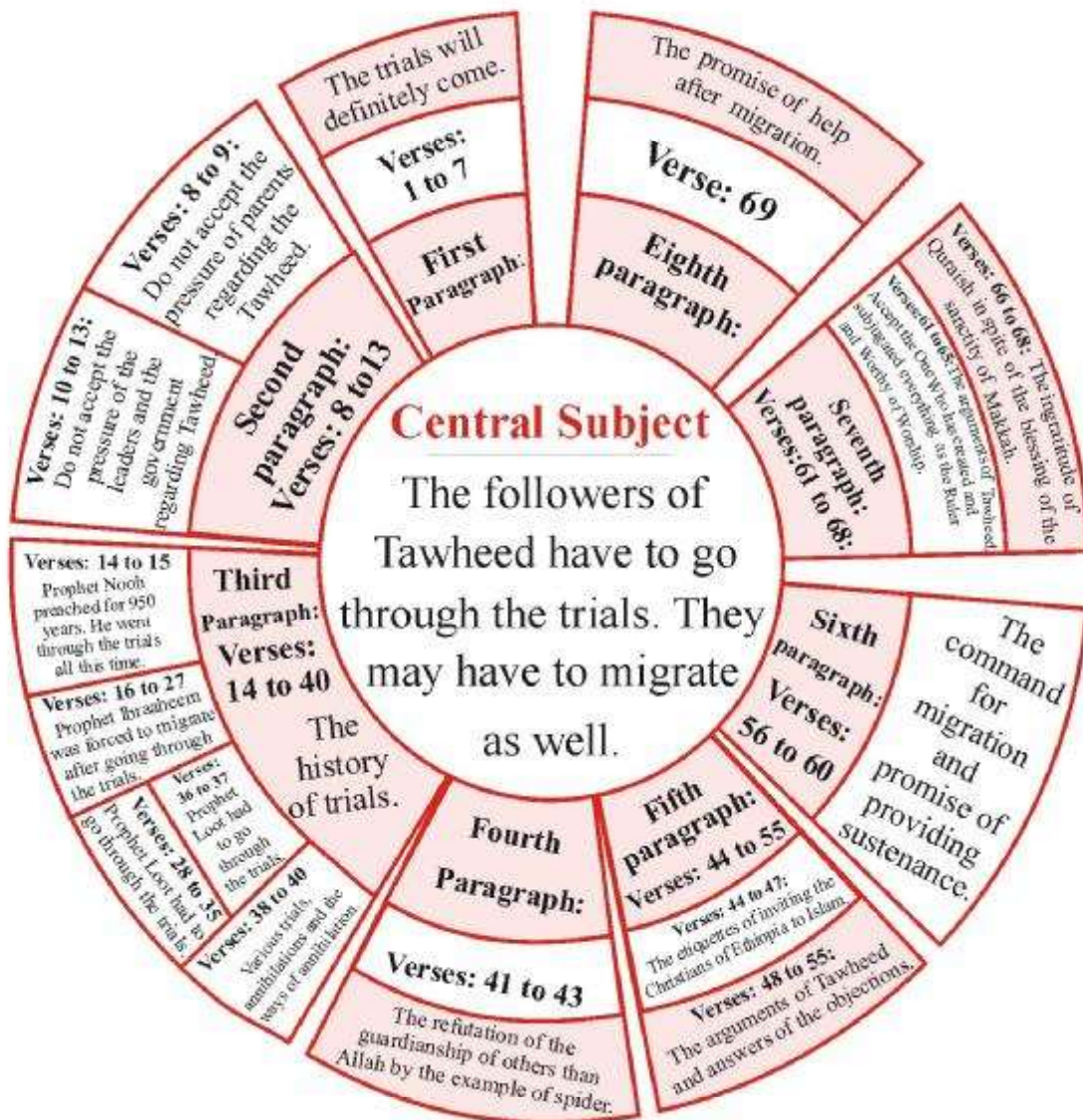


Flow Chart of Macro-Structure of Soorah Al-'Ankaboot

29- Soorah Al-'Ankaboot Makkan

Verses: 69

Paragraphs:8



• Period of revelation

1- Soorah Al-'Ankaboot was revealed after soorah Luqmaan, before the migration to Ethiopia (Rajab, 5 Prophet-hood), in the beginning of 5 Prophet-hood when the Muslims were being tortured and molested by the polytheists who denied the life hereafter. The Muslims were prepared for migration and other trials.

2- The command for migration to Ethiopia was given in the following words:

﴿إِنَّ أَرْضِي وَاسِعَةٌ﴾ “Surely, My earth is spacious (to migrate if needed).

