

Surah Taariq

Tafseer e Arshadi

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Dr. Shaikh Arshad Basheer Madani has not personally reviewed this English work word for word. Therefore, if you face any difficulty or confusion, please refer to the original Urdu book.

JazakAllaahu Khairan.

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First part - General overview of Surah At-Tariq

The first part of Surah At-Tariq presents a general overview, in which the connection with the preceding and succeeding surahs is highlighted. In this, the thematic style and objectives of the Surah are also reviewed.

Note: Units of surah-sections (maqati‘) and their mutual interrelationship.

86. Surah At-Taariq
The star that rises at night
The Night-Comer
At-Taariq
Place of revelation: Makkah

Some objectives

- The reality of the human being and his brief introduction.
- In this Surah, a reminder of resurrection after death is being given.
- Allah Almighty swears by the sky and the stars; the purpose is that these creations are so tremendous that we marvel at them, so why should we not believe in the One who created them?

Surah At-Taariq: A brief introduction to themes, structure, and mutual coherence

Surah At-Taariq is a Makkan Surah which delivers strong messages about the Day of Judgment, Allah’s constant watchfulness, and the truth of the Qur’an.

Themes of Surah At-Taariq

1. Oaths by the sky and At-Taariq (the shining star) (verses 1–3)
 - Allah swears by the sky and the shining star (At-Taariq), highlighting its importance.
2. Human creation and the Resurrection (verses 4–10)
 - Allah reminds that the beginning of man is from a weak drop, which is a sign of Allah's power.
 - If He can create man, then the occurrence of the Day of Resurrection and life after death is also easy.
3. Allah's perfect knowledge and judgement (verses 11–14)
 - The cycles of the sky (rain, celestial movements) are signs of Allah's perfect system.
 - The earth splitting and plants emerging are an example of the Resurrection.
 - Every hidden matter will be exposed on the Day of Judgment.
4. Refutation of falsehood and the truth of the Qur'an (verses 15–17)
 - Allah refutes the denial of the disbelievers and warns them of the punishment of the Hereafter.
 - The Qur'an is declared decisive (Fasl); it is not entertainment but truth.

- Those who deny Allah, the Messengership, and the Hereafter are given respite, but their ultimate end is destruction.

Structure of Surah At-Taariq

1. Initial oaths and the sign of At-Taariq (verses 1–3)
 - Attention is drawn through celestial signs.
2. Human beginning and Allah’s power in the Resurrection (verses 4–10)
 - Human creation is made a proof for being raised after death.
3. Cosmic and earthly signs (verses 11–14)
 - These verses clarify Allah’s system, wisdom, and justice in the universe.
4. Warning for the deniers of Allah, Messengership, and the Hereafter, and the finality of the Qur’an (verses 15–17)
 - The Surah ends with a severe warning.

Surah At-Taariq – Internal coherence

1. Celestial signs and human creation (verses 1–10)
 - The shining star and human creation both point to Allah’s precise **power**.
2. Cosmic order and the Day of Resurrection (verses 11–14)

- Just as the sky and the earth are subject to Allah’s system, the Day of Resurrection is also a result of this same command.
3. The finality of the Qur’an and the fate of those who deny Allah, Messengership, and the Hereafter (verses 15–17)
- Because of the decisiveness of the Qur’an, resurrection after death is inevitable and it is a demand of justice.

Link between Surah Al-Buruj, At-Taariq, and Al-A‘la

1. Surah Al-Buruj (Surah 85) → Mention of the law of Allah’s justice
 - Description of oppression against the believers and Allah’s retribution.
2. Surah At-Taariq (Surah 86) → Proof of the Day of Resurrection
 - The Day of Resurrection is established through cosmic signs and human creation.
 - Doubts about life after death are removed.
3. Surah Al-A‘la (Surah 87) → Ultimate success
 - Tawhid, Messengership, the Hereafter, purification, and remembrance of Allah are declared the key to success.
 - A comparison is drawn between those who accept guidance and those who reject it.

Key connections

- Surah Al-Buruj warns the deniers of Allah, Messengership, and the Hereafter, and the oppressors, of the Day of recompense and the law of justice and requital, while Surah At-Taariq establishes the inevitability of the Day of Resurrection.
- Surah At-Taariq removes doubts about the Resurrection, whereas Surah Al-A‘la shows the path of success in the Hereafter.
- Surah Al-Buruj speaks of the consequences of rejecting faith, Surah At-Taariq of the reality of the final decision, and Surah Al-A‘la calls to faith and remembrance.

Result

Surah At-Taariq presents celestial and biological evidences in favour of the Day of Resurrection. It is placed in excellent order between Surah Al-Buruj (which describes oppression against the believers and Allah’s justice) and Surah Al-A‘la (which highlights the importance of purification and remembrance of Allah). The three surahs together give a unified message:

- Allah’s justice is real.
- The Day of Resurrection is inevitable.
- Success lies hidden in faith and remembrance of Allah.

Second Section - Exegetical Translation

It presents the translation of the meanings of the Qur'an, along with verse-by-verse explanation.

Surah At-Taariq: Translation and verse-by-verse explanation

Surah At-Taariq (86:1–17)
Makki Surah – 17 verses

1. وَالسَّمَاءِ وَالطَّارِقِ

Translation:

By the sky and by the night-comer that shines in the dark.

Explanation:

Allah swears by the sky and by the star that appears at night, thereby highlighting its **importance**.

2. وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الطَّارِقُ

Translation:

And what will make you know what the night-comer is?

