

Surah al-Tur, Chapter 52, Verses 1 – 28

(The Mount)

Section (juz'): 27

Number of Verses: 49

General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

The Chapter was revealed in Mecca and it has forty nine Verses. The title of the Chapter owes its designation to the opening Verse. The word Tur, connoting the Mount of Tur, the appointed place (miqat) where Torah was Divinely revealed to Prophet Moses (as), is attested ten times in the Holy Qur'an. Like other Meccan Chapters, Chapter 52 mainly treats of Resurrection, the Rewards to be granted to the pure, and the chastisement in store for disbelievers.

Mention is also made herein to defending the Noble Prophet (S) and the virtues of patience and perseverance.

Merits of the Recitation of the Chapter

According to a Prophetic tradition:

"One who recites Surah al-Tur shall be safe from torment and shall enjoy Divine Favors in Paradise."

Another tradition narrated from Imam Baqir (as) reads:

"One who recites Surah al-Tur shall be granted Divine Good in this world and the Hereafter."

It is evident that such great Rewards in this world and the Hereafter fall into the share of those who recite the Chapter in order to preoccupy themselves with contemplation and make use of the same to act upon them.

Surah al-Tur – Verses 1-8

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

وَالتُّورِ

وَكِتَابِ مَّسْطُورٍ

فِي رَقٍّ مَّنشُورٍ

وَالْبَيْتِ الْمَعْمُورِ

وَالسَّقْفِ الْمَرْفُوعِ

وَالْبَحْرِ الْمَسْجُورِ

إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ لَوَاقِعٌ

مَا لَهُ مِنْ دَافِعٍ

1. *By the Tur [Mount].*
2. *And by an Inscribed Book.*
3. *By a parchment unrolled.*
4. *And by the Prosperous House.*
5. *And by the roof [of the heaven] raised high.*
6. *And by the blazing sea.*
7. *Indeed, the torment of your Lord will surely come to pass.*
8. *There is no impediment for it.*

The word tur denotes "mountain," but it ad hoc connotes a mount in the Sinai region which served as the appointed place where Prophet Moses (as) met with Divine Manifestation. The mount is a sacred place and the Holy Qur'an depicts it as al-Tur ("the Mount"). The Arabic phrase kitab mastur designates Scriptures like the Torah and the Holy Qur'an inscribed on thin pieces of paper which were unrolled rather than rolled.

The word raqq in the phrase fi raqq-in manshur deriving from raqqa denoting thin and delicate parchment prepared for writing. Manshur denotes "unrolled" and masjur signifies "ablaze" which also denotes "brimming, abounding, filled." The compound bayt al-Ma'mur ad hoc refers to the House of God Almighty which has always been prosperous through the presence of pilgrims.

The holy Ka'ba is designated twice as bayt;

("house");

the other instance is bayt al-'atiq;

("ancient house").

According to traditions, there is place above Ka'ba in the heavens where angels circumambulate it and it is also termed as bayt al-ma'mur.¹

The phrase al-bahr al-masjur denoting blazing and agitated sea or those which shall be set ablaze on the Day of Resurrection, as it is attested elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an²:

"And when the seas become as blazing fire or overflows"

or it may connote magma erupting at times through volcanoes.

It is also worthy of note that as mentioned above under 51:60:

"Therefore, woe unto those who disbelieve from their Day which they have been promised"

where it treats of the promise of the inevitable occurrence of Resurrection.

The Chapter in question, following five oaths, reads:

"Indeed the torment of your Lord shall certainly come to pass. There is no impediment for it."

In short, the blessed Verses in question make a reference to the torment in store for disbelievers saying that in the same manner that the constituent elements of the world of being follow a certain order unimpeded by any impediment, the torment in store for disbelievers and contenders and their abode in Hell is certain against which no impediment may arise.