(Verse: 56)

3- The weak Muslims of Makkah and the hypocrites who were hesitant to migrate to Ethiopia were warned. (Verses: 10 to 11)

The relationship of soorah Al-'Ankaboot with the Book

- 1- In the previous soorah (Al-Qasas), the Israelites who were oppressed and victimised by Pharaoh's military government were mentioned. Here, in soorah Al-'Ankaboot, the victimisation of new Muslims by the Makkan pagans is mentioned and they are being prepared for migration and the trials.
- 2- In order to prove the Tawheed of Guardianship, a beautiful example of the spider's web has been given in this soorah.
- 3- In the next soorah (Ar-Room), the arguments to establish the Day of Judgement and the life hereafter have been given.

Important key words and subjects

1- **The Muslims have been told the three principles of trials in this soorah by the word “Yuftanoon” (they will be tested).**

- (a) The Muslims have been taught that they will definitely be tested after belief in Tawheed. ﴿أَحْسِبُ النَّاسَ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ﴾ “Do the people think that they will be left alone on saying 'we believe', and they will not be tested? (Verse: 2)
- (b) The history of invitation of Tawheed is full of trials ﴿وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ﴾ “We did test those who have gone before them.” (Verse: 3)
- (c) The purpose of trials is to select the true Muslims. ﴿فَلْيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلْيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكٰذِبِينَ﴾ “Allah has to see who are the truthful and who are the liars.” (Verse: 3)

2- **The subject of “meeting with the Lord” has come three times in this soorah.**

Those who expect to see their Lord have been assured that the appointed time will come. ﴿مَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ أَجَلَ اللَّهُ لُحُوبًا﴾ “He that hopes to meet Allah must know that Allah's appointed time is sure to come.” (Verse: 5)

(b) Those who do not believe in meeting with their Lord and deny the revelations of Allah have been given the news of painful punishment.

﴿وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَلِقَائِهِ أُولَئِكَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِمَا يُرْسَلُ بِهِمْ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِهِمْ وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ﴾ “Those who disbelieve Allah's revelations and deny that they will ever meet Him, they are the ones who shall despair of My Mercy and they are the ones for whom there shall be a painful punishment.” (Verse: 23)

(c) Prophet Sho'aib advised his nation to believe in Tawheed and the hereafter and forbade them from spreading mischief.

﴿وَإِلَى مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا فَقَالَ يَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ، وَارْجُوا الْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ، وَلَا تَعْتَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ﴾ “To the people of Madyan, We sent their brother Sho'aib, who said: 'O my people! Worship Allah and look forward to the Last Day, and do not transgress in the land wickedly.’” (Verse: 36)

3- The subject of struggle and effort has been mentioned twice in this soorah.

(a) The first thing is that the struggle is useful for the man himself.

﴿وَمَنْ جَاهَدَ فَإِنَّمَا يُجَاهِدُ لِنَفْسِهِ﴾ “He that strives, does that for his own soul.” (Verse: 6)

(b) The second thing is that those who strive in His way, Allah will guide them to His ways in the future. ﴿وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا﴾ “Those who strive in Our cause, We will surely guide them to Our ways.” (Verse: 69)

4- The key words of migration have been mentioned twice in soorah Al-'Ankaboot.

(a) Only his nephew Loot believed in prophet Ibraaheem and declared to migrate towards his Lord. ﴿فَأَمَّنَ لَهُ لُوطٌ وَقَالَ إِنِّي مُهَاجِرٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي﴾ “Loot affirmed his belief with Ibraaheem and said: 'I will migrate towards my Lord'.” (Verse: 26)

(b) Allah advised his true servants not to grieve if the land of Makkah had become narrow for them, for His earth was vast and they could migrate to any other country; but to worship and obey Him was essential for them.

﴿يَعِبَادِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ أَرْضِي وَاسِعَةٌ فَإِنَّمَا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مَا كَفَرْتُمْ بِهِ يَكْتُمُونَ﴾ “O My servants who have believed! Surely, My earth is spacious (to migrate if needed), therefore, worship Me and Me Alone.” (Verse: 56)

5- Two ways have been mentioned in this soorah - the Way of Allah and the way of infidel leaders.

(a) **The way of the infidel leaders:** The leaders of the unbelievers asked the believers to follow their way and told them that they will bear the burden of

their sins.

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّبِعُوا سَبِيلَنَا وَلْنَحْمِلْ خَطِيئَتَكُمْ وَمَاهُمْ بِحَامِلِينَ مِنْ خَطِيئَتِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ﴾

(آیت: 12)

﴿إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ﴾

“The unbelievers say to the believers: 'Follow us, and we will bear the burden of your sins'. But they will not bear any burden of their sins; they are surely lying.” (Verse: 12)

(b) The Way of Allah: Allah consoled the righteous Muslims that He is with them. He said: “You are struggling in My way. I will guide you towards My ways.”

