

Sūrah 59: al-Hashr

Period of Revelation

Bukhari and Muslim contain a hadith from Sa'īd bin Jubair to the effect "When I asked Abdullah bin Abbas about Sūrah Al-Hashr, he replied that it was sent down concerning the battle against the Banu-Nadheer just as Sūrah Al-Anfal was sent down concerning the Battle of Badr. "As for the question as to when this battle took place, Imām Zuhri has stated on the authority of Urwah bin Zubair that it took place six months after the Battle of Badr. However, Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Hisham and Baladhuri regard it as an event of Rabi' al-Awwal, 4 A.H.

Historical Background

In order to understand the subject matter of this Sūrah well, it is necessary to have a look at the history of Madinah and the Jews of Hijaz, for without it one cannot know precisely the real causes of the Prophet's dealing with their different tribes the way he did.

No authentic history of the Arabian Jews exists in the world. They have not left any writing of their own in the form of a book or a tablet which might throw light on their past, nor have the Jewish historians and writers of the non-Arab world made any mention of them, the reason being that after their settlement in the Arabian peninsula they had detached themselves from the main body of the nation, and the Jews of the world did not count them as among themselves. For they had given up Hebrew culture and language, even the names, and adopted Arabism instead. In the tablets that have been unearthed in the archaeological research in the Hijaz no trace of the Jews is found before the first century of the Christian era, except for a few Jewish names. Therefore, the history of the Arabian Jews is based mostly on the verbal traditions prevalent among the Arabs most of which are bad, and have been spread by the Jews themselves.

The Jews of the Hijaz claimed that they had come to settle in Arabia during the last stage of the life of the Prophet Moses. They said that the Prophet Moses had despatched an army to expel the Amalekites from the land of Yathrib (previous name of Madinah) and had commanded it not to spare even a single soul of that tribe. The Israelite army carried out the Prophet's command, but spared the life of a handsome prince of the Amalekite king and returned with him to Palestine. By that time the Prophet Moses had passed away. His successors took great exception to what the army had done, for by sparing the life of an Amalekite it had clearly disobeyed the Prophet and violated the Mosaic law. Consequently, they excluded the army from their community, and it had to return to Yathrib and settle there for ever. (Kitab al-Aghani, vol. xix, p. 94). Thus the Jews claimed that they had been living in Yathrib since about 1200 B.C. But, this had in fact no historical basis and probably the Jews had invented this story in order to overawe the Arabs into believing that they were of noble lineage and the original inhabitants of the land.

The second Jewish immigration, according to the Jews, took place in 587 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, destroyed Jerusalem and dispersed the Jews throughout the world. The Arab Jews said that several of their tribes at that time had come to settle in Wadi al-Qura, Taima, and Yathrib. (Al-Baladhuri, Futuh al-Buldan). But this too has no historical basis. By this also they might have wanted to prove that they were the original settlers of the area.

As a matter of fact, what is established is that when in 70 A.D. The Romans massacred the Jews in Palestine, and then in 132 A.D. expelled them from that land, many of the Jewish tribes fled to find an asylum in the Hijaz, a territory that was contiguous to Palestine in the south. There, they settled wherever they found water springs and greenery, and then by intrigue and through money lending businesses gradually occupied the fertile lands. Ailah, Maqna, Tabūk, Taima, Wadi al Qura, Fadak and Khaiber came under their control in that very period, and Banl Quraidhah, Banu-Nadheer, Bani Bahdal, and Bani-Qaynuqah also came in the same period and occupied Yathrib.

Among the tribes that settled in Yathrib the Banu-Nad^heer and the Banū Quray^hah were more prominent for they belonged to the Cohen or priest class. They were looked upon as of noble descent and enjoyed religious leadership among their co-religionists. When they came to settle in Madinah (Yathrib) there were some other tribes living there before, whom they subdued and became practically the owners of this green and fertile land. About three centuries later, in 450 or 451 A.D., the great flood of Yemen occurred which has been mentioned in v. 16-17 of Sūrah Saba. As a result of this different tribes of the people of Saba were compelled to leave Yemen and disperse in different parts of Arabia. Thus, the Bani Ghassan went to settle in Syria, Bani Lakhm in Hirah (Iraq), Bani Khuza'ah between Jeddah and Makkah and the Aws and the Khazraj went to settle in Yathrib. As Yathrib was under Jewish domination, they at first did not allow the Aws and the Khazraj to gain a footing and the two Arab tribes had to settle on lands that had not yet been brought under cultivation, where they could hardly produce just enough to enable them to survive. At last, one of their chiefs went to Syria to ask for the assistance of their Ghassanide brothers; he brought an army from there and broke the power of the Jews. Thus, the Aws and the Khazraj were able to gain complete dominance over Yathrib, with the result that two of the major Jewish tribes, Banu-Nad^heer and Banū Quray^hah were forced to take quarters outside the city. Since the third tribe, Bani-Qaynuqah, was not on friendly terms with the other two tribes, it stayed inside the city as usual, but had to seek protection of the Khazraj tribe. As a counter measure to this Banu-Nad^heer and Banū Quray^hah took protection of the Aws tribe so that they could live in peace in the suburbs of Yathrib.

