



A Summary of Pondering upon the First quarter of the Second Chapter of the Noble Qur'an

(The Ayat from 142 to 157 of Surat Al-Baqarah)

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| Theme | Ayat |
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| <p>2</p> <p>Qiblah and guidance</p> | <p>🕋The fools (pagans, hypocrites, and Jews) among the people will say, "What has turned them (Muslims) from their Qiblah [prayer direction (towards Jerusalem)] which they used to face in prayer." Say, (O Muhammad SAW) "To Allah belong both, east and the west. He guides whom He wills to a Straight Way." (142)</p> |
| | <p>Thus We have made you [true Muslims - real believers of Islamic Monotheism, true followers of Prophet Muhammad SAW and his Sunnah (legal ways)], a Wasat (just) (and the best) nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muhammad SAW) be a witness over you. And We made the Qiblah (prayer direction towards Jerusalem) which you used to face, only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad SAW) from those who would turn on their heels (i.e. disobey the Messenger). Indeed it was great (heavy) except for those whom Allah guided. And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost (i.e. your prayers offered towards Jerusalem). Truly, Allah is full of kindness, the Most Merciful towards mankind. (143)</p> |
| | <p>Verily! We have seen the turning of your (Muhammad's SAW) face towards the heaven. Surely, We shall turn you to a Qiblah (prayer direction) that shall please you, so turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid- al-Haram (at Makkah). And wheresoever you are, turn your faces towards it (in prayer). Certainly, the people who were given the Scriptures (i.e. Jews and the Christians) know well that, that (your turning towards the direction of the Ka'bah at Makkah in prayers) is the truth from their Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what they do.(144)</p> |
| | <p>And even if you were to bring to the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) all the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), they would not follow your Qiblah (prayer direction), nor are you going to follow their Qiblah (prayer direction). And they will not follow each other's Qiblah (prayer direction). Verily, if you follow their desires after that which you have received of knowledge (from Allah), then indeed you will be one of the Zalimun (polytheists, wrong-doers, etc.). (145)</p> |
| | <p>Those to whom We gave the Scripture (Jews and Christians) recognize him (Muhammad SAW or the Ka'bah at Makkah) as they recognize their sons. But verily, a party of them conceal the truth while they know it - [i.e. the qualities of Muhammad SAW which are written in the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)]. (146)</p> |
| | <p>(This is) the truth from your Lord. So be you not one of those who doubt. (147)</p> |
| | <p>For every nation there is a direction which they face (in their prayers). So hasten towards all that is good. Wheresoever you may be, Allah will bring you together (on the Day of Resurrection). Truly, Allah is Able to do all things. (148)</p> |
| | <p>And from wheresoever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah), that is indeed the truth from your Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what you do. (149)</p> |
| <p>And from wheresoever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah), and wheresoever you are, turn your faces towards it (when you pray) so that people may have no argument against you except those of them that are wrong-doers, so fear them not, but fear Me! - And so that I may complete My Blessings on you and that you may be guided. (150)</p> | |
| <p>Remembrance of Allah and giving thanks to Him</p> | <p>Similarly (to complete My Blessings on you) We have sent among you a Messenger (Muhammad SAW) of your own, reciting to you Our Verses (the Quran) and sanctifying you, and teaching you the Book (the Quran) and the Hikmah (i.e. Sunnah, Islamic laws and Fiqh - jurisprudence), and teaching you that which you used not to know. (151)</p> |
| | <p>Therefore remember Me (by praying, glorifying, etc.). I will remember you, and be grateful to Me (for My countless Favours on you) and never be ungrateful to Me. (152)</p> |

(The Ayat from 142 to 157 of Surat Al-Baqarah)

3

| Theme | Ayat |
|--|---|
| Patience is the way to guidance and gratitude | ○ you who believe! Seek help in patience and As-Salat (the prayer). Truly! Allah is with As-Sabirin (the patient ones, etc.) (153) |
| | And say not of those who are killed in the Way of Allah, "They are dead." Nay, they are living, but you perceive (it) not. (154) |
| | And certainly, We shall test you with something of fear, hunger, loss of wealth, lives and fruits, but give glad tidings to As-Sabirin (the patient ones, etc.)(155) |
| | Who, when afflicted with calamity, say: "Truly! To Allah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return." (156) |
| | They are those on whom are the Salawat (i.e. blessings, etc.) (i.e. who are blessed and will be forgiven) from their Lord, and (they are those who) receive His Mercy, and those are the ones who are the guided. (157) |

The verses of this quarter are divided into three sections

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The third section: Patience is the way to guidance and gratitude

From verses 153 to the end of the quarter, verse 157
It emphasizes that **true guidance** requires patience with calamities and contentment with Allah's decree and destiny

Section Two: Remembrance of God and Thanking Him

From verses 151 to 152
It emphasizes that true guidance entails following the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), remembrance of Allah and thanking Him for all His blessings.

Section One: The Qiblah and Guidance From verses 142 to 150
It emphasizes that true guidance lies in the direction of the heart, rather than the direction of the body.

Pondering upon the verses of the first section: The Qiblah and guidance

Verse 142 and linking it to other places in the first chapter

5

Reflections

- Informing about the hypocrites and that they are in fact the fools though they do not know; rather they think, out of their excessive misguidance, that the people are the fools.
 - Pondering upon the term (will say), we will notice that it indicates the future; that is, Allah foretold what the fools would say when the Qiblah will be shifted before it happened. Indeed, what Allah said actually took place and the fools said the same words, namely "what has turned them from their Qiblah?" This is one of the miracles of the Noble Qur'an.
 - The objection of the hypocrites to the change of the Qiblah of prayer for Muslims from Bayt Al-Maqdis (their Qiblah) to the Sacred House (the Qiblah of our master Ibrahim (peace be upon him), the father of the prophets, the father of our masters Moses and Jesus, (peace be upon them).
 - Wherever you turn your body, it will be in the presence of Allah, looking at Him (Exalted and Glorified be He), as long as your hearts are true to Allah alone (Exalted and Glorified be He) without any associate, and you are monotheists.
 - An order from Allah to His Messenger (peace be upon him) to say to them: It is not important where your body turns, because Allah is everywhere, and He does not care about where your body turns. He (Exalted and Glorified be He) cares about the intention of your hearts and their sincerity to Him alone.
 - **These are the ones whom Allah wills to guide** and who follow the religion of Ibrahim [Islamic Monotheism, i.e. worship none but Allah (Alone)], and he was not of one the polytheists .
 - Indeed, Allah is All-Encompassing, not limited by a direction or place, and He is All-Knowing of what is in your hearts. He knows who amongst you is sincere and who is a hypocrite. He knows who amongst you is sincere in intention and who is a liar with evil intentions.
 - If you are also sincere in your intention, and dedicated it to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, then rejoice that Allah **will guide you to Himself on a Straight Way** with your prayers. He will also answer your supplication in Al-Fatihah in prayer. "**Guide us to the straight path.**"
- **The topic of guidance**, which was the focus of the first chapter from Al-Fatihah "**Guide us to the straight path**" to "And they say, "Be Jews or Christians, then you will be **guided**", is resumed in the second chapter with the topic of the body's turning to the Qiblah in prayer. Changing the Qiblah does not change the **guidance** in the heart of the believer, even if it causes the heart of the hypocrite to turn on his heels.

Verses

And when it is said to them (hypocrites): "Believe as the people (followers of Muhammad Peace be upon him , Al-Ansar and Al-Muhajirun) have believed," they say: "Shall we believe as the fools have believed?" Verily, they are the fools, but they know not. (Al-Baqarah: 13)

And to Allah belong the east and the west, so wherever you turn yourselves or your faces there is the Face of Allah (and He is High above, over His Throne). Surely! Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knowing. (Al-Baqarah: 115)

The fools (pagans, hypocrites, and Jews) among the people will say, "What has turned them (Muslims) from their Qiblah [prayer direction (towards Jerusalem)] which they used to face in prayer." Say, (O Muhammad SAW) "To Allah belong both, east and the west. He guides whom He wills to a Straight Way." (Al-Baqarah: 142)

Pondering upon the verses of the first section: The Qiblah and guidance Verse 143 and linking it to other places in the first chapter

Reflections

- Verse 143 shows the position of the nation of our master Muhammad (peace be upon him) among all the nations. It is a moderate nation, with no exaggeration or negligence.
- In Allah's Saying "**Truly, Allah is, to the people, Kind and Merciful**", there is syntactic hyperbaton where the term "the people" is mentioned before "Kind and Merciful" for the purpose of specification. We also note that the term "kind" (*Ra'uf* in Arabic) is prefixed with *Lam* for emphasis of Allah's kindness toward people. "Kind" is mentioned before "Merciful" to add an important meaning; namely that Allah is compassionate to His creation and appreciates their effort and their deeds for Him. He (Exalted and Glorified be He) does not want to make things difficult for them, rather He intends ease for them and to lighten their burden. What would Allah do with their punishment or with making things difficult for them? He (Exalted and Glorified be He) is the Rich (free of wants), and the wealth giver. He does not need anyone, nor does He benefit from any one's prayer, charity, or good deed. It is neither their (sacrifices) meat nor their blood that reaches Allah, but it is piety from you that reaches Him. Therefore, every prayer that has been performed toward the Holy House in Jerusalem will be accepted and rewarded and will not be lost. This is out of Allah's mercy and kindness toward His servants on whom Allah bestowed His grace.
- Considering His Saying "**only to test those who followed the Messenger**", we recall here Allah's Saying about following the Messenger: "**Say (O Muhammad SAW to mankind): 'If you (really) love Allah then follow me (i.e. accept Islamic Monotheism, follow the Quran and the Sunnah), Allah will love you and forgive you of your sins. And Allah is Off-Forgiving, Most Merciful.'**" [Al-Imran: 31]
- The rationale in the verse, "**only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad SAW) from those who would turn on their heels (i.e. disobey the Messenger)**", is a test to distinguish the hypocrites from the faithful and sincere believers.
- With this test, by changing the Qiblah, the truthful person was manifested in his quest for the love of Allah (Exalted and Glorified is He) and the false hypocrite was also manifested.