Surah al-Tur – Verses 9–14

يَوْمَ تَمُورُ السَّمَاءُ مَوْرًا

وَتَسِيرُ الْجِبَالُ سَيْرًا

فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ

الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي خَوْضٍ يَلْعَبُونَ

يَوْمَ يُدْعُونَ إِلَى نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ دَعَاً

هَذِهِ النَّارُ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ

9. The Day when the heaven shall shake with a dreadful shaking.

10. And the mountains shall move away with haste.

11. Then woe unto the beliers on such Day.

12. Who are immersed in falsehood preoccupied with vain talk [regarding Divine Signs].

13. The Day when they shall be pushed down by force to Hellfire with a forceful pushing.

14. This is the Fire which you used to recurrently belie.

The Arabic word mawr denotes speedy and circular, but disorderly and abyss like, movement, such that the wind scatters dust in the air and shakes everything. The word khawdh originally denotes "plunge into water and passing the same" but it is figuratively applied to being preoccupied with vanity and falsehood. The word da“ designates pushing violently.

It is worthy of note that all the world of existence has been created for man and when his affairs come to an end in this world, the world of existence shall be rolled up as well;

(*"The Day when the heaven shall shake with a dreadful shaking"*).

Thus it is also attested elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an:

"We shall roll up the heaven like a scroll."

It is only God Almighty Who is not subject to alteration. The seven heavens shall shake as well and change into waves in motion.

The mountains which fixate the earth shall be restless on that Day;

"And the mountains shall move away with haste."

The blessed Verses nine to eleven are saying that following a reminder as to the Signs of His Mercy and the creation of all beings in the form of oaths, God Almighty is saying that in the same manner that everything is well-established in its proper place the heavens, the mountains, the seas, and the prosperous world and all beings have been recorded in the Preserved Tablet, the Divine Torment in store for those who deserve it is based upon order and justice and the same shall appear when the heaven shakes violently and mountains move away from their places.

The blessed Verses make a reference to the time of Resurrection saying that the material world which is established by Divine Order shall disintegrate upon Divine Will and changes into the Hereafter. In short, the material world shall be rolled up and the Hereafter shall appear. On such Day, wayl, which is said to be a bottomless pit for those who belied Divinely appointed Messengers and Prophets and attributed madness, sorcery, and lying to them.

The blessed Verses twelve to fourteen enumerate the characteristics of those who belie Prophets saying that they play in vanity with natural phenomena which are not well-established and are transient and unbecoming compared to spiritual affairs and Divine teachings, since their words and acts resemble children and lunatics, devoid of reason and insight.

Had they not been preoccupied with vanity and attributing falsehood to Prophets nor had they called them sorcerers, liars, and lunatics, they would have perceived the truth.

"The Day when they shall be pushed down by force to Hellfire with a forceful pushing."

The adverb of manner da“an ("with a forceful pushing") connotes that on such Day, Divine Torment shall fall into the share of disbelievers and they shall be pushed down by force to Hellfire and it shall be said unto them that it is the Fire against which you were warned by Prophets but you failed to investigate the veracity of their words and believe in truth; it was out of your prejudice and concupiscent desires that you regarded their words as legends and made attempts to bear animosity against Messengers of Truth and inflict harms upon them.

Surah al-Tur – Verses 15–16

أَفَسِحْرٌ هَذَا أَمْ أَنْتُمْ لَا تُبْصِرُونَ

اصْلَوْهَا فَاصْبِرُوا أَوْ لَا تَصْبِرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

15. Is this [torment] magic or do you not see?

16. Taste you therein its heat and whether you are patient of it or impatient of it; it is all the same. You are only being requited for what you used to do.

Polytheists and disbelievers claimed at all times that the Noble Prophet (S) was a sorcerer robbing them of their sense and casting veils on their eyes such that they might acknowledge miracles and Revelation. Thus, they shall be censured and rebuked on the Day of Resurrection by asking them if it is sorcery.

Are they not able to perceive the fire and sense its heat? These two blessed Verses censures disbelievers who term Divine Revelation and miracles as sorcery. They are inquired as to what they see of different kinds of torment is sorcery and something baseless or they are unable to see the torment in the same manner that that the eyes of their hearts were blind unable to perceive the truth and veracity of their words.

The reason is that they denied the Truth and the people of Truth in this world thereby they shall enter their abode in Hell abounding in torment and affliction which shall be the recompense of their deeds. It shall be all the same whether they be patient or fail to be so, since as mentioned in the blessed Verse, torment awaits them and nothing may impede it. Such torment is the recompense of their evil deeds.

