

Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī

Vol. 8

*Sūrat al-Anfāl* – Booty

*Sūrat at-Tawbah* – Repentance

& *Sūrah Yūnus* – Jonah



# Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī

The General Judgments of the Qur'ān  
and Clarification of what it contains  
of the *Sunnah* and *Āyahs* of Discrimination

Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abī Bakr  
ibn Farḥ al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī al-Andalusī al-Qurṭubī

## Vol. 8

*Sūrat al-Anfāl* – Booty  
*Sūrat at-Tawbah* – Repentance  
& *Sūrah Yūnus* – Jonah

translated by

Aisha Bewley

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## Table of Transliterations

ء	'	ض	ḍ
ا	a	ط	ṭ
ب	b	ظ	ẓ
ت	t	ع	'
ث	th	غ	gh
ج	j	ف	f
ح	ḥ	ق	q
خ	kh	ك	k
د	d	ل	l
ذ	dh	م	m
ر	r	ن	n
ز	z	ه	h
س	s	و	w
ش	sh	ي	y
ص	ṣ		

### Long vowel

ا	ā
و	ū
ي	ī
أَؤ	aw
أَيَّ	ay

### Short vowel

َ	a [ <i>fatḥah</i> ]
ُ	u [ <i>dammah</i> ]
ِ	i [ <i>kasrah</i> ]

## Translator's note

The Arabic for the *āyats* is from the Algerian State edition of the *riwāyah* of Imam Warsh from the *qirā'ah* of Imam Nāfi' of Madīnah, whose recitation is one of the ten *mutawātir* recitations that are mass-transmitted from the time of the Prophet ﷺ.

There are minor omissions in the text. Some poems have been omitted which the author quotes to illustrate a point of grammatical usage or as an example of orthography or the usage of a word, often a derivative of the root of the word used in the *āyah*, but not the actual word used. Often it is difficult to convey the sense in English. Occasionally the author explores a grammatical matter or a tangential issue, and some of these may have been shortened. English grammatical terms used to translate Arabic grammatical terms do not have exactly the same meaning, sometimes rendering a precise translation of them problematic and often obscure.

The end of a *juz'* may vary by an *āyah* or two in order to preserve relevant passages.





## 8. SŪRAT AL-ANFĀL – BOOTY

It is Madinan and about Badr according to al-Ḥasan, ‘Ikrimah, Jābir and ‘Aṭā’. Ibn ‘Abbās said that it is Madinan except for seven *āyahs* from *āyah* 30 to *āyah* 37.

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَنْفَالِ قُلِ الْأَنْفَالُ لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ فَأَتَقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَصْلِحُوا ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ وَأَطِيعُوا  
اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١﴾

**1 They will ask you about booty. Say: ‘Booty belongs to Allah and the Messenger. So have *taqwā* of Allah and put things right between you. Obey Allah and His Messenger if you are believers.’**

‘Ubādah ibn aṣ-Ṣamit related: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ went out to Badr and confronted the enemy. When Allah routed them, a group of the Muslims pursued them to kill them, another group surrounded the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and yet another group reached the enemy camp and looted it. When Allah dispersed the enemy, and those who went after them returned, they said, “We should have the booty. We are the ones who went after the enemy and Allah has negated them and defeated them.” Those who surrounded the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “You have no more entitlement to it than us. We should have it. We surrounded the Messenger of Allah ﷺ so that the enemy could not attack him.” Those who actually got to the army and booty said, “You are no more entitled to it than us. It should be ours. We came upon it and impounded it.” So Allah revealed this *āyah* and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ divided it immediately between them.

Abū ‘Umar said that the people who have knowledge of the Arabic language say that *istalwaw* means to surround. The verb is used for death overcoming people. ‘He divided it immediately’ means quickly. They said that *fuwāq* is the period between two milkings of a she-camel. It is pronounced as *fuwāq* or *fawāq*. This was before the revelation of: ‘*Know that when you take any booty, a fifth of it belongs to Allah...*’ (8:41) Scholars say that it means that Allah and the Messenger have judgment regarding it and do with it what will bring one close to Allah.

Muḥammad ibn Iṣḥāq related from ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥārith and others of our companions from Sulaymān ibn Mūsā al-Ashdaq from Makḥūl that Abū

Umāmah al-Bāhilī said, ‘I asked ‘Ubādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit about this *āyah* and he said, “It was revealed about us, the people of Badr, when we disagreed about the booty and our behaviour was poor. So Allah took it from our hands and gave it to the Messenger and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ divided it equally.” That was *taqwā* of Allah, obeying the Messenger and preventing division.

It is related in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* that Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqās said, ‘The Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ took an immense amount of booty. There was a sword in it. I took it to the Prophet ﷺ and said, “Give me this sword as booty. You know my state.” He said, “Take it back to where you took it from.” I went until I was about to throw it in the common booty. My soul got at me and I returned to him and said, “Give it to me.” He said to me in a fierce voice, “Take it back to where you took it from.” I went until I was about to throw it in the common booty. My soul got at me again and I returned to him and said, “Give it to me.” He said to me in a fierce voice, “Take it back to where you took it from.” Then Allah revealed: “*They will ask you about booty.*” This is the wording of Muslim, and there are many variants about it. We have said enough. Allah gives success in guidance.

The singular of booty (*anfāl*) is *nafl*. It is said:

*Tawqā* of our Lord is the best booty.

My slowness and haste is by the permission of Allah.

