ALAQ2-QADR1

*Dua*

*Aoozubillahi minash shaitaan ir rajeem*

*Bismillah ir Rahman ir Raheem*

*Alam yaalam bi AnnAllaha yara*

*Rabbishrah Li sadri wa Yassir li Amri wahlul uqdatummillisani yafqahu qauli*

*Allahumma Sabbitna Indal mauti laa ilaha IllAllah. Ameen YaRabbel Aalameen*

In Sha Allah ta’ala we are continuing our study of Surat ul Alaq. We started it last week but we left off the last passage and before we finish it off and begin the study of Surat ul Qadr, some very basic overview of the structure of Surat ul Alaq and its main points: its main discourse and how beautifully it’s all organized.

So far we started with the first passage in which Allah *Azza wa jal* addresses the messenger (s.a.w) Himself. Those are the ayat

ٱقۡرَأۡ بِٱسۡمِ رَبِّكَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ (﻿١﻿) خَلَقَ ٱلۡإِنسَـٰنَ مِنۡ عَلَقٍ (﻿٢﻿) ٱقۡرَأۡ وَرَبُّكَ ٱلۡأَكۡرَمُ (﻿٣﻿) ٱلَّذِى عَلَّمَ بِٱلۡقَلَمِ (﻿٤﻿) عَلَّمَ ٱلۡإِنسَـٰنَ مَا لَمۡ يَعۡلَمۡ

Among its many themes we highlighted the need and the importance that Allah *azza wa jal* gives to seeking knowledge. So the first word itself is *Iqraa*, to read. *Allama*, to teach, comes up twice. *Qalam* comes up, all these words that have to do with education and learning. That’s the central theme of the first passage in which Allah addresses His messenger (s.a.w). One of those ayaat, the final of those ayat is عَلَّمَ ٱلۡإِنسَـٰنَ مَا لَمۡ يَعۡلَم A*llamal Insana ma lam y’alum* (He taught the human being what he did not know). So Allah taught the human being knowledge that human being did not have access to. If this is such treasured knowledge that we couldn’t have learned it and the only way we could have learned is if Allah taught us then what kind of person would it be that has no value for this knowledge? What kind of person would refuse to learn this kind of knowledge? Allah gives His diagnosis in the next passage: A couple of ayat

 كَلَّآ إِنَّ ٱلۡإِنسَـٰنَ لَيَطۡغَىٰٓ (﻿٦﻿) أَن رَّءَاهُ ٱسۡتَغۡنَىٰٓ (﻿٧﻿) إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ ٱلرُّجۡعَىٰٓ (﻿٨﻿)

These three ayaat basically, internally, what is Allah’s diagnosis of a person that doesn’t appreciate this knowledge. Such an incredible treasure, who would turn it away? There is no doubt that the human being himself seeks to rebel, meaning this knowledge calls you to submit. It’s not just any knowledge; it’s not just for your information. It’s not casual knowledge. It’s something that demands on you submission and even in the first words it’s not *iqraa bismillah*, it’s *iqraa bismi rabbik*. When you declare Allah the Master, what do u become? A slave. That’s calling for action right away. So now the human beings seeks to rebel. That’s one reason to reject this knowledge then أَن رَّءَاهُ ٱسۡتَغۡنَىٰٓ (he sees himself free of need) he doesn’t think he needs it. So human being doesn’t think he needs this knowledge that Allah says you couldn’t have known it by yourself. And the attitude of this person: I don’t need it, I could do without it , I haven’t learned it so far and I am doing ok and I don’t see why I should be learning it. You know in our times it’s easy to understand. Why do u go and learn something? Why does somebody go get a bachelor’s degree or certification or they go into a certain technology school or whatever. People go learn something because they think it’s gonna bring them some return, it’s valuable. Something, if they know it, their life will improve somehow or if they know it they will be able to help themselves. Well this person doesn’t see the need, he thinks it’s ok. Whatever he knows it’s good enough for him (arra aaha hustagna ) and he doesn’t realize the consequence.

He has no concern that he will be returned to Allah so Allah reminds him إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ ٱلرُّجۡعَىٰٓ ( Inna Ila rabbikar ruj’aa ) no doubt it is to your Master that there is the final return. My personal reading based on whatever tafaaseer that I’ve read , that every time the third person is used in this surah, every time the third person is used, it’s addressing other than Messenger(s.a.w) and when the second person is used mostly in this surah, it addresses the Messenger (s.a.w) himself . This has been a point of contention as we will see later on in this surah. Where does the third person get directed “he” and where does the second person get directed it’s “you” but in this ayah ( inna ila rabbikar ruja’a )’ to your Master’ this is the second person now. Right? This transition of second person is very important in this 2nd passage of the surah. Why? Because this actually is part of a psychological, you know mind communication, really manipulation even, in the Quran. Allah azzawajal has these psychological effects that He communicates by means of switching persons. To make this simple for you, let me tell it to you this way: You know if a teacher walks in to a class and knows that one of the students was cheating on the exam, only one. The teacher walks in and says “someone here cheated on the exam, he thinks he can get away with it”, now he used the word ’he’ right? That’s third person. That’s not second person but all of a sudden he says, “he thinks he can get away with it, he doesn’t think that I can catch him. Abdul Kareem, can you come over here?” He was using ‘he’ now all of a sudden what did he use? ‘You’. What does that do? It sends shock waves to the criminal, he wasn’t expecting it. All of a sudden it turned to him. And when you talk in third person psychologically what it is called is disassociation or diffusion of responsibilities. It’s not talking about me it’s talking about someone else. So Allah azzawajal speaks about this person إِنَّ ٱلۡإِنسَـٰنَ لَيَطۡغَىٰٓ (innal insana layatgha) the human being rebels أَن رَّءَاهُ ٱسۡتَغۡنَىٰٓ (arraha hustaghna) does he see himself free of need ‘he’, ‘he’. إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ ٱلرُّجۡعَىٰ (inna ila rabbikar ruj’aa) ‘you’ will be returned only to your Master. What do you think, I am talking about someone else? See this change, this shift? So this is the only one in the surah that addresses the human being directly but the point of it is actually alighra (warning), you know sending shock waves and this is done often in the Quran, this sort of switch from third person to the second to shock the audience, but for the most part in the rest of this surah the 2nd person is addressed the messenger (s.a.w) himself, so we said two passages so far. The first passage is the importance of knowledge. The second passage, what kind of person would turn this knowledge away. The third when you don’t accept this knowledge you are ignorant and when you are ignorant what kind of behavior do you engage in, what kind of behavior does an ignorant person engage in? So we read

 أَرَءَيۡتَ ٱلَّذِى يَنۡهَىٰ (﻿٩﻿) عَبۡدًا إِذَا صَلَّىٰٓ (﻿١٠﻿)  (Ara ai tallazi yanhaa Abdun iza salla ) Do u see the one who forbids the slave when he is about to pray. This is talking about Abu Jahal. There is pretty much ijmaa on this in the ummah among the mufassiroon that these ayat that are coming that he forbade him from praying and then the fact that rasool (s.a.w) had made dua for him. So Allah says have you ever thought and we talked about in this last week (araayta in kazzaba wata walla) even before that so you know these ayat that talked about Abu Jahal interestingly placed right after the ayat of knowledge. coz Abu Jahal if you know what the word Jahal means, it means ignorance, firstly the ayat of knowledge and then the polar opposite, the father of ignorance. The guy who was named this, by the way Arab used to call him abu-l-hakam (the father of wisdom). This ‘father of’ concept doesn’t exist in English but we have other things you know how we say that’s a basketball man right or that’s a car guy. What does that mean? When I see him I know he is obsessed with cars, he knows a lot about cars or he is great at playing basketball, right. We put a guy at the end of it, right? that’s a computer guy, right, well they didn’t have ‘guy’ they had ‘Abu’ so you know Abu Jahal, we shouldn’t really translate as father of ignorance, that’s the ignorance guy. You see him, the first thing that comes to your mind is ignorance but before this he was known among his people as the wisdom guy. He was the guy you turn to for counsel, he was one of the smart leaders among Quraish but what knowledge did he reject, Allah talks about that knowledge in the beginning of Surat ul Alaq. You reject that knowledge, you can have all the knowledge in the world and you are still what? you are still *jahil* you are still ignorant. So those ayat come about Abu Jahal.

