Surah 36 Surah Yaaseen

YAASEEN

THE LINK BETWEEN SURAH YAASEEN AND THE PRECEDING SURAHS

Surah Saba negates the false belief that any one’s intercession can alter Allaah’s decision. Thereafter, Surahs Yaaseen, Saaffaat, Saad and Zumar also share this theme, though to a more intense degree. Surah Saba also dispels many doubts held by the Mushrikeen. Surah Yaaseen now emphasises the fact that since the false gods of the Mushrikeen cannot save them from Allaah’s punishment, how can they even hope that any intercession can change Allaah’s decree?

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE SURAH

The first eleven verses serve as introduction to the Surah. In these verses, Allaah explains that the Qur’aan verifies the truthfulness of Rasulullaah ﷺ. However, because Allaah has sealed the hearts of many people who refuse to accept the truth, they cannot accept the fact.

Verse 12 warns people about the Aakhirah, after which verses 13 to 29 narrate the incident of the people of a certain village. They rejected Allaah’s apostles and even martyred a person who gave them good advice. Eventually they were destroyed by Allaah’s punishment, from which futile the “hoped for intercession” of their gods could not save them.

The primary assertion of the Surah appears in this incident, where the murdered person says, “Why should I take others as Aaliha besides Him? If Ar Rahmaan intends any harm to reach me, their intercession will not help me in the least, nor can they rescue me (from punishment).” [We therefore have no reason for worshipping them.]” [verse 23]

The Surah contains the following five arguments to prove its central theme.

1. “Have they not seen how many were the nations that We destroyed before them (all of whom behaved as they do)? (These nations were so thoroughly destroyed that) They will certainly never return to them (in this world). (Finally, on the Day of Qiyamah) They will all be present before Us collectively (when they will have to answer for their behaviour and suffer an even graver punishment).” [verses 31, 32]. In this verse, Allaah mentions that many disobedient nations before it had been destroyed, whose gods could not assist them at all.

2. “Dead (arid, barren) earth is an Ayah for them (which demonstrates how Allaah brings things back life after people have lost hope)... until the words ...other things about which they have no knowledge” [verses 33 to 36]. In these verses Allaah explains that Only He can revive barren land, causing all types of vegetation to flourish on it. It is also only He Who causes springs to gush forth from beneath the earth. The angels of the Mushrikeen have no share in the creation of these things. Not even the angels, the Jinn or the Ambiyaa can accomplish any of these feats. Therefore, how can any other besides Allaah be regarded as a intercessor or an deity?
3. Verses 37 to 40 contain the third logical proof where Allaah says, “The night is (also) an Aayah for them (which demonstrates Allaah’s great powers) … until the words … They all (sun and moon) swim within their orbits.” Allaah controls the entire solar system, which has not altered its perfect functioning to this day. If there existed a being whose intercession could effect any change to Allaah’s decisions, then this being would have certainly been able to effect some change in Allaah’s system.

4. Allaah presents the fourth logical proof from verse 41 to verse 44. In this proof, Allaah explains how He allows ships and other marine vessels to travel safely across the oceans. If He wished to sink any ship, no false god would be able to save the ship.

5. Allaah presents the fifth logical proof in verse 71 in which He speaks of the animals that He has created for man’s various purposes. Some animals man can use to transport himself and his goods; others he slaughters to eat. Only Allaah has created these animals and the false gods of the Mushriken had no part in this creation. Therefore, they cannot be regarded as deities nor as effective intercessors.

“We did not teach him (Rasulullaah ﷺ) poetry, nor is it befiting him (to recite poetry because his duty is much nobler). This is advice and the clear Qur’aan to warn him who is living, and to establish proof against the Kaafiroon (to prove that their behaviour and beliefs are incorrect)” [verses 69, 70]. In these verses Allaah attests the authenticity of Rasululaaah ﷺ, declaring that he was not a poet, neither was the Qur’aan a work of poetry, as the Mushriken alleged. Allaah says that it is not becoming of a person like Rasululaaah ﷺ to be a mere poet.

Allaah clearly asserts the theme in verses 74 and 75 where He says, “They adopt various Aaliha besides Allaah so that they may be assisted (by these Aaliha). (Little do they realise that) They (these gods) are unable to render any assistance to them, and (instead) they will be a ready army (who will testify) against them.”

