

## Principles for the Salvation of Mankind Found in Surat Al-Asr

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### ABSTRACT

The Holy Qur'an was transmitted by Allah to Mohammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) via Gabriel (peace be upon him) as the last heavenly book for the enlightenment, welfare, and happiness of mankind. Therefore, the Holy Qur'an includes principles addressed to all people until the end of time.

In this research we show how Surat Al-Asr highlights principles of salvation for humankind. In this Sura are the basic principles of human liberation for here and the afterworld; believing in only one God, doing one's best as a Muslim, advising fairness and patience summarized in three brief verses.

To be happy here and in the hereafter, as well as to eliminate one's frustration in the Next World, one needs to follow the guidance of the Holy Qur'an.

**KEYWORDS:** salvation, principles, Surat al-Asr, believing in only one God (Allah), advice of the fairness, truth and patience.

### INTRODUCTION

The Holy Qur'an is the last heavenly book sent by Allah to Mohammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) via Gabriel (peace be upon him), for the enlightenment, welfare, and happiness of mankind.

It has been stated in certain verses that Qur'an is a divine book sent for the purpose of bringing mankind from deviation to enlightenment, from the dark to the light.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Qur'an is a source of healing and light for humans.<sup>2</sup>

Qur'an contains principles that would help mankind to achieve real happiness. And, being the shortest Surat of the Qur'an, the Surat of Asr is one of the Suras of great significance which offers, at a high level of eloquence<sup>3</sup>, the method of salvation for mankind. Therefore, in this article, we intend to elaborate the principles of salvation for mankind in the light of the Surat of Asr.

#### A- The importance of the Surat of Asr

The Surat of Asr declares, in a very brief and almost formulated way, the methods for mankind to adhere in

every age in order to be safe from the great depression, and to achieve worldly and heavenly bliss. Therefore, Imam Shafi; one of the Imams of the Four Orders has said, "*Had Allah sent only this sura, this sura would still suffice for the salvation of mankind.*"<sup>4</sup> And it is also told that he said, "*If men had duly contemplated on the meaning of the Surat of Asr, this would be more than enough for them.*"<sup>5</sup> And, Beyhaki of the Hadith Imams tells us that when two of the Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) met, they would not leave without one reading the Surat of Asr to the other and, then bidding farewell.<sup>6</sup>

Hence, Mehmed Akif as late poet of ours voices this, in a concise way, in those lines of his, which could be interpreted as follows:

The Creator is the owner of endless names, first of which is the "Truth",

What great honor it is for the subject to hold the truth by the hand!

Remember, the Companions read the Surat of Asr, Whenever they would part, think you why?

Because, in that great sura it is to be found: the signs of salvation;

First comes the true faith, and then good deeds,

Then the truth, and perseverance. There, my dear, lies humanity.

Once this four becomes one, thou shall never be

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disappointed any more.<sup>7</sup>

In this sura, Allah the Highest underlines that mankind is presently disappointed, and that only those endowed and equipped with four good deeds shall be eligible for salvation from disappointment and depression, these deeds are:

- a. To have faith,
- b. To do good deeds,
- c. To recommend the Truth,
- d. To recommend patience.

These shall be explained as follows.

Paying more attention, one would notice that these principles are the keys to worldly and heavenly salvation, which the mankind needs at all times and places. And, paying even more attention, one will see that the concern for Allah has been combined in these principles with the concern for his subjects. Because, it is through faith and good deeds that one may mature himself, and that is related to the concern for Allah. And when mankind fulfills the duty of advice and enlightenment by means of recommending others the Truth and patience, this is related to the concern for the subjects.<sup>8</sup> And the real happiness and salvation of mankind, in its true sense, depends on whether he lives up to the expectations of these two concerns.

### **B- Disappointment of Mankind in the Context of Time**

Named after the vow made on the *Asr*, this sura consists of three verses. The Sura, according to Ibn Abbas, Ibn Zubeyr, and the majority of the interpreters, is *Meccian* (inspired to the Prophet in Mecca). Some even say that it is among the first suras to have been inspired in Mecca. Mujahid, Qatada and Mukatil have commented that this sura was inspired in Medina.<sup>9</sup> It is underlined in the sura that salvation and happiness can be achieved only through having faith, doing good and beneficial deeds, and recommending the Truth and patience, and in three verses of this very short sura, thus, the perfect system brought about by Islam for human life is expressed.