Explanation:

Allah draws attention to how unique and great the reality and grandeur of At-Taariq (the star) is.

3. النَّجْمُ الثَّاقِبُ

Translation:

It is the star of piercing brightness.

Explanation:

At-Taariq is described as a bright star that tears through the darkness of the night with its light and spreads **illumination**.

4. إِنَّ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ لَّمَّا عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ

Translation:

There is no soul but that over it there is a watcher appointed.

Explanation:

Over every human being there is a guardian appointed by Allah, who watches over his very self or his **deeds**.

5. فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ

Translation:

So let man look from what he was created.

Explanation:

Man should reflect on his beginning from a weak and insignificant drop.

6. خُلِقَ مِنْ مَّاءٍ دَافِقٍ.

Translation:

He was created from a gushing fluid.

Explanation:

Human life begins from a humble and weak drop of fluid, which shows his **humility** and lowliness.

7. يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَيْنِ الصُّلْبِ وَالتَّرَائِبِ.

Translation:

Which emerges from between the backbone and the ribs.

Explanation:

The process of human creation is described in a very precise way, in full accord with the physical reality of the human body.

8. إِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ رَجْعِهِ لَقَادِرٌ.

Translation:

Surely He is fully able to bring him back.

Explanation:

If Allah can create man from a mere drop of fluid, then bringing him back to life again is not difficult for Him.

9. يَوْمَ تُبْلَى السَّرَائِرُ.

Translation:

On the Day when all secrets will be tested and laid bare.

Explanation:

On the Day of Resurrection, every hidden matter and every intention will be exposed and thoroughly examined.

10. فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَلَا نَاصِرٍ

Translation:

Then he will have no strength, nor any helper.

Explanation:

On that Day, a human being will not be able to help himself, nor will there be anyone to help him.

11. وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الرَّجْعِ

Translation:

By the sky with its cycles of returning rain.

Explanation:

The sky's property of repeatedly sending down rain is yet another sign of Allah's power.

12. وَالْأَرْضِ ذَاتِ الصَّدْعِ

Translation:

And by the earth which splits open.

Explanation:

The earth splitting and plants emerging from it is a vivid example of life and of the Resurrection.

13. إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلٌ فَصْلٌ

Translation:

Surely this (Qur'an) is a decisive word (which separates truth from falsehood).

Explanation:

The message of the Qur'an is final, clear, and categorical; it leaves no room for doubt.

14. وَمَا هُوَ بِالْهَزْلِ

Translation:

And it is not a matter of amusement.

Explanation:

The Qur'an is a serious and true discourse, not entertainment or a fabricated story.

15. إِنَّهُمْ يَكِيدُونَ كَيْدًا

Translation:

Surely, they are devising a plot.

Explanation:

The disbelievers were making plots and schemes against the Prophet ﷺ and against the Qur'an.

16. وَأَكِيدُ كَيْدًا

Translation:

And I (Allah) too am devising a plan.

Explanation:

Allah responds to their schemes, and His planning dominates and overturns all of their plots.

17. فَمَهْلٍ الْكَافِرِينَ أَمْهَلُهُمْ رُوَيْدًا

Translation:

So give the disbelievers respite; give them a little while.

Explanation:

Allah grants the disbelievers a temporary respite, but their final outcome is certain and inescapable.

Summary

Surah At-Taariq draws attention to the wonders of creation and to the certain reality of the Resurrection. It reassures the believers of Allah's constant watch over them, and warns the

disbelievers about the consequences of their plots. The Qur'an's message is decisive, clear, and impossible to refute.

Tenth Section - Authentic points from Arabic Tafasir

Part Two: Detailed Tafsir

In this section, the detailed exegesis is presented by benefiting from the classical tafasir such as Tafsir At-Tabari, Ibn Abi Hatim, Al-Baghawi, Tafsir Al-Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir, and from contemporary works like Tafsir As-Sa‘di. Likewise, key points and the concise summary of Ibn Kathir’s Tafsir known as “Al-Misbah Al-Munir” have been utilized, along with other commentaries on Ibn Kathir such as the explanation of Shaykh Al-Rajihi, Shaykh Khalid As-Sabt, the tahqiq and takhrij of Shaykh Muqbil, and the research of Shaykh Al-Huwayni and Hikmat Basheer on Tafsir Ibn Kathir.

In addition, the scholarly investigations of Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Al-Qayyim, and Ibn Al-Jawzi have been taken into consideration. Guidance has also been sought from Tafsir Adwa’ Al-Bayan, Fath Al-Qadir by Ash-Shawkani, the tafsir of Shaykh Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan, the tafsir of Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen and his students, as well as from the encyclopedic works “Mawsu‘at At-Tafsir Ad-Durrar” and “Mawsu‘at At-Tafsir bil-Ma’thur” under the supervision of Shaykh At-Tayyar.

All of this has been carefully rendered into Urdu form, all praise is for Allah, so that it may help us understand both the traditional and the contemporary perspectives, by the will of Allah.

Tafsir of Surah At-Taariq

Surah At-Taariq is a Makkan Surah in which, after the opening oaths, Allah states a central point: “Over every soul there is a guardian.” This Surah explains Allah’s all-encompassing knowledge of the human being, His accounting of a person’s deeds, and His absolute power over him. He alone is the One who created man from a weak and insignificant drop, and He alone is fully able to return him to life again; this is the core theme of the Surah.

