

MODULE 2

Class Title: Surah Al Kawthar

Aim of the lesson: To understand the message of the surah

Category: Scripture

Lesson Format: Power point presentation with narration, activity

(Greeting to students) *AssalamalaikumwaRahmatullahiwaBarakatuh*

(*Taooz*) *Aoodhubillahi min AsShaytanirRajeem*

(*Tasmiyah*) *BismillahirRahmanirRaheem*

(*Du'a*) *Rabbishrahlisadriwayassirliamriwahluluqdatummillisaniyafqahuqawli* (Surah Ta-Ha 20: Verse 25-28)

Material needed for activity:

Square piece of paper for each student.

Slide 1

Teacher: Today, we're going to discuss *Surah Al Kauthar, Inshaa Allah*. I'm sure you all know this *surah*. So can anyone tell me something about it?

Student: It's the smallest *surah* of the Qur'an.

Teacher: Absolutely, it is the smallest *surah* of the Qur'an. It has only three *ayaat*. How many of you know it by heart? *Alhamdulillah*, everyone knows it because it is the easiest and the smallest *surah* of the Qur'an. Yet despite its length, it conveys a strong and powerful message.

Slide 2

To begin with, we're going to identify the reason behind its revelation, or under what conditions it was revealed. There are some scholars who say it was revealed in Medina, though most of the scholars say it was revealed in Makkah. You see, when *Rasoolullah* (pbuh) was in Makkah, he was going through a very difficult time as the very people who used to love him had started hating him. There was neither hope nor any apparent reason for him to believe that things would get better.

He was a person whom everyone liked and trusted. Then, suddenly all of that changed with the revelation of Allah's Message; people thereafter started calling him insane, a magician and a liar. Can you imagine being called all these bad names when once you used to be called *Sadiq* and *Ameen*?

The Arabs had this age old tradition of taking pride in their numbers of offspring and anyone who didn't have children was considered an outcast. They would call such a person '*abtar*'. The

Prophet (pbuh) had two sons, Qasim and Abdullah. Let me quote a hadith narrated by Abdullah bin Abbas:

Slide 3

Abdullah bin Abbas said: “The eldest son of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) was Qasim; next to him was Zainab, next to her Abdullah and next to him three daughters, viz. Umm Kulthum, Fatimah and Ruqayyah. Of them first Qasim died and then Abdullah. Thereupon As bin Wail (a Makkan Chief) said: "His line has come to an end: now he is *abtar* (i. e. cut off from root).”

In this hadith the order of daughters is not chronological. Chronologically the daughters were: Ruqayya, Umm Kulthum and then Fatimah.

Student: I thought he had three sons, and one was Ibrahim??

Teacher: Yes that’s true. He was the youngest of the children of the Prophet. His mother was Maariah, the Coptic (i.e. Egyptian). Ibrahim was born in the eighth year after *hijrah*. He was sixteen months old when he died in Madinah so that was much later. The above incidences took place when the Prophet (s.a.w) had started preaching in Makkah.

Slide 4

The first person who found out about *Rasoolullah’s* (pbuh) son’s death was no other than his blood relative and paternal uncle Abu Lahab, probably because he was also his neighbour. As soon as he got the news, he rushed to his tribe and announced that “*Batara Mohammadun*”, or that “Mohammad has been cut off”. They neither liked nor encouraged the Holy Prophet’s (pbuh) teachings. As such, they didn’t want his progeny to continue. They assumed that since there would be no one to carry forward the Prophet’s message after him, he would inevitably quit preaching.

Do you understand the kind of mentality they had? To be very honest, even in our so called modern society, sons are considered very important because we think that the family’s name and traditions are carried on through the sons alone. *Alhamdulillah*, this concept is not as prevalent in cities anymore, but if you look at the entire country (Pakistan), it’s a different picture altogether.

There were others in the tribe of Quraysh who would say Mohammad (pbuh) is cut off from his people, just as a tree which is cut off from its roots, thereby leaving it susceptible to fall to the ground at any moment (Ibn Jarir).