Verses

And they say, "Be Jews or Christians, then you will be guided." Say (to them, O Muhammad Peace be upon him), "Nay, (We follow) only the religion of Ibrahim (Abraham), Hanifa [Islamic Monotheism, i.e. to worship none but Allah (Alone)], and he was not of Al-Mushrikun (those who worshipped others along with Allah). " Say (O Muslims), "We believe in Allah and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to Ibrahim (Abraham), Isma'il (Ishmael), Ishaque (Isaac), Ya'qub (Jacob), and to Al-Asbat [the twelve sons of Ya'qub (Jacob)], and that which has been given to Musa (Moses) and 'Iesa (Jesus), and that which has been given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we have submitted (in Islam)." So if they believe in the like of that which you believe, then they are rightly guided, but if they turn away, then they are only in opposition. So Allah will suffice you against them. And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower. (Al-Baqarah:135- 137)

Thus We have made you [true Muslims - real believers of Islamic Monotheism, true followers of Prophet Muhammad SAW and his Sunnah (legal ways)], a Wasat (just) (and the best) nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muhammad SAW) be a witness over you. And We made the Qiblah (prayer direction towards Jerusalem) which you used to face, only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad SAW) from those who would turn on their heels (i.e. disobey the Messenger). Indeed it was great (heavy) except for those whom Allah guided. And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost (i.e. your prayers offered towards Jerusalem). Truly, Allah is, to the people, Kind and Merciful. (Al-Baqarah: 143)

- **Following the Messenger is the way to win the love of Allah (Exalted and Glorified is He), for it is a difficult test for the hypocrites, but It is easy for the true believers, whom Allah has guided. The hypocrite doubts, questions, fabricates sedition, and turns on his heels.**

Pondering upon the verses of the first section: The Qiblah and guidance

Verse 143 and linking it to other places in the first chapter

7

Reflections

- Verse 143 shows the position of the nation of our master Muhammad (peace be upon him) among the nations. It is a moderate nation, with no exaggeration or negligence.
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Verses

And they say, "Be Jews or Christians, then you will be guided." Say (to them, O Muhammad Peace be upon him), "Nay, (We follow) only the religion of Ibrahim (Abraham), Hanifa [Islamic Monotheism, i.e. to worship none but Allah (Alone)], and he was not of Al-Mushrikun (those who worshipped others along with Allah)." Say (O Muslims), **"We believe in Allah and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to Ibrahim (Abraham), Isma'il (Ishmael), Ishaque (Isaac), Ya'qub (Jacob), and to Al-Asbat [the twelve sons of Ya'qub (Jacob)], and that which has been given to Musa (Moses) and 'Iesa (Jesus), and that which has been given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we have submitted (in Islam)."** **"So if they believe in the like of that which you believe, then they are rightly guided, but if they turn away, then they are only in opposition. So Allah will suffice you against them. And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower. (Al-Baqarah:135- 137)**

Thus We have made you [true Muslims - real believers of Islamic Monotheism, true followers of Prophet Muhammad SAW and his Sunnah (legal ways)], a Wasat (just) (and the best) nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muhammad SAW) be a witness over you. And We made the Qiblah (prayer direction towards Jerusalem) which you used to face, only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad SAW) from those who would turn on their heels (i.e. disobey the Messenger). Indeed it was great (heavy) except for those whom Allah guided. And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost (i.e. your prayers offered towards Jerusalem). Truly, Allah is, to the people, Kind and Merciful. (Al-Baqarah: 143)

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Reflections

- We note that the word "*Kabirah* (translated as hard)" is prefixed with *Lam* in Arabic, in the two holy verses, to add emphasis.
- In "**Truly it is**", it (*Innaha* in Arabic), suffixed with the personal feminine attached pronoun, refers to prayer in the first verse. But in the second, it refers to both the prayer and the change of the direction of prayer, so He (Exalted is He) did not say "*Innaha*" but rather said "it was (in *Kanat*)", without the personal feminine attached pronoun to include the meaning of prayer and the change of the direction of prayer at the same time.
- Al-Khashi'un who are certain that they will meet their Lord and that they will inevitably return to Him have a degree, but those whom Allah has guided are higher in degree.
- Who are those whom Allah has guided?** They are the prophets from the offspring of our master Ibrahim (peace be upon him) as indicated in Allah's saying: "**And that was Our Proof which We gave Ibrahim (Abraham) against his people. We raise whom We will in degrees. Certainly your Lord is AllWise, AllKnowing. And We bestowed upon him Ishaque (Isaac) and Ya'qub (Jacob), each of them We guided, and before him, We guided Nuh (Noah), and among his progeny Dawud (David), Sulaiman (Solomon), Ayub (Job), Yusuf (Joseph), Musa (Moses), and Harun (Aaron). Thus do We reward the gooddoers. And Zakariya (Zachariya), and Yahya (John) and 'Iesa (Jesus) and Iliyas (Elias), each one of them was of the righteous. And Isma'il (Ishmael) and Al-Yas'a (Elisha), and Yunus (Jonah) and Lout (Lot), and each one of them We preferred above the 'Alamin (mankind and jinns) (of their times). And also some of their fathers and their progeny and their brethren, We chose them, and We guided them to a Straight Path. This is the Guidance of Allah with which He guides whomsoever He will of His slaves. But if they had joined in worship others with Allah, all that they used to do would have been of no benefit to them. They are those whom We gave the Book, AlHukm (understanding of the religious laws), and Prophethood. But if these disbelieve therein (the Book, AlHukm and Prophethood), then, indeed We have entrusted it to a people (such as the Companions of Prophet Muhammad SAW) who are not disbelievers therein. They are those whom Allah had guided. So follow their guidance. Say: "No reward I ask of you for this (the Quran). It is only a reminder for the 'Alamin (mankind and jinns)." (Al-An`am: 83-90)**
- Therefore, the verses were concluded with the command of Allah for our master Muhammad (peace be upon him) to follow the example of those whom Allah has guided. "**They are those whom Allah had guided. So follow their guidance.**"

Verses

And seek help in patience and As-Salat (the prayer) and truly it is extremely hard except for Al-Khashi'un [i.e. the true believers in Allah - those who obey Allah with full submission, fear much from His Punishment, and believe in His Promise (Paradise, etc.) and in His Warnings (Hell, etc.)]. (They are those) who are certain that they are going to meet their Lord, and that unto Him they are going to return. (Al-Baqarah: 45-46)

Thus We have made you [true Muslims - real believers of Islamic Monotheism, true followers of Prophet Muhammad SAW and his Sunnah (legal ways)], a Wasat (just) (and the best) nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muhammad SAW) be a witness over you. And We made the Qiblah (prayer direction towards Jerusalem) which you used to face, only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad SAW) from those who would turn on their heels (i.e. disobey the Messenger). **Truly it was hard except for those whom Allah guided.** And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost (i.e. your prayers offered towards Jerusalem). Truly, Allah is, to the people, Kind and Merciful. (Al-Baqarah: 143)

- Whoever performs prayer establishes faith and affirms his pure belief in the unseen. Therefore, when describing the pious, Allah (Exalted is He) mentions their establishment of prayer immediately after their belief in the unseen. "**Who believe in the Ghaib (Unseen) and perform As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), and spend out of what we have provided for them [i.e. give Zakat, spend on themselves, their parents, their children, their wives, etc., and also give charity to the poor and also in Allah's Cause - Jihad, etc.] (Al-Baqarah: 3)** The establishment of prayer is an indication of faith in the unseen. That is why Allah described prayer as faith in His saying, "**And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost**" meaning your prayer offered toward the Qiblah of the Holy House in Jerusalem.
- Allah named prayer as faith: "**And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost.**" This means that **prayer is faith**. It is the translation of pure belief in the unseen and an embodiment of belief in the existence of Allah, Lord of this universe, as well as in His oneness, sovereignty and attributes. It is also an embodiment of true belief in the angels, all the heavenly books, the messengers, the last day and predestination which is chosen by Allah.
- Note...Why did He not single out only the persons praying toward to Jerusalem for His mercy and compassion?** They should have been given preference, but Allah's mercy and compassion are inclusive. He divides it amongst all people, because He created them all, the obedient and disobedient. He leaves the door open for all people, even the foolish of the Jews and the hypocrites. How great and honorable is Allah!
- We notice the rhetorical distinctive Qur'anic style in Allah's Saying: "**And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost.**" It could have been "Allah does not waste your faith", but the style used in the verse is somehow exclamatory, meaning "**How do you think that Allah can waste your faith!**" Don't you know your God, and how just, generous and thankful He is.

Pondering upon the verses of the first section: The Qiblah and guidance

Pondering on the repetition in Verses 142 and 143

◉ The fools (pagans, hypocrites, and Jews) among the people will say, "What has turned them (Muslims) from their Qiblah [prayer direction (towards Jerusalem)] which they used to face in prayer." Say, (O Muhammad SAW) "To Allah belong both, east and the west. He guides whom He wills to a Straight Way." Thus We have made you [true Muslims - real believers of Islamic Monotheism, true followers of Prophet Muhammad SAW and his Sunnah (legal ways)], a Wasat (just) (and the best) nation, that you be witnesses over people and the Messenger (Muhammad SAW) be a witness over you. And We made the Qiblah (prayer direction) towards Jerusalem) which you used to face, only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad SAW) from those who would turn on their heels (i.e. disobey the Messenger). Indeed it was hard (heavy) except for those whom Allah guided. And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost (i.e. your prayers offered towards Jerusalem). Truly, Allah is, to the people, Kind and Merciful. (Al-Baqarah: 142- 143)

Qiblah

The word "the Qiblah" in the two verses: "What has turned them (Muslims) from their Qiblah which they used to face in prayer" And: "And We made the Qiblah which you used to face"

They said "their Qiblah," and Allah said "the Qiblah" because the Qiblah of Jerusalem was never the Qiblah of the Muslims. Rather, it was a temporary direction with the intention of changing it during the performance of prayer, so the Messenger moved during prayer, from the direction of Jerusalem to the direction of the Sacred House in Mecca, where is the Qiblah of Muslims and before them the father of Muslims and the father of the prophets, our master Ibrahim (peace be upon him).