Narration of Sayyiduna Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him): An-Nasa’i has narrated from Sayyiduna Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) that Mu‘adh (may Allah be pleased with him) led the Maghrib prayer and recited Surah Al-Baqarah and An-Nisa. The Prophet ﷺ said: “O Mu‘adh! Are you putting the people to trial? Would it not have been enough for you to recite Surahs like ‘By the sky and the night-comer’ (At-Taariq) and ‘By the sun and its brightness’ (Ash-Shams)?”

This report is found in An-Nasa’i’s As-Sunan Al-Kubra, not in As-Sunan As-Sughra. In other authentic ahadith, it is mentioned that Mu‘adh (may Allah be pleased with him) led the ‘Isha prayer, not Maghrib, and there is no mention of Surah At-Taariq there; therefore, this narration contains an additional detail compared to the other, more established reports.

Note: Shaykh Diya-ur-Rahman Azmi (may Allah have mercy on him) answered this in Al-Jami‘ Al-Kamil by clarifying that this is an addition from a trustworthy narrator (ziyadat ath-thiqah), and hence it is acceptable.

Tafsir of verses 1–3

Allah, exalted is He, swore by the sky and by the shining stars within it: “By the sky and the night-comer (At-Taariq).” Then He said: “And what will make you know what At-Taariq is?” and Himself explained it: “It is the star of piercing brightness (An-Najmu Ath-Thāqib).”

- Qatadah (rahimahullah) said: The star is called “Tariq” because it is seen at night and hidden during the day.
- The lexical meaning of “Tariq” as “one who comes by night” or “one who knocks at the door at night” is established by the hadith: “He forbade that a man should come to his family by night (nahā an yatruqa ar-rajulu ahlahu laylan),” i.e., to arrive suddenly at night.

Linguistic clarification

“By the sky and At-Taariq” contains two oaths:

1. An oath by the sky.
2. An oath by the night-comer (the star).

Allah has clarified “At-Taariq” by the phrase “An-Najmu Ath-Thāqib,” thereby explaining it Himself and leaving no room for independent interpretive opinion here; this is a case of tafsir of the Qur’an by the Qur’an.

Meaning of At-Taariq

- Al-Wahidi (rahimahullah) said: According to the mufasssirun, “At-Taariq” refers to those stars which appear at night and are absent during the day.
- Linguistic point: In Arabic, anything that comes by night (a person, an animal, or a star) can be called “Taariq”;

however, in this context, by the flow of the verses, what is intended is the **star**.

Surah At-Taariq (verses 1–4)

1. Explanation of “At-Taariq”

The scholars of tafsir, language, and semantics such as Al-Farra’, Az-Zajjaj, and Al-Mubarrid agree that:

- “At-Taariq” refers to those stars which appear at night and are hidden during the day.
- Imams Ibn Jarir At-Tabari and Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on them both) held the same view.

Point of difference: Is “An-Najmu Ath-Thāqib” (the piercing, shining star) a specific star or something general?

- Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) preferred that it is a type or category of stars, not a single, specific star.
- Conclusion: It should not be restricted to one particular star.

2. Meaning of “Ath-Thāqib”

- Ibn ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him): “Shining.”
- ‘Ikrimah (may Allah have mercy on him): “One that spreads light and burns the devils.”
- Mujahid (may Allah have mercy on him): “Blazing.”
- Ibn Jarir At-Tabari (may Allah have mercy on him): “Its light is flaming and shining.”

- Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him): “Its light pierces through as it passes.”

Summary: “Ath-Thāqib” means intense brightness, a blazing light, or very strong radiance.

Note: It is derived from “thuqub”, meaning: that which makes a hole in the darkness of the night and tears through the darkness by giving **light**.

3. Verse 4: “إِنَّ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ لَّمَّا عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ”

Translation: Every soul has a guardian set over it.

Tafsir of verse 4 (this is the response to the oath):

- Over every human being there are angels appointed who oversee his deeds, his provision, and his lifespan.
- When a person dies, he is taken and returned to Allah.

There is a difference among the scholars: does this “guardian” watch over the deeds, or protect the person himself?

2. The view of Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him):

- “Hafiz” refers to those angels who protect a person from calamities, as in Surah Ar-Ra‘d (13:11):
“For him are successive angels before him and behind him, guarding him by the command of Allah.”
- These angels protect a person from devils, dangers, and harms until the decree arrives.

2. The view of Ibn Jarir At-Tabari (may Allah have mercy on him):

- “Hafiz” refers to the angels who write and record the deeds, as in Surah Al-Infitar (82:10–11):
“And indeed, over you are surely guardians, noble, recording.”
- Likewise, in Surah Al-An‘am (6:61): “And He sends over you guardians.”

3. A third opinion:

- Some scholars hold that “Hafiz” is in fact Allah Himself, who knows the states of the servants and is the watcher over their deeds.

A brief comparison:

- Ibn Kathir’s view: “Hafiz” are the angels who give bodily protection and guard from worldly harms (evidence: Ar-Ra’d 13:11), and they protect until the destined decree comes.
- Ibn Jarir’s view: “Hafiz” are the angels who write and preserve the deeds (evidence: Al-Infitar 82:10–11, Al-An‘am 6:61), and they maintain a full record of all actions.

Some scholars have cited for the third opinion (that “Hafiz” refers to Allah Himself) the verse:

“وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَفِيظٌ” (Al-Hajj: 6)

“And Allah is Guardian over every thing.”

• **

• **Summary of Tafasir: Verses 1–4**

- Allah, exalted is He, says at the beginning of Surah At-Taariq:

“By the sky and the night-comer. And what will make you know what the night-comer is? It is the star of piercing brightness.”

