

## SURAH-103

### AL-'ASR

This Surah derives its title from "Al-'Asr" "The Time" of which oath has been sworn. This word Al-'Asr appears in the first verse. It is an early Makkan Surah which comprises three verses only.

In this Surah, an oath has been sworn by the time that man is in the state of loss. However, only those people are an exception to this general rule who possess four virtues: First is that they believe; second is that they do righteous deeds; third is that they exhort one another to Truth, and fourth is that they exhort one another to patience.

"Al-Asr" denotes "time" that is measurable, consisting of periods in succession. It is different from "Dahr" which means "unlimited time" without beginning or end. Hence Al-Asr in this Surah, of which oath has been taken, is the passing or the flying time which can never be recaptured. Time is wealth as the span of age given to man for work in this world is limited. If man wastes time in useless pursuits and does not attend to his basic obligations which have been briefly stated in Verse 3, then man is in sheer loss as declared in verse 2. Quran uses the word loss not for worldly failure only but it uses this word for failure in the Hereafter particularly. About the virtues mentioned in verse 3 which a person must possess in order to escape from the loss, we already know.

Imam Razi has cited a scholar as saying: I understood the meaning of Surah Al-'Asr from an ice-seller, who was calling aloud for the attention of the people repeatedly in the bazaar, saying: "Have mercy on the one whose wealth is melting away." Hearing what he was crying, I said to myself: This is then the meaning of Wal' Asr i innal- insana la fi khusrin. The age limit which man has been allotted is passing quickly like the melting away of ice. If it is wasted or expended in wrong pursuits, it will be sheer loss to man. (Imam Razi quoted by Syed Abul Ala Maududi).

This Surah, comprising only three verses, is one of the shortest Surahs of the Holy Qur'an. But in its meaning it is very comprehensive. It presents in few brief words the whole teachings of the Qur'an about the good conduct and virtues which a believer should adopt. In plain words it tells a man what he should do in order to avoid loss and attain real success in this world as well as in the Hereafter which is eternal. Imam Shaf'e has rightly said that if the people only considered this Surah well, it alone would suffice them for their guidance.

**SURAH-104****AL-HUMAZAH**

This Surah derives its title from the word "Humazah" ("The slanderer") which occurs in its first verse. This is an early Makkan Surah, probably revealed in the third year of Muhammad's Prophethood. It comprises 9 verses.

This Surah condemns all sorts of scandal-mongering, backbiting and hoarding of wealth in the nutshell. Every person who slanders and backbites, and who amasses wealth and counts, has been cursed. An evil habit of such persons has been specially mentioned that they amass huge wealth, count it and think that their wealth would not only itself survive forever but it would also make them immortal. But nothing is immortal in the universe except God Himself Who is eternal. Such a slanderer, backbiter and hoarder of wealth will not only die, but after his resurrection he will also be thrown into Hatama. It is Fire of Hell kindled by Allah which will leap over the hearts.

Probably the allusion is to the opponents of the Prophet (PBUH) who, according to a plan, spread on the ways leading to Makkah during Hajj season and tried to prevent the visitors from listening to the Prophet by scandalizing, backbiting and defaming him.

**SURAH-105****AL-FIL**

This Surah is designated after the word Al-Fil, "The Elephant" which occurs in its first verse. It is an early Makkan Surah and it has only 5 verses.

This Surah alludes to a historical event which occurred in the year of the birth of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), say, about 570 A.D. Abraha Ashram, the Christian viceroy in Yemen of the King of Abyssinia, had built a magnificent cathedral in San'a, the capital of Yemen. He hoped that annual Arabian pilgrimage would be diverted from Kaabah, the Makkan sanctuary, to the new church, and this would bring with it huge trade and commerce in addition to serving a religious cause. However, his expectation was not fulfilled. Intoxicated with power and fired by religious fanaticism, he decided to destroy Kaabah. So he set out against Makkah with 60,000 troops and 13 (or according to some, 9) elephants. No defence was offered by the Quraish who were custodians of Kaabah and their chief, Abdul Muttalib invoked Allah, saying: "O God, a man protects his house, so You must also protect Your House; let not their

cross and their craft overcome Your craft." The Makkans withdrew from the city and went to the mountains with their families for fear of massacre.

According to traditions, Abraha's special elephant, named Mahmud, refused to advance on the last stage of the march. In the meantime swarms of flying creatures or birds appeared carrying stones in their beaks and claws and showered these on the invaders. Whosoever was hit, his body would start disintegrating and it would result into breaking of the skin and falling off the flesh and making the bones visible. Abraha's army was totally destroyed almost to a man and Abraha himself was struck and died on march back to his country.

Those who do not believe in miracles say that the army of Abraha retired in disorder owing to an outbreak of small pox in the camp. According to an Orientalist, the flying creatures may well have been swarms of insects carrying infections. Whatever may be the nature of the doom that overtook the invading army, in any case it was a big miracle, a totally unexpected rescue. The prayer of Abdul Muttalib (the grandfather of the Prophet) was granted, Allah saved His House.

The sight of the elephants was astounding to the Arabs, so they described the year in which this event took place as 'Am al-Fil (the year of the Elephant). It is the same year in which the messenger of Allah, Muhammad the Prophet of Islam was born. The People of the Elephant invaded Makkah in the month of Muharram and Muhammad (PBUH) was born in Rabi'al-Awwal, fifty days after this event. However, the view of some commentators is that the Prophet was born on the same day on which Abraha's army was repelled.

This Surah was not only a reminder to the Makkans of Allah's great favour on them, but also a warning to them as they were now disbelieving Allah's messenger and were vehemently opposing him. It was an ultimatum to them to behave, otherwise Allah, Who had destroyed a very powerful army of Abraha on account of his intention to destroy His House, would not leave them alone as they wanted to destroy His messenger.

**Lesson-362 :**

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

1. I swear by the Time.
2. Surely, man is indeed in loss.
3. Except those who believe, and do good deeds, and exhort one another to truth, and exhort one another to patience.

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

1. Woe to every slanderer, backbiter.
2. Who amasses wealth and counts it.
3. He thinks that his wealth will make him immortal.
4. Never! but he will be surely thrown into "Hotama" (the consuming one).
5. And what will make you understand what "Hotama" is?
6. The fire of Allah kindled.
7. The one that will leap up over the hearts.
8. Surely, it will be close in on them.
9. In columns outstretched.

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

1. Have you (O Muhammad) not seen what your Lord did to the companions of the Elephant?
2. Did He not make their plan a flop?
3. And sent against them swarms of birds.
4. Which bombarded upon them stones of baked clay.
5. And made them like the chewed up chaff.

آيَاتُهَا (١٠٣) سُورَةُ الْعَصْرِ بِكَبِيرٍ رُكُوعًا

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَالْعَصْرِ

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِفِي خُسْرٍ

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَّصُوا

بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَّصُوا بِالصَّبْرِ

آيَاتُهَا (١٠٤) سُورَةُ الْهُمَزِ بِكَبِيرٍ رُكُوعًا

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ

الَّذِي جَمَعَ مَالًا وَعَدَّدَهُ

يَحْسَبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُ أَخْلَدَهُ

كَلَّا لَيُنْبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ

نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمَوْقَدَةُ

الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْأَفْئِدَةِ

إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِمْ مُّوَصَدَةٌ

فِي عَمَدٍ مُمَدَّدَةٍ

آيَاتُهَا (١٠٥) سُورَةُ الْفِيلِ بِكَبِيرٍ رُكُوعًا

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ

أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضَلُّلٍ

وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ

تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارَةٍ مِنْ سِجِّيلٍ

فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