*“In the Name of Allah the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. 1- By Al-Asr (the time), 2- Verily, man is in loss. 3- Except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the Truth [i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf) which Allah has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar) which Allah has forbidden], and recommend one another to patience (for*

the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allah's Cause during preaching His religion of Islamic Monotheism or Jihad).”<sup>10</sup>

As seen, it is emphasized by these verses, by making an oath by the *Asr*, that the whole mankind is in loss, and that only those who have faith and do good deeds, and who recommend each other the Truth and patience are not.

The verse-by-verse explanation and interpretation of the sura is as follows:

**1- Wa'l-Asr:** The Sura starts with Allah taking an oath on the *asr*. Here, one wonders why Allah takes oath on the *asr*. We would like to answer this question by explaining the meaning of the *Asr*.

**Asr:** Means one of the edges of the day, especially the slice of time from the afternoon to the sunset, a period of eighty or a hundred years which is also called an age, and the afternoon.<sup>11</sup>

a) As quoted by Zayd b. Aslam from Ibn Abbas, if we are to deal with *asr* as time in its absolute sense, or any given time, there are lessons in it for thinkers pointing at the existence and oneness of Allah.<sup>12</sup>

And Fakhruddin al-Razi reasons that Allah takes oath on the time because of the strange characteristics inherent in time. Because broadness-narrowness, health-disease, and wealth-poverty are all contained in time. It is very natural to take an oath on the time, in order to point out this broad character thereof. If one spends such a long portion of time of his life on useless deeds, and if he realized the truth at the very last instant, he would be awarded the eternal heaven. Hence, time is the most important thing for one. In this sense, a slice of time of an instant is very precious. So, time is of the very self of the gifts. It is therefore that Allah the Highest takes oath on the time, which is the actual gift. Again, another reason for taking oath on the *asr* is that time is higher than place in terms of honor. Time is a pure gift which is free of defects and disappointment. Disappointment and defects are with the people that live within the time. This fact has been eloquently expressed by Imam Shafi in his following lines:

On us is all shame... yet it's time we blame,  
 What has it other than us? It's our time,  
 We satirize time, yet it is innocent,  
 Should it come to speak, we would hear a  
 thousand sighs  
 Even our piety is all ostentatious, all pretense.  
 With which we take in the on-lookers.

While even a wolf abstains from eating one fellow  
wolf's carcass

Our people eat the raw flesh of others

Each one of us is a wolf, hiding under the skin of a  
sheep,

And know thee that we hunt those who take us for  
sheep.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, if we are to take oath, we must do it on a  
perfect and honored thing, which is time.<sup>14</sup>

b) If we take *asr* as the slice of time from the highest  
rise of the sun to the sunset, we could think as follows:  
Allah the Highest has taken oath on this slice of time  
about the people who are in loss. Because the answer to  
the oath is the verse "*Verily, man is in loss.*" There is a  
relation between human life and this slice of time. Just  
like the coming lower and setting of the sun, human life  
ceaselessly flows away as well, kind of starts to set,  
which denotes loss and disappointment. Similarly, Allah  
has also taken oath on the time of *duha*, to those who  
engage in trade, and to those who make profits as well.  
Because, that slice of time is one in which business and  
shopping activities are intense, and profits are made to a  
great extent. By taking oath on the slice of time from the  
highest point of the sun to the sunset, Allah points at the  
relation between this slice of time and the human life, and  
reminds that it is not late, and there is still a chance to  
make it back to Allah, through repentance, even if there is  
only little time left from the human life –the sun is about  
to set. And this is another reason why Allah takes an oath  
on *asr* thus interpreted.<sup>15</sup>

