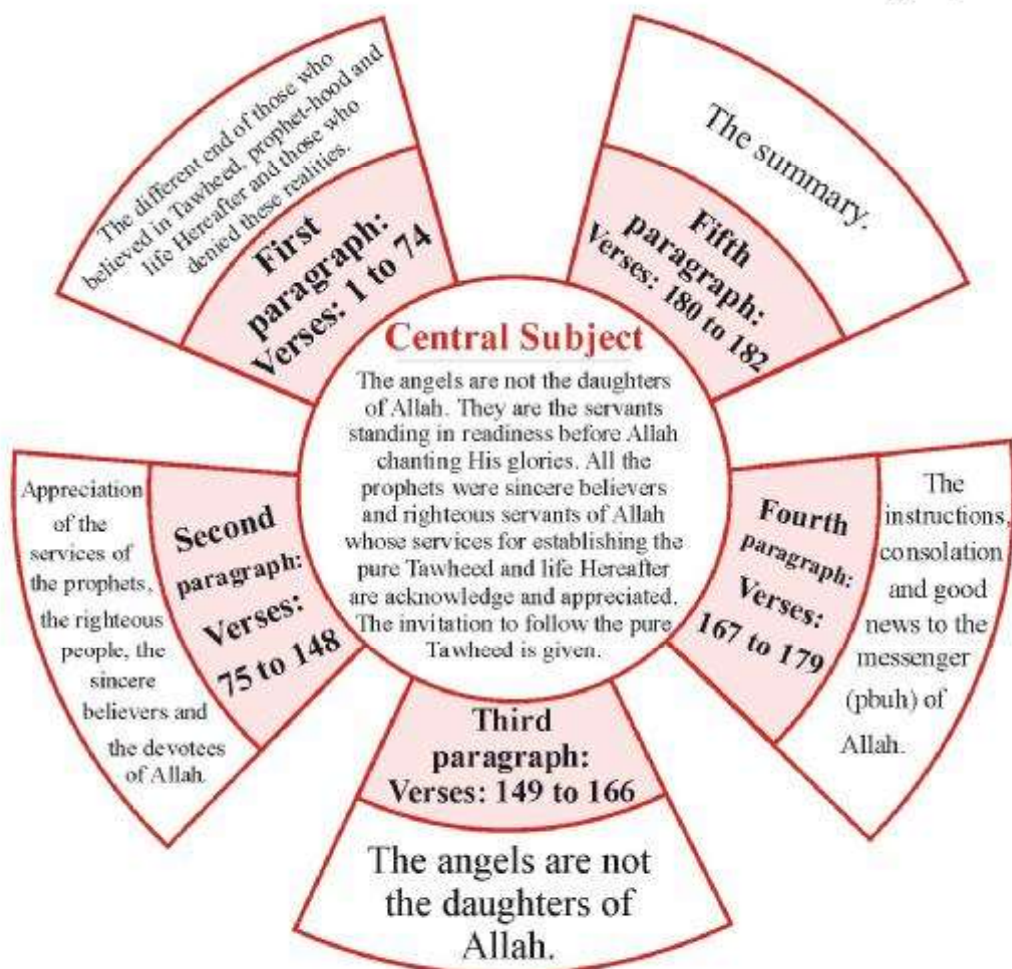


Flow Chart of Macro-Structure of Soorah As-Saaffaat

37 - Soorah As-Saaffaat Makkan

Verses: 182

Paragraphs:5



• **Period of revelation:**

Soorah As-Saaffaat was probably revealed towards the end of the third phase of prophet's stay in Makkah (6 to 10 prophet-hood). This was the period when soorah Faatir and soorah Yaa-Seen were revealed as well. The Makkan pagans considered the angels as Allah's daughters. They rejected the invitation of Tawheed given by the messenger (pbuh) of Allah and were making fun of him. They called him a magician, a poet and an insane person. They said, "How can we leave our gods for an insane poet?" At this juncture, they were invited to understand the task of prophet-hood and the position of prophet-hood of Muhammad (pbuh) by the history of different prophets who were righteous and devoted believers, so that they may follow the pure Tawheed.

Special Features

There are some repetitive verses in soorah As-Saaffaat which have been repeated again and again.

﴿إِلَّا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الْمُخْلِصِينَ﴾ “Illa ibaadallah hil Mukhlaseen” (Except the sincere devotees of Allah.) ﴿كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾ “Kazaalika Najzil Mohsineen” (Thus do We reward the righteous.) ﴿إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ “Innahoo min Ibaadenal Mo'mineen” (Surely, he was one of Our believing devotees.) The word ﴿سَلَامٌ﴾ “Salaam” (Peace) has also been used repeatedly in this soorah.