In verse 77, Allaah highlights the ingratitude of man, who, forgetting that Allaah created him from a drop of semen, chooses to contest the belief in Towheed. They also contest Allaah’s power by expressing surprise at the fact that Allaah will resurrect man on the Day of Qiyaamah. Allaah replies to their objection when He says, “Say, The One Who gave life to it the first time (when He created it) will revive it. He has knowledge of all things… until the words … When He wills anything, His only command is to say, “Be!” and it comes into being” [verses 79 to 82].

Allaah proves the coming of Qiyaamah by explaining that it is indeed simple for the Being Who originally created man from nothing, to bring the same original matter back to life. Allaah also mentions one of His smaller feats in creating fire from a green tree. After creating man from nothing and creating enormous phenomena like the heavens and the earth, can He not perform the simple act of resurrecting the dead? In fact, all Allaah needs to do when He intends something to happen, is Say Be!” The thing then immediately comes into being.

Allaah concludes the Surah Yaaseen by stating the essence of the theme, when He says, “Pure is that Being in Whose hand lies the reins (control) of everything, and to Whom you will all be returned (after death).”
In the name of Allaah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

1. Yaaseen. (Only Allaah knows the correct meaning of these letters.)

2. By the oath of the wise Qur’aan.

3. You are verily among the Ambiyaa...

4. …on the straight path (Isaam).

5. (This Qur’aan is) A revelation of the Mighty, the Most Merciful.

6. (It was revealed) To warn a nation (the Arabs) whose forefathers were not warned (by a Nabi since the demise of ‘Isa many centuries earlier) and who were negligent (disregarded their duties to Allaah).

7. The decision has been passed against most of them that they will not have Imaan (and are destined to die as Kuffaar).
8. (When they reach the Aakhirah,) We shall place a yoke (collar) around their necks, which reaches to their chins, so that their gazes are fixed upwards (symbolic of their arrogance in this world which prevented them from looking down and seeing the straight path).

9. We have placed a barrier in front of them and a barrier behind them, and We have enveloped them (with the darkness of kufr and sin) so they cannot see (the truth to acquire any spiritual understanding).

10. It is the same to them (makes no difference to them) whether you warn them or you do not warn them. (In any event,) They will never have Imaan (because their pride prevents them from accepting the truth).

11. You can warn only him who follows the advice and fears Ar Rahmaan without seeing Him (because such a person is willing to accept guidance). Give him the good news of forgiveness and a bountiful provision (a reward of honour).

12. Verily only We (can) revive the dead and record what (actions) they send ahead (to be rewarded or punished in the Aakhirah) and the trails (guidance) they leave (for others to follow). We have meticulously recorded everything in the clear Book (the "Lawhul Mahfooth").

13. Give them the example of the people of the village (probably Antioch) when the messengers (prophets) came to (preach Tawheed to) them.

14. When We sent two (Prophets) to them, and the people rejected them, after which We reinforced them with a third (Prophet) and they said (to the people), “We have certainly been sent as messengers to you people.”
15. The people said, “(How can you be prophets when) You are mere humans like ourselves (a Prophet ought to be an angel). Allaah has not revealed anything (to you), you are only lying (about your duty and message).”

16. They replied, “(Whether you believe us or not,) Our Rabb knows that We have been sent as messengers to you people (and we will therefore continue with our duty).”

17. “Clear propagation is our only responsibility.”

18. The people said, “We augur (foresee) evil from you (only evil can be expected from your presence here). If you do not desist (stop preaching), we will surely stone you and a painful punishment from us will definitely afflict you.”

19. The messengers said, “Your augury (premonition of evil) is with you (if any evil comes your way, it will be only as a result of your own wrong-doing). (Do you foresee evil only) Because you have been given advice? (This is foolish indeed because good advice should rather prompt you to anticipate goodness. However, you say such things because) You are but a transgressing nation (who do not live within limits).”

20. A man (from the same town) came running from the farthest end (part) of the town saying, “O my people! Follow (obey) the messengers.”

21. “Follow those who do not ask for any payment from you, and who are rightly guided (who are not selfishly motivated in any way).”
22. “Why should I not worship the One Who has created me, and to Whom you all shall return?” (We have every reason to worship Allaah and would be foolish not to.)

23. “Why should I take others as Aaliha besides Him? If Ar Rahmaan intends any harm to reach me, their intercession will not help me in the least, nor can they rescue me (from punishment).” (We therefore have no reason for worshipping them.)