Before the Prophet's arrival at Madinah until his emigration the following were the main features of the Jews' position in Hijaz in general and in Madinah (Yathrib) in particular:

1. In the matter of language, dress, civilization and way of life they had completely adopted Arabism, even their names had become Arabian. Of the 12 Jewish tribes that had settled in Hijaz, none except the Bani Zaura retained its Hebrew name. Except for a few scattered scholars none knew Hebrew. In fact, there is nothing in the poetry of the Jewish poets of the pre-Islāmic days to distinguish it from the poetry of the Arab poets in language, ideas and themes. They even intermarried with the Arabs. In fact, nothing distinguished them from the common Arabs except religion. Notwithstanding this, they had not lost their identity among the Arabs and had kept their Jewish prejudice alive most ardently and jealously. They had adopted superficial Arabism because they could not survive in Arabia without it.
2. Because of this Arabism the western orientalisists have been misled into thinking that perhaps they were not really Israelites but Arabs who had embraced Judaism, or that at least majority of them consisted of the Arab Jews. But there is no historical proof to show that the Jews ever engaged in any proselytizing activities in Hijaz, or their rabbis invited the Arabs to embrace Judaism like the Christian priests and missionaries. On the contrary, we see that they prided themselves upon their Israelite descent and racial prejudices. They called the Arabs the Gentiles, which did not mean illiterate or uneducated but savage and uncivilized people. They believed that the Gentiles did not possess any human rights; these were only reserved for the Israelites, and therefore, it was lawful and right for the Israelites to defraud them of their properties by every fair and foul means. Apart from the Arab chiefs, they did not consider the common Arabs fit enough to have equal status with them even if they entered Judaism. No historical proof is available, nor is there any evidence in the Arabian traditions, that some Arab tribe or prominent clan might have accepted Judaism. However, mention has been made of some individuals, who had become Jews. The Jews, however, were more interested in their trade and business than in the preaching of their religion. That is why Judaism did not spread as a religion and creed in Hijaz but remained only as a mark of pride and distinction of a few Israelite tribes. The Jewish rabbis, however, had a flourishing business in granting amulets and charms, fortune telling and sorcery, because of which they were held in great awe by the Arabs for their "knowledge" and practical wisdom.
3. Economically they were much stronger than the Arabs. Since they had emigrated from more civilized and culturally advanced countries of Palestine and Syria, they knew many such arts as were unknown to the Arabs; they also enjoyed trade relations with the outside world. Hence, they had

captured the business of importing grain in Yathrib and the upper Hijaz and exporting dried dates to other countries. Poultry farming and fishing also were mostly under their controls. They were good at cloth weaving too. They had also set up wine shops here and there, where they sold wine which they imported from Syria. The Bani-Qaynuqah generally practiced crafts such as that of the goldsmith, blacksmith and vessel makers. In all these occupations, trade and business these Jews earned excessive profits, but their chief occupation was trading in money lending in which they had ensnared the Arabs of the surrounding areas. More particularly the chiefs and elders of the Arab tribes who were given to a life of pomp, bragging and boasting on the strength of borrowed money were deeply indebted to them. They lent money on high rates of interest and then would charge compound interest, which one could hardly clear off once one was involved in it. Thus, they had rendered the Arabs economically hollow, but it had naturally induced a deep rooted hatred among the common Arabs against the Jews.

