*A`ūdhu*billāhi*min ash-shaitāni r-rajīm.* Bismillah hir*-*Rahman nir-Rahim (opening prayer)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MtSR9gAF5k>

 **سورة العصر**





**Transliteration**

Surat Al-`Aşr

*“WalAAasr*  *Inna al-insana lafee khusr
Illa allatheena amanoowaAAamiloo assalihati*

*watawasaw bilhaqqiwatawasaw bissabr*.”

(The Noble Qur’an 103:1-3)

*Allahumma ja'alna min al ladhina aamanu wa ‘amilus saalihaati wa tawaasau bil haqq wataawasau bi sabr. Alhamdulillahi rabbil ‘aalameen assalaatu wassalamu ‘ala ashrafil anbiyaai wal mursaleen wa ‘ala aalihi wa sahbihi wa man-is sanna bis sunnatihi ila yaum-i-deen. Allahumma ja’alna minhum wa min al ladhina aamanu wa ‘aamilus saalihaati watawaasau bil haqq watawaasau bis sabr.Wallahumma thabbitna ‘indal mauti bi la ilaaha il Allah. Aameen ya rab al ‘alameen.Thumma amma ba’ad.*

***Assalaamu ‘alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakaatuh (greeting)***

This is our third get-together for the study of *Surat-ul-‘Asr*. Hopefully, *Inshaa’Allahu ta’alaa* - our final get together. It’ll be my best attempt to complete the study of this *Surah* today. But we’ll go…I won’t try to rush anything and we’ll see how far we get Inshaa’Allahu ta’ala.

Those of you that have been following along, we were up to “*innal insaan*.” That’s what we covered last time we left off. There we discussed the usage of the word “*inna*” in the *ayah* and the usage of the word “*al insaan”* and we left it there.

Now we’re dealing with the part *lafi khusr…lafi khusr*…so roughly translated…no doubt about it: every single human being is truly immersed in loss. The first thing to note here is the tools in Arabic language that are being used to emphasize this statement. If you have in English, you have “the human being is in loss.” That’s a statement. But in Arabic you don’t just have a statement, you have a statement and it can be empowered by certain tools. It can be made stronger and stronger and stronger and stronger. Similarly, also in Arabic rhetoric, the statement can be made weaker and weaker and weaker. It can be strengthened; it can also be weakened.

This statement - grammatically speaking - is the strongest it could possibly be. First of all there are two kinds of sentences in Arabic: *jumla fi’liya* and *ismiyya*. This is *ismiyya*. You know there are a noun-based sentence and a verb-based sentence, and rhetorically speaking, the noun-base sentence is stronger than the verb-based sentence. Normally the Arabs use the verb-based when they speak; and on unusual occasions they will use the noun-based; it’s stronger. This is a noun-based [sentence]: it’s *jumla ismiyya;* it’s got a *mubtada* and a *khabar*. This is the first thing that makes it stronger.

The second is, instead of saying, “*Al insaanu fi khusr”* it is *innal insaan.* This is *harf at-tawkeed;* this is a *harf*. This is a preposition that is used only for the purpose of strengthening what you’re about to say. So there’s a second reason that it’s stronger.

The third reason that it’s stronger is the word “*Al Insaan*” has “*Al”* on it which is *lil jins* - which we’ll read the commentary of the *mufassiroon* and we’ll see that it implies every single human being. Instead of saying “a” person, or “people,” it’s every single human being - adding another degree of emphasis.

Then on top of that you have *lafi*. It’s not just *fi khusr:* it is *lafi khusr.* This *laam -* typically you have the word “*wi*” (the word *fi* rather). *Laqad khalaq-nal insaana fi ahsan-i-taqweem.* There’s just “*fi.”* But this is “*lafi*.” *Laam* here is very difficult to translate but it basically has the same function – rhetorically - as “*inna*”: “certainly; certainly.” *Laam,* according to some linguists in Arabic (it is also argued), is used to swear on top of an oath. So for example, *laqad khalaqna*, *aam* is already an oath in and of itself or used in response to an oath, So it’s a means by which something is empowered - another tool of empowerment.

Then you have…it’s not *innal insaana la khaasir*. The human being is a loser or even the *khabar* could have been a verb. *Innal insaana laqad khasara…or khasira,* rather, right? The human being has lost. *Lafi khusr* – he is in loss. The imagery used (we talked about it last time) the one who’s being drowned; he’s immersed in it. You know, someone being a loser is one thing and, by the way, *ism faa’il* in Arabic implies something that’s happening right now. But by using the preposition it becomes a constant state. He is immersed in it; he’s been in it; he is going to stay in it… kind of thing. It’s a scenario that’s being depicted. So the word *fi* here adds to that.

Then there’s (like) Al Mazhari comments: “*Fi Khusrin*,” the *tanween*. You know, *“Yufi dhul ’azma”* [with] the *tanween* at the end. *Khusr* isn’t just loss; it’s *incredible* loss just because there’s a *tanween* at the end, (*khusrin*), because of that. So, [there is] one after another after another after another mechanism by which this statement has been emphasized. And above and beyond all of that, Allah began with “*Al ‘Asr” b*y taking an oath. And the oath (among other things) is also a manifestation of anger. We talked about the other purposes of the oath last time, but another manifestation of the oath is anger. For example, even nowadays you’re talking to each other: “I swear you better stop! I swear I’m going to get you!” you know. When you use the “I swear,” it’s the manifestation of anger. So the fact that Allah (*azza wa jal*) - before He mentions the loss of the human being in and of itself - is a means by which the statement is emphasized. So there are tools by which the statement is emphasized over and over and over and over again. The human being is in loss. Or verily, the human being or man is at loss; mankind is in doom, etc., etc. Don’t even begin to cover the rage and the terror that is embedded in the language of this ayah that Allah (*azza wa jal*) depicts in the words, *Innal insaana lafi khusr.*

Let’s talk a little bit about the word *Khusr*. In the original session I told you there’s a difference between the word, “*Khusr”* that’s used here. Then there’s the word *khusraan* that occurs in the Quran also, and then there’s the word *khasaar, khasaara, a*nd the difference between them. Just as a quick recap, *khusraan* is the worst kind of loss. So, for example, when Allah says, “*khasirad-dunya wal aakhirah dhaalika hu al khusraan,”* He lost the *Dunya* and the *Aakhirah*. That is the ultimate loss; that’s the worst kind of loss. That’s not for everyone but that’s for the worst kind of person.

K*husraan* is used. *Khasaar* is used when you are already in trouble and you add to your trouble. So for example, *Wattaba’u mal lam yazidhu maalahu wa waladuhu illa khasaara.* It’s used with *ziyyada* usually. It didn’t increase them [mankind] in anything but loss. Meaning they were already in trouble, it added to their trouble. It’s used in that sense, but *khusr* is the base form, meaning generally all human beings are in a state of tremendous loss. So k*hasira*, the way it’s used in Arabic, is also used in the meaning of suffering in addition to loss. Loss is the common translation. *Khasira fi bay’ihi* also means he suffered loss in his business. It also means to lose your capital altogether. We made reference to this before also. You put your money in a business. Not only does it not make money, but you lose your investment money also. This is called *khusr*. If you lost, you know, just the profits, you broke even. This is not called *khusr*. If you lost the money you put in of your own [and] all of it is gone too, the essential capital what’s called in Arabic *ra’sul maal*, if that is gone too then that’s called *khusr*. It’s also, by the way, used when you are conned. Like if you say “*khasirat-tijaraatuhu,*” it’s one of the meanings of that is his business went under. But it also means his business was destroyed by means of some kind of trickery. Somebody conned him; somebody deceived him, and that made his business go down. So there’s this, there’s this illusion to deception also in the word *khusr*. Human beings are deceiving themselves. They’re in a kind of deception and that’s leading them to a loss…the antonym – the opposite of *khasirat-tijaaratuhu is rabihat-tijaaratuhu.* His…his business became profitable that he not only put his money in, he got more out of it too. So Allah (*azza wa ja*l) uses this word. This is a little bit about the word *khusraan*.