24. “(Should I worship others besides Allaah,) I would then surely be in clear error.”

25. “I have certainly believed in your Rabb (Allaah), so listen to me (and obey the Prophets).” (However, instead of listening to him, the people killed him.)

26. It was said (to him after his death), “Enter Jannah.” He said, “If only my people had known...”

27. “…the reason why my Rabb had forgiven me and made me from among the honoured ones!” (If they knew this, they would surely have followed my example.)

28. We did not (make the effort to) send any army against his nation (people) after him, nor were We going to.

29. It was only a single scream (an extremely loud blast that was needed to punish them,) after which they were (all destroyed like a light that is) suddenly extinguished (in an instant).
30. What anguish about My bondsmen! (They are so cruel and foolish that) They mock every Rasool that comes to them.

31. Have they not seen how many were the generations that We destroyed before them (all of whom behaved as they do)? (These nations were so thoroughly destroyed that) They will certainly never return to them (in world).

32. (Finally, on the Day of Qiyaamah) They will all be present before Us collectively (when they will have to answer for their behaviour and suffer an even graver punishment).

33. Dead (arid, barren) earth is an Aayah for them (which demonstrates how Allaah brings things back to life after people have lost hope that the vegetation will be revived). (By merely sending rain to the dead earth) We revive it and (even) bring forth grains from it, which you eat.

34. (In addition to the grains We cause to grow on earth for man,) We place orchards of date palms and grapes on it (the earth) and cause springs to gush forth...

35. ...so that they may eat from its fruit, even though their hands have not made it. Will they not be grateful (for everything We have given them without any effort on their part)?

36. That Allaah is Pure Who created every pair (male and female of every species of plant) that the earth grows, (as well as pairs) from among themselves (human beings), and (pairs from) other things about which they have no knowledge.

37. The night is (also) an Aayah (sign) for them (which demonstrates Allaah’s great powers). We draw the day out of it (at sunset) and they (people) are suddenly left in darkness.
38. The sun travels towards its destination (within its orbit without straying from its course). This is the (perfect) arrangement of the Mighty, the All Knowing.

39. We have stipulated (determined) stations (phases) for the (waxing and waning of the) moon, until (after it passes the waning phase at the end of the month) it returns (to a state when it looks) like a branch of an old date palm.

40. It is not possible for the sun to catch (overtake) the moon (so that the sun appears during the night), nor is it possible for the night to precede the day. They all (the sun and moon) swim within their orbits (without entering the orbits of each other).

41. An Aayah (sign) for them (demonstrating Our power) is that We had carried their lineage (ancestors) on board the laden ark (as the flood raged during the time of Noah).

42. And (In addition to this) We have made (marine) conveyances for them like the ark, which they board (to transport themselves and their goods to distant lands).

43. If We wish, We could drown them (as they travel by sea) and they will have no helper nor shall they be rescued...

44. …except (We do not do this) because of Our mercy and so that they enjoy themselves (in this world) for a little while (until their death).
45. When they are told, “Fear what is before you (the punishment and many calamities of this world) and what is behind you (the punishment of the Aakhirah that is still to come) so that mercy may be shown to you (but they still refuse to submit).”

46. (However, instead of learning lessons.) They turn away from every Aayah (guidance) of their Rabb that comes to them.

47. When they are told, “Spend (on the poor) from what (wealth) Allaah has provided for you,” the Kuffaar (cynically) say to the Mu'mineen, “Should we feed someone whom Allaah will feed (directly without us as a means) if He wills? You are but in manifest deviation.” (They foolishly fail to realise that Allaah certainly does not need any person's charity to feed the poor just as He does not need it to feed the rich and the rest of creation. By spending on the poor, people are doing themselves a favour because they will be generously rewarded for their charity.)

48. They say, “When will this promise (of punishment) come to pass, if you (Rasulullaah ﷺ) are truthful?”

49. (It seems that) They await only a single scream (punishment or Qiyaamah) to seize them while they are arguing. (It seems that only after this they will decide to accept Imaan but then it will be too late!)

50. (When the punishment seizes them, they will have no chance to do anything.) Then they will be unable to make any bequest (testament) nor shall they be able to return to their families (homes).

