

Summary of Juz 25

Surat al-Shura - The Consultation

The Makkans didn't just object to the belief in the Oneness of Allah but denied that a human could be a prophet. This objection is refuted, "The heavens are about to cleave" (5). So, absurd and insulting was their conviction. The central theme is the truthfulness of Prophethood. In describing the unique, distinctive and the otherness of Allah, "There is nothing like Him" (11).

A list of guidelines for inviting people to the way of Allah is given. Be patient, don't follow others' whims, believe firmly, be just, be tolerant, be responsible, don't argue, and finally, "Allah will gather you together and you'll return to Him" (15). "You will see the wrongdoers in a state of terror because of what they did, and its consequences will unfold before them. But the righteous believers will be in the gardens of Paradise" (22).

The message is one of making the right choice. Do you want the harvest of this life or the Hereafter? The mission of the Prophet ﷺ is to help us make the right choice: "Say, 'I don't ask you for any reward for this work, except, 'love for the relatives. And whoever does a good deed We shall increase its positive impact for him.'"" (23). The next few verses explain the wisdom behind differences in human capabilities. Without this difference in talents, status and aptitude, there would be no rank and file, no discipline and no organisation. People would be unwilling to cooperate with each other and consequently, human civilisation would not flourish.

The next section (36-43) gives nine tips for social harmony: forgive; obey Allah; pray; consult each other; give charity; be courageous; stand up for the rights of others. Then three things to avoid are mentioned, major sins, indecency and anger. The section finishes with "Whoever is patient and forgives, now these are things one ought to do." (43) A powerful appeal is made to humanity: "Come back to your Lord before the Day when there will be no turning back from Allah. You will find no place to escape that Day, nor will you be able to deny your sins" (47).

The Surah returns to the subject of prophethood, to dispel any doubts: not all humans can speak to Allah directly, so He sends His Prophets, with whom He communicates by revelation, from behind a screen, or through an angel (51).

Surat al-Zukhruf - The Golden Ornaments

Juz 25 continues with Surat al-Zukhruf. It opens by demonstrating the unconditional loving nature of Allah, "Shall We turn away from you and deprive you of this Reminder because you are people who've gone beyond limits?" (5), no matter how heartless and unwilling people may be, Allah will continue to provide guidance.

The contradictory beliefs of the disbelievers are exposed. They believed in Allah as the Creator, but they worshipped idols. "If you ask them who created the heavens and the Earth, they will certainly say they were created by the Almighty, the Knower" (9). Another contradictory belief was the idea that the angels were Allah's daughters, yet they felt ashamed when they received daughters of their own.

They criticised the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ because he was poor and therefore unfit to lead. The Quran disproves them, "Why was this Quran not sent down on a famous personality from one of the two towns?" (31). Allah shows His disregard for material wealth by saying, if it were not for the prospect of everyone becoming a disbeliever, He would have given the disbelievers so much wealth that the roofs, the staircases and the furnishing of their homes would be made of gold and silver (33-35).

The corrupting influence of wealth is illustrated by the example of the Pharaoh who declared: "My people, is not the country of Egypt and all these rivers flowing beneath my feet mine?" (51). The Pharaoh despised Musa simply because the latter did not have "golden bracelets". The Quran teaches that this is a mean and miserly attitude. Their objection to the Quran is rejected, "This Quran is a great honour for you and your people; you will be questioned about it" (44).

The Makkans were rude about the Prophet Isa also. They would say, "Are our gods better, or is he?" (57-8). The Quran goes on to praise the Prophet Isa and prophesies his second coming as the sign of the Final Hour.

The purpose of revelation is to caution people about the consequences of their actions in this life and to motivate them to accept the truth. What's the result? Paradise, where they will have "Food and drink in golden trays and cups shall be passed around. Everything that one desires, and the eyes delight in, will be there" (70-73). This is contrasted with the misery of Hell (74-78). The Surah opened by describing the loving nature of Allah, so it ends by advising the Prophet ﷺ to forgive his detractors.

Surat al-Dukhaan - The Smoke

The next Surat in Juz 25 is al-Dukhaan. This Surah was revealed after famine struck Makkah. The dust blew and covered the city with a smoke cloud. The Makkans asked the Prophet ﷺ to pray for relief and promised to believe if they were saved. He ﷺ prayed and it rained, but they didn't keep their word, just like the people of Pharaoh, they broke their promise. The Quran tells the story as a warning. Some commentators believe the smoke cloud refers to a catastrophe that will occur near the Final Hour, possibly a nuclear explosion or the earth being struck by a comet.

A frightening picture of the people of Hell follows; fed from the tree of Zaqqum. Its fruit boils in the stomach tearing it apart. What a contrast to the delights that await the pious people of Paradise. The purpose of the Quran is to awaken God-consciousness in people. The Surah finishes with "So wait, they the disbelievers are also waiting" (59).

Surat al-Jathiyah - Kneeling

Juz 25 ends with Surat al-Jathiyah. It discusses Tawhid, the oneness of Allah and unseats the idols. This seminal teaching of the Quran is the essence of Islam. The opening passage marvels at nature. The amazing signs in all of creation, point to a Creator. From the plant kingdom to animals, to the celestial bodies and the rain cycle. Attention is drawn to Divine creativity and the idolaters are invited to reflect on the helplessness of their idols. "This Quran is full of insights for humanity, guidance and compassion for a people with firm faith" (20).

The leaders of the Quraysh opposed the Messenger ﷺ because he was too radical and posed a threat to their status and wealth. They feared they would lose the income from the pilgrims if their existing belief system was replaced. They opposed him to preserve their hegemony and sought to defend their gods. They were not prepared to accept the Sovereignty of the God of Muhammed ﷺ. Too much was at stake. They are warned of the consequences of their rebellion: "When you will see all the communities kneeling down. Today, each community will be summoned to its Book of Deeds" (28). The Surah ends as it began, by emphasising the greatness of Allah.