Let’s talk little bit about the word *Al Insaan* in the *ayah.* Just as we…we talked about it linguistically before. But just what the *ulamaa* [scholars] have said: *Al insaanu lil jince an nan naasa fi khusraan min tijaarati him.*

First, *Al Insaan lil Jince* - that this word *insaan* is referring to all human beings. So when Allah says the human being is, no doubt, in deep trouble, in deep loss, there’s no exception because the *jince* in Arabic means the entire category. That no one should think when they read the *ayah* (not me, somebody else). I can think of my neighbors, I can think of these other k*uffar* that are in trouble. That’s not the idea when you use the word jince. It is a universal statement.

Then the second, we read this in: *zamakhsari* also *an nan naasa fi khusraanin min tijaarati him illas saaliheena wahda hum.*

That people are in tremendous loss because of the trades they make. In other words, they put their money and their effort and their time into things that they think will bring them profit. But they bring them nothing but loss. *Illas saaliheen*: except for the righteous. *Wahda hum* them alone (may Allah make us from them). *Li anna hum mushtara wal aakhirah bi-dunya* because those are the people. Which trade did they do? They purchased the *aakhirah* in exchange for giving up the pleasures of *dunya*. That’s the transaction that the *saaliheen* made. *Fa rabihu wa sa’idu* that then they were profitable and they were happy: *wa man ‘adaahum tajjaru khilaafa tijaarati him*. And then whoever was an enemy against them…who…who stood against this transaction of theirs - *fa waqa’u fil khasaara wa-sh-shaqawa,* and then they remained in loss and in despair.

Then we read something from *Ash-shawkani…wal ma’ana anna kulla insaan-in fil mataajir wal masaa’ib.* Beautiful words! He says that this means that every human being is in an act of selling and trading and making efforts constantly. Meaning they’re competing in making more sales than the other, and they’re competing in getting ahead from the other. This is what they’ve lost in. And if you remember, this is very similar to what we talked about in *At-takaathur*. His *tafseer* of this word is very similar to what we already read in *At-takaathur. Wa sarf-al ‘amaar fil ‘amaal i-dunya*. And he exhausts his ages (by *amaar* he’s referring to his age). Meaning youth is one age, maturity is one age, you know. Middle age is one age, old age and senility. He exhausts of his life opportunities in the works of *Dunya: lafi nuks. A*nd all of them that have been exhausted, *Wa sarf-al ‘amaar fil ‘amaal i-dunya lafi nuks*, they are all in loss. *Wa dalaal,* and in waste. *Anil haq hatta yamut:* and he is misled from the truth until he dies and then he wakes up. *Wa ‘qeel ul muraad bil insaan al kaafir.* We talked about this before but it’s coming directly from the *mufassiroon* now.

It is also been said that the *insaan* in this surah refers to the *kaafir*, that the meaning of *al insaan…innal insaana lafi khusr*, some have understood this as *innal kaafira lafi khusr. Wa qeela jama’atu min al kuffar.* It’s also been said this is a group from the *kuffar*, wahum-ul Waleed ibn al-Mugheera, Wal ‘aas bin Waa-il wal Aswad min Abdul Muttalib bin Asad wal awal ulaa. Others say that no; this is a group from the *kuffar* specifically from the life of the Prophet like Waleed ibn al Mugheera, ‘Aas bin Waa-il, Abdul Muttalib. These are the kinds of individuals (*la’ana humullah*), that are being referred to in this *surah* but even Ash-Shawkani Rahimahullah says that the first meaning is preferred. Among these who say they are *kuffar*, the ones who generally refer to the *kuffar* is the preferred meaning. But then even that has a criticism which we’ll get to.

*Wa qaal al akhfash fi khusr fi halaka*…Al Akhfash (*rahimahullah*) says when Allah says *fi Khusr*, he is in loss. What He means by that is he is in destruction. *Halaka…halaka…*actually literally means violent death. You know there’s Maut, that’s death but *halaak* or *halak* is violent death, like a death in a car accident, or… you know a vicious kind of death. So he’s putting himself…setting himself up for this vicious end.

*Wa qaal Al Farrah ‘uqooba.* And Farrah says this is a terrible ending. *Uqooba* means a consequence, an ending that is scary for others to watch. In other words, one’s end, that when other people see this, they don’t want to end up like that. And you use his *uqooba* as an example upon yourself, you know. Remember what happened to him? You don’t want to go down that road, that kind of thing. So this is *‘uqooba*.

Then Ibn Zayed says (*rahimahullah*) *lafi sharr…lafi khusr* here implies *lafi sharr*, that he is in…immersed in evil because the ultimate loss of the human being is his engrossment in evil deeds. We read something from Al-Shinqitee (rahimahullah) *lafdhal insaan wa in kaana munfaridan fa inna alfihi ju’ilatu lil jins*…the word *al insaan* - even though it’s singular, it’s used for all humanity, generally speaking.

Then we come to a very, very, important comment that has been made by Ibn Taymiyyah (Rahimahullah) and it’s so powerful it’s even quoted by Mufti Mohammed Shafee’ in his Urdu tafseer, Ma’ariful Quran. The translation of which is also available in English. It’s not the best English so if you can read Urdu, read the Urdu tafseer, Ma’ariful Quran. But those of you who don’t have access to that language, at least some…something of the English is available. What is this comment that is so beautiful that I’m referring to by Ibn Taymiyyah (Rahimahullah). He says that humanity is kept from accepting the truth of this Deen by two obstacles. There are two obstacles that keep human beings from saving themselves. Now what is the path to save yourselves, there are two things. Those are in the Quran; we find *al ladhina aamanu wa* what’s after *wa ‘amilus saalihat*. This is what we find all over the Quran, right. They believe and they act, they believe and they act. Even though we haven’t talked in detail, what…what *Iman* is Allah referring to? What righteous deed is Allah referring to? We’re just using them as terms, as tags and phrases right now. But generally this is the path to salvation. This is the path to save yourself and be successful in the *Aakhirah*. The first step:  *Iman*; the second step: action. Ibn Taymiyyah (Rahimahullah) argues there are two obstacles before the people that keep them from *Iman* and action. What are those two obstacles? He calls them *Shubuhaat* and *Shahawaat*. *Shubuhaat* and *Shahawaat*. What does that mean? *Shubuhaat* means doubts; *Shahawaat* means temptations, desires. So he says the two things that keep people from accepting the truth are doubts and temptations. What does he mean by that? You see, when you ask someone to accept this Deen, you’re asking them to give up a lot of things. You’re asking them really to give up a lot of things. You know, I had a friend in college. Big guy, really like you know, loved football. And we used to talk about Islam all the time. And I said, “Man, why don’t you just accept Islam?”

“I can’t give up that pork; I just can’t give it up. That’s some good stuff.”

What’s his obstacle? He’s not in doubt. His obstacle is not doubt; he’s convinced this is good. His obstacle is his temptation.

Another one says, “I can’t give up the life of partying, I can’t give up the women, I can’t give up the clubs, I can’t give up the drugs, I can’t give up this that or the other.”

These are desires. On the one hand there’s a person who says this is right but I cannot live by this because I’m too…The gravitational pull of temptation is just too strong for me.”

This is just one problem. Here’s another problem. Here’s a person who doesn’t accept. You know what this is because he’s not sure if this is the truth. You know he’ll say,

“How do you know yours is the only right religion? There are so many religions out there. What about them? What about all those people? They’re just going to go to hell? That’s what you believe? I can’t accept that. That’s just…I’m not sure. How can there be just one right way? You know if there was just one right way, why wouldn’t everybody follow?”