Slide 5

They would boast about their own sons and wealth. They would talk about how big a tribe they had, with so many people behind them to provide them with support and protection in times of need.

These were the three things that *Rasoolullah* (pbuh) had lost. The disbelieving leaders further tried to discourage the Holy Prophet (pbuh) by criticizing that if the Qur'an is such a noble book, then it should have been revealed upon a noble man or a leader of superior lineage. This criticism has been recorded in the Qur'an, in *Surah Zukhruf, ayah 31*. So these were difficult times for the Prophet (s.a.w).

Slide 6

Allah (swt) was seeing all this. He said in *Surah Hijr 15, ayah 97*: "We know your chest feels tight at what they say."

Slide 7

Allah understood the kind of despair *Rasoolullah* (pbuh) was going through, he could understand that so Allah (swt) gave the Prophet (s.a.w) a gift. What was the gift? The gift was *Surah AlKauthar*.

Slide 8

Does anybody know what '*kauthar*' means? It means 'abundance'. An 'abundance' of what, do you suppose? Any guesses? Yes?

Student: Allah's (swt) mercy and blessings.

Teacher: Allah's (swt) mercy and blessings, okay. What else?

Slide 9

Actually, *Rasoolullah* (pbuh) was promised an abundance of everything good in this world, as well as in the Hereafter. It would be impossible to count on our finger tips all the *AlKauthar* that *Rasoolullah* (pbuh) was given or promised, so we'll just discuss a few.

Slide 10

Firstly, even though he was an orphan, Allah (swt) gave him a very loving grandfather; Haleema (ra) proved to be a loving nanny; and then he was taken under the care of his uncle Abu Talib, who extended all of own his resources for his nephew's care and well being. Later in life at the age of twenty-five, the Prophet (pbuh) married Khadija (ra), a woman of exemplary character. She proved to be a pillar of support, strength, comfort, love and solace for *Rasoolullah* (pbuh). So *Alhamdulillah*, *Rasoolullah* (pbuh) was well taken care of by those who loved him dearly.

So we see that even though the Prophet (pbuh) didn't have parents, he was always well taken care of. He did not have riches but Allah (swt) blessed him with a rich wife who put her wealth at his disposal.

Allah (*swt*) expanded his chest, which means he was given an abundance of wisdom, and that his heart was opened up to receive the profound message of the Qur'an.

Allah (*swt*) raised the Prophet's remembrance until the Day of Judgment through his *ummah*—his followers, who are spread all over the earth. Whenever the *adhan* is called, his name is mentioned with Allah (*swt*). Whenever a child is born, the *adhan* is the first *kailmah* that's said into the baby's ear, and *Rasoolullah* (pbuh) is remembered along with Allah (*swt*). So this an enormous honour that Allah (*swt*) has given to *Rasoolullah* (pbuh); whenever His own name is mentioned, the Prophet's (pbuh) name is usually uttered simultaneously. We, as Muslims, are urged to send blessings whenever his name is mentioned; it is said that angels do the same. Then, in each and every *rakah* of each and every *salah* that so many million Muslims offer every day, and will go on doing so till the end of time, we read *Durood*, sending salutations and blessings upon him. *Subhan Allah*.

Slide 11

Then when he was made the Prophet of Allah (pbuh), his message was not restricted to the Arabs alone, it was a message for the whole world and its entire people. With the grace of Allah (*swt*), the Prophet (pbuh) has achieved unparalleled victory over the hearts and minds of millions of people, who have passed away or are living, not to forget those who will follow. Thus, we—his *ummah*, who love, remember, follow and obey him, are also part of *Al Kauthar*.

Even the companions that he got in his life were unique in their love and devotion to him. They obeyed him without questioning and were ready to slay their lives for him at the slightest hint.

