so long as he has proclaimed the Message. He should attend to all, and especially to the humble and lowly.

80. 9:

The fear in the blind man's heart may have been two-fold. (1) He was humble and God-fearing, not arrogant and self-sufficient; (2) being poor and blind, he feared to intrude; yet his earnest desire to learn the Qur'ān made him bold, and he came, perhaps unseasonably, but was yet worthy of encouragement, because of the purity of his heart.

80. 11:

Allah's Message is a universal Message, from which no one is to be excluded, rich or poor, old or young, great or lowly, learned or ignorant. If anyone had the spiritual craving that needed satisfaction, he was to be given precedence if there was to be any question of precedence at all.

80. 13:

At the time this *Sūrah* was revealed, there were perhaps only about 42 or 45 *Sūrahs* in the hands of the Muslims. But it was a sufficient body of Revelation of high spiritual value, to which the description given here could be applied. It was held in the highest honor; its place in the hearts of Muslims was more exalted than that of anything else; as Allah's

Word, it was pure and sacred; and those who transcribed it were men who were honourable, just and pious. The legend that the early *Sūrahs* were not carefully written down and preserved in books is a pure invention. The compilations made later in the time of the first and the third caliphs were merely to preserve the purity and safeguard the arrangement of the text at a time when the expansion of Islam among non-Arabic-speaking people made such precautions necessary.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Narrate the cause of revelation of '*Abasa*.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This part of the chapter cautioned the prophet who frowned at a blind man, *Ibn Ummi Maktuum* and goes on to state the characteristics of the *Quran*.

5.0 SUMMARY

We have gone through the translation and detailed commentary of '*Abasa*: 1 - 16, by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Narrate the cause of revelation of '*Abasa*.
- ii. List and explain some of the lessons taught by this part of the chapter.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Abdullah, Yusuf Ali (1990). *The Holy Qur'ān (Arabic Text, English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary)*. al-Madina al-Munawwara, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Holy Qur'ān Printing Complex.

Maulana, Muhammad Ali (2002). *The Holy Qur'ān (Arabic Text with English Translation and Commentary)*. Ohio, U.S.A.: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore Inc.

UNIT 2 TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY OF 'ABASA: 17 - 42

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Arabic Text of 'Abasa: 17 - 42
 - 3.2 Translation of 'Abasa: 17 - 42
 - 3.3 Commentary of 'Abasa: 17 - 42
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is the part two of the chapter entitled 'Abasa or [he frowned]. It is the 80th chapter of the *Qur'an*. Its name is taken from verse one of its verses. It was revealed at *Makkah*. It has forty-two verses.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give the translation of 'Abasa: 17 – 42 in English
- explain some of its verses in a detailed commentary.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Arabic Text of 'Abasa: 17 - 42

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

﴿قُتِلَ الْإِنْسَنُ مَا أَكْفَرَهُ - مِنْ أَيِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ - مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ خَلَقَهُ فَقَدَرَهُ - ثُمَّ السَّيْلَ يَسْرَهُ - ثُمَّ أَمَاتَهُ فَأَقْبَرَهُ - ثُمَّ إِذَا شَاءَ أَنْشَرَهُ - كَلَّا لَمَا يَقْضِ مَا أَمْرَهُ - فَلَيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَنُ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ - أَنَّا صَبَبْنَا الْمَاءَ صَبَبًا - ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْأَرْضَ شَقَّا - فَأَبْنَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبَّا - وَعَنْبَأَ وَقَضْبًا - وَزَيَّتُنَا وَنَخْلًا - وَحَدَّأَئِقَ غُلْبًا - وَفَكِهَهُ وَأَبَا - مَتَعًا لَكُمْ وَلَا نُعْمِكُمْ - فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الصَّاحَّةُ - يَوْمَ يَغْرُرُ الْمَرءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ - وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبِيهِ - وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَبَيْهِ - لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ

مَنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَانٌ يُغْنِيهِ - وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّسْفِرَةٌ - ضَحْكَةٌ مُّسْتَبْشِرَةٌ - وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَلَيْهَا
غَبَرَةٌ - تَرْهَقُهَا قَسْرَةٌ - أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكُفَّارُ الْفَجَرَةُ

3.3 Translation of 'Abasa: 17 – 42

'Abasa (He Frowned): 17 – 42

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

- 80:17. Woe to man! What hath made him reject Allah;
- 80:18. From what stuff hath He created him?
- 80:19. From a sperm-drop: He hath created him, and then mouldeth him in due proportions;
- 80:20. Then doth He make His path smooth for him;
- 80:21. Then He causeth him to die, and putteth him in his grave;
- 80:22. Then, when it is His Will, He will raise him up (again).
- 80:23. By no means hath he fulfilled what Allah hath commanded him.
- 80:24. Then let man look at his food, (and how We provide it):
- 80:25. For that We pour forth water in abundance,
- 80:26. And We split the earth in fragments,
- 80:27. And produce therein corn,
- 80:28. And Grapes and nutritious plants,
- 80:29. And Olives and Dates,
- 80:30. And enclosed Gardens, dense with lofty trees,
- 80:31. And fruits and fodder,-
- 80:32. For use and convenience to you and your cattle.
- 80:33. At length, when there comes the Deafening Noise,-
- 80:34. That Day shall a man flee from his own brother,

- 80:35. And from his mother and his father,
- 80:36. And from his wife and his children.
- 80:37. Each one of them, that Day, will have enough concern (of his own) to make him indifferent to the others.
- 80:38. Some faces that Day will be beaming,
- 80:39. Laughing, rejoicing.
- 80:40. And other faces that Day will be dust-stained,
- 80:41. Blackness will cover them:
- 80:42. Such will be the Rejecters of Allah, the doers of iniquity.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give the translation of verses 17 to 32 of '*Abasa* in English.

3.3 Commentary on '*Abasa*: 17 – 42

80. 19:

The origin of man as an animal is lowly indeed. But what further faculties and capacities has not Allah granted to man? Besides his animal body, in which also he shares in all the blessings which Allah has bestowed on the rest of His Creation, man has been granted divine gifts which entitle him to be called the Vicegerent on earth: ii. 30. He has a will; he has spiritual perception; he is capable of divine love; he can control nature within certain limits, and subject nature's forces to his own use. And he has been given the power of judgment, so that he can avoid excess and defect, and follow the middle path. And that path, as well as all that is necessary for his life in its manifold aspects, has been made easy for him.

80. 21:

Cf. xx. 55. Death is an inevitable event after the brief life on this earth, but it is also in a sense a blessing, a release from the imperfections of this world, a close of the probationary period, after which will dawn the full Reality. "The Grave" may be understood to be the period between physical death and immortal Life, whatever may be the mode of disposal of the dead body. This intermediate period is the Barzakh or Partition.

80. 23:

Though all these blessings and stages have been provided by Allah's Grace for the good of man, yet unregenerate man fails in carrying out the purpose of his creation and life.

80. 24:

After a reference to man's inner history, there is now a reference to just one item in his daily outer life, his food: and it is shown how the forces of heaven and earth unite by Allah's Command to serve man and his dependants. "A provision for you and your cattle" (verse 32 below). If that is the case with just one item, food, how much more comprehensive is Allah's beneficence when the whole of man's needs are considered!

80. 26:

The water comes from the clouds in plentiful abundance; the earth is ploughed, and the soil is broken up in fragments, and yields an abundant harvest of cereals (Corn), trellised fruit (Grapes), and vegetable food (nutritious Plants), as well as fruit that can keep for long periods and serve many uses, like olives and dates.

80. 27:

Therein: i.e., from within the earth or the soil.

80. 30:

We not only get field crops such as were mentioned in n. 5961 above, but we have the more highly cultivated garden crops, both in the way of lofty trees, and in the way of carefully tended fruits like the fig; and then we have grass and all kinds of fodder.

80. 32:

The same verse occurs at Ixxix. 33, where no. 5940 explains the wider meaning in that context.

80. 33:

Preliminary to the establishment of the Final Judgment.

80.36:

Even those who were nearest and dearest in this life will not be able or willing to help each other on that awful Day. On the contrary, if they have to receive a sentence for their sins, they will be anxious to avoid even sharing each other's sorrows or witnessing each other's humiliation; for each will have enough of his own troubles to occupy him. On the other hand, the Righteous will be united with their righteous families: iii. 21; and their faces will be "beaming, laughing, rejoicing" (Ixxx. 38-39).

80. 37:

Nor friend will ask after a friend that Day. On the contrary the sinner will desire to save himself at the expense even of his own family and benefactors.