- Allah, Glorified be He, swears by the sky and by At-Taariq, and At-Taariq here means An-Najmu Ath-Thāqib, that is, the shining star whose light pierces through and passes on, as though it bores through the heavens until it reaches down and becomes visible from the earth, and this is a generic noun that covers all bright stars. This is how it is explained in Tafsir As-Sa‘di (p. 919).
- Imam At-Tabari (may Allah have mercy on him) said in his Tafsir (24/351):
“Our Lord has sworn by the heaven, and by At-Taariq, which is one of the bright stars that appear at night and remain hidden during the day; and anything that comes by night is called ‘Tariq’.”
- Qatadah and others said: “The star is called ‘Tariq’ because it is only seen at night and concealed during the day.” This is mentioned in Tafsir Ibn Kathir (8/374).
- Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:
“Allah has sworn by the heaven and its radiant stars, each one of them being a sign from among the signs that point to His Oneness. He named the star ‘Tariq’ because it appears at night after having been hidden by the light of the sun, so it is likened to a traveller who comes by night to people or to a household. Al-Farra’ said: Whatever comes to you at night is ‘Tariq’; and Az-Zajjaj and Al-Mubarrid said: In the daytime there is no ‘Tariq’.” This is in At-Tibyan fi Aqsaam Al-Qur’an (p. 63).
- At-Tabari also said (24/352) about the verse:
“وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الطَّارِقُ”

“Allah, exalted is He, says to His Prophet Muhammad ﷺ:
And what will make you know what that night-comer is by
which I have sworn? Then the Most High Himself
explained it and said: ‘It is the star of piercing brightness,’
that is, the one whose light flares and blazes.”

Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) said:
“Regarding His statement ‘Ath-Thāqib’: Ibn ‘Abbas said: it
means ‘al-mudi’ (the shining one). As-Suddi said: when it is
hurled at the devils it pierces them. And ‘Ikrimah said: it is such
that it both shines and burns the Shaytan.” This is in Tafsir Ibn
Kathir (8/375).

And the matter upon which Allah, majestic is His glory, has
sworn by these great signs, and which is certainly true and
bound to occur, is His statement that follows:

“Verily, every soul has a guardian over it.”

Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) says (8/375):
“That is, over every soul there is a guardian from Allah who
protects it from calamities, as Allah the Exalted says:
‘For him are successive angels before him and behind him,
guarding him by the command of Allah’ (Ar-Ra‘d: 11).”

Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:
“And the matter for which an oath is sworn here is the state of
the human soul, the attention given to it, and the appointing of
guardians over it; that it has not been left neglected. Rather,
there have been set over it such (angels) who preserve its deeds
and enumerate them. Thus, Allah, Glorified be He, swore that

there is no soul except that there is a guardian angel appointed over it who preserves its actions and speech and records whatever good or evil it earns.” This is in At-Tibyan fi Aqsaam Al-Qur’an (p. 64).

Tafsir of Surah At-Taariq, verses 5–7

Verse 5

“فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ”

“So let man observe from what he was created.”

Explanation:

Allah directs the human being towards reflecting on his weak origin in order to guide him to faith in the Resurrection. The One who is capable of originating the first creation is certainly capable of bringing it back to life, as in Surah Ar-Rum (30:27): “He is the One who originates the creation, then repeats it, and that is even easier for Him.”

Verse 6

“خُلِقَ مِنْ مَّاءٍ دَافِقٍ”

“He was created from a gushing fluid.”

Explanation – linguistic notes:

- “Dafq” refers to a forceful gush or flow of fluid that is emitted from the man.
- “Madhy” (the thin pre-seminal fluid that emerges with arousal in drops) is not described as “dafq”, because it does

not have that forceful gush, nor does it carry the same pleasure that accompanies the emission of semen. The emission of madhy requires wudu.

- Ghusl becomes obligatory only upon the emission of “daafiq” (forcefully gushing semen).

Verse 7

“يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَيْنِ الصُّلْبِ وَالتَّرَائِبِ”

“Emerging from between the backbone and the ribs.”

Summary:

1. The lowly and humble beginning of man (a mere drop) urges him to reflect on his own weakness and on Allah’s power.
2. Verses 5–7 highlight the deep connection between human creation and Allah’s power to resurrect, demonstrating that the One who created him from such a weak origin can surely bring him back to life.

As Allah says:

“Does He who created not know, while He is the Subtle, the All-Aware?” (Al-Mulk: 14).

Question 1: Does “mā’ dāfiq” refer to the woman’s fluid or only to the man’s semen?

Imam Ibn Al-Qayyim and Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen stated that “mā’ dāfiq” – the fluid that gushes forcefully – refers specifically to the state of the man’s semen:

1. Some scholars said that “from between the backbone” refers to the man’s back, and “the ribs” refers to the woman’s chest. However, the correct view is that the thing which gushes (dafiq) is the man’s fluid. (Tafsir Ibn ‘Uthaymeen)
2. Allah has informed in more than one place that He created the human being from a “nutfah”, and the “nutfah” is the man’s fluid. Likewise, the linguists have stated this. Al-Jawhari said: “Nutfah is called the pure, clear water, whether little or much; and ‘nutfah’ is the man’s fluid, and its plural is ‘nutaf’.” And also that the thing described with “dafq” (gushing, spurting) and “nadh” (sprinkling, splashing) is in reality the man’s fluid; it is not said that the woman ‘did dafq’ (gushed) or splashed the fluid.” This is the end of his words. See I‘lam Al-Muwaqqi‘in (1/145–146).