﴿وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْبُحْسِينِ﴾ “Those who strive in Our cause, We will surely guide them to Our ways; surely, Allah is with the righteous.”

(Verse: 69)

6- Commandments and instructions to the new Muslim companions regarding the conditional obedience of parents.

The new Muslim companions were taught to treat their non-Muslim parents nicely, but if they force them to commit Shirk, they should not be obeyed.

﴿وَوَضَّيْنَا لِلْإِنْسَانِ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حُسْنًا وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا﴾ “We have enjoined man to show kindness to his parents; but if they force you to commit Shirk with Me, of which you have no knowledge, do not obey them.” (Verse: 8)

7- The prayer in which Allah is remembered, is required.

The prophet (pbuh) was ordered to convey the teachings of revelations to the people and establish the prayer. Two important things were told about the prayer.

﴿أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ﴾

(آیت: 45)

﴿وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ﴾

“Recite from this Book (the Quran) which has been revealed to you and establish Salah (prayer). Surely, Salah keeps one away from shameful and evil deeds; and surely, the remembrance of Allah is the greatest indeed, Allah knows what you do.” (Verse: 45)

(a) The prayer keeps you away from shameful and evil deeds.

(b) The spirit of prayer is the remembrance of Allah and this is the greatest thing.

8- The arguments and debate with the people of the Book should be done in a nice and polite manner.

The Muslims who migrated towards Ethiopia were trained to preach Islam among the people of the Book over there. They were allowed to hold

discussions over the creed of Tawheed but they were told to argue in a nice and polite way. ﴿وَلَا تُجَادِلُوا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ﴾ “Do not argue with the people of the Book except in good taste.” (Verse: 46)

Macro-structure of soorah Al-'Ankaboot

Soorah Al-'Ankaboot consists of nine (9) paragraphs.

- 1- Verses: 1 to 7: In the first paragraph, the new Muslim companions are told that trials will definitely come.**

They will not be forgiven by merely saying that they believe. The previous Muslims had gone through the trials. The purpose of trial is to differentiate between the true and the false. Those who do bad deeds cannot save themselves from the grasp of Allah.

Those who hope to meet Allah should know that the appointed time is sure to come. Those who believe and strive in the way of Allah, their struggle will succeed and will be beneficial for themselves. ﴿وَمَنْ جَاهَدْ فَإِنَّمَا يُجَاهِدُ لِنَفْسِهِ﴾ “He that strives, does that for his own soul.” (Verse: 6) Their vices will be wiped away and their virtues will be rewarded.

- 2- Verses: 8 to 13: In the second paragraph, the new Muslim companions have been ordered that they should not accept the pressure of polytheist leaders.**

The Muslims have been enjoined to be kind to their parents; but if they insist on Shirk and pressurise for it, they should not be obeyed. The weak Muslims who were hesitant to migrate to Ethiopia and were afraid of the leaders of Quraish have been criticised for their hypocrisy at this occasion. The hypocrite says that he believes; but he considers the trial by the people as the Divine punishment. In case of success, he boasts of his help and favour.

Allah Who is aware of the secrets of hearts wants to show who is the sincere believer and who is the hypocrite?

﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ فَإِذَا أُوذِيَ فِي اللَّهِ جَعَلَ فِتْنَةَ النَّاسِ كَعَذَابِ اللَّهِ وَلَئِنْ جَاءَ نَصْرٌ مِنْ رَبِّكَ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّا كُنَّا

مَعَكُمْ أَوْلَىٰ لِلَّهِ بِأَعْلَمَ بِمَا فِي صُدُورِ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ (آيت: 10)

“There are some among people, who say: 'We believe in Allah'; yet, when they suffer in the cause of Allah they confuse the persecution of people with the punishment of Allah. But when there comes help from your Lord, they are sure to say: 'We have always been with you'. Is not Allah fully aware of what is in the hearts of the people of the world.” (Verse: 10)

The leaders of the unbelievers used to pressurise the weak Muslims and said that they will bear the burden of their sins on the Day of Judgement. It is said that they are liars. On the Day of Judgement, they will have to bear the double burden - their own burden as well as the burden of others. They will have to answer for their false accusations on that Day.

3- Verses: 14 to 40: The history of trials has been described in the third paragraph.

Prophets Nooh, Ibraaheem, Loot, and Sho'aib went through these trials.

