

## Encyclopedia of Qur'anic Chapters In Simple Language

1- Maryam

2- Tāhā

3- Al-Anbiyā'

4- Al-Hajj

5- Al-Mu'minūn

6- An-Nūr



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**Illustrator:** Hamid-Reza Beidaghi

**Identification:** Heidari Abhari, Gholam-Reza, 1969

**Title:** *Encyclopedia of Qur'anic Chapters in Simple Language*

**Publication Specification:** Ghadyani Publisher

**Appearance:** 360 pages, 22\*29 cm

**Subject:** *Qur'an —Chapters and Verses – Teenage Literature*

**LCCN:** BP 65/H 93 F 1393 4

**DDC:** 157/279





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

*Ghadyani Publication*

*Encyclopedia of Qur'anic Chapters  
In Simple Language*

*Reference Book of Religion*

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**ISBN:** 6 - 480 - 251 - 600 - 978

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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





# Maryam

19  
Makki

## The Chapter at a Glance:

Sūrah “*Maryam*” is the 19<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Holy Qur’an. This Chapter was revealed to the Prophet (PBUH & HP) in Mecca and has 98 verses.

## About the Name of the Chapter:

Mary (Maryam), mother of Jesus (‘Īsā), was faithful and virtuous. This Chapter was named after her since most of its verses narrate her life story. In addition to this Chapter of the Qur’an, God has also mentioned Mary in several other Chapters, and praises her purity and righteousness. According to a narration from the Prophet (PBUH & HP), Mary (PBUH) is among the four greatest Heavenly women in Islam. The three other women are lady Fatimah al-Zahra, lady Khadijah, and Asiyah, the Pharaoh’s wife (PBUT).

## General Contents of the Chapter:

The most crucial part of this Chapter narrates a part of the lives of Zechariah (Zakarīya), Mary, Jesus, John (Yaḥyā), Abraham (Ibrāhīm), Ishmael (‘Ismā‘īl), Enoch (Idris) and other prophets of God. Another part of this Chapter is about the Day of Judgment and describes the fate of the righteous and evil people on that day. Another part of this Chapter delivers great advice and teachings about life. Furthermore, other topics are also discussed in Chapter Maryam.

## Excerpts from the Chapter:

### The Prayers of Zechariah (PBUH)

Zechariah (PBUH) was one of the prophets of God. He was the husband of Mary’s aunt. When he was an elderly man, he raised his hands in prayer and said to God: *“O Lord, I am old, and my wife is also infertile. But I ask you to grant me a child that can be my inheritor.”* Then God revealed to Zechariah (PBUH): *“O Zechariah! I will give you the good news of a son whose name is John.”* Zechariah (PBUH) was surprised when he heard this news. He said to God: *“My Lord! How would I have a son, while my wife is infertile, and I am weak due to old age?”* Again, God said to Zechariah (PBUH): *“This is easy for Me, in fact I created you before this, at a time when you did not exist!”*

Soon after, God blessed Zechariah (PBUH) with a son, named John. The story of Zechariah’s (PBUH) dialogue with God is mentioned in verses 2-11 of Chapter Maryam.

### John (PBUH), The Companion of Jesus (PBUH)

Just like his father, John-the son of Zechariah (PBUH)- was one of the prophets of God. He was the cousin

of Mary (PBUH). When Jesus (PBUH) was chosen to be a prophet, John (PBUH) encouraged the people to believe in Jesus. The words of John had a great impact on the people. Everyone knew him as a pure and righteous person, and for that reason they would accept his words. Eventually, John was martyred at the hands of the tyrannical king named “*Herod*”.



## **The Miraculous Birth of Jesus (PBUH)**

The birth of Jesus (PBUH) was indeed a miracle. Jesus was born of his mother, Mary (PBUH), without having a father. When the Almighty God wanted to bless Mary with Jesus (PBUH), He sent an angel to Mary and gave her the glorious news of the birth of Jesus (PBUH). In order for the people to believe that this was indeed God's miracle, God gave Jesus (PBUH) the power of speech on the first days of his birth. He started speaking while he was in cradle and said: *"I am the servant of God, who has given me a heavenly book, and has appointed me to be His prophet. His blessings are upon me wherever I go, and He had commanded me to be steadfast in prayer and to give alms to the poor as long as I shall live. He has ordered me to honor my mother and has removed me of arrogance and mischief."* This story has been expressed in verses 16-34 of Chapter Maryam.