Question 2: In “as-sulb” and “at-tarā’ib” – is this speaking of the man’s backbone and ribs, or the woman’s?

Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) adopted the view that what is meant is the man’s backbone and the man’s ribs. He said:

“There is no disagreement that ‘as-sulb’ refers to the backbone of the man, and there is a difference concerning ‘at-tarā’ib’: it has been said that it also refers to the man’s ‘tarā’ib’, and that they are the bones of the chest – the collar bones from the throat down to the top of the chest. And it has been said (qīla) that what is meant by it is the woman’s ‘tarā’ib’. However, the first view is the more apparent (stronger) one.”

The reason for the preference of Ibn ‘Uthaymeen and Ibn Al-Qayyim is that the word “dāfiq” is used for the man’s emission of semen, not for the woman’s emission, because in the woman’s emission the quality of strong gushing (dafq) generally does not apply in the same way.

Question 3: The wording in the Qur’an is “min bayni as-sulbi wa-t-tarā’ib”, not “min as-sulb” – how does this address the doubts?

Critics object by saying: “Modern science tells us that semen is produced in the testes, not between the backbone and the ribs; therefore the Qur’an is wrong – we seek refuge with Allah.”

This reasoning rests on several false assumptions which collapse under linguistic, tafsiri, and scientific scrutiny.

Short answer

The verse is speaking about a zone (region) of the body, not about the precise point of origin. The Qur’an says “from

between the backbone and the ribs (min bayni as-sulb wa-t-tarā'ib)", not "from the backbone (min as-sulb)".

Detailed answer

1. What is the verse actually saying?

The Qur'an is not giving a medical textbook description of where sperm is "produced" anatomically, as in a detailed anatomy lesson. Rather, the verse is describing that the human being is created from a gushing reproductive fluid that is associated with that bodily zone which links the lower back (loins) and the upper body/chest region.

Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) adopted the view that:

Allah said "yakhruju min bayni as-sulbi wa-t-tarā'ib" and did not say "min as-sulb wa-t-tarā'ib" ("from the backbone and the ribs"), so it becomes necessary that the man's fluid comes from the area between these two different things, just as He said about milk: "coming from between (yakhruju min bayni) digested matter and blood."

Furthermore, Allah has informed in multiple places that He created the human being from a "nutfah", and this "nutfah" is the man's fluid. The linguists, such as Al-Jawhari, said: "Nutfah is the clear water, whether little or much, and it is the man's fluid; its plural is 'nutaf'." And again, the thing that is described with "dafq" (gushing) and "nadh" (sprinkling) is in reality the man's fluid; it is not usually said that the woman 'did dafq' or splashed the fluid.

So the verse is:

- Not denying that production (origin) is in the testes and the reproductive system.
- But indicating that this reproductive fluid which creates man is related to and issues from the bodily trunk – the region between the backbone and the front of the body – where the main life and reproductive organs are located and from where the ejaculatory discharge proceeds.

“And also, that which is described with ‘dafq’ (gushing, spurting) and ‘nadh’ (sprinkling, splashing) is, in reality, the man’s fluid; it is not said that the woman ‘did dafq’ – that she splashed or hurled the fluid.”

- Reference: I‘lam Al-Muwaqqi‘in, 1/145–146.

Tafsir of Surah At-Taariq (verses 8–17)

Verses 8–9

“Indeed, He is certainly able to bring him back. On the Day when secrets will be put to the test.”

Explanation:

- “Raj‘ihi” refers to bringing the human back to life on the Day of Resurrection.
- “Yawm tubla as-sara’ir” refers to the Day of Judgment, when all secrets will be exposed and examined.
- Ibn Jarir At-Tabari and Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on them both) held that this is the Day of Resurrection on which the hidden matters will be tested.

Unveiling of secrets

- From Ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both), in Sahih Al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim: “For every treacherous person there will be raised for him on the Day of Resurrection a banner on his back, and it will be announced: This is the treachery of so-and-so, son of so-and-so.” This shows how hidden treachery will be publicly exposed.
- Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “As-sara’ir” are the hidden affairs of the heart – beliefs, intentions, shirk, showing off, hypocrisy – all of which will be brought to light on the Day of Resurrection.
- In Tafsir As-Sa‘di it is mentioned that in this world many things remain hidden and unknown to people, but on the Day of Resurrection the goodness of the righteous and the evil of the wicked will all become manifest.
- Here the intended “looking” is a look of reflection and insight (i’tibar), not just a physical glance; i.e., to look with insight.
- “On the Day when the secrets will be tested”: the secrets of the hearts will be tested, and on the Day of Resurrection the reckoning will be based on the state of the heart. Therefore we must be more concerned about the deeds of the heart than the outward deeds of the limbs.

He further explained:

- In His statement “On the Day when the secrets will be tested”, “sara’ir” refers to the hearts, because on that Day the judgment will be according to the inner reality of the hearts, whereas in this world the judgment is according to outward actions (the actions of the limbs). This is why the

Prophet ﷺ treated the hypocrites outwardly as Muslims; when permission was sought to kill them, he said: “So that people do not say that Muhammad kills his companions.” He did not kill them, even though he knew that so-and-so was a hypocrite, because in this world dealings are based on the apparent, while on the Day of Resurrection they will be based on what is hidden.

