

SUMMER IMMERSION

TAFSIR OF SURAH AL-TUR



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SESSION 4

The Concept and Application of Taqwa

- Taqwa means building a barrier (wiqaya) between oneself and what Allah has forbidden.
- It involves proactive deterrents: avoiding situations that could lead to haram, even if not haram themselves.
- Examples include not being alone with the opposite gender or using devices only in the presence of others.
- The Prophet ﷺ encouraged taking a companion when traveling—deterrence prevents spiritual harm.
- Taqwa and sabr both stem from the idea of holding oneself back (ḥabs), emphasizing resistance and self-control.

The Nature of Jannah and Everlasting Blessings (Ni'mah)

- Jannah means “something hidden,” enhancing its spiritual allure and value.
- Blessings in Jannah are not temporary or vulnerable to loss, unlike those in the dunya.
- Ghazali states that true blessings are those without fear of them ending.
- In Jannah, there is no sorrow (ḥuzn) or fear (khawf), making it a place of absolute peace.
- It is referred to as Dar al-Ni'mah, the eternal home of blessings that only increase.

The Ever-Increasing Delight and Enjoyment (Fakiha)

- Fakiha (from “juicy fruit”) signifies continuous, active joy in Jannah.
- Blessings in Jannah feel new and more enjoyable with each experience.
- Nothing becomes stale; food, relationships, and settings renew in sweetness and satisfaction.
- The people of Jannah will be entirely absorbed and fulfilled by these blessings.
- The greatest source of joy is knowing the blessings are from Allah —“Bima atahum Rabbuhum.”

The Three Prerequisites for Entering Jannah

- According to Ghazali: (1) deeds, (2) Prophet’s ﷺ intercession (shafa’ah), and (3) Allah’s mercy.
- Righteous deeds are necessary, even if small, such as one sincere salat or uttering the kalima.
- The Prophet’s intercession is granted by Allah’s permission and not guaranteed to all.
- These two are not sufficient without the third—Allah’s mercy is the true entrance key.
- Emphasis is placed on the interconnectedness of effort, prophetic support, and divine compassion.

The Mercy of Allah and Jannah’s Nature

- Jannah is ultimately a gift from Allah, not a wage for deeds.
- The Qur’an phrases it as “what their Lord gave them,” not “what they earned.”
- Imam Razi notes this alone affirms Allah’s boundless love and mercy.
- If Jannah were based on earnings, it would be limited—Allah’s giving has no bounds.
- This shows that Allah’s mercy far outweighs our finite actions.

Protection from Jahannam as the Greatest Blessing

- Being saved from Hellfire is a greater blessing than receiving Jannah's pleasures.
- The Qur'an uses the word waqa (protection) to highlight this act of divine safeguarding.
- Ibn Abbas said the greatest gift from Allah is protection from Jahannam.
- The Qur'an frequently emphasizes asking for protection from fire, more than for reward.
- Jahannam is so intense that even its slightest touch is unbearable.

Linguistic Nuances: "Massa" and "Nafha/Lafha"

- Massa = the slightest, unintentional touch; lamassa = deliberate, contact with desire.
- Differences affect rulings, such as in wudhu—Shafi'i and Maliki views vary accordingly.
- Nafha is a cool breeze; lafha is a scorching wind.
- The Qur'an uses "nafha" when describing the lightest touch of Hellfire—still devastating.
- Even the lightest brush of divine punishment leads to cries of despair.

The Concept of Hani'ah: Enjoyment Without Fear

- Hani'ah is the state of full, carefree enjoyment, without anxiety about loss or harm.
- In the dunya, enjoyment is always coupled with risk: health effects, fear of loss, stress.
- In Jannah, food, relationships, and moments carry no downside or regret.
- Allah uses the phrase "kulu wa shrabu hani'an" to express this total satisfaction.
- True pleasure is when blessings come without consequence—only possible in the hereafter.

The Collective Nature of Blessings in Jannah

- Qur'anic language about Jannah is always in the plural: "kulu," "shrabu," etc.
- Islam values shared blessings—Ibn Ata'ullah said no blessing is complete unless shared.
- Even food is more joyful when eaten in company, per the Prophet ﷺ's guidance.
- Individual blessings can feel empty without loved ones to share them with.
- In Jannah, blessings are designed for community and collective joy.

The Significance of Togetherness (Qurb)

- Togetherness (Qurb) enhances all blessings; isolation (Bu'ud) diminishes them.
- Jannah is described as being "abiding therein together"; Jahannam is "abiding therein alone."
- Worship in congregation (like jamaa') and communal fast-breaking are more rewarding.
- Proximity to the Prophet ﷺ and Allah is the greatest treasure in both worlds.
- In both dunya and akhirah, distance from Allah is the harshest punishment.

Allah's Appreciation (Shakur) and Complete Enjoyment

- Allah is Shakur—He values our small efforts even though they don't "earn" Jannah.
- "Bima kuntum ta'maloon" is about divine appreciation, not wage-for-deed logic.
- Enjoyment in Jannah is free from arrogance and hardship, unlike in dunya.
- The setting is perfect—relaxation without guilt, health consequences, or worldly discomforts.
- The greatest joy is not the thing itself—but the fact that Allah gave it.