

# Surah Feel <sup>[105]</sup> (The Elephant) - Miracle Dream Tafseer

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## Introduction to the Last Ten Surahs' Sequenced in the Qur'an

The final 10 surahs of the Qur'an are a change to the theme of the Afterlife mentioned previously in Juzz 'Amma.

These last 10 surahs have some direct link to Allah's Messenger's life in the context of Revelation (Asbaab al Nuzool).

There is a lot of context and historical background in these last 10 surahs.

When you speak in general terms, people may not necessarily get the message, so sometimes you directly have to mention 'You' to the person - to make them realise that they need to change their evil ways.

The same is in regard to the Quraysh and anyone who opposes a message - they will not accept that the threat is towards them unless it is specifically said; YOU will be punished.

So now we will see that there is a direct address to the Quraysh themselves.

Previous surah; one feature of hell was Hutama - that which tramples and crushes people in hell.

Hutaaman = the produce that comes under your feet and crushes into powder.

Since the previous surah Humazah was the last surah on the afterlife, Allah is threatening the Quraysh now with punishment in this world.

We will see how Allah sends a punishment, in this world - against the army of the Elephant.

What is the punishment?

ayah 5 of this surah. They turned up into like chewed up corner.

- 1 - From the universal warning to the specific warning.
- 2 - What connects these 10 surahs together. Ten components of one main subject.

This ideological conflict took place in the city of Makkah.

originally it was called Bakkah. It's founder was Ibraheem/Abraham.

His du'a is the reason why Allah caused this city to exist.

Du'a is mentioned in Baqarah and Ibraheem.

baqarah - Make this - a peaceful city.

rabbij'al hadhal balada aaminan - my Lord, make this city peaceful.

This change in language signifies that at one time, this place was just desert. At another time, he realised this place was going to be a city - so he asked Allah to make it peaceful.

A few years later - there was a city.

So they are 2 prayers at different times.

The first part of his prayer was for it to be:

- safe and peaceful (aaminan)
- provide its people with all kinds of fruits = Prosperity (warzuq ahlalum min ath-thamarat)

Peace and Prosperity.

According to Political Science, a society cannot survive - unless it has Peace and Prosperity.

You have a house, business, money and cars - if it isn't safe - society can't survive.

You can have safety - but you don't have any wealth, business, trading, money etc - then that society cannot function.

This is the Genius of Prophet Ibraheem that he knew this.

But then we learn about him that he worries that Allah has made him Imam (leader) over mankind.

All believers are leaders of their families. So you are asked about those who are under you.

Rabbana hablana min azwajina wa min dhurriyaatina qurrata a'yunin wa ja'alna lil muttaqeen Imaama - Our Lord, accept from us and our partners and our descendants, make them a coolness for our eyes and make us Leaders for the God fearing/conscious who guard against evil [surah Furqan]

We will be asked about those who we are responsible over.

So Ibraheem says;

..at-thamaraat, man aamana billahi wal yawmil aakhiri - provide them with fruits - only for those who believe in Allah and the Last Day.

Ibraheem does not want his descendants who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day (Judgment Day) to be fed by Allah because they are not worthy of it. He would be pleased if they did not live because they would do sin and oppression.

This is similar to the du'a of Prophet Nuh:

il-laa faajiran kaf-faara - don't let them live because they will give birth to more oppressive, ungrateful disbelievers who do all sorts of evils without shame.

Allah does not answer this du'a of Ibraheem, instead He says;

wa man kaf-fara fa umati'uhoo qaleela -those who disbelieve, I will provide him a little also.

All this du'a is in surah al Baqarah - and the video on the legacy of Ibrahim on Youtube by Nouman Ali Khan.

Surah Feel.

An army of Elephants, arabs had never seen them in battle before. This was so strange and different to the Arabs that they called this year - 'Aam al Feel - The Year of the Elephant.

How are they going to fight an army of Elephants.

So when you see the army of Elephants - you knew the peace of Makkah had broken. There was fear. Elephants were like war Tanks.

The people of Makkah fled to the Mountains. Except a few who tried to negotiate.

None thought the peace in Makkah would remain. Abraha - the one who was the leader - had the main intent to destroy the Ka'bah and the city of Makkah.

Under the most impossible of circumstances - Allah kept the du'a/prayer of Ibraheem answered - He

kept the city safe by destroying Abraha and his army.

The du'a of Ibraheem was for Allah to make the city safe, and to provide thamarat (fruits/food) to the people. So the next surah after Surah Feel is surah Quraysh - where Allah is telling them that He has kept them safe and provided them with all sorts of fruits and foods throughout the year.

No tribe could travel for trade safely throughout the year except the Quraysh tribe. Any other tribe who did so would be robbed.

Why doesn't anyone mess with them? Because the Arabs thought that these were sacred people who looked after the Holy House (Masjid al Haram). The thieves would fear to rob them because they thought they would get Divine punishment.

Also politically - all the tribes had false gods. These idols would be in the Haram (Masjid al Haram/main mosque in Makkah) - which the tribes would visit at Hajj time.

If some people tried to steal from the Quraysh - the Quraysh would warn them that they would harm their tribes idol in the Haram (main mosque in Makkah). So the thieves/robbers would back away.

So both parts of Prophet Ibraheem's duas' are fulfilled.

In the end of Surah Quraysh - fal ya'budu Rabba haadhal bayt

the bayt/home is this city, they are being reminded of the one who prayed for this house - Ibraheem. That they should be monotheists like him.

aladhee yat'ammahum min joo'in wa aamanhum min khawf - the one who has fed them from hunger, and given them safety/peace from fear. (ayah 3 of surah Quraysh).

This is the exact same things Prophet Ibraheem had prayed for. Food and Peace/safety - despite fear.