4. The demand of their trade and economic interests was that they should neither estrange one Arab tribe by befriending another, nor take part in their mutual wars. But, on the other hand, it was also in their interests, that they should not allow the Arabs to be united and should keep them fighting and entrenched against each other, for they knew that whenever the Arab tribes united, they would not allow them to remain in possession of their large properties, gardens and fertile lands, which they had come to own through their profiteering and money lending business. Furthermore, each of their tribes also had to enter into alliance with one or another powerful Arab tribe for the sake of its own protection so that no other powerful tribe should overawe it by its might. Because of this they had not only to take part in the mutual wars of the Arabs but they often had to go to war in support of the Arab tribe to which their tribe was tied in alliance against another Jewish tribe which was allied to the enemy tribe. In Yathrib the Banū Quraythah and the Banu-Nadheer were the allies of the Aws while the Bani-Qaynuqah of the Khazraj. A little before the Prophet's emigration, these Jewish tribes had confronted each other in support of their respective allies in the bloody war that took place between the Aws and the Khazraj at Buath.

Such were the conditions when Islām came to Madinah, and ultimately an Islāmic State came into existence after the Prophet's arrival there. One of the first things that he accomplished soon after establishing this state was unification of the Aws and the Khazraj and the Emigrants into a brotherhood. The second was that he concluded a treaty between the Muslims and the Jews on definite conditions, in which it was pledged that neither party would encroach on the rights of the other, and both would unite in a joint defense against the external enemies. Some important clauses of this treaty are as follows, which clearly show what the Jews and the Muslims had pledged to adhere to in their mutual relationship:

“The Jews must bear their expenses and the Muslims their expenses. Each must help the other against anyone who attacks the people of this document. They must seek mutual advice and consultation, and loyalty is a protection against treachery. They shall sincerely wish one another well. Their relations will be governed by piety and recognition of the rights of others, and not by sin and wrongdoing. The wronged must be helped. The Jews must pay with the believers so long as the war lasts. Yathrib shall be a sanctuary for the people of this document. If any dispute or controversy likely to cause trouble should arise, it must be referred to God and to Muhammad the Apostle of God; Quraysh and their helpers shall not be given protection. The contracting parties are bound to help one another against any attack on Yathrib; Every one shall be responsible for the defense of the portion to which he belongs.” (Ibn Hisham, vol. ii, pp. 147 to 150).

This was an absolute and definitive covenant to the conditions of which the Jews themselves had agreed. But not very long after this they began to show hostility towards the Prophet of God and Islām and the Muslims, and their hostility and perverseness went on increasing day by day. Its main causes were three:

First, they envisaged the Prophet merely as a chief of his people, who should be content to have concluded a political agreement with them and should only concern himself with the worldly interests of his group. But they found that he was extending an invitation to belief in God and the Apostleship and the Book (which

also included belief in their own Prophets and scriptures), and was urging the people to give up disobedience of God and adopt obedience to the Divine Commands and abide by the moral laws of their own prophets. This they could not put up with. They feared that if this universal ideological movement gained momentum it would destroy their rigid religiosity and wipe out their racial nationhood.

Second, when they saw that the Aws and the Khazraj and the Emigrants were uniting into a brotherhood and the people from the Arab tribes of the surrounding areas, who entered Islām, were also joining this Islāmic Brotherhood of Madinah and forming a religious community, they feared that the selfish policy that they had been following of sowing discord between the Arab tribes for the promotion of their own well being and interests for centuries, would not work in the new system, but they would face a united front of the Arabs against which their scheming and machinations would not succeed.

Third, the work that the Messenger of God was carrying out of reforming the society and civilization included putting an end to all unlawful methods in business and mutual dealings. More than that; he had declared taking and giving of interest also as impure and unlawful earning. This caused them the fear that if his rule became established in Arabia, he would declare interest legally forbidden, and in this they saw their own economic disaster and death.

For these reasons they made resistance and opposition to the Prophet their national ideal. They would never hesitate to employ any trick and machination, any device and cunning, to harm him. They spread every kind of falsehood so as to cause distrust against him in the people's minds. They created every kind of doubt, suspicion and misgiving in the hearts of the new reverts so as to turn them back from Islām. They would make false profession of Islām and then would turn apostate so that it may engender more and more misunderstandings among the people against Islām and the Prophet. They would conspire with the hypocrites to create mischief and would cooperate with every group and tribe hostile to Islām. They would create rifts between the Muslims and would do whatever they could to stir them up to mutual feuds and fighting. The people of the Aws and the Khazraj tribes were their special target, with whom they had been allied for centuries. Making mention of the war of Buath before them they would remind them of their previous enmities so that they might again resort to the sword against each other and shatter their bond of fraternity into which Islām had bound them. They would resort to every kind of deceit and fraud in order to harm the Muslims economically. Whenever one of those with whom they had business dealings, would accept Islām, they would do whatever they could to cause him financial loss. If he owed them something they would worry and harass him by making repeated demands, and if they owed him something, they would withhold the payment and would publicly say that at the time the bargain was made he professed a different religion, and since he had changed his religion, they were no longer under any obligation towards him. Several instances of this nature have been cited in the explanation of verse 75 of Sūrah al-Imrān given in the commentaries by Tabari, Nisaburi, Tabrisi and in Ruh al Ma'ani.