- “On the Day when the secrets will be tested” thus means: the hearts will be put to trial, as Allah said: “Does he not know that when what is in the graves is scattered, and what is in the breasts is made apparent?” (Al-‘Adiyat: 9–10). For this reason, we must give more attention to the deeds of the heart than to outward deeds. The actions of the limbs are only outward signs, but the real pivot is the work of the heart.

He cited two important examples:

- Regarding the Khawarij, the Prophet ﷺ told the Companions that one of you would consider his own prayer insignificant compared to their prayer and his fasting insignificant compared to their fasting; outwardly they strove greatly in worship, yet their hearts were empty (we seek refuge with Allah). Their Islam did not go beyond their throats, and they shot out of Islam as an arrow passes straight through the target.
- Al-Hasan Al-Basri (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “By Allah, Abu Bakr did not surpass you by much prayer or fasting, but by that faith which settled in his heart.” When faith becomes firmly rooted in the heart, it pushes a

person towards action; but outward action on its own does not necessarily lead to rectification of the heart.

Practical conclusion (Ibn ‘Uthaymeen):

- We must be concerned with our hearts – their deeds, beliefs, inclinations, and purification.
- We must strive to cleanse the heart of shirk, bid‘ah, rancour, hatred, dislike of Allah’s revealed rulings, and hatred of the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them).
- That Day, all hidden matters will be brought out and made visible – everything a person kept concealed in his heart, whether good or evil, faith or disbelief.
- Ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) said: Allah will bring out every hidden, concealed matter on the Day of Resurrection; it will either become a beauty and adornment for the face or a cause of disgrace.
(qurtubi:22/212-214)

• ﴿يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ السِّرُّ أَمْرًا﴾

“On the Day when the secrets will be tested”

There is a subtle point in describing deeds with the word “sirr” (an inner, hidden matter). The point is that deeds are in reality the results of the inner secrets of the hearts. So whoever’s intention and inward state are sound, his deed is also sound, and

this inner goodness appears on his face in the form of light, brightness, and modesty.

And whoever's intention and inner state are corrupt, his deed follows that corruption; even if some beauty appears in his outward action, in reality it has no value. So on the Day of Resurrection his inner condition (sariirah) will be made manifest, and judgment and manifestation will be according to that.

[Ibn Al-Qayyim: 3/288–289]

Ibn Al-Qayyim's explanation:

Regarding "On the Day when the secrets will be tested", he said: "Allah, the Most High, alluded to this when He said: 'On the Day when the secrets will be tested' – that is, the secrets will be examined. Muqatil says: they will be exposed and made manifest. 'Balawtu ash-shay'" means: I tested something so that its reality and its hidden aspect would become apparent. 'As-sara'ir' (secrets) is the plural of 'sariirah', and these are the matters hidden between Allah and His servant, whether outward or inward. Faith is also among the secrets, and so are its rulings. On the Day of Resurrection they will be tested so that the good may be distinguished from the evil, the one who fulfilled (his duties) from the one who was negligent, and what was done for Allah from what was not done for Him."

Verse 10:

"Then he will have no power and no helper."

Explanation:

- On the Day of Resurrection, the human being will be helpless; he will not be able to help himself, nor will others be able to help him.
- According to Surah Al-Baqarah (2:48):
 - There will be no protector.
 - No intercession will be accepted.
 - No ransom will be taken.
 - No help will reach him.

“Then he will have no power and no helper”

That is, for that disbelieving person on that Day there will be no strength by which he can protect himself from Allah’s punishment and severe grasp, and no helper who can save him from the calamity that befalls him.

Whereas in the world he used to rely on the strength of his people and tribe, by which he remained safe from the harm of his enemies, and he used to seek help from his allies and supporters, who would stand by him as helpers at times of oppression and aggression. (At Tabri:24/359)

Surah At-Taariq (verses 11–17)

Verses 11–12

“By the sky of returning, and the earth of splitting open.”

Explanation:

- “Dhat ar-raj“”:
 - The cycle of rain (Mujahid).
 - The returning of provision (Qatadah).

- “Dhat as-sad“:
 - The earth splitting open for plants to grow (Qatadah).

Ibn ‘Uthaymeen said regarding “By the sky of returning”:

- “Ar-raj“ here means rain; it is called “raj“ because it comes again and again.

According to Ibn ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both), “Dhat ar-raj“ means rain. It is also narrated from him that these are the rain-bearing clouds. He also said: “By the sky of returning” – that is, the rain returns again and again. Qatadah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “Every year it returns the sustenance of the servants; if it did not do so, they and their animals would perish.”

Tafsir of “And the earth of splitting open”:

- Ibn ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) said: “It is the earth splitting open for vegetation.” This is also the view of Sa‘id ibn Jubayr, ‘Ikrimah, Abu Malik, Ad-Dahhak, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Qatadah, As-Suddi, and the majority of the mufasssirun. Ibn Jarir At-Tabari (may Allah have mercy on him) preferred this view: that it describes the earth cracking open for trees, plants, and fruits to emerge.
- Mujahid said: “These are the channels through which water breaks through the earth.”
- Some said: “It is the earth splitting open for the dead (on the Day of Resurrection).” However, the first view is the more well-known.

Ibn Kathir's comment:

“Ibn ‘Abbas said: it is the earth splitting open for vegetation.” This can be a reference to the vegetation itself, as if it were being said: “And by the earth that brings forth growth,” or to the very act of splitting which occurs when the plants emerge. Both meanings are closely connected and mutually consistent.

Verses 13–14

“Indeed, it is surely a decisive word. And it is not a thing of amusement.”