Finally in the Hereafter, he will be rewarded with *Maqaammum-Mahmood*, which is the position of intercession by permission of Allah and the highest degree in *Jannah*, *in shaa Allah*. Allah (*swt*) says in *Surah Al-Isra'17: verse 79*:

“And from (part of) the night, pray with it (i.e the Qur'an) as additional (worship) for you; it is expected that your Lord will resurrect you to *Maqaammum-Mahmood* (the praised station).

So this is all part of the abundance gifted to *Rasoolullah* (pbuh); against the petty claims of the *mushriqeen* of Makkah, who have been long forgotten, there's no comparison, is there?

Slide 12

Now, coming back to the surah:

A'uzubillahiminashaitanirrajim, BismillahirRahmannir Rahim

INNA A'TAINAKAL KAUSAR. FASALLI LI RAB BIKAWAN HAR, INNA SHANIKA HUWA AL ABTAR

Slide 13

The first *ayat* we see is “*Inna atainaka Al Kauthar.*” Translated as, “Verily, We have granted you (Mohammed (pbuh)) *Al Kauthar.*” Often when Allah (*swt*) addresses Himself, He uses the pronoun ‘We’, and even ‘Us’. Can anyone tell me why He uses the word ‘We’ for Himself? We know that Allah (*swt*) is one, don’t we? Then what could be the reason for the use of a plural pronoun?

Student: Maybe because He has the power of many?

Teacher: Okay, He has the power of many; you’re close.

Student: Kings and queens use this way of talking about themselves.

Slide 14

Teacher: Exactly. Allah (*swt*) refers to Himself as ‘We’ because it’s a royal way of talking. Kings and queens talk like this; thus as Allah (*swt*) is The King of kings, it’s the natural way of addressing Himself.

The other reason that the *ulema* give is that Allah (*swt*) has a lot of attributes. There are 99 attributes that we know of, however there are probably more. Thus, when He talks about something as great and majestic as Himself, He uses the plural pronoun ‘We’.

Lastly, in this *ayah*, He is declaring that with all my profound qualities, with all my unique attributes, I am giving you this huge gift, the gift of abundance. Please keep in mind all the abundant things we have talked about so far.

Slide 15

Already by this point in his mission, Allah (*swt*) was extremely pleased with what *Rasoolullah* (pbuh) had done, out of complete submission and obedience to Allah (*swt*). Whenever a servant is obedient, the master is really pleased; isn’t it? Likewise, Allah (*swt*) loved *Rasoolullah*(pbuh) a lot for his devotion, servitude and obedience. Resultantly, He gave him a surprise gift—*Al Kauthar*. It was a surprise because it was not something *Rasoolullah* (pbuh) was expecting at all.

Slide 16

So far, we’ve talked about *Al Kauthar* in an abstract way, but there is a real and physical manifestation of *Al Kauthar* as well; *Rasoolullah* (pbuh) has told us that it’s a river in Paradise. There’s a *hadith* in which the Messenger of Allah (*swt*) said, “I entered paradise(in the night of *Mairaj*) and I came to a river whose banks were made of pearls, so I thrust my hand into its flowing water and found it was the strongest smell of musk. I asked “O Jibreel, what is this?” He replied, “This is *Al Kauthar* which Allah the Mighty Majestic has given you.”” (Bukhari and Muslim)

Slide 18

So now you know that *Al Kauthar* is also an actual river in *Jannah*. *Subhanallah*, it's not just the blessings that Rasoolullah (*pbuh*) was given in this world. The river is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. It is also said that the birds in Paradise will be very beautiful too having necks as long as carrots. Upon hearing this, Omar (ra) who was given the good news in this world only that he will be going to *Jannah*, became curious and inquired more to which the Prophet (*pbuh*) replied, 'Verily the birds will be beautiful and the one who eats them will be even more beautiful than those birds.' (Ahmad)

So you see no matter how we look in this world, if we can make it to *Jannah*, inshAllah, we will be very beautiful looking people there.

