

CHAPTER 100, AL-ADIYAT (THOSE THAT RUN)

Rating: 5.0

Description: God swears by the war horses that people are ungrateful and misguided.

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Introduction

Chapter 100 is named from the words of the first verse describing charging war horses, or those that run. It is an eleven-verse chapter amongst the short Meccan chapters at the end of the Quran. These chapters were predominantly revealed at the beginning of the prophethood of Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, and served to teach the new Muslims the basics of faith and to strengthen



their hearts in the face of strong opposition and abuse. At the time of this chapter's revelation, the country was in chaos and turmoil. Inter-tribal skirmishes and raids were a daily occurrence; thus the sight and sound of war horses was something that the people no doubt knew very well. The subject matter is designed to show how evil a person can become if he constantly denies the Hereafter.

Verses 1 – 6 An oath by magnificent horses

God swears an oath by the charging steeds that pant, while producing sparks by striking their heels. They make raids in the early morning when their enemies are unaware and stir up clouds of dust when they dash into the middle of the enemy troops.

When the Arabs of the time mounted raids on settlements or other tribes, they would leave at night in order to take the enemy by surprise when they launched their attack in the very early morning. It was in this half-light that the sparks generated by the movement of horses would be visible. God swears by these war horses and describes their movements. In our mind's eye we see a picture of the horses running, snorting, neighing, and arriving in the middle of the enemy. Their hooves strike the rocky desert terrain producing sparks of fire, adding to the fear the enemy must have felt surrounded by these magnificent panting horses creating disorder and confusion.

This vision is one well-known to those persons to whom the Quran was at first addressed. They were well aware of the widespread bloodshed, and the loot and plunder mentality that was prevalent at that time. Thus God swears by this scene in order to make a statement and call attention to His words. The horses God had bestowed upon them were, gifts and a blessing, they should not have been employed for unjust fighting, tyranny, and plunder. God did not intend that these magnificent animals be used for this purpose. To use them in this way demonstrates careless ingratitude.

Verses 6 – 8 People are ungrateful

God says that there is no doubt that the human being is disloyal to his master (God). Most people are ungrateful for all the bounties and blessings He bestows upon them. They deny God's favors and this ingratitude is shown through their actions and verbal statements. There are many who do not even believe that God exists let alone acknowledge the blessings He has bestowed. On the Day of Judgment, each person will testify against him or herself because they will be unable to speak anything but the truth.

Humankind's love of wealth is excessive and intense. He sees something that he wants or desires and becomes engaged in a relentless pursuit of it. For many acquisition of wealth is the primary purpose of their lives irrespective of how it is obtained and without giving a thought to the legitimacy of the way it is earned. However, having faith changes a person's priorities, values, and concerns. Faith brings God-consciousness and changes ingratitude to thankfulness.

Verses 9 – 11 Intentions and actions have consequences

Don't people understand that when the contents of graves burst forth, and those who were dead are brought back to life, all their secrets will be made known? On that Day God will be fully aware of everything they did.

Pondering the final three verses provides a cure for ingratitude. It describes a scene from the Day of Resurrection that makes any right-minded person shudder with fear. We are shocked by a violent and frightening scene; the graves burst open scattering their contents. People will exit their graves by being wrenched out and thrown around forcefully. It leaves no doubt that the intense longing for wealth and multitudes of world possessions will provide no protection whatsoever.

God will not pass judgment only on the apparent and obvious deeds but also the ones that a person tries to keep hidden. All the intentions, aims, ideas and thoughts, as well as the motives behind a person's acts and deeds, will be uncovered and examined in minute detail. Everything that lies hidden in a person's heart will be exposed.

On that fateful Day of Resurrection, God will be fully aware of what is on the inside and what is on the outside. He will know what is what, who is who, what was visible and what was hidden, and He will know what punishment or reward is deserved.

The chapter began with people carefree and unconcerned about consequences, however, it ends with the knowledge that a record was definitely kept, nothing is hidden from God, and there will indeed be consequences.

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