Now we come to the next part, so there are three passages so far: knowledge, then the rejection, the reasons for the rejection of knowledge and then the behavior that occurs because one rejects knowledge, what kind of lowly person they become and now we come to the fourth Allah azzawa jal declaring warnings against those who reject knowledge. What is the consequence of ignorant behavior? So you know this guy thinks that he doesn’t need it and because he doesn’t need this knowledge so when he does something bad he doesn’t know the consequences of it. He doesn’t realize that it’s gonna bring anything bad to himself. You see we talked about how he had animal skin, the skin of slaughtered camel placed on top, heaped on the top of the messenger (s.a.w) while he was in sujood. He had one of his thugs even try to choke him when he was in salah from behind. He had to be rescued a couple of times (s.a.w). So these couple of incidents he doesn’t think anything is gonna happen. What’s gonna happen, who has he got behind him, who is gonna protect him so now Allah azzawa jal responds and when He responds He doesn’t talk to him. You know there is one thing to say “if you don’t stop”, pay attention to the words, I said, “if **you** don’t stop”, what person is that? This is second person but look at the ayah, this is where we are beginning يَنتَهِ لَّمۡ لَٮِٕن كَلَّا (kalla la illam yantahi) No! If he himself doesn’t come to an end, if he doesn’t stop himself, ‘He’ not ‘you’. There are two benefits of that. Allah distances Himself from him and we learn from these words Allah is not talking to him, Allah is talking to the Messenger (s.a.w). He is talking to the Messenger about him, so the Messenger needs to be told this. Why? Because Messenger (s.a.w) is the one who is being attacked and Allah comes to his defense with His words and says that if this guy doesn’t stop you’ll see what’s gonna happen to him, you understand? So Allah comes to the counsel in defense of the Messenger (s.a.w).

Before we go on, two interesting things. You know in the first passage of this surah Allah azza wa jal said *alla mal insanaa maa lam y’alum*  He taught the human being what he didn’t know. We learn two things here, two things that we couldn’t have known. One is from the perspective of criminal. What does a criminal need to know, a bad person, what do they need to know about Allah? They need to know that Allah is watching. A bad person, you know like a criminal, the biggest thing that will stop the criminal from committing a crime is the security camera. Isn’t that the case? If somebody is watching he will stop, if there is camera on the red light he will stop. If it’s a criminal the first thing that will put him in check is that someone is watching. So in the beginning Allah said, Allah taught the human being what he couldn’t have known but what is that lesson that the criminal needs to learn? يَرَىٰ ٱللَّهَ بِأَنَّ يَعۡلَم أَلَمۡ (alum yaa lum be annAllaha yara ) didn’t he know that Allah watched, Allah sees. Allah is talking to Abu Jahal didn’t he know, that’s the knowledge he needs to have. Why? Because if he had the slightest amount of that knowledge he would not engage in the behavior that he engaged in. So for the one who is engrossed in sins this is a very powerful lesson in the Quran here. Even among the Muslims, the one who is engrossed in sins what is the knowledge that needs to be told to them over and over until it gets internalized? Allah is watching. Don’t you know Allah is watching? You know when you do something bad, when you do something indecent and you say “did you realize that your dad was watching you when you were doing that”. “Did you realize your boss was actually listening when you were cursing him?” You know when somebody else is watching and you behave badly, all of a sudden you put yourself in check, you start apologizing, you realize that was something very bad, right? But now for a person to gain first step in *eemaan* and leave their criminal behavior يَرَىٰ ٱللَّهَ بِأَنَّ يَعۡلَم أَلَمۡ (alum yaa lum bi annAllaha yara ) now that he doesn’t even wanna accept, that knowledge he even rejects. Now we get to the ayat of consequences.

 كَلَّا لَٮِٕن لَّمۡ يَنتَهِ (kalla la illam yanta hi) no if he doesn’t stop at all then if he still doesn’t stop. And ‘*La In’* it’s not just ‘*In’. ‘In’* would have meant **if** he doesn’t stop. *La iillam yantahi:* if he dares to continue, in other words, laam is here *Laam al Taukeed* and is also here for *alighra* (warning him) if he thinks he can get away and continue this behavior, if he thinks he is gonna continue at all at in any capacity بِٱلنَّاصِيَةِ لَنَسۡفَعَۢا (lanas fa’am bin nasiyah) we will certainly grab him and drag him by the, you know in old English they call it the forelock. It’s this hair right in front of your head; we will grab him by that. بِٱلنَّاصِيَةِ لَنَسۡفَعَۢا (lanas fa’am bin naasiyah) we will grab him by that, you know grabbing by this, usually an animal is grabbed from here, an animal is grabbed from the front, when the master is angry at the animal, ok? A child can be grabbed when the adult is being abusive to the child. They grab him from the head. In a moment of rage Musa (A.S) grabbed Haroon (A.S) where? Here. He has an authority over him and grabbed him from the head and the beard, right? Now Allah azza wa jal in the ayah says We will grab by the forehead, right here, this here We’ll grab it. This is very powerful. First of all Allah didn’t *say lanas fa an hu* we will certainly grab him. The word ‘him’ is not there, the word him is not there (\*repeat)it’s understood. Why? Actually this is part of rhetoric of the Quran, Abu Jahal is not even worth mentioning. 1. It’s understood 2. He is not even worth mentioning and especially not with the verb for which the subject is ALLAH, *lanas fa’ am* **We** will certainly grab and drag by the forelock, the front of the head. The other thing is that this forehead in Arab tradition and expression was the place of two things: 1. it is the place of your pride, this is where your pride is and actually this is part of most societies, this is your pride which is why you know when you wear a hat and an emblem shows here. In other cultures you have turbans, right? This is the place of dignity and also this is the place, of course, where the mind rests so this is the place of knowledge and he had rejected knowledge, that’s the beginning of the surah. We will grab him by the part which led him to his kufr. Two things led him to kufr: his ignorance and his arrogance. What’s the place in the body that is place of ignorance and arrogance? *An-naasiya* the cultural representation of it. So that’s one, Allah will grab him by that, and then the other thing here is at the end of the surah we will learn there is an ayah of sajdah. And what do you put on the ground when you make sajdah? It’s right here, so in the end the Messenger is told don’t be like Abu Jahal, you put your head down now in this dunya. But *him,* if he doesn’t put his head down now when will we drag his head? Eventually. In the end the head will come down. Either you bring it down in this dunya or in the next dunya, in the next life, in the aakhirah but it’s gonna come down no matter what. You will be brought to your humility, Subhan Allah. So *lanas fa amm bin naasiyah* .

*Wannnusat Lughat Tai’iyah*. This is ,you know Taiyah tribe, in their language this word *naasiyah* was used. *Qusaas us shi’ar fi muqaddam ur ras* The lock of hair in front of the head. This word is also used in other places in the Quran for eg: يُعۡرَفُ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمُونَ بِسِيمَـٰهُمۡ فَيُؤۡخَذُ بِٱلنَّوَٲصِى وَٱلۡأَقۡدَامِ *yu’rafal mujrimoona bi seemahum fa yu’khaz binnawasi wal aqdami* (55:41) criminals will be known and recognized by their foreheads and they will be grabbed by front lock of the hair and by their feet. So this is another place in Surat ur-Rahman, Allah azza wa jal talks about it. The other thing here is *kalla la illam yantahi* the first part of it is hypothetical “**if** he doesn’t stop, **if** his activities don’t come to an end.” But the latter part is for sure ***l****anas fa ám*  ‘we will definitely’ *laam* for *taukeed* for emphasizing. Then the noon at the end *Lansas Fa’a****n*** This is noon of taukeed also, *bin-nasiyah* so this is very powerful language from Allah. If he dares to continue then certainly there will be very sharp consequences. Now one last meaning of safa’a . Safa’a in Arabic is to grab something and pull it so hard it starts coming out of its roots. Now think about that. What’s being grabbed and how it’s being yanked and how the face is being dragged? SubhanAllah. This is huge huge ayat, and in other places in Quran, Allah talks about *afaman yamshi mukibban ala wajhihi ahda*  is the one whose face is in the ground and he is walking like that, is he more guided or the one who stands straight up. Some mufassiroon understand that as the scene on the day of judgment. People will be dragged by their faces and some people will be walking upright. May Allah make us from those who walk upright on that day.

Now the last thing about this to tie in what we talked about last week. You know this Abu Jahal when he came and threatened the messenger (s.a.w), you make Salah here one more time and I’m gonna crush your neck, you know put my foot on ur neck and crush it; that’s basically what he said. Then he saw the messenger (s.a.w) make Salah again and all his thugs are with him, so he is gonna look bad if he doesn’t do something, right? Because he already called them out the time before so he is not a man if he doesn’t go and attack, so he goes to attack the messenger (s.a.w) and then he, I told u last week, he is moving back flapping his arms, pushing something away, nobody else sees it and he was asked what you were doing and he said there was this chasm, this ditch, this canyon that showed up before me and him and there was this vicious creature that was coming at me to grab me and I was just pushing him back. And then the messenger (s.a.w), he told ‘what! Are you gonna talk to me like that’ meaning that messenger of Allah became strong in his words because Allah had given him this counsel: he is gonna be grabbed by his forehead, because the angels are already coming to grab him by his forehead and he had to run back.