51. The trumpet will be blown (to signal the arrival of Qiyaamah) and they will scurry (rush) to their Rabb (for reckoning) from their graves.
52. (Overcome with grief and worry) They will say, “Alas. Who has raised us from our graves? This is what Ar Rahmaan has promised and the messengers spoke the truth!”

53. It (the arrival of Qiyaamah) will be (signalled by) only a single scream, after which they will all instantly appear before Us (to account for their actions in the world).

54. On this day (of Qiyaamah), no soul shall be wronged in the least, and you (O mankind) will be repaid only for what you did (Men will be punished for only the sins that they committed).

55. (Unlike others who will be miserable on the Day of Qiyaamah) The people of Jannah will certainly enjoy themselves in what they will be doing on this day (of Qiyaamah).

56. They, together with their spouses will be resting on couches in the shade (unlike those in Jahannam where the sweltering sun will be just above the sinners heads).

57. There they will have fruits and whatever they request.

58. They will (also) receive a greeting of peace from the Most Merciful Rabb (indicating that He is pleased with them).

59. (The announcement will then be made,) “Separate yourselves (from the Mu’minen) today, O you criminals (Kuffaar)!”
60. (Allah will remind the people saying,) “O children of Aadam! Did I not emphasise to you that you should not worship (follow the dictates of) Shaytaan (who had encouraged you to worship besides Allaah)? He is certainly your open enemy (and will always mislead you).”

61. “And (did I not emphasise to you) that you should worship only Me? This (path of Touheed) is the straight path.”

62. “He (Shaytaan) has misled a large group from you. Did you not have the intelligence (wisdom) to understand (that you should not follow him when you had been warned so often)?”

63. (As a result, you shall now be subjected to the punishment of Jahannam.) “This is the Jahannam about which you were (respectably) warned (but which you foolishly denied).”

64. “Enter it (Jahannam) today because you used to commit kufr.”

65. On this day We shall seal their mouths. Their hands will speak to Us and their legs will testify to what they earned (the sins they committed). (In this manner, they will be unable to lie.)

66. If We wished, We could have wiped out their eyes. They will then run to (find) the path, but how will they see (without vision)?

67. If We wish, We could transfigure (distort) them (turning them into pigs or monkeys) as they stand and they will be unable to go ahead or backwards (then they will be unable to do anything).
68. He whom We advance in age (make old), We diminish in structure (physical strength). Do they not understand (that the Being Who causes these changes in people can certainly bring the dead back to life)?

69. We did not teach him (Rasulullah ﷺ) poetry, nor is it befitting of him (to recite poetry because his duty is much nobler). This is (pure) advice and the clear Qur’aan...

70. ...to warn him who is living, and to establish proof against the Kaafiroon (to prove that their behaviour and beliefs are incorrect).

71. Do they not see that, with Our hands, We have created livestock for them and they are its masters (owners).

72. We placed them (these animals) at their (people's) service, (subdued) some of them as their means of transport (to ride), while they eat others.

73. From them (these animals), they derive many uses and (obtain something to) drink. Are they not grateful (for these bounties)?

74. They adopt various Aaliha besides Allaah with the hope that they may be assisted (by these Aaliha).

75. (Little do they realise that) They (these gods) are unable to render any assistance to them, and (instead) they will be a ready army (who will testify) against them.
76. (O Rasulullah) Let not their (the Mushrikeen's) speech (taunts and accusations) grieve you. Indeed We are Aware of what they keep secret (conceal) and what they make public (reveal and We will punish them for it).

77. Has man not seen that We created him from a seed (a lowly sperm), and now (forgetting his humble beginnings,) he is suddenly an open adversary (a deviant enemy contesting Our word)?

78. (When arguing with Us) He quotes examples for Us (disregarding Our status) and forgets himself (forgets that he was once a lowly drop of fluid). He says, “Who will give life to (revive the) bones after they have decomposed (decayed)?”

79. Say, “The One Who gave life to it the first time (when He first created it) will revive it. He has knowledge of all things.”

80. (It is) He Who created fire for you from (the wood of) a green tree from which you (are able to) kindle fires (by rubbing the branches together).

81. Does the One Who created the heavens and the earth not have the power to create others like them? Why not? (He can create millions more because) He is the Prolific Creator, the All Knowing.

82. When He wills anything (intends to do anything), His only command is to say, “Be!” and it comes into being.

83. Pure is that Being in Whose hand lies the reins (control) of everything, and to Whom you will all be returned (after death).