

Tafseer As-Sa'adi - English

Exegesis of the Quran in English

- [About the word 'Lord'](#)
- [When Jihad Refers to Fighting](#)
- [Publisher's Note](#)
- [001-Surah Al-Fatihah](#)
 - [Verse 01](#)
 - [Verse 2 & 3](#)
 - [Verse 4](#)
 - [Verse 5](#)
- [Motivational Verses](#)
 - [02-18: Deaf, Dumb & Blind](#)

About the word 'Lord'

English

The word "lord" in English has several related meanings. The original meaning is "master" or "ruler," and in this sense, it is often used to refer to human beings: "the lord of the mansion" or "Lord So-and-So" (in the United Kingdom, for example).

The word "Lord," with a capital L, is used in the lexicon of Islam to refer to the One and Only God — Allah. In Islam, there is no ambiguity about the meaning of this word. While it is true that one may occasionally use the word "lord" (whether capitalized or not) to refer to a human being, in Islamic discourse, the reference of this term is always clear from the context. Whereas for Christians, Hindus, and other polytheists, the word "Lord," with a capital L, may refer to Allah, to Jesus, or to some imagined deity, for Muslims, there can be no plurality of meaning. Allah alone is the Lord, and the Lord is Allah — not Jesus, not Rama, not any other being.

When Jihad Refers to Fighting

Although jihad is often translated into English as "holy war," it must be noted that war has never been described as "holy" in any of Islam's primary texts or even early Islamic literature. Linguistically speaking, jihad is an Islamic term that applies to a broad spectrum of activities, ranging from daily striving to meet the day's challenges, to striving against one's desires and self, to the struggle to provide for one's family. Its basic definition is "the act of striving or struggling in the way of Allah." Therefore, jihad is not limited to war; it includes struggling with one's soul, speech, body, and wealth so that the message of Allah reaches all humans willing to receive it.

Islamic scholars have referred to different types of jihad, such as jihad against the self (to understand Islam, act upon it, call others to it, and be patient with the difficulties of making this call), jihad against the Devil (repelling satanic whispers, doubts, and lusts), jihad of the tongue (controlling it, using it to enjoin what is good, forbid what is wrong, spread the correct teachings of Islam, and answer false ideologies), jihad against aggression (with the purpose of protecting Islam and the lives, honor, and property of Muslims), and other types of jihad like jihad against the hypocrites, jihad against oppressors, and jihad against mischief-makers.

Jihad — in the context of fighting — has specific rules and conditions that need to be met before it is initiated. The first rule is that people are not to be fought because of what they believe or to coerce them into accepting Islam. The second rule is to "fight only those who fight you" and never initiate unprovoked aggression (Qur'an 2:190). This means that Muslims are only allowed to fight back rather than initiate fighting; however, "fighting back" includes defending against actual aggression as well as proactively addressing real threats of aggression. In both cases, Muslims are instructed to be prepared and ready to defend their nation before they actually engage in military conflict. There are additional conditions, but the above-mentioned rules are vital for understanding jihad in its broader meaning and placing it in the proper context.

Another condition of the sort of jihad that involves fighting is that it should take place only under an Islamic authority that "raises the banner" for such jihad. It is not in accordance with the Sunnah for any individual or self-appointed group of Muslims to

wage war on behalf of a nation. Instead, Muslims should be united under the single authority of an imam or khaleefah (caliph), except in the case where an individual needs to defend his own family and property, or to help his neighbor do so. This is proven by the example of the early Muslims, as well as texts in the Qur'an and the Sunnah:

"When there comes to them [the hypocrites] a matter related to [public] safety or fear, they spread it about; if only they had referred it to the Messenger and to such of them as are in authority, those among them who are able to think through the matter would have understood it." (Qur'an 4:83)

"Hudhayfah ibn Yaman asked the Prophet (ﷺ): 'What if (the Muslims) have no single leader (and are divided into disputing groups)?' The Prophet (ﷺ) answered: 'If they have no single leader or unified group, then leave all these disputing groups, even if you have to bite on a tree until your death.'" [part of a longer hadith recorded by Bukhari]

There are other conditions for jihad. In general, the rules laid out for war in Islam should be upheld unless there is some legitimate need or strategy when fighting occurs that would necessitate going against those rules. A Muslim should not kill himself or herself, nor kill another Muslim, except by accident (Qur'an 4:92). Women, children, the elderly, and other non-combatants should not be harmed. Land should not be destroyed, nor trees cut down. Corpses should not be mutilated. Islam should not be imposed upon non-believers. Rather, if combatant non-Muslims choose on their own to embrace Islam, even if only as a deceitful trick, it should be accepted by the Muslim leadership, and fighting should stop. Peace should be sought before lives are lost. Treaties and agreements should be upheld. Prisoners should be well-treated. Above all, justice must be done.