Surah al-Tur - Verses 17-18

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَنَعِيمٍ

فَاكِهِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ وَوَقَّاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِيمِ

17. Indeed, the God fearing shall be in Gardens [of Paradise] and Abundant Bounties.

18. Enjoying in that which their Lord has bestowed on them, and their Lord saved them from the torment of the torment of Hellfire.

Fearing God Almighty is the key to Paradise;

("Indeed, the God fearing shall be in Gardens [of Paradise] and Abundant Bounties").

Following warning those who denied Divine Signs and followed concupiscent desires and wasted their lives in sport and play, the twain blessed Verses bear glad tidings to the God fearing who abstained from following Satan and concupiscent desires and obeyed the Truth and Divinely appointed Messengers and fearing God Almighty turned into their permanent disposition of mind such that they deserved the attribute of Fear God Almighty.

It should be borne in mind that fearing God Almighty is an exalted state ranking higher than belief, such that every believer does not fear God Almighty and such fear has not turned into his permanent disposition of mind.

In short, the twain blessed Verses in question treat of the exalted state of the God fearing. On the Day when the heaven shall be cleft asunder and the constituent elements of the earth shall be scattered and the world shall come to its end and disbelievers shall be pushed toward Hellfire, the God fearing shall be happy and delighted in Gardens of Paradise enjoying abundant Bounties and whatever shall be bestowed upon them by God Almighty while they shall be saved from excruciating torments of Hell.

The Arabic relative ma ("that") in:

"enjoying in that which their Lord has bestowed on them"

designates general applicability, namely it is not only applied to mundane Bounties but also it designates all worldly and spiritual Bounties bestowed upon the God fearing while they shall be saved from torment, suffering, and affliction;

("Indeed, the God fearing shall be in Gardens [of Paradise] and Abundant Bounties, enjoying in that which their Lord has bestowed on them, and their Lord saved them from the torment of the torment of Hellfire").

Surah al-Tur – Verses 19–20

كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

مَتَّكِينَ عَلَى سُرُرٍ مَّصْفُوفَةٍ وَزَوَّجْنَاهُمْ بِحُورٍ عِينٍ

19. *[It shall be said unto them:] "Eat and drink with happiness because of what you used to do."*
20. *They will recline on thrones arranged in ranks. And We shall marry them to hur [beauties with wide lovely eyes].*

The twain blessed Verses are addressed to the people of Paradise saying unto them to eat and drink with happiness and enjoy the Bounties of Paradise without entailing any hardship or ailment. They shall recline on bejeweled thrones arranged in ranks. God Almighty shall marry them to beautiful hur with wide lovely eyes.

Those who abstained from watching those outside the circle of close kinship shall have beautiful spouses in the Hereafter.

Surah al-Tur – Verse 21

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ بِإِيمَانٍ أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَمَا أَلْتَنَاهُمْ مِنْ عَمَلِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ بِمَا كَسَبَ رَهِينٌ

21. *And those who believe and whose offspring follow them in faith, to them shall We join their offspring, and We shall not decrease the Rewards of their deeds in anything. Every person is a pledge for that which he has earned.*

The blessed Verse in question treats of other spiritual and material Bounties in store for the people of Paradise saying that those who believed and whose offspring followed them in believing in God Almighty shall join their offspring in Paradise without decreasing any of their Rewards for their deeds.

It is also a great Bounty that believers shall be joined by their offspring in Paradise enjoying their company without any decrease in their Rewards.

It is narrated from the Command of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as) that the Messenger of Allah said:

*"believers and their offspring shall be in Paradise reciting this Verse."*³

It is also narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) that the children of believers shall be taken to their fathers as a token of respect.⁴

It is worthy of note that it is another Divine Favor which shall be bestowed upon God Fearing believers such that their children shall join them in Paradise since they were the pupil of their eyes in this world and they wished to be with them as a consequence of which such great Favor shall be bestowed upon them in Paradise.

It is noteworthy that the blessed Verse closes by saying that "every person is a pledge for that which he has earned" thereby everyone shall be answerable for his own deeds and he shall not be censured for vices committed by others.