But are they worthy of these benefits of the du'a of Ibraheem? Didn't Ibraheem ask Allah to give only to those who believe? Yet these people do not believe in the last day, they are polytheists, so should they really deserve these blessings - when they are opposing his way?

The one who disbelieved - ummati'u qaleela.. Then I will throw him into the hellfire. (surah al baqarah)

Are these the worthy children of Ibraheem or the unworthy?

The surah after Quraysh is surah Ma'un - a surah which shows that they are not really worthy of Allah's favours.

Ibraheem continues the du'a in surah baqarah:

yarfa'ul qawa'id al bayt wa isma'il..

muslima ummatan lak. Show us our rituals and accept from us.  
(baqarah).

Rabbana wab'ath Rasoolan min hum - Our Master - send a Messenger from them.

The believers are good, and the evil are bad.

The custody of the house (in Makkah) should be to the Messenger, not to those who are not worthy - those who are Ma'un - those who might sacrifice but are so greedy for more.

So Allah tells us in the surah after that who the authority of the Masjid al Haram should belong to - surah Kawthar.

Kawthar includes the victories, the Qur'an, the legacy of Ibrahim, the cleansing of the house from idols.

Allah's Messenger has the honor of removing the idols from the house built by Ibraheem originally for Allah's worship alone.

So Allah says in ayah 2 of surah Kawthar;

fa sallee - so pray.

the first sign of gratefulness to Allah is prayer.

waNhar - and sacrifice.

prayer and sacrifice are the legacy of Ibraheem.

That tradition of sacrifice with that entire incident of Isma'il.

Now you are no longer one family of Ibraheem - rather, now you are enemies (shaani') to each other; believers or disbelievers.

Mumtahirah - example in Ibraheem - enemies until you believe in Allah and the last day.

In Arab history - your identity/citizenship is your tribe (Qabeelah). Allah's Messenger is being told by Allah to renounce his citizenship by Allah ordering him to say;

Qul ya ayuhal Kafiroon (Say: oh you who disbelieve)

He isn't saying 'O my people! O Quraysh!'

Now it is clear - conflict, I am not a disbeliever, I am not of you.

Allah has made his Messenger say that he is officially an enemy of his tribes people now, and that a conflict is drawing near.

So when a conflict occurs, one side has to be Victorious.

Allah says;

idha jaa'a nasrullahi wal fat-h

- when the help and victory comes.

Many say it is Madani, others say it is Makki. But it is a promise of Allah that His Messenger will win in the conflict.

This is a very big occasion in history - Allah's religions Establishment on Earth.

The final Messenger and the final victory of this Messenger.

Minor signs are shown to show that the major help will come.

When you see the small signs;

When you see the clouds and rain slightly come - you know a storm is going to occur.

So what is the small sign that a big victory (of Nasr) will come.

So Allah tells in Surah Lahab that He will destroy an enemy, a sign of eventual major victory.

Shaikh Ameen al Islaahi (in Tadabbur al Qur'an) and Shaikh Muhammad Farooq az-Zayn (Nadhm al Qur'an) - when people are in war for a long time - they forget what they are fighting about. 'Why were even there?'

The conflict between the believers and disbelievers is quite long. So Allah reminds us why this conflict happened. Belief vs Disbelief.

If you want to summarise what Ibraheem's unique legacy was, it is well known - Tawheed - the Oneness of Allah, depending on Him alone, asking Him alone, serving Him alone etc.

That's his legacy.

So we are reminded of the agenda of this Ummah - Qul huwa Allahu ahad. To remind us we are struggling for Allah's religion.

The unparalleled Oneness of Allah is what believers are always striving to uphold.

But as time progresses - negative influences from outside and internal influences from inside will affect that Tawheed - trying to make it weaker, as has happened throughout history.

So Allah sent surah Falaq - to protect the believers from evil on the outside.

And Allah sent surah an-Naas to protect the believers from evil whisperings on the inside.

All these surahs tie to the legacy of Prophet Ibraheem, which is tied to Allah's Messenger reviving it in a beautiful way.

fat-tabi' millata Ibraheema haneefan (solely dedicated to Allah). - quran.

## A History Lesson of the Arabs of Makkah and Yemen:

Specifically the Arab world can be split up into 3 parts:

- Iraq
- Sham (Syria)
- al Jazeera (Gulf) - meets sea on 3 sides, including Yemen.

For a great period in history, the rule of Saba' controlled trade between Europe and Asia and the rest of the world. Their ports gave them a lot of strength, wealth and in effect - Political power.

The great flood occurs at 450-451 CE - so everything they had is destroyed.

So now - There needs to be a new location where the travelling route can take place in Yemen.

So how is this connected to the Arabian Peninsula?

The Yemeni Arabs left that region and settled as tribes in different places.

'Aws and Khazraj are also Yemeni tribes who settled in Medinah. And earlier times from Yemen had already settled at the location of Zamzam water when Isma'il was a baby with his mother Hajar - where Ibraheem had been commanded by Allah to leave them.

Those people had left Yemen in search for water and settled with them. Isma'il grew up amongst them and got married into them.

In Hijaz - the children of Isma'il are settling in different places during this similar time period. And there is a historical figure Uthayb bin Kalaam/al Mujami' [born around 400 CE] (mentioned by Ibn Khaldun) - he makes the children of Isma'il to unify and make a state/city.

They are trying to unify their family as one block of family strength. And because he is charismatic - the people agree.

So the population of Makkah grows.

This man who united the sons of Isma'il has 3 sons. The most popular of them is Abd al Manaf, and he had 4 sons; Hashim, Mu'tallib, Abdul Shams and Nawfal.

Hashim is born on 464 CE - after the flood. (the flood was on 450 CE).

As Hashim grows up - he feels that the Makkans might be able to take advantage of the Economic vacuum which is taking place.

So Hashim starts to make trade agreements of Makkah with other business empires in the surrounding countries.

Traders from Yemen have already left the region because they couldn't survive their economically.