## **Abraham's (PBUH) Advice to Azar**

Azar was the uncle of Abraham (PBUH), and one of the greatest supporters of idolatry. Azar was a close friend of Nimrod-the king of the disbelievers of that era-and on his behalf, he oversaw activities of the house of idols. Abraham (PBUH) repeatedly advised Azar to stop practicing idolatry, but Azar never stopped. In verses 42-48 of Chapter Maryam, a portion of the conversation of Abraham (PBUH) and Azar is mentioned. In a part of these verses we read: Abraham said to Azar: *"Why do you worship one which neither hears nor sees, and cannot benefit you in danger? Follow me to guide you to the right path. Do not worship Satan, for he has disobeyed the Merciful God. I fear that you will receive a punishment from God, and you will be the companion of Satan."* Azar said: *"O Abraham! Do you have no desire for my gods? If you do not stop, I will certainly stone you."*

## **Enoch (PBUH), the Scientist**

Enoch (PBUH) was one of the prophets of God who lived before the time of Noah (PBUH). Some commentators of the Qur'an say that he was named Idris (which is derived from the Arabic word "*Dars*" meaning "*To instruct*") because of his great efforts in the way of teaching and learning new knowledge. He had great knowledge of astronomy. Enoch (PBUH) was the founder of the science of medicine and taught this knowledge to people well. He was the first to use the pen and was also the first person to sew a dress. Before that, people used animal skins to cover and wrap around their body parts. Enoch also built many cities.

In the Holy Qur'an, in Chapter Maryam, God praises this great prophet of God. In verse 56 and 57 of this Chapter, we read: *"And remember Idris in the Book, he was indeed very truthful, and a great prophet. And We lifted him to a high position."*



# Tāḥā

20  
Makki

## The Chapter at a Glance:

Sūrah “Tāḥā” is the 20<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Holy Qur’an. This Chapter was revealed to the Prophet (PBUH & HP) in Mecca and has 135 verses. The 1<sup>st</sup> verse of the Chapter begins with the disjointed letters<sup>1</sup> (*huruf muqatta’at*) of “طه” and is pronounced as follows: “Tā,Hā”.

## About the Name of the Chapter:

This Chapter takes its name from its first verse. Tāḥā is also referred to the Prophet as one of his Qur’anic names. Another name of this Chapter is “*al-Hakim*” (Wise).

## The General Content of the Chapter:

A section of Chapter Tāḥā is about the importance of the Qur’an and the special attributes of God. Another section of the Chapter, which comprises of about 80 verses, speaks about the life of Moses (Mūsā). A few other verses speak about resurrection (*Al-Ma’ad*), the Day of Judgment, and the story of Adam and Eve. The Chapter closes by stating some valuable life lessons and some awakening advice.

## Excerpts from the Chapter:

### Miraculous Cane

One of the miracles of Moses (PBUH) was his cane that transformed into a dragon. When God wanted to bestow this miracle to him, he said: “*O Moses! What is this that you’re holding in your right hand? Moses (PBUH) replied: “This is my cane, that which I lean against, beat down leaves with it for my sheep, and use it for other things.”*”

God said: “*Cast it down, O Moses!*” Then Moses (PBUH) threw down his cane and it turned into a dragon that moved to every direction. Moses (PBUH) was shocked to see such a scene.

God said: “*Now hold this dragon and do not fear. We will restore it to its original state!*”

Moses (PBUH) held the dragon and again it changed into his cane. This story has been narrated in verses 17-21 of Chapter Tāḥā.

### Speak Softly

If we see someone committing a bad deed, we should not speak to them in an angry tone. Rather, we must speak to them politely and make them understand their wrongdoing or otherwise, we will not have any influence on them. Speaking nicely with a soft tone is much more effective than speaking in anger. God

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.



commanded Moses (PBUH) and his brother Aaron (Hārūn) to go to Pharaoh and prevent him from doing evil and asked them to speak gently to Pharaoh.

In verses 43 and 44 we read: *“You and your brother go to the Pharaoh because he has rebelled. But speak softly to him, perhaps he may become vigilant and fear his bad deeds”*.