- Ibn ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both):
 - “Fasl” = the truth.
 - “Hazzl” = falsehood.

Answer to the oath:

Allah swore by the sky (which returns the rain) and the earth (which splits open) and then said: “Indeed, it is surely a decisive word.”

- Ibn ‘Abbas: “It is the truth.”
- Qatadah: “It is a decisive discourse.”
- “And it is not a thing of amusement” means: it is not a joke; rather, it is serious truth.

Verses 15–17

“Indeed, they are plotting a plot. And I (Allah) am also planning a plan. So give respite to the disbelievers; give them a little respite.”

“Indeed, they are plotting a plot, and I am also planning a plan” – this shows who is truly dominant; for man is so weak and insignificant that he can never be equal to the One who is All-Powerful and All-Knowing.

Explanation:

- The disbelievers devise every possible scheme against the Qur’an, against Islam, and against the Muslims.
- “And I am also planning a plan” – Allah declares that He too is devising a counter-plan, and His plan overcomes all of theirs.
- “So give respite to the disbelievers; give them a little respite” – Ibn ‘Abbas said: “ruwaydan” means “for a short while”, referring to the nearness of the coming punishment.

Their plotting and Allah’s plan:

- “Indeed, they are plotting a plot”: they scheme, fight, oppose, and spread doubts.
- “And I am also planning a plan”: Allah’s planning encompasses them, granting them rope, then seizing them at the appointed time (as in Surah Al-A‘raf 7:183).

Explaining the attributes *makr* and *kayd* to students

You can explain them to students in this “as-it-is” way:
Allah’s statement: “Indeed, they are plotting a plot, and I (too) am plotting a plot.”

That is: the disbelievers (in the time of the Prophet ﷺ) wanted to stop people from accepting the call of Islam, and

for this purpose they used every possible scheme and plot. But Allah turns their plotting and deception back upon them, so they can never succeed in their evil aims.

The attribution of *kayd* (plotting, planning) to Allah is only in a way of response and reciprocity, not in an absolute sense. Therefore, Allah is described with this attribute only in a situation of *mukafaat* (requital, countering), because in such a case it indicates power, perfection, and dominance, which befits Allah, the Exalted.

But if *kayd* is attributed initially or absolutely (without any opponent mentioned), then it is understood in a blameworthy meaning, and Allah is far above every kind of fault and deficiency.

So this attribute and other similar attributes, like *makr* (plotting) and *khidaa* ' (outwitting), are not attributed to Allah in an absolute sense; rather, only in the context of response and opposition, as they have come in the texts. And Allah knows best.

“...They plot a mighty plot; they plotted against the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and against those who believed with him. Look at what they did to the believers in Makkah: they used to harm them, mock them, drive them out; the Muslims migrated twice to Abyssinia, then migrated to Madinah – all of that to protect their religion from those criminals who harassed them with every kind of plot.

The greatest plot which they carried out against the Prophet ﷺ was at the time of Hijrah.

And what Allah informed of did in fact happen: the Prophet ﷺ left them by migrating; battles took place between them; in the second year after Hijrah the great chiefs and leaders of Quraysh were killed, including their leader Abu Jahl;

and within eight years, or even less, the Prophet ﷺ entered Makkah as a conqueror. As is mentioned in the books of history, he was holding the door frame of the Ka‘bah while Quraysh were standing beneath him, and he said to them: ‘What do you think I will do with you?’

- Because now the matter was in your hands, you said: “What do you think I will do with you?”
- According to the reference in Fath Al-Bari, Quraysh replied: “You are a noble brother and the son of a noble brother.”
- You said: “I say to you what Yusuf said to his brothers: ‘No blame will there be upon you today. May Allah forgive you, and He is the most merciful of those who show mercy’ (Yusuf: 92). Go, you are all free.”

The Prophet ﷺ did this favour to them because they had entered Islam, and Allah, the Exalted, said: “Say to those who disbelieve that if they cease, what has previously occurred will be forgiven them” (Al-Anfal: 38). (Tafsir Ibn ‘Uthaymeen)

When the Muslims turned away from the Qur’an, they were defeated, and their humiliation was in accordance with their distance from the Qur’an. The more a person is distant from the Book of Allah, the more honour will be distant from him, and likewise victory, until he returns to the Book of Allah. (Tafsir Ibn ‘Uthaymeen)

- It is not the believers who ultimately counter the plots of the disbelievers; rather, it is Allah Himself who does so.
- As in Surah Ibrahim (14:46): “And they had already plotted their plot, but with Allah is their plot (recorded).”

Summary:

“And they plotted, and Allah also plotted; and Allah is the best of planners” (Al ‘Imran: 54).

Surah At-Taariq (verses 15–17) summary in English

1. Allah Himself counters the plots of the disbelievers
 - The disbelievers’ schemes against Islam and the Muslims are ultimately ineffective, because: “They plotted, and Allah (also) plotted, and Allah is the best of planners” (Al ‘Imran: 54).
2. The reality of their plotting
 - In truth, they only harm themselves: “They deceive none but themselves” (Al-Baqarah: 9).
 - Allah protects the believers: “Indeed, Allah defends those who have believed” (Al-Hajj: 38).
3. Their failed attempt to extinguish Allah’s light
 - The enemies of Islam want to extinguish Allah’s light “with their mouths” (by their efforts and propaganda), as in At-Tawbah: 32, but they cannot succeed.
4. The supremacy of Islam is guaranteed
 - Allah has decreed: “He it is who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to make it prevail over all religion” (At-Tawbah: 33).
 - Whoever stands in opposition to this decree only brings destruction upon himself.