These kinds of questions come in this person’s mind. And they fall into what? Doubt. This is the route of doubt. Either one of these things will keep you from the Deen…either one of these things. And by the way, for most people the problem is in doubt. Most people the problem is temptations and then when they fall into their temptations, Shaytaan comes in and adds a new virus which is doubt. So when you call them to the Deen, they say I am in doubt. But the real problem wasn’t doubt. What was it? The temptations? So they…in other words, there’s a psychological problem and there’s an intellectual problem. You could also call it a spiritual problem or problem of the heart - which is temptation. There is an intellectual problem, a problem of the mind, which is doubt. Most people that give the excuse of the intellectual doubt, actually that’s not true, that’s a cover, that’s a façade. The real problem is their hearts have desires and they don’t want to give up their desires. And to cover that up they make all kinds of intellectual excuses. And when you get rid of all of them, the truth comes out; that was really their desire. I don’t want to change. You know, I don’t want to change. This is…this is a…you know…you know a sad state; they just don’t want to come out of.

Now why mention this in the midst of this surah? You see at the end Allah says,

*illal ladhina aamanu wa ‘amilus saalihaat…*But He mentioned two more things didn’t He?

*Wa ta waasau bil haqq wa ta waasau bis sabr.*

Ibn Taymiyyah (rahimahullah) argues: *wa ta wasaau bil haqq*. Truth is the removal of what? Doubt. Truth is the weapon against doubt. So *tawaasau bil haqq* gets rid of one obstacle, and what was the other obstacle? *Shahawaat*…temptations…desires. To fight against those desires, knowing the truth is not enough. What must you have? The strength to not fall into them; the strength to hold back; to control yourself. Where does that come from? *Wa ta waasau bi as sabr*.

You see how beautifully those two obstacles that keep people from *Iman and ‘aamal us saalihaah,* they are mentioned in *wa ta waasau bil haqq and wa ta waasau bis sabr*. This is the comment that I felt was very, very, important for us to understand.

Now we’re going to look at some other commentary. I’m going to go just through my notes so I don’t miss anything, in shaa Allahu ta’ala. The first comment just about this ayah, you see in these two *ayaat, Allah ‘azza wa jal* has depicted a very powerful reality, and one element of that is that human beings are so preoccupied with their personal problems. You know, Allah says human beings are in loss, right. But it’s… you know we’re talking…we’re thinking about the hell fire and the Day of Judgment and all of that. But even the way Allah created the human being on this Earth…before He has also said, we’ve already studied…*laqad khalaqnal insaana fi kabad:* we created the human being no doubt, in toil, in labor. Even the *kaafir* has to work hard. You got to; you know, work 40 hours, 50 hours to get a pay check and barely survive, barely make an income. That’s their state too. It’s not easy for anyone. So even…you know and there are people in the world who are Muslims or Non-Muslims that barely get food to eat or they see their children starving and they see all kinds of oppression. So it’s not like for the *kuffar*, all the kuffar, this world is *Jannah* also. They’re also in loss even in worldly terms. They’re in…they’re in…you know they suffer a lot of problems. But you know what happens? Human beings, when they completely immerse themselves in their own problems, that’s all they think about is themselves, then they fail to see that they’re part of a larger picture. And they fail to see their problems are nothing compared to the problems lying ahead. You think this is a problem? There is way bigger lying ahead. So they think they are in loss now but if you put it in perspective, it’s nothing compared to the loss that is coming. This is the first thing that we want to make note of.

Then you know what happens, when you don’t have *Iman*, when you don’t have this key that we’re going to talk about in the next ayah, your problems get blown out of proportion. You think I got some really big problems. You know I…I get reminded. Even I…you know human beings are weak. We have these kinds of things…you know and…when I still lived in Maryland, our basement, it flooded, right. And I was like “Oh my God, the carpet’s wet, it’s soggy!” This, that, the other, but *Alhamdulillah*; we don’t have basements in Texas so it’s cool. But you know…and I called this brother to help out, you know get rid of the water and stuff. And I was like “I’m all stressed out, the kids are upstairs and you know electronics,” and this and that. And the brother comes and the brother…he’s a good brother, *Alhamdulillah,* he’s from…happens to be from Somalia. He’s really good like a handy man. He helps out with the Islamic school in the *masjid* and the brother’s helping out and he says, “You look worried, Akhi.” And I was like, “Yeah you know this…all this problem.” And he goes like, “Don’t worry about water akhi, you can’t fight water; it killed Fir’aun!” You know, and we just started talking and we’re talking and he tells me his life story, *SubhanAllah, subhanAllah*. He was like five years old when his village was attacked by enemy tribes. And he survived on the back of a donkey hiding in hay. And he’s traveled as a kid. His parents were executed. He’s the only child left in the family. From five years old he’s been living on his own, just travelling like half of Africa. He went to Ethiopia [but] he ended up in like the Khaleej. He started working for a sheikh, learned some little bit of trade, and became an Engineer. He’s got the craziest story, you know. And when you hear his story, you say, “Man I got no problems.” We get lost…you get immersed in your problems and you blow them out of proportion…and this is another loss of the human being. He is at a loss to see that what problems he has are nothing compared to what’s out there. He fails to see the gratitude that Allah…he owes Allah (*‘azza wa jal)*. And when this happens, when human beings are so preoccupied with their own life, their own problem, they fail to see the lessons in the three things. There are three things I want to highlight to you.

The first is the lessons in the creation of Allah. They no longer look at the creation of Allah as signs that remind you what your real purpose in life is. What are the real problems that you should avoid? Financial problems are nothing; health problems are nothing. The problem of *Iman* is something big in comparison. This is nothing compared to that problem. You know. You have social problems…it’s nothing. You know job problem is nothing. Compared to the problem that I am immersed in evil deeds and I need to start doing good deeds to save myself. That’s a much bigger problem. And the ayaat of Allah, the creations of Allah, when you reflect on them…naturally what happens is you remember your Creator, you remember what you owe Him and where you’re headed. They fail to see the creations around them as signs.

Another thing they fail to see is the lessons of history which is actually what this *surah* is highlighting. When…when Allah says *wal ‘asr*, remember the word *‘asr…*time as it passes away? If you just reflect on history and how many people have come and failed and have gone, they had a little bit of time to become a success and they didn’t make use of that time and they failed and they’re gone and their chance is over. Then a new generation came with a new chance and they lost their chance and their time was over. And now it’s my turn. I have a chance; I better not make the mistake that these people made which is why Allah tells me of the nations of the past who lost the opportunity. You know Allah is alluding to all of those historic accounts in the Quran just in the word *wal ‘asr,* because all of them, their ultimate loss, was not availing the time that they had before it gets too late - you know.

*Min qabli anyaatiyahum ‘azaabun aleem*…before a punishment comes to make…avail that time. And finally of course are the signs of revelation. When you’re too preoccupied with your own life, you fail to look at the Quran, you fail to look at Revelation, you fail to look at the legacy of Prophet Muhammad (*salallahu ‘alayhi wassalam*) for guidance of how should I live my life. What should I aspire towards? Because if your only concern is your career, you’re not going to get career advice and programming from the *Rasoolullah salalaahu ‘alayhi wassalam.* Right, you’re not going to get that from the Quran. But if you’re looking for where should I spend my money, how should I raise my kids, how should I be to my neighbor, what do I…what more do I owe my parents. When you start thinking, you know why my…what good can I do then you turn to the Book, then you turn to the Messenger (*‘alayhi salaatu wassalam*). So this preoccupation with the self in and of itself is the loss of the human being.