(a) Prophet Nooh spent 950 years among his people. Allah annihilated them by the flood. They were the wrong-doers. Allah saved those who were in the Ark and provided a lesson for the whole world. (Verse: 15)

(b) Prophet Ibraaheem gave the invitation of Tawheed and piety.

﴿أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاتَّقُوهُ﴾ “Worship Allah and fear Him.” (Verse: 16) Prophet Ibraaheem declared that idolatry is false. He exposed the false gods and said that they did not provide sustenance.

﴿فَايْتَعُوا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الرَّزْقَ وَأَعْبُدُوهُ وَاشْكُرُوا آلَةَ الْيَوْمِ تُرْجَعُونَ﴾ “You worship idols besides Allah and fabricate falsehood. In fact, those whom you worship besides Allah have no power to give you your sustenance, therefore, seek your sustenance from Allah, worship Him, and give thanks to Him, to Him you shall be returned.”

(Verse: 17)

The previous nations also denied. The responsibility of the messenger is only to make the message clear.

﴿وَإِنْ تُكَذِّبُوا فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ أُمَمٌ مِّن قَبْلِكُمْ وَمَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلْغُ الْمُبِينُ﴾ “If you deny (the message), then nations have denied before you. The only duty a messenger has is to deliver (Allah's message) clearly.” (Verse: 18)

Prophet Ibraaheem gave many rational arguments about Tawheed.

Allah initiates the creation and repeats it and it is easy for Him.

Allah controls everything.

Allah may punish or may have mercy. No one can frustrate His plan.

No guardian and helper can save from Allah's Wrath. (Verses: 21 to 22)

The unbelievers and the deniers of life hereafter are disappointed of Allah's Mercy. They will have a painful punishment. (Verse: 23)

The nation of Ibraaheem planned to kill him or burn him alive but Allah saved him from the fire. The believers can get encouragement from this event and the history of trials.

(c) Only his nephew Loot believed in prophet Ibraaheem. He declared that he was going to migrate towards his Lord. (Verse: 26)

﴿فَأَمَّنَ لَهُ لُوطٌ وَقَالَ إِنِّي مُهَاجِرٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي﴾ "Loot affirmed his belief with Ibraaheem and said: 'I will migrate towards my Lord'." (Verse: 26)

Prophet Loot told his nation to avoid the obscenities which were never committed before by anyone in the world. They were involved in homosexuality. (Verses: 28, 29)

They were so shameless that they used to commit obscenities even in their assemblies. (Verse: 29). They invited the punishment of Allah. Prophet Loot prayed for help. ﴿رَبِّ انصُرْنِي عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ﴾ "O my Lord! Help me against this corrupt nation." (Verse:30)

(d) Allah sent Sho'aib towards Madyan. He gave the invitation for three things:

(1) Worship Allah! (2) Look forward to the Last Day! (3) Do not create mischief in the land. (Verse: 36)

The nation rejected his invitation. A severe earthquake overtook them and they were destroyed in their own homes.

(e) Allah ruined Aad and Thamood. The Satan had made their evil deeds look beautiful to them. (Verse: 38)

Allah annihilated Qaaron, Pharaoh and Haamaan. They had shown arrogance in the land. (Verse: 39)

(f) At the end, four different ways of annihilation of nations have been described. They are annihilated as a result of their sins.

﴿فَكُلًّا أَخَذْنَا بِذُنُوبِهِ﴾ "We seized all of them for their sinfulness." (Verse: 40)

(1) ﴿فِيهِمْ مَن أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ عَاصِبًا﴾ "Against some We sent a violent tornado full of stones."

(2) ﴿وَمِنْهُمْ مَن أَخَذَتْهُ الصَّيْحَةُ﴾ "Some were seized by a mighty blast."

(3) ﴿وَمِنْهُمْ مَن حَسَفْنَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ﴾ "Some were swallowed up by the earth."

(4) ﴿وَمِنْهُمْ مَن أَغْرَقْنَا﴾ "And some were drowned." (Verse: 40)

﴿وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَكِن كَانُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ﴾ "It was not Allah Who was unjust to them, but they were unjust to their souls." (Verse: 40)

4- Verses: 41 to 43: In the fourth paragraph, the creed of guardianship of others besides Allah has been refuted by the example of the spider. Only Allah is the True Guardian.