This change confirms that the straight path, which guides to the Lord of the worlds, is the path of those whom Allah has blessed, and not the Qiblah of those who earned Allah's anger, nor those who went astray from the Christians and Jews.

People

We notice the repetition of the word "people" in the two verses: "**the fools among the people will say**" And: "**that you be witnesses over people**" And: "**Truly, Allah is, to the people, Kind and Merciful.**"

Three degrees: the highest is the nation of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), then the people, and lastly the foolish hypocrites. And above them all is the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), for he is a witness over his nation, and his nation is a witness over the people.

Expression of Majesty: Allah

In the verse 143, the expression of majesty "Allah" is repeated 3 times, and this needs contemplation: **those whom Allah guided. And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost . Allah is, to the people, Kind and Merciful**

Guidance appears in "those whom Allah has guided"

The repetition of the word of majesty "Allah" helps us recognize Allah as the great God who guides people and does not waste their efforts, and is Kind and Merciful to them.

This is how we get to know Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He) and love Him. He swears that He is Kind and Merciful to people.

Pondering upon the verses of the first section: The Qiblah and guidance Verse 144 and linking it to other places in the Noble Qur'an

Reflections

- The verse suggests that the eye of Allah is watching closely his beloved, our master Muhammad (peace be upon him), and in another verse Allah says, **"So wait patiently (O Muhammad SAW) for the Decision of your Lord, for verily, you are under Our Eyes , and glorify the Praises of your Lord when you get up from sleep. "** (Al-Tur: 48) The sincere believer, and in particular the patient believer is under the guard of Allah.
- Therefore, beneficence is that you worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you do not see Him, then He sees you....and Allah loves the beneficent.
- Allah is All-Hearing, Near, and responsive to supplications. He listened to the request of His beloved, our Master Muhammad (peace be upon him), and responded to him on account of his great status. He commanded him to turn his face towards the Qiblah of the Father of the Prophets, our Master Ibrahim (peace be upon him) in the direction of the Sacred Mosque in Mecca, where Allah's Sacred House is. This is to emphasize that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) is of the descendants of our master Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and that he brought the Islam that our master Ibrahim, the first of all Muslims, brought. Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) is a descendant of our master Isma'il, Ibrahim's son, who is older than our master Isaac, father of our master Jacob (Israel) (may peace and blessings be upon them all.)
- *Falanuwalliyannaka* (translated as **"Surely, We shall turn you to"**) is prefixed with the resumption particle *"Fa"* to indicate speed response to the Prophet's supplication, and the *nun* is an emphatic suffix
- We note that the Qiblah is the Sacred Mosque and not the Ka`bah. The worshipers should turn their face toward the direction of the Sacred Mosque. This is a facilitation from Allah to the worshippers to make the matter easy for them without any difficulty.
- **Allah was pleased with** His beloved Muhammad (peace be upon him), so He let him and his nation turn to **a Qiblah that shall please him.** **"And verily, your Lord will give you (all i.e. good) so that you shall be well-pleased."** Allah is pleased with His Messenger (peace be upon him), and the Messenger is pleased with his lord (Exalted is He). Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. This is the state of the beneficent people who are close to Allah.
- These are the four positions in which Allah's saying **"Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him"** is mentioned and they are worthy of contemplation so that one can know whom they are.

Verses

Verily! We have seen the turning of your (Muhammad's SAW) face towards the heaven. Surely, We shall turn you to a Qiblah (prayer direction) that shall please you, so turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid- al-Haram (at Makkah). And wheresoever you people are, turn your faces (in prayer) in that direction. Certainly, the people who were given the Scriptures (i.e. Jews and the Christians) know well that, that (your turning towards the direction of Al-Masjid Al-Haram at Makkah in prayers) is the truth from their Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what they do. (Al-Baqarah: 144)

And put your trust in the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful. Who sees you (O Muhammad SAW) when you stand up (alone at night for Tahajjud prayers). And your turning over and over among those who fall prostrate (along with you to Allah in the five compulsory congregational prayers). (Al-Shu`ara': 217-219)

Allah will say: "This is a Day on which the truthful will profit from their truth: theirs are Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise) - they shall abide therein forever. Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. That is the great success (Paradise). (Al-Ma'idah: 119)

And the first to embrace Islam of the Muhajirun (those who migrated from Makkah to Al-Madinah) and the Ansar (the citizens of Al-Madinah who helped and gave aid to the Muhajirun) and also those who followed them exactly (in Faith). Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success. (Al-Tawbah: 100)

You (O Muhammad SAW) will not find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day, making friendship with those who oppose Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad SAW), even though they were their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred (people). For such He has written Faith in their hearts, and strengthened them with Ruh (proofs, light and true guidance) from Himself. And We will admit them to Gardens (Paradise) under which rivers flow, to dwell therein (forever). Allah is pleased

Pondering upon the verses of the first section: The Qiblah and guidance

Verses 144 to 150

Reflections

- We note that the end of verse 144, as well as the following verses up to 147 talk about **those who were given the Scripture**, especially the Jews who were living in Medina.
- The Noble Qur'an named them as "**those who were given the Scripture**" in two places (verses 144 and 145) and once named them as "**Those to whom We gave the Scripture**" in verse 146
- When the verb (give) comes in the form of the passive without mentioning "Allah" as "**those who were given the Scripture**", it indicates reprimand for those among them who went astray after knowing the truth and concealed it. But when Allah attributes them to Himself "**Those to whom We gave the Scripture**" and mentions "Allah" – referred to by We -, He refers to those among them who were righteous, and praises those who know the Scripture well as they know their sons. So He said about them "**Those to whom We gave the Scripture.**"
- "**Those who were given the Scripture**" know well that the Noble Qur'an is the truth from their Lord as they know their sons, but a group of them conceal what they know and conceal the truth though they know well the truth from your Lord, and Allah is not unaware of what they do.
- It is important to follow with consideration the word "**the truth**" in Allah's Saying: "**know well that, that it is the truth from their Lord,**" where the verb *Ya`lam* (know) is prefixed with emphatic *Lam* in verse 144, then in verse 146 "**But verily, a party of them conceal the truth while they know it.**" Then it came for the third time in verse 147 "**the truth from your Lord.**"
- The conclusion is: Do not be, O Muhammad, one of those who doubt, for you are on the truth and they know that very well.
- We notice in verse 145 the repetition of the word "**follow your Qiblah**", "**follow their Qiblah**", "**follow each other's Qiblah**", but then the term "**if you follow**" is used with an emphatic *ta'* for exaggeration, as in Allah's Saying in the verse about Allah's love:
- "**Say (O Muhammad SAW to mankind): "If you (really) love Allah then follow me (i.e. accept Islamic Monotheism, follow the Quran and the Sunnah), Allah will love you and forgive you of your sins. And Allah is Off-Forgiving, Most Merciful. "** [Al `Imran: 31]
- Notice the term "**then indeed you will be.**" It means in case you follow the desires of those who were given the Scripture, then indeed you will be one of those who are unjust. The conditional phrase "if you follow" is used with emphatic prefix *lam*.
- This verse is the greatest evidence that the Noble Qur'an is the revealed word of Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He), and not the words of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him.)
- The prohibition against following the Jews and Christians is confirmed in Allah's saying, "**The Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace , not (the way) of those who earned Your Anger (such as the Jews), nor of those who went astray (such as the Christians).** This is because they have gone astray, made others go astray, concealed the truth, written and fabricated the verses and belied the Messenger (peace be upon him).
- Verse 145 points out that there is no way for any nation to follow the Qiblah of others, and the reason is mentioned in in verse 148... "**For every nation there is a direction to which they face (in their prayers).**"

Verses

Verily! We have seen the turning of your (Muhammad's SAW) face towards the heaven. Surely, We shall turn you to a Qiblah (prayer direction) that shall please you, so turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid- al-Haram (at Makkah). And wheresoever you people are, turn your faces (in prayer) in that direction. Certainly, **those who were given the Scripture (i.e. Jews and the Christians)** know well that, that (your turning towards the direction of Al-Masjid Al-Haram at Makkah in prayers) is **the truth** from their Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what they do. (Al-Baqarah: 144)

And even if you were to bring to **those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians)** all the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), they would not **follow your Qiblah (prayer direction)**, nor are you going to **follow their Qiblah (prayer direction)**. And they will not **follow each other's Qiblah (prayer direction)**. Verily, if you **follow** their desires after that which you have received of knowledge (from Allah), then indeed you will be one of the Zalimun (polytheists, wrong-doers, etc.) (145)

Those to whom We gave the Scripture (Jews and Christians) recognize it (the Scripture) as they recognize their sons. But verily, a party of them conceal **the truth** while they know it. (146)

(This is) **the truth** from your Lord. So be you not one of those who doubt. (147)

Pondering upon the verses of the first section: The Qiblah and guidance

Verses 144 to 150

Reflections

- Every human being has an intention and a destination that he hides in his heart and no one knows about it. It moves him and determines his Qiblah. Therefore no one will follow the Qiblah of others. Everyone follows his intellect, belief, intent, and intention, regardless of the verses and compelling evidence you might bring to them.
- We notice the repetition of the word of majesty "Allah" twice in the same verse: "**Allah will bring you together (on the Day of Resurrection). Truly, Allah is Able to do all things.**"
- Verse 148 emphasizes a very important meaning, which is that the direction of the body and the face is not important, because Allah is not limited by directions and has no place. However, what really matters is the heart, the intention, and the intent that give rise to good deeds. So what matters is to compete in doing good deeds and in the benefit of people, and not in standing and sitting in prayer. Prayer is to reform hearts, set right our conditions and do beneficence to Allah's creation, and do good for them.
- **So hasten towards all that is good...** This is the most important thing and not the change of the Qiblah. This is the true guidance.

- We note the repetition and the frames from verse 144 in His saying, "**so turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid- al-Haram (at Makkah)**" until verse 149... "**turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid- al-Haram (at Makkah).**"
- The second frame from verse 149: "**And from wheresoever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah)**" till the following verse 150: "**And from wheresoever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah)**".
- The third frame from verse 144 in His Saying: "**turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah), and wheresoever you are, turn your faces towards it**" until verse 150: "**turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah), and wheresoever you are, turn your faces towards it.**"

- Those who compete in doing good deeds are truly guided. Therefore, verse 150 and the first section of the Qur'anic quarter concluded with Allah's Saying, "**And so that I may complete My Blessings on you and that you may be guided.**" O you who pray to Allah day and night: "Guide us to the straight path."
- We notice in verse 150 Allah's Saying: "**so fear them not, but fear Me.**" Do not fear people...The heart should not fear from any person or anything. Fear should be from Allah alone for there is no God but Allah.