The relationship of soorah As-Saaffaat with the Book

- 1- In the previous soorah (Yaa-Seen), Muhammad (pbuh) was told to be the last link of prophet-hood by saying: “You are indeed one of the messengers” (36: 3) Here, in soorah As-Saaffaat, the services of some prophets towards Tawheed have been mentioned and it has been established that peace is for the messengers of Allah. ﴿سَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ﴾ “Peace be on the messengers.” (Verse: 181)
- 2- The topic of negation of worship of angels mentioned in soorah Faatir has been explained in more detail here.
- 3- Here, in soorah As-Saaffaat, the services of nine prophets Nooh, Ibraaheem, Ismaa'eel, Is-haaq, Loot, Moosaa, Haaron, Ilyaas and Yoonus have been mentioned. In the next soorah (Saad), the repentance of three prophets Dawood, Sulaimaan and Ayyoob is mentioned.

Important Key words and Subjects

1- The evidence of angels arrayed in rows has been presented in soorah As-Saaffaat:

The Makkan pagans said that the angels were the daughters of Allah. It has been refuted here.

- (a) In the very first verse, the evidence of the angels who are arranged in ranks have been presented that they have no share in the Divinity and that Allah is Alone. ﴿وَالضُّفُفِ صَفًّا﴾ “I swear by those who arrange themselves in ranks.” (Verse: 1)

(b) The same thing has been repeated in verses 164 to 166.

﴿وَأَنَّا لَتَعْنُ الضَّافُونَ﴾ “We arrange ourselves in ranks for His service.” (Verse: 165)

2- The belief of Tawheed has been established in soorah As-Saaffaat and the participation of angels in the Divinity has been refuted.

(a) In the fourth verse, it has been said clearly that the God is only One God.

﴿إِنَّ إِلَهَكُمْ لَوَاحِدٌ﴾ “Indeed, your God is One.” (Verse: 4)

(b) It is said about the pagan leaders that they show pride and arrogance regarding the invitation of Tawheed. ﴿إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ﴾ “When they were told: 'There is no god except Allah,' they used to puff themselves up with pride.” (Verse: 35)

(c) The polytheists were asked if they wanted more gods other than Allah, the One and Only? ﴿أَيُّفَكَالْهَيْئَةُ دُونِ اللَّهِ تُرِيدُونَ﴾ “Would you serve false gods instead of Allah?” (Verse: 86)

3- Use of of the word ﴿فَاسْتَفْهِمِهِمْ﴾ “Fastaftehim” (ask them) in soorah As-Saaffaat:

The Makkan pagans have been contended with the word

﴿فَاسْتَفْهِمِهِمْ﴾ “Fastaftehim” (ask them) in this soorah.

(a) ﴿فَاسْتَفْهِمِهِمْ أَهْمُ أَشَدُّ خَلْقًا أَمْ مَنِ خَلَقْنَا إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُمْ مِنْ طِينٍ لَازِبٍ﴾ Ask them: “What is more difficult - their creation or the rest of our creation (like mountains)?- Them we created out of a sticky clay.” (Verse: 11) This is the argument to prove the life hereafter.

(b) ﴿فَاسْتَفْهِمِهِمْ آلِ بَنَاتٍ أَلَيْسَ لَهُنَّ بَنُونَ﴾ Ask them: (Does it make any sense that) “their Lord should have daughters while they choose to have sons?” (Verse: 149) What an idea! This is the argument to prove the Tawheed of Person.

4- The allegation against the messenger (pbuh) of Allah that he is insane and a poet:

The saying of the Makkan pagans has been reported in this soorah who used to say: ﴿وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ كَوَالِهَيْتِنَا لِشَاعِرٍ مَجْنُونٍ﴾ “What! Should we give up our gods for the sake of a mad poet?” (Verse: 36)

5- Use of the word ﴿الْمُخْلِصِينَ﴾ “Al-Mukhlaseen” (sincere devotees) for the prophets in soorah As-Saaffaat:

The words ﴿عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الْمُخْلِصِينَ﴾ (Sincere devotees of Allah) have been used five times in this soorah. The prophets are the sincere and the chosen people. They follow the unadulterated Tawheed and Allah makes them special by choosing them for Himself. They are the obedient and loyal servants of Allah. (Verses: 40, 74, 128, 160 and 169)

6- Use of the word ﴿الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾ “Al-Mohsineen” (righteous) for prophets in soorah As-Saaffaat:

The word ﴿الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾ (the righteous) has been used four times in this soorah. The prophets are the messengers, the preachers, the practical and the righteous people. It is the way of Allah that He rewards people according to their belief and deeds. ﴿إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾ “Thus do We reward the righteous.” (Verses: 80, 110, 121, 131) This is a repeated verse.

