

Al-Buruj [The Castles] **Makkan Period**

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

[1] By the heaven with its impregnable castles;¹

[2] by the Promised Day,

[3] and by the witness and what is witnessed:²

[4] the people of the pit were destroyed

[5] with fire abounding in fuel,

[6] while they sat around it,

[7] and were witnessing what they did to the believers.³

[8] Against these they had no grudge except that they believed in Allah, the Most Mighty, the Most Praiseworthy,

[9] to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. Allah witnesses everything.

1. The expression "impregnable castles" refers to the massive stars and planets of the heavens.

2. The word "witness" here refers to the person who will be present on the Day of Resurrection to observe it. As for the expression "what is witnessed," it signifies the Resurrection itself whose harrowing scenes will be witnessed by all.

3. The "people of the pit" were those who had stuffed pits with believers and then set them ablaze, intensely enjoying this carnival. To say that the "people of the pit were destroyed" amounts to saying that they invited God's curse upon themselves and were overtaken by His chastisement.

[10] Surely those who tormented the believing men and the believing women and then did not repent, theirs shall be the chastisement of Hell, and theirs shall be the chastisement of burning.

[11] As for those who believed and acted righteously, theirs shall be Gardens beneath which rivers flow. That is the great triumph.

[12] Stern indeed is your Lord's punishment.

[13] He it is Who creates for the first time and He it is Who will create again,

[14] and He is the Ever Forgiving, the Most Loving

[15] - the Lord of the Glorious Throne,

[16] the Executor of what He wills.

[17] Has the story of the armies reached you,

[18] the armies of Pharaoh and Thamud?

[19] The unbelievers are indeed engaged in denying it, calling it a lie,

[20] although Allah surrounds them.

[21] Nay; but this is a glorious Qur'an,

[22] inscribed on a well-guarded Tablet.⁴

4. This signifies that the Qur'an's writ is bound to come about for it is inscribed on God's Well-Guarded Tablet and hence cannot be subjected to alteration.