The completion of the blessing of Islam and guidance

Verses

For every nation there is a direction to which they face (in their prayers). So hasten towards all that is good. Wheresoever you may be, Allah will bring you together (on the Day of Resurrection). Truly, Allah is Able to do all things. (148)

And from wheresoever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah), that is indeed the truth from your Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what you do. (149)

And from wheresoever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah), and wheresoever you are, turn your faces towards it (when you pray) so that people may have no argument against you except those of them that are wrong-doers, so fear them not, but fear Me! - And so that I may complete My Blessings on you and that you may be guided. (150)

Verses of the First Section: Qiblah and Guidance

Completion of the Blessing in Other Places in the Noble Qur'an as in Verse 150

The completion of the blessing of Islam and guidance

Allah mentioned the completion of the blessing in five verses in other places in the Noble Qur'an that are worthy of further consideration:

"Forbidden to you (for food) are: Al-Maytatah (the dead animals - cattle-beast not slaughtered), blood, the flesh of swine, and the meat of that which has been slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allah, or has been slaughtered for idols, etc., or on which Allah's Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering, and that which has been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by the goring of horns - and that which has been (partly) eaten by a wild animal - unless you are able to slaughter it (before its death) and that which is sacrificed (slaughtered) on AnNusub (stone altars). (Forbidden) also is to use arrows seeking luck or decision, (all) that is Fisqun (disobedience of Allah and sin). This day, those who disbelieved have given up all hope of your religion, so fear them not, but fear Me. This day, I have perfected your religion for you, **completed My Blessing upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.** But as for him who is forced by severe hunger, with no inclination to sin (such can eat these above-mentioned meats), then surely, Allah is OffForgiving, Most Merciful." (Al-Ma'idah: 3)

"Verily, We have given you (O Muhammad SAW) a manifest victory. That Allah may forgive you your sins of the past and the future, **and complete His Blessing on you, and guide you on the Straight Path.**" (Al-Fath: 1-2)

And Allah has made for you out of that which He has created shades, and has made for you places of refuge in the mountains, and has made for you garments to protect you from the heat (and cold), and coats of mail to protect you from your (mutual) violence. **Thus does He Complete His Blessing unto you, that you may submit yourselves to His Will (in Islam).** (Al-Nahl: 81)

"Thus will your Lord choose you and teach you the interpretation of dreams (and other things) **and complete His Blessing on you and on the offspring of Ya'qub (Jacob), as He completed it on your fathers, Ibrahim (Abraham) and Ishaque (Isaac) aforetime!** Verily, your Lord is All-Knowing, All-Wise." (Yusuf: 6)

"O you who believe! When you intend to offer As-Salat (the prayer), wash your faces and your hands (forearms) up to the elbows, rub (by passing wet hands over) your heads, and (wash) your feet up to ankles. If you are in a state of Janaba (i.e. had a sexual discharge), purify yourself (bathe your whole body). But if you are ill or on a journey or any of you comes from answering the call of nature, or you have been in contact with women (i.e. sexual intercourse) and you find no water, then perform Tayammum with clean earth and rub therewith your faces and hands. Allah does not want to place you in difficulty, but He wants to purify you, **and to complete His Favor on you that you may be thankful.**" (Al-Ma'idah: 6)

**Pondering upon the verses of the second section: Remembrance of Allah and Giving Thanks to Him
Verse 151 and Linking it to Other Places in the Noble Qur'an**

| Reflections | Verse |
|-------------|-------|
|-------------|-------|

14

Similarly (to complete My Blessings on you) We have sent among you a Messenger (Muhammad SAW) of your own, reciting to you Our Verses (the Quran) and sanctifying you, and teaching you the Book (the Quran) and the Hikmah (i.e. Sunnah, Islamic laws and Fiqh - jurisprudence), and teaching you that which you used not to know. (Al-Baqarah: 151)

Similar verses are mentioned in several places in the Book of Allah as follows:

This is the supplication of our master Ibrahim, which was mentioned in the previous quarter. We note here the difference in order. In the supplication of our master Ibrahim (peace be upon him), the order of guidance came in this way: 1. Recitation of verses 2. Teaching the Book and Al-Hikmah 3. Sanctification

But in verse 151, the order has changed into this way: 1. Recitation of verses 2. Sanctification 3. Teaching the Book and Al-Hikmah.

Recitation of verses sanctifies the hearts with much remembrance of Allah

When hearts are sanctified, they begin to learn the Book and Al-Hikmah. You do not pour water into the cup until after it has been purified. Therefore, hearts must be purified before being taught.

"Our Lord! Send amongst them a Messenger of their own (and indeed Allah answered their invocation by sending Muhammad Peace be upon him), who shall recite unto them Your Verses and teach them the Book (this Quran) and Al-Hikmah (full knowledge of the Islamic laws and jurisprudence or wisdom or Prophethood, etc.), and sanctify them. Verily! You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise." (Al-Baqarah: 129)

The verses of Surat Al `Imran and Al-Jumu`ah came all in the same order to stress this meaning.

Indeed Allah conferred a great favor on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger (Muhammad SAW) from among themselves, reciting unto them His Verses (the Quran), and sanctifying them, and teaching them the Book (the Quran) and AlHikmah [the wisdom and the Sunnah of the Prophet SAW (i.e. his legal ways, statements, acts of worship, etc.)], while before that they had been in manifest error. (Al `Imran: 164)

He it is Who sent among the unlettered ones a Messenger (Muhammad SAW) from among themselves, reciting to them His Verses, sanctifying them, and teaching them the Book (this Quran, Islamic laws and Islamic jurisprudence) and Al-Hikmah (As-Sunnah: legal ways, orders, acts of worship, etc. of Prophet Muhammad SAW). And verily, they had been before in manifest error. (Al-Jumu`ah)

- We note in this quarter the repetition of the words knowledge and truth.
- Knowledge and truth: **"only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad SAW)"; "the people who were given the Scriptures (i.e. Jews and the Christians) know well that, that (your turning towards the direction of Al-Masjid Al-Haram at Makkah in prayers) is the truth from their Lord"; "after that which you have received of knowledge"; "a party of them conceal the truth while they know it"; "(This is) the truth from your Lord"; "that is indeed the truth from your Lord"; "and teaching you the Book (the Quran) and the Hikmah".** Knowledge of the truth.
- In verse 151, there is repetition of Allah's teaching: **"teaching you the Book (the Quran) and the Hikmah (i.e. Sunnah, Islamic laws and Fiqh - jurisprudence)" "and teaching you that which you used not to know."** **What is the significance of this repetition?**

**Pondering upon the verses of the second section: Remembrance of Allah and Giving Thanks to Him
Verse 151 and Linking it to Other Places in the Noble Qur'an**

Reflections

Verses

Similarly (to complete My Blessings on you) We have sent among you a Messenger (Muhammad SAW) of your own, reciting to you Our Verses (the Quran) and sanctifying you, and **teaching you** the Book (the Quran) and the Hikmah (i.e. Sunnah, Islamic laws and Fiqh - jurisprudence), and **teaching you** that which you used not to know. (Al-Baqarah: 151)

- We notice in this quarter the repetition of the words "knowledge" and "truth".
- Knowledge and truth: **"only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad SAW)"; "the people who were given the Scriptures (i.e. Jews and the Christians) know well that, that (your turning towards the direction of Al-Masjid Al-Haram at Makkah in prayers) is the truth from their Lord"; "after that which you have received of knowledge"; "a party of them conceal the truth while they know it"; "(This is) the truth from your Lord"; "that is indeed the truth from your Lord"; "and teaching you the Book (the Quran) and the Hikmah".** Knowledge of the truth.
- In verse 151, there is repetition of Allah's teaching: **"teaching you the Book (the Quran) and the Hikmah (i.e. Sunnah, Islamic laws and Fiqh - jurisprudence)" "and teaching you that which you used not to know."** **What is the significance of this repetition?**

Allah's teaching us is not limited to knowledge of the Book and Al-Hikmah

They (the Jews, Quraish pagans, idolaters, etc.) did not estimate Allah with an estimation due to Him when they said: "Nothing did Allah send down to any human being (by inspiration)." Say (O Muhammad SAW): "Who then sent down the Book which Musa (Moses) brought, a light and a guidance to mankind which you (the Jews) have made into (separate) papersheets, disclosing (some of it) and concealing (much). And you (believers in Allah and His Messenger Muhammad SAW), **were taught (through the Quran) that which you knew not** - neither you nor your fathers.." Say: "Allah (sent it down)." Then leave them to play in their vain discussions. (Al-An`am: 91)

Indeed Allah shall fulfill the true vision which He showed to His Messenger (SAW) [i.e. the Prophet (SAW) saw a dream that he has entered Makkah along with his companions, having their (head) hair shaved and cut short] in very truth. Certainly, you shall enter AlMasjidAlHaram; if Allah wills, secure, (some) having your heads shaved, and (some) having your head hair cut short, having no fear. **He knew what you knew not**, and He granted besides that a near victory. (Al-Fath: 27)

He taught our master Adam all the names....and when Adam learned from Allah, Allah made the angels prostrate to him

And He taught Adam all the names (of everything) , then He showed them to the angels and said, "Tell Me the names of these if you are truthful." (Al-Baqarah: 31)

He teaches you what you think you know and teaches you what you don't know you knew not

"O you who believe! When you contract a debt for a fixed period, write it down. Let a scribe write it down in justice between you. Let not the scribe refuse to write as Allah has taught him, so let him write. Let him (the debtor) who incurs the liability dictate, and he must fear Allah, his Lord, and diminish not anything of what he owes. But if the debtor is of poor understanding, or weak, or is unable himself to dictate, then let his guardian dictate in justice. And get two witnesses out of your own men. And if there are not two men (available), then a man and two women, such as you agree for witnesses, so that if one of them (two women) errs, the other can remind her. And the witnesses should not refuse when they are called on (for evidence). You should not become weary to write it (your contract), whether it be small or big, for its fixed term, that is more just with Allah; more solid as evidence, and more convenient to prevent doubts among yourselves, save when it is a present trade which you carry out on the spot among yourselves, then there is no sin on you if you do not write it down. But take witnesses whenever you make a commercial contract. Let neither scribe nor witness suffer any harm, but if you do (such harm), it would be wickedness in you. **So be afraid of**

Pondering upon the verses of the second section: Remembrance of Allah and Giving Thanks to Him

Verse 152 and Linking it to Other Places in the Noble Qur'an

16

Reflections

Verses

Therefore remember Me (by praying, glorifying, etc.). I will remember you, and be grateful to Me (for My countless Favours on you) and never be ungrateful to Me. (Al-Baqarah: 152)

Allah commands the servant to do two things: To remember Allah and give thanks to Him.