Then Allah azza wa jal describes in the next ayah  نَاصِيَةٍ۬ كَـٰذِبَةٍ خَاطِئَةٍ۬  *nasiyatin, kazibatin,khatiah* 3 words; this is badal from *an nasiyah*. Why mention this forehead. Allah gives it 2 adjectives. This forehead that is kazibah. It’s a lying forehead. *kha tiah* it’s a forehead that commits a huge mistake, meaning in his mind, first of all Allah calls him a liar which is an insult. Number 1 it’s humiliating the leader of Quraish. So you have to understand the political, social ramifications of this kind of language. He is already a leader of Quraish. The Rasool (s.a.w) is already the subject not only of ridicule but also of physical persecution and now the messenger is given words that are basically not apologetic at all, they are calling them out, calling him (abu jahal) a liar to his face *kaziba tin.* But what is he a liar about? What the word itself suggests is he heard the Quran, he knew it was true and he was still lying that it is shi’r or this, and he was rejecting it for untrue reasons. So Allah azza wa jal already exposed the fact that in deep down inside Abu Jahal had already accepted that this is the truth but he refused to humble himself and this from the story I told u last time; *Akhnas Ibnu Shureyk*, Abu Jahal, Abu Sufyan that went to go and listen to the messenger recite Quran. He testified that this is the truth. He said we are Banu Amar, we are not gonna accept him. Yeah it’s the truth but come on, if we accept him his tribe wins forever, we can’t have that, our tribe needs to compete. So Allah calls him *kazibah*, this forehead is *kazibah*. Then He says *khatiah* and *khatiah* is a very interesting word. *Khatiah* is a mistake whose consequences one does not know, a mistake whose consequences (\*repeat) you know you make a mistake and somebody says “yeah I made a mistake, what’s the big deal”. If you don’t know what the big deal is you don’t know what other things are gonna happen because of this mistake. This is a *khataa*, this is one of the meanings of ,you know, *khataa*. So Allah calls him *khatiah*, in other words he rejected the Messenger (s.a.w), he attacked the Messenger (s.a.w.). Even if he calls it a mistake he doesn’t realize what the consequences are. He doesn’t see what the big deal is and when he gets grabbed he realized what this mistake was now so *nasiyatin, kazibatin,khatiah*.

Now we come back to this life and Allah azza wa jal opens him a challenge. First He said if he doesn’t stop he is gonna get grabbed; right, that was the first part, now he goes further Allah basically calls him out SubhanAllah  فَلۡيَدۡعُ نَادِيَهُ  (*fal yad ou nadiyya*) ‘let him call his gang’ ‘nadi’ in Arabic is a public place and he used to sit in public places and he used to have a lot of people hanging out with him, you know like a popular gangster and all of the sub gangsters who all wanna be, they are all low lives but they only feel cool when they hang out with the cool guy, so they had those guys with him. Let him call his gang, let him call the people he calls on, bring them on, bring your entire posse together. You know, understand Allah is speaking but to the kafir who is speaking? You have to understand this; to the kafir only the messenger, all they see is this one man (s.a.w). And when he speaks because they are kuffar, they don’t think these are Allah’s words; whose words do they think these are? They think they are his words; he is standing in front of a bunch of criminals that are actually pretty violent and they seem bad and they are tough guys and He is saying bring them on *fal yad ou nadiyya* call out his people.

Now after this, by the way Allah azza wa jal then says ٱلزَّبَانِيَةَ سَنَدۡعُ (*sanad uzza baniyah*) then we will very soon call *azzabaniyah*, which is the plural of *zabniyah. Zabniyah* in Arabic means a security guard, a cop. Allah says you call out your gang I’m gonna call out the guards. Who are these guards? Some of the mufassiroon like Al Shaukani (Rahmat-ul-Allah) says *malaikatu ta’zeeb fee jahannama* *li annahum yasfaoona ahl an nar ilaiha* because zabana in the Arabic means *dafa’hu waramabihu* to protect something, to guard something and to guard it with force and if something that tries to get out you attack it, you give it a beating. So prison guards basically. That is one way it’s used in classical literature. Qatada (R.A) called it, you know police, security, soldiers, that sort of a thing. Now imagine the scenes, it’s very easy for us to picture now; on the one hand you got gangsters, right, you got a bunch of thugs, on the other hand u got the swat team. Is there even a competition? Right. You call out your friends we are gonna call out the whole military, the entire military come out against them. There is not even a competition. And this calling out, this challenge that was issued to him and the fact that he ran back, this is how this ayah is interpreted; that Allah azza wa jal issued this army against him, right. When he came to attack his messenger (s.a.w) *sanad uzz zabinyah*.

Then at the end, so this was the last passage. Once again let’s reread what the passages were. First was knowledge, then what kind of person would reject knowledge, then what kind of behavior does the one who reject knowledge engage in like Abu Jahal, then what are the consequences of rejecting or this behavior, what’s gonna happen if he rejects this behavior. And finally, finally you know most people who try to practice their deen, give dawah, more than anybody else the messenger of Allah (s.a.w). You could say that the kuffar and their animosity is a distraction to his work. It’s a distraction and it’s demoralizing. He is trying to do the most noble work and here these people are, not only they use the nastiest language but they actually, physically attack him also so it’s demoralizing. So at the end Allah azza wa jal basically disregards Abu jahal and starts talking to His messenger (s.a.w) and He says تُطِعۡهُ لَا كَلَّا (*kalla la toti’ hu*) ‘no no, not at all’ and *kalla* is the means by which something is completely disregarded. You know, no big deal; kalla; don’t worry about it, not at all, leave it, this is not even an issue, this guy is nothing. Basically Abu Jahal and his animosity is nothing, he is nothing against you, don’t let it to get to your head, don’t stress over it; kalla. *la tu ti’ hu*. *itaua* in Arabic doesn’t just mean to fall, it also means to pay attention, to succumb to something, to comply, to yield into something. *la tu ti’hu* not just, do not follow him, don’t even pay attention to him, don’t even succumb, don’t yield to his pressure, don’t worry about it, don’t be intimidated by it at all. Now when you are not distracted by that, what should you do وَٱسۡجُدۡ (*wasjud)* ‘and make sajdah’ you see he refused sajdah, so his forehead gets dragged, he gets to do another kind of sajdah in the hell fire but the messenger is told don’t be like him, you make sajda وَٱسۡجُدۡ. وَٱقۡتَرِب (*waqtarib)* and you come close. The messenger is told: come close. You know what’s beautiful about these ayat Allah azza wa jal says *wasjud*, He doesn’t say *wasjud lillah* ‘make sajdah to Allah’ wasjud lahu, wasjud lilrabilaaalameen; NO Allah does not mention Himself. Is it obvious that it is about Allah? It is, and this is the second thing Allah teaches us. Very beautiful in this surah. The surah began *alla mal insana ma lam ya’ lum* ‘he taught the human being what he couldn’t have known’. One thing that the criminal needed to know was what? Allah is watching but here is another important thing that human being could never have known. You know there are people who believe in God, they believe in God, they wanna please God, they do but they don’t know what to do, they don’t know what makes Him happy, they don’t know how to serve Him. They are sincere, they wanna serve Him, and they want to know what to do to be a good person. You meet people like this at work; man I love God, I really appreciate everything that He has done for me. Thank God I have this job, Thank God this, Thank God that. They talk about God, they do but they don’t know what to do to make Him happy. So when they don’t know what do they do? They come up with their own philosophies. The Arabs did this too, there were sincere Arabs even before Islam who wanted to worship Allah but they didn’t know how. So you know what they used to do, some of them used to take all their clothes off and dance around the Kaaba naked and they thought this makes Allah happy, that’s what they did. You ask them why they are doing it; we are trying to make Allah happy. You had other people, you know a lot of the practices of ignorance like shirk, why do people do them? In assumption that Allah will be what? God will be happy. He’lll be happy with this practice of mine. People slaughter animals put them in front of statues, why? Because God will be happy, people had no idea so now Allah azza wa jal, not to the criminal but to the seeker of Allah, the one who seeks to please Allah. They didn’t know what to do so Allah taught *wasjud* ‘make sajdah’ don’t pay attention to him. I’m teaching you something you couldn’t have known, make sajdah to Allah and he doesn’t even have to mention Allah because Allah is the teacher Himself so it’s clear who should the sajdah be to and by means of sajdah come close because what do people do with their ignorant practices, they try to come close to Allah. They think these things are bring them close to Allah but Allah told them another way to come close to Him *wasjud waqtarib* SubhanAllah.

