

Tafseer Surah Al-Jumu'ah

Introduction

- I. Objectives of this *surah*:
 - A. Allah's grace upon this Ummah in choosing and guiding it through the Messenger ﷺ after its deviation. It emphasizes the obligation to obey him and warns against imitating the Jews [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
 - B. It briefly mentions some rulings related to the Friday congregational prayer [*al-Tafseer al-Muyassar*]

Tafseer of the Verses

1. **Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth 'constantly' glorifies Allah—the King, the Most Pure, the Almighty, the All-Wise.**
 - a. This verse is about Allah
 - i. This verse mentions four names of Allah at the end of it which is not typical because usually Allah mentions two of His names at the end of various verses
 - b. All created things in the heavens and all created things on earth declare Allah's transcendence and purity from every attribute of deficiency that is not appropriate for Him [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
 - i. Basically all of existence does it. Allah used the present tense form of the Arabic word for 'glorify' in order to signify that the creation does this constantly without stop [Sabuni]
 - c. The word *maa* is used in Arabic here to include the unknown to us as well in the heavens and earth
 - d. Allah is the true King because He has dominion over the upper and lower worlds, everything is His subject and under His complete control [Sa'di]
 - e. The Arabic word for *Al-Quddus* [Most Pure] refers to something that is inherently pure in and of itself. Nothing purifies it because it is already pure
 - i. Allah is the source of all purity
 - ii. It also is a reference to Allah being free of every deficiency [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
 - f. *Al-'Azeez* [the Almighty] refers to someone who has both respect and authority
 - i. Allah is Almighty because nothing can overpower Him and He is the omnipotent ruler of His dominion [Sabuni and *al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
 - g. Allah being All-Wise means He is wise in His creating, decree and laws [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
 - h. These four great qualities of Allah at the end of the verse call us for the worship of Him alone without any partners [Sa'di]
2. **He is the One Who raised for the illiterate 'people' a messenger from among themselves—reciting to them His revelations, purifying them, and teaching them the**

Book and wisdom, for indeed they had previously been clearly astray—

- a. This verse is about the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ
- b. The Arabs could not read nor write so that is why they are referred to as illiterate
 - i. Allah sent among them a messenger from themselves. They knew his lineage, his beautiful qualities, and his truthfulness [Sa'di]
 1. They were very well aware of his qualities due to their constant interactions with him ﷺ in the past so they knew he could not be making the Qur'an up
- c. Allah mentions four things that the Messenger ﷺ does in this verse which corresponds to Allah's four names in the previous verse:
 - i. Reciting to them His revelations
 1. The verses of the Qur'an are Allah's signs for others just as a king is recognized by his signs of his authority over the land
 - ii. Purifying them
 1. This is in reference to spiritual purification from sins and disbelief
 2. Allah is the Most Holy and only He can purify us so the Prophet ﷺ is purifies us on His behalf
 - iii. Teaching them the Book
 1. The Qur'an contains legal laws for us to implement and only someone who is strong and has authority can make laws, which fits perfectly with Allah's name Almighty in the previous verse
 - iv. Teaching them wisdom
 1. Meaning teaching them how to live according to the Qur'an which is called the Sunnah
 2. This can only come from someone who is the source of it, which is Allah the All-Wise
- d. Before the coming of the Prophet ﷺ, the people of Mecca who converted were headed straight to their destruction due to their misguidance but their fate was turned around through sending of the Prophet ﷺ
 - i. Their misguidances included [among other things] worshiping idols, spilling blood, and severing family ties [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
 - ii. After receiving this education and purification from the Prophet ﷺ, they became the most knowledgeable of people and were the leaders of knowledge and religion. They had the best of manners and the most complete guidance, and were the most guided themselves, as well as guiding others. They became the leaders of the guided ones and the guides of the believers, so it was a great favor of Allah upon them by sending the Prophet ﷺ [Sa'di]

3. along with others of them who have not yet joined them `in faith`. For He is the Almighty, All-Wise.

