



وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ



*and celebrate the Praises of Allah often (and without stint):  
that ye may prosper.*

## Quran English Translation & Commentary

By

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### Al Jumu'ah



#### Introduction and Summary

This is the sixth Surah in the Madinah series of short Surahs which began with Surah 57.

The special theme here is the need for mutual contact in the Community for worship and understanding; for the spirit of the Message is for all, ignorant and learned, in order that they may be purified and may learn wisdom.

The date has no special significance: it may be placed in the early Madinah period, say between A.H. 2 and 5.

**Summary-** The Revelation has come among unlearned men, to teach purity and wisdom not only to them but to others, including those who may have an older Message but do not understand it: meet solemnly for the Assembly (Friday) Prayer, and let not worldly interests deflect you therefrom, (62:1-11, and C. 241).

### **C.241 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)**

*Allah's care for his creatures is universal,  
His Revelation is for all--- ignorant  
And lowly as well as learned and high-placed---  
Now and forever. None can arrogantly  
Claim exclusive possession of Allah's gifts;  
If they do, search their hearts within, and you  
Will find them afraid of Death and Judgement.  
Men of Faith! On the Day of Assembly,  
When you, hear the call, hasten earnestly  
To answer it: leave off business, and join  
In common worship and devotion. Then  
You may disperse about your ordinary business,  
But remember the Praises of Allah always;  
It is He alone that can provide  
For you every need, and His gifts are best.*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

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يُسَبِّحُ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ...

1. Whatever is in the heavens and on earth, doth declare the Praises and Glory of Allah --

**C5449.** See n. 5408 to 59:24, where I have explained the difference in signification between **sabbaha** and

**yusabbihu**. The latter form is used here, to express an actual fact. 'Everything declares the Praises and Glory of Allah, because Allah's mercies extend to all His creatures: He sends His Revelation for the benefit of the ignorant and unlettered as well as for those who have learning in their midst, especially as the latter are apt, by the very weight of their ponderous learning, to miss the real point and spirit of Allah's Message.'

... الْمَلِكِ الْقُدُّوسِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ (١)

- the Sovereign,
- the Holy One,
- the Exalted in Might,
- the Wise.

**C5450.** See 59:23, and n. 5402.

Here we have two of the divine attributes repeated from 59:23 and two from the end of 59:24, implying a reminiscence of all the beautiful divine attributes mentioned in that passage.

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ ...

2. It is He Who has sent amongst the **Unlettered** a messenger from among themselves,

**C5451. The Unlettered:** as applied to a people, it refers to the Arabs, in comparison with the People of the Book, who had a longer tradition of learning, but whose failure is referred to in verse 5 below. As applied to individuals, it means that Allah's Revelation is for the benefit of all men, whether they have worldly learning or not.

... يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ ...

- to rehearse to them **His Signs**,

**C5452. His Signs:** Allah's wonderful Signs in His Creation and in His ordering of the world. It may include the Verses of the Quran, but they are more specifically referred to as "Book" in the next line but one.

... وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ ...

- to sanctify them,
- and to instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom --

**C5453.** Cf. 2:129, and n. 129.

Read again the attributes in the last verse.

- Allah is full Sovereign, and therefore cares for all His subjects, including the meanest and most ignorant, and sends His prophets or messengers to them.
- He is the Holy One, and therefore purifies and sanctifies those who were steeped in superstition and wickedness.
- He is Exalted in Power, and therefore He can confer all these blessings on the most unlikely people (verse 3), and no one can stay His hand.
- He is wise, and therefore He instructs in wisdom, both through written Scriptures, and in other ways, e.g., by means of a knowledge of life and its laws, and an understanding of His wonderful universe.

... وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ (٢)

although they had been, before, in manifest error --

**C5454.** Previous ignorance or error is no bar to a person or nation receiving the blessings of Allah's revelation, provided such person or nation has the will to come to Allah and the capacity to bear His Message. For an instance of incapacity through arrogance, see verse 6 below.

... وَأَخْرَيْنَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ ...

3. As well as (to confer all these benefits upon) **others of them**, who have not already joined them:

**C5455. Others of them:** i.e., others than those among whom the holy Prophet came as a messenger. In other words his Message is for his Arab people and his non-Arab contemporaries as well as those who live in other

ages, and have no personal contact with him or his Companions.

... وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ (٣)

and He is Exalted in Might, Wise.

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ...

4. Such is the Bounty of Allah, which He bestows on whom He will:

**C5456.** That is, according to His wise Will and Plan, and also as a result of His unbounded generosity to all.

... وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ (٤)

and Allah is the Lord of the highest bounty.

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِّلُوا الثَّوْرَةَ لَمَّا لَمْ يُحْمَلُوا بِهَا كَمَثَلِ الْإِبْرَاهِيمَ إِسْقَارًا ...

5. The similitude of those who were charged with the (obligations of the) Mosaic Law, but who subsequently failed in those (obligations), is that of a donkey which carries huge tomes (but understands them not).

**C5457.** The Children of Israel were chosen as special vehicles for Allah's Message early in history. When their descendants corrupted the Message and became guilty of all the abominations against which prophets like Isaiah inveighed with such zeal and fire, they merely became like beasts of burden that carry learning and wisdom on their backs but do not understand or profit by it.

... بئسَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ ...