5. The respite given to the disbelievers

- “So give respite to the disbelievers; give them a little respite”: Allah grants them a short, temporary delay.
 - Outcome: “We grant them enjoyment for a little, then We will drive them to a harsh punishment” (Luqman: 24).
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Notes from Fath Al-Qadir and Ahsan Al-Bayan – as-it-is points

1. Meaning of At-Taariq

- The Qur’an itself has clarified that At-Taariq is the bright star. The word “Taariq” literally comes from “knocking”, but it is used for one who comes by night. The stars are called “Taariq” because they are hidden by day and appear by night.

2. “Over every soul there is a guardian”

- That is, over every soul are angels appointed by Allah who record all of its good and bad deeds. Some scholars said: they are the angels who also protect human beings.

3. “Indeed, He is able to return him”

- Meaning: Allah is fully able to resurrect him after death. Some have said it means: He is able to return that drop of fluid to the private part from where it initially came out, but the first meaning (resurrection) is considered more correct by Al-Shawkani and Ibn Jarir At-Tabari.

4. “The sky of returning”

- The Arabs used to call rain “raj” (return), so rain is called “raj” here. As a good omen, they would call it “raj” hoping it would return again and again.
5. “The earth of splitting”
- The earth splits so that plants emerge from it; it splits so that springs gush out; and likewise a day will come when the earth will split and all the dead will come out alive. For this reason, the earth is described as “splitting” and “cleft”.
6. “Indeed, it is a decisive word”
- This is the answer to the oath: it is a clarifying, decisive word by which truth and falsehood are both made clear.
7. “And I (too) am planning a plan”
- Meaning: I am not unaware of their plots; I am also planning against them, or I am nullifying and countering their schemes. A plan intended for an evil aim is evil, but if the purpose is just and right, then it is not evil in itself.

Eleventh Section - Lessons learned from the Surah

In the end, we will discuss the lessons that can be learned from each Surah. These lessons—more than four thousand in total—are practical in nature and help us to implement the teachings of the Qur'an in our daily lives. These lessons have been taken from Arshad Basheer Madani's book "Ahdaaf wa Asbaaq-e-Qur'an" (Objectives and Lessons of the Qur'an).

Some themes

- Establishing the reality of resurrection after death and mentioning the angels among the "guardian" angels (verses 1–10).
- Oaths of Allah affirming that the Qur'an is the truth (verses 11–14).
- Warning and admonition directed to the disbelievers (verses 15–17).

Some lessons

- A human being should recognize his own reality.
- Everything in this universe is a proof of the power of Allah.
- It is necessary for a person to do righteous and good deeds, because Allah has appointed a watcher over him who observes him.
- Surely the human self, his very being, the substance from which he was created, and the manner of his creation are among the clear proofs of Allah's power.
- It is astonishing that a human, created from such a lowly substance, walks about in arrogance.
- The belief in resurrection after death is firmly established.

- Among the aspects of the miraculous nature of the Qur'an is that it describes the process of human creation, and this is a proof that the Noble Qur'an is revealed from Allah.
- "Then he will have no power and no helper..." – no one can overcome the power of Allah, and a person should not be deceived by his own strength.
- The disbelievers will inevitably, one day or another, receive the recompense for what they have done.
- "Who am I? From where did I come? Who created me? And where am I going after death?" – this Surah gives a brief and comprehensive answer to all of these questions.
- If the creation is so magnificent, then how great must the Creator be? Recognize His majesty and greatness.
- After death there will be reckoning and account; the purpose is to remind us of the Hereafter – "On the Day when the secrets will be tested."
- At the end, it is made clear that this Qur'an is sent down from Allah, and that those who do not believe in it are being granted a respite.
- The Surah ends with a threat; that is, the disbelievers are being warned and alerted to desist from disbelief.

Connection / subtleties of tafsir – as-it-is English

- From Surah Al-Qiyamah up to this Surah, the occurrence of the Day of Resurrection and its truth has been continuously clarified through proofs taken from the horizons, from within the human self, and from other evidences. Taken together, it appears as one complete, unified subject.
- In Surah Al-Buruj and Surah At-Taariq, news is given of the mockery of the Quraysh disbelievers regarding the

belief in the Hereafter and regarding the ordinary Muslims. In these Surahs, further light is shed on their denial and the causes of that denial, and those disbelievers are warned through parables and threats.

- From Surah Al-A‘la and then in the ten Surahs that follow it, the address is essentially directed to the *da‘i* (caller to Allah). In the work of da‘wah, attention is needed to two aspects:
 1. To remove the obstacles and issues that arise from the side of the people being called, and to search for effective means of influencing them.
 2. To strive to adorn the *da‘i* with the highest and noblest qualities.

The *da‘i* should focus on self-development so that he becomes capable of availing the opportunities that Allah opens for him and becomes an effective caller; so that, in the light of the Prophetic example, he can become better and better as a *da‘i*.

Verses and hadith

Verse:

“Then let man see from what he was created. He was created from a gushing fluid. Emerging from between the backbone and the ribs.” (At-Taariq 86:5–7)

Hadith:

“Indeed, Allah created Adam from a handful which He took from all of the earth. So the children of Adam came according to

(the nature of) the earth: among them is the red, the white, and the black, and those between that; the easy-going and the harsh; the evil and the good.” (Then in Yahya’s narration it adds: “and those between that”, and in the report of Yazid there is mention of this wording.)