- a. This verse is about the rest of us. It is hinting at Islam becoming a global phenomenon to include Arabs and non-Arabs, in fact, it is in reference to every Muslim until the Day of Judgment [Sabuni]

- b. Meaning there are other tribes, nations, people, etc. that have not joined the ranks of the believers yet but they will

4. This is the favor of Allah. He grants it to whoever He wills. And Allah is the Lord of infinite bounty.

- a. Meaning this faith will continue to grow in number to others and this is a favor which Allah grants to whomever He wants
 - i. This is different from what was the case with the previous prophets among the Children of Israel where their message was restricted to just their own nation
 - ii. Allah is more knowledgeable about who deserves this faith and whom to choose to be His prophet. This verse is a refutation of the Jews who used to restrict prophethood only to the Children of Israel, which was one of the reasons why they refused to believe in the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ [Sabuni]
- b. Those whom Allah sent His messenger ﷺ to and who witnessed him and responded to his call have obtained attributes and virtues that no one can match. This is from Allah's honor and wisdom, as He did not leave His servants aimless and astray. Rather, He sent messengers to them, commanding and prohibiting them. This is from Allah's great favor, as He gives it to whom He wills among His servants. It is better than His blessings upon them in physical health, abundance of provision, and other worldly blessings. There is no greater blessing than the blessing of faith, which is the means of success and eternal happiness [Sa'di]
- c. It is also a favor from Allah that He chose this nation to carry the ultimate message [Sabuni]

5. The example of those who were entrusted with 'observing' the Torah but failed to do so, is that of a donkey carrying books. How evil is the example of those who reject Allah's signs! For Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people.

- a. The purpose of revelation is to learn it, ponder over it, and put it into practice but the Jews did not do that with the Torah so it did not benefit them. After Allah mentioned His favor by sending the messenger and revealing the Qur'ān, He mentions the conduct of some of the followers of Musa who turned away from practicing on what was contained in the Torah, as a warning to this nation against following them
 - i. The act of Jews not abiding by the Torah is being compared to a donkey because the animal does not understand what it is carrying nor does it benefit from them
- b. One of the reasons Jews are very explicitly and constantly called out in the Qur'an is because during the Prophet's ﷺ time in Medina, many of the Jews in the city behaved just like their ancestors who contradicted the teachings of the Torah
- c. We can take away from this that we should not restrict revelation (i.e. Qur'an) to just something that is recited for ceremonial purposes or just something that is respected but neither understood nor followed. If we did so, then we would be no different than the donkey example in this verse
- d. The people who become more exposed to the truth are more responsible for it and since the Children of Israel were given so many signs and blessings but yet still failed to abide by Allah's revelation, they became the wrongdoing people

- i. Part of their signs was also believing in the Prophet ﷺ, they had clear indications and descriptions of him in their books yet they still refused [Sabuni]
- 6. **Say, 'O Prophet,' "O Jews! If you claim to be Allah's chosen 'people' out of all humanity, then wish for death, if what you say is true."**
 - a. They are being told that if they are indeed Allah's chosen people guaranteed paradise in the afterlife, then why do they not wish to die now so they can enter into eternal bliss instead of dealing with this imperfect life?
 - b. If they knew that they were right, they would not have hesitated to accept this challenge, which Allah has made as evidence of their truthfulness if they desire it and of their falsehood if they do not desire it. And the fact that they did not take up this challenge despite it being announced to them is a clear indication that they know the invalidity and corruption of what they are upon [Sa'di]
- 7. **But they will never wish for that because of what their hands have done. And Allah has 'perfect' knowledge of the wrongdoers.**
 - a. Meaning they have made investments which only benefit them in this life but not the afterlife so they will never wish for death
 - i. They preferred the worldly life over the Hereafter and feared punishment from Allah, due to their disbelief and evil deeds. Allah is aware of the wrongdoers, and nothing of their injustices is hidden from Him [*al-Tafseer al-Muyassar*]
- 8. **Say, "The death you are running away from will inevitably come to you. Then you will be returned to the Knower of the seen and unseen, and He will inform you of what you used to do."**
 - a. There is a connection between being tied to revelation and being afraid of death because Allah's words constantly remind us of death and meeting Him for judgment. When we cut off revelation from our lives, we forget about death and become absorbed in this life. This is what was happening to the Jews, they had a superficial relationship with the Torah so forgot about death and were not preparing for it
 - b. Even though they do not desire death because of what their hands have put forth and they run away from it as far as possible, that will not save them. They must meet the death that Allah has decreed for His servants and written upon them. Then, after death and the completion of their allotted time, all of creation will return on the Day of Resurrection to the world of the unseen, where they will be informed of what they have done, of good and evil, small and big [Sa'di]
- 9. **O believers! When the call to prayer is made on Friday, then proceed 'diligently' to the remembrance of Allah and leave off 'your' business. That is best for you, if only you knew.**
 - a. Friday sermon and the prayer, which are what is meant by the 'remembrance of Allah' here, is a day of gathering and is suppose to be a weekly reminder for us that we will all be gathered on the Day of Resurrection to be judged for our deeds
 - b. Proceeding 'diligently' here means taking the initiative, caring for it, and making it the most important task [Sa'di]
 - c. Meaning when the caller to prayer calls out on the day of Friday after the speaker

