

SURATULFEEL (105)

The *Suratulfeel*, also, continues the theme of warning those vying for excess. The *Suratulhumaza* condemns vying for excess in accumulating wealth for the exploitation of human beings. The *Suratulfeel* condemns those vying for power to perpetuate wrong. Hence, both the surahs portray both the aspects of vying for excess, wealth and power, separately to bring home to everyone that wealth or power, acquired in sheer disregard of the moral law and used for the exploitation of man and perpetuating wrong, ends in fiasco.

Hence, the Surah addresses the leaders of the Makkan polytheists directly in the first verse and warns them that as the *Rabb* of the Holy House had broken *Abraha's* power, similarly, their power shall be broken if they persist in opposing the Last Messenger, by using their power for perpetrating crimes and exploiting it to perpetuate their hold on the people for their vested interest. The second verse asks them if Allah had not nipped *Abraha's* conspiracy to demolish the Holy House in the bud. The verse suggests to them that, similarly, their conspiracy against the Messenger shall be nipped in the bud and history bears witness to it. All the Makkan leaders, except *Aboo Sufyaan*, were either killed or defeated in battles. The fourth verse tells them that, since "To Allah belong the armies of the heavens and the Earth and Allah is mighty, wise" (the seventh verse of the *Suratulfat'h*), He sent flights of birds to wipe them out in toto as the Surah portrays, from the third verse to the fifth verse, how the whole army was wiped out.

The Surah depicts, in vivid images, how a potentate, drunk with power, came from *Yemen*, where he had usurped the throne, to demolish the Holy House at Makka during Muharram, AD 571, after the *Hajj* pilgrimage was over. He was accompanied with a sixty thousand strong army and thirteen elephants. At that time, the *Quraysh*, led by their chief, *Abdulmuttalib*, used to guard the Holy House. They were too weak to face the army. But, before *Abraha* could reach Makka to give effect to his evil designs, flights of birds coming from the direction of the Red Sea, each with small stones, (one in the beak and two in their claws) attacked his army, hitting it with those stones at *Muhassir*, a valley near *Muzdalifa*, on way to *Minaa*. The entire army was wiped out and none could reach *Yemen* to report the disaster. The Surah shows that numbers i.e. numerical preponderance cannot do everything if it is used to do wrong.

SURATULFEEL

In the name of ALLAH, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

1. Did you not see how your *Rabb* did by (*Abraha's*) soldiers accompanying the elephant (invading the Ka'ba to demolish it under him)?
2. Did He not nip their conspiracy (their designs on the Ka'ba) in the bud (neutralized it before fulfilment)?
3. And He sent flights of birds against them,
4. (Charging and) hitting them with small stones of baked clay.*
5. Consequently, He made them like (turned them into) chaff chewed (by animals).

* *سيجيل* (*sijjeelun*) has been 'Arabicised from the سنگ گیل (*sang-i-gill*) in Persian, meaning stone of hardened clay.

سُورَةُ الْفِيلِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ ﴿١﴾

أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضَلُّلٍ ﴿٢﴾

وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ ﴿٣﴾

تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارٍ مِّنْ سِجِّيلٍ ﴿٤﴾

فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ ﴿٥﴾