So Hashim goes to secure a business connection in Sham (Syria) to an Arab King of Ghassan.

Abdul Shams - to Habasha (Ethiopia)

Nawfal - to Iraq.

And sent one of his brothers to Yemen.

So he made Makkah - a central port for trade. Since Makkah is central between all these 4 lands.

These brothers made an Agreement (Eelaaf) - these brothers are called As-haab al Eelaaf (the



companions of the United Agreement).  
Also they are known as Al Mutajreen - the traders.

This is the exact same word mentioned in the beginning ayah of surah Quraysh.

Hashim was of the 4 brothers who had started Makkah as an economic power.

He had a son known as Abdul Mu'tallib (457 CE born) - who had Abdullah - who had; Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah (sal Allah alayhi wasalam).

The Ethiopian Christian/Roman World during all this time Period:

300 years after Jesus, the Romans rule Rome, Western Asia, Turkey, Egypt, Ethiopia, part of Yemen.

There was a brief time when Yemen became partially Jewish - they started oppressing the Christians. Some even say this oppression was against the Monotheistic followers of Jesus mentioned in surah Burooj of as-haab al Ukhdood (the companions of the ditch.)

The Ethiopians saw the oppression against other Christians in Yemen by the Jewish rule - so they invaded Yemen. They set up a king from the Christian Yemeni group who ruled them. But soon there was infighting between the kings for power.

Abraha does a military coup - he takes over the king of Yemen, while keeping good ties with Ethiopia - telling them that he did this only for the sake of wanting to apply justice.  
It became weaker than before - but the allegiance was still there.

The way kings encourage people to gain strength again is by reminding the people how powerful they once were - and how they need to return to their former greatness once more.

So what does Abraha remind the people of? About their fame when they were a powerful business empire.

So now Abraha decides to build al Qullays - a christian centre, a huge building/shrine/temple made of the most expensive materials - hoping it will undermine Makkah.

You can't change peoples religious mentality within a small amount of time.

So he sends a letter to Ethiopia - saying that the Arabs (of Yemen and Arabia) - are still preferring the Ka'bah over al Qullays - the christian temple.

The arabs found out about this and they went there out of hatred - and they defecated in the building to show that no-one respects it. Others say they burnt the place down.

Abraha is extremely anger - if they have insulted him and his religion - it incites him and his army even more to attack Makkah who has taken away, their former economic power of the past.

He has an army of between 12,000 - 60,000 in his army - directing to attack Makkah with the help of Yemenis and Ethiopians. The Arabs do not have professional armies, they are divided and their numbers are far less.

The army of Abraha had 9 - 13 elephants. Mahmood was a Massive elephant from them.

When they get to at-Ta'if - Ta'if negotiated with them. Why? Because they had their main idol Laat with them. So they did not fear their idol would get destroyed if Makkah was destroyed.

The other tribes did not fight because their idols were in Makkah, and if their tribe idol did get destroyed - who would they turn to in worship?

Abu Righal was appointed by the tribe of at-Takheef, from the town of at-Ta'if - to guide the army of Abraha to the Ka'bah. Because the path between the two towns (Makkah and at-Ta'if is complicated).

Abu Righal died on the way. This became a monument because he was a historical betrayer of the Arabs. So the arabs would spit on and stone his grave.

Abraha's army reached Makkah in the month of Muharram. The reasons why Makkah was attacked is because of politics, and religious issues.

Allah talks about Military/political issues of the surah in surah Feel.

In surah Quraysh - Allah talks about the economic issues of Quraysh.

## **Ayah 1:**

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ

*Alam tara kayfa faAAala rabbuka bi-as-habi al feel*

Have you not seen, [O Muhammad], how your Lord dealt with the companions of the elephant?

alam taRa - did you not See?

alam taraW - did You (Plural) not see?

The scholars wondered whether this was referring other peoples individually, or to Allah's Messenger?

There is evidences for both.

To Individuals:

wa bil waalidayni ihsaana - and be good to both your parents. (quran)

Allah's Messenger does not have two parents in his lifetime because they had died along time ago before this command was given.

This command is to other people. Even though the singular was used.

Also - Maybe alot of people saw the event because they were alive when this event occurred? Some say this event occurred abit before the birth of Allah's Messenger.

So it is possible that it refers to certain individuals who did see this event within their childhood. And that Allah is talking to them - did you not see..?

- the Messenger is being asked:

But Allah's Messenger did not see it then. He was born after.

so it can be in a figurative way; have you not heard, have you not realised how your Master dealt with the people of the Elephant?

The Arabs did not have a christian calendar, they would say; do you remember the event which occurred 10 years after 'Aam al Feel (the Year of the Elephant)?

It can also be; are you not amazed at how your Master dealt with the people of the Elephant?

If you look at the size of the army - it is bigger than the amount of people living in Makkah.

When a army with Elephants loses to a people - without any fighting -

this shows Allah has plans of keeping this city secure through ways which He wills.

Did you not realise that this can happen - that Allah can keep peace in Makkah - by Himself? That He can destroy an entire deadly army without needing the help of anyone else? An army which has elephant tanks that can flatten the whole city down with their feet?

alam taRa - did you not see? Have you not heard about it? Are you not amazed?

Feel 2b

Feel 2b 0.38.30

Dr Fadil Hassaan ar-Ra'i: This surah is a lesson for every rebellious tyrant, oppressor and dictator who lives in any civilization at any time.

Anyone who seeks to overpower others with their armies, they do not care about their enemy and will not fear any consequences.

The weak ask for the law, and the strong oppressors say that the law does not apply to them because they are 'above the law.'

This is seen throughout history, and can even be seen today.

This is the concept the surah is alluding to.

This is why the word Tarra was placed in this ayah. Didn't you See (Tarra)?

Tarra is the verb in present tense.

