

'Uqbah ibn 'Āmir narrated that God's Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

1

Have you not seen that tonight certain verses have been revealed, the like of which have never been known?

2

'Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of the daybreak', and 'Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind'.⁽¹⁾

From the Qur'an

﴿Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of the Daybreak, (1) from the evil of anything that He has created; (2) from the evil of darkness when it gathers; (3) from the evil of the conjuring witches; (4) from the evil of the envious when he envies.﴾ (113: 1-5)

﴿Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind, (1) the King of mankind, (2) the God of mankind, (3) from the mischief of the slinking prompter, (4) who whispers in the hearts of mankind, (5) from among jinn and mankind.﴾ (114: 1-6)

The Narrator

Abu Ḥammād 'Uqbah ibn 'Āmir al-Juhanī, was a highly respected companion of the Prophet. He was a good reciter, with good knowledge of the Shariah and its details. He was gifted with good expression, a poet and writer. He took part in the liberation of Syria and accompanied 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ in liberating Egypt. He was appointed Governor of Egypt by Caliph Mu'āwiyah ibn Abi Sufyān. He died in Year 58 AH, 678 CE.

Summary

The Prophet mentions that the last two surahs of the Qur'an, The Daybreak and Mankind, are unique. Nothing is like them either in the scriptures given to earlier prophets or in what people use to expel evil spirits.

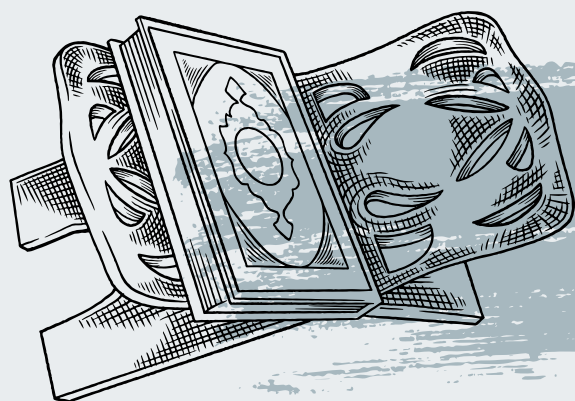
1 Related by Muslim, 814.



Message and Meaning

1

The Prophet (peace be upon him) tells ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Āmir that he had received new revelations: two surahs that are absolutely unique, particularly in the area of seeking God’s shelter. All the verses in these two surahs seek to protect their reciter against the evil of envy and the work of envious people. There is no similar appeal for God’s refuge anywhere else.



2

These two surahs are entitled The Daybreak and Mankind, respectively. The Prophet refers to them by mentioning the first verse of each, because they are well known by these, and they are often called together *al-mu‘awwidhatayn*, in reference to their initial words. The first of these two surahs is called in Arabic, *al-Falaq*, which particularly refers to the daybreak, but linguistically it refers to anything that opens up to usher in something new. This applies to the day as it breaks through the night, and it applies to seeds, date stones and similar things.

Both surahs start with the words *qul a‘ūdḥ*, which mean: ‘Say: I seek refuge’. Thus, they encourage turning to God and seeking His protection from the evil and scheming of Satan and his whispers. Reciting these surahs is an appeal to God for protection against all evil.

Several hadiths recommend the recitation of these two surahs as an appeal for protection and prayer for a cure. One hadith is narrated by Abu Sa‘īd al-Khudrī who says: ‘God’s Messenger (peace be upon him) used to appeal for protection from the evil jinn and the envious eye. When he received the revelation of these two surahs, he used them and discarded other formulae’.⁽¹⁾ The Prophet did so because the two surahs cover all that needs to be protected against. As such, they are sufficient.

1 Related by al-Nasā‘ī, 7804; al-Tirmidhī, 2058.

Implementation

1

The Prophet (peace be upon him) uses a particular Arabic style expressing wonder, saying: 'have you not seen'. This formula is frequently used in the Qur'an, as it draws the addressee's attention to a particular point, theme or phenomenon. It is highly effective and it ensures better response as the message the speaker puts across is quickly understood. It is advisable that scholars, advocates of Islam and educators should use this and similar opening formulae to ensure that their audiences are paying full attention.

2

The hadith makes clear that these two surahs are the best appeals for protection and recovery a Muslim may use. However, this does not preclude the use of other prayers and glorifications of God mentioned in the Prophet's hadiths. Nor does it preclude resorting to other measures that protect people from evil. However, these two surahs are the best and most effective.

3

In the second of these surahs, entitled Mankind, Satan is described as 'slinking' which means 'moving stealthily'. However, the description also connotes that he retreats when a person says God's name. Therefore, the more a person glorifies God and supplicates to Him the farther away Satan goes. We should remember God, praise and glorify Him at all times, and we should seek God's protection from Satan whenever some ill thoughts creep into our minds or we are tempted to commit a sin.

4

We should learn, memorize, understand and teach the Qur'anic surahs God has given special merit to. These should be taught at home, school and study circles.

5

The hadith and the verses of these surahs show that it is not possible to avert harm caused by envious people and those who resort to black magic unless we seek God's help. He alone can repel harm, as He is the Creator, Lord and Sovereign of all. Nothing happens anywhere in the universe without His permission.



