

al-Taba Tabai (AR)

CHAPTER AL-FALAQ

The refuge or shelter mentioned in this Surah means to seek shelter through God from all evils normally and specifically. This is a Medina Surah and the causes for the Messenger has mentioned this revelation as a command.

The word *A'udh* is to seek the help of one who has the capacity or capability to defend against evil.

" I seek shelter with the Lord of the daybreak"

Here "Falaq' means a rift, a gap, and a separation. In another view it means a simile in the active sense, and so the verse may now be taken to mean, *I seek shelter with the Lord of this dawn that is manifest after rending the daybreak.* "Falaq" is generally used to mean the morning because it comes forth after splitting the veil of the night. We seek shelter from the evil that hides goodness. this explanation is closer to the verse.

Creation: It rends the veil of the unseen, therefore "Falaq" means bringing forth something after tearing the screen of the unseen.

There is a weak opinion that says that this is a stage of Hell and some traditions confirm this. Its residents have been ensconced and this is similar to a new creation. Refuge is the shelter from the evil of every person or creation [this includes the evil of the Jinns, mankind and beasts].

" From the evil of what He has created"

This refers to the evil of the creation in the sense that it is not overwhelming. It is noted in the Sahah that *Ghasiq* is used to denote the darkness after dusk. The word "Ghasiq" in this verse means night or the time when there is no light in the horizon. *Waqab* is used to denote penetration or entry.

The verse will now mean, *I seek shelter from the darkness of the night when it enters with all its evil.* Evil is manifest more in the darkness of the night because it hides wickedness and helps those who are evil. He is therefore its prisoner. Evil is attributed to the night because it is then that its numbers increase.

There is a weak opinion that says that evil increases in the night and mankind becomes its prisoner because of inherent weaknesses. The previous verse had mentioned evil in the common term but in the very next verse it is used specifically, and this has been done to lay more stress on the witchcraft of the witches and the envy of the envious when they start envying. The Surah mentions three kinds of evil or dangers, the evil of the night when it comes, the overwhelming of evil due to neglect, and the evil of the witches who tie knots and blow on them.

"And the evil of the witchcrafts when they [the witches] blow on the knots"

In other words *I seek shelter from the evil spell of the witches when they tie the knots and blow on them.* The evil affect of witchcraft has been stressed through the women because women mostly indulge in this. The verse has specifically mentioned the witches because they learn witchcraft and create rifts among the people with it. There are various verses that give examples of this [Surah Baqarah 106], the story of Harut and Marut and the magicians in the court of the Pharaoh. The word "Aqad" refers to those desires that are obtained by tying the knots and blowing on them [by the witches]. The women use it to attract their lovers or husbands to things that they [the women] desire.

The opening and blowing on the knots is a symbolism that is beyond normal comprehension. When they burn in envy, he is jealous to an extent and this is the meaning of "and from the evil of the envier when he envies." There is another weak assumption that this verse includes those who are curious and to help him is also a psychological form of envy which comes out when that person is curious and surprised.

A discussion on Hadiths

Abd Ibn Hameed has narrated a tradition recorded in Durre Manthur. He said, "a person cast a spell on the Prophet and this was done by a Jew. The Messenger complained about this to God and Jibril came down with the Surahs called *Mua'zzatein* and said, *Indeed a person who recites this verse* [and he recited the verse] and the spell was repelled. The Messenger came to a well and called Ali and asked him to untie the knots by reciting the verses and the witchcraft was defeated.

The Compiler's Opinion

The writer has quoted Muhammad bin Sanan who quoted the Messenger in the book Tib Aamma but the Hadiths have been narrated with differences in the wordings in the books of Ahle Sunnah. Mufasal has quoted Imam Ja'far Sadiq to say that they are Zubair and Ammar. There are other Hadiths too in this regard but most of them quote the Aimmah of Ahlulbait that it was Ali who was instrumental in repelling the spell from the Messenger. Some people have objected how the witchcraft could affect a Messenger of God?

The Answer: "losing one's mental equilibrium" the commentators have taken to mean losing one's sanity but there is no proof of being inflicted by a disease due to witchcraft. Majmaul Bayan records that Imam Hasan and Husain (AS), like the Messenger, often used to seek shelter from witchcraft through these two Surahs. According to Aqba bin A'mir, this Surah is based on a few verses. In Durre Manthur; Tirmizi, Nisai and others have agreed with my opinion that there are other verses in this regard.

Abbas, Manthur, Bazaz, Tibrani, Marduiya have quoted from the traditions of the Sahih books that Qur'an confirms the two Surahs but Ibn Masud does not. He has expunged them from the Qur'an. He says, " do not mix these two Surahs with those in the Qur'an" for he did not recite them as a part of the Qur'an. He thought that this was a way of protection from witchcraft identified separately by the Messenger.

The compiler's view

Suyuti and Bazaz have said that Ibn Masud did not follow any companion. There is a hadith from the Messenger who used to recite both the Surahs in the daily prayers. I have proved them both as part of the Qur'an.

Ibn Masud is recorded in Tafsir Qummi to have quoted Abu Bakr Hazarmi, " I asked Imam Ja'far Sadiq that Mua'zzatein has been removed from the Qur'an by Hammaz, to which the Imam answered

I have heard my father say that Ibn Masud has done this deed on his own but they are both a part of the Qur'an.

There are umpteen Hadiths in both Sunni and Shia sects confirming that these Surahs are a part of the Qur'an. Qur'an is a miracle and the inclusion of these two Surahs in the Qur'an is part of its proof.

A Doubt

Some disbelievers say that Qur'an as compiled by Ibn Masud is reliable.

Answer

The perfection of Qur'an is continuous and there is no dispute about the inclusion of these two Surahs. No one has said that these two Surahs have not been revealed on the Messenger in the sense that they are not perfect or that it has been proven that they are not part of the Qur'an. They are a part of the Qur'an.

Ibn Jareer has quoted Abu Hurera who has quoted the Messenger that Falaq is a part of Hell. In another tradition it says that Falaq is a gateway to Hell and there are many similar Hadiths. Uqba bin Amir has said that it is a well in Hell.

Majmaul says that Falaq is a stage in Hell and its residence cry for shelter from its heat. The same is recorded in the Tafsirs of Abu Hamza Thumali and Ali bin Ibrahim Qummi.

Sukuni has quote Imam Ja'far Sadiq and Tafsir Qummi has an Hadith that says,

The time is near when mankind will decry poverty and envy overwhelm justice.

The author of this book opines that this tradition was recorded on the authority of Anas, and A'yun Salati has quoted Imam Ridha (AS), and he has quoted his forefathers who have quoted the Messenger that, " the times is near when envy will outweigh justice and truth."

Ibn Abi Sheba has quoted Anas and he in turn has quoted the Messenger to have said,

Envy devours goodness in the manner fire devours wood.