The beginning of the surah was the command (iqra) ‘read’. The ending of the surah is also a command, the ending of the surah is *wasjud waqtarib* ‘make sajdah, come close’ also a command. So it begins with the commandment of Allah, it ends with the commandment of Allah. You know what else is remarkable the two ends of the surah; both of them deal with Salah. When do you recite Quran (iqra) where do you recite quran? In Salah. Where do you make sajdah? In Salah. What is the means by which you get close to Allah? When is the slave closest to Allah? In sajdah, in Salah. So the beginning is worship, the end is worship. The other beautiful thing about it, of how the surah is tied together is the first part; first commandment is to read which is a commandment to seek knowledge, right? Reading enhances your knowledge. But the ending *wasjud waqtarib.* These are commandments of worship. So there are two things: there’s seeking knowledge and there is worship. So there is talab-ul-ilm and there is qira’ah; that’s on the one hand and there is ibadah on the other. But what comes first, first you learn then you worship. There is a sequence you know a gradation between knowledge and action and this is something in the entire Quran. First you learn then you practice then you learn then you practice. So seeking of knowledge and then practicing knowledge ‘*iqraa*’ in the beginning, ‘*wasjud waqtarib* ’ in the end. Beautifully tied together how cohesively the arguments in the surah are presented. But now InshAllah-o- ta’la we go forward and talk about how this surah is connected to the next surah which is what we have to start today InshaAllah.

**Surat-ul-qadr**.

*Aoozubillahi min ash shaitaanir rajeem*

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَـٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّآ أَنزَلۡنَـٰهُ فِى لَيۡلَةِ ٱلۡقَدۡرِ (﻿١﻿)﻿

وَمَآ أَدۡرَٮٰكَ مَا لَيۡلَةُ ٱلۡقَدۡرِ (﻿٢﻿)﻿

 لَيۡلَةُ ٱلۡقَدۡرِ خَيۡرٌ۬ مِّنۡ أَلۡفِ شَہۡرٍ۬ (﻿٣﻿)﻿

 تَنَزَّلُ ٱلۡمَلَـٰٓٮِٕكَةُ وَٱلرُّوحُ فِيہَا بِإِذۡنِ رَبِّہِم مِّن كُلِّ أَمۡرٍ۬ (﻿٤﻿)﻿

سَلَـٰمٌ هِىَ حَتَّىٰ مَطۡلَعِ ٱلۡفَجۡرِ (﻿٥﻿)﻿

5 simple ayat, 5 beautiful ayat but this Surat-ul-Qadr how is it connected, what is the relationship between it and the surah that came before it, the surat-ul-alaq that we just finished. First and foremost Surat-ul-Alaq began telling the story of **how** revelation began: *iqraa*; that was how revelation began. The angel came, told the messenger to recite. how did it begin. This surah tells us **when** did it begin. So while the previous surah addressed the question of how, this surah addresses the question of when.

إِنَّآ أَنزَلۡنَـٰهُ فِى لَيۡلَةِ ٱلۡقَدۡرِ it is no doubt that we sent it down in the night of al-qadr. I’m not translating as night of power, how it’s commonly translated as night of power. We will have a bit of long discussion what the qadr means, but for now the first connection between the two; how did it begin and this one is when did it begin. That’s the first connection between these two surahs. The second Allah azza wa jal says in the previous and keep saying over and over. ﻿ عَلَّمَ ٱلۡإِنسَـٰنَ مَا لَمۡ يَعۡلَمۡ ٱلَّذِى عَلَّمَ بِٱلۡقَلَمِ (﻿٤﻿)﻿   ‘He taught with the pen, He taught the human being what he couldn’t have known’ and in this surah Allah azza wa jal says ٓ أَدۡرَٮٰكَ مَا لَيۡلَةُ ٱلۡقَدۡرِ وَمَا ‘what will make you know what lailatul-qadr is’. Previous surah said; He taught him what he didn’t know and this surah says how will you know what lailatul-qadr is. He is asking the question; meaning you don’t have the knowledge Allah will give the specific knowledge to you; the messenger (s.a.w) that he didn’t have before. Another beautiful co-relation between the two surahs that Ash- Sharawi (rahmat-ul-Allah) points out and also Dr. Faz-us-saleh samiri, incredible! The last ayat of Surat-ul-Alaq Allah says (wasjud waqtarib) ‘make sajdah and come close to Allah’ what’s the opportunity in which you can come close to Allah? What is the night of sajdah in coming close to Allah? Lailatul-Qadr. The very first thing in the next. Then in the previous surah also *iqraa* in the beginning is Quran. Iqraa is; recite what? Recite the Quran and which Quran? The one, that came down in lailatul-qadr. That’s the next surah. So they are connected in many many ways. Another thing that’s mentioned (Arabic Narration) what I just said is that you know the first part of that surah is saying recite, this one says what to recite- it! meaning the Quran itself, that is what you should be reciting. Another interesting correlation that is made by some scholars and you find many of these and actually some of them; I used to be skeptical about them like numerology type stuff. I was very skeptical about it until I found a couple of narrations that are associated or attributed to ibn-e-Abbas (R.A). You know there is a whole discussion about when the lailatul-qadr is? Right. And we all know that it is one of the 5 odd nights. You know, that’s the very least, every Muslim knows that much. So it’s either the 21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th, 29th right. One Aalim you know Al-Alusi (Rahmat-ul-Allah) commented. It’s beautiful that Allah azza wa jal in this surah which is the surah of lailatul-qadr; it has 5 ayat and there are only 5 possible days in which lailatul-qadr falls. Ok then, some, you know, there are many opinions, there are about 40 different opinions about when lailatul-qadr is, by the way 40 different opinions. But instead of going through all of them just some interesting things that ibn-e-Abbas (R.A) his theory. His theory; according to one. There are two places. One place he says it’s the 23rd, that’s his ijtehaad. Another place he thinks and later, he formed this opinion later, his assumption was that it’s the 27th; that was his opinion ibn-e-Abbas (R.A) among others and all of these are opinions, none of these are like absolute evidences. The opinions that are most in the number are for the 27th. In the end though that’s not in itself evidence but it’s interesting that when ibn-e-Abbas (R.A) was explaining his rationale to Umar. He was explaining why he thinks it’s the 27th to Umer(R.A), he gave some interesting reasons that I wanna share them with you, at least summarize. lailatul-qadr the words lailatul-qadr are 9 letters (laam, yaa, laam, taa marbuta, alif, laam, laam, qaaf, daal, raa) 9 letters and the words lailatul-qadr occur in this surah 3 times. So what’s 9 times 3= 27. This numerology stuff I don’t, you know we don’t take it as daleel but it’s interesting that he presented this rationale to Umar (R.A). Another thing he said is that this surah has 30 words in it. The word count in this surah is 30 words but the 27th word, 30 words are like 3 days in a month right. The 27th word is *hiyaa*. *salamum hiya hatta matla il fajr* and this is also ibn-e-Abbas (R.A) and others reiterated it after him, that it is, hiya is referring to the night itself. It is peace until the break of dawn. It- *hiya*. So he says *hiya* is the 27th word which may also be a clue Allah hu alam that it is the 27th night. But this InshaAllah our dars isn’t gonna be about which night it is. I just want to share with you that first of all there is a variety of opinions and then there is some really creative explanation of why may be that it is the 27th. In other case the safe position to have Allah ho Alaam is that it falls in the one of the odd nights and we don’t know which one. That’s probably the safe position to have and given and this is my personal, for my own self I’m sharing it with you, if you find it beneficial take it, if not and if not then consult an Aalim that knows better Insha’Allah o Ta’ala. My personal take on it is; nowadays there is so much disagreement among the Ummah when the Ramadan begins, right, like your masjid is doing it Monday and the other one is doing it Tuesday and other one is doing Thursday and the other one says we are gonna be really different we’ll start next week, crazy right? So much variations so the safe thing to do is to take at least the last 11 nights very seriously, right, to assume that it might fall anywhere, you might have started on the wrong day so take at least last 10 nights, 11 nights very very seriously in the month of Ramadan and you know it’s especially difficult because in our culture Ramadan starts, first three four days the masajid are full then you get burnt out then you are kind of seasonal. 20days into it you are really tired. When you are really tired is when you have to seek the real treasure lailatul-qadr, right. So people get really lazy and what they do they take a vacation and show up on 27th and go back home, right; in hopes that may be that was it, that just, probably not a healthy attitude. We should, you know, save our energies especially for the last ten and not get burnt out and you know again personal advice. This is not a fatwa or anything, personal advice to the Muslims in general, you know instead of getting burnt out in Ramadan in the beginning; keep it moderate. Ok you can’t pray all 20 encourage 8, 20 or encourage you whatever your masjid is doing, do as much as you can but if you get tired early, take a break, it’s not fard it’s ok. Take a break, it’s better that you stay consistent than you come for 2 days and then you forget the rest of 28 days, you are tired or you complain, Guy recites too slowly, you know a lot of people complain they recite too slowly but the Quran was meant to be recited slowly if that’s your problem you got serious problems. Right. This is you know Quran is not meant to be just read or uttered in hyper speed, you have no idea what’s being recited and you just got it over with. That’s not what Quran came down for and that’s the last activity which will give you khushoo in the Salah and the whole point of Salah is what? Remembering Allah (*aaqimisalata le zikri*) Allah says ‘establish Salah so that you can remember me’. How are you remembering Allah if you can’t keep up the words, you can’t even keep up, you don’t even know what’s being recited how are you remembering Allah. So we have lost the spirit of the prayer and we are more concerned with the form of the prayer and that’s unfortunate, but again it’s a side subject. Let’s come to the surah itself Insha’Allah-o-Ta’ala and finish it as much as we possibly can.

