
Sūrah 15: al-Hijr

Period of Revelation

It is clear from its topics and style that the period of its revelation is similar to that of Sūrah Ibrāhīm as two things are quite prominent in its background. Firstly, it appears from the repeated warnings in this Sūrah that despite the fact that the Prophet had been propagating the Message for many years his people in general had not shown any inclination towards its acceptance nay they had become more and more obdurate and stubborn in their antagonism enmity and ridicule with the passage of time. Secondly by that time the Prophet had begun to feel a little tired of making strenuous efforts to eradicate disbelief and opposition of his people. That is why God has consoled and comforted him over and over again by way of encouragement.

Topics and the Central Theme

Though the main topics of the Sūrah are :

- a. warning to those who rejected his Message, opposed it tooth and nail and ridiculed him.
- b. comfort and encouragement to the Prophet

It does not mean that this Sūrah does not contain admonition and instructions. As a matter of fact the Qur'ān never confines itself to mere warning; rebuke and censure but resorts to precept in every suitable place. Accordingly this Sūrah contains brief arguments for Tawhid (Monothesim) on the one hand and admonition in the story of Adam and Satan on the other.

Sūrah 15: al-Hijr⁶¹²

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate,
the Most Merciful

1. Alif, Lām, Rā.⁶¹³ These are the verses of the Book and a clear Qur'ān [i.e., recitation].
2. Perhaps those who disbelieve will wish⁶¹⁴ that they had been Muslims.
3. Let them eat and enjoy themselves and be diverted by [false] hope, for they are going to know.
4. And We did not destroy any city but that for it was a known decree.
5. No nation will precede its term, nor will they remain thereafter.
6. And they say, "O you upon whom the message has been sent down, indeed you are mad."⁶¹⁵
7. Why do you not bring us the angels, if you should be among the truthful?"
8. We do not send down the angels except with truth;⁶¹⁶ and they [i.e., the disbelievers] would not then be reprieved.
9. Indeed, it is We who sent down the message [i.e., the Qur'ān], and indeed, We will be its guardian.
10. And We had certainly sent [messengers] before you, [O Muhammad], among the sects of the former peoples.
11. And no messenger would come to them except that they ridiculed him.
12. Thus do We insert it [i.e., denial] into the hearts of the criminals.
13. They will not believe in it, while there has already occurred the precedent of the former peoples.
14. And [even] if We opened to them a gate from the heaven and they continued therein to ascend,
15. They would say, "Our eyes have only been dazzled. Rather, we are a people affected by magic."
16. And We have placed within the heaven great stars and have beautified it for the observers.
17. And We have protected it from every devil expelled [from the mercy of God]
18. Except one who steals a hearing and is pursued by a clear burning flame.
19. And the earth - We have spread it and cast therein firmly set mountains and caused to grow therein [something] of every well-balanced thing.
20. And We have made for you therein means of living and [for] those for whom you are not providers.⁶¹⁷
21. And there is not a thing but that with Us are its depositories, and We do not

⁶¹² *Al-Hijr*: The valley of stone. It was inhabited by the tribe of Thamūd (mentioned in verses 80-84), who caved palaces and dwellings out of the rock.

⁶¹³ See footnote to 2:1.

⁶¹⁴ On the Day of Judgement or at the time of death.

⁶¹⁵ Literally, "possessed by *jinn*."

⁶¹⁶ i.e., with a message or, as the conclusion of the verse suggests, to carry out a promised punishment.

⁶¹⁷ God has put at your service other men and animals for which He provides. An additional meaning is that God provides means for your living and for all other creatures as well.

- send it down except according to a known [i.e., specified] measure.
22. And We have sent the fertilizing winds⁶¹⁸ and sent down water from the sky and given you drink from it. And you are not its retainers.
23. And indeed, it is We who give life and cause death, and We are the Inheritor.⁶¹⁹
24. And We have already known the preceding [generations] among you, and We have already known the later [ones to come].
25. And indeed, your Lord will gather them; indeed, He is Wise and Knowing.
26. And We did certainly create man out of clay from an altered black mud.
27. And the jinn We created before from scorching fire.
28. And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, "I will create a human being out of clay from an altered black mud.
29. And when I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My [created] soul,⁶²⁰ then fall down to him in prostration."
30. So the angels prostrated - all of them entirely,
31. Except Iblees;⁶²¹ he refused to be with those who prostrated.
32. [God] said, "O Iblees, what is [the matter] with you that you are not with those who prostrate?"
33. He said, "Never would I prostrate to a human whom You created out of clay from an altered black mud."
34. [God] said, "Then get out of it,⁶²² for indeed, you are expelled.
35. And indeed, upon you is the curse until the Day of Recompense."
36. He said, "My Lord, then reprieve me until the Day they are resurrected."
37. [God] said, "So indeed, you are of those reprieved
38. Until the Day of the time well-known."
39. [Iblees] said, "My Lord, because You have put me in error, I will surely make [disobedience] attractive to them [i.e., mankind] on earth, and I will mislead them all
40. Except, among them, Your chosen servants."
41. [God] said, "This is a path [of return] to Me [that is] straight.
42. Indeed, My servants - no authority will you have over them, except those who follow you of the deviators.
43. And indeed, Hell is the promised place for them all.