### **A Calm Cradle**

In verse 53 of Chapter Tāḥā we read: *“God made the planet like a cradle for you”*.

A cradle is a small bed with rockers that an infant sleeps in. The gentle movement of the cradle neither hurts nor disturbs an infant’s calmness and peace. In verse 53 of Chapter Tāḥā, the earth is compared to a cradle, alluding to the fact that even though the planet moves like a cradle, it does not disturb the peace of its inhabitants. For centuries people thought the earth was steady, and the sun would rotate around it. But later they realized that the Earth rotates around the sun. Perhaps, by comparing the earth to a cradle in verse 53 of Chapter Tāḥā, maybe it was trying to allude to this phenomenon.

### **Verse of Remission**

The word *“Ghoḥfrān”* in the Arabic language means *“Remission”*. The *“Verse of Remission”* is an allusion to the 82<sup>nd</sup> verse of Chapter Tāḥā, which consists of glad tidings of God’s forgiveness and mercy. In this verse God says: *“Verily I am the most forgiving to he who repents, believes, does righteous deeds, and stays in the right path”*.

### **Knowledge is Boundless**

We humans need to constantly seek knowledge to live in this world. Our lives have various aspects. We need to know what we should consume that is beneficial for our health, how to communicate well with our parents, family, and friends, how to make a good living, and build a good life for ourselves. Ultimately, we need to learn how to live our lives in a way which pleases God, and gain His pleasure, so that we become prosperous in this world and the Hereafter. All this knowledge is identified as the science of religion. Every human should seek to learn this science to the best of their ability by referring to the Heavenly Qur’an, the narrations of the Prophet and his successors, and learn from them how to live a prosperous life.

In verse 114 of Chapter Tāḥā, God told the Prophet (PBUH & HP): *“And say: ‘My Lord! increase me in knowledge’.*”

This verse teaches us that seeking out religious knowledge should be our top priority. We must understand that we should ask God’s guidance in showing us the right way of life and make us steadfast in this path.



# Al-Anbiyā'

21  
Makki

## The Chapter at a Glance:

Sūrah “*Al-Anbiyā'*” is the 21<sup>st</sup> Chapter of the Holy Qur'an. This Chapter was revealed to the Prophet (PBUH & HP) in Mecca and has 112 verses.

## About the Name of the Chapter:

The word “Anbiyā'” in the Arabic language means “*Prophets*”. This Chapter was named so since the names of sixteen divine prophets are mentioned in it. These prophets are Abraham (Ibrāhīm), Lot (Lūt), Isaac (Is'hāq), Ezekiel (Zul-Kifl), Jacob (Ya'ghūb), Noah (Nūh), David (Dāwūd), Solomon (Sulaymān), Job (Ayyūb), Ishmael ('Ismā'īl), Enoch ('Idrīs), Jonah (Yūnus), Zechariah (Zakarīya ), John (Yaḥyā), Moses (Mūsā), and Aaron (Hārūn). There are other prophets whose names are not explicitly mentioned in this Chapter but are mentioned in another form.

## The General Content of the Chapter:

Part of Chapter Al-Anbiyā' says that the world has just one God: the only Creator and Lord of the world. Another part of the Chapter speaks about the triumph of the right upon wrong, and monotheism upon polytheism. A significant portion of this Chapter is about several divine prophets. Lastly, the Chapter begins and concludes with intensive warnings of God to people to think about the Day of Judgment and to not neglect that day.

## Excerpts from the Chapter:

### Ask the Mindful

When we have a medical question, we seek the help of a specialist. If we have a question regarding home renovation, we ask an architect. If we want to learn something about film making, we seek the help of a movie director. Now, if we have a question about religious issues, who should we ask? In this regard, we must refer to the narrations of the Prophet (PBUH & HP) and his Ahlul-Bayt (Prophet's Family). Religious scholars can also help us become acquainted with religious laws by narrating the Qur'anic verses and the narrations of Ahlul-Bayt (PBUH).

In verse 7 of Chapter Al-Anbiyā', God says: “*If you do not know, ask people who know*”. This is an important law of life. If we don't know something, we must ask those who do and learn it from them.

