

Volume 1

Encyclopedia of Qur'anic Chapters In Simple Language

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*Dedicated to the first teacher of the Qur'an
Prophet Muhammad (PBUH & HP)*

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*Encyclopedia of Qur'anic Chapters
In Simple Language*

Reference Book of Religion

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In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful



A gift to the diligent generation who ponder upon the
words of God and act upon it.

~ Publisher





Al Fātihah

1
Makki

The Chapter at a Glance:

Sūrah “*Al-Fātihah*” is the first Chapter of the Holy Qur’an. This Chapter was revealed to the Prophet (PBUH & HP) twice; once in Mecca and once in Medina. This Chapter has seven verses:

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Praise belongs to God, the Lord of the worlds. The Lord who is compassionate and merciful. Owner of the Day of Recompense. It is You we worship and ask for help. Guide us to the straight path. The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those whom you have been angry with, nor those who have gone astray.

About the Name of the Chapter:

This Chapter is known as “*Al-Ĥamd*”, meaning “*Praise*”. The Chapter’s name is derived from its second verse where we read: “الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ” (*Al-ḥamdu li-llāhi rabbi l-‘ālamīn*; Praise is due to the God, the Lord of the worlds).

This Chapter is also known as “*Umm Al-Kitāb*” (the Mother of the Book) and “*Fātiḥat Al-Kitāb*” (The Opener of the Book) because this Chapter is at the beginning of the Qur’an.

General Contents of the Chapter:

The content of this Chapter can be divided into two themes. The first part is about praising God and mentioning some of His attributes, while the second part includes some prayers.

In the first section, we become acquainted with some of God’s traits and in the proceeding part, we converse with Him, seek His help, and guidance.

Excerpts from the Chapter:

Verse of Bism-il-Lāh

The phrase “بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ” (*Bismillāh ar-Raḥmān ar-Raḥīm*) is known as the “*Verse of Bismillāh*”. “*Bismillāh ar-Raḥmān ar-Raḥīm*” means I begin my work in God’s name, by His permission, and by seeking refuge in Him. A God who is generous and merciful, and everything happens in this world by His will. If we begin every activity in God’s name and for His sake, God will bless and grant us success in that task. Of course, this phrase should not only be recited by our tongue, but we must pay attention to its meaning.

The Status of Chapter Al-Fātihah

Sūrah Al-Ĥamd is an essential Chapter of the Qur’an. It contains the most basic teachings of the religion of Islam, summarizing the Qur’anic lessons in an eloquent manner. In this Chapter, we refer to God as Merciful and Benevolent. These two attributes help us as servants, to have an adequate understanding of our Creator, before we begin to converse with Him. When we recognize that our Lord is Merciful, we can ask

Him everything we need, only have our full trust in Him, and only declare our servitude to Him.

What is يَوْمُ الدِّينِ (Yawm ad-dīn)?

One of the names of the Day of Judgment is Yawm ad-dīn, meaning the “*Day of Recompense*”. The day which the righteous will be rewarded, and the criminals will be punished. This name of Judgment Day is mentioned in the fourth verse of Chapter Al-Fātihah.

In this verse, we read: “مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ” (Maliki Yawm ad-dīn; Owner of the Day of Recompense). On the Day of Judgment, it is God who investigates and judge’s people’s deeds, rewarding and punishing each person accordingly. God is the absolute owner of Judgment Day; the kind Lord who is fair and does not oppress anyone.

Fātihat Al-Kitāb in Prayer

We recite Chapter Al-Fātihah in the first two Units (Rak’at) of our prayers. This Chapter is in the form of a prayer, and by reciting it in each of our prayers, we seek God’s guidance to the right path, the path that pleases Him. This request, which we ask God in our prayers many times during the day, shows that we need His help at every moment to do good deeds and avoid evil acts, and we must always be God-conscious and seek His help.

Moreover, Chapter Al-Fātihah teaches us a beautiful lesson about prayer. It would be virtuous, that before we want to ask God for something, first we call on Him by his beautiful attributes such as Merciful and Benevolent, praise Him for the many blessings He has bestowed us, and then seek more help from Him. In this way, we express to God that we are ever grateful for the many blessings He has granted us.





