Summary of Juz 28

Surat al-Mujadilah – The Woman at odds

Juz 28 commences with Surat al -Mujadilah. Khawla bint Sa'laba was divorced by her husband and according to the Arabian custom of Zihar, when the husband tells his wife, "You are to me like the backside of my mother." This declaration could not be revoked, so the woman would be left in limbo, neither married nor divorced. So Khawla appealed to the Messenger ﷺ and this Surat was revealed to provide a way out for her from this difficult situation. This story illustrates that Allah is aware of our plight and our earnest pleas can prompt His speech. The Surat gives instructions about secret conversations. The rule is never plot to harm others. The hypocrites and the Jews plotted secretly whilst the Muslims were unaware of their plotting. The Quran teaches us the social manners of going into meetings and giving room to newcomers. The Surat ends by describing the dedication and loyalty of true believers.

Surat al-Hashr – the Gathering of the Forces

Juz 28 continues with Surat al-Hashr, it is a Madani Surat and was revealed after the Battle of Uhud, in the fourth year after Hijra, 627 CE. The central theme is the expulsion of the tribe of Banu al-Nadir from their fortresses in the south of the city. When the Messenger ﷺ arrived in Madinah he made a treaty with the three Jewish tribes. The Jews welcomed this new arrangement, which guaranteed them peace. A Muslim woman selling her goods in the market was insulted by a Jewish goldsmith. A Muslim defended her and in the scuffle, killed the offender. The Jews killed him. The Messenger ﷺ asked them for the payment of blood money. Instead of honouring the treaty, Banu al-Nadir conspired to kill the Messenger ﷺ, a clear violation of the treaty. But he left their castle safely. They were given ten days to leave and allowed to carry as much as they could. Their palm groves and homes were given to the emigrants. Eighteen beautiful names of Allah are mentioned at the end.

Surat al-Mumtahana – The Woman Investigated

The third Surat in Juz 28 is Surat al-Mumtahana. The Prophet ﷺ would keep his expeditions secret, in order to prevent information leaking to the opponents. He planned action against the Quraysh leaders. Hatib ibn Balata, a companion gave a letter to a woman travelling to Makkah, warning the Quraysh. Balata's strategy was to appease the Quraysh and save his family, who were under their control. His plan was discovered, and the letter confiscated. He was reprimanded but no action was taken against him since he had fought in the Battle of Badr. The lessons we learn are:

- Don't base your judgements on guesswork
- Allah and His Messenger have a forgiving nature
- Always be loyal to your community

Surat al-Saff – The Rows

Juz 28 continues with Surat al-Saff. This Madani Surat motivates the believers to be brave and practice what they preach. To fight in the path of Allah when called to do so and not to shy away from the momentous responsibility of defending the community. The Surat criticises those who broke their pledge. By giving the example of Musa and Isa, the Surat challenges the Jews and the Christians to examine their Books. Their prophets had already predicted the coming of Muhammad ﷺ as the final Messenger. In the Gospel of John 14:15, Jesus foretold, "If you love me keep my commands, and I will ask the Father to give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever." Who was this advocate? Our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Salvation is achieved through faith and Jihad, we are told. This requires a firm belief in Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, along with practical and persistent efforts to obey the law. Those who do so are honoured with the title, "the helpers of Allah."

Surat Al-Jumuʿah – The Day of Congregation

Surat Al-Jumuʿah is a Madani Surat and mentions four important roles of the Prophet ﷺ: teaching; recitation of the verses of the Quran; purification and development of the character of his followers; and clarifying the Book with wisdom. The Surat highlights the importance of the Friday prayer, stressing the significance of this important weekly lesson, the sermon. Worshippers are encouraged to rush for the Friday sermon as it is an important socio-political gathering where the leader of the community addresses the congregation. The true believer will give precedence to the worship of Allah, over all worldly things.

Surat al-Munafiqun- The Hypocrites

Juz 28 continues with Surat al-Munafiqun. This Surat is a commentary on an incident that took place after the campaign of Banu Mustaliq. A fight broke out between two men. One of them called out, 'Ansar! Come to my help!' The other one called out, 'Emigrants! Come to my help!' Both sides responded and swords were drawn. The Prophet ﷺ rushed to the scene to caution them and succeeded in calming them down. However, the hypocrites were jealous of this Muslim unity and began to plot and scheme. Abdullah ibn Ubayy, the leader of the hypocrites stated, "When we get back to Madinah, the strong will expel the weak". When he approached Madinah, his son stood tall in front of him and stopped him from entering. But the Prophet ﷺ said, "Let him enter". Hypocrisy is vehemently condemned in the Quran because it smacks of an unprincipled attitude and disloyalty. The antidote to hypocrisy: give charity.

Surat al-Thaghabun – The Mutual loss

Surat al-Thaghabun deals with life Hereafter. It warns that wealth, spouses and children will be a temptation that could lead to breaking Divine laws. "Whoever can save themselves from greed, then those are the successful ones" (16). However, on Judgement day all will feel cheated, even the believers will feel loss because they will realise they could have worked harder for the Hereafter. The disbelievers will be absolutely devastated as they realise the world has cheated them.

Surat al-Talaq – The Divorce

Surat al-Talaq is a Medinan Surat, which deals with divorce. It outlines the correct method to be followed, the prescribed waiting periods, maintenance and custody of the children including the breastfeeding of any child. These are like an appendix to Surat al-Baqarah's passage on family law (222 to 242). The blessed Messenger ﷺ described divorce as, "The most hateful of permissible things" (Abu Dawud). Ali, the fourth caliph, said, "The Divine Throne trembles when a couple divorce." Islam allows divorce only when life as a husband and wife becomes so unbearable that it is damaging to the quality of family life. People going through divorce are reminded, "Be mindful of Allah." He shall provide them with a means out of this dreadful situation, and He will provide for them sustenance.

Surat al-Tahreem – The Prohibition

The last Surat of Juz 28 is al-Tahreem. It tells the story of Zainab, the wife of the Prophet ﷺ. One day he spent extra time with her which upset Aisha, who complained his breath smelled of Maghafir, a wild tree on which bees feed. The Prophet ﷺ told her he had eaten honey and promised to refrain from doing so, in the future. The solution to sinning is "Taubatan Nasuhan" (8) –sincere and genuine repentance. This means regretting the sin, feeling ashamed of it, resolving not to repeat it and then asking for Allah's forgiveness. Whatever the circumstances, five general principles are taught:

1. Not to make unlawful that which Allah has made lawful
2. How to amend and atone for vows
3. Not to betray trusts and give away secrets
4. The whole family should work together to save themselves from the Hellfire
5. Seek repentance for sins done intentionally or unintentionally