80. 40:

The dust on the faces of the sinners will be in contrast to the beaming light on the faces of the righteous; and the blackness in contrast to the "laughing, rejoicing" faces of the righteous. But the dust also suggests that being Rejecters of Allah, their faces and eyes and faculties were choked in dust, and the blackness suggests that being Doers of Iniquity they had no part or lot in Purity or Light. Another contrast may possibly be deduced: the humble and lowly may be "in the dust" in this life, and the arrogant sinners in sunshine, but the roles will be reversed at Judgment.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Narrate the cause of revelation of '*Abasa*.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This part of the chapter refutes the argument of those who deny life after death by referring to the growth of man's food. It finally talks about the Day of Judgement when man will flee from his relatives, when some faces will be beaming and other faces will be dust-stained.

5.0 SUMMARY

We have gone through the translation and detailed commentary of '*Abasa*: 17 - 42, by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Explain some differences between man as a mammal and other animals.
- ii. Explain how the forces of the Heaven and Earth serve man to produce his food.
- iii. Mention some of the happenings that will occur on the Day of Judgement.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Abdullah, Yusuf Ali (1990). *The Holy Qur'ān (Arabic Text, English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary)*. al-Madina al-Munawwara, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Holy Qur'ān Printing Complex.

Maulana, Muhammad Ali (2002). *The Holy Qur'ān (Arabic Text with English Translation and Commentary)*. Ohio, U.S.A.: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha‘at Islam Lahore Inc.

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UNIT 3 TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY OF AT-TAKWIR

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Arabic Text of *at-Takwir*
 - 3.2 Translation of *at-Takwir*
 - 3.3 Commentary of *at-Takwir*
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is entitled *at-Takwir* or [the folding up]. It is the 81st chapter of the *Qur'an*. Its name is taken from verse one of its verses. It was revealed at *Makkah*. It has twenty-nine verses.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give the translation of *at-Takwir* in English
- explain some of its verses in a detailed commentary.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Arabic Text of *At-Takwir*

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

﴿إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِرَتْ - وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انْكَدَرَتْ - وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُيَرَتْ - وَإِذَا الْعِشَارُ
عُطَلَتْ - وَإِذَا الْوُخُوشُ حُشِرَتْ - وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ سُجَرَتْ - وَإِذَا النُّفُوسُ رُزَّجَتْ - وَإِذَا
الْمَوْعِدَةُ سُيَلَتْ - بِأَيِّ ذَنِبٍ قُتِلَتْ - وَإِذَا الصُّحُفُ نُشِرَتْ - وَإِذَا السَّمَاءُ كُشِطَتْ -
وَإِذَا الْجَحِيمُ سُعِرَتْ - وَإِذَا الْجَنَّةُ أُزْلَفَتْ - عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَا أَحْضَرَتْ - فَلَا أَقْسِمُ
بِالْحُكْمِ - الْجَوَارُ الْكُنْسِ - وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا عَسَعُسَ - وَالصُّبْحُ إِذَا تَنَفَّسَ إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ

كَرِيمٌ ذِي فُؤَادٍ عِنْدَ ذِي الْعَرْشِ مَكِينٌ مُطَعٌ ثُمَّ أَمِينٌ وَمَا صَحِبُكُمْ بِمَجْنُونٍ وَلَقَدْ رَأَاهُ
بِالْأَفْقِ الْمُبِينِ وَمَا هُوَ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ بِضَانٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِقُولٍ شَيْطَنٌ رَّجِيمٌ فَإِنَّ تَذَهَّبُونَ إِنْ هُوَ
إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ لِمَنْ شَاءَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَسْتَقِيمَ وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤﴾

3.2 Translation of *at-Takwīr*

At-Takwīr (The Folding Up)

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

- 81: 1. When the sun (with its spacious light) is folded up;
- 81: 2. When the stars fall, losing their lustre;
- 81: 3. When the mountains vanish (like a mirage);
- 81: 4. When the she-camels, ten months with young, are left untended;
- 81: 5. When the wild beasts are herded together (in the human habitations);
- 81: 6. When the oceans boil over with a swell;
- 81: 7. When the souls are sorted out, (being joined, like with like);
- 81: 8. When the female (infant), buried alive, is questioned -
- 81: 9. For what crime she was killed;
- 81:10. When the scrolls are laid open;
- 81:11. When the world on High is unveiled;
- 81:12. When the Blazing Fire is kindled to fierce heat;
- 81:13. And when the Garden is brought near;-
- 81:14. (Then) shall each soul know what it has put forward.
- 81:15. So verily I call to witness the planets - that recede,
- 81:16. Go straight, or hide;
- 81:17. And the Night as it dissipates;
- 81:18. And the Dawn as it breathes away the darkness;-

- 81:19. Verily this is the word of a most honourable Messenger,
- 81:20. Endued with Power, with rank before the Lord of the Throne,
- 81:21. With authority there, (and) faithful to his trust.
- 81:22. And (O people!) your companion is not one possessed;
- 81:23. And without doubt he saw him in the clear horizon.
- 81:24. Neither doth he withhold grudgingly a knowledge of the Unseen.
- 81:25. Nor is it the word of an evil spirit accursed.
- 81:26. When whither go ye?
- 81:27. Verily this is no less than a Message to (all) the Worlds:
- 81:28. (With profit) to whoever among you wills to go straight:
- 81:29. But ye shall not will except as Allah wills,- the Cherisher of the Worlds.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give the translation of verses 1 to 14 of *at-Takwīr* in English.

3.3 Commentary on *at-Takwīr*

81. 1:

Verses 1 to 13 are conditional clauses, and the substantive clause is in verse 14. The time will come when nature's processes as we know them will cease to function, and the soul will only then know by self conviction the results of its actions. With reference to an individual soul, its resurrection is its supreme crisis: the whole world of sense, and even of imagination and reason, melts away, and its whole spiritual scroll is laid bare before it.

The conditional clauses are twelve, in two groups of six. The first six affect the outer or physical life of man; the last six, his inmost spiritual life. Let us take them one by one. (1) The biggest factor affecting us in the external physical World is the light, heat, and perhaps electric or magnetic energy of the sun. The sun is the source of all the light, heat, and energy, and indeed the source and support of all the physical life

that we know. It is the biggest factor and yet most remote from us in our solar system. Yet the sources of our inner spiritual life will be greater and more lasting, for they will survive it. The sun as the center of our solar system also stands as a symbol of the present order of things. The physical forces, as defined in Newton's laws of Matter and Attraction, will also break up with the break-up of the sun.

81. 2:

(2) Next after the sun, we can derive faint lights from the innumerable stars in the firmament. For all the ages of which we have any record, these stars have remained fixed. Nothing can be more fixed; yet they can and will fail.

81. 3:

(3) On our own earth the mountains the "eternal hills"-seem the most striking examples of stability; yet they will be swept away like a mirage, as if they had never existed.

81. 4:

(4) The type of Arab property, as well as the type of the Arab pet, was the camel, and the most precious camel was the she-camel just about to be delivered of her young. She would in normal times be most sedulously cared for. But when all our landmarks of this life vanish, even she would be left untended. Nothing would then be as it is now.

81. 5:

(5) In the present world, the wild animals fear each other, and they all fear man and normally keep away from human habitations. But when this order passes away, there will be scarcely any differentiation between human habitations and the wilds of the forests.

81. 6:

(6) The oceans, which now keep their bounds, will surge and boil over, and overwhelm all landmarks. At present the waters seem to have reached their fixed and normal levels, but the whole equilibrium will then be disturbed. Such will be the complete wreck of this transitory world, at the approach of the dawn of the permanent Reality. But these are physical symbols, relating to the outer nature surrounding the physical nature of man. The remaining six. viz.,: the 7th to the 12th, describe the ordering of the new World, from which all present seeming incongruities will be removed.

81. 7:

In lvi. 7, the sorting out into three classes is mentioned, viz.,: Those Nearest to Allah, the Companions of the Right Hand, and the Companions of the Left Hand. That was a sort of broad general division. The meaning in this passage is wider, (7) Whereas in this world of probation, good is mixed with evil, knowledge with ignorance, power with arrogance, and so on, in the new world of Reality, all true values will be restored, and like will consort with like, for it will be a world of perfect Peace, Harmony, and Justice.

81. 9:

(8) In this world of sin and sorrow, much unjust suffering is caused, and innocent lives sacrificed, without a trace being left, by which offenders can be brought to justice. A striking example before the Quraysh was female infanticide. The crime was committed in the guise of social plausibility in secret collusion, and no question was asked here. But in the world of Justice, full questions will be asked, and the victim herself-dumb here-will be able to give evidence, for she had committed no crime herself. The proofs will be drawn from the very means used for concealment.

81. 10:

(9) The Scrolls recording the deeds of men, good or bad, will then be laid open before all. In the present phenomenal world, things may be concealed; but in the world of absolute Reality, every secret is opened out, good or bad. The whole tale of acts, omissions, motives, imponderable spiritual hurt, neglect, or help will be laid bare.

81. 11:

The Sky, or Heaven as standing for both the Blazing Fire and the Garden, the Home of the Hereafter. (10) Just as when an animal is skinned, its real flesh and blood and inner organs become visible, without any outer coating to hold them together, so the inmost state of every soul will then become plain.