إِنَّآ أَنزَلۡنَـٰهُ فِى لَيۡلَةِ ٱلۡقَدۡر ‘It is no doubt that We have sent it down’. Many things in the ayah need attention. First is the word ‘we’. Allah uses the ‘we’ for Himself. A lot of people ask that question. How come Allah doesn’t use ‘I’ right? How come He doesn’t use ‘I’, how come He uses ‘we’? This has come up before in our sessions, just a brief overview. First and foremost the words, the pronouns that occur in the Quran for Allah are ‘I’ (Ana), ‘We’ (Nahnu), (Anta) in dua we say (ant-al-a ziz-ul-hakeem), (anta) ‘You’, (Huwa) meaning ‘He’. Four pronouns occur for Allah azza wa jal (Ana, Nahnu, Anta and Huwa) I, We, He and You; these are the four pronouns that occur for Allah. Of them only one is plural, only one of these is plural which is nahnu. All the others are singular. So the people who are confused is that it is actually, literally plural, the first counter argument to that is that if it was actually plural you wouldn’t just find huwa, you would also find hum. You wouldn’t just find HE, you would also find THEY that doesn’t occur. You wouldn’t just find anta you would also find antum; (all of you) that doesn’t occur. So the nahnu even when it occurs for Allah azza wa jal it’s not literally ‘we’ because it’s not given the same consideration in the 2nd person or the 3rd person. This only happens in the first person. This is the first thing to note. The second thing to note, that’s often not noted and I think that actually this is fairly popular is that the word nahnu; it was used in sematic languages and in many other languages also as an illustration of power, royalty and formality. Kings, they don’t say I am forgiving you, you know what they say? We are letting you go, we have decided. How many are you dude? This is one guy but he says what? We. It’s a show of royalty, a show of power. He speaks of himself like he is more powerful than many and this sort of rhetoric is used when a king speaks. In the Quran when Allah azza wa jal speaks about doing something majestic; when he talks about something that is royal; you know, when He provides His slaves water; when He gives them food, rizq, provision; when He takes care of their sustenance; when He creates; These are the majestic powers of Allah. You usually find *nahnu* ‘we’ especially with water which is interesting because His Arsh is above what? Water. It’s actually above water. It’s actually made above water and water is the symbol of ALLAH’s kingship actually in the earth. So whenever Allah talks about sending water down you find nahnu in the Quran ‘We’. But two instances for ‘I’ in the Quran. Either Allah is extremely angry, extremely angry, you’ll find ana or extremely merciful you will also find ana ‘I’. So we say *nahnu* is formal speech while *ana* is informal, *ana* is informal(\*repeat). Nahnu may be a declaration, like a majestic, royal, declaration but ana is personalized, it’s closer and it has emotional charge in it like nothing else. I’ll give you a couple of examples you know taubah, when Allah accepts taubah he doesn’t just forgive your sins, what does He do? He takes your evil deeds and replaces them with good ones. This is the nature of tauba. It’s a very powerful act of Allah’s mercy and some extreme act of Allah’s love. You find in the Quran (atooboo) ‘I accept taubah’ I, taubah is extreme mercy; not ‘We’ but ‘I’. When it comes to extreme punishments in the Quran e.g. when the followers of Eesa (A.S) asked him to send a table spread from the sky. They asked him for the table spread from the sky. Eesa (A.S)’s first response was (ittaq-ul-ALLAH) fear Allah, have taqwa in Allah. What are you asking for and this is appropriate for Eesa (A.S) because he is the last of messengers to Bani Israel and they have been asking for miracles for generations. And after seeing the most amazing things they still don’t have eeman. Their hearts are still hard, so now you are still asking for table spread, you are still asking for a miracle to see. Allah azza wa jal did say He is sending it down but he also sent a warning with it and what’s the warning? ٱلۡعَـٰلَمِينَ مِّنَ أَحَدً۬ا أُعَذِّبُهُ لَّآ عَذَابً۬ا أُعَذِّبُهُ فَإِنِّىٓ  (5:115) If anybody disbelieves after this then it is I that will torcher him and torcher him for sure, that I have never tortured anyone with. Very strong language and the strength of the language becomes even tougher because of what word? ‘I’ instead of ‘We’. So there is a difference between how they are used in the Quran but one last point which is not commonly noted but it is very important to note. It is beautiful about the Quran. People who get confused about the use of word ‘we’ in the Quran don’t read Quran carefully enough. Whenever the word Nahnu occurs for Allah subhana wa taala in the Quran, right after or right before either there is the word Allah or there is the word Rabb. Both what version? Singular. So it is never confusing that is it really plural or is it one, immediately the singular form is used e.g. even in this surah إِنَّآ أَنزَلۡنَـٰهُ فِى لَيۡلَةِ ٱلۡقَدۡر but then as you go forward you’ll find the word Rabb, we’ll discover it Insha’Allah-o-tala. Ok. So every time in proximity either before or after you’ll find the word Rabb, you’ll find the word Allah singular making it clear that it’s actually not meant literally as a plural. Another thing that’s important to know about this surah is this night powerful the Lailat-ul-qadr means yet. But is this night noble, blessed because the Quran came down in it or is it already noble and then the Quran came down in it. So is it the nobility of this night, the majesty of this night was it already there and then the Quran came or is it the fact that this night became noble because of the coming down of the Quran. Al Sharawi (Rahmat-ul-Allah), he puts it this way: (Arabic passage)SubhanAllah this is a very balanced statement. He says this night was noble and majestic and dignified by Allah even before the Quran came down and its dignity enhanced after the Quran was revealed in it. So it was already there, which is why the name is used Lailat-ul-qadr إِنَّآ أَنزَلۡنَـٰهُ فِى لَيۡلَةِ ٱلۡقَدۡر suggesting that the word, the name of it, the title of it is already known with Allah even before the Quran was revealed. In another place, in surah ad-dukhan; *lailat-im-mubarkah*; the blessed night or a blessed night. Now As-Shaukani (Rehmat-ul-Allah) is probably the most concise tafseer on the Lailat-ul-qadr. I read like 20 of them and there is a lot of overlap in the tafaseer and I found ash-Shaukani (Rahmat-ul-Allah), his writing basically covers everything you need to know. Instead of giving you 35 quotes of who said what and who said what and who said what, it’s the most concise narration or the most concise writing on the subject, so we’ll just go through it bit by bit Insha’Allah. (Arabic narration) He says **We** sent **it** down, pronoun ‘*Hu’* referring to? The Quran. Now in language you don’t use a pronoun unless the audience already knows what it is being used for. E.g. your wife sends you to groceries she doesn’t say make you sure you don’t forget **it**. Right? What’s the question you are gonna ask. What is it? Is it the milk? Is it the diapers? Is it the cereal? What is it? Unless the audience already understands what it is you can’t use the word it, right? They have to understand it ahead of time. So there has to be mentions so she says to you make sure not to forget the milk and then after 10, 5 minutes she says make sure you don’t forget it. Now when she says ‘it’ what are you thinking about? It’s already there in your mind. Right? But the surah begins with the pronoun. We have sent it down instead of saying *Inna anzalnal Quran* instead of saying Quran, it just says ‘it’. Now there are several benefits of that we will explore them in the words of As-shaukani (Rehmat-ul-Allah) directly. First of all, this use of the word *‘hu’*, atcually I took it out so I’ll just tell you verbatim. This use of the word *‘hu’*  is used in the Arabic *lesharaf* meaning you, the knowledge of that, the fact that this is Quran itself is so embedded in your heart that it doesn’t have to be said, it doesn’t even have to be spelled out and this is only done in context where everybody knows what you are talking about or that subject matter is so universal, so important that its name doesn’t even need to be mentioned for you to appreciate it. For example, I will give you a contemporary example to understand the point. You say in sports, I don’t follow football at all but you know Dallas cowboys or something. Right? So if I say, “Man! They are gonna win the bowl this year”, you didn’t even say cowboys; you just say they are gonna win the super bowl; ‘they’ are gonna win the super bowl. If anybody is obsessed with that team what are they already gonna understand? That ‘they’ refers to the cowboys. This dialogue came down in the context where there were 2 reactions. Either the believers who are obsessed with Quran or the disbelievers, they absolutely hated the Quran, you didn’t have a casual attitude, “oh, interesting words”. You didn’t have that. You only have one of two reactions, either people are dying for it or they are willing to kill against it, 2 extreme reactions but both sides know about it very very well. So when Allah says we sent **it** down both the believer and the disbeliever are very clear what it is. It is the Quran itself. We have sent it down. Now the other thing that should be mentioned in this and the previous surah is, it’s a little bit of a departure from what we learned before: *nazzala be hir roohul ameen* Allah azza wa jal says *innahu laqaulu rasoolin kareem* this is the word of a noble messenger meaning Jibreel gives these words to you but in these surahs this one and the one before (al-alaq) Allah azza wa jal makes sure you understand Jibreel (A.S) is just a means of delivery. Whose actual words are these? Allah Himself. We actually have sent it down yes Jibreel brings it down but the source is Ourselves. So Allah makes it a point subahana wa ta’la to take credit for the words Himself. This is the second critical point that we should note. Now *anzala* the word *anzalna hu*, in Arabic for sending down there are two words that occur in the Quran *anzaln*a or *anzala* and *nazzala*, the infinitive form is *inzaal* and *tanzeel*. They are different words. Inna *nahnu nazzalna alaeykal qura aana tanzeela*. That’s a different word nazzala but here we don’t find *inna nazalna hu fe lailat-ul-qadr.* Here the words are *inna anzalna hu fi lailat-ul-qadr*. So there is a little bit of difference between them. In common English translations both of them get translated as ‘we sent it down’, we sent it down in lailat-ul-qadr. Again I’m not translating lailat-ul-qadr yet. The difference is huge. The word *anzala* comes from *af’ala* or *ifaal* in Arabic morphology and an act that rhymes with that pattern, it implies something that is done at one time. So if Allah says *anzala* *like inna anzalna hu fi lailat-ul-qadr.* We sent the whole Quran down the whole thing at once in lailat-ul-qadr. But if Allah says nazzalna, nazzala like fa’alaa is something that takes place over time; it doesn’t happen at once, it takes time like ‘*Allama’* in Arabic ‘to teach’. Teaching doesn’t happen at once, it takes time. The student needs time to absorb, teacher needs time to teach, it’s a process, it could take years but as opposed to it *aalama* as opposed to *allama, aalama* is to inform, not to teach but to inform. How long does it take to inform someone? Once you say it, it’s done. You informed them. If you say the flight is at 8o’clock, you don’t have to teach them. You don’t have to teach them anything, you just inform them, so it happens at once. So two different words for Quran are used, in a nutshell. One word that suggests the whole Quran came down at once, the other word suggests that Quran came down over time and we know that Quran came to messenger (s.a.w) over the course of 23 years, from his age of 40 to his age of 63, right? So we understand that it came down over time, why use this word that suggests that it came down all at once? This has been understood predominantly one way. There is a second opinion I’ll share with you but I’ll share the predominant opinion with you that comes again from ibn-e-Abbas (R.A). He says and this is what Shaukani is paraphrasing. (Arabic passage)That Allah sent it down from lauh-al-mahfooz to the first heaven also called baiyt-ul-izza, okay? He sent it down to first heaven in lailat-ul-qadr, the entire Quran came down from the 7th heaven to the first in lailat-ul-qadr. From there, Jibreel (A.S) would give it to the messenger on occasion. Somebody would ask the question, the answer is in the ayah, some incident comes up, the answer lies in the ayat, some issue arises, the answer lies in the ayat right, some problem arises the answer, and the solution lies in the ayat. This explanation we find in Surat al-Isra the 17th surah. Allah azza wa jal in that surah He says, you know  تَنزِيلاً۬ وَنَزَّلۡنَـٰهُ مُكۡثٍ۬ عَلَىٰ ٱلنَّاسِ عَلَى لِتَقۡرَأَهُ  فَرَقۡنَـٰهُ وَقُرۡءَانً۬ا (17:106) ‘and this recital that We have split up We split up overtime’ meaning didn’t send it all at once, We split it up overtime, ‘so you may recite it on to the people on occasion meaning when the appropriate occasion arises then you recite those ayat . Think about it *abasa watawalla* those ayat, there’s an incident then the ayat come, right? Then the ayat come. Similarly *ara aytallazi yanha, abdan iza salla ‘*you see the one who forbids the slave from praying ’. First, that incident happens then the ayaat come down so *alamuk*, on occasion *naazalna hu tanzeela* the other word, the other side of the word ‘and we sent it down gradually overtime’. The complaint of the kuffar was how come it doesn’t come down jumlatun wahidah, how come the whole thing doesn’t come down at once. You see if it comes down at once then like you know somebody hands you the Quran, Muslim takes shahadah, they handed the whole copy of the Quran, read this translation. What happens to the new Muslim? They get overwhelmed. What do they need more than that? One lesson at a time, one thing at a time, take your time with them, don’t overwhelm them. How did Allah teach the sahabah (R.A) of messenger (s.a.w). How did Allah teach the messenger (s.a.w) himself, how many years did it take to learn the Quran? On occasion, 23 years. The occasion is coming, the ayat, the lessons are coming and they are being internalized little by little by little. So we learnt form that Quran is a long term study even for ourselves. That’s even part of the Sunnah now. The Quran is not something that you just casually read through like you are reading a newspaper or you finish a textbook. I read the Quran, you can’t do that with the Quran, it takes time to internalize, it’s something deep, it requires deep study right. So this, the word *anzalna* for the first heaven and from there down to the messenger (s.a.w) over the next 23 years. Now the other thing; *shahru Ramadan allazi unzila fee hil Quran. ‘unzila’-* same word. Month of Ramadan in which we sent the entire Quran down. How we know the word entire Quran is meant even though *kaamila* is not used because *unzila* is used so *shahru Ramadan* that’s referring to lailat-ul-qadr; in it the entire Quran was sent down. Now we talk a little bit about, this is a very beautiful topic. What’s this lailat-ul-qadr? What is qadr? You know Laila ok night, right, what is qadr? Commonly qadr is translated as the night of power and most of the time in English translation it’s not fully appreciated; what exactly does it mean that Allah calls it lailat-ul-qadr. We’ll read some of the scholarly commentary on this which is actually, I found it extremely beautiful; (Arabic narration)The first thing, this is found in ahadith, this is found in many asaar of the sahaba, the gist of it is, it is called lailat-ul-qadr because the word qadr means estimation, determination also. Determination. Allah azza wa jal Himself, you know He is (wAllah ho ala kulli shai in qadeer) same root, same root. Allah has estimate and control over everything but you know how there is a 30 year plan or a million year plan but then there is a year’s budget right or the actions that needed to be taken for that year. Allah knows everything already but He lets His angels know of what the plan is for this year. What has Allah decreed for the people this year, He informs the angels of that in this night, so for that year basically the execution of Allah’s plan is delivered to the angels in lailat-ul-qadr. That’s the first thing for that next year. (Arabic narration)This is the other thing, qadr not just means estimation, calculation, precision, it also means honor, nobility, dignity. So it’s called the night of great dignity and nobility also because of its great nobility then (Arabic narration) this is beautiful. And it’s called the night of appreciation, qadr is also to appreciate and it says, mufassiroon say it’s called this night because in this night when people obey Allah, Allah really appreciates it, this is the night of Allah appreciating the worship and ibadah of His slave and obviously so appreciated it is that He counts this one night’s worship as how many? A thousand months right. خَيۡرٌ۬ مِّنۡ أَلۡفِ شَہۡر Better, more than a thousand months, so it’s not even similar to a thousand moths, it’s better than a thousand months, so He went even further than a thousand month SubhanAllah. Then finally, (Arabic narration) the word qadr in Arabic has one more meaning that’s also used in the Quran and that is constriction, congestion, to be stuck in something so Allah azza wa jal for e.g. in surah at-talaq He says رِزۡقُهُ عَلَيۡهِ قُدِرَ وَمَن (65:07)‘whoever his provision became tight on him’ meaning the budget became tight. Right? We also read in juzz amma before رِزۡقَهُ  عَلَيۡهِ فَقَدَرَ ٱبۡتَلَٮٰهُ مَا إِذَا وَأَمَّآ (89:16)‘whoever We test and we take his rizq, we make it tight’, their budget becomes constrained, they don’t have loose opportunity to spend cash anymore, it becomes restrictive on them so this tightness (deeq) is also part of the meaning of Qadr and it is called that also, that meaning is injected in it also because so many angels descend on the earth that space becomes tight SubhanAllah. All of these meanings of the nobility of the night, the decree of the night, also qadr means power, so power of the night, then the tightness because of the descent of all those all angels , all of these meanings are embedded in one word. If you take any alternatives of qadr, you say lailat-asharf the night of nobility, then the all other meanings are gone, if you say night of power, then all the other meanings are gone but Allah azza wa jal picks the perfect word which captures all these beautiful implications all at same time without compromising the integrity of the meaning, SubhanAllah. So al-Baqai (Rehmat-ul-Allah) he says, again just commenting on the ‘*hu’*. He says it is an indication that the love of the Quran and the recognition of the Quran lies in every heart. That’s why ‘it’ is enough to say.