Then as far as one of the beautiful things I want to comment on also is a statement from Shah Waliullah Dehlawi (*Rahimahullah*). Talking about *‘Asr*, the word *‘asr* in this ayah and connecting with the loss of the human being, Shah Waliullah Dehlawi (Rahimahullah) has a term he uses for certain passages of the Quran. He calls them *ad tadhkeer bi ayaam illah…*reminder by the days of Allah…reminder by the days of Allah. What are the days of Allah? It is the day He created the human being, the day on which He sent revelation to His Messenger (*salalaahu ‘alayhi wassalam*), the day of Badr, the day on which the flood came to the disbelievers against Nuh (‘alayhi salaam), the day when the water was parted, the day when Fir’aun was destroyed, etc. The day when Musa (‘alayhi salaam) spoke to Allah (‘azza wa jal). These are the amazing days in human history. And Allah refers to these awesome days all over the book. Of course in the future also there are amazing days coming. The Day of Judgment, the day on which the believers will get to see their Lord, etc., etc. These are the…these are…you know incredible occasions of time and by using *wal ‘asr* and to save ourselves that warning, it is if we only remember those days of Allah it would be enough for us to not fall into loss, to keep things into perspective. That’s the commentary of Shah Waliullah Dehlawi (rahimahullah).

And finally something Hameedudin Farahi said which also I found very, very beautiful. He said one of the lessons of this Surah is: a lot of people they go you know, when they…when they…when you get a vacation and you go like ah…to…to a historical site, right. People want to go visit the Great Wall of China, or they want to see the ancient monuments in Rome, right. Or you go to Algeria by the water, the Roman Empire had built these like amazing forts and you know docks for the ships and stuff like that. You go see these historical sites and people take pictures next to them with smiles on their faces. But what are those monuments a sign of? They are sign of destroyed nations. They’re literally…you know…a grave is a record of a person who dies, but those monuments are a record of a nation that died. Think about that. Those are graves of an entire nation. So when you go to them you should remember how these people didn’t avail their time and their time was gone. No matter how high and big and powerful they thought, time is an enemy you cannot fight. You know…you can…you can have all the weapons in the world [but] you will still lose against this one enemy. This one…this one will get you, right. And these…all these great powers that thought whose going to come against us you know…Allah even tells them on the Day of Judgment, “Aren’t you the one who used to swear?… *ma lakum min zawaal awalum takunu aqsamtum min qabl…*Weren’t you the ones that used to swear much before this, that you’re not going to have any downfall. We’re going to be number one; nobody is going to take us down? Well time took you down too. A time came when your time…you know was gone too. So he says that even visiting the ancient sites and ruins in and of themselves is a reminder of *Surat ul ‘Asr*. So when somebody sees an ancient site, he says, “W*al ‘asr innal insaana lafi khusr”…right? SubhanAllah.*

This is the…the final commentary on that issue. Then, as far as the lost, just a few other things. Actually most of this I already made mention to but the suffering of the human being on this earth. This is something I wanted to highlight. You know we talked about the poor starving, the victims of crime, those who basically live miserable lives in labor, you know… We know human beings have actually even more suffering than animals, if you think about it. Human beings have additional…in addition to physical suffering we also have psychological suffering, right? The…the lion doesn’t care if his grandkid got sick. He doesn’t care, he doesn’t have that consciousness. They don’t care. Birds don’t look after their extended relatives, they just move on. They take care of their cubs and their young for a very little time and then they’re on their own and you don’t care about them, right. Sounds a lot like modern society for human beings, but… generally though, you’re still emotional when your child is hurting, and you’re hurting perhaps even more than your child. The psychological elements of torture are sometimes even worse than physical pain, they’re even worse than physical pain. And you know you would think, “Oh yeah! These are problems of the poor and the sick and the weak. What about the rich? They live good lives? Actually they don’t. Some of the highest suicide rates in the world are in some of the wealthiest counties, even in the United States, right. Some of the wealthiest places in the country have the highest suicide rates; people overdosing on anti-depressants. You know the farmer who’s poor, who has barely like two meals to eat - can go to sleep peacefully at night. But the guy who’s got millions upon millions, he’s got like six bedrooms to choose from. “Where am I going to sleep”? He can’t go to sleep at night; he has to take anti-depressants. He’s being killed psychologically. So they [and] everyone’s in loss, everyone has got some kind of problems. Everyone has this.

And Allah *(azza wa jal*) in this Surah didn’t just give us relief from the final loss, which is *Aakhirah*, that’s the ultimate loss, right. Hell-fire, standing before Allah and having to answer for your deeds - that would be the worst loss. But He even gave us relief from the loss of this world. From depression…from like anxiety, from fear you know, from oppression, He gave us….He freed us from these things also in His solution: *illal ladhina aamanu wa ‘amilus saalihaat. W*hen we study this solution we see it’s not just a remedy for the *Aakhirah*, it is also a remedy for *Dunya* because in the end the loss of the human being will happen in the *Aakhirah*, but it is also happening in *Dunya*; it’s happening here too. And Allah answers both of them in this profound Surah. Like Allah ‘azza wa jal says: *Ya ayuhal insaan innaka kaadihun ila rabbika kadhan fa mulaaqihi*… Amazing *ayah*: you forgetful human being, you are marching forward, toiling forward *Kadah* is to move with a lot of effort, right. Whether you like it or not you are marching towards Allah (‘azza wa jal) and you will get to meet him. Whether you think you’re going to meet him or not, whether you’re prepared for it or not, whether you care or not, whether you want to hear it or not, every single second that passes you are one step closer to meeting Him. Every day that passes, you are one step closer to meeting Him. You could live your life of sin or you could party it away, fine; living it up, right. Like there’s no tomorrow. There is a tomorrow and that’s coming and you will meet Him. So this is, this is the profound lesson embedded in the Surah also.

So now, what I want to tie these to, like the loss of *Dunya*, the loss of *Aakhirah*. In this *Dunya* somebody says, “Man, I wish I had a better job, I wish I had that car, I wish I had this…you know I wish I had married that woman. I wish I could have this, I wish I could have that. I wish I didn’t have this problem, I wish I didn’t have that problem.” What happens in the *Aakhirah: ya laeetani kuntu turaaba*. I wish I was dust. Can you compare? SubhanAllah! You think these problems are big, there’s far bigger coming, far bigger coming, *SubhanAllah*. So this is when you really appreciate. Today we appreciate the loss of the human being but *then* is when we’d really appreciate *innal insaana lafi khusr.*

Now we get to the last ayah *In shaa Allahu ta’ala* of this Surah, which is really…you should remember all of this is actually one sentence. The entire Surah:

*Wal ‘asri*

*innal insaana lafi khusr*

*illal ladhina aamanu*

*wa ‘amilus saalihaat*

*wa tawasaau bil haqq*

*wa tawaasau bis sabr*

Linguistically [it] is one statement, one discourse; it’s not disconnected. This exception, the comments we’ve made before, are that the exception is always the minority and the people who don’t meet the exceptional criteria are always the majority. In other words the people in loss are the majority and the people who are successful are the minority. But you know there’s something we should know about society and just the way the world works. The majority decides what is right and what is wrong. The majority sets the trends. The majority sets the standards. We do things. And by the way, even in psychology, you know how normal behavior is defined? Normal behavior is defined as what everybody does. And abnormal behavior is defined when somebody is doing something that nobody else is doing. In other words, everybody is driving this way and you’re driving that way. You are doing what? [Doing] abnormal behavior, right? Now think about that from the religious point of view. You have a society where everybody does certain things and you go to your job and everybody does certain things; but you’re a Muslim [and] you can’t do those things. Guess what they start thinking of you as? Not just, not just Muslims, but weird, abnormal, you don’t fit [in]. That guy’s a little off. You know what’s he doing in that corner over there, why is he…why doesn’t he eat this stuff? It is such good food he turned it away. Why didn’t he go to that party? Why did he avoid that woman that was trying to hit on him, why did he do that? You know…they don’t get it and they think it’s weird. And this is…by the way when you are constantly looked at as “strange,” it can have an impact on you. I don’t want to be weird; I don’t want to be looked at as strange. So you know what happens, even though the majority are losers, you’re the actual…you’re the successful one. They start convincing you that you are living a life of loss. You need to get with the program basically. What they’ll start convincing you of psychologically is “Man, this is getting hard, I can’t live like this, I need to you know…everybody else gets to enjoy life, why do I have to live this strange life?” So the problem isn’t just of accepting this truth knowing that the majority will be on falsehood and being cognizant of that will help you and me a lot, because the forces (the majority has a force, it has a pull). My teacher used to give the analogy of swimming upstream. All the fish are going this way and there’s this one or two fish that’s trying to go upstream. Obviously anybody who looks at that, he’ll be like, “Crazy man, let’s go this way, everybody’s headed that way. Why you’re going up there for? It’s harder and it’s only going to get harder. You’re only going further up.” *SubhanAllah*. This is the example of the human being in a society that is headed…the entire society is headed in the way of loss.

