

CHAPTER 93, AD-DUHA (THE FORENOON)

Rating: 5.0

Description: A concise chapter assuring Prophet Muhammad that his life will improve and reminding him that God has always taken care of his needs. Comprehensive instructions from God to Prophet Muhammad that are applicable to everyone.

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Introduction

This is a short chapter of eleven verses found towards the end of the Quran. It was revealed in Mecca in the very early period of revelation and addressed to Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him. God reassures him that he had not been forgotten even though there had been no revelation for some time. The temporary lull in revelations caused Prophet Muhammad much grief and stress, thus the subject matter is designed to console Prophet Muhammad and relieve his anxiety and distress. It reveals God's tenderness and mercy and is a message of affection that soothes Prophet Muhammad. The chapter reveals God to be benevolent; soothing pain and trouble, and filling humankind with contentment and hope.



When, for a period of time, the revelations stopped, the unbelievers taunted Prophet Muhammad saying that "Muhammad's Lord has deserted him." The revelations were the link between Prophet Muhammad and God; they kept him firmly on his path while learning to spread the message. When the revelations stopped Prophet Muhammad felt abandoned and rejected and the derision of the disbelievers was an added burden. When this chapter was revealed it came as a flow of mercy and compassion. It restored Prophet Muhammad's strength and reassured him.

Verses 1 – 4 An oath followed by reassurance

God swears by the morning brightness and by the night when the earth grows still and dark. When God swears an oath he is asking us to reflect and ponder. The bright hours of the day are contrasted with the quiet stillness of the night. By describing these two periods of time before reassuring Prophet Muhammad, God establishes a

connection between natural phenomena and human feelings. Both of these times have a remarkable effect on the human being. These opposite periods of time allude to the fact that people face different circumstances; sometimes life is easy, sometimes it is very difficult. Going through the darkness is an important part of being alive.

Your Lord (God says to Prophet Muhammad) has not forsaken you, nor is He displeased with you. God assures Prophet Muhammad that he is not angry or annoyed with him and He did not and will not ever abandon him. He says emphatically that He did not say goodbye and this situation is not final. These are tender and soothing words expressing God's love for Prophet Muhammad. He (God) goes on to say that the life to come will be better than this present life. The scholars say that this refers to the Hereafter being better than this present life and that it might refer to the later part of Prophet Muhammad's life being easier and better than the struggles at the beginning of his life and his prophethood.

Verses 5 – 8 Three favors

God tells Prophet Muhammad that He will be bounteous to him and he will be well satisfied and content. God will also ease the difficult path and Prophet Muhammad's mission will be successful. He will have honor and prestige and his message will continue to spread. In the Hereafter, Prophet Muhammad's position will be higher than the rank he attained in this world. It will not be an immediate transformation, it might take some time but soon Prophet Muhammad will be blessed with more than he can imagine.

God then continues by reminding Prophet Muhammad that He was caring about him throughout his life. When Prophet Muhammad was an orphan it was God who gave him shelter and refuge. The orphan could be called the most oppressed in any society, when they cry out for help it is only God who hears and responds to their call. Prophet Muhammad was in a dark place, but God rescued him.

When Prophet Muhammad was lost it was God who found him and guided him. He (Prophet Muhammad) was never involved in idolatry, polytheism or atheism even though it was present in the customs and practices of his people. He was however unaware of the true faith and his true purpose. He sensed this, and it haunted him; He was seeking, and God directed him to the straight path.

When Prophet Muhammad was poor it was God who enriched him and made him self-sufficient. The scholars explain that Prophet Muhammad was under a lot of pressure. He felt responsible not just for himself and his immediate family but for humanity. God found him crushed under this weight and made him free of need.

Verses 9 – 11 Three demands

Prophet Muhammad is then instructed by God to protect the orphans, be charitable to those who seek aid and proclaim the blessings of God. Of course Prophet Muhammad would never oppress an orphan or ignore someone in need, however when God teaches him a lesson it is the believer who learns. Prophet Muhammad was at one time an orphan thus he knows the hardships associated with this situation. The believer becomes responsible for not letting this happen to any orphans in their sphere of influence.

When a person seeks aid, it could be physical aid such as food or shelter, and it can also be knowledge and guidance. God is teaching us how to deal with those who seek aid. Do not humiliate them, treat them with respect, and allow them to remain dignified in the face of distress. These instructions reflected the needs of the day. It was a time not dissimilar to our own, a greedy, materialistic society in which the needs of the weak were not catered for. Islam reformed that society and God's instructions are equally applicable today. Those who seek knowledge and guidance are often fearful or over enthusiastic; treat them in the same way as those who need physical aid, with care and respect.

Talking about God's bounties is a way of expressing gratitude to Him. Mention His favors to you and mention the teaching He has blessed you with. Prophet Muhammad has been given favor after favor and God has instructed him to mention them. It is a lesson for us all because when we examine our lives we too will find many blessings and favors, and then the biggest favor of all is guidance.

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