

Background and Meaning

Al-Mutaffifin begins with dishonesty in measuring and weighing, then places that wrongdoing within the greater reality of resurrection, records and judgement. Ibn Kathir identifies the offence as demanding one's full due while giving others less than theirs. The surah contrasts the records and destinations of the wicked and the righteous, and ends with the reversal of the ridicule believers suffered in this life. The parent should notice how a seemingly ordinary transaction is connected to the state of the heart and the final meeting with the Lord.

Tafsir of the Surah

Ayat 1–6: Taking fully and giving less. Ibn Kathir explains tatfif through short measure and weight: people insist on receiving their own entitlement in full, yet reduce what they give others. He relates this warning to the Qur'an's commands to measure and weigh justly and to the destruction of the people of Shu'ayb for their dishonesty. The question about resurrection challenges the root of this behaviour. They will stand before the Lord of all worlds, who knows hidden thoughts as well as outward actions.

Ayat 7–17: A record and a darkened heart. Ibn Kathir connects Sijjin with confinement and lowness, contrasting it with the elevated destination of the righteous. The wicked person denies the Day of Recompense, transgresses and dismisses revelation as ancient tales. His commentary explains the covering over the heart as the result of accumulated sins, which prevent a person from accepting the truth. Repentance and seeking forgiveness cleanse the heart. These ayat also describe being veiled from the Lord and entering the Fire, followed by the rebuke that this was the reality they denied.

Ayat 18–21: The elevated record. Ibn Kathir contrasts 'Illyyun with Sijjin and explains its connection with height and elevation. He records different early explanations of its precise location, while emphasising the honour attached to the righteous and their written record. The angels brought near witness it. The contrast gives the reader a different measure of importance from worldly reputation: what matters is the record accepted and honoured with Allah.

Ayat 22–28: What deserves striving. Ibn Kathir describes the righteous enjoying lasting blessing, seated in honour and showing the freshness of delight upon their faces. Their pure drink is sealed, with musk associated with its fragrance or ending. Tasnim is an exalted drink, enjoyed pure by those brought near and mixed for others among the people of Paradise. The command to compete for this turns ambition towards the Hereafter and the deeds that lead to Allah's reward.



Tafsir of the Surah • Continued

Ayat 29–36: The reversal of mockery. Ibn Kathir explains how the wrongdoers laughed at believers, exchanged contemptuous gestures and called them misguided. They had not been appointed as guardians over the believers, yet occupied themselves with belittling them. On the Last Day the position is reversed: believers receive honour and joy, while the deniers face the recompense of their conduct. The ending reassures the faithful that present ridicule cannot overturn Allah's judgement or diminish the final reward He has promised.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِينَ

١

Memorised

Woe to the defrauders.

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَكْتَالُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ
يَسْتَوْفُونَ

٢

Memorised

Those who, when they take a measure from people, they take in full.

وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَوْ وَزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ

٣

Memorised

But when they measure or weigh to others, they cheat.

أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَبْعُوثُونَ

٤

Memorised

Do these not know that they will be resurrected?

لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ

٥

Memorised

For a Great Day?

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

٦

Memorised

The Day when mankind will stand before the Lord of the Worlds?



Memorisation · Continued

كَلَّا إِنَّ كِتَابَ الْفُجَّارِ لَفِي سِجِّينَ

Not at all. The record of the wicked is in Sijjeen.



Memorised

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا سِجِّينُ

But how can you know what Sijjeen is?



Memorised

كِتَابٌ مَرْقُومٌ

A numerical book.



Memorised

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ

Woe on that Day to the deniers.



Memorised

الَّذِينَ يُكَذِّبُونَ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ

Those who deny the Day of Reckoning.



Memorised

وَمَا يُكَذِّبُ بِهِ إِلَّا كُلُّ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ

But none denies it except the sinful aggressor.



Memorised



إِذَا تُلِّيَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَتُنَا قَالَ أَسَاطِيرُ
الْأَوَّلِينَ

١٣



Memorised

When Our revelations are recited to him, he says, "Legends of the ancients."

كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا
كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

١٤



Memorised

Not at all. Their hearts have become corroded by what they used to earn.

كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَمَحْجُوبُونَ

١٥



Memorised

Not at all. On that Day, they will be screened from their Lord.

ثُمَّ إِنَّهُمْ لَصَالُوا الْجَحِيمِ

١٦



Memorised

Then they will roast in Hell.

ثُمَّ يُقَالُ هَذَا الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تُكَذِّبُونَ

١٧



Memorised

Then it will be said, "This is what you used to deny."

كَلَّا إِنَّ كِتَابَ الْأَبْرَارِ لَفِي عِلِّيَّينَ

١٨



Memorised

No indeed; the record of the righteous is in Elliyyeen.



Memorisation · Continued

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا عَلِيُونَ

١٩

Memorised

But how can you know what Elliyyoon is?

كِتَابٌ مَّرْقُومٌ

٢٠

Memorised

A numerical book.

يَشْهَدُهُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ

٢١

Memorised

Witnessed by those brought near.

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ

٢٢

Memorised

Indeed, the righteous will be amid bliss.

عَلَى الْأَرْئَاكِ يَنْظُرُونَ

٢٣

Memorised

On thrones, looking on.

تَعْرِفُ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ النَّعِيمِ

٢٤

Memorised

You will recognize on their faces the radiance of bliss.



يُسْقَوْنَ مِنْ رَحِيقٍ مَخْتُومٍ

٢٥



They will be given to drink a sealed wine.

خَتَمَهُ مِسْكَ^ج وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ
الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ

٢٦



Whose seal is musk—this is what competitors should compete for.

وَمِزَاجُهُ مِنْ تَسْنِيمٍ

٢٧



Its mixture is of Tasneem.

عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا الْمُقَرَّبُونَ

٢٨



A spring from which those brought near drink.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا كَانُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا يَضْحَكُونَ

٢٩



Those who committed crimes used to laugh at those who believed.

وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِهِمْ يَتَغَامَزُونَ

٣٠



And when they passed by them, they would wink at one another.



وَإِذَا أَنْقَلَبُوا إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِمْ
أَنْقَلَبُوا فَكِهِينَ

٣١

 Memorised

And when they went back to their families, they would go back exulting.

وَإِذَا رَأَوْهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّ هَٰؤُلَاءِ
لَضَالُّونَ

٣٢

 Memorised

And if they saw them, they would say, "These people are lost."

وَمَا أُرْسِلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ حَٰفِظِينَ

٣٣

 Memorised

Yet they were not sent as guardians over them.



فَالْيَوْمَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ
يَضْحَكُونَ

٣٤



Memorised

But on that Day, those who believed will laugh at the unbelievers.

عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ يَنْظُرُونَ

٣٥



Memorised

On luxurious furnishings, looking on.

هَلْ ثَوَبَ الْكُفَّارُ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ

٣٦



Memorised

Have the unbelievers been repaid for what they used to do?

Parent tafsir: adapted from Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, 83:1-36.

Arabic commentary: quran.ksu.edu.sa/tafseer/katheer/sura83-aya1.html

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