And you know our challenge is a profound challenge because you know if you were living in a society where Islam was being practiced as it should be, right. If that was the case, which by the way isn’t the case in much of the world, so don’t even idealistically think, “Oh I’m going to go to the Muslim world. It’s going t be great.” Let’s get real. What’s happening in the Muslim, world we should know? But even if that was…that was the case, and *In shaa Allahu ta’ala* it will be the case. Allah will give establishment to this *Deen.* If we were living in such a society then obeying Allah is actually easy because the majority is doing it. So, even…not just you should do it but when everybody’s doing it, it becomes easier to do. But in this society obeying Allah becomes harder because the majority is bent upon disobeying Allah. It is bent upon disobeying Allah so much so if this isn’t even the case in society, this may be the case in your own family. Your own family, the majority of them may be headed towards loss and you want to save yourself and they say, “Why are you turning yourself into a loser?” They’ll actually ironically use those terms. “Why are you such a loser” which is - you know - funny because they’re headed towards loss, right. *Subhan Allah.* This is an amazing you know…thing to be aware of that’s embedded in this ayah by use of this exception.

Anyhow

*Illal ladhina aamanu wa ‘amilus saalihaati wa tawaasau bil haqqi wa tawaasau bis sabr…*

The first comment we will make is that when Allah mentioned the loss of the human being the singular was used: *Al insaan*…even though it refers to all human beings. We talked about diffusion and responsibility last time, the singular was used. You know what that means, in the end you might think you’re following the crowd; you got a lot of people with you. It’s the way your family does things, or your tribe does things or your country does things or whatever. But when it comes to suffering the consequences of your mistakes, nobody will be with you. You will be by yourself. People follow trends but when the time comes:

*wa taqata’at bihi al asbaab*

All their relationships will be chopped off. But when it came to the exception Allah didn’t say:

*illal ladhi aamana wa ‘amila saalihan…wa ‘amilas saalihaat wa ta waasa bil haqq wa ta waasa bis sabr*.

No, he didn’t use the singular, he used the plural…he used the plural. So we have to understand this transition from the singular to the plural. What we learn here is these few people that are going to go against the mold and they’re going to swim upstream, the only way they will survive is if they stick together; they cannot be apart. It’s like that leaf that cuts off from the tree you know, it dies. They have to remain connected to this *ummah*. The unity of this *ummah* and the believers sticking together is embedded in this *ayah* as part of our survival because of the use of the plural. *Iman* is not something you can sustain on your own. It has…you know…*Iman* is boosted with good company, with reminder, with council, with *salaah* in *jama’ah*. All of these things are *Iman* boosters, right… Because we do them together. They’re collective things. So the word *aamanu* is beautiful here that Allah *‘azza wa jal* tied the exception to a collective affair and not - just you know - you would think *Iman* is a personal thing. Okay, good deeds, maybe, we should do them together…

*tawaasi bil haqq tawaasi bis sabr…*

That’s…it involves other people, but *Iman* is a personal thing. But even *Iman* Allah *‘azza wa jal* made it a collective affair. What we learn from that is if you think you have *Iman* and you have nothing to do with the community, the *masjid*, you don’t go and benefit from the reminder…the daily reminder of the *imam;* you don’t have council of good brothers around you, good sisters around you, then you are going to necessarily suffer a loss of *Iman*. And those of you that distance yourselves from the *masjid*, sometimes you will face…you will feel it: “Man I…I don’t feel good. I got to go back to Allah’s house. I got to.” You know…and it’s not just about praying because you could pray at home too. It’s this collective you know…body of believers. They…they feed off of each other. They raise the *Iman* together. This should happen even in circles of learning. You know if you’re sitting and listening to a lecture on your own, you might benefit. But when brothers and sisters will learn together, it actually helps us more. It boosts the Iman more. When you see a lot of people attending a program, in and of itself is a motivator. “Man I need to come to these things more often,” even if you don’t know anyone. There’s just something about *la ilaaha illalah* that binds us together and gives us strength. Just the sight of each other gives us strength. That’s what the love and affection of this u*mmah* is supposed to be. So that’s one of the things about the transition from singular to plural.

The other thing we should talk about here is *illal ladhina aamanu… A*llah ‘azza wa jal in this ayah didn’t mention any qualifications of Iman.

*Al ladhina aamanu billahi wa malaaikatihi wa kutubihi wa rusulihi wal yaum il aakhiri*

Nothing! He didn’t say that “Believe in Allah, believe in the Last Day,” none of that. He just said they have *Iman*. Who are these people? What is this *Iman*? There are so many things to talk about from the Quran’s own point of view within Iman, we’ll have to pick and choose just a couple of things *in shaa Allahu ta’ala*.

The first thing we’ll talk about is the fruits of *Iman*, just the fruits of *Iman*. How are you supposed to know that the kind of Iman you have…you know…what should you…what should you taste from it? Basically the fruit of Iman essentially is tranquility, at the heart of it. The fruit of Iman is tranquility. Remember we said human beings are in loss. What are the losses of the human being? Loss of health, loss of wealth, loss of loved one right? These are the kinds of losses human beings suffer in this world. Loss of comfort. But if you have Iman then you know that this world is not permanent, this world is temporary and what Allah has in the Aakhirah compared to this world is nothing.

*Wa ma mata ‘udunya fil aakhirati illa qaleel…you know…this…this…al hayaat id dunya actually…mata ‘ul hayaat id dunya fil aakhirati illa qaleel…fi surat at tauba*

He says, “What [are] the utilities, the things you use in this life, the worldly life compared to the *aakhirah*; what are they? Very little… miniscule. If you really, really, really believe that, you have *Iman* in that, if you have *Iman* in

*fa ma uteetu min shayee in fa mata ‘ul hayaat ud Dunya*

Whatever you have been given [are] utilities of worldly life. You know in that ayah Allah says whatever you have, no whatever you have been given…*fa ma uteetum…*whatever you have been given. You know when you are given something, it doesn’t belong to you, and it belongs to the one who gave it to you; so when it’s taken away you say, “Well it wasn’t mine to begin with. Because he gave it to me, he has the right to take it back.” When it’s your own and you lose it, you say, “Man! I can’t believe I lost my money, my house, my car, my kid, my wife.” But when you realize all of this is *na’eem*, this is given to you, this is blessing to you, when it’s taken away even when we ourselves are taken away, what do we say? We say, *“Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi*” we belong to Allah, what to speak of the things we own. We belong to Allah and we are to be returned to him, returned to Owner, right, the attitude of the believer changes. I’ll give you just one example, just…this…one small aspect of Iman because if we just started talking about various you know aspects of Iman, it would take a series in and of itself; perhaps another time, *in shaa Allahu ta’ala*.