### Earth's Roof and Shield

The earth's atmosphere which is about 300 miles (480 km) is enveloped by a layer of gases close to its surface. The atmosphere works as a natural shield against aerolites that strike the Earth every day. The

size of some of these aerolites can be many millions of miles long. When extraterrestrial objects barrel toward Earth, they wind up exploding or evaporating, causing no harm to Earth's inhabitants. If there was no atmosphere, the land and its inhabitants would regularly be bombarded by aerolites. The atmosphere has another benefit: it protects us from much of Sun's ultraviolet radiation penetrating to Earth's surface. If the atmosphere did not exist, the Earth would become a dry desert, and uninhabitable for life. In verse 32 of Chapter Al-Anbiyā', God refers to the blessing of the atmosphere and says: "*And We made the sky a protecting roof.*" In this verse, the word "sky" is an allusion to Earth's atmosphere. God compared the atmosphere to a roof. Just like a roof shields a house from rain and sunshine, the Earth's roof also protects its people from many dangers.allusion to Earth's atmosphere. God compared the atmosphere to a roof.



Just like a roof shields a house from rain and sunshine, the Earth's roof also protects its people from many dangers.

### **The Great Idol is Guilty!**

No matter how much Abraham (PBUH) advised the people of his city to stop idolatry, they did not listen. Finally, Abraham decided to go to the city and demolish the idols. Apart from the great idol, he managed to break all other idols, placing the axe in the hand of the great idol.

The idolaters, who realized that Abraham (PBUH) had broken their idols, went to him and arrested him. They said to Abraham: "*O Abraham! Have you broken our idols?*" Abraham (PBUH) replied: "*Maybe your great idol broke them. If your idols can speak, ask them.*" Abraham's response made the idolaters remain quiet and ponder about this. If they had said the great idol could not do anything, they would have been self-condemned. How can an idol who can't do anything be the god of the people? This story is recounted in verses 51-67 of Chapter Al-Anbiyā'.

### **Hastening to Do Good Deeds**

When we want to perform a good deed, Satan tempts us and says: "*Why are you rushing? Just leave it for tomorrow or another day. Don't worry it won't be late.*" When Tomorrow comes, he will again convince us to delay in performing that good deed, and gradually we forget about it, or something happens, preventing us from performing that good deed. True believers do not delay in performing good deeds. For example, if they are going to give a hand to the poor or visit the sick or lend money to someone, they hasten to do these righteous acts. In verse 90 of Chapter Al-Anbiyā', in praise of Zechariah (PBUH) and his family, God says: "*They hastened to do good deeds.*" This verse implies that they swiftly moved to perform righteous actions and never left it for another day.

### **The Golden Era of Imam Al-Mahdi (PBUH)**

When Imam Al-Mahdi (PBUH) reappears, he will fight the oppressors and fill the world with equity. He will establish a global government, eradicating all the violence, corruption, and oppression. The earth will be governed by Imam Al-Mahdi, and his true believers after being ruled for thousands of years by the tyrannical rulers. During the reign of the Imam of Our Time (PBUH), security, faith, and justice will take root all over the world, and the earth will be governed by the most virtuous people.

In numerous narrations, our Prophet (PBUH) has spoken about this celestial time, giving the believers the glad tidings of this golden era. Even the Qur'an has promised a world full of goodness for all. For example, in verse 105 Chapter Al-Anbiyā', God says: "*Indeed, we have written in the Pslams (Zabūr), after the remembrance, the earth shall be inherited by my righteous servants.*"

In the exegesis (Tafsīr) of this verse Imam Al-Baqir (PBUH) said: "*The righteous servants who have been mentioned in this verse, are the companions of Imam Mahdi (PBUH) in the end of the Time*".

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# Al-Hajj

22  
Madani

## The Chapter at a Glance:

Sūrah “*Al-Hajj*” is the 22<sup>nd</sup> Chapter of the Holy Qur’an. This Chapter was revealed to the Prophet (PBUH & HP) in Medina and has 78 verses.

## About the Name of the Chapter:

“*Hajj*” is one of the rituals of the religion of Islam. During the Hajj pilgrimage, Muslims circumambulate around God's house, offer an animal sacrifice, and perform other rituals. Every year, on the special days of Hajj, many Muslims around the world go to Mecca and perform the Hajj ritual. Since the verses of this Chapter refer to this important worship and glorious ceremony, the Chapter was named Hajj. In verse 27 of this Chapter, we read: “*And invite people to perform Hajj*”.