7- Use of the word ﴿الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ “Al-Mo'mineen” (believers) for the prophets in soorah As-Saaffaat:

The word ﴿الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ “Al-Mo'mineen” (the believers) has been used four times in this soorah. The prophets have perfect belief. They have no share in Divinity. However, they are obedient servants of Allah and His devotees. Allah has mentioned the prophets Nooh, Ibraaheem, Moosaa, Haaron and Ilyas and then said: ﴿إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ “Surely, he was one of Our believing devotees.” (Verses: 81, 111, 122, 132). This is also a repeated verse.

8- Meaningfulness of the use of word ﴿سَلَامٌ﴾ “Salaam” for the prophets in soorah As-Saaffaat:

The word ﴿سَلَامٌ﴾ “Salaam” (peace) has been used five times in this soorah. There is peace and security for the prophets and annihilation for their opponents. Five prophets have been mentioned by name in this soorah and their services have been appreciated. Their services regarding the propagation of invitation of Tawheed have been acknowledged and they have been given the greetings of peace at the end.

(a) ﴿سَلَامٌ عَلَى نُوحٍ﴾ “Salutation to Nooh.” (Verse: 79)

(b) ﴿سَلَامٌ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ﴾ “Salutation to Ibraaheem.” (Verse: 109)

- (c) **سَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ** “Salutation to Moosaa and Haaron.” (Verse: 120)
- (d) **سَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ** “Salutation to Ilyaaas.” (Verse: 130)
- (e) **سَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ** “Peace be on the messengers.” (Verse: 181)

Macro-structure of soorah As-Saaffaat

Soorah As-Saaffaat consists of five paragraphs.

1- Verses: 1 to 71: In the first paragraph, the Tawheed, the prophet-hood and the life hereafter have been established by refuting the participation of angels in Divinity. It has been clarified that the end of the believers and the unbelievers will be different.

- (a) The evidence of the angels has been presented that they are standing in rows before Allah. They invoke Him and glorify Him. They have no share in the Divinity. There is only One God, Allah.
- (b) The Jinns do not have access to Allah and they cannot get the news of the Unseen. They also have no share in Divinity. If they try to listen to the exalted assembly of angels, they are pursued by a flaming fire of piercing brightness. The Quraish were asked, whether the creation of man is more difficult or the other things that Allah has created.
- (c) Instead of making fun of the Quran and calling it magic and denying the life hereafter, they should accept the invitation of Islam. You will surely, be raised to life again and then you will be disgraced. That will be the Day of your Punishment. All those who committed Shirk will be thrown in hell and no one will be able to help them over there.
- (d) The leaders will tell their followers: “You yourselves were guilty. You rebelled yourselves.” They will quarrel with one another. Both the pagan leaders and their followers will suffer the punishment. These leaders were caught in their pride and used to say: “How can we leave our gods for the sake of a mad poet?”
- (e) Muhammad (pbuh) has come with the Truth. The previous prophets had prophesied about him. Only the sincere followers of Tawheed will be saved from the punishment of hell. There will be blessings of paradise for them.

They will have familiar sustenance, fruits, gardens, crystal-clear drinks, bashful big-eyed virgins in there. They are the people who believed in the life hereafter.

- (f) Those who denied the life hereafter will be in the middle of hell. The success of the hereafter is the real success for which man should strive. There is the tree of "Zaqqoom" in the hell from which the dwellers of Hell will fill their bellies. They will also be given boiling water to drink. They used to follow their forefathers blindly. They did not think about the teachings of prophets. Only the sincere slaves of Allah are saved from the punishment.

2- Verses: 75 to 148: In the second paragraph, nine (9) prophets have been paid homage for their services for propagation of Tawheed.