They had adopted this hostile attitude against the covenant even before the Battle of Badr. But when the Prophet and the Muslims won a decisive victory over the Quraysh at Badr, they were filled with grief and anguish, malice and anger. They were in fact anticipating that in that war the powerful Quraysh would deal a death blow to the Muslims. That is why even before the news of the Islāmic victory reached Madinah they had begun to spread the rumor that the Prophet had fallen a martyr and the Muslims had been routed, and the Quraysh army under Abu Jahl was advancing on Madinah. But when the battle was decided against their hopes and wishes, they burst with anger and grief. Ka'b bin Ashraf, the chief of the Banu-Nadheer, cried out: *"By God, if Muhammad has actually killed these nobles of Arabia, the earth's belly would be better for us than its back."* Then he went to Makkah and incited the people to vengeance by writing and reciting provocative elegies for the Quraysh chiefs killed at Badr. Then he returned to Madinah and composed lyrical verses of an insulting nature about the Muslim women. At last, enraged with his mischief, the Prophet sent Muhammad bin Maslamah Ansāri in Rabi al-Awwal, 3 A.H., and had him slain.

The first Jewish tribe which, after the Battle of Badr, openly and collectively broke their covenant were the Bani-Qaynuqah. They lived in a locality inside the city of Madinah. As they practiced the crafts of the goldsmith, blacksmith and vessel makers, the people of Madinah had to visit their shops fairly frequently. They were proud of their bravery and valor. Being blacksmiths by profession even their children were well armed, and they could instantly muster 700 fighting men from among themselves. They were also arrogantly aware that they enjoyed relations of confederacy with the Khazraj and Abdullah bin Ubbay, the chief of the Khazraj, who was their chief supporter. At the victory of Badr, they became so provoked that they began to trouble and harass the Muslims and their women in particular, who visited their shops. By and by things came to such a pass that one day a Muslim woman was stripped naked publicly in their bazaar. This led to a brawl in which a Muslim and a Jew were killed. Thereupon the Prophet himself visited their locality, got them together and counseled them on decent conduct. But the reply that they gave was; *“O Muhammad, you perhaps think we are like the Quraysh; they did not know fighting; therefore, you overpowered them. But when you come in contact with us, you will see how men fight.”* This was in clear words a declaration of war. Consequently, the Prophet laid siege to their quarters towards the end of Shawwal (and according to some others, of Dhul Qa’dah) 2 A.H. The siege had hardly lasted for a fortnight when they surrendered and all their fighting men were tied and taken prisoners. Now Abdullah bin Ubayy came up in support of them and insisted that they should be pardoned. The Prophet conceded his request and decided that the Bani-Qaynuqah would be exiled from Madinah leaving their properties, armor and tools of trade behind. (Ibn Sa’d, Ibn Hisham, Tarikh Tabari).

For some time after these punitive measures (i.e. the banishment of the Qaynuqa and killing of Ka’b bin Ashraf) the Jews remained so terror stricken that they did not dare commit any further mischief. But later when in Shawwal, 3 A.H., the Quraysh in order to avenge themselves for the defeat at Badr, marched against Madinah with great preparations, and the Jews saw that only a thousand men had marched out with the Prophet as against three thousand men of the Quraysh, and even they were deserted by 300 hypocrites who returned to Madinah, they committed the first and open breach of the treaty by refusing to join the Prophet in the defense of the city although they were bound to it. Then, when in the Battle of Uhud the Muslims suffered reverses, they were further emboldened. So much so that the Banu-Nadheer made a secret plan to kill the Prophet, though the plan failed before it could be executed. According to the details, after the incident of Bi’r Maunah (Safar, 4 A.H.) Amr bin Umayyah Damri slew by mistake two men of the Bani Amir in retaliation, who actually belonged to a tribe which was allied to the Muslims, but Amr had mistaken them for the men of the enemy. Because of this mistake their blood money became obligatory on the Muslims. Since the Banu-Nadheer were also a party in the alliance with the Bani Amir, the Prophet went to their clan along with some of his Companions to ask for their help in paying the blood money. Outwardly they agreed to contribute, as he wished, but secretly they plotted that a person should go up to the top of the house by whose wall the Prophet was sitting and drop a rock on him to kill him. But before they could execute their plan, God informed him in time and he immediately got up and returned to Madinah.