Al-Baqarah

2

Madani

The Chapter at a Glance:

Sūrah “*Al- Baqarah*” is the second Chapter of the Holy Qur’an. This Chapter was revealed to the Prophet (PBUH & HP) in the city of Medina and has 286 verses. The first verse of this Chapter begins with the disjointed letters¹ of (*Huruf Muqatta’āt*) “آلِم” , and is pronounced as: “*Alif, Lām, Mīm*”. Chapter Al-Baqarah is the largest Chapter of the Qur’an, with verse 282 being the longest verse of the Qur’an.

About the Name of the Chapter:

The word “*Baqarah*” in the Arabic language means “*The female cow*”. The Chapter’s name is derived from verses 67-74, which narrates a murder case that prompted the sacrifice of a cow. One of the Israelites was suspiciously murdered, and his murderer was not known. This murder caused two groups from the Israelites to accuse one another of the murder. To solve this problem, they went to Moses (PBUH), and sought his help. So, Moses sought God’s help and He showed Moses a solution. Then, Moses (PBUH) instructed the Israelites: “*God commands you to slaughter a cow. Then the victim should be touched by a part of the cow’s body, and by the power of God the victim will become alive and reveal his murderer.*” Instead of obeying God’s clear command, the Israelites began to make excuses. First, they said to Moses (PBUH): “*You must be joking?*”, and then they said: “*What kind of characteristics must this cow have?*”. When Moses (PBUH) described the cow, again they made excuses and asked: “*What color should this cow be?*”. When the color was determined, they said to Moses (PBUH): “*Ask your Lord to explain more!*”. Eventually, after their ongoing discussions, they killed the desired cow, touched the dead body with part of the sacrificed cow, and by God’s will the dead person became alive, and revealed his murderer.

General Contents of the Chapter:

Chapter Al-Baqarah contains a variety of subjects. Certain verses explore topics such as theology, the world after death, the importance of the Qur’an, and its miraculous nature. In other verses of the Chapter, the lives of Adam, Moses (Mūsā), and Abraham (Ibrāhīm) are mentioned. In addition, part of the Chapter is about the laws concerning prayer (Salah), fasting, Hajj pilgrimage, and the conditions of marriage and divorce. Another section of the Chapter is about Islam’s enemies, the method of encountering them, and the story of changing the Qiblah (Prayer direction). Besides these topics, other issues have been mentioned in Chapter Al-Baqarah.

¹ - 29 Chapters of the Qur’an begin with “*disjoined letters*”. Six of them: Al- Baqarah, Āl ‘Imrān, Al-'Ankabūt, Ar-Rūm, Luqmān and As-Sajdah, begin with the letters “*Alif, Lam, Meem*”. Commentators have pointed to a variety of possible explanations for these letters, but they cannot come up with a definite answer. We may be able to say that these letters are codes between God and His Messenger.

Excerpts from the Chapter:

God's Successor

Adam (PBUH) was the first human God created on earth. Before Adam's creation, God informed the angels of His decision by telling them: *"I want to place a successor on earth."* God wanted to create a creature who would become close to Him through worship and servitude. God had the intention to choose a successor who could adorn themselves with Godly qualities like mercy, benevolence, forgiveness, and to achieve great knowledge and power and become a complete servant of God. The Angels told God: *"Do you want to create someone on earth who can cause corruption and bloodshed? If you intend to create a new creature for obedience and worship, we are constantly engaged in your remembrance and obedience and we glorify you"* God replied: *"I know something you do not know."*

The angles understood correctly that evil doers and bloodshed will exist among humans; but they did not know that prophets, Imams (Divine Leaders), scholars, and benefactors could also exist among mankind.

The angels said: *"O God, you are far from any fault or shortcoming. We have no knowledge except what you taught us, and you are Knowing and Wise."* This dialogue between God and the angels is recounted in verses 30-32 of Chapter Al-Baqarah.

Change of the Qiblah

For the first thirteen years of Islam in Mecca and a few months in Medina, Muslims shared Jerusalem as their prayer direction with Jews. Jews constantly reproached Muslims and said: *"They have no independence because they pray towards our Qiblah."* To put an end to these criticisms, God appointed another prayer direction for Muslims.



One day when the Prophet (PBUH & HP) was observing noon prayers, Gabriel grabbed onto his shoulders and directed him toward the Ka'ba. Since then, Muslims had to face the Ka'ba to perform their prayers. The change of the Qiblah and its related issues are explained in verses 142-144 of this Chapter.