ascends the pulpit, then hurry to the mosques to attend the speech and the prayer and leave trading, so that it does not distract you from obedience. That hurrying and leaving out trading after the call for the Friday prayer is better for you [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

- i. It's not restricted to just trading but anything that may distract us from the Friday prayer [Sabuni]
 - ii. It is better for us because it leads to our sins being forgiven and a reward from Allah that is everlasting. Those who prefer this world over the religion of Allah are the true losers even if such an individual thinks to be profiting in some way [*al-Tafseer al-Muyassar* and Sa'di]
- d. The Friday prayer is also suppose to do the four things mentioned in verse 2 above:
- i. Verses of Allah are recited as a reminder for us
 - ii. Purify us spiritually
 - iii. Learn the laws of Allah
 - iv. Internalize the wisdom of the Qur'an
- e. Allah only asks for a short period of time from us on Friday for His remembrance so we should not be stingy with it. The same goes for our daily prayers which take no more than 15-20 minutes
- f. This verse is an evidence for the obligation of attending the Friday prayer and listening to the sermon [*al-Tafseer al-Muyassar*]

10. Once the prayer is over, disperse throughout the land and seek the bounty of Allah. And remember Allah often so you may be successful.

- a. Meaning when you have completed the Friday prayer then spread out on earth searching for lawful earnings and the fulfillment of your [other] needs [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-Tafseer*]
- b. And since being engaged in trade can be a cause of forgetting Allah, Allah commanded us to increase His remembrance, saying: '*And remember Allah often so you may be successful.*' That is, in your standing, sitting, and lying down. Increasing in the remembrance of Allah is one of the greatest means of success [Sa'di]

11. When they saw the fanfare along with the caravan, they 'almost all' flocked to it, leaving you 'O Prophet' standing 'on the pulpit'. Say, "What is with Allah is far better than amusement and merchandise. And Allah is the Best Provider.

- a. This came down because during one of the sermons on a Friday, the Muslims dispersed while the sermon was going on because a very profitable trade caravan had arrived from outside the city. The businessmen and the customers got excited and left the Prophet ﷺ standing on the pulpit while he was giving a sermon. This verse is telling them to leave off trade and entertainment until the Friday prayer is over
 - i. Some reports suggest that there were only 12 men left in the mosque, everyone else left to benefit from the trade caravan [Sabuni]
 - ii. At that time, the sermon on Fridays used to be after the prayer like it is now for Eid prayer, however, this rule was later changed to before the prayer on Friday. So they did not leave the prayer but the sermon [Sabuni]

- iii. Today we can “leave” the Friday prayer by being distracted on our phones during the sermon
- b. Entertainment and trade are what distract most people from remembering Allah so we are being reminded that what is with Allah of reward is better than these things so we should not be distracted by them at the expense of remembering Allah
- c. We also learn from this that patience in obeying Allah does not cause a loss of sustenance, for Allah is the best provider. Whoever fears Allah, He will provide for them from sources they could never imagine [Sa’di]
 - i. Allah is the best of providers and givers, so we ask Him and seek His assistance through obedience to Him in obtaining the good of this world and the Hereafter that He has in store [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-Tafseer*]