Common Translation of ayah 1: Didn't you see..? It is translated in past tense.

ammaa Ra'ayta would be past tense in arabic.

However - Present tense in arabic Balaghah/Rhetoric implies; something Continuous.

It didn't happen - but it happened over and over again.

This will be a continuous Theme in the Surah - we will see how the Present-future tense in Arabic is used to imply continuity.

That - Allah dealing with oppressors - won't just occur for that present Time (of the Army of the Elephant event), but it refers to Allah dealing with future oppressors too.

- In the phrase Alam Tarra there are two benefits:

Something you see physically (literally) with your eyes, or you visualise with your mind (figuratively).

taRa - Ra'a - to see literally and with insight.

Some scholars say that Allah's Messenger did not see the event of the Army of the Elephant. They say he was born in the same year, but 50 days after that major event.

So he did not see the event with his eyes, but he has heard it over and over again within his lifetime as we will see from the commentaries of Tafseer (explanations on the Qur'an).

- Alam Tarra - also Produces the meaning of Shock.

Didn't you not see/hear about how your Master dealt with them?!

- Itifaat - transisions in the Qur'an.

Allah talks to different audiences in the Qur'an. So even though Allah's Messenger is being spoken to in this ayah - he will recite it to the people - so the disbelievers who listen to this ayah will be warned, but they will also realise that Allah is siding for His Messenger (because Allah says; RabbuKa [Your Master (O Muhammad)] dealt with the companions of the Elephant).

So Allah is warning the elders of Quraysh - who did see the event of the companions of the Elephant - through His Messenger; didn't you see how your Master (O Muhammad) - [how He dealt with the oppressors?].

ash-Shawkani: to give the Messenger amazement with what Allah did with the people of the elephant. You know and the people with you know very well because of what came to them continuously of the story of the Elephant.

They knew this because at the time the Army of the Elephant came - all the people of Makkah had to evacuate to the mountains. Apart from a few who made negotiations with Abraha (the leader of the

Elephant army).

This year was so famous to the Arabs - that they made it a calendar from which they compared other dates too. I.e. Someone might say; 'Do you remember the event which happened 2 years after the Year of the Elephant ('Aam al Feel)?'

The Arabs all recognised the Holiness of the Ka'bah, so the Ka'bah and its guardians - the Quraysh gained more respect due to this event. This was a proof that it was a holy sanctuary which Allah had, and would protect.

ash-Shawkani continues; Alam tarra kayfa - did you not see? (how Allah dealt with His enemies?)  
So the disbelievers should be aware that if they oppose Allah's Messenger, Allah can destroy them too. Just like He destroyed the people of the Elephant.

They took pride in how Allah protected His holy house - the Ka'bah, so they should take one more step in enslaving themselves to Him by following His final Messenger.

The Hamza (letter 'A' on A lam in the first ayah) signifies a question in the statement; Did you not see (A lam Tarra?).

What is the significance of the Hamza (A)? What is the significance of the statement being in Question form?

- To give emphasis to the event, and evoke the Conscience of the one who has received a favour from Allah.

(i.e. Don't you remember how your Master dealt with the companions of the Elephant? Why aren't you grateful to Him for that?)

This question addresses Allah's Messenger and also indirectly to the disbelievers.

To the disbelievers: It warns them that they should remember Allah's favour upon them, and be grateful to Him for that. And that if they do not - they will become His enemies - and He can destroy them like He destroyed Abraha's army.

To the Messenger: Allah is giving reminder to His Messenger that He is on his side; Your Master will give you help through whatever means it takes. The same way your Master protected the Ka'bah when it had no other human to defend it.

Historical Account continued:

When Abraha reached near Makkah, he met Abdul Mu'tallib, and Abdul Mu'tallib (the grandfather of Allah's Messenger) tried to make a settlement. He offered Abraha the lands/plains of Tahamah, a third of the revenues of the Treasury of Tahamah.

But Abraha refused and prepared his armies - showing defiance. He wasn't bothered with making peace. He just wanted to show his strength.

as-haab al Feel. Feel is the word for Elephant, and it is in singular form.

Why did Allah use the singular word Elephant, when we know there were between 9 to 13 elephants in the army (the plural for Elephant is aFyaal [Elephants].) So why didn't Allah use the word aFyaal?

1 - Because the army was known for the most famous Elephant which was huge/extremely big and the most famous of the elephants (known as Mahmood)

2 - Feel is a singular word which can refer to an entire category [Ism Jam'].

The Elephant People. Iddaafah (causes an Identification) - these people were associated with the elephants.

As-haab al Feel will be discussed in more detail later insha' Allah.

Alam tarra:

1 - Why did Allah say - did you not see? When Allah's Messenger was not there?

Seeing = knowledge and reminder.

Don't you know? Have you forgotten what happened?

It indicates that the news of this event was spreading amongst the people continuously always.

This acquired knowledge is more powerful to mention as 'did you not see?' instead of 'did you know?'

Did you not see is more graphical and visual.

There is Condemnation in the Qur'an many times when Allah says; Alam tarra - did you not see?

- alam Yaraw kam ahlakna min qablahum min al qurooni (did you not see how many towns Allah destroyed before them?) - quran

- alam Ta'lam anAllaha 'ala kulli shay'in qadeer? - do they not know Allah is above everything in control)

- quran.

Tafseer ul Waseet fi Tafseer il Qur'an al Kareem (a contemporary written Tafseer) - by at-Tantawi (not the present one but the one before him):

Allah put the question in the way of 'How' - Allah didn't say What He did, but How Allah dealt with them.

The How (Kayfa) tells in more detail than just the word What (Maa). The word What would tell what happened (destruction). But the word How would explain how the destruction happened = more detail.

- Kayfa (how) is used for Amazement. How could it be that a massive army of strong elephants come to you and you have no army to defend your city - yet they are destroyed?