So *AlKauthar* is a river in Paradise whose banks are of gold and pearls. At the end of this river is a pond, also called *Kauthar*; it'll be near the gathering place of people on the Day of Judgment. About it, *Rasulullah* (*pbuh*) has said,

Slide 19

"Verily it is a river that my Lord the Mighty and Majestic has promised me and it has abundant goodness. It is a pond where my *ummah* will be brought to on the Day of Judgment. Its countenance is as numerous as the stars in the sky. Then, a servant of Allah (swt) from amongst them will be prevented from it, and I will say, "O Lord verily he is from my *ummah*", then He Allah will say, "Verily you do not know what he introduced after you." (Muslim)

Slide 20

On the Day of Judgment, there will be scorching heat from the sun and people will be expected to stand for a long time waiting for accountability. There will be hardly any space as they will be standing in close proximity.

Just imagine from Adam (as) to the last man on earth everybody will be there. Everyone will be sweating because of the heat and also because of their sins so that the amount of sweat will be in accordance with one's sins. Some people will be soaked up to their eyes, some upto their waist, depending upon what kind of deeds they did in this world.

"On the Day of Resurrection, the sun will be brought near the created beings till it is about a mile from them, and mankind will sweat according to what they had done, the sweat reaching the ankles of some, the knees of others, the waists of others, while some will have their mouths covered by the sweat and Allah's Messenger (*pbuh*) pointed his hand at his mouth." (Muslim)

Teacher: What is synonymous with sweating?

Student: Thirst

Teacher: Yes. Thus, the people will become very thirsty and would quench their thirst by drinking water from the pond of *Kauthar*. However, there will be some who will be forbidden to drink from the pond. They will be the people who made innovations in *deen*, they made changes after the message was completed and finalized by the last Prophet (pbuh). This is the warning in the hadith on the last slide. May Allah (*swt*) make us part of the group who will have the privilege of drinking from the pond of *Kauthar*, *ameen*.

Slide 21

Moving on, now we're going to take a short break and do a quick activity. I want everyone to try and figure out how we can make a pelican from this piece of paper. You can't draw, you don't have pencils. You have to fold the sides and see if you can make a pelican.

(Activity goes on for five minutes. Students try folding the paper to make a pelican)

Teacher: Okay, all of you who think it's impossible to make a pelican from this piece of paper please raise your hands. *Alhamdulillah*. Should we continue? Do you think if you have instructions in front of you, it'll be easier?

Student: Yes.

Slide 22

Teacher: What if I stand here and show it to you, do you think that will be better than giving **instructions only**?

Student: Yes, much better.

Slide 23

Teacher: What is the point of this activity? Can anyone get it?

Student: Step by step instructions and completion.

Teacher: Absolutely! If we go step by step we can complete what we set out to do; anyone else?

Student: We can't just do everything on our own.

Slide 24 - 27

Teacher: Very good! We just can't do everything on our own. When I asked you to make a pelican from a piece of paper, you were all blank. You didn't know where to start from and clearly you needed help. So this is what we have learnt from this activity: just knowing what to do is not enough. If somebody told you that you have to become a good Muslim, your next question would be, "How"? Instructions are crucial. That is the reason why Allah (*swt*) has sent

the Qur'an. It is the eternal manual on 'How to be a good Muslim'; it contains all the required guidelines for success.

However, please note that even after reading from a manual, one can still make mistakes. When I was trying to make this pelican at home, believe me I made some mistakes, then I restarted it according to written instructions. However if I had somebody with me to guide me, someone who had done it before, it would have been much easier. Thus, even though guidance is important, having a role model or a live instructor is even more beneficial.

Allah (swt) sent us the Qur'an with all the guidance and information that we require to lead a righteous life, whereas the Holy Prophet (pbuh) proved to be the role model who made us understand that it is not beyond human capacity to achieve this objective.

Now, to somebody who has attempted to make a pelican but has not got the perfect result, I would say, Okay...it does look a little bit like a cow and even reminds me of a goat, but it's acceptable.

