

The Tafsīr of Sūrat Al-‘Aṣr (Chapter - 103)

Which was revealed in Makkah

How ‘Amr bin Al-‘Āṣ was aware of the Qur’ān’s Miracle due to this Sūrah

They have mentioned that ‘Amr bin Al-‘Āṣ went to visit Musaylimah Al-Kadhdhāb after the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was commissioned (as a Prophet) and before ‘Amr had accepted Islām. Upon his arrival, Musaylimah said to him, “What has been revealed to your friend (Muḥammad ﷺ) during this time?” ‘Amr said, “A short and concise Sūrah has been revealed to him.” Musaylimah then said, “What is it?” ‘Amr replied;

﴿وَالْقَصْرِ ۝ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ خَيْرٌ ۝ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ
وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ﴾

﴿By Al-‘Aṣr. Verily, man is in loss. Except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and recommend one another to the truth, and recommend one another to patience.﴾

So Musaylimah thought for a while. Then he said, “Indeed something similar has also been revealed to me.” ‘Amr asked him, “What is it?” He replied, “O *Wabr* (a small, furry mammal; hyrax), O *Wabr*! You are only two ears and a chest, and the rest of you is digging and burrowing.” Then he said, “What do you think, O ‘Amr?” So ‘Amr said to him, “By Allāh! Verily, you know that I know you are lying.”^[1]

I saw that Abu Bakr Al-Kharā’ī mentioned a chain of narration for part of this story, or what was close to its meaning, in volume two of his famous book *Masāwī’ ul-Akhlāq*. The *Wabr* is a small animal that resembles a cat, and

[1] He also mentioned it in *Al-Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah* 6:320, and Al-Hāfiẓ mentioned similar to it in *Al-Iṣābah* 3:225.

سُورَةُ الْاَشْرِ
٦٠١
سُورَةُ الْاَشْرِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَالْعَصْرِ ۝١ اِنَّ الْاِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِۦٓ اَكْثَرُ ۝٢ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّٰلِحٰتِ ۚ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ۝٣

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وَبَلَّ لِكُلِّ هَمَزٍ لَمَزَةً ۝١ الَّذِيْ جَمَعَ مَا لَا وَعَدَدَ لَهُ ۝٢ يَحْسَبُ اَنْ مَا لَهُ اَخْلَدَهُ ۝٣ كَلَّا لِيُبْنِدَنَّ فِي الْخَطْمَةِ ۝٤ وَمَا اَدْرٰنَكَ مَا الْخَطْمَةُ ۝٥ نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمَوْفِدَةُ ۝٦ الَّتِي تَطْلُعُ عَلٰى الْاَفْنِدَةِ ۝٧ اِنَّمَا عَلَيْهِمْ مُّوَصَّدَةٌ ۝٨ فِي عَمْدٍ مُّمدَّدَةٍ ۝٩

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اَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِاَصْحٰبِ الْفِيلِ ۝١ اَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضْلِيلٍ ۝٢ وَاَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا اَبَابِيلَ ۝٣ تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارٍ مِّنْ سِجِّيلٍ ۝٤ فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصِفٍ اَنْ اَكُوْلٍ ۝٥

the largest thing on it is its ears and its torso, while the rest of it is ugly. Musaylimah intended by the composition of these nonsensical verses to produce something which would oppose the Qur'an. Yet, it was not even convincing to the idol worshipper of that time.

At-Ṭabarānī recorded from 'Abdullāh bin Ḥiṣn Abi Madīnah that he said, "Whenever two men from the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to meet, they would not part until one of them had recited Sūrat Al-'Āshr in its entirety to the other, and one of

them had given the greetings of peace to the other."^[1]

Ash-Shāfi'ī said, "If the people were to ponder on this Sūrah, it would be sufficient for them."

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

﴿وَالْعَصْرِ ۝١ اِنَّ الْاِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِۦٓ اَكْثَرُ ۝٢ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّٰلِحٰتِ ۚ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ۝٣﴾

﴿1. By Al-'Āshr.﴾

﴿2. Verily, man is in loss.﴾

^[1] Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsaṭ no. 5097, Majma' Al-Baḥrayn.

﴿3. Except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and recommend one another to the truth, and recommend one another to patience.﴾

Al-‘Āshr is the time in which the movements of the Children of Ādam occur, whether good or evil. Mālik narrated from Zayd bin Aslam that he said, “It is the evening.” However, the first view is the popular opinion. Thus, Allāh swears by this, that man is in *Khusr*, which means in loss and destruction.

﴿إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ﴾

﴿Except those who believe and do righteous good deeds,﴾

So Allāh makes an exception, among the species of man being in loss, for those who believe in their hearts and work righteous deeds with their limbs.

﴿وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ﴾

﴿And recommend one another to the truth,﴾ This is to perform acts of obedience and avoid the forbidden things.

﴿وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ﴾

﴿And recommend one another to patience.﴾ meaning, with the plots, the evils, and the harms of those who harm people due to their commanding them to do good and forbidding them from evil.

This is the end of the *Tafsīr* of *Sūrat Al-‘Āshr*, and all praise and thanks are due to Allāh.