81. 12:

(11) Then will burn the Blazing Fire of the Hell, worse than the fiercest fire.

81. 13:

(12) Lastly the Garden will come in sight, not yet attained, but visible, or "brought near". For the scales have fallen from the eyes; and the soul knows itself.

81. 14:

This is the conclusion. It is only on such conditions that the soul reaches its full realization. Put forward: cf. "the Deeds which his hands have sent forth" in lxxviii. 40.

81.15:

The heavenly bodies bear witness to the power, beauty, and goodness of Allah in sending His Revelation while adjuration is a significant issue in the Qur'ān.

The appeal here is made to three things, the Planets, the Night, and the Dawn. (1) The Planets have a retrograde and a forward motion, and, during occultation, hide or disappear behind the sun or moon, or are otherwise invisible or appear stationary. They behave differently from the millions of stars around them. Yet they are not mere erratic bodies, but obey definite laws, and evidence the power and wisdom of Allah.

81. 17:

How the Night gradually declines after its height at midnight! It seems gradually to steal away, and as Dawn approaches, to merge into Day. So a soul in spiritual darkness gradually awakes to its spiritual Dawn through Revelation.

81. 18:

The slow "breathing out" of the darkness by the Dawn, shows us, by beautiful imagery, that these wonderful operations, of which people in their ignorance are frightened if they have to do with darkness, are really beneficent operations of Allah. They have nothing to do with evil spirits, or witches, or magic. For three questions were actually raised about the holy Prophet's Ministry by the ignorant. (1) Did his wonderful works come from himself and not from Allah? (2) Was he possessed of an evil spirit? In other words, was he mad? For that was the theory of madness then current. (3) Was he a soothsayer, or necromancer, or magician? For he had virtues, powers and eloquence, so extraordinary that they could not understand him.

81. 19:

They are told her that all their three theories were foolish. The Revelation was really from Allah. Their wonder should cease if they observe the daily miracles worked round them in nature. The bringer of Allah's Message was the angel Gabriel, and not an evil spirit.

81. 20:

Not only was the bringer of the Revelation, Gabriel, an honorable Messenger, incapable of deceit, but he had, in the angelic kingdom, rank and authority before Allah's Throne, and he could convey an authoritative divine Message. He was, like the holy Prophet, faithful to his trust; and therefore there could be no question of the Message being delivered in any other way than exactly according to the divine Will and Purpose. These epithets could apply to the Prophet himself, but in view of verse 23 below, it is best to understand them of Gabriel.

81. 22:

After describing the credentials of the Archangel Gabriel, the Text now appeals to the people to consider their own "Companion", the Prophet, who had been born among them and had lived with them, and was known to be an honorable, truthful, and trustworthy man. If Gabriel was the one who brought the Message to him, then there was no question of demoniacal possession. And the Prophet had seen him in his inspired vision "in the clear horizon".

81. 23:

Read along with this the whole passage in 53: 1-18 and notes there; where the two occasions are mentioned when there was a vision of inspiration: "For truly did he see, of the Signs of his Lord, the Greatest".

81. 24:

Such would be the words of a soothsayer, guarded, ambiguous, and misleading. Here everything was clear, sane, true, and under divine inspiration.

81. 25:

Such as evil suggestions of envy, spite, greed, selfishness, or other vices. On the contrary the teaching of the Qur'ān is beneficent, pointing to the Right Way, the Way of Allah. Rajīm: literally, driven away with stones; rejected with complete ignominy. The rite of throwing stones in the

valley of Mina at the close of the Makkan Pilgrimage suggests symbolically that the Pilgrim emphatically, definitely, and finally rejects all Evil.

81. 26:

It has been shown that this is no word of a mortal, but that it is full of divine wisdom; that its teaching is not that of a madman, but sane to the core and in accordance with human needs; that it freely and clearly directs you to the right Path and forbids you the Path of evil. Why then hesitate? Accept the divine Grace; repent of your sins; and come to the higher Life.

81. 27:

It is not meant for one class or race; it is universal, and is addressed to all the Worlds.

81. 28:

Cf. lxxiv. 55-56. Allah is the Cherisher of the Worlds, Lord of Grace and Mercy, and His guidance is open to all who have the will to profit by it. But that will must be exercised in conformity with Allah's Will. Such conformity is Islam. Verse 28 points to human free-will and responsibility; verse 29 to its, limitations. Both extremes, viz.,: cast-iron Determinism and an idea of Chaotic Free-will, are condemned.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

List the three questions that were raised about the prophet's message by the unbelievers.

4.0 CONCLUSION

At-Takwir starts with conditional clauses of some of the events that will usher in the Day of Judgment and others that will take place therein. These include the folding up of the sun, falling of the stars, vanishing of the mountains, abandoning of the pregnant she-camels, gathering of the wide beasts, blazing of the oceans, sorting out of the souls, questioning of the buried-alive female infant, laying down of the scrolls, unveiling of the world on high, kindling of the blazing fire and near bringing of the garden. It concludes by affirming the fact that the Qur'ān is a message revealed for the benefit of the whole worlds.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit presents us with the Arabic text, English translation and detailed commentary of *Sūrat at-Takwīr* as contained in the universally acclaimed Qur’ānic exegesis by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Mention some event that will lead to and/or occur on the Day of Judgment.
- ii. List the three questions raised about the prophet’s message by the unbelievers.
- iii. Give Almighty Allah’s response to those questions.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Abdullah, Yusuf Ali (1990). *The Holy Qur’ān (Arabic Text, English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary)*. al-Madina al-Munawwara, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Holy Qur’ān Printing Complex.

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UNIT 4 TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY OF AL-INFITĀR

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Arabic Text of *al-Infitār*
 - 3.2 Translation of *al-Infitār*
 - 3.3 Commentary of *al-Infitār*
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is entitled *al-Infitār* or [the cleaving asunder]. It is the 82nd chapter of the *Qur'an*. Its name is taken from verse one of its verses. It was revealed at *Makkah*. It has nineteen verses.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give the translation of *al-Infitār* in English
- explain some of its verses in a detailed commentary.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Arabic Text of *Al-Infitār*

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

﴿إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انفَطَرَتْ - وَإِذَا الْكَوَافِرُ انْشَرَتْ - وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ فُجِرَتْ - وَإِذَا الْقُبُورُ بُعْثِرَتْ - عَلِمْتَ نَفْسٌ مَا قَدَّمَتْ وَأَخْرَتْ - يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَنُ مَا عَرَكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ - الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّاكَ فَعَدَلَكَ - فِي أَيِّ صُورَةِ مَا شَاءَ رَجَبَكَ - كَلَّا بَلْ تُكَذِّبُونَ بِالَّذِينَ - وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَفِظِينَ - كِرَاماً كَتِيبِينَ - يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ - إِنَّ الْأُبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ - وَإِنَّ الْفُجَّارَ

لَفِي جَحِيمٍ - يَصْنُونَهَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ - وَمَا هُمْ عَنْهَا بِغَائِبٍ - وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمُ الدِّينِ -
ثُمَّ مَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمُ الدِّينِ - يَوْمٌ لَا تَمْلِكُ نَفْسٌ لِنَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَالْأَمْرُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلَّهِ ﷺ

3.2 Translation of *Al-Infītar*

Al-Infītar (The Cleaving Asunder)

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

- 82: 1. When the Sky is cleft asunder;
- 82: 2. When the Stars are scattered;
- 82: 3. When the Oceans are suffered to burst forth;
- 82: 4. And when the Graves are turned upside down;-
- 82: 5. (Then) shall each soul know what it hath sent forward and (what it hath) kept back.
- 82: 6. O man! What has seduced thee from thy Lord Most Beneficent?-
- 82: 7. Him Who created thee. Fashioned thee in due proportion, and gave thee a just bias;
- 82: 8. In whatever Form He wills, does He put thee together.
- 82: 9. Day! nit ye do reject Right and Judgment!
- 82:10. But verily over you (are appointed angels) to protect you,-
- 82:11. Kind and honourable,- Writing down (your deeds):
- 82:12. They know (and understand) all that ye do.
- 82:13. As for the Righteous, they will be in bliss;
- 82:14. And the Wicked - they will be in the Fire,
- 82:15. Which they will enter on the Day of Judgment,
- 82:16. And they will not be able to keep away therefrom.
- 82:17. And what will explain to thee what the Day of Judgment is?
- 82:18. Again, what will explain to thee what the Day of Judgment is?

82:19. (It will be) the Day when no soul shall have power (to do) aught for another: For the command, that Day, will be (wholly) with Allah.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give the translation of verses 27 to 33 of *al-Infitār* in English.