"Fight in the path [according to the rules set by Allah] of Allah only those who fight you, but do not commit aggression [transgress limits], Allah does not love aggressors. ...And fight them until persecution is no more, and religion is [freely embraced] for [the individual's faith in] Allah. But if they desist, then let there be no aggression except against transgressors." (Qur'an 2:190, 193)

"Allah does not forbid you from being good, kind, just, and fair to those who have not fought you because of religion, nor driven you from your homeland. Allah loves those who are just. Allah forbids you from giving allegiance to those who have fought you because of religion and have driven you from your homeland, and those who supported your expulsion..." (Qur'an 60:8-9)

In addition, the Muslim nation is encouraged to maintain strong military capabilities to promote justice and to deter acts of war and aggression.

"And make ready for them [their potential aggression] all you can of power, including steeds of war, to deter the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others besides, whom you may not know but whom Allah knows." (Qur'an 8:60)

Publisher's Note

All praise and thanks belong to Allah alone, the One, the Almighty, and the All-Merciful. Blessings and peace be upon Prophet Muhammad, the last of His messengers and prophets, and upon his family, his Companions, and all those who follow in his footsteps until the end of time.

It is quite disheartening that even though many Muslims today recite the Qur'an regularly, its application in their daily lives is almost non-existent. This stems from the fact that the Qur'an needs to be read with translation and explanation so that the context of each verse becomes clear, as well as the different ways it applies to one's daily routine.

This comprehensive ten-volume exegesis of the Qur'an, beautifully penned by Imam Abdur-Rahman Nasir as-Sa'di and translated by Nasiruddin al-Khattab, aims to do just that: make the meanings and explanations of the Qur'an easy to understand for English-language readers and provide them with take-home lessons from the incidents mentioned in it. May Allah accept the efforts of all those who contributed to the production of this book, and may it be acceptable to Him. Ameen.

Muhammad Abdul Mohsin al-Tuwaijri

Managing Director

International Islamic Publishing House

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

001-Surah Al-Fatihah

Verse 01

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, that is, I begin with every name of Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala – Glorified and Exalted is He); this includes all the (beautiful) names of Allah.

Allah – He is the One Who is worshipped, the only One Who deserves to be worshipped, because of the divine attributes He has, which are attributes of perfection.

The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful – These two names indicate that He possesses great mercy that encompasses all things and includes all living beings, and He has decreed it for the pious, the followers of His Prophets and Messengers. Absolute mercy is for them; others have a share of it.

It should be noted that one of the basic principles on which the early generations of the Ummah and its leading scholars are agreed is belief in the names and attributes of Allah and how those attributes are manifested. For example, they believe that He is Most Gracious, Most Merciful; He possesses mercy that is one of His attributes, and this mercy has an impact on His creation. So, all types of blessings are signs of His mercy. The same applies to all of His names. We may say concerning the All-Knowing that He has (unlimited) knowledge, by means of which He knows all things. Similarly, the All-Powerful is possessed of might and has power over all things.

Glossary (Hinglish/urdu)

- **Gracious** – Wo jo har kisi par meherbaan aur bahut dayalu hai
 - Maths teacher bahut jyada Gracious hai, or wo har students ko pyar se samjhati hai or sare doubts clear karti hai.
- **Merciful** – Bahut jyada rehem karne wala aur neimatein ataa karne wala