Verse of Fasting

The “*Verse of Fasting*” refers to verse 183 of Chapter Al-Baqarah. We read in this verse: “*O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous*”. According to this verse, fasting was observed by other religions before Islam and prescribed to them in their holy books.

The important point mentioned in this verse is the purpose of fasting, and that is God wanted His servants to develop the quality of righteousness. A person who can restrain themselves of eating and drinking for a month and stand against their desires is able to avoid sins easier throughout the year.

Laylat Al-Mabit (*Night of Sleeping*)

In the thirteenth year after Prophethood, the disbelievers decided to attack the house of the Prophet (PBUH) at night and assassinate him. God informed the Prophet (PBUH & HP) about their wicked plan and asked him to migrate to Medina.

Since the enemies were to not be informed of the Prophet's departure, Ali (PBUH) had to sleep in the Prophet's bed and cover himself with a white blanket. When the disbelievers broke through the house, they found Imam Ali (PBUH) instead of the Prophet! And thus, their wicked plot failed and with the sacrifice of Amir al-Mu'minin (Leader of the Believers), Prophet Muhammad (PBUH & HP) was saved from his enemies. That historic night is known as “*Laylat Al-Mabit*”. *Laylah* means night and *Mabit* means sleeping; the night in which Imam Ali (PBUH) slept in the place of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH & HP).

The verse 207 was revealed on that night to praise the selfless sacrifice of Imam Ali (PBUH) and is called the verse of “*Laylat al-Mabit*”.

Verse of the Throne (*Ayat al-Kursi*)

Ayat Al-Kursi refers to verse 255 of Chapter Al-Baqarah, in which the word “*Kursi*” (Throne), has been stated. In this verse we read: “*God's throne extends over the Heavens and the earth.*” This means that the entire universe is under God's sovereignty and all existence is under His command. Reciting Ayat Al-Kursi has great blessings. The holy Prophet and Ahlul-Bayt (Prophet's Family) have emphasized the importance of this verse. Once, Abuzar asked the Prophet (PBUH & HP): “*Which verse is the most important and best verse that God has revealed to you?*” The Prophet (PBUH & HP) responded: “*Ayat Al-Kursi*”.



Āl ‘Imrān

3

Madani

The Chapter at a Glance:

Sūrah “Āl ‘Imrān” is the 3rd Chapter of the Holy Qur’an. This Chapter was revealed to the Prophet (PBUH) in Medina and has 200 verses. The first verse of this Chapter begins with the disjoined letters² (*Huruf Muqatta‘āt*) of “آلِمْ” and is pronounced as: “*Alif, Lām, Mīm*“. Interestingly, verse 154 of this Chapter, is one of the two verses in the Qur’an containing all the letters of the Arabic alphabet.

About the Name of the Chapter:

‘Imrān, was the name of Mary’s (Maryam) father and the word “Āl” means family, thus “Āl ‘Imran” means the family of ‘Imran. The name is derived from verse 33 of the Chapter. In this verse we read “*Indeed, God chose Adam, Noah, the family of Abraham and ‘Imrān above all mankind*”.

General Contents of the Chapter:

Chapter Āl ‘Imrān covers a wide variety of topics such as theology, resurrection (Al-Ma’ad), striving in the path of God (Jihad), positive and negative experiences of Muslims in the battle of “*Badr*” and “*Uhud*”, Muslim Unity, Hajj, giving charity in the way of God, and enjoining good and forbidding wrong (Al-amr bi ‘l-ma’rūf wa ‘l-nahī ‘ani ‘l-munkar). While other verses narrate segments of the lives of Adam, Noah (Nūḥ), Abraham (Ibrāhīm), Moses (Mūsā), Jesus (‘Īsā) and Mary (PBUT). Besides these topics, other themes are also discussed in this chapter.

Excerpts from the Chapter:

Mary’s (PBUH) Story

Mary’s (PBUH) father, “*‘Imrān*”, and her mother, “*Hannah*”, were both faithful and righteous individuals. For years, they were unable to have a child until, after many prayers and vows, God blessed them with Mary (PBUH). Zechariah (Zakariyyā), was the husband of Mary’s aunt. Mary’s mom wanted her daughter to grow up to be a well-nurtured, righteous, and faithful lady, she asked the scholars of Banī Israel (Children of Israel) to accept her guardianship. So, the scholars casted their votes to choose among themselves and ultimately Zechariah was chosen for this task. Mary (PBUH) attained a high status before God in her teenage years. She fasted during the days and spent the nights in worship. Every time Zechariah went to her place of worship, he found food there. He would ask Mary (PBUH): “*Where did you obtain this food?*”. Mary would respond: “*This is from God. Indeed, God provides sustenance for whomever He wishes without measures.*” The story of Mary’s birth and her upbringing by Zechariah (PBUH) is mentioned in verses 35-37 of Chapter Āl ‘Imrān.