The verse is prefixed with the resumption particle (*Fa'*) to indicate speed of responding to Allah's command to make remembrance of Him. We have clarified that the order of guidance is: 1. Recitation of the Qur'anic verses 2. Allah's sanctification of hearts 3. Teaching the Book and Al-Hikmah. Given that recitation of the verses is the first step in the path of guidance, Allah's command was "**Therefore remember Me**"

This is an explicit command to remember Allah in all forms of remembrance, whether they are:

1. Making remembrance of Allah with His name or with one of His Beautiful Names;
2. Reciting the Noble Qur'an which is the best type of remembrance;
3. Performing prayer;
4. Saying *Al-Baqiyat Al-Salihah* (the enduring good deeds): "*Subhana Allah* (Glory be to Allah), *Al-Hamdu li-Allah* (praise be to Allah), *la ilaha illa Allah* (there is no god but Allah), *Allahu Akbar* (Allah is the greatest); *la hawla wa la Quwwata illa billahi Al-'Aliy Al-'Azim* (there is no power and no strength except by Allah, the Most High, the Most Great)";
5. Seeking Allah's Forgiveness;
6. Invoking Allah's peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad;
7. Saying: *Subhana allahi wa bihamdihi subhana allahi al-azim* (glory is to Allah and all the praise is to Him, glory is to Allah, the Most Great);
8. Supplication.

Here is the command to make much remembrance of Allah, as it is the key to true guidance, because it invokes Allah's blessings upon us and His angel's prayer for us and brings us out of darkness into light to the path of the All-Mighty, the Praiseworthy. This is an important aspect of true guidance.

- Do I thank Allah when I say: "Praise be to Allah"?
- Allah says: "**Be grateful to Me**", and does not say "Thank me", as He says "Worship me" or "Fear me."
- Being grateful to Allah involves thanking by deeds and thanking people for every deed, in anticipation of Allah's reward, and following the command of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). Thanking by deeds involves spending from what Allah gave you on the orphans and needy people.

O you who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance. And glorify His Praises morning and afternoon [the early morning (Fajr) and 'Asr prayers]. He it is Who sends Salat (His blessings) on you, and His angels too (ask Allah to bless and forgive you), that He may bring you out from darkness (of disbelief and polytheism) into light (of Belief and Islamic Monotheism). And He is Ever Most Merciful to the believers. (Al-Ahzab: 41- 43)

Therefore remember Me (by praying, glorifying, etc.). I will remember you, and be grateful to Me (for My countless Favours on you) and never be ungrateful to Me. (Al-Baqarah: 152)

They worked for him what he desired, (making) high rooms, images, basins as large as reservoirs, and (cooking) cauldrons fixed (in their places). "Work you, O family of Dawud (David), with thanks!**" But few of My slaves are grateful. (Saba': 13)**

Therefore remember Me (by praying, glorifying, etc.). I will remember you, and be grateful to Me (for My countless Favors on you) and never be ungrateful to Me. (Al-Baqarah: 152)

17

- We note that the word of “majesty” is not used. That is, Allah did not say “Therefore remember Allah.” Rather, He said “**Therefore Remember Me**” in a manner of speech that brings the servant closer to Allah. It is the lover’s remembrance of the beloved, not forcibly, but voluntarily, with love and longing.
- **The great gift** is given directly to the one who obeys, and it is of the same kind of action. **Therefore remember Me. I will remember you.** However, there is a great difference between the servant’s remembrance of Allah and Allah’s remembrance of the servant. The difference is that between the creator and the creature. It is the difference between who is nothing and who is everything and gives limitless donation. He has no limits, **“I will remember you,” that is, I will guide you, I will take care of you, I will have mercy on you, I will bestow upon you My Blessings, I will protect you, and support you.**
- What do you think about the one mentioned by the Lord of the earth and the heavens, Who says to a thing only: “Be!” and it is. He has all the good in His Hand, and to Him return all affairs (for decision). Sacred be His Names. What did the one who found Allah and whom Allah remembered lose? And what did the one who lost Allah and whom Allah forgot win?
- The first gifts of Allah’s remembrance of a servant is his guidance and purification of his heart.
- **The next command is to be thankful to Allah**, but it does not involve only thanking Allah for His blessings by doing good deeds and being benevolent to others be virtue of this blessing, but this matter should most importantly be complemented by another thing, namely, **“and never be ungrateful to Me.”**
- After the general command, a specific command was made. That is, after commanding us to remember Allah in a general way without specification or qualification, He specified an important matter, which is (Thanking Allah for His blessings and not being ungrateful for any of His blessings, even if they were diminished at times of hardship and affliction); **“and be grateful to Me and never be ungrateful to Me.”**
- The command is to give continuous thanks to Allah, uninterrupted by denial of any blessing or rejection of any decree of Allah Almighty. There should be complete satisfaction with the decree of Allah, whether it involves an increase or a decrease in His blessings. This meaning became clear to us because Allah prohibited us from being ungrateful to Him after commanding us to give thanks to Him.
- When a person is immersed in Allah’s blessings, remembering that Allah, the Lord of the worlds, is the giver of all these blessings, he thanks Him. But it may happen that he gets afflicted with something of fear, hunger, or a loss of wealth, lives and fruits. Then one may turn on his heels and forget all the blessings of Allah and remember only what was taken from him and what he lacks, so he becomes angry and stops seeing the remaining blessings of Allah. He may even deny Allah’s blessings and gets dissatisfied and impatient of this ordeal and this affliction.
- This was the significance of adding **“and never be ungrateful to Me”** after saying **“and be grateful to Me”**
- Allah (Exalted be He) said: **“and be grateful to Me”** and did not say **“and be grateful to Allah”** as He said “remember Me” to draw the servant closer to him. He (Exalted be He) loves the servant when He gives him and when He deprives him or reduces what he has or when He afflicts him.”
- It is an obligation to thank Allah even at the time of trial and lack of some blessings. The believer should be patient at afflictions and should concentrate on the remaining blessings Allah gave him, rather than on the missing blessings.
- **To reach this level, it is necessary to seek the help of patience, as will be mentioned in the verses of the third section of this quarter. Besides, remembrance of Allah again is symbolized by the prayer in which the servant speaks to Allah and Allah speaks to him.**
- **The third section of the verses of this quarter is a detailed note and an explanation of how you can thank Allah and not be ungrateful to Him...so Allah’s command was.... O you who believe! Seek help in patience and As-Salat (the prayer).**

Pondering on the verses of the third section: Patience is the way to guidance and gratitude

Verse 152 and Linking it to Other Places in the Noble Qur'an

18

Direct command to practice patience

O you who believe! **Endure and be more patient** (than your enemy), and guard your territory (by stationing army units permanently at the places from where the enemy can attack you), and fear Allah, so that you may be successful. (Al-Imran: 200)

- And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart, **and be patient. Surely, Allah is with those who are As-Sabirin (the patient ones, etc.)** (Al-Anfal: 46)
- Musa (Moses) said to his people: "**Seek help in Allah and be patient.** Verily, the earth is Allah's. He gives it as a heritage to whom He will of His slaves, and the (blessed) end is for the Muttaqun (pious) (Al-A'raf: 128)
- So wait patiently (O Muhammad SAW) for the Decision of your Lord,** for verily, you are under Our Eyes, and glorify the Praises of your Lord when you get up from sleep. (Al-Tur: 48)
- And enjoin As-Salat (the prayer) on your family, and be patient in offering them [i.e. the Salat (prayers)].** We ask not of you a provision (i.e. to give Us something: money, etc.); We provide for you. And the good end (i.e. Paradise) is for the Muttaqun (pious). (Taha: 132)
- Patience and perseverance in patience
- The verses stress that Allah is with the patient people.
- You are under the eyes of Allah when you wait patiently for the decision of Allah.
- Being patient in offering prayers.

Command to seek the help of patience and prayer

O you who believe! **Seek help in patience and As-Salat (the prayer).** Truly! Allah is with As-Sabirin (the patient ones, etc.). (Al-Baqarah: 153)

- And seek help in patience and As-Salat (the prayer)** and truly it is extremely hard except for Al-Khashi'un [i.e. the true believers in Allah - those who obey Allah with full submission, fear much from His Punishment, and believe in His Promise (Paradise, etc.) and in His Warnings (Hell, etc.)]. (They are those) who are certain that they are going to meet their Lord, and that unto Him they are going to return. (Al-Baqarah: 45-46)
- Here is a repetition of the command to seek the help of patience and prayer. The first verse concluded with talking about the patient: "**Truly! Allah is with As-Sabirin (the patient ones, etc.)**" The second verse concluded with talking about prayer as being heavy and hard except for Al-Khashi'un, [i.e. the true believers].
- In the two verses, patience came before prayer, why?**
- Does patience equal prayer? Is prayer a kind of patience? It is a specification after a general statement.
- Is prayer completely separate from patience, but they complement each other?
- We note in the two verses that the prefixed preposition *bi* (translated as in) is not repeated. It is mentioned only before the term patience. He (Exalted be He) said: "**Seek help in patience and As-Salat (the prayer),**" and did not say *bi as-salah* (and in prayer), as if they are one thing complementing each other.
- In the supplication of Surat Al-Fatihah, we say: **You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).**" We do not know how this seeking help will be. These two verses teach us that this can be achieved by combining in seeking Allah's help between patience with the heart and prayer for Allah with the body.