## General Contents of the Chapter:

Many verses in Chapter Al-Hajj are about the Day of Judgment and its fascinating scenes. Several verses of this Chapter speak about the struggles against idolaters and signs that remind us of God. Another part of the Chapter invites people to investigate the instructive fate of the predecessors by mentioning the people of the Tribe of Noah (Nūḥ), Ād, Thamūd, Abraham (Ibrāhīm), Lot (Lūt), Jethro (Shu‘ayb), and Moses (Mūsā). Another section of the Chapter deals with the subject of the Hajj pilgrimage by providing explanations about it. Lastly, a part of the Chapter mentions several other topics including prayers, Zakat (Purification of wealth by spending part of it in God’s way), enjoining good and forbidding wrong (Al-amr bi ‘l-ma‘rūf wa ‘l-nahy ‘ani ‘l-munkar), and true reliance upon God (Tawakkul).

## Excerpts from the Chapter:

### Surprised of Judgment Day!

Many who doubt in the Day of Judgement say to themselves: “*Is it possible for God to revive the dead and hold us accountable for our deeds!?*” It is difficult for them to believe in the resurrection of the dead. In response to these kinds of people, the Holy Qur’an says: “*If you think a little in your creation, you realize that it is not hard to believe in the resurrection. In your mother's womb, you were first a dot of semen. Then you turned into a blood clot. Slowly you began to turn into a piece of soft meat. Gradually, growing up to become a complete human being. Is it hard for God, who once created you like this, to bring you back to the desert plain on the Day of Resurrection?*” This response of God is mentioned in verse 5 of Chapter Al-Hajj.

### Clothes from Silk

Unlike the Inhabitants of Hell who will wear clothes made of fire, People of Heaven will wear beautiful,

clean, and soft clothes. In several verses of the Qur'an, God speaks of the unique garments of People of Heaven. For example, in verse 23 of Chapter Al-Hajj, God says: "*God will admit those who believe and do righteous deeds into paradise in which rivers flow beneath the trees. They shall be adorned with bracelets of gold and with pearls, and their garments will be of silk*".

Silk is a type of animal-based natural textile. It's a fine lustrous, delicate fiber usually used for ornamental purposes.

### **A Beneficial Ceremony**

The 28<sup>th</sup> verse of Chapter Al-Hajj commemorates the Hajj pilgrimage as a valuable ritual. One of the advantages of the Hajj pilgrimage is that it causes the Muslim unity to be increased. During the Hajj ceremony, all Muslims dress alike and circumambulate (Tawāf) around the House of God, depicting their unity, and reinforcing their solidarity. Another benefit of Hajj is that Muslims of different backgrounds get to know each other. During Hajj, Muslims from various countries come together, creating an opportunity for them to exchange their cultures and beliefs. Another benefit of the Hajj is that after Hajjis (Title given to Muslims who successfully completes the Hajj) perform this ritual, they become closer to God. Thus, after returning to their cities, they will influence others to have intimacy with God, and be righteous.

### **The Day of Barren!**

Until we are in this world, we can compensate for our mistakes. For example, if we have wronged someone, we can apologize and seek their forgiveness. But, on the Day of Resurrection we no longer have the chance to compensate for our past mistakes. If we have neglected prayers, or fasting, or if we have been dishonest and backbiting, or have committed any other misdeeds, we don't have the opportunity to compensate on the Day of Judgment. Hence why in verse 55 of Chapter Al-Hajj, God has alluded to the Day of Judgment, as the "Day of Barren", the day when one cannot make amends of their past.

### **Feeble Idols**

Idols are stone or wooden sculptures made by humans. Idolaters made the idols, and then worshiped them by prostrating before them. It is obvious that their actions were wrong. In verse ٧٣ of Chapter Al-Hajj, God condemns the actions of idolaters with a clear explanation. In this verse, God says that these idols cannot even create a fly, so how do you perceive them as your god? Moreover, should the fly snatch away anything from them, these idols cannot retrieve it. Are these feeble creatures worthy of worship? Still during this time there are many people who worship idols.