But at least the fruits of Iman I wanted to mention, the primary fruit being tranquility. You’re at peace with your life whether you’re poor or you’re healthy or you’re sick or you’re healthy or you’re old or you’re young. Whether people like you or don’t, if you have Iman, you’re at peace. You’re at peace with yourself; you’re at peace with Allah (‘azza wa jal). And this is something most human beings don’t enjoy by the way. Most human beings are not at peace and they’re running after it. Why do you think people go after one…go watch one movie, then another one comes out and they run after it go… They’re looking for tranquility, enjoyment, entertainment; their heart should finally be at rest. Why is it that they get one car then they run after another car; get one house, run after another house. Why do we do that? Because we’re not at rest... But Allah says:

*“Ala bidhikr illahi tatmainna al quloob.”*

By remembering Allah hearts will be satisfied, they’ll be tranquil, they’ll be at rest. That is the real fruit of Iman. That is the real fruit of…and when you have that, you have no loss. No loss is a loss; so just one example of that, *In shaa Allah*, a real life example, and then we’ll move forward *In shaa Allahu ta’ala*.

The example I want to give you is of a friend of mine who lives in New Orleans. And this…this…this friend of mine, you know he used to own a car dealership, luxury cars, Muslim family and they own all these cars but they paid for them in cash because they didn’t want to deal in *Riba* (interest) and stuff. So all these German cars, high-end Japanese cars, right? And they’ve…they’re sitting right there on the lot surrounded by palm trees, water, beautiful property, right. And they’re like selling hundreds of thousands of dollars’ worth of merchandise every single month. Business is good, and then you have Katrina, right. And the Levies break and they’re right on the water. The only car left was the… I think it was the LS 400. Lexus…the top…top class Lexus that they escaped in. When I went to meet the brother, he and his father were delivering pizza in that Lexus. That’s what his job was. Now you can imagine they went from what to what, right. What kind of lifestyle, what kind of financial dealings to what kind of lifestyle where they now have to deliver pizza and work at a pizza restaurant full time. But a big smile on their face and I’m looking at them, like, “Man, people if they suffer this kind of loss, either they pop a you know whole bottle of Advil or Tylenol and get it over with, they jump off a cliff, they…they’ll drown themselves. They can’t take it anymore you know. They don’t want to deal with it. Why…what’s…what’s that smile on your face? He said, “You know when we were busy, when business was good, we didn’t have time to go to the masjid, we didn’t get to…I didn’t get to see the wife much, didn’t get to play with the kids. Now *Subhan Allah* we catch every Salah in the masjid; there’s still a roof over our heads, food on our plate, what do we have to be ungrateful for? We should be grateful. *Subhan Allah*, this doesn’t happen unless you have Iman. That kind of loss is not a loss. But if you don’t have Iman then that’s a loss, then you’ll be…you will collapse. You will no longer be…you won’t even want to live. You know people are willing to commit suicide because they wanted to, you know, get with this girl and she married somebody else, and they jump off a bridge and this and that. This real life story, I know of a Muslim kid that this happened to in the 90’s in New York. Wanted to marry this girl, she married somebody else, he jumped off the… you know…the Brooklyn bridge…jumped…and he killed himself, committed suicide. It’s a sad thing. When does that happen? When you long for something other than Allah and longing for Allah will give you tranquility and that will not happen until you have Iman. This is the escape from loss…*illal ladhina aamanu…*this is the first thing.

Then Allah (‘azza wa jal) mentions *wa ‘amilus saalihaat*. First, in the way I organize my notes…just…I’m going to go through the difficult vocabulary and some of the commentary and then we’ll come back to the ayah as a whole and look at the lessons piecemeal. But let’s just deal with the vocabulary first.

*Wa ‘amilu…’amilu…*

The word *‘amal* in Arabic is similar to another word called *Fi’l*. There is *‘amal* and there is F*i’l. ‘Amal* is a conscious action. ‘Amal is a conscious action. While fi’l is a sub…it can also be a subconscious action. For example, fi’l is “I’m breathing right now.” That’s not an ‘amal that is what…it’s a fi’l. I’m walking, that can be a fi’l because I’m not necessarily thinking about every step, you know looking at my foot…hey move forward. You know do that. It’s subconscious almost, right. When you open your eyes and you can see, that’s not a ‘amal, that is what? A fi’l. But when you speak to someone, when you speak…when you go to work, when you drive your car, rightl when you…when you buy…go and buy groceries, these are all ‘amaal because there is a conscious intent involved. You actually thought about it and then did it.

So here Allah (‘azza wa jal) is making us…one thing we’re realizing is we are answerable for every single act that we did consciously because they are behaviors…they are. You know, by the way, in our Deen there’s so much mercy, there are people who don’t have control over their conscious behavior, they lose their sanity, they have all kinds of psychological disorders. They’re you know…and they are not…in…in our Deen they are *ghair mukkalaf*. They’re not held responsible for their behavior. But ‘amal in it of itself includes conscious actions and then the…the word after it ‘amilu… as saalihaat.

The word *as saalihaat* is actually an adjective. It comes from the word Salah which means to reconcile and to rectify…to reconcile and rectify. This is a very powerful word; it has two things in it that I want to highlight, *In shaa Allah*. My fear genuinely is we’re not going to finish Surat ul ‘Asr today. In shaa Allah one last session after, In shaa Allah, one last session.

But anyway…the word as saalihaat, is an adjective in and of itself. The word that is understood…well you know…Allah says they do goods literally…if you want a rough translate it…goods…but good in and of itself in English doesn’t even sound right. Good is an adjective. But an adjective requires a noun. Good deeds. Even…you know a lot of translations they say…and they do good deeds. Well the good is here in the word Saalih, where’s the word deeds? It’s not there in the Arabic. That word would’ve been *wa ‘amilu al ‘amaala as saalihaati*. If the word al ‘amaal was there, which is understood. It is mahzoof; it’s implied. Now the things that I want to highlight here are…are couple of things. The first thing is the word al ‘amaal in Arabic is considered *jam’a mukassar…*it’s a broken plural and broken plurals are supposed to have feminine adjectives. This…I know it’s a little bit technical but you’ll see the benefit of it in a second, *In shaa Allah*.

So typically you would say al ‘amaala as saalihata. You would put a Ta marbuta on as saaliha and that would be done. Righteous deeds. But Allah ‘azza wa jal says al ‘amaala in…understood but He says as saalihaati…jam’a muzakkar saalih. This is the feminine plural form. So what’s the difference between saying as saalihata, just putting a ta marbuta as we would expect? And instead of putting the ta marbuta, putting the feminine plural form. Well the difference is, from the balaagha point of view if you put the ta marbuta then those are many many many deeds. But when you put the feminine plural this is considered a form of jam’u qilla, a plural of minimum, meaning Allah is saying righteous deeds that I’m asking you to do are not countless. They’re just a few. I’m not asking a lot of you. You just have to do a few good deeds. In other words our Deen isn’t composed of an endless list of instructions. Allah has asked us for a few things and we fail to do them. Right, and the fact that Allah hasn’t asked us for much is inside the word as saalihaat. Had it been as saaliha, it would’ve been a lot more, it would rhetorically…would’ve been a lot more. subhanAllah. So what are these few things you know, the muharramaat are a few. The main faraaid…the main obligations are a few. Then there are things in your deen that embellish your life as a Muslim. They are the Sunnan of the Prophet salallaahu ‘alayhi wassalam. They are behaviors that add… you know... make your etiquette, your manners, your behaviors better and better. They increase your Iman and your taqwa. But at the heart of it there are a few things you should definitely do and there are a few things you should definitely not do and they’re not a lot. And they are so few that any Muslim knows them. The few things at the core of this Deen are so few that any Muslim knows what they should do and what they shouldn’t do. Even the guy who doesn’t study Islam at all, doesn’t learn anything, even that person knows they should pray five times, even that person knows they should fast in Ramadan, even that person knows they should go to Hajj. Even that person knows they owe something to tell their non-Muslim neighbors…something about....they should tell them something about Islam at least. They should know…at least I’ll give them a CD, I’ll hand them a pamphlet, something…they know that…they…they…the very basics everybody knows. Even if you don’t know them in academic terms they are just a few. This is the first thing I wanted to highlight.