Now there was no question of showing them any further concession. The Prophet at once sent to them the ultimatum that the treachery they had meditated against him had come to his knowledge; therefore, they were to leave Madinah within ten days; if anyone of them was found staying behind in their quarters, he would be put to the sword. Meanwhile Abdullah bin Ubayy sent them the message that he would help them with two thousand men and that the Banū Quraythah and Banu Ghatafan also would come to their aid; therefore, they should stand firm and should not go. On this false assurance they responded to the Prophet’s ultimatum saying that they would not leave Madinah and he could do whatever was in his power. Consequently, in Rabi’ al-Awwal, 4 A.H., the Prophet laid siege to them, and after a few days of the siege (which according to some traditions were 6 and according to others 15 days) they agreed to leave Madinah on the condition that they could retain all their property which they could carry on three camels, except the armour. Thus, Madinah was rid of this second mischievous tribe of Jews. Only two of the Banu-Nadheer became Muslims and stayed behind. Others went to Syria and Khaiber.

Theme and Subject Matter

The theme of the Sūrah as stated above, is an appraisal of the battle against the Banu-Nadh^heer. In this, on the whole, four things have been discussed.

1. In the first four verses the world has been admonished to take heed of the fate that had just befallen the Banu-Nadh^heer. A major tribe which was as strong in numbers as the Muslims, whose people boasted of far more wealth and possession who were by no means ill-equipped militarily and whose forts were well fortified could not stand siege even for a few days, and expressed their readiness to accept banishment from their centuries-old, well established settlement even though not a single man from among them was slain. God says that this happened not because of any power possessed by the Muslims but because the Jews had tried to resist and fight God and His Messenger, and those who dare to resist the power of God, always meet with the same fate.
2. In verse 5, the rule of the law of war that has been enunciated is: the destruction caused in the enemy territory for military purposes does not come under "spreading mischief in the earth."
3. In v. 6-10 it has been stated how the lands and properties which come under the control of the Islāmic State as a result of war or peace terms, are to be managed. As it was the first ever occasion that the Muslims took control of a conquered territory, the law concerning it was laid down for their guidance.
4. In v. 11-17 the attitude that the hypocrites had adopted on the occasion of the battle against the Banu-Nadh^heer has been reviewed and the causes underlying it have been pointed out.
5. The whole of the last section (v. 18-24) is an admonition for all those people who had professed to have affirmed the faith and joined the Muslim community, but were devoid of the true spirit of the faith. In it they have been told what is the real demand of the Faith, what is the real difference between piety and wickedness, what is the place and importance of the Qur'ān which they professed to believe in, and what are the attributes of God in Whom they claimed to have believed.

Sūrah 59: al-Hashr¹⁵³⁶

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

1. Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth exalts God,¹⁵³⁷ and He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.
2. It is He who expelled the ones who disbelieved among the People of the Scripture¹⁵³⁸ from their homes at the first gathering.¹⁵³⁹ You did not think they would leave, and they thought that their fortresses would protect them from God; but [the decree of] God came upon them from where they had not expected, and He cast terror into their hearts [so] they destroyed their houses by their [own] hands and the hands of the believers. So take warning, O people of vision.
3. And if not that God had decreed for them evacuation, He would have punished them in [this] world, and for them in the Hereafter is the punishment of the Fire.
4. That is because they opposed God and His Messenger. And whoever opposes God - then indeed, God is severe in penalty.
5. Whatever you have cut down of [their] palm trees or left standing on their trunks - it was by permission of God and so He would disgrace the defiantly disobedient.
6. And what God restored [of property] to His Messenger from them - you did not spur for it [in an expedition] any horses or camels,¹⁵⁴⁰ but God gives His messengers power over whom He wills, and God is over all things competent.
7. And what God restored to His Messenger from the people of the towns - it is for God and for the Messenger and for [his] near relatives¹⁵⁴¹ and orphans and the [stranded] traveler¹⁵⁴² - so that it will not be a perpetual distribution among the rich from among you. And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from. And fear God; indeed, God is severe in penalty.
8. For the poor emigrants who were expelled from their homes and their properties, seeking bounty from God and [His] approval and supporting God and His Messenger, [there is also a share]. Those are the truthful.
9. And [also for] those who were settled in the home [i.e., al-Madīnah] and [adopted] the faith before them.¹⁵⁴³ They love those who emigrated to them and find not any want in their breasts of what they [i.e., the emigrants] were given but give [them] preference over themselves, even though they are

¹⁵³⁶ *Al-Hashr*: The Gathering.