- Har momin ko unka Taqwa ikhtiyar karna chahiye kyuki hamare Rabb bahut merciful hai.
- **Glorified** – Wo sabse Aala hai aur saari taarifei sirf unhi ke liye.
 - Allah sabko palne wale hai, sari neimatein unhi ki hai jo aur koi nhi kar sakta wo akele saari taarifon ke layak hai glorified hai.
- **Exalted** – Wo jo sabse uncha hai, Aala hai
 - Allah ka darja sabse exalted hai.
- **Divine** – Wo jo akela har nuqs se paak se, aur sabse jyada taqatwar hai.
 - Qur'an Allah ki divine kitab hai, jo hidayat aur rehmat ka zariya hai.
- **Attributes** – sifatein, kisi chij ko karne ka gunn
 - Allah ka har naam unki attributes (sifatein) batati hai.
- **Possesses** – kisi ke pas kuch hona
 - Allah ne bahut badi rehmat possess ki hui hai.
- **Encompasses** –kisi chij ko apne andar samaye rakhne wala
 - Allah ne is puri kaaenat ko ek bahut badi rehmat ke sath apne andar encompass kiya hua hai.
- **Decreed** –Kisi chij ka aadesh dena
 - Allah ki rehmat specific taur par momino ke liye hai jo unka taqwa ikhtiyar karte hai aur ye Allah ne decreed kiya hai.
- **Pious** – wo jo Imaan wale hai aur Allah ka taqwa ikhtiyar karte hai
 - Har pious Allah ki ibadat karta hai aur unke deen ke raste me chalta hai.
- **Absolute** –Wo jo bilkul pure hai, kisi se mila hua nhi hai aur bilkul perfect hai
 - Allah ki rehmat absolute hai sacche Imaan walo ke liye.
- **Principles** – kisi tarah ka rule
 - unke banaye principles ke according chalna afzal hai.
- **Generations** –pidhiyaan
 - Allah ne alag alag generations pe alag alag nabiyon ko bheja sahi rasta banane ke liye.
- **Leading** –
 -
- **Scholars** –
 -
- **Manifested** –
 -
- **Impact** –
 -
- **Creation** –
 -
- **Applies** –
 -

- **Concerning** –

-

- **Similarly** –

-

- **Might** –

-

Verse 2 & 3

Arabic	Transliteration	Translation
نِيَمْلَعْلِلْ رَبَّهِ لِّلْ دِّمْحِلْ	Alhamdulillahi Rabbil-Aalameen	Praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds
مِيْحِرْلِلْ نَمَّحِرْلِلْ	Ar-Rahmaan-ir-Raheem	The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Alhamdulillah - Praise be to God.

This refers to praising God for the **attributes** of **perfection** and for His actions that are based on **generosity** and **justice**. So to Him be perfect praise in all ways.

Rabbil-Aalameen - The Lord of the worlds

The Lord is the One Who **sustains** all **creatures** - which refers to all beings other than God - because He created them, **granted** them everything that they need and **bestowed** great **blessings** upon them; if they were **deprived** of those blessings they would not be able to **survive**, for whatever blessings they enjoy come from Him.

He sustains His creation in two ways, **general** and **specific**. In general **terms**, this refers to His creation of all creatures, His granting of **provision** to them and His **guiding** them to that which is in their **best interests**, which enables them to survive in this world.

In specific terms, it refers to His **cherishing** of His close friends, by means of **instilling faith** in their hearts, guiding them to it, perfecting it for them and **warding** off from them **distractions** and **obstacles** that come between them and faith. In real terms, this means guiding them to everything that is good and protecting them from everything that is bad. **Perhaps** it is for this reason that most of the **supplications** of the Prophets used the word Lord (Rabb), since all their requests and needs came under His special cherishing.

The phrase "the Lord of the worlds" indicates that He alone has the power to create, and He alone controls His creation, bestows blessings and is completely independent of means, whilst all of creation is dependent upon Him in all respects.

Verse 4

نَّيِّدُكُمْ يَُوْمَ الدِّينِ ۚ

Master of the Day of Judgement.

The Master (Malik) is the one who possesses the attributes of sovereignty, one of the implications of which is that He enjoins and forbids, rewards and punishes, and controls His subjects in all ways. This sovereignty is connected to the Day of Judgement, which is the Day of Resurrection, the day on which people will be judged on the basis of their deeds, both good and bad. On that day, His perfect sovereignty, justice and wisdom will become completely clear to His creation, and they will realize that created beings have no sovereignty at all. On that day, kings and subjects, slaves and free, will all be equal and will submit fully to His might, awaiting the reckoning, hoping for His reward and fearing His punishment. Hence this day is singled out for mention; otherwise, He is the Master of the Day of Judgement and of all other days.