c) If we assume that *asr* is the "*salatu'l-wusta*,"  
meaning the afternoon prayer; we should suggest that  
Allah the Highest takes oath on the *asr* due to the virtue,  
and superiority of the afternoon prayer. The afternoon  
prayer is the "middle prayer." By saying in Qur'an;  
"*Keep up the prayers, and –especially– the middle  
prayer,*"<sup>16</sup> Allah has named this prayer, and has, by the  
way, ordered us to continue with our prayers, and, by  
especially mentioning the name of the middle prayer,  
Allah has pointed out the significance thereof. At this  
slice of time in which the heat of the Sun is alleviated, the  
Muslims would form a circle around the Prophet (peace  
and blessings of Allah be upon him), and listen to his  
advice and orders. And since they would have finished  
their daily chores, this hour of the day was the most  
suitable time for them to come together and listen to  
advice. In this sense, the afternoon prayer is of great  
importance.<sup>17</sup> In the meantime, the afternoon prayer is, in

practice, the last of the obligatory acts belonging to the  
daytime. With the evening, night prayers will begin.  
Thus, Allah the Highest, with the phrase "*Wa'l-Asr*,"  
takes oath on such an important prayer.

d) Other than the foregoing, it has also been  
commented that *asr* is the time in which the Prophet  
(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his  
ummah lived. In that case, the phrase "*Wa'l-Asr*" could  
be interpreted as: "*Wa'l-Asr allazi anta fihi*" (I swear on  
the time you live in.) Similarly, Allah the Highest has  
taken oath on the place of the Prophet (peace and  
blessings of Allah be upon him) by the verse "*I swear by  
this city (Mecca),*"<sup>18</sup> and on the life of the Prophet (peace  
and blessings of Allah be upon him), namely on the  
period of time granted to him, by the verse "*Verily, by  
your life (O Mohammad), in their wild intoxication, they  
were wandering blindly.*"<sup>19</sup> Through these verses, Allah  
says to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon  
him), "I swear on your time, place, and life," and in  
saying this, points out the significance of these three  
elements, which are time, place, and life. And it is clear  
that, since it is obligatory to respect these three elements,  
it is also obligatory to respect in the first place the Person  
to whom these elements belong, namely, to the Prophet  
(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).<sup>20</sup> So, the  
reason why Allah, apart from taking oath on the place and  
the life of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be  
upon him) in other verses, takes oath here on his *asr* and  
time is to emphasize that it is necessary to respect and  
love him at the same time.

## 2- "*Verily, man is in loss*":

**Khusr-Khusran**; has such meanings as deficiency,  
being deceived in trade, being destroyed, to deviate, to do  
incompletely, to lose, and to destroy.<sup>21</sup> Accordingly, the  
fact that human is in loss is described as destruction by  
Akhfash, as *ukubah* and as punishment by Farra; and  
engaging in wrong and evil deeds by Zeyd b. Ali.<sup>22</sup>  
Actually, all these meanings are close to each other, and  
are almost identical. The "al" article that precedes the  
phrase "*al-Insan (the Human)*" denotes a common  
name.<sup>23</sup> It indicates that this phrase stands for the  
humankind in general, and not one certain person, and it  
is explained that all humans are in loss. This means:  
mankind never leaves the state of loss. Yet, the capital of  
mankind is his life, and life is ending in one breath, one  
hour at a time, and one gets closer, with each second, to  
the end of all gifts and the day of judgement. Were those

breathes things made and practised by mankind in a way that he can spend in the way and at the time he wishes, that life would not come to an end, and mankind would be in no kind of loss for spending it at his own discretion. Yet, those breathes are not the own invention of mankind. They are created by Allah. Allah has entrusted that life to mankind so that he can use it, in His own consent, in a limited and reasonable way. Salvation of mankind depends on the profit to arise from the use of the capital of time. That is why Allah the Greatest says; *“And that man can have nothing but what he does (good or bad),”*<sup>24</sup> and *“Every person is a pledge for that which he has earned.”*<sup>25</sup> In this way, after man pays the capital to its rightful owner, he shall be entitled to salvation and endowed with gifts in proportion to the profit to be left to him on the Day of Judgement, or he will be held responsible and punished as one that has incurred losses and has gone bankrupt. Every second that passes in human life, every breath taken and spent is either for some deed or work, or it is wasted. If it has been wasted, it, of course, is a loss. If it has been invested in a deed, then it is either a charitable and good deed, or a sin that is evil and bad. Or any deed that is neither a sin nor a good deed; namely, a deed that is *mubah*. If the deed is *mubah*, it is like the time has been wasted since it causes one no good. Even if man spends his time in *taeat*, there may be another more beneficial *taeat* that he missed. Thus, it could also be deemed for man as a loss that he misses the chance to acquire something that is more beneficial and precious. In this respect, human is in a certain extent of loss every given second. Along with all these, if we take into consideration other events that affect and exert pressure upon man in time, it becomes clear what kind of peril and loss man is in. Even if he admits that he is in constant gifts and welfare, man cannot deny that his life flows in the direction of death, and that he, thus, is in a constant state of loss. Indeed, every breath spent is a death.<sup>26</sup> It is therefore that Razi takes the verse *“Verily, man is in loss”* as clear evidence for the idea that loss and trouble are principles with mankind.<sup>27</sup>