Allah Alone is the Guardian, True Accomplisher, Patron and Protector. The creed of guardianship of others besides Allah, is weak like the spider's web which can neither provide comfort nor give protection. The support of Allah is strong and the support of others besides Allah is weak. The example of those who took others besides Allah as their guardians is like that of spider's web which is very weak. ﴿مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ كَمَثَلِ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ إِذْ تَبَنَّىٰ﴾ “The parable of those who take protectors other than Allah is that of a spider who builds for itself a dwelling, and surely, the weakest of the dwellings is the dwelling of a spider.” (Verse: 41)

Those who take others besides Allah as their guardians and protectors, they are living in the spiders dwelling which is very weak and cannot provide them any protection. ﴿وَإِنَّ أَوْهَنَ الْبُيُوتِ لَبُيُوتُ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ “And surely, the weakest of the dwellings is the dwelling of a spider.” (Verse: 41)

Only those who have knowledge, can benefit from these beautiful parables. ﴿وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعَالِمُونَ﴾ “But none will grasp them except the wise.” (Verse: 43)

5- Verses: 44 to 55: The arguments of Tawheed have been given in the fifth paragraph.

The silencing answer of the objections has been given and the etiquettes of inviting the Christians to Islam in a nice and polite manner have been taught.

The messenger (pbuh) of Allah has been advised to continue preaching with the help of Quran and remembering Allah through prayers. Surely, the prayer keeps you away from evil and obscenity and the spirit of prayers is the remembrance of Allah. ﴿وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ﴾ “The remembrance of Allah is the greatest (virtue) indeed.” (Verse: 45)

The contention and discussion with the people of the Book should be made in a beautiful manner. They should be told that we also have been given the similar revelation as you were given.

﴿وَلَا تَجَادِلُوا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا بِالْبِطْرِ هِيَ أَحْسَنُ﴾ “Do not argue with the people of the Book except with better means.” (Verse: 46)

They should be told: Your God and our God is the same and we are obedient to Him. ﴿وَقُولُوا آمَنَّا بِالَّذِي أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَأُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَالْهَتَا وَالْهَكْمَ وَاحِدًا وَنَعْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾ “And say:

We believe in that which is sent down to us and that which is sent down to you; our God and your God is the same, One God to Whom we submit as Muslims.” (Verse: 46)

The objection against the messenger (pbuh) of Allah was answered that he did not write this Quran himself. It is the Word of Allah. The messenger (pbuh) of Allah did not know reading or writing before. Then why the followers of falsehood are involved in suspicion?

6- Verses: 56 to 60: In the sixth paragraph, the command for migration has been given and the sustenance has been promised.

If it is not possible to follow the religion at the place where the Muslims are living, it is essential for them to migrate to some other place.

﴿يُوعِبَادِي الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ أَرْضِي وَاسِعَةٌ فَإِنِّي فَاعٍ عَبْدُونَ﴾ “O My servants who have believed! Surely, My earth is spacious (to migrate if needed), therefore, worship Me and Me Alone.” (Verse: 56)

Those who believe, do good deeds and migrate will live in the high mansions of Paradise beneath which rivers flow. What an excellent reward for those who were patient in difficult circumstances and put their trust in their Lord! The Muslims were assured that they will get their provisions after migration as well.

﴿وَكَايْنٍ مِّنْ ذَاتِهِ لَآتِيهِمْ رِزْقُهَا. اللَّهُ يَرْزُقُهَا. وَإِنَّا كُمْ﴾ “How many creatures are there that do not carry their provisions with them? Allah provides for them as He provides for you.” (Verse: 60)

7- Verses: 61 to 68: In the seventh paragraph, there is charge sheet against the Quraish that they are ungrateful in spite of having the blessing of the sanctuary of Ka'bah.

The life of this world is nothing except a pastime and an amusement. The real home is the home in the hereafter.

The polytheists become the followers of Tawheed when they embark a ship. They obey Allah sincerely and pray to Him; but when they are delivered from the distress, they commit Shirk again. They are being given respite. Allah has made Makkah the city of Peace, while people are snatched away from the surroundings. This peace has not been established by their gods. They follow the falsehood rather than the truth! There is punishment of Hell for such unbelievers.

8- Verse: 69: The last paragraph consists of the last verse. The new Muslim youth have been promised help after the migration of Ethiopia.

Those who strive for the cause of Allah, He shows them His Way. They are the righteous people. Allah is with them.

﴿وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾ “And those who strive in our cause, We will surely guide them to Our ways, surely, Allah is with the righteous.” (Verse: 69)

There is the good news in this verse that after the migration of Ethiopia, there is the migration to Madinah, then the battles of Badr, Uhad, Ahzaab, truce of Hudaibiyah, conquest of Khaybar, conquest of Makkah, campaign of Tabook and then Islam will spread in the East and the West. Allah will guide the righteous Muslims towards His ways at every stage.

Central Subject

The followers of Tawheed have to go through the trials. They may have to migrate as well.