Event of Mubahilah

In the 7th year after migration, God commanded the Prophet to introduce Islam to the rest of the world.

2 - Disjoined letters are explained briefly in the beginning of Chapter al-Baqarah.

He wrote letters to world leaders, including to the Bishop of Najran, inviting its people to embrace Islam. In response to this letter, the Christians of Najran sent a group of people to Medina to debate with the Prophet about the status of Jesus (PBUH). The Christians of Najran refused to accept the truth. Therefore, the Prophet left it up to God to judge between the two groups. This meant that both groups had to stand across each other and request God to punish the tyrant group for truth to be revealed. For this event, the Prophet was accompanied by Ali (PBUH), Fatimah (PBUH), Hassan (PBUH), and Hussain (PBUH). Upon seeing



their luminous faces, the People of Najran were extremely frightened, and regretted to continue with the call upon God's curse. Instead, they wrote a treaty, and agreed to pay taxes to live under the protection of the Prophet's Islamic government. This event of Mubahilah is mentioned in verse 61 of Chapter Āl 'Imrān.

Give What You Love to Charity

When helping the needy, some people donate their broken appliances, old clothes, and torn shoes! They never give from the things they love and enjoy. This sort of infāq or charity does not have much value, while the true essence of charity and generosity is giving to others from the things we love. In verse 92 of Chapter Āl 'Imrān we read: *“You will never attain the true spirit of generosity unless you spend of that which you love in the way of God.”*

After this verse was revealed, Zayd ibn Haritha, one of the Prophet's companions, brought his horse to the Messenger of God (PBUH & HP) and said: *“I love this horse, and for this reason I want to give it to charity in the way of God.”*

The Consequence of Prophet's (PBUH & HP) Good Morals

The holy Prophet's (PBUH & HP) entire life was a personification of goodness and morality. He became a prophet among people who did not value good etiquette, yet he was able to transform the hearts of many with his good manners. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH & HP) used to approach everyone in a friendly, very courteous, and sincere manner and avoided anger and violence. Therefore, people quickly fell in love with the extraordinary character of this honorable man and made themselves closer to him. Many people embraced Islam due to Prophet's good conduct, and exceptional manners in speech.

In fact, verse 159 of Chapter Āl 'Imrān, highlights this noble trait of the Prophet (PBUH & HP). In this verse we read: *“Due to God's mercy, you dealt with them gently, for had you been harsh they would surely have scattered away from around you.”*

Martyrs are Alive

The Battle of Uhud was a difficult and exhausting battle. In this battle, a group of Muslims were injured, and a group were martyred. Some of the survivors felt saddened for the martyrdom of their fellows. After the war, when they enjoyed a blessing, they said to themselves: *“It's unfortunate to see our brothers sleeping in the graves, dead, while they cannot benefit from these blessings!”*

In verse 169 and 170 of Chapter Āl 'Imrān, God responded to their false views and said *“Never assume that those who have been killed in God's cause are dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord granting them sustenance. They are pleased with the many blessings God has bestowed them from His grace.”*

The Chapter at a Glance:

Sūrah “*An-Nisā*” is the 4th Chapter of the Holy Qur’an. This Chapter was revealed to the Prophet (PBUH) in Medina and has 176 verses.

About the Name of the Chapter:

“*An-Nisā*” in the Arabic language means “*Women*”. The Chapter has been named such, as some of its verses pertain to the women’s rights, marriage, and other issues regarding women.

General Contents of the Chapter:

Chapter An-Nisā explores a wide variety of topics. A section of the Chapter is about justice and faith, destiny of the predecessors, charity in the way of God, and supporting the orphans. Other various verses discuss laws of inheritance, marriage, family, and rights of women. Introducing the enemies, the importance of obeying the leader, the duties of people toward each other are among other topics mentioned in this Chapter. Besides these, other topics are also explored in this Chapter.