### C- Salvation of Mankind with Respect to Time:

3- *“Except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds”:*

After taking an oath in the second verse on the fact that mankind is in loss, Allah the Highest states that those who have faith, who commit good deeds, and who recommend one another the Truth and patience shall be

saved from this loss. It means, it is obligatory that one equips himself with these four qualities in order to be saved from loss and disappointment. First of these qualities is *iman* (faith).

**a. Iman:** In Arabic, *iman* means “to confirm, to approve.”<sup>28</sup> And, as a terminological expression, it stands for “agreeing and admitting the truth of all the things that Mohammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has brought from Allah, and informed us of.”<sup>29</sup> He who wholeheartedly agrees to the truth of these is a *mu'min*. In this sura, Allah the Highest, underlines that mankind is obligated first to have faith in order to save himself from loss and disappointment, and to make it to salvation and happiness. And religious practices and good deeds shall be accepted only if committed in good faith.<sup>30</sup> Otherwise, deeds without faith shall not suffice to lead one's self to salvation. Therefore, Qur'an denies the value of all actions which are not based on faith, or not mounted on the pivot of faith, and do not emanate from this order. The view of Qur'an thereabout is most obvious and clear. Because, Allah the Highest states hereabout as follows:

*“The parable of those who disbelieved in their Lord is that their Works are as ashes, on which the wind blows furiously on a stormy day; they shall not be able to get aught of what they have earned. That is the straying, far away (from the Right Path)”*<sup>31</sup>

*“As for those who disbelieve, their deeds are like a mirage in a desert. The thirsty one thinks it to be water, until he comes up to it, he finds it to be nothing; but he finds Allah with him, Who will pay him his due (Hell). And Allah is Swift in taking account.”*<sup>32</sup>

By touching, in Verse 3 of the Surat of Asr, upon the good deeds right after the virtue of faith, Allah the Highest reminds us of the close relation between faith and the deeds.

**b. Committing Good Deeds:** The concept of good deeds has been defined in numerous ways. Some of these definitions are general in nature, and some special. In this context, two definitions have been quoted from Ibn Abbas. In the first of these two definitions; he defined good deeds in general as “the whole of religious obligations,”<sup>33</sup> and yet in the second definition, he said, “performing the *salat*, and fasting.”<sup>34</sup> The definition made by Ali (d.40/661), which described the good deeds as “the acts of *salat* performed within due time, and in conformity to its routine and conventions” is also a well-grounded definition.<sup>35</sup> Again two definitions have been quoted from Qatadah with respect to the question as to

what good deeds are, and in the first of these, he describes good deeds as “engaging in good acts,”<sup>36</sup> and in the second definition he emphasizes that the deeds that will be accepted by Allah are things that are included in faith itself.<sup>37</sup> Both of the two definitions quoted from Qatadah are general in nature.