Surah al-Tur – Verses 22-23

وَأَمَدَدْنَا لَهُمْ بِفَاكِهَةٍ وَلَحْمٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ

يَتَنَازَعُونَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا لَّا لَغْوٌ فِيهَا وَلَا تَأْتِيمٌ

22. And We shall provide them with fruit and meat such as they desire.

23. There they shall pass from hand to hand a cup, free from any vain talk and free from sin.

The blessed Verse proceeds with an enumeration of the Bounties which shall be bestowed upon the people of Paradise saying that We shall prepare whatever the people of Paradise desire of meat and fruit and We shall increase the Bounties they desire such that they shall bear neither hardship nor affliction for obtaining them.

"Such as they desire"

reflects that God fearing believers shall avail themselves of whatever they desire since they reflect Divine Creativity since they shall be able to create whatever they desire. The blessed Verse 23 is saying that the people of Paradise shall pass from hand to hand a cup brimming with the wine of Paradise. The

wine shall be such that it shall not take away reason nor shall it lead to committing vices.

It makes a reference to the point that Bounties in store for the people of Paradise shall be free from blights and afflictions unlike those of mundane ones which entail pains and afflictions.

Surah al-Tur – Verse 24

وَيَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ غِلْمَانٌ لَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لُؤْلُؤٌ مَّكْنُونٌ

24. And there will go round pages of theirs to serve them as if they were pearls in shells.

While reclining on their royal thrones, the people of Paradise shall be served by most beautiful pages resembling pearls in shells. Pearls look so fresh, transparent, and beautiful in shells though they preserve their beauty without shells, but dust and other impurities decrease their freshness and brilliance. Pages of Paradise look so beautiful, fresh, and white complexioned that they are likened to pearls in shells.

The expression:

"go round"

makes a reference to their preparedness for rendering service at all times, though there shall be no need for servants in Paradise since the people of Paradise shall be provided with whatever they require. Such service reflects further respect for them.

It is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S) that he was inquired:

"If servants resemble pearls in shells, how will be those being served, namely the people of Paradise?"

He replied:

*"The superiority of those who will be served over those who provide them with service in Paradise is like the superiority of full moon over other planets."*⁵

It is worthy of note that the expression "of theirs" reflects that each and every believer shall have his own servants and they serve them with utmost delight since there shall be no sorrow in Paradise.

Surah al-Tur – Verses 25-27

وَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ

قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا قَبْلُ فِي أَهْلِنَا مُشْفِقِينَ

فَمَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقَانَا عَذَابَ السَّمُومِ

25. And some of them [people of Paradise] draw near to others, questioning [the secret of being provided with so many Bounties in Paradise].

26. Saying: Aforetime [in the world], we were benevolent toward our families warning them against Divine torment.

27. "Thus, Allah has been gracious to us and has saved us from the torment of the Fire.

These three blessed Verses also treat of the state of bliss enjoyed by the people of Paradise saying that besides other Bounties bestowed upon them, they associate with one another inquiring as to the virtues and merits leading to such exalted state to which they reply by saying that their virtues and merits included their association with the people of the world, entertaining fear of Divine torment and it was for the sake of such fear that God Almighty bestowed his favor upon them and saved them from excruciating and horrible torment.

Surah al-Tur – Verse 28

إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلُ نَدْعُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْبَرُّ الرَّحِيمُ

28. Indeed, We used to invoke Him before. Indeed, He is the Most Benevolent, the most Gracious.

The last words uttered by the people of Paradise, as reflected in the blessed Verse in question, is that they acknowledge the reality that they feel Divine Graciousness and Benevolence more than before saying that aforetime, they would invoke God Almighty and would praise Him as the Most Merciful and the Most Gracious, but they perceive the reality and the profundity of such Attributes that

He bestowed so many Bounties and Favors upon them for their little deeds and despite so many defects of theirs, He bestowed His Mercy upon them. It is worthy of note that the Most Beauteous Divine Attributes manifest on the Day of Resurrection through Bounties and Favors bestowed upon believers in Paradise and believers, witnessing such scenes, perceive the Truth behind His Most Beauteous Names; even Hell reflects His Attributes like Divine Justice, Wisdom, and Omnipotence.

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1. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn.
 2. 81:6
 3. Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan.
 4. Ibid.
 5. Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan; Kashshaf; Qurtubi; Ruh al-Bayan; Abu al-Futuh Razi's Tafsir.

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