



The Illuminating Lantern

**An exposition of subtleties from the Qur'ān
Part Thirty**

Shaykh Ḥabīb al-Kāzīmī

Translated by Alexander Khaleeli

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Author's Introduction

In the Name of Allah, the All-Beneficent, the All-Merciful

Peace and blessings be upon the one to whom He sent down the Clear Book, Muḥammad, the Chosen Prophet, and upon his noble progeny to whom Allah has made the balance of His Noble Book.

Dear reader,

When we look at the library of books written about the Qur'ān, we see that the methods of Qur'ānic commentary (tafsīr) vary considerably; there are those which focus on the linguistic and literary import of the Scripture, others which rely on narrations to explain it, some which affirm its spiritual and ethical dimensions, others which set out to produce an in-depth scholarly analysis of it, and others still that attempt to do all of the above. What unites all of these various commentaries together is the great length and detail with which they speak, placing considerable strain on a reader who wishes to gather all the knowledge relevant to him diffused throughout the pages of these texts, which are truly at the pinnacle of humanity's written heritage.

But in addition to this school, with its various sources, which has, by Allah's leave, come down to us, I saw fit to produce another kind of work; one which, first of all, divides sūras into collections of similar verses that share the same context and meaning, and then extracts the subtleties of their meaning in the form of self-contained points. In doing so, I wanted to help the reader to focus on each individual idea and ponder upon it, even if he only has a little time to do so, whether in his home or while travelling, so that he could be someone who ponders (mutadabbir) on the Qur'ān and benefits from its verses in his movements towards Allah, just as Allah Himself expects from all free-willed individuals:

*'Do they not contemplate the Qur'an?'*¹

*'This is an explanation for mankind, and a guidance and advice for the Godwary.'*²

*'Certainly We have made the Qur'an simple for the sake of admonishment.'*³

*'We have sent down the Book to you as a clarification of all things and as a guidance and mercy and good news for those who submit.'*⁴

*'We have sent the Qur'an in [discrete] parts so that you may read it to the people a little at a time'*⁵

*'A blessed Book that We have sent down to you, so that they may contemplate its signs.'*⁶

*'This is a proclamation for mankind, so that they may be warned thereby.'*⁷

*'There has come to you in this the truth and an advice and admonition for the faithful.'*⁸

*'We have made it an Arabic Qur'an so that you may apply reason.'*⁹

*'These are the signs of the Manifest Book.'*¹⁰

I wanted this commentary to be like a helper for the reader in this regard, so that Allah's Book could become a remembrance, a proclamation, a guidance, an admonition, a clarification, an explanation, a criterion and a clear book for him – which is the essence we extract from the above verses.

Something which I should mention here is that this commentary has a hue of moral education to it, in that I have tried to lead the one who ponders upon it towards the realm of spiritual refinement and self-development which was the Qur'ānic revelation's very raison d'être. So, it owes itself to this fact that I have, in some areas, chosen focus on those points which most useful for practically implementing the verse in our lives, rather than interrogating its corresponding concepts, to avoid making the verses appear dead, inanimate and abstract. In this way, we have tried to stay true to the original goal of this work, which was to transform the knowledge gained from these verses into action in the sphere of our daily lives, and I hope that this is possible

1. Sūrat al-Nisā' (4):82

2. Sūrat Āle 'Imrān (3):138

3. Sūrat al-Qamar (54):17

4. Sūrat al-Naḥl (16):89

5. Sūrat al-Isrā' (17):106

6. Sūrat Ṣād (38):29

7. Sūrat Ibrāhīm (14):52

8. Sūrat Hūd (11):120

9. Sūrat Zukhruf (43):3

10. Sūrat al-Shu'arā' (26):2

by pondering the merest paragraph concerning any verse in this book.

I began this work – by Allah's grace – dealing with the final part (juz') of the Qur'ān, assuming that readers will have had a general familiarity with the short sūras therein from a young age because they have often recited them in prayer or at other times, which would require them to have at least a basic grasp of their meanings. Hence, I present this work hastening to good deeds and I hope to complete the commentary [of the entire Qur'ān] with Allah's kindness and generosity in what days and nights remain of my life.

Finally, I would like to give thanks to the Lord Almighty who blessed me with success in this endeavour, for I know well that the hours spent reciting the Qur'ān and pondering upon its meanings were some of the sweetest hours of my life; because it was pondering on the words of someone I love, and when you love someone, you love to speak to them, you love to understand their speech and you love to comprehend their meaning.

And there is no doubt that the best books to be composed, read, studied or pondered upon are those whose subject is the best Book in existence, namely, that book which falsehood cannot approach from any direction.