Interpreters have mostly dwelled on general definitions. So, while good deeds are defined in such ways as confirming Allah and His Prophet, doing what he orders, and avoiding what he prohibits;<sup>38</sup> and obeying Allah, and avoiding what he prohibits,<sup>39</sup> it has also been described as all right deeds that are to be awarded,<sup>40</sup> everything in which Allah’s consent is sought;<sup>41</sup> every right deed committed in the light of the evidence inherent in the mind, the Book, and the Sunnah;<sup>42</sup> and to commit the deeds ordered by Allah.<sup>43</sup>

Taking a broader perspective on the definition of good deeds, Abduh defines the phrase “*salihat*” contained in this verse as the “deeds that are suitable for general acceptance, and proficient with regard to business, and are acknowledged by everyone to be good and beneficial for public and private circles”<sup>44</sup>. And Ahmad Hamdi Akseki (died in 1951) says: “And as for good deeds, they are some beneficial and pleasant acts and demeanors that are not denied by common sense, human nature, and nature itself, and are in line with one’s own self, his family, his nation and all people, in brief, with the interests of each person, no matter what class he belongs to.”<sup>45</sup>

As seen, although some definitions of good deeds have been made in the narrow sense, broader definitions are also available. It is seen in all definitions that faith is stipulated as a prerequisite, whether apparently or tacitly. Because, whether we define the good deeds as just the “obligatory religious acts,” or in a more detailed way as prayer and fasting, it is a prerequisite to have faith, and, it is unthinkable for these deeds to be acceptable without faith anyway. The conceptions of faith and good deeds are mentioned together 52 times in the Holy Qur’an. Being generally mentioned in the verses as “...those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds,” the phrases of “faith” and “good deeds” are specified conditionally in the verses as “And he who works deeds of righteousness, while he is a believer...”<sup>46</sup> or “And whoever does righteous good deeds, male or female, and is a (true) believer [in the Oneness of Allah (Muslim)]...”<sup>47</sup> All these verses tell us that a deed must be committed on the basis of faith in order to be a good deed.

**c. Recommending the Truth:** “and recommend one another to the Truth, and recommend one another to patience”: Allah the Highest specifies in this verse the third and fourth qualities of the people that are to achieve salvation and happiness. That is to say, those who have faith and commit good deeds must recommend to each other the Truth and patience. Meaning “correct, right,” **Truth** is the opposite the wrong, the superstitious, and it is generally used in two senses; the first one is to say or do something that is in line with justice, mercy, and reasonability whether it is related to beliefs or thoughts or to worldly issues. The second is the share that is to be given to Allah, to His subjects, or to his very self. Then, the meaning of recommending the truth to the others means: Every one in a good society ought to know the meaning and value of rights and laws, and act accordingly. In a good society, rights should not be violated, truths mustn’t be forgotten, wrong and superstitious beliefs mustn’t be let rise, and no one should keep silent and watch in the face of unjust practices. In such a society, the conscience of every one is required to be at ease and lively. Every individual should know and understand his own responsibility. Wherever rights are being violated, and wherever the wrong rises, he should do his part there, and should be ready to fight for his and others’ rights. Individuals should not only believe in truth, but keep on the path to the truth, speak the truth, and behave in the right way only on their own; on the contrary, they also ought to do their best in order that others too meet all requirements of rights and rules. It is this consciousness and attitude that is the guarantee of salvation of a society from moral breakdown and disaster. If no such spirit is to be found in the individuals that form the society, those people cannot make their way out of disappointment and loss. Should the individuals that make up a society, although they are walking on the path of the truth, stand aside and watch while rights are being violated in the society they live in, the same unjustness will eventually be inflicted upon themselves, too. This has been voiced in the Surat of Anfal as follows:

“And fear the *Fitnah* [affliction and trial] which affects not in particular [only] those of you who do wrong [but it may afflict all the good and the bad people], and know that Allah is Severe in punishment.”<sup>48</sup> The same particular has been touched upon in the Surat of Maidah:

“Those among the Children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of David and Jesus, son of Mary. That was because they disobeyed [Allah and the

Messengers] and were ever transgressing beyond bounds. They used not to forbid one another from Al-Munkar [wrong, evil-doing, sins, polytheism, disbelief] which they committed. Vile indeed was what they used to do.”<sup>49</sup>

In explaining why the Ummah of Islam is the most qualified ummah among others, Allah the Highest explains as follows that it is because they order good deeds, and prohibit from bad deeds:

