

80 | Surah Abasa

سورة عبس

42 Ayat

Parent's tafsir: adapted from Ibn Kathir
Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim · 80:1–42

Background and Revelation

Ibn Kathir explains the opening of 'Abasa through the arrival of Ibn Umm Maktum, a blind believer who sought instruction while the Prophet ﷺ was addressing a leading man of Quraysh in hope of his guidance. The surah corrected the preference given to that conversation over the sincere seeker. Ibn Kathir draws from this the equal right of people to receive the reminder, regardless of wealth, standing, age or social position. The parent should begin with this lesson before following the surah into revelation, creation, provision and resurrection.

Tafsir of the Surah

Ayat 1–10: Attention to the sincere seeker. Ibn Kathir explains that Ibn Umm Maktum wanted to learn and might benefit through purification and remembrance. The person who considered himself self-sufficient was receiving attention, although the Messenger was not responsible for making him accept purification. The one who came eagerly and with fear of Allah was being overlooked. The correction establishes care in conveying knowledge to the weak and the influential alike. Allah guides whom He wills, and worldly importance is no measure of who will benefit.

Ayat 11–16: An honoured reminder. Ibn Kathir explains the passage through the Qur'an and the admonition it contains. Its pages are honoured, elevated and purified from corruption. He records the explanation of the noble, righteous scribes as angels who convey revelation. From their honourable conduct he draws a lesson for the bearer of the Qur'an: speech and actions should follow a sound and upright way. Receiving the reminder therefore carries a responsibility to respond to its guidance.

Ayat 17–23: Human dependence and return. Ibn Kathir explains the rebuke against the person who denies resurrection without sound grounds. Allah created him from a small beginning, determined his affairs, gave him death and burial, and will raise him when He wills. Concerning the eased path, he records both birth and the clarification of guidance, favouring the latter explanation. He also records the explanation that the human being has not fulfilled Allah's commands, while offering a further reading connected with the completion of the appointed creation before the final raising.



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Tafsir of the Surah • Continued

Ayat 24–32: Looking at one's food. Ibn Kathir explains the call to consider food as both a reminder of Allah's favour and an argument for resurrection. Rain enters the earth, the ground opens and grain, vines, fodder, olives, palms, gardens and fruit emerge. Different provisions sustain people and their animals. The One who gives life to the apparently lifeless ground is able to restore bodies after they have become dust. Everyday provision should therefore lead to gratitude and recognition of the Creator's power.

Ayat 33–37: A matter occupying everyone. Ibn Kathir explains the deafening cry as a name or description connected with the Resurrection. The terror is so great that a person flees even from close relatives, including parents, spouse and children. Each individual has a concern that occupies him fully. The passage shows the weight of one's own account and the limits of worldly closeness when everyone stands before Allah.

Ayat 38–42: The faces of the two groups. Ibn Kathir explains the radiant, smiling faces through the happiness of the people of Paradise, whose inward joy becomes visible. Other faces are covered in dust and darkness. He connects their condition with disbelief in the heart and wickedness in action. The ending joins inner belief and outward conduct, completing a surah that began by teaching the proper regard for a sincere person seeking the reminder.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى

١

Memorised

He frowned and turned away.

أَن جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَى

٢

Memorised

When the blind man approached him.

وَمَا يَدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّهُ يُزَكِّي

٣

Memorised

But how do you know? Perhaps he was seeking to purify himself.

أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنْفَعَهُ الذِّكْرَى

٤

Memorised

Or be reminded, and the message would benefit him.

أَمَّا مَنِ اسْتَغْنَى

٥

Memorised

But as for him who was indifferent.

فَأَن تَ لَهُ وَتَصَدَّى

٦

Memorised

You gave him your attention.



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Memorisation · Continued

وَمَا عَلَيْكَ أَلَّا يَزَكِّي



Memorised

Though you are not liable if he does not purify himself.