"You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything)." Ask Allah for help and be patient. Seek help in patience and prayer.

The third section of the verses of this quarter is a detailed note and an explanation of **how you can thank Allah and not be ungrateful to Him...so Allah's command was.... O you who believe! Seek help in patience and As-Salat (the prayer).** Therefore, verse 153 concluded with "**Truly! Allah is with As-Sabirin (the patient ones, etc.)**"

- If you want to thank Allah and not be ungrateful to Him, you should seek Allah's help, as mentioned in Al-Fatihah: "**You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).**" .worship = prayer.
- Seek Allah's help by supplications, then pursue and adopt the legitimate means, then surrender all affairs to Allah, trusting in Him, leaving for Him the results, and lastly be patient.

Pondering on the verses of the third section: Patience is the way to guidance and gratitude Patience and Degrees of *Ma`iyyah* (Allah being with His creation) (2/1)

19

Degrees of *Ma`iyyah* (Allah being with His creation)

Types of Patience

The first degree is the companionship and presence of Allah with a human being

Have you not seen that Allah knows whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is on the earth? There is no Najwa (secret counsel) of three, but He is their fourth (with His Knowledge, while He Himself is over the Throne, over the seventh heaven), nor of five but He is their sixth (with His Knowledge), not of less than that or more, but **He is with them** (with His Knowledge) wherever they may be; and afterwards on the Day of Resurrection, He will inform them of what they did. Verily, Allah is the All-Knower of everything. (Al-Mujadilah: 7)

He is with them wherever they may be... with everyone in every place and time

The second degree is Allah being with His creation providing them with support and protection which is the first degree of closeness

If you help him (Muhammad SAW) not (it does not matter), for Allah did indeed help him when the disbelievers drove him out, the second of two, when they (Muhammad SAW and Abu Bakr radhiallahu'anhu) were in the cave, and he (SAW) said to his companion (Abu Bakr radhiallahu'anhu): "Be not sad (or afraid), surely **Allah is with us**." Then Allah sent down His Sakinah (calmness, tranquility, peace, etc.) upon him, and strengthened him with forces (angels) which you saw not, and made the word of those who disbelieved the lowermost, while it was the Word of Allah that became the uppermost, and Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise. (Al-Tawbah: 40)

Allah was (with His support and protection) with Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq in the cave, as He was with our master prophet Moses (peace be upon him).

And when the two hosts saw each other, the companions of Musa (Moses) said: "We are sure to be overtaken." [Musa (Moses)] said: "Nay, verily! **With me is my Lord**, He will guide me." (Al-Shu`ara': 61- 62)

With this *Ma`iyyah* (Allah being with His creation), Allah saves the servant from all evil, relieves his sadness, and guides him to the path of the All-Mighty, the Praiseworthy.

1. Patience with obedience
2. Patience in avoiding sins
3. Patience with the decree of Allah
4. Patience with people's harm

Pondering on the verses of the third section: Patience is the way to guidance and gratitude Patience and Degrees of *Ma`iyah* (Allah being with His creation) (2/2)

20

Degrees of *Ma`iyah* (Allah being with His creation)

Types of Patience

The third degree of *Ma`iyah* is that of closeness, where Allah is not only with you and supports you, but He is also close to you

And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad SAW) concerning Me, then (answer them), **I am indeed near** (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor). So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright. (Al-Baqarah: 183)

This is great closeness, where Allah is closer to man than his jugular vein

And indeed We have created man, and We know what his ownself whispers to him. And **We are nearer to him than his jugular vein (by Our Knowledge)** (Qaf: 16)

Is it such a talk (this Quran) that you (disbelievers) deny? And instead (of thanking Allah) for the provision He gives you, on the contrary, you deny Him (by disbelief)! Then why do you not (intervene) when (the soul of a dying person) reaches the throat? And you at the moment are looking on, But **We (i.e. Our angels who take the soul) are nearer to him than you, but you see not.** (Al-Waqi`ah: 81-85)

The fourth and highest degree of *Ma`iyah* is that which brings you closer to being under the eyes of Allah

So wait patiently (O Muhammad SAW) for the Decision of your Lord, for verily, **you are under Our Eyes**, and glorify the Praises of your Lord when you get up from sleep. And in the night-time, also glorify His Praises, and at the setting of the stars. (Al-Tur: 48-49)

When you are patient with Allah's judgment and decree, you are closer to Allah as His beloved, for Allah loves the patient

We note that with the command to be patient comes the command to make remembrance of Allah '**And in the night-time, also glorify His Praises**', as the command to seek help in patience and then prayer.

Making a lot of remembrance is the key to guidance and closeness to the eye of Allah, as well as the key to patience with His decree and to giving Him continuous thanks, uninterrupted for lack of blessings or wealth or the like. It is the key to giving thanks with gratefulness and without despair, but rather with patience in the case of deficiency and affliction.

1. Patience with obedience

2. Patience in avoiding sins

3. Patience with the decree of Allah

4. Patience with people's harm

An important conclusion related to Verse 153

21

Allah is with the patient. Allah loves the patient people who exercise great patience like the patience of Job (peace be upon him) who did not complain, but rather prayed to Allah: “Verily, distress has seized me, and You are the Most Merciful of all those who show mercy.” Likewise, Prophet Jacob exercised great patience without complaining and said to his sons: “ So (for me) patience is most fitting. And it is Allah (Alone) Whose help can be sought against that which you assert.”

Let’s remember the characteristics of the pious people:

◊ It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, and each and every act of obedience to Allah, etc.) that you turn your faces towards east and (or) west (in prayers); but Al-Birr is (the quality of) the one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, the Prophets and gives his wealth, in spite of love for it, to the kinsfolk, to the orphans, and to Al-Masakin (the poor), and to the wayfarer, and to those who ask, and to set slaves free, performs As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), and gives the Zakat, and who fulfill their covenant when they make it, and who are **As-Sabirin (the patient ones, etc.) in extreme poverty and ailment (disease) and at the time of fighting (during the battles).** Such are the people of the truth and they are AlMuttaqun (pious). (Al-Baqarah: 177)

They are the truthful pious people.

Pondering on the verses of the third section: Patience is the way to guidance and gratitude

Pondering on Verse 154 in Relation to the Preceding and Following Verses

And certainly, We shall test you with something of fear, hunger, loss of wealth, lives and fruits, but give glad tidings to As-Sabirin (the patient ones, etc.). Who, when afflicted with calamity, say: "Truly! To Allah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return." (Al-Baqarah: 155-156)

3. The command to give glad tidings to the patient

Allah (Exalted be He) mentioned in verse 156 those who, when afflicted with calamity, say....
Death is the greatest calamity for the deceased's family, and cannot be compared with other misfortunes. However, in case of being killed in the way of Allah, we do not say: We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return... because they did not die, but rather they are still alive with their Lord, receiving provisions. Therefore, what applies to the ordinary dead does not apply to them. In ordinary calamities, we say: "We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return."
This does not contradict our firm belief that we belong to Allah and to Him we shall return, but it is said in all calamities and at the death of any person, except for those who are killed in the way of Allah, because they are still alive, not like all other dead.

And say not of those who are killed in the Way of Allah, "They are dead." Nay, they are living, but you perceive (it) not. (Al-Baqarah: 154)

2. The command not to say about those who are killed in the way of Allah that they are dead

- Perhaps this verse is mentioned before Allah's promise in the next verse "**And certainly, We shall test you with something of fear**" as the beginning of the greatest calamity that afflicts man and his family, namely, death. Therefore, Allah described death as a calamity.
- "O you who believe! When death approaches any of you, and you make a bequest, then take the testimony of two just men of your own folk or two others from outside, if you are travelling through the land and **the calamity of death befalls you.** Detain them both after As-Salat (the prayer), (then) if you are in doubt (about their truthfulness), let them both swear by Allah (saying): "We wish not for any worldly gain in this, even though he (the beneficiary) be our near relative. We shall not hide Testimony of Allah, for then indeed we should be of the sinful." (Al-Ma'idah: 106)
- We are commanded to say what the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) is commanded to say, in every divine command coming after the term 'Say'. Likewise, we are commanded not to say to those who are killed in the way of Allah that they are dead. These are Allah's commands to His Messenger (peace be upon him) to say certain important things to people, which they usually overlook or do not understand well.
- Allah distinguished those who are killed in the way of Allah by granting them a special life in which there is provision and blessings. They are not like other humans who die and we say about them they are dead. Those special people are alive and are provided sustenance from their Lord, even if we do not perceive how this happens.
- Therefore, the calamity of death is introduced individually, because what is said in the case of death is different from what is said at other calamities
- The calamity of death is given precedence because those who are killed in the way of Allah are signaled out as being alive with their lord, receiving provisions, and rejoicing in what Allah has bestowed upon them of His Bounty. This is a reference to their great status with Allah, for they are not like other people who die normally.

O you who believe! Seek help in patience and As-Salat (the prayer). Truly! Allah is with As-Sabirin (the patient ones, etc.). (Al-Baqarah: 153)

1. The command to seek help in patience and prayer

All the verses of this third section of the quarter starting from verse 153 that begins with: "**O you who believe, seek help in patience and prayer**", until verse 157 that ends with "**and those are the ones who are the guided**" talk about patience, but verse 154 came with the command not to say about those who are killed in the way of Allah that they are dead.