Excerpts from the Chapter:

Dowry (Mahr), the Women’s Right

When a man marries a woman, he must give her a dowry. While dowry is often money, it can be anything agreed upon by the bride such as: gold, house, sponsorship for Hajj pilgrimage, book, and other things. Dowry is a form of gift and every gift is a sign of affection. By giving a dowry, a man shows his wife that he truly loves her. From the Islamic point of view, dowry is the women’s right. No man should fall short of providing his wife with a dowry. However, a woman can forgive the husband to pay the



dowry. In this case, the husband is no longer obligated to provide her with a dowry. Otherwise, the groom must fulfill this form of gift.

The 4th verse of Chapter An-Nisā pertains to this topic and in this verse, we read: *“And give the women their dowry. But if they give up willingly to you anything of it, then take it in satisfaction and ease.”*

Hellfire and the Effect of Repentance

The Hellfire has intense and scorching flames, that destroys the skin of the inhabitants of Hell. In verse 56 of Chapter An-Nisā we read: *“Every time the skins of the Inhabitants of Hell are burned, we will replace their skins, so they may again taste the punishment of the Hellfire.”*

However, God dislikes taking anyone to Hell. God will forgive any sinner who repents and regrets their bad deeds, and they will never go to Hell.

We should know, to what extent, an improper treatment and oppression of other human beings, would burn their depths of existence and cause irreparable damage to them that nothing can compensate for it in this world. Therefore, since God is Just and Wise, He will take the revenge of oppressed against the oppressors, in the Hereafter.

Verse of the Trust

The 58th verse of Chapter An-Nisā is about trust and fulfilling trust obligations. We read in this verse: *“God commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice.”*

Salaam and Its Response

Saying Salaam is recommended and replying to it is an obligation. If someone said Salaam to us, it is an immediate duty to respond to the greeting. Even if we were praying, we should not leave a person’s Salaam without a reply, but rather it’s better to return their greeting with a better Salaam. For example, if someone said to us: *“Salaam Alaikum”* (Peace be with you), it is better for us to say: *“Alaikum Assalaam wa Rahmat-ul-Allah”* (May the peace and mercy of God be with you), and if someone said: *“Salaam Alaikum wa Rahmat-ul-Allah”*, we may say: *“Alaikum Assalaam, wa Rahmat-ul-Allah Wa Barakatuhu”* (May the peace, mercy, and blessings of God be with you). This is an example of Qur’anic ethics.

In verse 86 of Chapter An-Nisā, God says: *“And when you are greeted with a Salaam, return their greeting with one better than it or return it in a similar manner.”*

Abraham (PBUH), God’s Close Friend!

In verse 125 of Chapter An-Nisā, we read: *“God chose Abraham as an intimate friend.”* In a narration, Imam As-Sādiq (PBUH) said: *“If God chose Abraham as a friend, it was not because He needed his friendship. Rather it was because Abraham was God’s meritorious servant and he endeavored in the way of His satisfaction.”*

Abraham (Ibrāhīm) gave food to the hungry, prayed during the night, prostrated for long periods of time, never sought anything from anyone but God, and always gave assistance to those who needed him. These qualities were the reason why God chose Abraham as His friend.



Al-Mā'idah

5
Madani

The Chapter at a Glance:

Sūrah “Al-Mā'idah” is the 5th Chapter of the Holy Qur'an. It was revealed to the Prophet (PBUH & HP) in Medina and has 120 verses.

About the Name of the Chapter:

The word “Mā'idah” in the Arabic language means “*The Table Spread with Food*”. The Chapter's name is derived from verses 112-115, where God speaks of a heavenly food that Jesus' (‘Īsā) apostles had requested him. The purpose of the request for such a miracle was for them to increase their faith in Jesus' heavenly message. Jesus (PBUH) prayed, and God granted his prayer by sending a heavenly spread full of food for him and his apostles. Another name for this Chapter is “*Uqūd*”, meaning “*Contracts*” because in the first verse the believers are advised to fulfill their promises.

General Contents of the Chapter:

Chapter Al-Mā'idah consists of two major subject matters. Some of its verses are about Islamic beliefs, and others are about Islamic laws. In matters of belief, the Chapter has addressed topics such as the succession of the Prophet (PBUH & HP), resurrection (Al-Ma'ad), and the deviation of Christians.