When a nations army dies abroad, the nation gets angry and sends more people to avenge them. However, Abraha did not die - he survived and made it all the way back to Yemen, so when the pebbles of Sijjeel hit him - they had peeled and burned his skin off as though he was melting (through which he gradually painfully died), so when he returned to his people - they saw his skin melting off and never wanted to avenge them - out of fear that they would get the same disease as him.

It was an amazing plan of Allah.

- Afalam yandhuru al sma' kayfa banaynaha? - did they not look at the sky (and everything above) and How we built it? - quran.

So Allah makes us amazed at all the sky and universe above us through this ayah.

There is no doubt that this miracle of the Creator dealing with Abraha is a proof of His power and control (qudrah) and wisdom in the way He planned. I.e. If Abraha died in Makkah, the Yemenis and Ethiopians might have sent more people to avenge him. However, his slow melting painful death which they had seen with their own eyes in Yemen scared them from doing similar to what he did.

- This incident is a proof of the honor of Prophet Muhammad because miraculous events occur in the year a Prophet is born and appointed by Allah. As a indication and confirmation of their Prophethood.

And that is why they say the clouds would cast shadow over the Messenger of Allah as he travelled, and the plants prostrated to him etc.

Similarly - the year Prophet Moses was born, Pharoah started to kill the sons of the Bani Isra'il (Jewish Muslims) because Pharoah had a dream that a boy from Bani Isra'il would be born -who would remove him from his kingdom. Yet Moses/Musa survived secretly because Allah protected him in the house of Pharoah himself as a adopted child.

Then when Moses was about to get Prophethood - he accidentally killed a man (to defend another man) and Moses ran away from the kingdom of Pharoah out of fear that he would get killed.



Then he returned back after a few years to Pharoah as a Messenger from Allah.

So such miraculous moments of remembrance occur - so the people remember that this is the upcoming time for a Messenger from Allah.

Abdul Mu'tallib made Poetry as a Supplication/Du'a to Allah:

La hum il-la al mar'a

yamhalahu famna' halaalak

(there is no doubt about it - there is a man who has the intent of wreaking havoc in it [Makkah], then keep him away from your halaal [permissible])

I.e. He is implying that the holy house is called the Haram (forbidden to do evils sanctuary), and the only one it is Halal/permissible for Allah alone.

Your the only one who can defend it.

wansur 'ala Aala as-Sareeb - so help (us) over the people of the Cross/crucifix.

The army of Abraha was Christian and influenced by the Ethiopians Christians. These Ethiopians were the people who had given them the Elephants.

wa 'aabidheehi - and those who worship it.

Al yawma aalaK (this day (help) your people [against the worshippers of the cross/crucifix])

So he is saying to Allah that we are your people who look after your House of worship, so help us against the cross worshippers.

la yaghlibana sareebuhum wa mahaalahum 'udwan (let not there cross/crucifix or there plans of destruction - out of animosity - destroy your Place/sanctity).

In kunta taarakahum wa ka'batuna (if you are going to leave them and abandon our Ka'ba)

fa'mur maa badaalak - then do what you decide.

He also made a du'a;

Ya Rabb la arju lahum waaka - my Master I don't wish for them Waaka (i.e. Success).

waak - in crop season there is harvest. And the farmer works hard to produce crops. This effort is Waaka.

Abdul Mu'tallib is wishing that Allah does not make their hard efforts - of getting to Makkah to destroy the Ka'bah - be a success.

I do not wish that they see the fruits of their labour/success.

Ya Rabb famna 'anhum habaka - My Master - keep them from attacking those who support you.

These are the poetic supplications of Abdul Mu'tallib.

According to Taaj al Uroos (a famous Arabic Reference lexicon dictionary):

Fi'l -

1 - action.

2 - movement

3 - something that occurs.

Refers to something abstract.

Idioms; bi fi'li kadha (bi ta'theerih) = because of it's Impact.

bil Fi'l / Fi'lan - ofcourse / truly / obviously.

It is real, its not hypothetical. It really takes place.

Ja'ala (transformed) and Khalaqa (created) is not used because Fi'l cover both.

'Aml could also be used but it is an action with intent. Fi'l is not. 'Aml also requires some effort.

Fi'l is used for Allah instead of 'Aml because it signifies there is no effort.

- Fa'aalun li ma yureed

- alam taRa kayfa Fa'ala Rabbuka bi 'Aad.

- quran.

Alam taRa kayfa Fa'ala Rabbuka bi as-hab al feel.

When an 'aml is done - you are alluding that other actions without intent.

So 'Aml is not used because Allah always does everything with ease, and with full knowledge of what He is doing.

Al Aloosi in Rooh al Ma'ani: If He had mentioned all 3 words (i.e. Khalaqa, Ja'ala, 'Aml) the speech would be prolonged unnecessarily. So Allah spoke the most comprehensive of speech without having to mention other unnecessary words. Fi'l sufficed, so Allah used that.

In every word - there is wisdom from Allah.

RabbuKa - Your Master.  
He didn't use the word Allah.

Allah is an Ism 'Aalam - a Name of Allah with ALL His Qualities included within it.

But Rabb signifies one main attribute of Being Master and therefore necessitating slavery. (it also signifies other Attributes like; al Mun'im [giver of favours], al Qayyim [powerful], al MuRabbi [Master], Mu'ttee [who gives alot]).

But the main concept of Rabb is Him being the Master, and us therefore being the slaves.

This destruction of Abraha's army was done by your Master and so we have to be His dutiful slaves.

Rabb (Master) in this ayah places demands on you to be a slave of Allah, but the word Allah would not do achieve that same result.

This is clearer in the next surah;

fal ya'budu Rabba haadhal bayt - let them enslave themselves to the Master of this House. (quran).

RabbuKa - Your (singular 'you') Master.  
Your Master (O Muhammad)

He mentions His Messenger, so He will protect him - just like He protected the Holy House in Makkah.