“You [true believers in Islamic Monotheism, and real followers of Prophet Muhammad and his Sunnah] are the best of people ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin Al-Ma’ruf [i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all the Islam has ordained] and forbid Al-Munkar [Polytheism, disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden] and you believe in Allah. And had the people of the Scripture [Jews and Christians] believed, it would have been better for them; among them are some who have faith, but most of them are Al-Fasiqun (disobedient to Allah and rebellious against Allah’s Command).”<sup>50</sup>

**d. Recommending Patience:** The fourth quality mentioned in this sura is to recommend one another to patience. Patience is to endure events, to hold up spirits when facing of the events. So, those who have faith and commit good deeds recommend to each other the Truth, the reality, the true religion, respect for the rights of others, adherence to righteousness, standing tall when facing the events, and to have patience for the sake of the Truth in submission to Allah in determination and will.

As it is known, the patience is the power to endure hardships, difficulties, and pain in order to do something, or to avoid bad deeds. There are two types of patience.

1) It is the patience against pain and hardships, and with this, one could attain the achievements attained by the people of influence by means of enduring the hardships inflicted by religious practices, abstinence, and good deeds.

2) It is the patience against tastes and desires, and one could avoid protect himself from prohibited and banned deeds, and from the harms of the deceptive, dangerous, and materially or immaterially hazardous things that seem pleasant, and yet lead to a very disastrous end.<sup>51</sup> The hadith that could be translated as “the heaven is surrounded by attractive things, and hell by difficult things”<sup>52</sup> implicates both types of patience.

While not denying the impact of natal ability with regard to the extent of patience, the importance of education, habitual behavior, and consequently of determination and will, and for that, of faith is of great

importance. Therefore, patience has been advised as one of the selective verbs among the *af'al al-mukallafin*, and has been ordered as in: “O you who believe! Endure and be more patient (than your enemy), and guard your territory by stationing army units permanently at the places from where the enemy can attack you, and fear Allah, so that you may be successful.”<sup>53</sup> Because, “Truly! Allah is with As-Sabirun [the patients]”<sup>54</sup>, “Only those who are patient shall receive their reward in full, without reckoning.”<sup>55</sup> Therefore, it is also common in hadiths to say: “Patience is the key to expansion, to relief”<sup>56</sup> “he who is patient shall be victorious,”<sup>57</sup> and in our language we say “patience leads to relief.”

It is understood from this explanation and from the course of speech that the patience that is advised here and in other contexts is the patience which is displayed with faith and good deeds on the path to the truth and goodness. And this is a quality of virility, straightforwardness, and honesty. It is not a lack of emotions which is nothing but idleness, persecution, and laziness which means submission to evil, accepting all wrongdoings, submitting to all kinds of persecution, falling into dirt and not trying for all costs to get out of it, to stay in the wrong, the superstitious, and the bad. Because it has been said: “But honor, power and glory belong to Allah, and to His Messenger (Muhammad) and to the believers.”<sup>58</sup> Submission to evil is evil, and consenting to unbelief is unbelief. Because it is said in a hadith: “should one of you see a wrongdoing, let him change it by hand. If he fails to do so, let him try to change it by tongue. And should he also fail to do that let him dislike it, which is the lowest degree of faith.”<sup>59</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Having adopted the salvation of mankind as its target, the Holy Qur’an has institutionalized several principles in order to help people lead a happy life and achieve a happy ending in the afterlife. So, in this sura which we are trying to explain and interpret, the path to lead mankind to salvation and worldly and heavenly happiness is described in a brief and eloquent manner, as if formulated.

In this sura which is made up of three verses, Allah the Highest underlines, by taking an oath on the *asr*, that all humans are in loss, and that only those who have faith and commit good deeds, and recommend to each other the Truth and patience are not in loss.

In The Holy Qur'an's view, any deed that is not supported by faith at its root, and not done on the instructions of Allah and His Prophet is not a "good deed." Therefore, faith has been mentioned before good deeds in various parts of the Holy Qur'an, and also in this sura, good deeds have been mentioned right after faith.

While in no part of the Qur'an a deed without faith is deemed as a "good" deed, no award has been promised for deeds that are committed without faith. Faith without good deeds is only a claim, and, in spite of this claim, one would refute his own claim by staying apart and away from the path shown by Allah and the Rasul. A seed would not grow to a tree unless planted in the earth. Yet, if no tree is growing although the seed is planted, then it means that the seed is decayed and destroyed under the

ground. It is therefore that the awards promised in the Holy Qur'an and good news are only for those who have and keep the faith, and commit good deeds.