3.3 Commentary on *Al-Infitār*

82. 1:

The physical world as we see it now will be destroyed before the final Day of Judgment, establishing the true Reality. In the following four clauses we have a reference to the Lesser Judgment, the individual dawn of the true Reality at Death.

Cf. lxxiii. 18. The beautiful blue sky overhead, which we take for granted in sunshine and storm, will be shattered to pieces before the New World is established. The partition which seems at present to divide things divine from this phenomenal world has to be shattered before each soul knows the reality about itself.

82. 2:

Throughout this passage, the dominating idea is the disturbance of order and symmetry. The metaphor behind the scattering of the constellations is that in the present order of things we see many things associated together, e.g., rank with honour, wealth with comfort, etc. In the New World this will be seen to have merely fortuitous.

82. 3:

Here, "when the oceans are suffered to burst forth" expresses the end of the present order of things. This may be in two ways, (1) The barrier which keeps within their respective bounds the various streams of salt and fresh water (Iv. 20, n. 5185) will be removed; (2) the Ocean will overwhelm the whole Globe.

82. 4:

This item is introduced to show that the whole order of things will be so reversed that even Death will not be Death. We think there is tranquility in Death: but there will be no tranquility. Literally, and figuratively, Death will be the beginning of a new Life. What we think to be Death will bring forth Life.

82. 5:

Sent Forward and kept back: may mean: the deeds of commission and omission in this life. Or the Arabic words may also be translated: sent forward and left behind: i.e., the spiritual possibilities which it sent forward for its other life, and the physical things on which it prided itself in this life, but which it had to leave behind in this life. Or else, the things it put first and the things it put last in importance may change places in the new world of Reality. "The first shall be last and the last shall be first".

82. 7:

Allah not only created man, but fashioned him in due proportions, giving him extraordinary capacities, and the means wherewith he can fulfill his high destiny.

82. 8:

By "Form" (Surah) here we can understand the general shape of things in which any given personality is placed, including his physical and social environments, his gifts of mind and spirit, and all that goes to make up his outer and inner life. The Grace of Allah is shown in all these things, for His Will is formed from perfect knowledge, wisdom, and goodness.

82. 9:

The goodness and mercies of Allah, and His constant watchful care of all His creatures should make men grateful, instead of which they turn away from the Right and deny the Day of Sorting Out, the Day when every action performed here will find its fulfillment in just reward or punishment.

82. 10:

Besides the faculties given to man to guide him, and the Form and Personality through which he can rise by stages to the Presence of Allah, there are spiritual agencies around him to help and protect him, and to note down his Record, so that perfect justice may be done to him at the end. For these Guardian Angels.

82. 15:

This means the Punishment in the `Fire` will be postponed as long as possible, to give the Sinner every chance of repentance and amendment.

But once the period of probation is past, it will be irrevocable. There will be no going back from it. By inference, the Righteous may individually reach some stage of Bliss at once, possibly in this life, possibly after death, though the Final Judgment will be the general and complete cessation of this fleeting world and the creation of the world of Eternity.

82. 18:

We can speak of Rewards and Punishments, the Fruits of Actions, the Resurrection and the Tribunal, the Restoration of True Values, the Elimination of all Wrong, and a hundred other phrases. They might serve to introduce our minds vaguely to a new World, of which they cannot possibly form any adequate conception under present conditions. The question is repeated in verses 17-18 to emphasize this difficulty, and a simple answer is suggested, as explained in the next note.

82. 19:

The answer is suggested by a negative proposition: 'No soul shall have power to do anything for another'. This is full of meaning. Personal responsibility will be fully enforced. In this world we all depend on one another proximately, though our ultimate dependence is always on Allah, now and forever. But here a father helps a son forward; husband and wife influence each other's destinies; falsehood and evil may seem to flourish for a time, because a certain amount of limited free-will has been granted to man. This period will be all over then. The good and the pure will have been separated from the evil and the rebellious; the latter will have been rendered inert, and the former will have been so perfected that their wills will be in complete consonance with Allah's Universal Will. The Command, thence forward, will be wholly with Allah.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Mention one of the events that will lead to the Day of Judgment that is not mentioned in chapter 81.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This chapter also starts with conditional clauses whose substantive clause is verse five. It goes on to describe how God has created and fashioned man in due proportion. Then it talks about the honorable protecting record keeping angels and finally mentions what the righteous will receive in delight and where the sinners will find themselves on the Day of Judgment.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this Unit, we have gone through the Arabic text, English translation and detailed commentary of *al-Infītār*, as contained in Abdullah Yusuf Ali's work on the exegesis of the Holy Qur'ān.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Mention one of the events that will usher in the Day of Judgment that is not mentioned in chapter 81.
- ii. Mention the two guarding angels appointed to every man and their functions.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Abdullah, Yusuf Ali (1990). *The Holy Qur'ān (Arabic Text, English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary)*. al-Madina al-Munawwara, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Holy Qur'ān Printing Complex.

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MODULE 3

- Unit 1 Translation and Commentary of *al-Mutaffifīn*: Verses 1 –17
- Unit 2 Translation and Commentary of *al-Mutaffifīn*: Verses 18 – 36
- Unit 3 Translation and Commentary of *al-Inshiqāq*
- Unit 4 Translation and Commentary of *al-Burūj*
- Unit 5 Translation and Commentary of *aṭ-Ṭāriq*

UNIT 1 TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY OF AL-MUTAFFIFĪN:1-17

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Arabic Text of *al-Muṭṭaffifīn*: 1 - 17
 - 3.2 Translation of *al-Muṭṭaffifīn*: 1 - 17
 - 3.3 Commentary of *al-Muṭṭaffifīn*: 1 - 17
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is part one of the chapter entitled *al-Muṭṭaffifīn* or [the dealers in fraud] verses 1 to 17. It is the 83rd chapter of the *Qur’ān*. Its name is taken from verse one of its verses. It was revealed at *Makkah*. It has thirty-six verses.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give the translation of *al-Muṭṭaffifīn* in English
- explain some of its verses in a detailed commentary.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Arabic Text of *al-Muttaffifin*: 1 – 17

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

﴿وَإِلَّا لِلْمُطَفَّفِينَ - الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَكْتَالُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ - وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَوْ
وَرَأُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ - أَلَا يَظْنُ أُولَئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَبْعُوثُونَ - لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ - يَوْمٍ يَقُومُ
النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعَلَمِينَ - كَلَّا إِنَّ كِتَابَ الْفُجَارِ لِفِي سِجْنٍ - وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا سِجْنٌ
- كِتَابٌ مَرْفُومٌ وَإِلَّا يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمَكَدِّينَ الَّذِينَ يُكَذِّبُونَ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ وَمَا يُكَذِّبُ بِهِ
إِلَّا كُلُّ مُعْنَدٍ أَثِيمٍ إِذَا ثُشِّلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَاتُنَا قَالَ أَسَاطِيرُ الْأُولَئِينَ كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَى
قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَنِ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَمَحْجُوبُونَ ثُمَّ إِنَّهُمْ لَصَالُوا
الْجَحِيمَ ثُمَّ يُقَالُ هَذَا الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تُكَذِّبُونَ﴾

3.2 Translation of *Al-Muttaffifin*

Al-Muttaffifin [The Dealers in Fraud]: 1 – 17

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

- 83: 1. Woe to those that deal in fraud,-
- 83: 2. Those who, when they have to receive by measure from men,
exact full measure,
- 83: 3. But when they have to give by measure or weight to men, give
less than due.
- 83: 4. Do they not think that they will be called to account?-
- 83: 5. On a Mighty Day,
- 83: 6. A Day when (all) mankind will stand before the Lord of the
Worlds?
- 83: 7. Nay! Surely the record of the wicked is (preserved) in Sijjin.
- 83: 8. And what will explain to thee what Sijjin is?
- 83: 9. (There is) a Register (fully) inscribed.

- 83:10. Woe, that Day, to those that deny-
- 83:11. Those that deny the Day of Judgment.
- 83:12. And none can deny it but the Transgressor beyond bounds, the Sinner!
- 83:13. When Our Signs are rehearsed to him, he says, "Tales of the ancients!"
- 83:14. By no means! but on their hearts is the stain of the (ill) which they do!
- 83:15. Verily, from (the Light of) their Lord, that Day, will they be veiled.
- 83:16. Further, they will enter the Fire of Hell.
- 83:17. Further, it will be said to them: "This is the (reality) which ye rejected as false!

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give the translation of verses 7 to 17 of *al-Muttaffifīn* in English.

