

## THE QUR'AN - A CLOSER LOOK

### PART 2

#### A TASTE OF THE QUR'AN

The name of the Holy Book, "**Qur'an**", means "recitation" or just possibly, "reading". It is normally joined with one of three descriptive adjectives meaning either "glorious", "mighty", or "noble". All chapters (surahs) but one are introduced by the words, "**Bismillah, Al Rehmaan, Al Raheem**"; which might be translated, "**in the Name of Al'lah, Most Gracious (or, Most Beneficent), Most Merciful**".

**"Praise be to Allah the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds; most Gracious, most Merciful; Master of the Day of Judgement. Thee do we worship, and Thine aid do we seek. Show us the straight way, the way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy grace, those whose portion is not wrath, and who go not astray".**

Surah 1, The Opening, verses 2-7; these verses are the pious Muslim's daily prayer.

**"Allah! There is no god but He - the Living, the Self-Subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and on earth. Who is there can intercede in His presence except as He permitteth? He knoweth what (appeareth to His creatures as) Before or After or Behind them. Nor shall they compass aught of His knowledge except as He willeth. His Throne doth extend over the heavens and the earth, and He feeleth no fatigue in guarding and preserving them, for He is the Most High, the Supreme (in glory)".**

Surah 2, The Cow, verse 255.

**"Seest thou not that it is Allah Whose praises all beings in the heavens and on earth do celebrate, and the birds (of the air) with wings outspread? Each one knows its own (mode of) prayer and praise. And Allah knows well all that they do. Yea, to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth; and to Allah is the final goal (of all). Seest thou not that Allah makes the clouds move gently, then joins them together, then makes them into a heap? - then wilt thou see rain issue forth from their midst. And He sends down from the sky masses (of clouds) wherein is hail: He strikes therewith whom He pleases and He turns it away from whom He pleases. The vivid flash of His lightning well-nigh blinds the sight. It is Allah Who alternates the Night and the Day: verily in these things is an instructive example for those who have vision!"**

Surah 24, The Light, verses 41-44.

**"By the Sun and its (glorious) splendour; by the Moon as it follows (the Sun); by the Day as it shows up (the Sun's) glory; by the Night as it conceals it; by the Firmament and its (wonderful) structure; by the Earth and its (wide) expanse; by the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it: and its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right - truly he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it!"**

Surah 91, The Sun, verses 1-10.

**"This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah; who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them; and who believe in the Revelation sent to thee (Muhammad), and sent before thy time, and in their hearts have the assurance of the Hereafter. They are on (true guidance) from their Lord, and it is these who will prosper. As to those who reject Faith, it is the same to them whether thou warn them or do not warn them; they will not believe. Allah hath set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing, and on their eyes is a veil; great is the penalty they (incur)".**

Surah 2, The Cow, verses 2-7.

**"When the Sky is cleft asunder; when the Stars are scattered; when the Oceans are suffered to burst forth; and when the Graves are turned upside down - (Then) shall each soul know what it has sent forward and what it has kept back. O man! what has seduced thee from thy Lord Most Beneficent? - Him Who created thee, fashioned thee in due proportion, and gave thee a just bias; in whatever form He wills, does He put thee together. Nay! but ye do reject Right and Judgement!"**

Surah 82, The Cleaving Asunder, verses 1-9.

**"The Companions of the Right Hand - what will be the Companions of the Right Hand! (They will be) among Lote trees without thorns, among Talh trees with flowers (or fruits) piled one above another - in shade long extended, by water flowing constantly, and fruit in abundance, whose season is not limited, nor (supply) forbidden, and on Thrones (of Dignity) raised high. We have created (their Companions) of special creation, and made them virgin-pure (and undefiled) - beloved by nature, equal in age - for the Companions of the Right Hand"**

**"The Companions of the Left Hand - what will be the Companions of the Left Hand? (They will be) in the midst of a fierce Blast of Fire and in Boiling Water, and in the shades of Black Smoke: nothing will there be to refresh, nor to please: for that they were wont to be indulged, before that, in wealth (and luxury), and persisted obstinately in wickedness supreme!"**

Surah 56, The Inevitable, verses 27-38; 41-46.

**"We sent not a messenger except but (to teach) in the language of his (own) people, in order to make things clear to them. Now Al'lah leaves straying those whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases; and He is exalted in power, full of wisdom".**

Surah 14, Ibrahim, verse 4.

**"Those were some of the prophets on whom Allah did bestow His Grace - of the posterity of Adam, and of those whom We carried (in the Ark) with Noah, and of the posterity of Abraham and Israel - of those whom We guided and chose; whenever the Signs of (Allah) Most Gracious were rehearsed to them, they would fall down in prostrate adoration and in tears."**

Surah 19, Maryam, verse 58.

**"By (the Token of) time (through the Ages), verily Man is in loss, except such as have Faith and do righteous deeds, and join together in the mutual teaching of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy."**

Surah 103, Time Through the Ages, verses 1-3.

**"The believers are but a single Brotherhood: so make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers; and fear Allah, that ye may receive Mercy. O ye that believe!"**

**Let not some men among you laugh at others; it may be that the (latter) are better than the former: nor let some women laugh at others; it may be that the (latter) are better than the former:"**

**"O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that you may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well-acquainted with all things".**

Surah 49, The Chambers, verses 11a, 13.

**"We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents: in pain did his mother bear him, and in pain did she give him birth. The carrying of the (child) to his weaning is (a period of) thirty months. At length, when he reaches the age of full strength and attains forty years, he says, 'O my Lord! Grant me that I may be grateful for Thy favour which Thou hast bestowed on me, and upon both my parents, and that I may work righteousness such as Thou mayest approve; and be gracious to me in my issue. Truly have I turned to Thee and truly do I bow (to Thee) in Islam'".**

Surah 4, The Winding Sandhills, verse 15.

Lastly, a surah directed to Muhammad himself, when in trouble:

**"By the Glorious Morning Light, and by the Night when it is still - thy Guardian-Lord hath not forsaken thee, nor is He displeased. And verily the hereafter will be better for thee than the present. And soon will thy Guardian-Lord give thee (that wherewith) thou shalt be well-pleased. Did He not find thee an orphan and give thee shelter (and care)? And He found thee wandering, and he gave thee guidance. And He found thee in need, and made thee independent. Therefore treat not the orphan with harshness, nor repulse the petitioner (unheard); but the Bounty of thy Lord - rehearse and proclaim!"**

Surah 93, The Glorious Morning Light, verses 1-11.

From that taste of the impressive grandeur of the Qur'an, we turn almost reluctantly to analyse its teachings more systematically, then the claims it makes for itself, and finally the story of its compilation.