وَمَآ أَدۡرَٮٰكَ مَا لَيۡلَةُ ٱلۡقَدۡرِ Another interesting comment about *ma adraa kaa*, amazing language. If you just get to finish ma adraa kaa I think I’ll be happy for this evening InshaAllah-o- ta’la. First of all *maa* in Arabic is used for many purposes, one of them is *a taajub* ; to give you a sense of aww, to make you or to surprise you even. One of , I think to give you a sense of how this should be translated; what in the world could possibly make you realize, what in the world could possibly give you a clue what lailat-ul-qadr is, what it really is? This is different from saying when it is. See all of our discussion becomes about lailat-ul-qadr, when is it? But what’s the question Allah is highlighting? Not when is it but what is it, do you realize what an amazing thing this is? what you have for emphasis is *Ma la ta’ajjub*. This is one. There’s tafkheem also, to give it gravity, do you understand this is a very strong subject, very heavy thing. The other thing is there are 2 styles Usluwain fi kitaabillah Allah says *Maa yudreeka* ‘what will tell you’, *maa adraaka* ‘what would have told you’ so sometimes He uses the past tense, sometimes He uses the future tense. *Wama yudreeka la’allahu yazzakka* ‘what will give you a clue’ right, maybe he wants to cleanse himself. *Wama adraaka ma lailatul qadr* , *wama adraaka mal Qaariah* right? *Wama adraaka mal hutamah* and the mufassiroon are pretty much in agreement about this whenever Allah uses the present future tense ‘what will give you a clue’ SubhanAllah, Allah does not give the answer. This is something only Allah knows and when Allah says *maa adraaka* the past tense, then Allah usually gives the answer. So messenger is told وَمَآ أَدۡرَٮٰكَ مَا لَيۡلَةُ ٱلۡقَدۡر, what would ever tell you what lailat-ul-qadr is, the past tense is used. What does that indicate? The messenger (s.a.w) is given the answer and we learned this in several narrations in which you know the famous narration about the sahabah that got into a quarrel and the messenger (s.a.w) knew and he forgot by the decree of Allah but Allah did inform him, but it’s not even the real issue because even that was not what the night is but what? when the night is. Here the appreciation is what the night is and so to give us the clue of what makes this night so incredible, the rest of the surah actually answers this question, doesn’t it? *Lailatul qadri khairum min alfi shahr,* *tanazzalul malaaika*  the entire definition of what lailat-ul-qadr actually is has been given so that’s again in sequence with what Allah azza wa jal says. The other thing I want you to know because Quran is revealed in this night, this is something very special and Allah gives it a special usloob, a special form of speech that has not been used anywhere else in the Quran. We say (Arabic narration) There is a principle in Arabic that you know using a noun is more powerful than just alluding to it or using a pronoun instead of it. If you actually spell it out that’s more powerful, ok. So rhetorically speaking if I say Abd-ul-kareem is here, that’s more noble than just saying *he* is here. Now we find in the Quran *wa ma adraa ka maheyaah*, *wa ma adraaka mal hutamah, wama adraaka mattariq*. You heard these before. In many places Allah says *wa ma adraa ka* but when He says them the next ayah *narun hameyah* it doesn’t say *hiya narun hameya* it doesn’t repeat the whole thing so in a way to put it in English. What will give you a clue what it is; a fire. The second sentence just says ‘a fire’ but it doesn’t say it is a fire, that ‘it is’ part not mentioned. 2nd time, *wa ma adraaka mal hutamah* what will give you an idea what hutamah is, now the next ayah doesn’t say *Alhutamatu Narullahil mooqadah* hutamah happens to be the fire of Allah’s kingdom, no, hutamah is not repeated. So the question is what will give you a clue what hutamah is; the fire of Allah. The second part, the response isn’t a complete sentence it’s just the predicate of the sentence. *wama adraaka mattariq* What will give you a clue what it is at-Tariq? The next sentence isn’t *at tariqu an najmus saqib* tariq happens to be the brilliant star, that’s not what is said, just *najm-us-saqib.* What was not repeated? At-Tariq. It doesn’t get repeated but now comes in the surah wama adraa ka ma lailat-ul-qadr. The next ayah just doesn’t say *khairum min alfi shahr* what does it say *Lailatul Qadri khairum min alfi shahr*. This is only place in the Quran where part of the question is repeated again. Giving this an emphasis over all the other places in which such style is used, because what is being highlighted here. The other places are the importance of at-tariq ‘a creation of Allah’, the importance of hutamah the fire, hell fire twice, these are magnificent creations by the way but none of this compares to what, the night in which Quran was revealed so it is given a special usloob. *wama adraa ka ma lailat-ul-qadr, lailat-ul-qadr* again. How many times this lailat-ul-qadr occurs in the surah? 3 times. *Inna anzalnahu fi* ***Lailatul Qadr****, wama adraaka ma* ***lailatul qadr****,*and again ***Lailatul qadr*** *khairum min alfi shahr*. Now in *Lataiful Isharat* this is actually something really beautiful al-Qushayri (Rahmat-ul-Allah) wrote in the 4th century, I wanna share the quote with you. (Arabic Narration) First of all it is a beautiful night in which Allah decreed mercy for his close friends, may Allah make us from them. (Arabic Narration) The worshippers of Allah realize the worth of their own selves in this night, qadr again, the qadr of their own selves meaning the appreciation of their own selves what that mean is the people who take advantage of this night, they realize what they are worth to Allah because if you are not worth anything to Allah, you’ll sleep through it, you won’t take any advantage of it. Ok so, the ones who really appreciate Allah find what they are worth to Allah in this night.(Arabic narration) and those who really seek to recognize Allah, they appreciate The One that they are worshipping in this night. They really find an appreciation of Allah like no other night in this night. One of the mercies that Alusi (Rahmat-ul-Allah) mentioned for us not knowing for sure which night it is. You know there are many benefits to that actually one of you may have heard, one is laziness of course, take all 29 days of Ramadan off show of lailat-ul-qadr, that would have happened. That’s one possibility right, that fitnah would have been created but another benefit that we have actually learned from another hadith of prophet (s.a.w). I’ll paraphrase for you; he is going with Ali (R.A) and there is a bedouin sleeping in the masjid and it’s time for Salah, so he tells Ali (R.A) go wake him up, so he goes and wakes him up for Salah then Ali (R.A)thinks this is a good deed why didn’t he do it himself, you know the messenger is the first to engage in a good deed so why would he tell me to do it, why not do it himself so he asked the Messenger (s.a.w) why did you not take advantage of this opportunity? Why did you send me? He said well if I tried to wake him up and he brushed me aside and he didn’t listen then he would have been in deep sin, but if you do it then that’s ok. You understand? So the fact that messenger sent Ali (R.A) was an act of mercy towards the guy who was sleeping, because when the messenger is waking you up man, that’s no joke and you, you know, “ I don’t know, I am sleepy right now”, you don’t realize who you are talking to, what kind of trouble you land yourself into, right so Alusi (Rahmat-ul-Allah) comments the fact that we don’t know when lailat-ul-qadr is, perhaps one of the gifts of that is the one who even after knowing it still doesn’t appreciate it, what kind of trouble would they be in, what kind of hole would they be in and after you knew what the worth of this night is, still kick it to the side. May Allah azza wa jal make us find lailat-ul-qadr every single Ramadan ok. One last ayah Insha’Allah o ta’ala and we’ll take a break for Salah.

