

Al-Kawthar

The Abundance
Al Qur'an Surah 108.

This Surah was revealed in Makkah.

In'naa A'taiynaa Kal'kawthar. Fasal'li li Rab'bika wan'her. In'naa shaani'aka hu-al-ab'tar

English translation:

- 1. Verily, We have given you (O' Muhammad) the Kawthar (abundance)***
- 2. So, pray to your Lord, and sacrifice.***
- 3. Verily, it is your enemy whose line (progeny) shall be cut off.*** (The Holy Qur'an by Aqa Mirza Puya. Permahomed Ebrahim Trust)

Background of revelation: Aas Bin Waael, the leader of the disbelievers among Quresh called our Prophet Pbu&h "Ab'tar." This is a derogatory term meaning one without progeny. This term was echoed by other disbelievers. Prophet (p) had lost both his sons** from Lady Khadija when they were young. In Arabia in those days, not having a male offspring (to continue the progeny) was regarded as a social stigma. They also felt happy that by not leaving a male heir, his mission of preaching the faith of Islam would end after his demise. Prophet pbu&h felt hurt by the taunting of his enemies. Allah swt therefore revealed this Surah to assure the Prophet pbu&h that his descendents will be abundant, and that his blessings and honor in this world and the hereafter were assured. In addition, his enemies will be without progeny.

It is related that Prophet pbu&hsaid that whoever recites this Surah, Allah will provide drink from the streams of Paradise. Every sacrifice offered (on Eid ul Adha) will have a reward of all the combined sacrifices offered by the people of the book and disbelievers.

In'naa A'taiyna Kal'kawthar. Verily, We* have given you (O' Muhammad) the Kawthar.

In'naa means (verily, We.) ***A'taiynaa-ka*** means (given to you). ***Al Kawthar*** (The Abundance) The word *Kawthar* is derived from the root word *Ka-Tha-Ra* which means superior in numbers or numerous. *Kawthar* also means abundance, especially of good things. It also is the name of a stream in Paradise.

Other derivatives of the root word ***Ka-Tha-Ra*** are:

Katha-ratun: Multitude

Katheerun: Much, many, numerous

Ak'tharu: More numerous (emphasis)

Kath-thara: To multiply

Takathur: Act of multiplying

Is-thak-thara: To wish for much

**The two sons were Tahir (Abdullah) and Qasim. He also had son Ibrahim from his wife Maria Qabtiah. He was born in Madinah, and died very young. * Allah swt uses the plural first person pronoun "In'naa" "verily We" to indicate His majesty and greatness.

At the time this Surah was revealed, Prophet pbuh&p ascended the pulpit and recited the S. The companions asked him what this thing was that Allah gave him. He replied that it was a stream in Paradise, which is whiter than milk, more sparkling than crystal, and it was surrounded by rubies and gemstones.

It is related that Imam Jafar as Sadiq A.S. said that Allah provided the stream of *Kawthar* to the Prophet pbuh&p in compensation for losing his son Abdullah.

In one sense, this Surah was a prophecy and a promise by Allah. Subsequent events confirmed the truth of that. Prophet pbuh&p succeeded in many battles against the disbelievers. Islam was established far and wide. His honor grew beyond expectations of the people. Muslims enjoyed prosperity and affluence. Prophet's pbuh&p descendants multiplied through his daughter Fatima S.A. They are known as *Syeds*.

Fasal'li li-Rab'bika Wan'her. *So, pray to your Lord, and sacrifice.* In return for His bounties in abundance, Allah instructed the Prophet pbuh&p to offer Salaat (non-obligatory) as a token of gratitude to his *Rabb* (Lord), and offer sacrifice.

Wan-Nahr. It is from the root word *Na-ha-ra* which means to sacrifice an animal by cutting or piercing the jugular vein. In Arabia it is understood as sacrificing a camel by first piercing or cutting the jugular vein, and when the animal has bled enough and comes down, then completing the sacrificial slaughter.

The word *Wan-her* also has the meaning of standing facing Qibla for Salaat.

It also means raising hands while reciting *Takbir*. It is reported that when this Surah was revealed, Prophet pbuh&p asked Angel Gabriel what was *Wan-Nahr*. Gabriel replied that Allah has enjoined on you to raise hands while reciting *Takbir* during (acts of) Salaat. The Angels in the seven Heavens also raise their hands while reciting *Takbir* (*Allahu-Akbar*).

In'naa Shaa'niaka. *Verily, it is your enemy.* The word *Shaani* means enmity.

Hu-al Ab'tar. *Whose line (progeny) will be cut off.* *Ab'tar* is referred to an animal whose tail is cut off. It also means someone who is without progeny. Here Allah swt foretold the Prophet that his enemies and those who taunted him will have no progeny.

Hazrat Fatima A.S. and *Kauthar*. Many Shia scholars have interpreted "*Kauthar*" as reference to the daughter of the Prophet Pbu& p, especially because from her proceeded the descendents of the Prophet pbuh&p. (the Imams and their descendants). Ref. *Tafseer-e- Namoon*.

Qur'anic Tafseer by Maulana Maqbool Ahmed (Urdu) reports:

Hadith in Aamaali from Abdullah bin Abbas that Ali A.S. asked about *Al Kawthar*. Prophet pbuh&p replied that it was a stream (in paradise) that Allah gave him. Ali A.S. asked more about it. Prophet said that it flowed from under the heavenly place; its water

Was whiter than milk, sweeter than honey, smoother than butter; its rocks were gems, rubies and coral, the grass was saffron, sand was Musk. Then he added, “it is for me and you, and your friends who will love you after I depart.”

At another place in the same section, addressing Ali A.S. he said, “You will give it to those present.” Since then Ali A.S. has been called “Saaqi-e-*Kawthar*,” the one who will serve the water of *Kawthar*.

(The End.)

References: - 1.) The Holy Qur’an, translation and commentary by Aqa Mirza Mahdi Puya. 2.) Tafseer-e-Namoonah. (Urdu) by Ayatullah Nasir Makaram Shirazee. 3.) Qur’anic Tafseer by Maulana Maqbool Ahmed (Urdu).

**Proceedings recorded by Syed H. Akhtar.
Austin Qur’anic discussion group.
Austin, Texas.
April 8, 2007**