# Al-Mu'minūn

23  
Makki

## The Chapter at a Glance:

Sūrah “*Al-Mu'minūn*” is the 23<sup>rd</sup> Chapter of the Holy Qur'an. This Chapter was revealed to the Prophet (PBUH & HP) in Mecca and has 118 verses.

## About the Name of the Chapter:

The Chapter's name, “*Mu'minūn*” (Believers) is derived from the beginning verses that enumerate the attributes of the believers. The Chapter begins with this sentence: “قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ” (Qad aflaha Al-Mu'minūn; Surely believers are blissful). Then the verse continues by mentioning some of the attributes of believers such as humility in prayer, avoidance of vain speech, paying Zakat (Purification of wealth by spending part of it in God's way), chastity, loyalty, and paying great attention to and offering prayer at the due time. In verses 1-9 a clear image of a true believer has been depicted. These verses teach us that actions speak louder than words, and if one claims to be a believer, they must show this through their actions by adhering to God's commandments.

## General Contents of the Chapter:

The Chapter begins by enumerating the traits of true believers. Another part of this Chapter mentions the various signs of God in universe. Furthermore, a section of the Chapter cites the instructive biography of some of the prophets such as Noah (Nūḥ), Hūd, Moses (Mūsā), and Jesus (ʿĪsā). In another section, God warns the arrogant to repent and return to the right path. Lastly, the Chapter ends by commemorating the Day of Judgment, that day when the benefactors will be rewarded, and the wicked will be punished.

## Excerpts from the Chapter:

### Milk, as a Food

Quadrupeds such as cows and sheep consume grass. It is quite interesting that same bland grass in the cow's or sheep stomach turns into a delicious and luscious white milk. If we humans consume grass, we will become sick and get stomachache. However, we easily can consume the luscious milk that is produced from grass. The development of milk in the stomach of quadrupeds is one of the hallmarks of God's power. In verse 21

of Chapter Mu'minūn we read: *“And verily there is a lesson for you in the quadrupeds. We quench you from what is in their bellies.”* This verse is a reference to the milk provided by quadrupeds.

### **Noah's Ark**

Among the People of Noah (PBUH), the rich and aristocracy opposed him more than others. Not only did they not embrace Noah's words, but prevented others from becoming Noah's companions. They said to people: *“Noah is someone like you. He wants to gain superiority over you. He is not God's Messenger. If God intended to guide us, He would send angels for our guidance. We have not heard from our predecessors that a prophet was to be sent for our guidance.”*

Noah (PBUH) who had become hopeless of guiding his People, sought God's help.



God commanded him to build a colossal ship. When the ship was ready, Noah (PBUH) boarded a pair of every kind of animal. Then he and his companions also boarded the ark. Thereafter, water poured out through fissures in the ground and rain poured down, immersing the city in water. Thus, the disbelievers of Noah's Tribe drowned, and his companions were saved.

This part of Noah's story is recounted in verses 23-29 of Chapter Mu'minūn.

### **Why Do you Doubt?!**

On the Day of Resurrection, God will revive the dead. God is capable of doing all that He wills. For Him reviving the dead is not a difficult task. The Holy Qur'an mentions God's power numerous times so that we do not doubt about the day of Resurrection.

In verse 86 of Chapter Mu'minūn, God has given an elaborate response to disbelievers who denied the Day of Judgment. The disbelievers said: *"When we die, and become dust and bones, shall we be revived again? This seems like a fairy tale."* God responds to their blasphemous talk by reminding the disbelievers of the greatness of the creation of the Heavens. This verse is implying that how would resurrecting the dead be beyond the all-embracing power of the One who has created the Heavens of this greatness?! Is God, who has this much power, unable to bestow another life to His servants?! How do you still deny the Day of Judgment, while you witness so many signs of God's power?

### **The Way without Return**

The life of us humans on this earth is an unrepeatable opportunity. We are all born one day, and we shall die one day. Nobody can return to this world and compensate for their own mistakes. Therefore, it is best for us to take our lives for granted, reap the opportunities of this world and avoid sins. When the disbelievers are on the threshold of death, they ask God to be returned to the world so that they can make up for their shortcomings by performing righteous deeds. However, God denies their request by saying: *"No, never!"*. The Merciful God has repeatedly shown us the right and wrong path, and death is an end to the divine trials. The request of the disbelievers, and the response they will receive is expressed in verses 99 and 100 of Chapter Mu'minūn.