The Holy Qur'an groups, in the Surat of Asr, the prescription of salvation for mankind under four headings. The fact that The Holy Qur'an assesses the principles of salvation, which philosophers and scientists have been trying to contemplate, comment, and sought these principles throughout the history, in three verses and under four headings clearly shows that it is a divine miracle.

Human is obliged to adhere to the principles cited in the Holy Qur'an, and especially in the Surat of Asr, in order to achieve salvation from disappointment, and to be in peace in this world and hereafter.

### NOTES

- (1) See Qur'an, Baqarah, 2/257; Maidah, 5/16; Ibrahim, 14/1; Isra, 17/9.
- (2) See Qur'an, Yunus, 10/57; Isra, 17/82; Fussilat, 41/44.
- (3) Fasahat means statement, clearness, and straightforwardness; and belagat means eloquence and strong verbal influence. For the explanations of fesahat and belagat in the me'ani science, see Ali b. Ali Tahanevi, *Kessafu Istilahati'l-Funun*, (Istanbul: Kahraman Publications, 1984), I,138-139; II,1105,1106.
- (4) as-Sabuni, Mohammad Ali, *Safwatu't-Tafasir*, (Beirut: Daru'l-Qur'ani'l-Karim, 1981), III, 600.
- (5) Mohammad Sawwaf, *Fatihatu'l-Qur'an*, (Cidde: 1985), 474.
- (6) as-Shawkani, Mohammad b. Ali b. Mohammad, *Fathu'l-Kadir*, (Egypt: 1964), V, 491; as-Sabuni, Above cited work, III, 601.
- (7) Arsoy, Mehmet Akif, *Safahat*, (Istanbul: Feza Gazetecilik A.S. ?), II, 828.
- (8) as-Sabuni, Above cited work, III, 601.
- (9) Alusi, Abu'l-Fadl Sihabu'd-Din as-Sayyid Mahmud, *Ruhu'l-Meani fi Tafsiiri'l-Qur'ani'l-Azim ve's-Sebi'l-Masani*, (Beirut: ?), XV, 291.
- (10) Translation of the meanings of The Noble Qur'an in the English Language, Dr. Mohammed Tagi-ud-Din Al-Hilali, Dr.Mohammad Muhsin Khan, (Madinah, 1417), 849.
- (11) ar-Ragib al-Isfehani, *Mufredatu Alfazi'l-Qur'an*, (Beirut: Ad-Daru's-Samiyyah, 1992), 569.
- (12) S. Suleyman Jamel, Jamel Hasiyesi (of the Jalalayn Commentary), (Istanbul: Kahraman Publications, 1965), IV, 582.
- (13) as-Shafi'i, Mohammad b. Idris, *Divanu's-Shafi'i*, (Composed by: Mohammad Afif az-Zu'bi), (Beirut: Daru'n-Nur, 1971), 82. In our own initiative, we tried, instead of formally translating the poem, to interpret the same in a way to both reflect the deeper meaning and to keep the verse form. In doing so, we aimed at reflecting the literary style without distortion.
- (14) ar-Razi, Fakhruddin, *at-Tafsiru'l-Kabir (Mafatihul-Gayb)*, (Egypt: 1962), XXXII, 84.
- (15) Ates, Suleyman, *Yuce Qur'an'in Cagdas Tafsiiri*, (Istanbul: Yeni Ufuklar Publications, 1991), XI, 80.
- (16) Qur'an, Baqarah, 2/238.
- (17) Ates, Above cited work, XI, 80.
- (18) Qur'an, Balad, 90/1.
- (19) Qur'an, Hijr, 15/72.
- (20) ar-Razi, Above cited work, XXXII, 86.
- (21) Mustafa Ibrahim, et al., *al-Mu'jamu'l-Wasit*, (Tehran: al-Maktabatu'l-Ilmiyye, ?), I, 233.
- (22) Qurtubi, Abu Abdillah Mohammad b. Ahmad el-Ansari, *al-Jami Li Ahkami'l-Qur'an*, (Beirut: Daru Ihyai't-Turathi'l-Arabi, 1985), XX,180; es-Shawkani, Above cited work, V, 491.
- (23) ar-Razi, Above cited work, XXXII, 86.
- (24) Qur'an, Najm, 53/39.
- (25) Qur'an, Tur, 52/21.
- (26) Almalili, Mohammad Hamdi Yazir, *Hak Dini Qur'an Dili*, (Istanbul: Azim Dagitim, ?), IX, 430, 431.

