

Background and Meaning

Al-Fajr moves from solemn oaths and the fate of powerful earlier peoples to human attitudes towards wealth, the reality of judgement and the welcome of the tranquil soul. Ibn Kathir explains that prosperity and restricted provision are both tests, rather than simple measures of Allah's honour or rejection. The parent should follow how the historical warnings prepare for that correction. The surah asks people to recognise Allah's authority, care for the vulnerable and prepare for the life in which their deeds will be judged.

Tafsir of the Surah

Ayat 1–5: Oaths that call for reflection. Ibn Kathir identifies al-fajr as dawn and prefers the explanation of the ten nights as the first ten of Dhul-Hijjah. He records several explanations of the even and the odd, rather than reducing the phrase to one undisputed identification. The departing or moving night completes the opening signs. The question addressed to a person of understanding invites reflection upon the oaths and the worship associated with these times.

Ayat 6–10: Strength that did not save its possessors. Ibn Kathir identifies 'Ad and Iram as a people known for exceptional strength, discusses Thamud's cutting of rock and records explanations of Pharaoh's stakes connected with his power and oppression. He rejects fanciful accounts of a hidden golden city as the intended meaning of Iram. The passage concerns real peoples whose strength could not protect their rejection of Allah's messengers.

Ayat 11–14: Transgression and the Lord's watchfulness. These peoples exceeded the limits and spread corruption. Ibn Kathir explains their punishment as a consequence of that rebellion. He records Ibn 'Abbas's explanation of the Lord's watchfulness through His hearing and seeing. Allah observes what His creation does and judges each person with justice. The historical accounts therefore address the present reader's conduct as well as the fate of earlier nations.

Ayat 15–16: Wealth and poverty are tests. Ibn Kathir rejects the assumption that abundant provision necessarily proves special honour, or that restricted provision proves humiliation. Allah gives and withholds from different people as a test. What matters is obedience in either condition: gratitude in prosperity and patience in hardship. The parent should keep this explanation central when reading the surah's criticism of pride and attachment to wealth.



Tafsir of the Surah · Continued

Ayat 17–20: Conduct towards those in need. The passage exposes failure to honour orphans, encourage feeding the poor or respect the rights attached to inheritance. Ibn Kathir explains the consuming of inheritance through taking whatever becomes available, without regard for whether it is lawful. Intense love of wealth is named alongside these wrongs. The criticism concerns the way possessions shape treatment of other people and response to Allah's commands.

Ayat 21–26: The day of regret. Ibn Kathir explains the earth's crushing and the bringing of creation before the Lord for judgement. The angels arrive in ranks and the Fire is brought near. A person then remembers earlier deeds, but that late remembrance cannot recover the lost opportunity. The wish to have sent something ahead for one's true life exposes the mistake of treating the present world as the final concern.

Ayat 27–30: The tranquil soul. Ibn Kathir describes this soul as settled, firm and following the truth. It is called to return to its Lord, pleased and accepted, and to enter among His servants and into His Paradise. He explains that this welcome is given at death and also on the Day of Resurrection. The ending supplies the surah's hopeful counterpart to its warnings: an enduring welcome from Allah for the soul at peace with Him.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَالْفَجْرِ

١

Memorised

By the daybreak.

وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ

٢

Memorised

And ten nights.

وَالشَّفْعِ وَالْوَتْرِ

٣

Memorised

And the even and the odd.

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَسِرُّ

٤

Memorised

And the night as it recedes.

هَلْ فِي ذَلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّذِي حِجْرِ

٥

Memorised

Is there in this an oath for a rational person?

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ

٦

Memorised

Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with Aad?



Memorisation · Continued

إِرْمَ ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ


☐ Memorised

Erum of the pillars.

الَّتِي لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلُهَا فِي الْبَلَدِ


☐ Memorised

The like of which was never created in the land.

وَتَمُودَ الَّذِينَ جَابُوا الصَّخْرَ بِالْوَادِ


☐ Memorised

And Thamood—those who carved the rocks in the valley.

وَفِرْعَوْنَ ذِي الْأَوْتَادِ


☐ Memorised

And Pharaoh of the Stakes.

الَّذِينَ طَغَوْا فِي الْبَلَدِ


☐ Memorised

Those who committed excesses in the lands.

فَأَكْثَرُوا فِيهَا الْفَسَادَ


☐ Memorised

And spread much corruption therein.



فَصَبَّ عَلَيْهِمُ رَبُّكَ سَوْطَ عَذَابٍ

١٣



So your Lord poured down upon them a scourge of punishment.

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِالْمُرْصَادِ

١٤



Your Lord is on the lookout.

فَأَمَّا الْإِنْسَانُ إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ رَبُّهُ
فَأَكْرَمَهُ وَنَعَّمَهُ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَكْرَمَنِ

١٥



As for man, whenever his Lord tests him, and honors him, and prospers him, he says, "My Lord has honored me."

وَأَمَّا إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ فَقَدَرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقَهُ
فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَهَنِ

١٦



But whenever He tests him, and restricts his livelihood for him, he says, "My Lord has insulted me."

كَلَّا بَلْ لَا تُكْرِمُونَ الْيَتِيمَ

١٧



Not at all. But you do not honor the orphan.

وَلَا تَحْضُونَ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمَسْكِينِ

١٨



And you do not urge the feeding of the poor.



وَتَأْكُلُونَ التُّرَاثَ أَكْلًا لَمًّا

١٩

Memorised

And you devour inheritance with all greed.

وَتُحِبُّونَ الْمَالَ حُبًّا جَمًّا

٢٠

Memorised

And you love wealth with immense love.

كَلَّا إِذَا دُكَّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا

٢١

Memorised

No—when the earth is leveled, pounded, and crushed.

وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا

٢٢

Memorised

And your Lord comes, with the angels, row after row.

وَجَاءَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَتَذَكَّرُ
الْإِنْسَنُ وَأَنَّى لَهُ الذِّكْرُ

٢٣

Memorised

And on that Day, Hell is brought forward. On that Day, man will remember, but how will remembrance avail him?

يَقُولُ يَلَيْتَنِي قَدَّمْتُ لِحَيَاتِي

٢٤

Memorised

He will say, "If only I had forwarded for my life."



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سورة الفجر

Memorisation · Continued

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يُعَذِّبُ عَذَابَهُ أَحَدٌ

٢٥ ☐ Memorised

On that Day, none will punish as He punishes.

وَلَا يُوثِقُ وَثَاقَهُ أَحَدٌ

٢٦ ☐ Memorised

And none will shackle as He shackles.

يَأْتِيهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ

٢٧ ☐ Memorised

But as for you, O tranquil soul.

أَرْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ رَاضِيَةً مُّرْضِيَةً

٢٨ ☐ Memorised

Return to your Lord, pleased and accepted.

فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي

٢٩ ☐ Memorised

Enter among My servants.

وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي

٣٠ ☐ Memorised

Enter My Paradise.

Parent tafsir: adapted from Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, 89:1-30.
Arabic commentary: quran.ksu.edu.sa/tafseer/katheer/sura89-aya1.html
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