The second thing I wanted to highlight about as saalihaat is that this word has in Arabic *luzoom and ta’addi* in it. What that means in English, I know I’ll use difficult words but I’ll simplify them as we go on. This word is transitive and intransitive. The word saalihaat can be understood as transitive which is called ta’addi or muta’addi in Arabic and intransitive which is laazim or luzoom infinitive, okay. What does that mean? The benefit of knowing that is as saalihaat could be…it could be describing the actions. Saalih means that which corrects. So these are correct actions. These are correct, good actions. Actions that…that in and of themselves are good and the consequences of them are also good. That’s when the word is laazim. If the word is muta’addi, you know what it means? The one who does them becomes good, meaning these are means by which the person who does them is becoming good. In other words, this saalihaat could be the impact…the description could be of the action and it could also be a means by which a person is being reconciled. You want to become a better person, start doing better things. Do good things and automatically you will start to become a better person. t’s like good deeds are being described in this Surah like medicine that are making you better and better and better. SubhanAllah. So the deed in and of itself is good and they are making you good. They’re correcting you, they’re fixing you. And the more you abandon them, the sickness comes back. And the more you take this medicine the more you start getting healed. That is embedded beautifully inside the word as saalihaat. It’s incredible that Allah (*‘azza wa jal)* put it in this way. *Illal ladhina aamanu wa ‘amilu as saalihaat.*

Then the final two…just as far as vocabulary. Let’s look at…these are little bit tougher words. So we’ll just look at my notes, *In shaa Allahu ta’ala* and conclude our third session. As far as linguistic analysis is concerned, the word *tawaasi*, related words from it are *wasaahu…wassaahu* and *awsaahu*, to charge someone, to command someone….*bi kadha…*to do such and such a thing. For example, if I say *wassaituka bis salaah*, it means, “I told you to make salaah. Man I’m telling you, you really should make salaah. I’m not just telling you, I’m counselling you, like kind of giving you a heart to heart. I’m doing my best to tell you and I’m telling to you in a way that makes you think this guy is telling me something that’s good for me.” You know there’s a way to tell someone something that aggrandizes yourself: “Hey you don’t make salaah, what’s the matter with you?” Right? That’s just putting yourself up and putting them down. But then when you talk to someone in a way that they feel what you want is good for them…right. I really think you should come, I really think you should stop doing that. I mean I’m worried about you. You know the tone - this is in wasseea itself…wasseea literally means to leave a will. And you know who you leave a will for, loved ones. And a will is full of things that will benefit the people after you’re gone. And when someone writes a will it implies they don’t have a lot of time left so they better write it up now, because once they’re gone, who knows what’s going to happen, so they will…they want to leave these important parting words to this person. This is at the heart of this word. What it includes is a sense of urgency. It’s like when you tell someone the truth, you have this urgency: “I’m not going to be around tomorrow, I better get this advice out to them now when I still can.” You know a lot of times when somebody needs your advice you say,

“I don’t know…I don’t know how they’re going to take it man, I don’t know if I should tell them. They’re not going to like what I have to say. We’re good friends, but if I bring this up we might not be good friends anymore. They might not want to talk to me anymore. I’ll wait for a better time.”

And you’ll keep waiting for a better time and a better time will never come. It’s true we should look for the right opportunity but we should also have a sense of urgency and the sense of urgency is inside the word *tawaasau*. This is the first thing that we wanted to highlight. This is also used by the way when you give someone an enormous amount of wealth. Waseea is also when you leave someone, bequeathed someone with land or like a house, or you know a river’s named after someone. This is also from *tawaasi*. So by implication what that means is what you are to offer someone is literally valued advice. It’s a treasure that you’re giving to someone that you’re handing them over that is really going to be of benefit to them.

Okay, so this is the second thing inside this word. And finally *at tawaasi* is from *baab* at *tafaa’ul* which means al *ishtriaaq*. It includes in it…this…this… a component of it is things that are done mutually. Meaning you are enjoining the other, you’re telling the other truth and the other is telling you a truth. And a part of that lesson we’ll share today. When you tell…when you give someone good advice sometimes they get back to you and say O yeah what about you, you’re telling me to do this, but I’ve seen you do this that or the…you know they come back at you. They come back at you with a good comeback too. Now the thing is the normal person has the reaction, “Man, I’m trying to tell you something good and all you can do is attack me. This is not about me; this is about you. This is how you would think.” But *tawaasi* implies it’s about you and it’s also about me. So even if he’s saying just to get back at you, your job in the spirit of *tawaasi bil haqq* is, “You know what, you’re right I should work on that.” And you should just leave it at that. This is the spirit of *tawaasi bil haqq*.

These are the stories we learn from Umar ibn al Khattab (radiallahu ‘anhu) right. He’s walking by, he sees…I’m not giving you the full narration, just the glimpse of it. He’s walking by; he looks through the window and he sees a guy drinking. He buzzed inside, grabbed the guy, “Haram!” He said, ”I did one, you did three. You did three haram. First of all you looked inside, second of all you came in without permission, third of all you made an assumption. How do you know I’m drinking alcohol, right? You made three. Umar ibn al Khattab says, “You’re right,” and he walks away. Doesn’t say anything! Weeks go by. He’s giving Khutbah and the same guy shows up in the khutbah. He sits all the way in the back, and after the *khutbah* is done, he sneaks up to Umar (radiallahu ‘anhu), he says…Umar says to him, you know, “Ever since that day I stopped checking, you know looking at people…I didn’t tell anyone about you either.” And the guy says ever since that day I stopped drinking. But the idea is you tell someone but you also expect that they tell you and it might not be in a way that you like. That’s okay in the end. If there’s even an element of truth in it you take it. Even…and you know…Umar ibn al Khattab could say, “Yeah, I know I’m wrong, but you’re still wrong too, come with me.” No, he just took it and you know what that shows? That shows sincerity. That shows sincerity. Your ability to take criticism, your ability to…for someone to come up to you and say you’re wrong and you say you’re right in the spirit of *tawaasi bil haqq*, because that is a gift someone has given you. How many times do we think when someone comes to us and gives us serious, genuine counsel that they are actually giving us a gift? Most of us look at it as an attack on our ego. Right, we look at it [and say], “How dare you! Who are you? Who are you? Where did you get your *ijaazah* that you can tell me what to do? Who made you sheikh,” right? “Since when are you the Imam?” Right, these are the kinds of questions you might get. “Who do you think you are? This is the kind of thing you might get. But what’s your attitude when you’re corrected? You take the best of it, leave the bad of it. Don’t assume this guy is doing it to insult me or humiliate me, their intention is with Allah. You don’t have to judge their intention, you leave that alone, and you just take the good of it. This is part of the spirit of *tawaasi bil haqq*.

*In shaa Allahu ta’ala* in our next session we’ll also talk about the meanings of the word *haqq* but I’ll just go…run through my notes to…at least…and that part is done and we

So in terms of this last *ayah*, the summary of *Ash Shawkani rahimahullah is aye jama’u bayn al Iman billah wal ‘amal as saalih fa innahum fi rab hin la fi khusr*…that these people gathered and they combined between Iman and good action. And this is something that comes up in *tafseer* over and over and over and over again. Iman and action are necessary consequences of each other. If you do good deeds your Iman will increase, and if you have Iman there is no way you could do it without having good deeds. What kind of Iman is this that you have it and it doesn’t lead you to any action. That’s impossible. And there’s no good action that doesn’t end up increasing your Iman. Okay, so they have a…this mutual relationship, so when they develop this, *fa innahum fi rib*…then they are definitely in a profit and not in any kind of loss…when they are able to make that connection between Iman and action. Unfortunately, a lot of Muslims believe their Iman - rather their Islam - is good enough. They’re set for Paradise because they already said *la ilaaha illallah Muhammad ar rasoolullah salalaahu ‘alayhi wassallam…*without getting into any theological, historical debate about which group said this about Iman and *‘amal*, which group said that…without getting into any of that. Just from a psychological point of view, people have that as an escape. Just like Christians have that escape:

“I already said the name of the Lord, you know…I already pronounced…I already said Jesus now I can be a drug dealer for all I care, and it’s all good. I’m already saved.”