- It is as if Allah said; it is no doubt that when the people saw the revenge, and you did not see the punishment on Abraha, but you were still an obedient slave to Allah while they were not.  
So it is like you saw the punishment truly, and they did not. So Allah has picked him over all others.

By saying Rabbuk - Your Master. Allah is implying that I am on your side (O Muhammad), and that I am enemies with your enemies. I can destroy them, just like I destroyed the enemies of this Holy House.

I only did this against the people of the Elephant to show the gratefulness of you and to honour your arrival. And I have been the carer for your people before your coming, so how am I going to leave your caring after you have come?

It is also a proof that Allah's Messenger will be victorious soon and clean the house from idol worship.

By saying Rabb instead of Allah, Allah has illustrated the ugliness of what has been done of shirk/polytheism in the Holy House of Allah in the Holy Mosque.

'How dare you enslave yourself to other masters when your true Master is only Allah who provides you with all that you have?'

Rabb has negated and attacked their shirk/polytheism.

As-haab al Feel.

Allah did not say arbaab or amlaak (the owners/masters) of the Elephant/s. He said as-haab, which means Companions.

Saahib can be a categorical statement, i.e. You are like those who you are companions (as-haab) with.

So these people are called As-haab al Feel = Elephant people.

Allah is humiliating them and implying that these people are like animals, like elephants. In their morals and etiquettes - they have a lack of understanding and intellect ('aql).

Whenever there is companionship between two people;

it is said; lil adwanu innahoo saahib ul a'la - the lesser one is the companion of the higher one.

i.e. If there are 2 men, the one who has less skills than the other will be called the saahib (companion), and the higher skilled one will be called the higher one.

i.e. Allah's Messenger is higher than the companions (sahaba), and this is why - they are called sahaba and Allah's Messenger is not called a Sahabi/companion of his companions.

So these people in Abraha's army are called the companions (as-hab) of the Elephant. It is like Allah is implying that the elephant/s are of a level higher than these people in the army!

So they are the elephants' companions', while the elephants are the higher ones!

Bal hum addal (quran)

He proves this point. Why? Because when the elephants were commanded to destroy the house, everytime the elephant was pointed towards the house - he would turn away and run in the opposite direction.

Just like the hadith:

La ttaa'ata li makhlooqin

fee ma'asiyyatin Khaliq - there is no obedience to the creation in (matters of) disobedience to the Creator.

The animal refuses to obey the creation in destroying the Ka'bah - yet these people who are worsers than animals are bent upon destroying it.

The elephant was in a better state than even them humans were.

al Aloosi:

Isn't it true that the polytheists have done a worse crime (of shirk) than Abraha's plan of taking down the walls of the Ka'ba?

So why did Allah not destroy them? Aren't they both criminals?

Allah waged His destruction on the one who was harming the rights of other humans in this life - so Allah destroyed him in this life.

But the one who harmed the rights of Allah - his destruction will be in the next life.

## Ayah 2:

أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضْلِيلٍ

*Alam yajAAal kaydahum fee tadleel*

Did He not make their deceiving plotting go into great waste?

Alam

Didn't He make their plot go to waste?

the second: A lam - didn't He..?

This is further emphasis of Allah helping and reminding us of His favours.

yaj'al is also present tense. Showing Continuity - He took their plot, and took it to waste.

Showing that He will always do this - He will always make the plot of those who attempt to harm Allah's signs (religion etc.) go to waste.

This is why Present-future (Muddaari') tense is used.

Ja'ala as opposed to Fa'ala in this ayah.

Ja'ala - take something and transform it into something else.

So Allah let them make their plan, prepare for it, train for it, march forward in their armies for it, then fully execute it, and then suddenly - Allah transformed it into waste.

Allah didn't alleviate it at the beginning. Rather - He let them think that the plan was working. Yaj'al - Allah played them along and failed and fooled them right at the end.

Nouman's teacher Dr Sami: when someone is rebellious - Allah let's them go free.

Like a wild dog with a lead. At first you might tie them to a lead of 1 metre.

But if he is really rebellious, take him to a 400 meter field. He will think he is free - he will run at full

speed in this field - thinking he is free to rebel. As he runs really fast, when he reaches the 400 metre level - he gets yanked, and chokes - that pain is much worse for him.

wa ya muduhum fee tughyaanihim ya/mahoon (and He extends them in their rebellion for a time) - quran

Allah could have destroyed them earlier, but because of their sincerity in going down this evil path - Allah allows them to go down this way and then He fails them. But this evil will only increase their punishment with Allah.

In the last ayah of this surah - past tense is used to describe the unique punishment. And past tense is used because Allah will not continuously send such a punishment.

The word Qayd is similar to Makr - a Plot (a plan made to harm someone).

Military plans are Qayd, i.e. Ambush which is secret.

Makr = deception in a Plan. I.e. You lead people on and you are deceiving them.

Didn't He take your secret plot and put it to waste?

Qayd is used as an attempt to harm someone secretly.  
How come it's called when his plan was open in clear day time?

Explanation:

1 - Because they were hiding animosity in their hearts against the Makkans which they did not show to them.

wa ma tukhfee fi sudooruhum akbar - quran - what they hide in their chests is worse.

2 - Society which revolves around religion, similar to secular nations who now call to patriotism to ones nationality. These people use these these calls (of religion or national loyalty) to incite people to fight another people - even though the battle is usually for Economic benefit.

So Abraha called people to have war of faiths, but the real Qayd was for economic benefits.

This is the exact same situation of Quraysh rejecting the Messenger of Allah.

Ja'ala aalihata illaaha wahida, inaha shay'un 'ujaab - (has he made all the gods into One God? This is a

strange thing indeed!) - quran

The Quraysh is not really shocked that all the gods are not real and that there is One God. They are inside fearful that if people find out about this One God - they will desert the idol worship, and Quraysh will lose out financially in selling idols.