Pondering on the verses of the third section: Patience is the way to guidance and gratitude

Pondering on Verse 154

23

And say not of who is killed in the Way of Allah, "They are dead." Nay, they are living, but you perceive (it) not. (Al-Baqarah: 154)

The command not to say about those who are killed in the way of Allah that they are dead

- We are commanded to say what the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) is commanded to say, in every divine command coming after the term 'Say'. Likewise, we are commanded not to say to those who are killed in the way of Allah that they are dead.
- We should rather say that they are alive, because in fact they are alive with their Lord, receiving provisions and rejoicing with what their Lord has given them... But we do not perceive or know that.
- **"Think not of those who are killed in the Way of Allah as dead. Nay, they are alive, with their Lord, and they have provision. They rejoice in what Allah has bestowed upon them of His Bounty, rejoicing for the sake of those who have not yet joined them, but are left behind (not yet martyred) that on them no fear shall come, nor shall they grieve. They rejoice in a Grace and a Bounty from Allah, and that Allah will not waste the reward of the believers." (Al `Imran: 169-171)**
- We are sure of this fact, and we do not describe those who are killed in the way of Allah as dead, for they are rather alive, receiving provisions from their lord, rejoicing in the grace and bounty Allah bestowed upon them and receiving good tidings about those after them who have not yet joined them.
- Our belief must be corrected, for Allah knows, and we do not know, and we believe Allah more than we believe our eyes and our knowledge. We have been given only a little of knowledge. Allah taught man what he did not know, and He taught Adam all the names, and Allah knows and you do not know.
- We note that the verse used the third person masculine singular passive imperfect verb "who is killed in the way of Allah " but the complement was a plural noun "(Amwat) they are dead." It was expected that the verse reads "And say not of who is killed in the Way of Allah, "He is dead." Or "He died " or that the whole verse uses the plural form in the first and second part reading: And say not of those who are killed in the Way of Allah, "They are dead."Nay, they are living.
- The singular form is used to refer to he who is killed in the way of Allah for the purpose of glorifying who is killed in the way of Allah. Such a person has a high status in the sight of Allah, and so Allah does not allow him to be like the rest of creation or to be described as other people. He is rather in the ranks of the prophets, the truthful ones, and the martyrs. The prophets are alive in their graves, they return peace to those who greet them. The earth is forbidden to eat the bodies of the prophets and martyrs, so the martyrs are not washed or shrouded, but rather buried as they are, for they are not dead. They will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment with their clothes and with their wounds exuding fragrance like musk. They will walk with the prophets and messengers and will enter Paradise without reckoning and without precedent of torment.

Pondering on the verses of the third section: Patience is the way to guidance and gratitude

Pondering on the Verses from 155 to 157 (1/3)

24

Reflections

- As a continuation of the command to exercise patience at the time of lack or shortage of blessings, verse 155 begins with an oath (emphatic prefix *lām*) and an affirmation (emphatic suffix *nūn*) to stress the meaning that no one will escape from this affliction and test.

Do you think that you will enter Paradise before Allah tests those of you who fought (in His Cause) and (also) tests those who are As-Sabirin (the patient ones, etc.)? (Al`Imran: 142)

Or think you that you will enter Paradise without such (trials) as came to those who passed away before you? They were afflicted with severe poverty and ailments and were so shaken that even the Messenger and those who believed along with him said, "When (will come) the Help of Allah?" Yes! Certainly, the Help of Allah is near! (Al-Baqarah: 214)

Do you think that you shall be left alone while Allah has not yet tested those among you who have striven hard and fought and have not taken Walijah [(Batamah - helpers, advisors and consultants from disbelievers, pagans, etc.) giving openly to them their secrets] besides Allah and His Messenger, and the believers. Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do. (Al-Tawbah: 16)

- **The test is with two matters:** 1. with something of fear; 2. with loss.
- A small, limited thing of fear and hunger. One hardship cannot overcome two reliefs. Hunger is experienced during fasting, and therefore fasting is half of patience.
- Allah kept a lot of things with you and decreased only a few from **three**: 1-wealth; 2-souls; 3- fruits. The patient will have the glad tidings and will be in the eyes of Allah and will win the love of Allah.
- When calamity and affliction occur, one flees from Allah's decree to Allah and to remembrance of Allah, prayer, recitation of the Noble Qur'an and supplication.
- **"We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return"** is a sentence by which the servant seeks his Lord's help, taking refuge in His might and His strength.
- One reminds himself that he belongs to Allah, and that we are all of Allah's creation, and that Allah owns everything, including our souls, and our return is to Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He).
- We note in this verse that "to Him" is mentioned before "we shall return" for the purpose of specification, for we really return only to Allah and to Allah alone Who has no partner.
- We will eventually leave the worldly life and what is in it, little or much, and that which is with Allah is better and will remain forever. And to Allah belongs what He gave and what He took, and everything with Him is in due proportion.
- We should keep supplicating to Allah after making remembrance, for this is the essence of seeking Allah's help to exercise patience.

Verses

And certainly, We shall test you with something of fear, hunger, loss of wealth, lives and fruits, but give glad tidings to As-Sabirin (the patient ones, etc.) (Al-Baqarah: 155)

Who, when afflicted with calamity, say: "Truly! To Allah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return." (Al-Baqarah: 156)

Pondering on the verses of the third section: Patience is the way to guidance and gratitude

Pondering on the Verses from 155 to 157 (2/3)

25

| Reflections | Verses |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The great glad tidings is that of guidance. Those are the ones upon whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy. And it is those who are the rightly guided.• Making a lot of remembrance of Allah brings about Allah's blessings on us and His angels' prayers for us• "O you who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance. And glorify His Praises morning and afternoon [the early morning (Fajr) and 'Asr prayers]. It is He Who sends Salat (His blessings) on you, and His angels too (ask Allah to bless and forgive you), that He may bring you out from darkness (of disbelief and polytheism) into light (of Belief and Islamic Monotheism). And He is Ever Most Merciful to the believers." (Al-Ahzab: 41- 43)• Likewise, exercising patience at the initial shock and saying, "We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return", makes Allah send His blessings upon us and makes His angels pray for us so that Allah may bless us.• This brings us out of darkness into light to the path of the All-Mighty, the Praiseworthy. The patient will be from those rightly guided who are loved by Allah (Exalted and Glorified is He).• They are those on whom are the Salawat (i.e. blessings, etc): We note in this verse that the preposition and the plural object pronoun are preceded for the purpose of specification. He did not say: There are blessings on them, but mentioned them in advance to indicate that only those people will have blessings from their lord.• "Those are the ones who are the guided": We note here in the arabic verse that the addition of the third person masculine plural personal pronoun after the plural demonstrative pronoun "Those." It would have been sufficient to say Those are guided, but the third person masculine plural personal pronoun is added for the purpose of specification. | <p style="text-align: center;">They are those on whom are the Salawat (i.e. blessings, etc.) (i.e. who are blessed and will be forgiven) from their Lord, and (they are those who) receive His Mercy, and those are the ones who are the guided. (157)</p> |

In the verse of much remembrance in Surat Al-Ahzab, Allah says: **It is He Who sends Salat (His blessings) on you, and His angels too**, while in the verse of patience in Surat Al-Baqarah, Allah says: **They are those on whom are the Salawat (i.e. blessings, etc.) from their Lord, and (they are those who) receive His Mercy.**

What is the difference?

1. Mercy is added in the second verse.
2. The phrase '**Salawat (i.e. blessings, etc.) from their Lord**' indicates that they have special and many blessings dedicated for them.
3. The addition of '**From their Lord**' suggests that they receive care and love from the Lord who afflicts the servant, but loves him and is kind to him and does not want him to suffer from pains or fatigue.

Pondering on the verses of the third section: Patience is the way to guidance and gratitude

Pondering on the Verses from 155 to 157 (3/3)

26

Reflections

- The repetition of two demonstrative pronouns in this verse **“those on whom are the Salawat ... and those ”** indicates that they will have donations without reckoning.
- **They are those on whom are the Salawat:** The demonstrative pronoun precedes the preposition and the nominative noun for the purpose of specification.
- The patient are described as being those : **Who, when afflicted with calamity, say....**
- These are their descriptions in Surat Al-Baqarah: **“Those are on (true) guidance from their Lord;” “those are the ones who are guided”; and “those are the successful.”**
- Allah’s donation to the patient has no limits, including their entrance to Paradise without reckoning and without precedent of torment. In the Hadith Qudsi: Allah says, “If I afflict one of My servants with a calamity in his wealth, soul, or children, then he received it with beautiful patience, I would be ashamed of him on the Day of Resurrection if I were to set up a scale for him or to publish his book of deeds.”

Say (O Muhammad SAW): “O My slaves who believe (in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism), be afraid of your Lord (Allah) and keep your duty to Him. Good is (the reward) for those who do good in this world, and Allah’s earth is spacious (so if you cannot worship Allah at a place, then go to another)! Only those who are patient shall receive their rewards in full, without reckoning.” (Al-Zumar: 10)

- Similarly, the following verses repeat the demonstrative pronoun **“‘Ula’ikka (those)”**:
Those are on (true) guidance from their Lord, and those are the successful. (Al-Baqarah: 5)
Those are on (true) guidance from their Lord, and those are the successful. (Luqman: 5)
- The first verse describes Al-Muttaqun (the pious) in the Surat Al-Baqarah; while the second describes the Muhsinun (gooddoers) in Surat Luqman
- Those are on (true) guidance from their Lord, and those are the ones who are the guided; and those are the successful.
- The pious are patient in extreme poverty, ailment and at the time of fighting, and are benevolent and exercise patience with no complaints. They never lost heart for that which did befall them in Allah's Way, nor did they weaken nor degrade themselves. And Allah loves the benevolent, the pious and patient

Verses

They are those on whom are the Salawat (i.e. blessings, etc.) (i.e. who are blessed and will be forgiven) from their Lord, and (they are those who) receive His Mercy, and those are the ones who are guided. (157)

Overview of Allah's Donations to the Patient

- Allah gave them the glad tidings in verse 155: **"give glad tidings to As-Sabirin (the patient ones)"**
"So wait patiently (O Muhammad SAW) for the Decision of your Lord, for verily, you are under Our Eyes , and glorify the Praises of your Lord when you get up from sleep. And in the night-time, also glorify His Praises, and at the setting of the stars. " (Al-Tur: 48- 49)
 We notice that with and after patience, there should be remembrance of Allah with glorification of His praise, particularly at night along with thinking about what He created and innovated.
Verily! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding. Those who remember Allah (always, and in prayers) standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying): "Our Lord! You have not created (all) this without purpose, glory to You! (Exalted be You above all that they associate with You as partners). Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire. (Al `Imran: 190-191)
 To know Allah's ability and wisdom in what He created, we trust in His decree and His choice for us, and so we do not feel worried. This helps us know Allah, be patient with His decree and thank Him without ungratefulness at times of hardship, calamities and adversity.
- Therefore, verse 191 in Surah Al `Imran concluded, after urging us to contemplate, make remembrance and glorification of Allah, with a number of supplications; and hence the response came from Allah, the All-Hearing, Near (to all by His Knowledge) and Responsive:
- **"Our Lord! Verily, whom You admit to the Fire, indeed, You have disgraced him, and never will the Zalimun (polytheists and wrong-doers) find any helpers. Our Lord! Verily, we have heard the call of one (Muhammad SAW) calling to Faith: 'Believe in your Lord,' and we have believed. Our Lord! Forgive us our sins and remit from us our evil deeds, and make us die in the state of righteousness along with Al-Abrar (those who are obedient to Allah and follow strictly His Orders). "Our Lord! Grant us what You promised unto us through Your Messengers and disgrace us not on the Day of Resurrection, for You never break (Your) Promise." (Al `Imran: 192- 194)**
- All the above-mentioned supplications began with **"Our Lord!"**
So their Lord accepted of them (their supplication and answered them), "Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female. You are (members) one of another, so those who emigrated and were driven out from their homes, and suffered harm in My Cause, and who fought, and were killed (in My Cause), verily, I will remit from them their evil deeds and admit them into Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise); a reward from Allah, and with Allah is the best of rewards." (Al `Imran: 195)
 They supplicated saying **"Our Lord!"** and their lord answered their supplications.
Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He) does not waste the deeds of the sincere and faithful believers, their patience, remembrance of Allah and their contemplation.

