

Sura 111: Al-Masad (The Palm Fibre)

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

Verses 1 to 5:

1. *May the hands of Abu Lahab be ruined, and ruined is he.*
2. *His wealth and what he earns will not avail him.*
3. *He will burn in a flaming Fire,*
4. *And his wife, the firewood-carrier,*
5. *Will have upon her neck a rope of palm-fibre.*

Abu Lahab was the Prophet's (PBUH) uncle. His name was Abd Al-Ozza ibn Abd Al-Muttaleb. He acquired the nickname Abu Lahab because his face looked bright. He and his wife, Um Jamil were among the worst of those who persecuted the Prophet (PBUH) and resisted Islam. Abu Lahab used to stalk the Prophet (PBUH) and whenever the Prophet (PBUH) started to call people to Islam, Abu Lahab would stand behind him to tell lies about Islam. He would then ask people not to listen to the Prophet (PBUH). He was the enemy of the Prophet (PBUH) and Islam since day one.

When Quraish decided to boycott Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the Muslims, the clan of Bani Hashem under the leadership of Abu Taleb, except for Abu Lahab, decided to protect the Prophet (PBUH). Abu Lahab sided with Quraish against his nephew. His two sons were married to the daughters of the Prophet (PBUH) before the advent of Islam. When the Prophet (PBUH) announced that he was sent as a messenger of God, Abu Lahab commanded his two sons to divorce their wives. He continued, together with his wife, to wage a merciless war on the Prophet (PBUH) and Islam. Um Jamil used to place thorns on the way of the Prophet (PBUH).

This Sura was revealed as a response to the war which Abu Lahab and his wife waged against the Prophet (PBUH) and Islam. The Sura started by warning Abu Lahab that he will perish, then emphasized that this warning will take place, "*May the hands of Abu Lahab be ruined, and ruined is he.*" His wealth will not avail him in this life, and in the Hereafter, he will burn in Hellfire. His wife will be led to Hell by a rope of palm-fibre bound around her neck.