3.3 Commentary on *Al-Muttaffifīn*: 1 – 17

83. 1:

"Fraud" must here be taken in a widely general sense. It covers giving short measure or short weight, but it covers much more than that. The next two verses make it clear that it is the spirit of injustice that is condemned, giving too little and asking too much. This may be shown in commercial dealings, where a man exacts a higher standard in his own favour than he is willing to concede as against him. In domestic or social matters an individual or group may ask for honour, or respect, or services which he or they are not willing to give on their side in similar circumstances. It is worse than one-sided selfishness: for it is double injustice. But it is worst of all in religion or spiritual life: with what face can a man ask for Mercy or Love from Allah when he is unwilling to give it to his fellow-men? In one aspect this is a statement of the Golden Rule. 'Do as you would be done by'. But it is more completely expressed. You must give in full what it due from you, whether you expect or wish to receive full consideration from the other side or not.

83. 4:

Legal and social sanctions against Fraud depend for their efficacy on whether there is a chance of being found out. Moral and religious sanctions are of a different kind. 'Do you wish to degrade your own nature?' 'Do you not consider that there is a Day of Account before a Judge Who knows all, and Who safeguards all interests, for He is the Lord and Cherisher of the Worlds? Whether other people know anything about your wrong or not, you are guilty before Allah'.

83. 7:

This is a word from the same root as Sijn, a Prison. It rhymes with and is contrasted with 'Illiyyīn in verse 18 below. It is therefore understood by many Commentators to be a place, a Prison or a Dungeon in which the Wicked are confined pending their appearance before the Judgment-Seat. The mention of the scribed Register in verse 9 below may imply that Sijjīn is the name of the Register of Black Deeds, though verse 9 may be elliptical and may only describe the place by the significance of its contents.

83. 9:

If we take *Sijjīn* to be the Register itself, and not the place where it is kept, the Register itself is a sort of Prison for those who do wrong. It is inscribed fully: i.e., no one is omitted who ought to be there, and for every entry there is a complete record, so that there is no escape for the sinner.

83. 11:

The fact of Personal Responsibility for each soul is so undoubted that people who deny it are to be pitied, and will indeed be in a most pitiable condition on the Day of Reckoning, and none but the most abandoned sinner can deny it, and he only denies it by playing with Falsehoods.

83. 13:

They scorn Truth and pretend that it is Falsehood.

83. 14:

The heart of man, as created by Allah, is pure and unsullied. Every time that a man does an ill deed, it marks a stain or rust on his heart. But on repentance and forgiveness, such stain is washed off. If there is no repentance and forgiveness, the stains deepen and spread more and

more, until the heart is scaled (ii. 7), and eventually the man dies a spiritual death. It is such stains that stand in the way of his perceiving Truths which are obvious to others. That is why he mocks at Truth and hugs Falsehood to his bosom.

83. 15:

The stain of evil deeds on their hearts sullies the mirror of their hearts, so that it does not receive the light. At Judgment the true Light, the Glory of the Lord, the joy of the Righteous, will be hidden by veils from the eyes of the Sinful. Instead; the Fire of Punishment will be to them the only reality which they will perceive.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Identify the consequences of dealing in fraud.

4.0 CONCLUSION

That increasing and decreasing in measures and weights will be a cause for regret and loss is the first message this part of the chapter passes across to its readers. It goes on to say that all cheats will be questioned by the Lord of all the worlds on the great day, the Day of Judgment and finally talks about the record of the sinners with their punishment on the Day of Judgment.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit takes us through the text, translation and detailed commentary of *al-Muṭṭaffifīn*: 1 – 17, as contained in the work of the reputable Quranic exegete: Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Explain the term: *Sijjīn*
- ii. Mention the consequences of dealing in fraud.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Abdullah, Yusuf Ali (1990). *The Holy Qur'ān (Arabic Text, English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary)*. al-Madina al-Munawwara, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Holy Qur'ān Printing Complex.

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UNIT 2 TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY OF AL-MUṬTAFFIFĪN: VERSES 18 - 36

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Arabic Text of *al-Muṭtaffifīn*: 18 - 36
 - 3.2 Translation of *al-Muṭtaffifīn*: 18 - 36
 - 3.3 Commentary of *al-Muṭtaffifīn*: 18 - 36
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is part two of the chapter entitled *al-Muṭtaffifīn* or [the dealers in fraud] verses 18 to 36. It is the 83rd chapter of the *Qur'ān*. Its name is taken from verse one of its verses. It was revealed at *Makkah*. It has thirty-six verses.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give the translation of *al-Muṭtaffifīn* 18 - 36 in English
- explain some of its verses in a detailed commentary.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Arabic Text of *al-Muṭtaffifīn*: 18–36

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

﴿كَلَّا إِنَّ كَتَبَ الْأَبْرَارِ لَفِي عَلَيْنَ - وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا عَلِيهِنَّ كَتَبٌ مَرْفُومٌ يَشْهُدُهُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ
إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ يَنْظُرُونَ تَعْرِفُ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ نَصْرَةَ النَّعِيمِ يُسْقَوْنَ مِنْ
رَّحِيقٍ مَّخْنُومٍ خَتَمُهُ مِسْكٌ وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلَيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ وَمِنَاجِهُ مِنْ تَسْنِيمٍ عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ
بِهَا الْمُقَرَّبُونَ - إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا كَانُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا يَضْحَكُونَ - وَإِذَا مَرُوا بِهِمْ

يَتَغَامِزُونَ - وَإِذَا انْقَلَبُوا إِلَى أَهْلِهِمْ انْقَلَبُوا فَكِهِينَ - وَإِذَا رَأَوْهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّ هُؤُلَاءِ لَصَائِلُونَ
- وَمَا أُرْسِلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِظِينَ - فَالْيَوْمَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ يَضْحَكُونَ عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ
يَظْرُونَ هَلْ ثُوبَ الْكُفَّارُ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٤﴾

3.2 Translation of *Al-Muttaffifīn*: 18 - 36

Al-Muttaffifīn [The Dealers in Fraud]: 18 – 36

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

- 83:18. Day, verily the record of the Righteous is (preserved) in 'Illiin.
- 83:19. And what will explain to thee what 'Illiyn is?
- 83:20. (There is) a Register (fully) inscribed,
- 83:21. To which bear witness those Nearest (to Allah).
- 83:22. Truly the Righteous will be in Bliss:
- 83:23. On Thrones (of Dignity) will they command a sight (of all things):
- 83:24. Thou wilt recognise in their faces the beaming brightness of Bliss.
- 83:25. Their thirst will be slaked with Pure Wine sealed:
- 83:26. The seal thereof will be Musk: And for this let those aspire, who have aspirations:
- 83:27. With it will be (given) a mixture of Tasnim:
- 83:28. A spring, from (the waters) whereof drink those Nearest to Allah.
- 83:29. Those in sin used to laugh at those who believed,
- 83:30. And whenever they passed by them, used to wink at each other in mockery);
- 83:31. And when they returned to their own people, they would return jesting;

83:32. And whenever they saw them, they would say, "Behold! These are the people truly astray!"

83:33. But they had not been sent as keepers over them!

83:34. But on this Day the Believers will laugh at the Unbelievers:

83:35. On Thrones (of Dignity) they will command (a sight) (of all things).

83:36. Will not the Unbelievers have been paid back for what they did?

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give the translation of verses 18 to 28 of *al-Muttaffifin* in English.

3.3 Commentary on *Al-Muttaffifin*: 18 – 36

83. 18:

Illiyyīn: the oblique form of the nominative *'Illiyyūn*, which occurs in the next verse. It is in contrast to the *Sijjin* which occurs in verse 7 above. Literally, it means the 'High Places'. Applying the reasoning parallel to that which we applied to *Sijjīn*, we may interpret it as the Place where is kept the Register of the Righteous.

83. 20:

This repeats verse 9 above. But the Register is of the opposite kind, that of the Righteous. It contains every detail of the Righteous.

83. 21:

Those Nearest to Allah will be witnesses to this Righteous Record; or as it may also be rendered, they will be present at the Record, and watch this Record.

83. 25:

The Wine will be of the utmost purity and flavour, so precious that it will be protected with a seal, and the seal itself will be of the costly material of musk, which is most highly esteemed in the East for its perfume. Perhaps a better interpretation of the "seal" is to take it as implying the final effect of the drink: just as a seal close a document, so

the seal of the drink will be the final effect of the delicious perfume and flavour of musk, heightening the enjoyment and helping in the digestion.

83. 26:

If you understand true and lasting values, this is the kind of pure Bliss to aspire, for, and not the fleeting enjoyments of this world, which always leave a sting behind.

83. 27:

Tasnīm literally indicates height, fullness, opulence. Here it is the name of a heavenly Fountain, whose drink is superior to that of the Purest Wine. It is the nectar drunk by Those Nearest to Allah.

83. 32:

The wicked laugh at the righteous in this world in many ways: (1) They inwardly laugh at their Faith, because they feel themselves so superior. (2) In public places, when the righteous pass, they wink at each other and insult them. (3) In their own houses they run them down. (4) Whenever and wherever they see them, they reproach them with being fools who have lost their way, when the boot is really on the other leg. In the Hereafter all these tricks and falsehoods will be shown for what they are, and the tables will be reversed.