### **Purgatory (Al-Barzakh)**

The Arabic word *"Barzakh"* (Purgatory) means a barrier that stands between two things. For example, if there is a hallway between two large rooms, that hallway is the Barzakh that stands between the two rooms. The world that exists between this world and the Hereafter is known as Purgatory. When we depart this world, till Day of Judgment, we will reside in the world of Barzakh. In Purgatory, believers and righteous people will reside in lush gardens, while the wicked will be punished. Imam Al-Sajjad (PBUH) said: *"A grave is either a garden from the gardens of Paradise, or a pit from the pits of Hell."* In this narration the Imam is alluding to the blessings and punishments of the world of Barzakh. The world of Barzakh is mentioned in verse 100 of Chapter Mu'minūn.



# An-Nūr

24  
Madani

## The Chapter at a Glance:

Sūrah “*An-Nūr*” is the 24<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Holy Qur’an. This Chapter was revealed to the Prophet (PBUH & HP) in Medina and has 64 verses.

## About the Name of the Chapter:

The Chapter’s name is derived from verse 35, which is known as the verse of “*Nūr*” (Light). The verse begins with this sentence: “*God is the Light of the Heavens and the earth*”.

## General Contents of the Chapter:

A few of the verses of this Chapter are about chastity, modesty, hijab, righteousness, and the invitation of women to cover themselves and lower their gazes in front of non-Mahram. Several verses of Chapter An- Nūr deal with the issue of marriage and urge people to make marriage simple and easy. Part of the Chapter is about rules of etiquette and principles of nurturing children. In the midst of these topics, several ethical and religious discussions have been expressed.

## Excerpts from the Chapter:

### Risky Steps

Satan never persuades man to be suddenly involved in corruption. First, he tempts us to commit small sins, and then encourages us to repeat these sins. Gradually, he will persuade us towards bigger sins, making evil thoughts and deeds normal for us. Thus, when the first temptations manifest, we must withstand against Satan’s first step and not let it become prevalent. Satan deviates us step by step, distancing us from God. Hence why in verse 21 of Chapter An- Nūr, God addresses the believers and says: “*O you who believe! Do not follow the steps of the Satan.*” Meaning that from the very first step, we must withstand against Satan’s temptations, and avoid his companionship.

### First, Ask for Permission

Before entering another person’s house, we must knock on the door, and ask for permission before entering. No one should enter another person’s house without their consent. Maybe the people residing in that house are not wearing appropriate clothes, or do not have the means of providing for their guest, or do not have the time to have guests over. In verse 27 of Chapter An- Nūr we read: “*O you who believe! Do not enter houses other than your own houses until you have asked permission and greeted those in them with Salaam. That is better for you.*”

### Mahram (Unmarriageable Kin) and Non-Mahram (Marriageable Kin)

Just like other celestial religions, the religion of Islam has a set of rules for relationships between men and

women. Women are prescribed to wear the hijab by covering their hair and body in the presence of a non-mahram. For a woman, their father, grandfather, brother, husband, uncle, son, nephew, mother's and father's uncles are considered her mahram. While other men are non-mahram. Likewise, God expects men to limit their relationship with non-mahram women. For a man, his mother, grandmother, sister, wife, aunt, daughter, niece, mother-in-law and the grandmother of his wife are considered his mahram, while other women are non-mahram. In verse 30 of Chapter An- Nūr, God says: *"Tell the believing men to lower their gazes in front of non-mahrams."*