وَأَمَّا مَنْ جَاءَكَ يَسْعَى



Memorised

But as for him who came to you seeking.

وَهُوَ يَخْشَى



Memorised

In awe.

فَأَنْتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهَّى



Memorised

To him you were inattentive.

كَلَّا إِنَّهَا تَذْكِرَةٌ



Memorised

Do not. This is a lesson.

فَمَنْ شَاءَ ذَكَّرْهُ



Memorised

Whoever wills, shall remember it.



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سورة عبس

Memorisation · Continued

فِي صُحُفٍ مُّكَرَّمَةٍ

١٣

Memorised

On honorable pages.

مَرْفُوعَةٍ مُّطَهَّرَةٍ

١٤

Memorised

Exalted and purified.

بِأَيْدِي سَفَرَةٍ

١٥

Memorised

By the hands of scribes.

كِرَامٍ بَرَرَةٍ

١٦

Memorised

Noble and devoted.

قُتِلَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا أَكْفَرَهُ

١٧

Memorised

Perish man! How thankless he is!

مِنْ أَيِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ

١٨

Memorised

From what did He create him?



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سورة عبس

Memorisation · Continued

مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ خَلَقَهُ فَقَدَرَهُ

١٩

Memorised

From a sperm drop He created him, and enabled him.

ثُمَّ السَّبِيلَ يَسْرَهُ

٢٠

Memorised

Then He eased the way for him.

ثُمَّ أَمَاتَهُ فَأَقْبَرَهُ

٢١

Memorised

Then He puts him to death, and buries him.

ثُمَّ إِذَا شَاءَ أَنشَرَهُ

٢٢

Memorised

Then, when He wills, He will resurrect him.

كَلَّا لَمَّا يَقْضِ مَا أَمَرَهُ

٢٣

Memorised

But no, he did not fulfill what He has commanded him.

فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ

٢٤

Memorised

Let man consider his food.



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سورة عبس

Memorisation · Continued

أَنَا صَبَبْنَا الْمَاءَ صَبًّا

٢٥

Memorised

We pour down water in abundance.

ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْأَرْضَ شَقًّا

٢٦

Memorised

Then crack the soil open.

فَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا

٢٧

Memorised

And grow in it grains.

وَعِنَبًا وَقَضْبًا

٢٨

Memorised

And grapes and herbs.

وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا

٢٩

Memorised

And olives and dates.

وَحَدَائِقَ غُلْبًا

٣٠

Memorised

And luscious gardens.



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سورة عبس

Memorisation · Continued

وَفَلِكِهَۃً وَّأَبَآ

٣١

Memorised

And fruits and vegetables.

مَتَّعَا لَكُمْ وَلِأَنْعَمِكُمْ

٣٢

Memorised

Enjoyment for you, and for your livestock.

فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الصَّاخَّةُ

٣٣

Memorised

But when the Deafening Noise comes to pass.

يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ

٣٤

Memorised

The Day when a person will flee from his brother.

وَأُمِّهِ ۖ وَأَبِيهِ

٣٥

Memorised

And his mother and his father.

وَصَحْبَتِهِ ۖ وَبَنِيهِ

٣٦

Memorised

And his consort and his children.



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Memorisation · Continued

لِكُلِّ أَمْرٍ مِنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يَغْنِيهِ



Every one of them, on that Day, will have enough to preoccupy him.

وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّسْفِرَةٌ



Faces on that Day will be radiant.

ضَاحِكَةٌ مُّسْتَبْشِرَةٌ



Laughing and rejoicing.

وَوُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَلَيْهَا غَبَرَةٌ



And faces on that Day will be covered with misery.

تَرَهَقَهَا قَتَرَةٌ



Overwhelmed by remorse.

أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرَةُ الْفَجَرَةُ



These are the faithless, the vicious.

Parent tafsir: adapted from Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, 80:1-42.

Arabic commentary: quran.ksu.edu.sa/tafseer/katheer/sura80-aya1.html

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