- (27) ar-Razi, Above cited work, XXXII, 88.
- (28) Soysaldi, Mehmet, *Qur'an Semantigi Acisindan Inanca Ilgili Temel Kavramlar*, (Izmir: Caglayan Publications, 1997), 20.
- (29) Almalili, Above cited work, I,177.
- (30) Qur'an, Furqan, 25/23.
- (31) Qur'an, Ibrahim, 14/18.
- (32) Qur'an, Nur, 24//39.
- (33) at-Tabari, Abu Jafer Mohammad Ibn Jarir, *Jamiu'l-Bayan an Ta'wili Ayi'l-Qur'an*, (Egypt: 1954), III, 294.
- (34) at-Tabari, Above cited work, XII, 1.
- (35) Abu Hayyan, Abu Abdillah Mohammad Ibn Yusuf al-Andalusi, *al-Bahru'l-Muhit*, (Riyad: ?), I, 111.
- (36) at-Tabari, Above cited work, XXIV, 67.
- (37) at-Tabari, Above cited work, XVI, 218.
- (38) at-Tabari, Above cited work, XXIV, 93.
- (39) at-Tabari, Above cited work, XI, 88; XV, 242; XVIII, 182; XXV, 145.
- (40) al-Qasimi, Mohammad Jamaluddin, *Mahasinu't-Ta'wil*, (Thk. M. Fuad Abdulbaki), (Egypt: 1957), II, 81.
- (41) Abu Hayyan, Above cited work, I, 111.
- (42) az-Zamakhshari, Abu'l-Qasim Mahmud Ibn Omar, *al-Kassaf an Haqaiqi't-Tanzil ve Uyuni'l-Akavil fi Vucuhi't-Ta'wil*, (Beirut: ?), I, 51.
- (43) See at-Tabresi, Abu Ali al-Fadl Ibn al-Hasan, *Mecmau'l-Bayan fi Tafsiri'l-Qur'an*, (Tehran: 1395), I, 127.
- (44) Abduh, Mohammad, *Suratu'l-Asr*, *Macallatu'l-Manar*, VI, 577.
- (45) Akseki, Ahmad Hamdi, *Ahlak Ilmi ve Islam Ahlaki*, (Simplified by: Ali Aslan Aydin), (Ankara: ?),18.
- (46) Qur'an, Taha, 20/112; Anbiya, 21/94.
- (47) Qur'an, Nisa, 4/124.
- (48) Qur'an, Anfal, 8/25.
- (49) Qur'an, Maidah, 5/78,79.
- (50) Qur'an, Al-i Imran, 3/110.
- (51) Almalili, Above cited work, IX, 433; Ates, Above cited work, XI, 81.
- (52) Muslim, Jennet, 1; Abu Dawud, *Sunnah*, 22; Tirmidhi, Jennet, 21; Nasai, Ayman, 3; Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, *al-Musnad*, III, 153.
- (53) Qur'an, Al-i Imran, 3/200.
- (54) Qur'an, Baqarah, 2/153.
- (55) Qur'an, Zumar, 39/10.
- (56) by Daylami without evidence, *Kuda'i*, as quoted from Ibn Abbas, and Ibn Abi'd-Dunya quoted from Ibn Omar: *Kashfu'l-Khafa*, II, 21.
- (57) I was unable to trace this hadith back to its source.
- (58) Qur'an, Munafikun, 63/8.
- (59) Muslim, Iman, 78; Tirmidhi, Fitan, 11; Nasa'i, Iman, 17; Abu Dawud, Salat, 242; Malahim, 17; Ibn Mace, Iqamat, 155, Fitan, 20; Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, Above cited work, III, 10, 20, 49,52.

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