 لَيۡلَةُ ٱلۡقَدۡرِ خَيۡرٌ۬ مِّنۡ أَلۡفِ شَہۡرٍ (Arabic Narration) Mufassiroon say when Allah says lailat-ul-qadr is better than a thousand nights, it means the deeds you do in this night are worth more than the deeds you would perform in a thousand months, which is 83 years or something. Now the thing is I was just for my own curiosity I actually tried to look up the average life span. Just thinking you know Allah offers us 83 months in bonus. The average life span in United States for women at its peak is 80, and its peak for men is 74 ok, so Allah goes beyond our average life span to offer us one night, where we can take control and earn good for entire life span in that month. It’s a very powerful thing that Allah azza wa jal offered to us, you know much of the Muslim world, some places the average life span is 40, average life span in some starving nations is 33, the life span is very very short. For those places Allah is offering them twice their life span per year of good deeds. What a mercy! You know the surah began what will give you a clue what lailat-ul-qadr is. Something you could never even have earned and this is where we find the hadith or narration of the Prophet (s.a.w). (Arabic narration) He saw that the age of the members of his Ummah is short. (Arabic narration)He says The messenger(SAW) was afraid that his Ummah’s members will have short lives, they are gonna not live that long so he was afraid that the people who came before had much longer lives and so they got a chance to earn even much more good deeds, so he had that fear so Allah as a gift gives to him lailat-ul-qadr so they can catch up, the members of Ummah can catch up and be actually even ahead of all of the other nations because imagine if one takes advantage of lailat-ul-qadr every single year, let’s just say for ten years, it’s a good millennium right for 10 years that’s a good millennium that you’ve got in your favor. May Allah azza wa jal make us appreciate what this night is.