Verse 5

نُيَعِّتُكَ أَيُّهَا الْوَدُّعَنَ كَيْفَ

You [alone] we worship, and You [alone] we ask for help

that is, we single out You alone to worship and ask for help. Putting the object at the beginning of the sentence conveys the meaning of exclusivity. In other words: we worship You, and we do not worship anyone other than You; we ask You for help and we do not ask anyone other than You for help.

Worship is mentioned before seeking help by way of mentioning what is general before what is specific, and also to give precedence to Allah's dues over those of His slaves.

“Worship” (‘ibadah) refers to everything that Allah loves and is pleased with of actions and words, both outward and inward. “Seeking help” refers to relying upon Allah (4s) when seeking to attain what is beneficial and ward off what is harmful, whilst trusting that one will attain that.

Worshipping Allah and seeking His help is the means of attaining eternal happiness and salvation from all evils; there is no other way of attaining salvation apart from doing these two things. True worship can only be that which is learned from the Messenger of Allah (salla Allahu ‘alayhi wa sallam - blessings and peace be upon him) and done with the intention of seeking the pleasure of Allah. If it includes these two things, then it is worship. Seeking help is mentioned after worship, even though it is a part of worship, because in offering all types of worship the individual needs the help of Allah (4«); if Allah does not help him, he will not attain what he wants to of fulfilling commands and heeding prohibitions.

Motivational Verses

02-18: Deaf, Dumb & Blind

١٨ نُوْعِجْرِي آلُ مُهَفٍّ يَمُوعٌ مُكْتَبٌ مُصٍّ

Deaf, dumb, and blind, they will not return (to the path).

مُصٍّ

مُصٍّ embodies a spiritual deafness, where the heart and mind become closed off from the divine truth. It's not simply the absence of physical hearing, but a **willful resistance** to the guidance that surrounds them. This deafness goes beyond the senses; it represents a refusal to listen to the whispers of wisdom and righteousness, even when they are clear and present. It is the **inability to hear the call of the divine**, not because of physical limitations, but because of a heart that is hardened and a soul that is detached from its source of truth. The deafness in this sense is not passive—it is a **choice to remain unresponsive**, to block out the light of guidance in favor of darkness. The true essence of مُصٍّ in this context lies in the **rejection of the divine invitation**, where a person's inner faculties are shut off from perceiving the profound messages meant to awaken them.

مُكْتَبٌ

مُكْتَبٌ symbolizes not just the absence of speech, but a profound **silence of the soul**, a refusal to express the truth or respond to divine guidance. It represents an inner **stifling of the voice**, where one may have the capacity to speak but chooses not to, either out of fear, stubbornness, or indifference. This metaphorical muteness is not merely the inability to speak—it signifies a **spiritual blockage**, where the heart refuses to articulate what is right or to proclaim the truth. It is as if the individual, despite having the tools for communication, is **mute in their response to the divine call**, remaining silent in the face of clarity and wisdom. This silence, in its essence, is a **spiritual withdrawal**, a refusal to express or act upon the guidance

provided, leaving the soul trapped in stillness, unable to speak the words of truth and righteousness. It can describe someone who is literally unable to speak or someone who, despite having a voice, remains silent in situations that demand speech. In deeper contexts, كُتُب can symbolize ignorance, fear, or submission—when silence is not just a condition, but a choice or an imposed state.



كُتُب conveys a deep metaphorical blindness, a state where the heart and soul are veiled from the light of truth. It is not merely the loss of physical sight but the **inability or unwillingness to perceive divine guidance** and wisdom, even when it is right before one's eyes. This blindness represents a **spiritual darkness**, where a person may see the world with their eyes but is blind to the deeper truths and realities that surround them. It is a state of being lost, not in the absence of light, but in a refusal to acknowledge it. The essence of كُتُب is an internal barrier, where the soul is **unable to recognize the truth**, trapped in ignorance and oblivion. It is as though the light of guidance shines brightly, but the heart remains closed, rejecting the illumination that could lead it to clarity. It represents not only the literal inability to see but also a deeper blindness of the heart and mind, where truth is ignored, and clarity is lost. It can symbolize ignorance, stubbornness, or being lost in confusion, where someone **refuses** to perceive what is right in front of them. It is not just darkness but an inability—or unwillingness—to find the light.