¹⁵³⁷ See footnote to 57:1.

¹⁵³⁸ Referring to the Jews of Banu-Nadheer, who broke their pact with the Messenger of God.

¹⁵³⁹ This was the first time they had ever been gathered and expelled.

¹⁵⁴⁰ Meaning that they went through no hardship (i.e., war) to obtain it.

¹⁵⁴¹ Those of Banā Hāshim and Banū Muttalib, whom he (Muhammad) had prohibited from accepting *zakāh*.

¹⁵⁴² This ruling concerning properties abandoned by an enemy without a war effort differs from that in *Sūrah al-Anfāl*, verse 41, which refers to spoils of war in which four-fifths is distributed among those who fought in God's cause.

¹⁵⁴³ Before the settlement of the emigrants (Muhājireen) among the Ansār, for whom a share is delegated as well.

- in privation. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful.
10. And [there is a share for] those who came after them, saying, "Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith and put not in our hearts [any] resentment toward those who have believed. Our Lord, indeed You are Kind and Merciful."
 11. Have you not considered those who practice hypocrisy, saying to their brothers [i.e., associates] who have disbelieved among the People of the Scripture, "If you are expelled, we will surely leave with you, and we will not obey, in regard to you, anyone - ever; and if you are fought, we will surely aid you." But God testifies that they are liars.
 12. If they are expelled, they will not leave with them, and if they are fought, they will not aid them. And [even] if they should aid them, they will surely turn their backs; then [thereafter] they will not be aided.
 13. You [believers] are more fearful within their breasts than God. That is because they are a people who do not understand.
 14. They will not fight you all except within fortified cities or from behind walls. Their violence [i.e., enmity] among themselves is severe. You think they are together, but their hearts are diverse. That is because they are a people who do not reason.
 15. [Theirs is] like the example of those shortly before them: they tasted the bad consequence of their affair, and they will have a painful punishment.
 16. [The hypocrites are] like the example of Satan when he says to man, "Disbelieve." But when he disbelieves, he says, "Indeed, I am disassociated from you. Indeed, I fear God, Lord of the worlds."
 17. So the outcome for both of them is that they will be in the Fire, abiding eternally therein. And that is the recompense of the wrongdoers.
 18. O you who have believed, fear God. And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow - and fear God. Indeed, God is Acquainted with what you do.
 19. And be not like those who forgot God, so He made them forget themselves. Those are the defiantly disobedient.
 20. Not equal are the companions of the Fire and the companions of Paradise. The companions of Paradise - they are the attainers [of success].
 21. If We had sent down this Qur'ān upon a mountain, you would have seen it humbled and coming apart from fear of God. And these examples We present to the people that perhaps they will give thought.
 22. He is God, other than whom there is no deity, Knower of the unseen and the witnessed.¹⁵⁴⁴ He is the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.
 23. He is God, other than whom there is no deity, the Sovereign, the Pure, the Perfection,¹⁵⁴⁵ the Bestower of Faith,¹⁵⁴⁶ the Overseer, the Exalted in

¹⁵⁴⁴ See footnotes to 6:73.

¹⁵⁴⁵ Literally, "Free" from any imperfection or "the Security."

¹⁵⁴⁶ Or "of Safety."

Might, the Compeller, the Superior.
Exalted is God above whatever they
associate with Him.

24. He is God, the Creator, the Inventor,
the Fashioner; to Him belong the best
names.¹⁵⁴⁷ Whatever is in the heavens
and earth is exalting Him. And He is
the Exalted in Might, the Wise.

¹⁵⁴⁷ As for the names and attributes of God, their translation is surely an impossibility, for even in Arabic they cannot represent more than an approximation limited by human understanding. To any description by God of Himself in human terminology, the mind is required to apply the concept of absoluteness and perfection befitting Him.