Then others say this *khair* خَيۡرٌ۬ مِّنۡ أَلۡفِ شَہۡرthat is you can do more good, you can accomplish more good in this night that you would be able to in others, not just in terms of ibadah but in reconciliation, meaning the barakah of your deeds in this night is unlike any other. So a lot of ulama based on that said if you have problems with your family, if you have been fighting with your wife, if you haven’t talked to your brother in 10 years, when should you call them? When should you make it up? When you say “oh he is gonna yell at me, hang up on me”, take your chances which night? On lailat-ul-qadr. you know bury that hatchet, move on, reconcile family ties, the good that will come out of this night is unlike any other night, so take advantage of that, because Allah use the word khair. خَيۡرٌ۬ مِّنۡ أَلۡفِ شَہۡرThen He didn’t even say *ka alfi shahr* it is like a thousand nights, He says it’s better. It’s better. So what that tells us and this is few statements from the Arabs (Arabic Narration) and it’s said also among mufassiroon that by Allah saying thousand months, He meant all time. (Arabic narration) the Arabs used to mention a 1000 months in a lot of their statements as a means of hyperbole meaning for all time, like saying to somebody, I’m gonna be your friend for a thousand months that doesn’t mean at the end of 1000 months I am no longer your friend what that means is, you know in English literature we say I am gonna be your buddy forever and ever and ever, that sort of talk, hyperbolized talk, their expression was a thousand months. So by using that expression yes we; some ulama did made the calculation of how many days it comes out, how many salawaat and all of that, that may be true but in addition it actually has this infinity kind of context in it or the power in it because of word khair and alfi shahar is used an expression among the Arabs.

 تَنَزَّلُ ٱلۡمَلَـٰٓٮِٕكَةُ وَٱلرُّوحُ فِيہَا بِإِذۡنِ رَبِّہِم مِّن كُلِّ أَمۡرٍ۬this is the heaviest ayah of the surah. It has a lot of beautiful subtleties in it, we will take one bit by bit. One of the things I want to help you appreciate about this ayah before the tafseer of it is, the literary marvel in it. The Quran we always say is precise speech and what I want to illustrate to you today is Quran is so precise that it is precise down to the way a word is spelled. Down to the way a word is spelled is precise. And that something is humanly not capable for us, what do I mean by that; I hope I can get across to you in next 5 or so minutes. In English have you ever heard the word demo? What’s the full version? Demonstration. Similarly if I say math, what’s the full version? Mathematics, bio biology, that sort of thing. Now, sometimes you use the short version, sometimes you use the long version but anybody who speaks the language knows they mean one and the same thing; I’m studying math, I’m studying mathematics, same thing, I saw the demo, I saw the demonstration; same thing. Ok. The Arabic, sort of like this, a parallel, it’s not exactly the same thing but it is a parallel to it, in Arabic there is a way you can spell the word in full form and also in its partial form. There are many ways to do that, one of those ways is called al-idgham-fis-salf. What I am trying to get is that in Arabic there is a word tatanazzalu; that’s the actual word. How many taa’s did you hear; tatanazzalu; 2. You can actually, you have the leisure in Arabic to drop one of those taa’s for redundant and you can just say, what instead? Tanazzalu. Both of them mean the same thing, the only difference is one is the brief version, one is the full version, similarly tafarraqu, tatafarraqu; tazakkaru, tatazakkaru, other words like that, yatadabbaroona, yaddabbaroona. You take one syllable out and you are allowed to do that, the meaning doesn’t change, but in Quran its remarkable even though the meaning doesn’t change, the Arabic reiterations, in old Arabic the more you use a word, the more you spell out the word is, it alludes to more in meaning. There is something more about this spelling then the lesser spelling. What I am trying to get at is the ayah says *tanaza lul malika*, how many taa’s did you hear; 1 taa. Let me take you to another ayah. This is ha-meem-as-sajdah *Innallazeen qaloo rabbunAllahu Thummastaqamoo* ***tatanaaza lu*** *alaihim ul malaaikah* (41:30), how many taas did you hear this time? 2 taas. In one place. Same thing, angels are coming down here, angels are coming down there but here he said *tanaza lul malaika* and there he said *tatanazzalu alaihim ul malaika* little bit more. Now rhetorically speaking the ulama like as-Sharawi (Rahmat-ul-Allah) and others, they comment when you add the taa, when you keep the full spelling there is something more about the context then the other. Now, let me tell you about ha-meem-as-sajdah where two taa’s occur ٱلۡمَلَـٰٓٮِٕڪَةُ عَلَيۡهِمُ تَتَنَزَّلُ. This is the ayah talking about angels descending at the time of death, how often do they descend, how often does that happen? Every day, every minute virtually the angels are descending at the time of death. Is there more occurrence of that? Sure. The ayah we are about to read; angels come down also, but when do they come down? lailat-ul-qadr. Is that happening every night? How often is it happening? Is it happening more or less than the other ayah? It’s happening way less. What’s happening in lailat-ul-qadr is much less than what’s happening in ayah in ha-meem-as-sajdah, that is the place to mention more, so the more is used in spelling *tatanazza lu alaihim ul malaika* .This is the context of less by comparison, so the lesser spelling form is used. Now think about that, I know this is a nuanced kind of a discussion but think about that. The messenger (s.a.w) didn’t read the Quran to the people, he recited it. To the disbelievers this was just speech, this wasn’t writing. Can you be conscious of what you said years ago or what you are going to say years later? Compared to that, maybe I should use one less taa here and one more taa there because it’ll fit better. You think that’s even possible for us, SubhanAllah, just the taa, one taa in the ayah in and of itself is a miracle. In and of itself shows the precision and marvel of the Quran. This occurs all over the Quran, difference between tazakkaru and tatazakkaru, tatafarraqu and tafarraqu. These subtle differences are actually big big things in how we appreciate the subtlety of the text. We’ll just go into the translation and end Insha’Allah-o –ta’la and continue after the prayers I was told.

 تَنَزَّلُ ٱلۡمَلَـٰٓٮِٕكَةُ وَٱلرُّوحُ فِيہَا بِإِذۡنِ رَبِّہِم مِّن كُلِّ أَمۡرٍ

Angels and ar-rooh which by ijmaa is Jibreel (A.S), descend in it by the permission of their Master their Lord as a result of or because of every single affair, I am translating ‘min’ as harf ajal as many mufassiroon have commented. We will talk more about this ayah, this is the 4th and 2nd last ayah of the surah, after the Salah