83. 33:

But the wicked critics of the Righteous have no call in any case to sit in judgment over them. Who set them as Keepers or guardians over the Righteous? Let them look to their own condition and future first.

83. 34:

The tables will then be reversed, and he laughs best who laughs last.

83. 35:

This is a repetition of verse 23 above, but with a different shade of meaning. The Righteous on their raised couches will be able to see all the true values restored in their own favour: but they will also see something else: they will also see the arrogant braggarts brought low, who brought about their own downfall by their own actions.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Explain the terms: *Tasnīm* and *'illiyyin*.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This part of the chapter depicts the record of the righteous with their reward on the Day of Judgment. It mentions the wicked behaviour of the unbelievers towards the believers on Earth but finally maintains that the believers will laugh at them on the Day of Judgment.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit takes us through the text, translation and detailed commentary of *al-Muṭṭaffiḥīn*: 18 - 36, by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Compare and contrast the two terms: *'illiyyīn* and *Sijjīn*.
- ii. List 4 ways through which the wicked laugh at the righteous in this life.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Abdullah, Yusuf Ali (1990). *The Holy Qur'ān (Arabic Text, English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary)*. al-Madina al-Munawwara, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Holy Qur'ān Printing Complex.

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UNIT 3 TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY OF *AL-INSHIQĀQ*

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- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Arabic Text of *al-Inshiqāq*
 - 3.3 Translation of *al-Inshiqāq*
 - 3.4 Commentary of *al-Inshiqāq*
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is entitled *al-Inshiqāq* or [the rending asunder]. It is the 84th chapter of the Qur’ān. Its name is taken from verse one of its verses. It was revealed at *Makkah*. It has twenty-five verses.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give the translation of *al-Inshiqāq* in English
- explain some of its verses in a detailed commentary.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Arabic Text of *Al-Inshiqāq*

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انشَقَتْ - وَأَذِنْتُ لِرَبِّهَا وَحَقَّتْ - وَإِذَا الْأَرْضُ مُدَّتْ - وَأَلْقَتْ مَا فِيهَا
وَتَخَلَّتْ - وَأَذِنْتُ لِرَبِّهَا وَحَقَّتْ - يَأْتِيَهَا الْإِنْسَنُ إِنَّكَ كَادْخُ إِلَى رَبِّكَ كَدْحًا فَمُلْقِيْهِ - فَأَمَّا
مَنْ أُوتَى كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ - فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسِبُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا - وَيَنْقِلِبُ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا - وَأَمَّا
مَنْ أُوتَى كِتَابَهُ وَرَاءَ ظَهْرِهِ - فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُو ثُبُورًا - وَيَصْلَى سَعِيرًا - إِنَّهُ كَانَ فِي أَهْلِهِ
مَسْرُورًا - إِنَّهُ ظَنَّ أَنَّ لَنْ يَحُوزَ - بَلَى إِنَّ رَبَّهُ كَانَ بِهِ بَصِيرًا - لَا أُقْسِمُ بِالشَّفَقِ - وَالْأَلْلِ
وَمَا وَسَقَ - وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا اتَّسَقَ - لَتَرْكِبُنَ طَبَقًا عَنْ طَبَقٍ - فَمَا لَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ - وَإِذَا قُرِيءَ

عَلَيْهِمُ الْقُرْءَانُ لَا يَسْجُدُونَ - بِلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُكَذِّبُونَ - وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُوَعِّدُونَ -
فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعِدَابٍ أَلِيمٍ - إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّلِحَاتِ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ﴿٤﴾

3.2 Translation of *Al-Inshiqāq*

Al-Inshiqāq (The Rending Asunder)

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

84: 1. When the sky is rent asunder,

84: 2. And hearkens to (the Command of) its Lord, and it most deserve
(do so);-

84: 3. And when the earth is flattened out,

84: 4. And casts forth what is within it and becomes (clean) empty,

84: 5. And hearkens to (the Command of) its Lord,- and it most
deserve (do so);- (then will come Home the full reality).

84: 6. O thou man! Verily thou art ever toiling on towards thy Lord-
painfully toiling,- but thou shalt meet Him.

84: 7. Then he who is given his Record in his right hand,

84: 8. Soon will his account be taken by an easy reckoning,

84: 9. And he will turn to his people, rejoicing!

84:10. But he who is given his Record behind his back,-

84:11. Soon will he cry for perdition,

84:12. And he will enter a Blazing Fire.

84:13. Truly, did he go about among his people, rejoicing!

84:14. Truly, did he think that he would not have to return (to Us)!

84:15. Nay, nay! for his Lord was (ever) watchful of him!

84:16. So I do call to witness the ruddy glow of Sunset;

84:17. The Night and its Homing;

- 84:18. And the Moon in her fullness:
- 84:19. Ye shall surely travel from stage to stage.
- 84:20. What then is the matter with them, that they believe not?-
- 84:21. And when the Qur'an is read to them, they fall not prostrate,
- 84:22. But on the contrary the Unbelievers reject (it).
- 84:23. But Allah has full knowledge of what they secrete (in their breasts)
- 84:24. So announce to them a Penalty Grievous,
- 84:25. Except to those who believe and work righteous deeds: For them is a Reward that will never fail.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give the translation of verses 16 to 25 of *al-Inshiqāq* in English.

3.3 Commentary on *Al-Inshiqāq*

84. 1:

The passing away of this world of senses to make way for a new World of Reality is here indicated by two Facts, which are themselves signs for a complete revolution in our whole knowledge and experience. The two Signs are: (1) the Sky being rent asunder and giving up its secretes, and (2) the Earth being flattened out from the globe it is, and giving up its secrets.

84. 2:

We may think that the heavens we see above us-high and sacred, seemingly vast and limitless, eternal and timeless-are not created matter. But they are. And they remain just so long as Allah wills it so, and not a moment longer. As soon as His Command issues for their dissolution, they will obey and vanish, and all their mystery will be emptied out. And it must necessarily be so; their very nature as created beings requires that they must hearken to the voice of their Creator, even to the extent of their own extinction.

84. 3:

The Earth is a globe, enclosing within it many secrets and mysteries-gold and diamonds in its mines, heat and magnetic forces in its entrails, and the bodies of countless generations of men buried within its soil. At its dissolution all these contents will be disgorged: it will lose its shape as a globe, and cease to exist.

84. 5:

We think the earth so solid and real. All our perishable things dissolve into the earth. But the earth itself will dissolve into a truer Reality.

84. 6:

This life is ever full of toil and misery, if looked at as empty of the Eternal Hope which Revelation gives us. The good suffer on account of their very goodness: the evil on account of their Evil. But the balance will be set right in the end. Those that wept shall be made to rejoice, and those that went about thoughtlessly rejoicing, shall be made to weep for their folly. They will all go to their account with Allah and meet Him before His Throne of Judgment.

84. 7:

Then will be the fortunate ones, who spent their lives in goodness and truth: for them the account will be made easy; for even after the balancing, they will receive more than their merits deserve, on account of the infinite grace, and mercy of Allah.

84. 9:

His people. should be understood in a large sense, including of course all those nearest and dearest to him.

84. 10:

The wicked are given the Record in their left hand. But their hands will not be free. Sin will tie their hands behind their back: and thus they can only receive their Records in their left hand, behind their back.

84. 11:

The wicked will cry for death and annihilation: but they will neither live nor die:

84. 13:

The tables are now turned. His self-complacence and self-conceit in his lower life will now give place to weeping and gnashing of teeth!

84. 14:

Most of the Evil in this world is due to the false idea that man is irresponsible, or to a mad and thoughtless indulgence of self. Man is not irresponsible. He is responsible for every deed, word, and thought of his, to his Maker, to Whom he has to return, to give an account of himself. To remember this and act accordingly is to achieve salvation; to forget or flout that responsibility is to get into Hell.

84. 16:

'Ye shall surely travel from stage to stage. Nothing in this life is fixed, or will last. Three things are mentioned which on the one hand have remained from age to age for as far back as the memory of man can go, and yet each of them is but a short phase, gone as it were in the twinkling of an eye. So our life here is but a fleeting show. Its completion is to be looked for elsewhere.

(1) The sun seems such a great reality that people worshipped him as a divinity. The beautiful glow it leaves when it sets is but momentary: it changes every moment and vanishes with the twilight.

84. 17:

(2) The Night is a phenomenon you see during almost half every twenty-four hours in ordinary latitudes. At nightfall, all the wandering flocks and herds come home. The men scattered abroad for their livelihood return home to rest and sleep. The Night collects them in their homes, and yet this phase of Homing lasts but a little while. Presently all is silent and still. So will it be with our souls when this life is ended with our death. We shall be collected in a newer and larger Homing.