Qayd is the secret plans of the Abraha in doing a economic war secretly, and pretending it is a Christian cause.

Dal-lala (taddleel) - to waste, to destroy. So it is no longer useable at all.

dal-la - to be lost literally, to place something somewhere and not be able to find it.

Didn't We take put the efforts of the Ethiopians /companions of the Elephant go to waste?

Taddleel (taf'eel) - repetition. On many occassions, Allah made it go to waste.

I.e. They built al Qul-lays (the Christian temple - so people would worship at it) - that failed.

- he tried to urge Arabs to love it like the Ka'bah - that failed.

- It was burnt, and defecated on - another fail.

- They planned and marched to take the Ka'bah and break it down - they failed.

taddleel (in taf'eel format) signifies continuous failures.

Allah put their entire plans to fail.

Imru' al Qays (a famous pre-Islamic poet) - was called; the king with the quality of Ddaleel (letter; Ddaad) - because he wasted the fortunes of his father after recieving his inheritance.

Failing Abraha's plans added respect to the Ka'bah instead of lowering its status.

wa maa du'aa ul kafireen il-laa fee ddalaal - what is the prayer of the disbelievers except to waste? - quran

Fee - in

Allah did not say; He put their plan to waste.

He put their Plan Fee (In) waste.



What's the benefit of that?

Fee - (in) is used for imagery.

it is harf ad-dharff (zamaan or makaan) - word of imagery; of time or location.

Allah is making us visualise that you take something good, and you throw it in a fire so it is burnt and worthless.

I.e. The elaborate plan was completely destroyed and wasted.

### **Ayah 3:**

وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ

*Waarsala AAalayhim tayran ababeel*

And He sent against them birds in flocks,

sent against them borns

abaabeel - herds upon herds upon herds.

When Abdul Mu'tallib made the du'a (prayer) to Allah, he saw flocks/herds of birds flying from the direction of Yemen (interestingly because the army of Abraha also came from Yemen).

He then said;

wallahi inaha la tayrun ghareeba, ma hiyya bi najdiyya wa la tah-hamiyyah, - I swear by Allah, these are strange birds, they are not from Najd, nor are they from Tahhaam.

Each bird carried 3 stones, two in its feet claws, and one in its beak.

Then the stone that would land - would land on a person and hit their head and come out from the other side.

Abu Ubayda said: Ababeel - multiple groups of different kinds (species).

It is said; the horses (or birds?) came herds upon herds from many different directions.

an-Nuhaas (a great arabic grammarian in our Islamic history) said: The reality is that they are huge awesome flocks of many different kinds of birds / species.

They were coming from every part of the sky - so it was very dark in the sky.

The arabs had an amazing imagination, with picturesque poetry. This is proven through their literature because they lived in a plain desert. So they needed to put colour and description in their lives through their media - poetry.

It was said; They were green birds coming from the oceans.

Allah might not want us to see what He did, but How He did it (kayfa).

Weightless birds destroyed an army of Elephants?

How can Allah use birds destroy an army?

Why did Allah say; arsala 'Alayhim (sent Upon them) and not; arsala llayhim (sent To them).

The word 'Ala shows Superiority and and Domination and wreaking havoc on someone and imposing oneself on them.

And this is why Allah says when punishing people; aRsala 'Alayhim (sent Upon them) - showing His domination over them.

To and Upon shows a big difference.

hat-taa idha fatahna 'alayhim azaaban shadeed (until We opened Upon them a severe punishment) -

quran

fa arsalnaa 'alayhim reehan sarsaran - so We sent Upon them a powerful wind - surah fussilat.

fa arsalna 'alayhim tayran abaabeel - so We sent Upon them birds in flocks.

So we see Allah says 'Ala (upon) when sending punishment to show Power from above.

But when He sends a Messenger, He mentions Ilaa (to). (il-laa fir'awn.. - quran)

So we see that Moses was sent as a Mercy, if he was sent as a punishment - Allah would say 'alaa fir'awn.

at-Tabari: And your Master sent upon them birds of different natures, one kind would follow behind another kind.

ababeel - in herds/flocks. There is no singular for this word.

Flocks upon flocks of birds, scores upon scores.

Tayr - used as a collective/plural noun = All kinds of birds. (in comparison to tayoor which would be many birds only) Tayran implies ALL kinds of birds.

Adding tanween on it - TayraN - showing they were many birds of different kinds and to terrify.

Because tanween is done to Terrorise (in Nasab form [fat-ha/zabar form] - TayrAN). TayrAN! Terror. All birds!

Exclamation.

This exclamation of tanween which had guided shooting stones - they did not hit you. But you were there - what if they had hit you?

Similar words are;

shammaateet

abbaadeed

and others.

Ibn Hashim: the arabs never used a singular word for Abaabeel (flocks).

Ibn Abbas and ad-Dahhak: Abaabeel refers to groups that follow one after the other.

Hasan al Basri and Qatadah: Ababeel refers to many and many.

Mujahid: they are dispersed (in their species), continuous and unified in one place.

Ibn Zayd: they came from every direction and united.

Al Farraa': I did not hear the arabs use the single form of the word Ababeel ever.

This surah is a gift to the Messenger of Allah.

al Bica'i: Allah gives His Messenger gifts even before he was born. He protects this city, and He defended this holy House of worship for him, so he could clear the Holy house from idols and turn to it for prayer and the Muslims (a house originally built for Allah's worship alone by Prophet Ibraheem).

This newly found respect for Allah's Messenger.

We gain new respect of how Allah guards this house for Allah's Messenger (alam tara kayfa fa'ala Rabbuka - do you know how Your Lord [O Muhammad] - dealt with the companions of the elephant.