Evil is the similitude of people who falsify the Signs of Allah:

وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ (٥)

and Allah guides not people who do wrong.

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ هَادُوا ...

6. Say: "O ye that stand on Judaism!

**C5458.** Standing on Judaism is a very different thing from following the Law and Will of Allah. An arrogant claim to be a chosen people, to be the exclusive possessors of divine teaching, to be exempt from any punishment for breaches of the divine law, (cf. 2:88), is presumptuous blasphemy. It may be Judaism, but it is not in the spirit of Moses.

... إِنْ زَعَمْتُمْ أَنْكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ لِلَّهِ مِنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَتُّوا الْمَوْتَ إِنْ

كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (٦)

if ye think that ye are friends to Allah, to the exclusion of (other) men, then express your desire for Death, if ye are truthful!"

**C5459.** Cf. 2:94-96.

If they claimed to be special friends of Allah, why do they not eagerly desire death, which would bring them nearer to Allah?

But of all people they are the most tenacious of this life and the good things of this life! And they know that their grasping selfish lives have run up a score of sin against them, which will meet its recompense.

وَلَا يَتَمَنَّوْنَهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ (٧)

7. But never will they express their desire (for Death), because of the (deeds) their hands have sent on before them!

And Allah knows well those that do wrong!

فَلْ إِنْ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلَاقِيكُمْ ...

8. Say:

"The Death from which ye flee will truly overtake you:

ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (٨)

then will ye be sent back to the Knower of things secret and open: and He will tell you (the truth of) the things that ye did!"

**C5460.** Before Allah's Judgment-Seat, when Judgment is established, we shall see the full inwardness of all deeds

in this world. The veil of illusion and delusion will be torn off. All our secret motives will be laid bare. The results of all our little plots and plans and their reactions on our eternal welfare will be clearly visible to us. All make-believe will disappear.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا...

9. O ye who believe!

... إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ ...

when the call is proclaimed to prayer on Friday (the Day of Assembly),

**C5461. Friday**, is primarily the Day of Assembly, the weekly meeting of the Congregation, when we show our unity by sharing in common public worship, preceded by a Khutbah, in which the Imam (or Leader) reviews the week's spiritual life of the Community and offers advice and exhortation on good living.

Notice the gradations of social contact for Muslims if they followed the wise ordinances of their Faith.

1. Each individual remembers Allah for himself or herself five or more times every day in the home or place of business, or local mosque, or open air, as the case may be.
2. On Friday in every week there is a local meeting in the central mosque of each local centre,-it may be a village, or town, or ward of a big city.
3. At the two 'Ids every year, there is a large local area meeting in one centre.
4. Once at least in a lifetime, where possible, a Muslim shares in the vast international assemblage of the world, in the centre of Islam, at the Makkan Pilgrimage.

A happy combination of decentralization and centralization, of individual liberty and collective meeting, and contact at various stages or grades. The

mechanical part of this ordinance is easy to carry out. Are we carrying out the more difficult part?

the spirit of unity, brotherhood, mutual consultation, and collective understanding and action? (R).

... فَاسْعَوْا إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ...

hasten earnestly to the Remembrance of Allah, and leave off business (and traffic):

**C5462.** The idea behind the Muslim weekly "Day of Assembly" is different from that behind the Jewish Sabbath (Saturday) or the Christian Sunday.

The Jewish Sabbath is primarily a commemoration of Allah's ending His work and resting on the seventh day (Gen. 2:2; Exod. 20:11):

we are taught that Allah needs no rest, nor does He feel fatigue ( 2:255). The Jewish command forbids work on that day but says nothing about worship or prayer (Exod. 20:10);

our ordinance lays chief stress on the remembrance of Allah. Jewish formalism went so far as to kill the spirit of the Sabbath, and call forth the protest of Jesus: "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark. 2:27).

But the Christian Church, although it has changed the day from Saturday to Sunday, has inherited the Jewish spirit: witness the Scottish Sabbath; except in so far as it has been secularized.

Our teaching says: 'When the time for Jumuah Prayer comes, close your business and answer the summons loyally and earnestly, meet earnestly, pray, consult and learn by social contact; when the meeting is over, scatter and go about your business'.

... ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ (٩)

that is best for you if ye but knew!

**C5463.** The immediate and temporal worldly gain may be the ultimate and spiritual loss, and vice versa.



فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ ...

10. And when the Prayer is finished, then may ye disperse through the land, and seek of the Bounty of Allah:

وَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ (١٠)

and celebrate the Praises of Allah often (and without stint): that ye may prosper.

**C5464.** Prosperity is not to be measured by wealth or worldly gains. There is a higher prosperity,-the health of the mind and the spirit.

وَإِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَارَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا انفَضُّوا إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكُوكَ قَائِمًا ...

11. But when they see some bargain or some amusement, they disperse headlong to it, and leave thee standing.

... قُلْ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِّنَ اللَّهْوِ وَمِنَ التِّجَارَةِ ...

Say:

"The (blessing) from the Presence of Allah is better than any amusement or bargain!

... وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ (١١)

And Allah is the Best to provide (for all needs)."

**C5465.** Do not be distracted by the craze for amusement or gain. If you lead a righteous and sober life, Allah will provide for you in all senses, better than any provision you can possibly think of.



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