84. 18:

(3) The astronomical Full Moon does not last a moment. The moment the moon is full, she begins to decline, and the moment she is in her "inter-lunar swoon", she begins her career anew as a growing New Moon. So is man's life here below. It is not fixed or permanent, either in its physical phases, or even more strikingly, in its finer phases, intellectual, emotional, or spiritual.

84. 19:

Man travels and ascends stage by stage as if they were in layers one above another. Man's spiritual life may similarly be compared to an ascent from one heaven to another.

84. 20:

Considering man's high destiny, and the fact that this life is but a stage or a sojourn for him, it might be expected that he would eagerly embrace every opportunity of welcoming Allah's Revelation and ascending by Faith to heights of spiritual wisdom. There is something wrong with his will if he does not do so.

84. 21:

Prostrate out of respect and humble gratitude to Allah.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Describe the two ways through which records shall be given on the Day of Judgment.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses the following among other things that will take place on the Day of Judgment: splitting the Heavens asunder, stretching the Earth forth, the presentation of records and the events that will happen afterwards.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit takes us through the Arabic text, English translation and detailed commentary of al-*Inshiqāq*, by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Mention the two events that will lead to the Day of Judgment but are not mentioned in chapter 82 & 81.
2. Describe the two ways through which records shall be given on the Day of Judgment.
3. Explain the reason behind most of the evils in this world.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Abdullah, Yusuf Ali (1990). *The Holy Qur'ān (Arabic Text, English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary)*. al-Madina al-Munawwara, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Holy Qur'ān Printing Complex.

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UNIT 4 TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY OF AL-BURŪJ

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
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 - 3.1 Arabic Text of *al-Burūj*
 - 3.2 Translation of *al-Burūj*
 - 3.3 Commentary of *al-Burūj*
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is entitled *al-Burūj* or [the zodiacal signs]. It is the 85th chapter of the *Qur’ān*. Its name is taken from verse one of its verses. It was revealed at *Makkah*. It has twenty-two verses.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give the translation of *al-Burūj* in English
- explain some of its verses in a detailed commentary.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Arabic Text of *Al-Burūj*

﴿سِمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

﴿وَالسَّمَاءُ ذَاتُ الْبُرُوجِ - وَالْيَوْمُ الْمَوْعُودُ - وَشَهِيدٌ وَمَشْهُودٌ - قُتِلَ أَصْحَابُ الْأَخْدُودِ -
النَّارُ ذَاتُ الْوَقُودِ - إِذْ هُنْ عَلَيْهَا قُعُودٌ - وَهُنْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَفْعَلُونَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ شُهُودٌ - وَمَا
نَقْمُدُ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ - الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ - إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَسَّرُوا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَتُوبُوا فَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
جَهَنَّمَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ الْحَرِيقِ - إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ جَنَّتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ

تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَرُ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْكَبِيرُ - إِنَّ بَطْشَ رَبِّكَ لَسَدِيدٌ - إِنَّهُ هُوَ يُبْدِيُ وَيُعْيِدُ - وَهُوَ
الْغَفُورُ الْوَدُودُ - ذُو الْعَرْشِ الْمَجِيدُ - فَعَالٌ لِمَا يُرِيدُ - هَلْ أَنَا كَحَدِيثُ الْجَنُودِ
فِرْعَوْنَ وَثَمُودَ - بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي تَكْدِيبٍ - وَاللَّهُ مِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ مُحِيطٌ - بَلْ هُوَ قُرْءَانٌ
مَجِيدٌ - فِي لَوْحٍ مَحْفُوظٍ ﴿١﴾

3.2 Translation of *al-Burūj*

Al-Burūj (The Zodiacal Signs)

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

- 85: 1. By the sky, (displaying) the Zodiacal Signs;
- 85: 2. By the promised Day (of Judgment);
- 85: 3. By one that witnesses, and the subject of the witness;-
- 85: 4. Woe to the makers of the pit (of fire),
- 85: 5. Fire supplied (abundantly) with fuel:
- 85: 6. Behold! they sat over against the (fire),
- 85: 7. And they witnessed (all) that they were doing against the Believers.
- 85: 8. And they ill-treated them for no other reason than that they believed in Allah, Exalted in Power, Worthy of all Praise!-
- 85: 9. Him to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth! And Allah is Witness to all things.
- 85:10. Those who persecute (or draw into temptation) the Believers, men And women, and do not turn in repentance, will have the Penalty of Hell: They will have the Penalty of the Burning Fire.
- 85:11. For those who believe and do righteous deeds, will be Gardens; beneath which rivers flow: That is the great Salvation, (the fulfilment of all desires),
- 85:12. Truly strong is the Grip (and Power) of thy Lord.
- 85:13. It is He Who creates from the very beginning, and He can restore (life).

- 85:14. And He is the Oft-Forgiving, Full of Loving-Kindness,
- 85:15. Lord of the Throne of Glory,
- 85:16. Doer (without let) of all that He intends.
- 85:17. Has the story reached thee, of the forces-
- 85:18. Of Pharaoh and the Thamud?
- 85:19. And yet the Unbelievers (persist) in rejecting (the Truth)!
- 85:20. But Allah doth encompass them from behind!
- 85:21. Day, this is a Glorious Qur'an,
- 85:22. (Inscribed) in a Tablet Preserved!

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give the translation of verses 12 to 22 of *al-Burūj* in English.

3.4 Commentary on *Al-Burūj*

85. 1:

Here is an appeal to three Signs in verses 1-3, and the substantive proposition is in verses 4-8, a denunciation of wicked persecutors of the votaries of Allah, persecutors who burnt righteous men for their Faith. The three Signs are: (1) the Glorious Sky, with the broad belt of the Constellations marking the twelve Signs of the Zodiac; (2) the Day of Judgment, when all evil will be punished; and (3) certain Persons that will be witnesses, and certain Persons or things that will be the subjects of the witness.

The Stars of the Zodiac as well as of other Constellations are like the eyes of the Night. It may be that crimes are committed in the darkness of the night. But countless eyes are watching all the time, and every author of evil will be brought to book.

85. 2:

The Day of Judgment, when the Sinner will have to give an account of every deed, open or hidden, is not merely a matter of speculation. It is definitely promised in revelation, and will inevitably come to pass. Woe then to the Sinners for their crimes.

85. 3:

The literal meaning is clear, but its metaphorical application has been explained in a variety of ways by different Commentators. The words are fairly comprehensive, and should, I think, be understood in connection with Judgment. There the Witnesses may be: (1) the Prophets (iii. 81); Allah Himself (iii. 81, and x. 61); the Recording Angels (I. 21); the Sinner's own misused limbs (xxiv. 24); his record of deeds (xvii. 14); or the Sinner himself (xvii. 14). The subject of the witness may be the deed or crime, or the Sinner against whom the testimony cries out. The appeal to these things means that the Sinner cannot possibly escape the consequences of his crime. He should repent, seek Allah's Mercy, and amend his life

85. 4:

Who were the makers of the pit of fire in which they burn people for their Faith? The words are perfectly general, and we need not search for particular names, except by way of illustration. In ancient history, and in Medieval Europe, many lives were sacrificed at the stake because the victims did not conform to the established religion. In Arab tradition there is the story of Abraham: Nimrud tries to burn him to death, but on account of Abraham's Faith, the fire became "a means of safety for Abraham": xxi. Another case cited is that of Zu-Nuwas, the last Himyarite King of Yemen, by religion a Jew, who persecuted the Christians of Najran and is said to have burnt them to death. He seems to have lived in the latter half of the sixth Christian century, in the generation immediately preceding the Prophet's birth in 570 A.D. While the words are perfectly general, a reference is suggested to the persecution to which the early Muslims were subjected by the pagan Quraysh. Among other cruelties, they were stripped, and their skins were exposed to the burning rays of the Arabian summer sun.

85. 6:

The persecutors sat calmly to gloat over the agonies of their victims in the well-fed fire.

85. 9:

It is suggested that the persecutors will richly deserve to be punished in the Fire of Hell. That Punishment will be far more real and lasting than the undeserved cruelty which they inflicted on men for their Faith in the One True God.

85. 10:

The "Chastisement of the Burning Fire" has been mentioned here in addition to the "Penalty of Hell". This assumes a special significance in the background of the cruel burning of the Faithful by the "makers of the pit". These criminals would be duly retributed by being subjected to a similar kind of suffering that they had caused their innocent victims.

85. 13:

For the various words for "Creation" and the ideas implied in them, see n. 120 to ii. 117 in the Yusuf Ali's work.

85. 16:

Allah's Will is itself the Word and the Deed. There is no interval between them. He does not change His mind. No circumstances whatever can come between His Will and the execution thereof. Such are His Power and His Glory. Compare it with that of men, described in the next two verses.