Regarding Islamic laws, topics such as adherence to oaths, justice, prohibition of murder, Tayammum (Dry Ablution), and laws concerning permissible (Halāl) and forbidden (Harām) foods have been explored. In the midst of these two major topics, part of the history of the prophets are also recounted.

Excerpts from the Chapter:

Verse of Fulfilment of Covenant

The word “*Uqūd*” in the Arabic language means contract. The first verse of Chapter Al-Mā'idah, is known as the “*Verse of Fulfilment of Covenant*”, in which the importance of fulfilling one's oath and adhering to contracts has been discussed. Each day, people make countless promises to each other and sign contracts, and neither of the two parties should break their promises. In the first verse of Chapter Al-Mā'idah we read: “*O you who have Faith! fulfill all contracts.*”

The Story of Ghadir

In the tenth year after migration (632), the Messenger of God (PBUH & HP) completed his final Hajj pilgrimage and then left Mecca for the city of Medina. Once the Hajj caravans reached the land of “*Ghadir Khum*”, the Prophet (PBUH & HP) ordered everyone to gather around. That day was the 18th of

Zil-Hajj (March 10th). The Prophet's companions made a pulpit for him and he walked up to it and after delivering a long speech, he said: *"Whoever I am his master and leader, after me Ali is his master and leader."* Thus, the Messenger of God (PBUH & HP) chose Imam Ali (PBUH) as a leader for the Muslim community. God says in verse 3: *"...Today, I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion."* This verse is a reference to the story of Ghadir.



Furthermore, in verse 67 God says: *“O’ Messenger, announce what has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message...”*. In this verse the Prophet (PBUH & HP) is being addressed, commending him to choose Imam Ali (PBUH) as his successor.

Generosity While in Prayer

One day, a needy man entered the Prophet’s (PBUH & HP) mosque and sought help from the people, but no one helped him. He became hopeless, looked up to the sky, and said: *“My Lord! You be the witness that I sought help from these people, but no one gave me anything.”* At that moment, Imam Ali (PBUH) was bowing down in prayer. While in that position, he held his right hand toward the needy man and signaled him to come forward and take his ring. The poor man happily stepped closer and removed the ring from Imam Ali’s finger. After a while, God revealed verse 55 of Chapter Al-Mā’idah to praise the generosity of Imam Ali (PBUH).

We read in this verse: *“Verily, your guardian is only God, His Messenger, those who believe, those who establish prayer and pay the poor charity while bowing down in prayer.”*

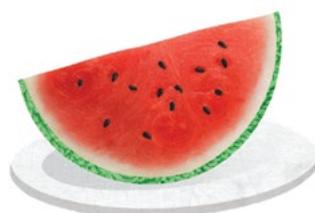
Story of Abel’s Murder

Adam (PBUH) had two sons, Abel (Hābīl) and Cain (Qābīl). One day it was decided that each of them had to do something in God’s way. Abel, who was a shepherd, sacrificed one of his best sheep in the way of God. However, Cain, who was a farmer, chose some of his worst crops for this cause. Between these two works, God only accepted Abel’s gift.

Cain became envious and killed his brother. This was the first murder that occurred on earth. The story of this crime is mentioned in verses 27-31 of Chapter Al-Mā’idah. God told us this story to demonstrate the ugliness of jealousy. Jealousy can become quite destructive that can drive a person to murder their own brother.

Jesus’(PBUH) Miracles

Jesus (PBUH) had a variety of miracles. One of his miracles was that he would turn a bird made of clay into a living one by blowing into the clay sculpture. Furthermore, Jesus was divinely capable of curing the congenital blind and heal those who had skin disease. Jesus (PBUH) had an even more astonishing miracle. By God’s power, he resurrected the dead and while they had been dead for a long time, they would come out of their graves alive. Verse 110 of this Chapter mentions Jesus’s (PBUH) miracles.





Al-An'ām

6

Makki

The Chapter at a Glance

Sūrah “*Al-An'ām*” is the 6th Chapter of the Holy Qur'an. This Chapter was revealed to the Prophet (PBUH & HP) in Mecca and has 165 verses.