We have the same exact mentality seeped into the Muslim community. When somebody says, “I’m already Muslim, yeah I mess up, I do a lot of haram things, but come on, I’m already…I already got my ticket right here. I already said *la ilaaha illallah Muhammad ar rasoolullah salalaahu ‘alayhi wassallam.* That’s good enough; I should be alright because my Iman is there.”

This Surah makes it clear, *illal ladhina aamanu*…not enough…*wa ‘amilus saalihaat…wa tawaasau bil haqq wa tawaasau bis sabr.* When you fulfill all four then you’re saved. Until then you’re not saved. And what it also teaches us if you think you have Iman and none of this is happening, then you probably don’t have Iman. Chances are you think you have Iman but you don’t.

So the Bedouins thought they had Iman…*qaalat il ‘araabu aamanna*…In *Surat ul Hujraat*, they said we have Iman. Allah said *qul lam tu’minu…*No, you don’t have…you didn’t get Iman yet…*wa la kin kullu aslamna…*you only have Islam.

Wa lamma yad khulil Imanu fi quloobikum…Iman hasn’t entered your hearts yet. And what is the proof that Iman hasn’t entered your hearts yet?

*Wa in tutee ’ullaha wa rasoolahu*…if you obey Allah and His Messenger [PBUH]…doesn’t action get mentioned? Allah says you don’t have Iman, you only have Islam, but you…and Iman hasn’t come into your heart. What should you do to get it into your heart?

Obey Allah and His Messenger; do action. *La yumitkum min ‘aamaalikum shaee an*. None of your deeds will be wasted away. *SubhanAllah*. These are the combinations of these two things.

A couple of notes left *In shaa Allah,* in the next five minutes we’ll be done. I’ll just read through them quickly. Az zamakhshari comments, “When he comes to *tawaasi bil haqq*. In explaining *al haqq…*he says…it includes *Tawheed*, includes obedience to Allah and His Messenger [PBUH], it includes being distant from worldly ambition and inclination towards the Hereafter.

Ashawkaani, when he talks about *tawaasi bil haqq,* he says…*wassa ba’adahum ba’ada bil haqq al ladhi yahiqqul qiyaam bih*i…they enjoin to each other, exhort each other, advise each other the truth that deserves to be established. Meaning they give each other advice that should be implemented.

 Qataadah says *bil haqq aye bil Quran*…beautiful. Qataadah rahimahullah says when they give each other the best counsel to the truth, the word truth, he says the truth here means the Quran; they give each other *ayaat* of Quran full of love and affection and concern for the other, so we remind each other through the *ayaat* of Allah. May Allah include this gathering in that. So *aye bil Quran wa qeela bit tawheed…*and it’s also said they remind each other with *tawheed…wal hamal ‘al aloolah*…and most people understand it to the first meaning…meaning any good, any truth that deserves to be established and to be lived by…

Ibn Katheer (rahimahullah) says:

*Al ladhina aamanu bi quloobihim:* those who truly believed with their hearts.

*wa ‘amalus saalihaat bi jawaarihi* him: and they did good deeds with all of their limbs…meaning once their hearts were submitted, their entire bodies submitted by good deeds.

*Wa tawwasau bil haqq wa hua adaautta’aat:* and they enjoined and exhorted each other to the truth and this is giving of or…executing all the acts of obedience.

*Wa tarkul muharramaat:* and to abandon all the things that are haram.

*Wa tawaasau bis sabr aye ‘alal masaaib wal aqdaar:* and they enjoin…exhorted each other to perseverance…meaning against all kinds of calamities and all kinds of situations that they find themselves in…

*wa azan…wa azza man yu’ zi mimman ya’mooruna hu bil ma’roof wa yanhauna hau ‘anil munkar*:

And…they held onto their commitment and their zeal with *sabr* whenever they were tortured, because of them commanding to good and forbidding from evil. In other words when you command to good and forbid evil then you will face consequences there. You will get into trouble, you will… even might get tortured and at that point you tell each other stay on in it and remain with *sabr*…remain *saabiroon.*

*Ya’tabiru-tawaasi bil haqq min al khaas ba’d al ‘aam…*others say that *tawaasi bil haqq* is....and this…by the way this is Shaqeenti (rahimahullah). It is understood as a special act after the general was mentioned. What he means by that is ‘*amilus saalihaat*…they do good things, and telling each other about the truth is a good thing. So why mention good things and then mention one of them. This is *al khaas ba’d al ‘aam.* This is a special good deed after the general, the one of which is the... of most importance or the one easily…easiest forgotten. This came up before, that’s what he’s mentioning.

*Li anna hu daakhil fi ‘amil as saalihaat*: because it is included in the…good deeds.

*‘ala ma yabnullah bihi ‘ibaadahu ‘anil ma’aasi…Zamakhshari comments in tawaasi bis sabr*. This is *sabr* over whatever Allah tests His slave with and also *sabr* and not falling into temptation and disobedience. In other words, the Believer will be put into times of temptation; he’ll be seduced into getting into things. His greed might take over him, his temptation might take over him, and at that point he has to have *sabr* to not fall into those things. May Allah protect us from falling into disobedience.

And then finally on the sequence…*wa ja’ala-tawaasi bis sabr qareen* and *tawaasi bil haqq daleelun ‘ala ‘azeemi qadrihi…*Allah puts *sabr* at the end and *haqq* first as an evidence of the power of enjoining the truth, that it’s more powerful and more important.

*Wa fakhaamati-sharfihi* and the weight of its nobility. *Wa mazeed thawaab as-saabireena ‘ala ma yahiqus-sabr ‘alayhi.* This is youknow *tawaasi bil haqq.* What he is saying in this ayah now. Ash-Shanqeeti (rahimahullah) is saying *as-saabireen* are those who whatever the situation comes that demands patience, they execute it. There’s one thing to encourage each other to be patient. It’s another thing to be patient when it’s time to be patient. We lose our patience and when someone says you know you need to be patient right now…no, no, no… This is not the time to be patient, I will…I know I should be, but you don’t understand this is a special case, right? Every time you need to be patient, you say:

“I have a special case exception.” Right? This is exactly what a person who doesn’t have *sabr* does. You know, whenever the advice is given, they say, “I know that’s the advice but I have an exceptional situation. I know I should have *sabr* but not right now. This is good advice; I know it’s in the Quran but not for me, not for right now.”

But that’s the attitude we have to get rid of. All the advice of this Book is for me right now. There’s never a time when it doesn’t apply. And… when you start thinking like that, selectively, then these things become useless. This advice is useless because when you need it the most is when you abandon it. When is the advice to have *sabr* become important, when you’re losing your temper, when you’re tempted, when you’re going to fall into disobedience, that’s when it’s important? When you’re sitting in a gathering… a good people…I should be patient…yeah I should be patient…that’s not an accomplishment…that’s not an accomplishment you see. So this is…the final thing about it.

*In shaa Allahu ta’ala* in our next session we will take an overview look and a careful look at how these four things are connected in the Quran:

*illal ladhina aamanu wa ‘amilus saalihaat wa tawaasau bil haqq wa tawaasau bis sabr.* We’ll study that *in shaa Allahu ta’ala*. We’ll also study the use of the *ba* in *bil haqq and bis sabr,* the rhetorical usage of the *ba*.

*Baarak Allahu fi walakum fil Quran il hakeem wa naf’ani wa iyaakum bil ayaati wa zikril hakeem wassalaamualaikum wa rahmatullahi wabaraaktuh.*