An Important Conclusion about the First Quarter

The relationship between worship, prayer, seeking help, patience and perseverance

28

- If you want to be thankful to Allah and not to be ungrateful, you must seek Allah's help, as in Al-Fatihah: "**You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).**" Worship = prayer.
- You should first seek Allah's help through supplication, then seek the legitimate causes and means, then surrender the affairs to Allah, trust in Him, and leave for Him the results, then exercise patience. That is why our master Moses said to his people:
Musa (Moses) said to his people: "Seek help in Allah and be patient. Verily, the earth is Allah's. He gives it as a heritage to whom He will of His slaves, and the (blessed) end is for the Muttaqun (pious) (Al-A`raf: 128)
- He is our master, and we trust in him, so why should He not decree good for us? Undoubtedly, what Allah has decreed for us will happen. He is our protector, and we put our trust in Him, as Allah (Exalted is He) says:
Say: "Nothing shall ever happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is our Maula (Lord, Helper and Protector)." And in Allah let the believers put their trust. (Al-Tawbah: 51)
- After supplicating to Allah, then seeking the legitimate means and relying on Allah, we must be patient until Allah answers our supplication. The answer will inevitably be for our benefit and not against us. **Say: "Nothing shall ever happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us....Why? ...because Allah is your master....that's why the verse concluded with: He is our Maula (Lord, Helper and Protector)."**
- The command to exercise patience is also mentioned in relation to prayer:
And enjoin As-Salat (the prayer) on your family, and be patient in offering them [i.e. the Salat (prayers)]. We ask not of you a provision (i.e. to give Us something: money, etc.); We provide for you. And the good end (i.e. Paradise) is for the Muttaqun (pious). (Taha: 132)
- Similarly, the command is repeated in the following verses:
Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, so worship Him (Alone) and be constant and patient in His worship. Do you know of any who is similar to Him? (of course none is similar or coequal or comparable to Him, and He has none as partner with Him). (Maryam: 65)
Verily, We are sending the she-camel as a test for them. So watch them [O Salih (Saleh)], and be patient! (Al-Qamar: 27)
- We are commanded to exercise patience in prayer, in the worship of Allah, and regarding the decree of Allah. We should not like to hasten what Allah has delayed or delay what He has hastened. For every matter there is a Decree (from Allah), and every nation has its appointed term, so when their term is reached, neither can they delay it nor can they advance it an hour (or a moment).
And they brought his shirt stained with false blood. He said: "Nay, but your ownelves have made up a tale. So (for me) patience is most fitting. And it is Allah (Alone) Whose help can be sought against that which you assert." (Yusuf: 18)
- From here we understand the relationship between worship, prayer, seeking help, patience and perseverance. This is the way to be thankful to Allah without ungratefulness. Rather, you should be patient and content, so you rise in the ranks of *Ma`iyyah* (Allah being with His creation) and then in the degrees of closeness to Allah until you are under the eyes of Allah. You can reach this rank when you exercise patience for His decree, a patience so beautiful as that of our master Jacob and Job with no complaints, and no ungratefulness for Allah's blessings. Seeking Allah's help has always been the means to reach this level of beautiful patience as stated by our master Jacob (peace be upon him): **And it is Allah (Alone) Whose help can be sought.** Patience is earned by getting used to being patient.

The Main Lessons Learned from Pondering upon the First Quarter of the Second Qur'anic Chapter

(1/2)

Turning the face in prayer to the Sacred Mosque in Mecca is an affirmation that true guidance lies in the religion of our master Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and in following the religion of Islam. From here you begin your path to reach Allah (Exalted and Glorified is He) on His straight path.

- ▶ We should express gratitude for the blessings of Allah and patience at loss of the blessing. There should be no ungratefulness for Allah's blessings in calamities.
- ▶ Concepts of guidance on the straight path that we ask Allah for 17 times a day and night. Guide us on the straight path, guidance that directs the heart, not the body. True guidance is the religion of Ibrahim [Islamic Monotheism, i.e. to worship none but Allah (Alone)], as was clarified in the final frame in the eighth and last quarter of the first Qur'anic chapter: **"And (remember) when the Lord of Ibrahim (Abraham) [i.e., Allah] tried him.....Be Jews or Christians, then you will be guided."**
- ▶ The key to guidance is a lot of remembrance of Allah, prayer, recitation of Noble Qur'an, giving thanks to Allah, expressing no ungratefulness to Him by exercising patience at loss of blessings and at times of calamities.
- ▶ The Importance of seeking Allah's help in everything through remembrance of Allah, patience, and gratefulness.
- ▶ The most important element of worship is prayer, and the most important element of prayer is remembrance of Allah. **"And remembers (glorifies) the Name of his Lord (worships none but Allah), and prays."**
- ▶ It is very important to exercise patience with the worship of Allah, prayer, and decree of Allah and not to hasten what Allah has delayed.
- ▶ The importance of exercising beautiful patience and its relation to gratefulness for Allah's blessings. Showing impatience at loss of blessings and at times of calamities is ungratefulness. This lessens your gratefulness to Allah and your faith in his decree and wisdom and your trust that He chooses only what befits you and is in your interest and is good for you. **"Nothing shall ever happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is our Maula (Lord, Helper and Protector)."**
- ▶ Patience in misfortune and adversity and when fighting is one of the characteristics of the pious, truthful, and righteous. It must be perfected by making it a beautiful patience, so you will be one of the pious, truthful, patient, benevolent, who are under the eyes of Allah, Who loves them, takes care of them, is close to them, and provides for them without account or precedent of torment. They enter paradise without question or discussion before the scales are set. or record of deeds are published.
- ▶ Perseverance and resistance (*Musabarah*) is against the enemy when fighting in the cause of Allah. It is the soul's tolerance of hardships and steadfastness and not to flee, and to receive death without fear, because whoever is killed in the way of Allah is alive, provided with sustenance, rejoicing and has glad tidings.
- ▶ Trials will inevitably come to raise your grades; increase your closeness to Allah; let you attain the degree of the patient; purify your heart, guide it and bring it closer to Allah.
- ▶ Guidance is Allah's guidance. It is from Allah and to Allah, and by means of the Book of Allah, following the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), on the straight path of Allah.
- ▶ When we supplicate to Allah, saying: "Guides us to the straight path", we remember all the keys of guidance that we ask for and the degrees that we seek, so we are on straight guidance as the Messenger of the Lord of the Worlds (peace be upon him).

The Main Lessons Learned from Pondering upon the First Quarter of the Second Qur'anic Chapter (2/2)

- ▶ The basis and evidence of faith is observance of prayers. That is why Allah called prayer faith in His Saying: **“And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost (i.e. your prayers offered towards Jerusalem).”**
- ▶ Truly, Allah is full of kindness, the Most Merciful towards mankind. He likes to please His righteous and sincere servants, as He responded to His Messenger (peace be upon him) and turned him to a Qiblah that pleases him, confirming his connection to our master Ibrahim (peace be upon him), the father of the prophets. This is also a confirmation the Islam that he brought is the true guidance and the religion of our master Ibrahim (peace be upon him) before our master Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them all).
- ▶ Do not be preoccupied with those who were given the Book, for they know the truth and will not follow you, as the verse no. 134 and the last verse No. 141 in the eighth quarter of the first Qur'anic chapter concluded with: **“That was a nation who has passed away. They shall receive the reward of what they earned, and you of what you earn. And you will not be asked of what they used to do.” (Al-Baqarah: 134)** And: **“That was a nation who has passed away. They shall receive the reward of what they earned and you of what you earn. And you will not be asked of what they used to do.” (Al-Baqarah: 141)**
- ▶ The importance of hastening to do good deeds, for it is the path of guidance and to reach Allah on the straight path.
- ▶ For every nation there is a direction which they face (in their prayers). Each of us has his piety according to his circumstances and conditions that only Allah knows. But all are based on belief in Allah, monotheism and sincerity to Him by doing good deeds and hastening to do them.
- ▶ Remembrance of Allah and recitation of verses are the key to guidance through prayer, recitation of the Noble Qur'an, and gratitude without disbelief. After that comes purification of hearts, and then knowledge of the Book and wisdom.
- ▶ Understanding the relationship between worship, prayer, much remembrance of Allah, seeking Allah's help, pursuing the legitimate causes, trusting in Allah's choice and decree, relying on Him, exercising patience, resilience, and perseverance. All these are signs of guidance on the way to the love of Allah (Exalted and Glorified is He).
- ▶ This quarter, with its three sections, is complementary to the previous quarter on the true guidance, the guidance of Allah. It is very important to link them, and they are all related to Al-Fatihah and the supplication: "Guide us to the straight path."
- ▶ Guidance is a path to success. It is the way to reach Allah, so that Allah may remember you, be with you, close to you and look at you and You be in His eyes and under His care
- ▶ The guided ones are the successful.