

## Background and Meaning

Al-Balad draws attention to Makkah, human life and the gifts through which people act and understand. It challenges boastfulness about wealth and calls the reader to the demanding path of faith, generosity, patience and mercy. Ibn Kathir explains the steep path through the acts named in the surah, including freeing a person from slavery and feeding someone in severe need. The parent should read these deeds together with the faith and mutual encouragement that follow them: the surah joins worship of Allah with practical care for His creation.

## Tafsir of the Surah

Ayat 1–3: The city and its inhabitants. Ibn Kathir identifies the city as Makkah and discusses the special permission granted to the Prophet ﷺ there for a limited part of the day, while its sanctity otherwise remained. He records the explanation of the parent and offspring as Adam and his descendants, and also mentions the broader meaning of every parent and child. The opening directs attention to the honoured place and the human beings who live within Allah's creation.

Ayah 4: Human life and struggle. Ibn Kathir records explanations of kabad that include the human being's upright formation and the hardship accompanying life. He discusses birth, growth and the effort of seeking a livelihood, and notes the preference of al-Tabari for the meaning of toil and difficulty. The statement prepares the reader to consider life realistically and to recognise the responsibility involved in the way one uses strength and possessions.

Ayat 5–10: Power, possessions and received gifts. Ibn Kathir explains the challenge to a person who imagines that no one can call him to account. Boasting about the large amount spent does not place that spending beyond Allah's sight. The eyes, tongue and lips are gifts from the Creator. Ibn Kathir records the explanation of the two paths as good and evil: the person who acts has also been given guidance and means of understanding.

Ayat 11–16: Taking the steep path. Ibn Kathir explains the passage through the path of good and deliverance, then follows the acts by which the Qur'an describes it. These include freeing a person from slavery and feeding during hunger, particularly an orphan who is a relative or a person in extreme poverty. The descriptions direct attention to genuine need. Generosity here means using what one has to relieve another person's hardship.



### Tafsir of the Surah • Continued

Ayat 17–20: Faith, patience and mercy. Ibn Kathir explains that the person described combines these good deeds with faith in the heart and hope for Allah's reward. Believers encourage one another to patience and mercy, including patience with harm and compassion towards people. They are identified with the people of the right. The contrasting ending describes those who reject Allah's signs and the Fire closed over them. The surah's conclusion keeps generosity, belief and the final account together.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

لَا أُقْسِمُ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ

I swear by this land.



وَأَنْتَ حَلٌّ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ

And you are a resident of this land.



وَوَالِدٍ وَمَا وَلَدَ

And by a father and what he fathered.



لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ

We created man in distress.



أَيَحْسَبُ أَنْ لَنْ يَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ أَحَدٌ

Does he think that no one has power over him?



يَقُولُ أَهْلَكْتُ مَالًا لُبَدًا

He says, "I have used up so much money."



# 90 | Surah al-Balad

Memorisation · Continued

## سورة البلد

أَيَحْسَبُ أَنْ لَمْ يَرَهُ أَحَدٌ



Memorised

Does he think that no one sees him?

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ عَيْنَيْنِ



Memorised

Did We not give him two eyes?

وَلِسَانًا وَشَفَتَيْنِ



Memorised

And a tongue, and two lips?

وَهَدَيْنَاهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ



Memorised

And We showed him the two ways?

فَلَا اقْتَحَمَ الْعَقَبَةَ



Memorised

But he did not brave the ascent.

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْعَقَبَةُ



Memorised

And what will explain to you what the ascent is?



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فَكَ رَقَبَةً

١٣



Memorised

The freeing of a slave.

أَوْ إِطْعَمٌ فِي يَوْمٍ ذِي مَسْغَبَةٍ

١٤



Memorised

Or the feeding on a day of hunger.

يَتِيمًا ذَا مَقْرَبَةٍ

١٥



Memorised

An orphan near of kin.

أَوْ مِسْكِينًا ذَا مَتْرَبَةٍ

١٦



Memorised

Or a destitute in the dust.

ثُمَّ كَانَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَوَاصَوْا  
بِالصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْمَرْحَمَةِ

١٧



Memorised

Then he becomes of those who believe, and advise one another to patience,  
and advise one another to kindness.

أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ

١٨



Memorised

These are the people of happiness.



# 90 | Surah al-Balad

## سورة البلد

Memorisation · Continued

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا هُمْ أَصْحَابُ  
الْمِشْأَةِ

١٩

Memorised

But as for those who defy Our revelations—these are the people of misery.

عَلَيْهِمْ نَارٌ مُؤَصَّدَةٌ

٢٠

Memorised

Upon them is a padlocked Fire.

Parent tafsir: adapted from Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, 90:1–20.  
Arabic commentary: [quran.ksu.edu.sa/tafseer/katheer/sura90-aya1.html](http://quran.ksu.edu.sa/tafseer/katheer/sura90-aya1.html)  
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