85. 17:

In contrast to the real, all-embracing, and eternal power of Allah, what are the forces of man at their best? Two examples are mentioned. (1) Pharaoh was a proud monarch of a powerful kingdom, with resources and organisation, material, moral, and intellectual, as good as any in the world. When he pitted himself against Allah's Prophet, he and his forces were destroyed, See lxxix. 15-26. (2) The Thamud were great builders, and had a high standard of material civilization. But they defied the law of Allah and perished.

85. 19:

In spite of the great examples of the past, by which human might and skill were shown to have availed nothing when the law of Allah was broken, the unbelievers persist (in all ages) in defying that law. But Allah will know how to deal with them.

85. 20:

Allah encompasses everything. But the wicked will find themselves defeated not only in conditions that they foresee, but from all sorts of unexpected directions, perhaps from behind them, i.e., from the very people or circumstances which in their blindness they despised or thought of as helping them.

85. 22:

"Inscribed in a Tablet Preserved", i.e. Allah's Message is not ephemeral. It is eternal. The "Tablet" is "preserved" or guarded from corruption: xv. 9: for Allah's Message must endure forever. That Message is the "Mother of the book":

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Highlight five lessons derivable from this divine passage.

4.0 CONCLUSION

God swears by the Heavens which display the zodiacal signs, the Promised Day, the Witness and the Witnessed. He narrates how the people of the ditch persecuted the Muslims with fire. He mentions the punishment of all oppressors and the reward of the Muslims who are oppressed.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit takes us through the Arabic text of *al-Burij*, its translation and detailed commentary as contained in Abdullah Yusuf Ali's Exegesis of the Qur'ān.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Writer a critical commentary on the story of the People of the Ditch.
- ii. Give a highlight of the story of two kinds of persecutors of believing men and women in this chapter and the consequences of their evil deeds.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Abdullah, Yusuf Ali (1990). *The Holy Qur'ān (Arabic Text, English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary)*. al-Madina al-Munawwara, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Holy Qur'ān Printing Complex.

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UNIT 5 TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY OF *AT-TĀRIQ*

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Arabic Text of *at-Tāriq*
 - 3.2 Translation of *at-Tāriq*
 - 3.3 Commentary of *at-Tāriq*
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is entitled *at-Tāriq* or [the night visitant]. It is the 86th chapter of the *Qur'ān*. Its name is taken from verse one of its verses. It was revealed at *Makkah*. It has seventeen verses.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give the translation of *at-Tāriq* in English
- explain some of its verses in a detailed commentary.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Arabic Text of *At-Tāriq*

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

﴿وَالسَّمَاءُ وَالظَّارِقُ - وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الظَّارِقُ - النَّجْمُ الشَّاقِبُ - إِنْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ لَمَّا
عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ - فَلَيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَنُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ - خُلِقَ مِنْ مَاءٍ دَافِئٍ - يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَيْنِ
الصُّلْبِ وَالثَّرَائِبِ - إِنَّهُ عَلَى رَجْعِهِ لَقَادِرٌ - يَوْمَ تُبْلَى السَّرَّائِرُ - فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ
وَلَا نَاصِرٍ - وَالسَّمَاءُ ذَاتِ الرَّجْعِ - وَالأَرْضُ ذَاتِ الصَّدْعِ - إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ فَصْلٌ -

وَمَا هُوَ بِالْهَذِيلٍ - إِنَّهُمْ يَكِيدُونَ كَيْدًا - وَأَكِيدُ كَيْدًا - فَمَهْلِ الْكَفَرِينَ أَمْهَلُهُمْ رُؤْيَا

3.2 Translation of *At-Tāriq*

At-Tāriq (The Night Visitant)

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

- 86: 1. By the Sky and the Night-Visitant (therein);-
- 86: 2. And what will explain to thee what the Night-Visitant is? -
- 86: 3. (It is) the Star of piercing brightness; -
- 86: 4. There is no soul but has a protector over it.
- 86: 5. Now let man but think from what he is created!
- 86: 6. He is created from a drop emitted -
- 86: 7. Proceeding from between the backbone and the ribs:
- 86: 8. Surely (Allah) is able to bring him back (to life)!
- 86: 9. The Day that (all) things secret will be tested,
- 86: 10. (Man) will have no power, and no helper.
- 86: 11. By the Firmament which returns (in its round),
- 86: 12. And by the Earth which opens out (for the gushing of springs or the sprouting of vegetation), -
- 86: 13. Behold this is the Word that distinguishes (Good from Evil):
- 86: 14. It is not a thing for amusement.
- 86: 15. As for them, they are but plotting a scheme,
- 86: 16. And I am planning a scheme.
- 86: 17. Therefore grant a delay to the Unbelievers: Give respite to them gently (for a while).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give the translation of verses 1 to 10 of *at-Tāriq* in English.

3.3 Commentary on *at-Tāriq*

86. 1:

The appeal here is to single Sign, viz.: the Sky with its Night. Visitant; and the substantive proposition is in verse 4: "There is no soul but has a protector over it". In the last *Sūrah* we considered the persecution of Allah's votaries, and how Allah protects them. Here the same theme is presented in another aspect. In the darkest sky shines out most brilliantly the light of the most brilliant star. So in the night of spiritual darkness-whether through ignorance or distress shines the glorious star of Allah's revelation. By the same token the man of Faith and Truth has nothing to fear. Allah will protect His own votaries.

This is explained in verse 3 below. The "Star of piercing brightness" is understood by some to be the Morning Star, by others to be the planet Saturn, by others again the shooting stars etc; etc. I think it is best to take the "Star" in the collective or generic sense, for stars shine on every night in the year, and their piercing brightness is most noticeable on the darkest night.

86. 4:

If man has a true spiritual understanding, he has nothing to be afraid of. He is protected by Allah in many ways that he does not even know. He may be an insignificant creature as a mere animal, but his soul raises him to a dignity above other creation. And all sorts of divine forces guard and protect him.

86. 5 & 6:

Man may be an insignificant creature as a mere animal, but his soul raises him to a dignity above other creation etc. See last note.

86. 7:

A man's seed is the quintessence of his body. It proceeds from his loins, i.e., from his back between the hip-bones and his ribs. His back-bone is the source and symbol of his strength and personality. In the spinal cord and in the brain is the directive energy of the central nervous system, and this directs all action, organic and psychic. The spinal cord is continuous with the Medulla Oblongata in the brain.

86. 8:

The Creator who can mingle the forces of psychic and physical muscular action in the creation of man, as explained in the last note, can surely give a new life after physical death here, and restore man's personality in the new world that will open out in the Hereafter.

86. 10:

In that new world, all our actions, motives, thoughts, and imaginings of this life, however secret, will be brought into the open, and tested by the standards of absolute Truth, and not by false standards of custom, prejudice, or partiality. In that severe test, any adventitious advantages of this life will have no strength or force whatever, and cannot help in any way.

86. 11:

The Firmament above is always the same, and yet it performs its diurnal round, smoothly and punctually. So does Allah's Revelation show forth the Truth, which like a circle is ever true to its centre,-which is ever the same, though it revolves through the changing circumstances of our present life.

86. 12:

The earth seems hard, but springs can gush forth and vegetables sprout through it and make it green and soft. So is Truth: hard perhaps to mortals, but through the fertilizing agency of Revelation, it allows our inner personality to sprout and blossom forth.

86. 13:

Revelation-Allah's Truth-can pierce through the hardest crusts, and ever lead us back to the centre and goal of our life: for it separates Good from Evil definitely. It is not mere play or amusement, any more than the Sky or the Earth is. It helps us in the highest issues of our life.

86. 15:

Though Allah in His Mercy has provided a piercing light to penetrate our spiritual darkness, and made our beings responsive to the growth of spiritual understanding, just as the hard earth is responsive to the sprouting of a seed or the gushing of a stream, yet there are evil, unregenerate men who plot and scheme against the beneficent purpose of Allah. But their plots will be of no avail, and Allah's Purpose will

prevail. It happened so with the Quraysh who wanted to thwart the growth of Islam. It will be so in all ages.

86. 17:

Gentle forbearance with Evil men shows our trust in Allah and Allah's Plan: for it can never be frustrated. This does not mean that we should assist or compromise with evil, or fail to put it down where we have the power. It means patience and humility where we have no visible power to prevent Evil.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Mention the different meanings given to *an-najm-th-thaaqib* by different commentators.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The chapter swears by the existence of humanity surrounded by the organized system of God. It asserts that how man is created is a proof of Allah's ability to return him to Him. It says that man will have no one to assist him on the Day of Judgment and it finally swears to the truthfulness of the *Qur'an* and the failure of those who oppose it.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit takes us through the translation and detailed commentary of *at-Tāriq*, as presented by Abdullah Yusuf Ali in his celebrated Translation and Commentary of the Holy Qur'ān.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Comment on *Sūratu `t-Tāriq* in brief.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Abdullah, Yusuf Ali (1990). *The Holy Qur'ān (Arabic Text, English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary)*. al-Madina al-Munawwara, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Holy Qur'ān Printing Complex.

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