

Taraveeh: Seventh Night

Surah Al-A'raf:

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Name

This Surah takes its name from vv. 46-47 in which mention of A'araf occurs.

Period of Revelation

A study of its contents clearly shows that the period of its revelation is about the same as that of Al-Anám, i. e., the last year of the Holy Prophet's life at Makkah, but it cannot be asserted with certainty which of these two was sent down earlier. Anyhow the manner of its admonition clearly indicates that it belongs to the same period. As both have the same

historical background the reader should keep in view the preface to Al-Anám.

Topics of Discussion

The principal subject of this surah is "invitation to the Divine Message sent down to Muhammad" (Allah's peace be upon him), which is couched in a warning. This is because the Messenger had spent a longtime in admonishing the people of Makkah without any tangible effect on them. Nay, they had turned a deaf ear to his message and become so obdurate and antagonistic that, in accordance with the Divine Design, the Messenger was going to be commanded to leave them and turn to other people,. That is why they are being admonished to accept the Message but, at the same time, they are being warned in strong terms of the consequences that followed the wrong attitude of the former people towards their Messengers. (Now that the Holy Prophet was going to" migrate from Makkah the concluding portion of the address has been directed towards the people of the Book with whom he was going to come into contact. This meant that the time of migration was coming near and the "invitation" was going to be extended to mankind in general, and was not to be confined to his own people in particular as before.

During the course of the address to the Jews, the consequences of their hypocritical conduct towards Prophethood have also been pointed out clearly, for they professed to believe in Prophet Moses but in practice opposed his teachings, disobeyed him and worshiped falsehood and consequently were afflicted with ignominy and disgrace.

At the end of the Surah, some instructions have been given to the Holy Prophet and his followers for carrying out the work of the propagation of Islam with wisdom. The most important of these is that they should show patience and exercise restraint in answer to the provocations of their opponents. Above all, they have been advised that under stress of the

excitement of feeling, they should not take any wrong step that might harm their cause.

Subject: Invitation to the Divine Message

Topics and their Interconnection

In this passage, the people have been invited to follow the Message sent down to them through Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and warned of the consequences of its rejection. **1 - 10**

The story of Adam has been related with a view to warning his descendants against the evil devices of Satan who is ever ready to mislead them as he did in the case of Adam and Eve. **11 - 25**

This passage contains some Divine instructions, and contrasts these with Satan's instructions, and depicts a graphic picture of the results and the consequences of the two. **26 - 53**

As the Message has been sent down by Allah (Who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth and everything in them), it should be followed, for it is like the rain He sends down to give life to the dead earth. **54 - 58**

Events from the lives of some well-known Prophets -- Noah, Hud, Salih, Lot, Shu'aib, Moses (Allah's peace be upon them all) -- have been related to show the consequences of the rejection of the Message, and the addressees of Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) have been admonished to accept and follow the Message in order to escape perdition. **59 - 171**

As the Covenant with the Israelites was mentioned at the end of the preceding passage, the whole mankind has been reminded very appropriately of the Covenant that was made at the time of the appointment of Adam as the Vicegerent of Allah so that all of his descendants should

remember it and accept and follow the Message that was delivered by the Holy Prophet. **172 - 174**

The example of the one who had the knowledge of the Message but discarded it, has been cited as a warning to those who were treating the Message as false; they have been exhorted to use their faculties to recognize the Message; otherwise Hell would be there abode. **175 - 179**

In this concluding portion of the Surah, some deviations of those who do not use their faculties properly to understand the Message have been dealt with and they have been admonished, reproved and warned of the serious consequences of their antagonistic attitude towards the Message of the Holy Prophet. **180 - 198**

In conclusion, instructions have been given to the Holy Prophet and through him to his followers, about the attitude they should adopt towards those who reject the Message and deviate from it. **199 – 206**