A life not led as per Allah's guidelines, however, will not be acceptable. A rare minority might be able to get it right by themselves without the instructions or a role model. Allah (swt), however, didn't leave anything to chance or fluke. He wanted to guide everyone and not just the rare minority. That is why He revealed books and sent prophets time and time again, with the last being the Holy Prophet (pbuh).

Slides 28 - 30

This is why his Sunnah is extremely important to our success, besides being binding upon us. If we make changes to it, we'll face severe repercussions and will be forbidden to quench our thirst from *Kauthar* on the day when there will be no respite from any other source than Allah (swt).

Slides 31 - 33

In the next ayat, "*fasalee lirabbika wan-har*", Allah (swt) declares that there are two actions we need to do after, of course, belief in and obedience to Him and his Prophet (pbuh): firstly, to establish salah for Allah (swt); and secondly, that we sacrifice only for Him.

The prayer is a gift from Allah and a great sign of our gratefulness to Him for ALL His favours upon us. That is why it will be the first thing to be asked about on Judgment Day.

The Messenger (S.A.W.) told us in an authentic hadith, "The first thing the people will be accountable for on the Day of Judgment is prayer, Allah will say to His angels (even though he already knows): "Look at my servants prayers. Were they complete or not?" If they were complete it will be written as complete. If they were not fully complete Allah will say: "See if my servant has voluntary prayers, if he has them Allah will say: Complete his obligatory prayers shortage with his voluntary prayers." Then the rest of his deeds will be dealt with in the same manner." (Reported by Imams Ahmad, Abu Dawood, An-Nisa'i, and Al-Hakim)

Prayer and sacrifice are the legacy of Ibraheem (pbuh). Allah (swt) has acknowledged the thankfulness of Ibraheem (as):

He [Ibraheem] was thankful for Allah's Graces. Allah thus chose him (as an intimate friend) and guided him to the Straight Path

[An-Nahl 16:121]

Although sacrificing our comforts in life is included in this for sure, specifically here it implies sacrificing an animal for Allah's sake alone. The idol worshipers used to sacrifice for their idols, so Allah (swt) is making it clear that all sacrifice is to be made exclusively to Him.

Slides 34-37

In conclusion, Allah (swt) who is *Ar-Rahman*, and *Ar-Raheem*, could feel the pain and grief of Rasoolullah (pbuh); so, as we've already discussed, He comforted him with the promise of *Al Kawthar*—and all the many bounties it implies. As even further consolation, He ended the surah with “*innashaniyakahuwaal abtar*”. By this, Allah (swt) declared that the enemies of Rasoolullah (pbuh), who were causing him so much grief, will be the ones who will be *abtar*—cut off from descendants, and definitely not him.

Thus, *Rasoolullah's* (pbuh) faith in Allah (swt) became stronger than ever and he understood that no matter what people say he has to be steadfast in difficulties, with immense patience and perseverance. Allah (swt) showed a lot of love for his Messenger by saying in a very simple sentence that “*innashaniyakahuwalabtar*”: “For he who hates you (O Muhammad (pbuh)) he will be cut off (from posterity and every good thing in this world and in the Hereafter).

Today, it's not his enemies, such as Abu Lahab and 'Aas bin Wail, who are remembered; rather, *Rasoolullah* (pbuh) is remembered every day, every minute, by his followers in every corner of the world. It affirmed the Prophet's faith that he did not have to worry about the disbelievers doubting and discouraging him as the Prophet's *ummah* will always remember him and carry on his legacy, Insha Allah, until the end of time.

(Du'a for end of a gathering) *SubhanaRabbikaRabbullzzati 'ammayasifunwasalamun 'alalmursaleen, walhamdulillahiRabbil 'alameen*

(Parting salutation to students) *AssalamalaikumwarahmatullahiwaBarakatuh*

References for teacher:

- Ma'arif Al Qura'n by MaulanaMufti Muhammad Shafi, Idaratul ma-Arif, Karachi
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- Seerat un Nabi, Urdu Audio by HumaNajmul Hassan, www.al-ilm.com