- (a) **Prophet Nooh: (Verses: 75 to 82)** He followed the invitation of Tawheed. Allah saved him and his followers from a great distress and let them live. He was a righteous believing servant of Allah. The unbelievers were drowned in the water.
- (b) **Prophet Ibraaheem: (Verses: 83 to 100)** He also belonged to the party of prophet Nooh. He had a good heart. He contended his nation and his father in the matter of Tawheed. He had severe hatred for polytheism. He addressed the idols and said: "Why don't you eat? Why don't you speak?" Then he broke them to pieces. Then he said to the people; Allah is your Creator and the Creator of those whose idols you make with your own hands. They decided to put him in the fire but they failed in their planning. He prayed for the righteous offspring, which was accepted.
- (c) **Prophet Ismaa'eel: (Verses: 101 to 111)** He was born as the result of his father's prayers. He was very gentle and patient. His father saw in a dream that he is slaughtering his son. The obedient son said, "Do what you have been ordered. You will find me patient. Thus, both the father and the son surrendered to the Will of Allah. It was a great test, in which they succeeded. Then Allah sent a ram as a substitute for Ismaa'eel's sacrifice and the tradition of sacrifice was made compulsory for the believers who could afford, for the rest of the time.
- (d) **Prophet Is'haaq: (Verses: 112 to 113)** Then prophet Ibraaheem was given the good news of the second son. He also was a righteous person. Allah's

blessings were bestowed on him and his descendants. However, some of them were righteous and some were wrongdoers.

(e) Prophets Moosaa and Haaron: (Verses: 114 to 122) Allah favoured both of them and delivered them from great distress. He gave them a bright Book Torah and guided them to the right way. A group of them followed their way.

(f) Prophet Ilyas: (Verses: 123 to 132) His nation used to worship the idol named Ba'l. He invited them to Tawheed. He contended his nation that they had left Allah, the best of creators and were worshipping the idol. He told them that Allah was their Lord and the Lord of their forefathers but they rejected him.

(g) Prophet Loot: (Verses: 133 to 138) He was one of the prophets. Allah saved him and his followers except his wife. The rest of the people were destroyed. People pass by this ruined town every day. They should learn a lesson from it that how severely Allah punishes the depraved people.

(h) Prophet Yoonus: (Verses: 139 to 148) He was also one of the prophets. He left his town and embarked a boat which was full. His name was drawn in the lot and he was thrown into the sea. He was swallowed by a fish. He deserved reproach; but he confessed his mistake and glorified Allah there, otherwise he would have stayed in the fish's stomach until the Doomsday. The fish threw him on a dry shore. He was exhausted. A gourd plant was caused to grow over him. Then he was sent to a town of a hundred thousand people or more. They believed and were given respite.

3- Verses 149 to 166: The divinity of the angels has been refuted in the third paragraph as well.

It is repetition of the first paragraph in which the evidence of angels was presented for the proof of Tawheed. The Makkan pagans not only called the angels, the daughters of Allah but also established a family relation between Allah and the Jinns. So it was told here that the angels are standing in rows before Allah to serve Him. They glorify Him and confess that He is free of all weaknesses. The Jinns are aware that the evil ones among them will be punished by Allah.

- 4- Verses: 167 to 179: In the fourth paragraph, the messenger (pbuh) of Allah has been given the consolation, the good news and the instructions and the unbelievers have been threatened with the punishment.**

Before the coming of the messenger (pbuh) of Allah, the polytheists used to say that they would have been sincere servants had they received the teachings; but when the prophet (pbuh) came with the teachings, they rejected him. Now, it is the way of Allah that He helps his messengers and his forces are victorious. Under the circumstances, the messenger (pbuh) of Allah should stay away from them for some time. You just wait and let them wait as well. Soon the punishment for which they are in a hurry, will descend in their courtyards. That will be the dreadful morning.

- 5- Verses: 180 to 182: In the fifth and last paragraph, there is explanation of the pure Tawheed, refutation of the Shirk, and appreciation of the services of the messengers (pbut).**

These are the last three verses. No one shares Allah in His Honour and Sovereignty. He is the unblemished One Who is free of all the wrong and negative Attributes ascribed to Him. ﴿سُبْحٰنَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُوْنَ﴾ “Glory be to your Lord, the Lord of Honour, He is free from what they ascribe to Him.” (Verse: 180) All the prophets have been appreciated for their services. There is peace for them. ﴿وَسَلَّمَ عَلٰى الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ﴾ “Peace be on the messengers.” (Verse: 181) The annihilation and destruction will be the fate of those who opposed the messengers. Only Allah Who is running the system of the universe deserves gratitude. ﴿وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ﴾ “And praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.” (Verse: 182) The same topic has been described in verse 59 of soorah An-Naml, but it is not the central subject of that soorah.

Central Subject

The angels are not the daughters of Allah. They are the servants of Allah standing before Him in rows glorifying Him. The Jinns have no share in divinity at all. Man should ponder over the teachings of all the prophets and messengers. The prophets are the chosen, believing, righteous, virtuous and faithful servants of Allah. They have rendered great services regarding the belief of Tawheed and reformation of mankind. For them, there is peace and for their opponents is destruction. So, in following the pure Tawheed is man's salvation.