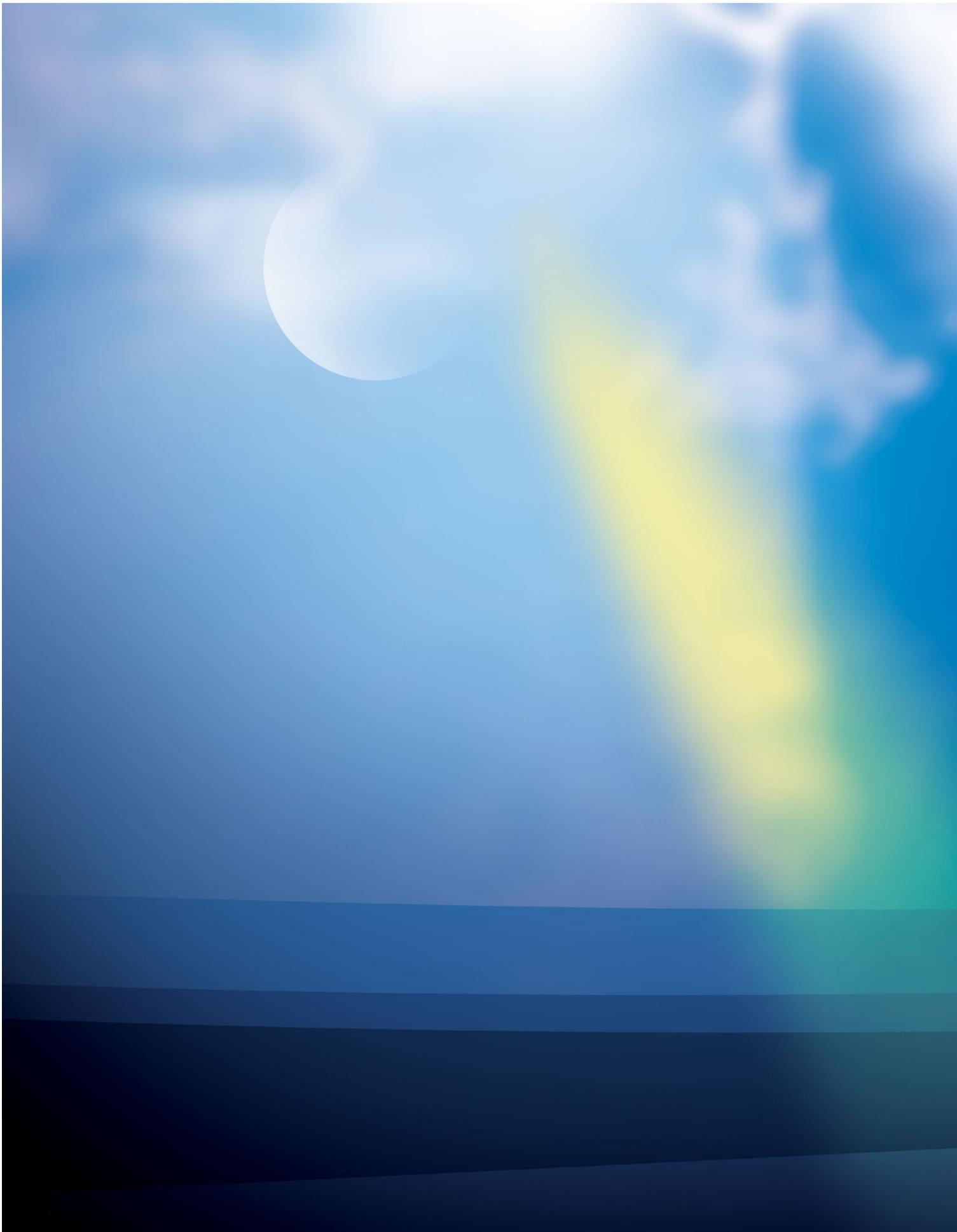
Furthermore, verse 31 commands the believing women to lower their gaze and cover themselves in presence of men who are non-mahram. They should cover all their body parts excluding what ordinarily appears such as the face and hands up to the wrist.

### **Diversity in Creatures**

God created innumerable distinct living creatures, each with special traits and abilities. This is a sign of God's majesty and endless power. The diversity we witness among living creatures illustrates that God can create whatever He wishes. The verse 45 of Chapter An- Nūr refers to this topic, where we read: *"Some of the creatures walk upon their belly and some walk upon two legs, and some that walk upon four. God creates what He pleases, because He is All-Powerful over everything."*

### **The Only Way to Prosperity**

Our only way to achieve prosperity in this world and the Hereafter is to adhere to the commandments of God and His Messenger (PBUH & HP). Adherence to these commandments is for our own benefit. Indeed, it is God who has created us, and He is the only one who knows what is best for us in this world. If we want to become victorious, we must observe and live according to every commandment of God and His Messenger. This is our only route to prosperity and happiness. In verse 52 of Chapter An- Nūr we read: *"Whoever obeys God and His Messenger, and fears God and refrains from opposing Him, such people will surely become victorious and prosperous."*





*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.*

