

Sura 108: Al-Kawthar (Abundance)

In the name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy

Verses 1 to 3:

1. *We have given you abundance;*
2. *So, pray to your Lord, and sacrifice.*
3. *He who hates you is the one who is cut off.*

This Sura, similar to Surat Ad-Duha (Chapter 93) and Surat Ash-Sharh (Chapter 94), has been dedicated exclusively to the Prophet (PBUH). Its purpose was to comfort the Prophet (PBUH), promise him glad tidings, threaten his enemies, and guide him to the path of thanksgiving. It exhibits an example of the plots that the idolaters of Mecca were plotting to hurt the Messenger (PBUH) and to stop the spread of Islam. The Sura also illustrates an example of the care and protection that God bestowed on His Messenger (PBUH) and the Muslims who believed with him.

The Sura exhibits the reality of guidance, goodness, and faith on one side; and the reality of misguidance, evil, and disbelief on the other. The former is one of abundance and expansion, while the latter is one of scarcity and shrinking resources.

It has been reported that the idolaters of Quraish used to harm and insult the Prophet (PBUH) hoping that these insults would drive the people away from listening to the call to Islam. One of the ways to slander the Prophet (PBUH) that they used was to say that he will die leaving no male descendants. This kind of ignoble statements would resonate with the people in the Mecca, because these people in their ignorance used to find great pride in having male descendants. They mocked the Prophet (PBUH) saying that his lineage has been cut off. The Sura came to comfort the Prophet (PBUH) and to emphasize the everlasting legacy that he will leave behind. This legacy is an embodiment of the goodness which God has entrusted His Messenger (PBUH) to convey to the world. The Sura states that it is his enemies whose lineage will be truly cut off.

The Sura starts by emphasizing that God will give His Messenger abundance. He will find this abundance in the prophethood which connects him with God and the universe. He will find abundance in the Qur'an. He will find abundance in the Higher Host who pray peace for him. He will find abundance in the legacy that he will leave behind which will continue to benefit people for millions of years. He will find abundance in the goodness that he brought to humankind.

"So, pray to your Lord, and sacrifice." Having received the great abundance of goodness that God has bestowed on him, it is now the time for showing gratitude. The best way to show gratitude to God is to pray, devoting oneself completely to Him; and to slaughter an animal as a sacrifice dedicated to God's name alone. The repeated mention of the name of God each time we slaughter an animal is a way of expressing the belief in the oneness of God.

"He who hates you is the one who is cut off." God's promise was fulfilled. Their memory was completely forgotten, while the Prophet's (PBUH) name is continuously mentioned around the world.