About the Name of the Chapter:

The word “An'ām” means “*The quadrupeds*”, which are animals like cattle, sheep, and camel. This Chapter takes its name from verses 118-121 and 136-146, in which certain rules with regards to the quadrupeds have been explained. Of the rules explained in this Chapter, is mentioning God's name while slaughtering the quadruped, otherwise, their meat is not considered Halāl or permissible to eat.

General Contents of the Chapter:

In this Chapter, much has been explained regarding theology, prophethood (Al-Nubuwah), and resurrection (Al-Ma'ad). An important part of the Chapter is about rejecting polytheism, idolatry, and the wrongdoings of polytheists and idolaters. Perhaps, it could be said that the main theme of the Chapter is the explanation of Islamic beliefs and critique of idolaters' thoughts. But other topics have been mentioned in this Chapter.

Excerpts from the Chapter:

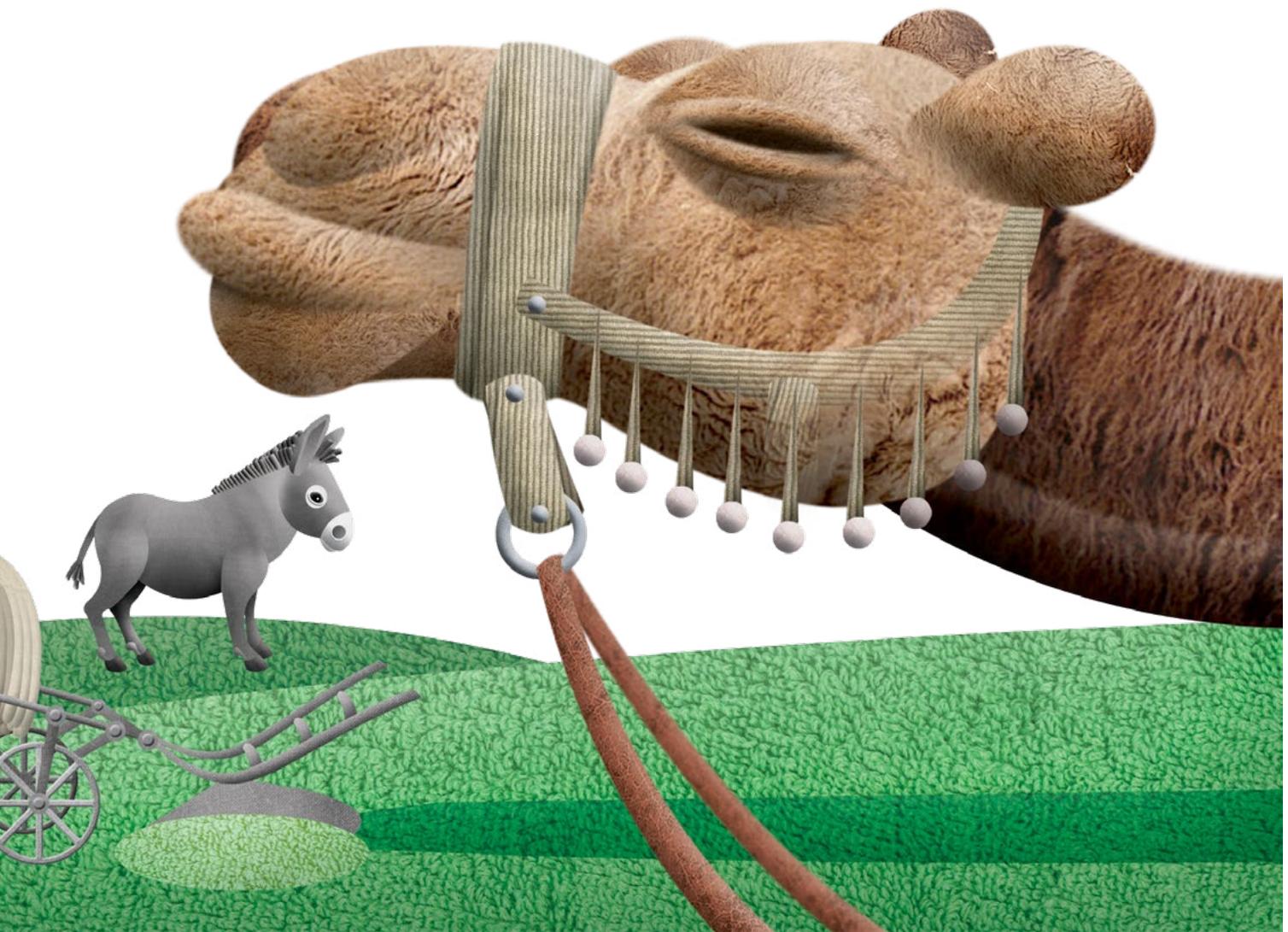
God Forgives Those Who Repent

Once, a group of sinners came to the Prophet (PBUH) and said: “*O' Messenger of God! We have committed a lot of sins. Will God forgive us? What will He do to us?*” In response, the Prophet stayed silent, until verse 54 of Chapter Al-An'ām was revealed. In this verse God gives the glad tidings to the sinners that if they repent, He will surely forgive them. We read in this verse: “*O' Prophet! When those who believe in Our signs come to you, say: "Peace be upon you!! Your Lord has prescribed Mercy on Himself that whoever does a bad deed out of ignorance and thereafter repents and makes amends, God will forgive him. Indeed, He is All-forgiving and All-merciful."*

Who is Elisha?

Elisha (Al-Yasa') is one of the prophets of God who was the descendant of Abraham (PBUH). In Hebrew, Elisha means “*God Sees*” or “*God Saves*”. Elisha (PBUH) lived in the time of Elijah (Ilyās) and was his student. Elisha's successor was Ezekiel (Zul-Kifl), who was also one of God's prophets.

Elisha's name has been mentioned twice in the Qur'an, once in Chapter Al-An'ām and once in Chapter Šād. We read in verse 86 of Chapter Al-An'ām: “*And We guided Ishmael (Ismā'īl), Elisha, Jonah (Yunus), and Lot (Lūṭ), whom we exalted over all people.*”



God is Aware of Everything

We have very limited knowledge regarding the incidents that happen in this world. Would we know if at this moment, a far-away star was destroyed? Or if a baby eagle came out of its eggshells in the middle of Amazon forests? Or if a smaller fish was eaten by a bigger one in the vast Pacific Ocean? We are tiny beings in this huge world and cannot really know of everything that goes on. However, the Great God is aware of every occurrence, big or small, wherever it is in this universe. He even knows when and where and how a leaf from a tree falls to the ground.