The arabs thought Allah had protected this house for them. But Allah firstly, had protected this house for His beloved final Messenger, Muhammad (sal Allah alayhi wasalam) - so he could revive the legacy of Ibraheem for mankind, and unite people to the worship of Allah alone.

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(i think the 1st 3 aayaat talk are not uploaded).

## **Ayah 4:**

# تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ

*tarmee bi hijaaratin min sijjeel*

Striking them with stones of hard clay,

Allah sent upon them birds

In surah Ahzab - Allah sent winds and armies [of angels] you did not see - Reehan wa junooda lam tarawha.

wa maa ya'lama junoodullahi illaa huwa. - none knows the armies of Allah except Him (quran)

tarmee - present tense is being used. For present tense to be used to describe a past event = it was happening continuously.

The pebbles kept coming down continuously.

If Ramat (past tense of Tarmee) was used - it would imply that the birds only threw once.

But it kept coming down continuously like rain.

Tarmee - Rama / yaRmee - to throw from a distance.

Thrown with a specific target.

So the birds threw from a height. And this hurts because of the force of gravity.

Thrown with a specific target. - so it is like Allah is targetting each criminal with guided missiles.

bi hijaaratin..

With stones

min sijjeel / from sijjeel

Sijjeel was originally a Farsi (Persian) word, and gradually became an arabic word.

Sange Gil (Sijjeel in arabic) in Farsi refers to pebbles which form on the ground when it rains, the sand clogs up like mud. Then it is baked with the extreme heat of the sun.

So sijjeel could refer to these dust based rocks.

That which is weak/powerless - Allah can destroy the strongest of things. He destroyed an army of Elephants by dust and birds.

at-Tabari said; Yunus the grammarian said:

The arabs said Sijjeel is the type of rock which hits you - it gets inside your body. (discussed in the tafseer of the next ayah).

Each bird had 3 rocks, two in its claws and 1 pebble in its beak, and they heaped upon the army from the skies, and their army was not even able to return.

They continuously pebbled them with clay which is burnt by the sun.

The word Sijjeel (lam at end), has a similar meaning to SijjeeN.

In arabic - when letters have a similar sound, it is likely that they have a similar meaning.

So since the letters; L and N have a similar sound in arabic - they are more likely to be with a same meaning or similar phrase.

And Sijjeen is the book of the people of the left hand on Judgment Day - those who are in loss.

Kal-iaa innal kitab al fujjaara la fee Sijjeen (surah mutaffifeen)

A huge record in hellfire which contains the names of the people in hell, like an attendance register.

So some say these peoples punishment was mentioned in the Sijjeen.

Ibn Abbas: When the pebble would fall on anyone of them - it causes swelling and it burns and infects their skin.

The first time a plague hit the arabs - it came from this attack and the rotting corpses.

This is one of the worst calamities to have hit the Arab world in that location.

The pebbles would enter into the skulls. And the pebble would go in from one side and come out from the other side. This was like a really strong bullet.

These statements are some witness statements from the actual event.

We notice the graphical images being described in sharp violent ways. How Allah destroyed them.

This is a response to the Kayfa (how?) in ayah 1. Did you not see How your Master deal with the people of the Elephant.

## **Ayah 5:**

فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ

*FajaAAalahum kaAAasfin ma/kool*

And made them like an empty field of stalks eaten up.

Ja'ala - you have something and make it into something else, i.e. Wood into a table.

khalafa - create out of nothing.

ja'alnakum ummatan wasatta - He transformed you into a middle balanced nation.

Ja'ala - make from one form to another.

Allah has made this strong army into like totally weak and dead empty corn stalks.

"Ka" as an independent word = 'Like/similar to.'  
(tashbeeh - likeness)

Allah describes us so we can imagine how this massive army transformed into like;

Asf - 'Aasif - winds which blow and cut off crumpled up leaves.

Reeh al 'Aasif - which blows leaves in the air.

'Asf also refers to straws which fly in the air.

Ma/kool - that which is eaten.

When cattle eat food, and when it eats a big piece, some part of it comes out of its mouth and flies into the air. The remains is called 'Asf al Ma/kool.

That's how they were crushed and destroyed.

Really grinded and chewed. This is how He made them.

It can also mean:

Ma/kool - that which is supposed to be eaten.

That which is about to be eaten up by its enemy. It is defenseless. Just like that animal is about to be eaten and it is defenseless, just like the hay and grass is defenseless before the cattle eat it.

These people were about to be eaten - about to be destroyed - and they were defenseless and weak.

Or these are the straws which the animals eat.

ash-Shawkani: Allah sent birds which threw pebbles made of clay baked into stones - so they became like eaten chewed up straws.

Allah uses this language to poke fun at them. They thought they were so strong and arrogant, and Allah destroyed them so they became like chewed up straw. They're not even like a leaf hanging off a tree (which has support to a branch), they're not even a full leaf, no - they are chewed up and worthless and totally weak.



Winds can even move it.

- Alam Tara - have you not seen/wondered?

Even though this surah is about Makkah and Allah protecting it from destruction. Allah did not mention that He is the Lord of the Ka'ba - that He will protect it. Rather, He said He is the Master of Muhammad (RabbuKa - Your Lord [O Muhammad]). So Allah is showing defense for His Messenger.

We were expecting Allah to mention the house (Masjid al Haram in Makkah - the holy mosque in Makkah.)  
But He will mention it in the next surah (Quraysh).

In this surah, Allah mentioned continuous mention of the same phonetic sound which helps in the rhythm; Feel, Tadleel, Abaabeel, etc.

This feature of rhyme makes you appreciate the Qur'an when Allah is telling the event of the army of the Elephant. But when the narrative is concluded - Allah removes the rhyme (the last word is Ma/kool) - showing the narrative has ended, because the rhyme has ended.

By saying Rabbuka - Allah has shown who His loyalty is with - and He has shown through this surah that He has power to destroy the enemy of Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah. (sal Allah alayhi wasalam).