⁶¹⁸ Causing precipitation in rainclouds or carrying pollen. Another meaning is "pregnant winds," i.e., those carrying rainclouds.

⁶¹⁹ God remains after all creation has passed away.

⁶²⁰ The element of life and soul which God created for that body, not His own spirit or part of Himself (as some mistakenly believe).

⁶²¹ Who was of the *jinn*. See 18:50.

⁶²² Your position in the heavens.

44. It has seven gates; for every gate is of them [i.e., Satan's followers] a portion designated."
45. Indeed, the righteous will be within gardens and springs,
46. [Having been told], "Enter it in peace, safe [and secure]."
47. And We will remove whatever is in their breasts of resentment,⁶²³ [so they will be] brothers, on thrones facing each other.
48. No fatigue will touch them therein, nor from it will they [ever] be removed.
49. [O Muhammad], inform My servants that it is I who am the Forgiving, the Merciful,
50. And that it is My punishment which is the painful punishment.
51. And inform them about the guests of Abraham,
52. When they entered upon him and said, "Peace." [Abraham] said, "Indeed, we are fearful [i.e., apprehensive] of you."
53. [The angels] said, "Fear not. Indeed, we give you good tidings of a learned boy."
54. He said, "Have you given me good tidings although old age has come upon me? Then of what [wonder] do you inform?"
55. They said, "We have given you good tidings in truth, so do not be of the despairing."
56. He said, "And who despairs of the mercy of his Lord except for those astray?"
57. [Abraham] said, "Then what is your business [here], O messengers?"
58. They said, "Indeed, we have been sent to a people of criminals,
59. Except the family of Lot; indeed, we will save them all
60. Except his wife." We [i.e., God] decreed that she is of those who remain behind.⁶²⁴
61. And when the messengers came to the family of Lot,
62. He said, "Indeed, you are people unknown."
63. They said, "But we have come to you with that about which they were disputing,
64. And we have come to you with truth, and indeed, we are truthful.
65. So set out with your family during a portion of the night and follow behind them and let not anyone among you look back and continue on to where you are commanded."
66. And We conveyed to him [the decree] of that matter: that those [sinners] would be eliminated by early morning.
67. And the people of the city came rejoicing.⁶²⁵
68. [Lot] said, "Indeed, these are my guests, so do not shame me.

⁶²³ See footnote to 7:43.

⁶²⁴ For having collaborated with the evildoers.

⁶²⁵ At the news of Lot's visitors.

69. And fear God and do not disgrace me.”
70. They said, “Have we not forbidden you from [protecting] people?”
71. [Lot] said, “These are my daughters⁶²⁶ - if you would be doers [of lawful marriage].”
72. By your life, [O Muhammad], indeed they were, in their intoxication, wandering blindly.
73. So the shriek⁶²⁷ seized them at sunrise.
74. And We made the highest part [of the city] its lowest and rained upon them stones of hard clay.
75. Indeed in that are signs for those who discern.
76. And indeed, they [i.e., those cities] are [situated] on an established road.
77. Indeed in that is a sign for the believers.
78. And the companions of the thicket [i.e., the people of Madyan] were [also] wrongdoers,
79. So We took retribution from them, and indeed, both [cities] are on a clear highway.
80. And certainly did the companions of al-Hijr⁶²⁸ [i.e., the Thamūd] deny the messengers.
81. And We gave them Our signs, but from them they were turning away.
82. And they used to carve from the mountains, houses, feeling secure.
83. But the shriek seized them at early morning,
84. So nothing availed them [from] what they used to earn.
85. And We have not created the heavens and earth and that between them except in truth. And indeed, the Hour is coming; so forgive with gracious forgiveness.
86. Indeed, your Lord - He is the Knowing Creator.
87. And We have certainly given you, [O Muhammad], seven of the often repeated [verses]⁶²⁹ and the great Qur’ān.
88. Do not extend your eyes toward that by which We have given enjoyment to [certain] categories of them [i.e., the disbelievers], and do not grieve over them. And lower your wing [i.e., show kindness] to the believers
89. And say, “Indeed, I am the clear Warner” -
90. Just as We had revealed [scriptures] to the separators⁶³⁰
91. Who have made the Qur’ān into portions.⁶³¹
92. So by your Lord, We will surely question them all
93. About what they used to do.

⁶²⁶ i.e., the women of his community who were lawful for marriage.

⁶²⁷ See footnote to 11:67.

⁶²⁸ The valley of stone.

⁶²⁹ Referring to *Sūrah al-Fāṭihah*.

⁶³⁰ Specifically, the Jews and Christians, who separated from the teachings of their prophets.

⁶³¹ Accepting part and rejecting part according to their own inclinations.

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94. Then declare what you are commanded⁶³² and turn away from the polytheists.⁶³³
 95. Indeed, We are sufficient for you against the mockers
 96. Who make [equal] with God another deity. But they are going to know.
 97. And We already know that your breast is constrained by what they say.
 98. So exalt [God] with praise of your Lord and be of those who prostrate [to Him].
 99. And worship your Lord until there comes to you the certainty [i.e., death].

⁶³² The implication is “Thereby you will distinguish or separate the disbelievers from the believers.”

⁶³³ Any who persist in association of others with God.