In verse 59 of Chapter Al-An'ām, we read: *“God knows whatever is in the land and the sea, and no leaf of a tree falls down, but He knows.”*

This gives us hope that God is aware of everything about us, and everything we do, and we must always see Him as our guardian.

Stars, Tools of Navigation

Star navigation was used for many years. Stars are one of the best tools for navigation and can guide us to find directions. For instance, if you stand facing the Polar Star, you are facing North, behind you would be South, to your right would be East, and to your left is West. If you want to find the Polar Star, you could use other



stars as a guide. There is a collection of stars in the sky known as “*The Big Dipper*” that looks like a ladle. If you continue the tip of the ladle, you will reach the Polar Star. The Polar star can also be found through another collection of stars known as the “*The Little Dipper*”, which also looks like a ladle, but a smaller one. The Polar Star lies at the end of the handle of this ladle. Many people still use stars for navigation. This captivating feature of stars is stated in the Holy Qur’an. In verse 97 of Chapter Al-An’ām, we read: “*And it is He who placed the stars that you may be guided by them through the darkness of the land and sea.*”

Stars, in this verse is also a reference to the successors of the Prophet (PBUH & HP), whom if we refer to and follow their guidance, we can be directed to the right path.

The Signs of the Prophet of Mercy

The Jewish and Christian scholars of the Prophet’s time expected the arrival of our Prophet from many years before the emergence of Islam. So, when Prophet Muhammad (PBUH & HP) was chosen as a prophet, they recognized him very well. The Prophet had the same signs that they had read in their religious books and heard from their scholars. Just like the way we know our closest relatives, the Jewish and Christians had recognized the Prophet.

In verse 20 of Chapter Al-An’ām we read: “*Those whom we have given a Heavenly book, know the Prophet as they know their own child. But, a group of them consciously conceal the truth.*”



The Qur'an is a captivating book, containing God's words and His lessons for us! It might be hard to believe, but in His book, God speaks about various life related issues, and guides us to the correct way of life! This book is a mirror image of the Qur'an. It introduces all the Qur'anic Chapters in sequence, and describes some of the lessons of each Chapter in a concise and practical manner. Indeed, whoever reads this book will become acquainted with many Qur'anic lessons.

