

Sura 68 - The Pen

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THE CHAPTER OF THE PEN

(LXVIII. Mecca.)

IN the name of the merciful and compassionate God. NUN. By the pen, and what they write, thou art not, by God's grace, mad! and, verily, thine is a hire that is not grudged! and, verily, thou art of a grand nature!

But thou shalt see and they shall see which of you is the infatuated.

Verily, thy Lord He knows best who errs from His way; and He knows best those who are guided.

Then obey not those who call thee liar; they would fain that thou shouldst be smooth with them, then would they be smooth with thee! And obey not any mean swearer, a back-biter, a walker about with slander; a forbiddener of good, a transgressor, a sinner; rude, and base-born too; though he have wealth and sons! When our signs are recited to him he says, 'Old folks' tales!'

We will brand him on the snout!

Verily, we have tried them as we tried the fellows of the garden when they swore, 'We will cut its fruit at morn!' But they made not the exception; and there came round about it an encompassing calamity from thy Lord the while they slept; and on the morrow it was as one the fruit of which is cut. And they cried to each other in the morning, 'Go early to your tilth if ye would cut it!'

So they set off, saying privily to each other, 'There shall surely enter it to-day unto you no poor person!'

And they went early deciding to be stingy.

And when they saw it they said, 'Verily, we have erred! Nay, we are forbidden (its fruit)!'

Said the most moderate of them, 'Said I not to you, "unless ye celebrate God's praises!"'

Said they, 'Celebrated be the praises of our Lord! verily, we were unjust!'

And they approached each other with mutual blame. Said they, 'O woe to us! verily, we have been outrageous! Haply our Lord may give us instead a better than it; verily, we unto our Lord do yearn.'

Thus is the torment, but, verily, the torment of the hereafter is greater, if ye did but know!

Verily, for the pious with their Lord are gardens of pleasure! Shall we then make the Muslims like the sinners? What ails you? how ye judge!

Or have ye a book in which ye can study, that ye are surely to have what ye may choose?

Or have ye oaths binding on us until the judgment day that ye are surely to have what ye may judge?

Ask them, which of them will vouch for this? Or have they partners, then let them bring their partners if they do speak the truth?

On the day when the leg shall be bared; and they shall be called to adore and shall not be able!

Lowering their looks, abasement shall attack them, for they were called to adore while yet they were safe!

But let me alone with him who calls this new discourse a lie. We will surely bring them down by degrees from whence they do not know. And I will let them have their way! for my device is sure. Or dost thou ask them a hire for it while they are burdened with debts?

Or have they the knowledge of the unseen, so that they write? But wait patiently for the judgment of thy Lord, and be not like the fellow of the fish, when he cried out as he was choking with rage. Had it not been that grace from his Lord reached him, he would have been cast out on the naked (shore) and blamed the while! But his Lord elected him, and made him of the pious. The misbelievers well-nigh upset thee with their looks when they hear the reminder, and they say, 'Surely he is mad!' And yet it is but a reminder to the worlds!