It is the best of spoils.

*Nafl* means an oath and an example of it is found in the *ḥadīth*: ‘The Jews are free of you by fifty oaths (*nafl*).’ *Nafl* also means denial as in the *ḥadīth*: “He denied [paternity of] her child.’ *Nafl* also means a particular plant (trefoil). *Nafl* is also doing more than the obligatory: the supererogatory. A grandchild is called *nāfilah* because it he is an addition to the child. Spoils are *nāfilah* because they are an addition to what Allah has made lawful for this Community which was unlawful for others. The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘I was preferred over the Prophets by six.’ One of them was: ‘Spoils were made lawful for me.’ *Anfāl* are the actual spoils. ‘Antarah said:

When the fight is hot, we are quenched by the canal

And we are abstinent in the division of the spoils (*anfāl*).

Scholars have four different views about what constitutes booty. The first is that it is what is wrested from the unbelievers for the Muslims or taken without fighting. The second is that it is the fifth (*khums*). The third is that it is a fifth of the fifth. The fourth is that it is initial spoils about which the ruler acts as he sees fit.

The position of Mālik is that booty is in the gift of the ruler from the fifth according to how he sees fit. There is no booty in the other four-fifths. He did not think that booty came from the initial spoils themselves because the people who receive it are specified. They are those who obtain it on mounts. The fifth is returned and divided according to the discretion of the ruler. The people who receive it are not specified. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘I only have a fifth of the spoils Allah gives you and that fifth is returned to you.’ After this, no one has a right to the booty. It is part of the right of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. It is a fifth. This is known in his school. It is related that he said, ‘That is from the fifth of the fifth.’ That is the position of Ibn al-Musayyab, ash-Shāfi‘ī and Abū Ḥanīfah.

The reason for the disagreement is the *ḥadīth* of Ibn ‘Umar which Mālik related: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent an expedition towards Najd and they plundered many camels, their shares being eleven or twelve camels each. They were given them camel by camel.’ That is how Mālik related it with some uncertainty in the transmission from Yaḥyā. A group of the transmitters of the *Muwatṭā’* corroborate that except for al-Walīd ibn Muslim. He related it from Mālik from Nāfi‘ from Ibn ‘Umar. He said in it: ‘Their shares were twelve camels and they were given them camel by camel.’ He had no uncertainty.

Al-Walīd ibn Muslim and al-Ḥakam ibn Nāfi‘ mentioned from Shu‘ayb ibn Abī Ḥamzah from Nāfi‘ that Ibn ‘Umar said, ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent us in an expedition towards Najd...’ Al-Walīd’s version has ‘consisting of four thousand’ and ‘an expedition was sent out from the army.’ Al-Walīd’s version has: ‘I was one of those who went out in it, and the shares of the army were twelve camels each, and the people on the expedition got a camel each [in addition] and so their shares were thirteen camels.’ Abū Dāwūd mentioned it.

This is used as evidence by those who say that booty is part of the fifth. They explain that if this expedition had been ten people, for instance, and they had taken 150 as booty, the fifth, which is 30, would have been taken from it and they would have had 120. That divided between ten would be twelve camels each. Then the people would be given from the fifth a camel each because a fifth of thirty does not have eleven camels. When you know what ten have, you know what a hundred or a thousand or more have.

Those who say that it is a fifth of the fifth use as evidence that it is permitted for there to be clothes and goods which were sold besides the camels and so those who did not get a camel were given the value of a camel from those goods. This is supported by what Muslim related of this *ḥadīth* by various paths, ‘We got camels and booty.’

Muḥammad ibn Ishāq said about this *ḥadīth* that the leader gave them booty before the distribution. This demands that booty is from the initial spoils which differs from Mālik's position. The position of those with a different position is more appropriate because they are *huffāz*, as Abū 'Umar said. Makḥūl and al-Awzā'ī said, 'More than a third is not given as booty.' That is the position of the majority of scholars. Al-Awzā'ī said, 'If they are given more, it is given to them and made part of the fifth.' Ash-Shāfi'ī said, 'There is no limit in the fifth which the leader can exceed.'

The *ḥadīth* of Ibn 'Umar indicates what al-Walīd and al-Ḥakam mentioned from Shu'ayb from Nāfi' that when an expedition goes out from the army and gets the booty, the army share in it. This is an issue whose ruling is not mentioned in other than the *ḥadīth* of Shu'ayb from Nāfi'. Scholars do not disagree about it. Praise belongs to Allah.

Scholars disagree about when the leader says before the fight, 'Whoever destroys that fortress will receive such-and-such. Whoever reaches that spot will receive such-and-such. Whoever brings a head will receive such-and-such. Whoever brings a captive will receive such-and-such.' It is related that Mālik disliked it and said, 'This is fighting for this world.' He did not permit it. Ath-Thawrī said that it is permitted and there is nothing wrong with it. This possibility is taken from the *ḥadīth* of Ibn 'Abbās who said, 'In the Battle of Badr, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever has killed someone has such-and-such and whoever takes a prisoner will have such-and-such."'

'Ikrimah reported from the Prophet ﷺ: 'Whoever does such-and-such and comes to such-and-such place, will have such-and-such.' The young men went quickly and the old men stood firm. When there was victory, the young men came asking for what he had allotted them and the old men said, 'Do not take it leaving us out. We were your support.' Allah revealed, '*Put things right between you*'" Ismā'īl ibn Ishāq mentioned it. Ath-Thawrī said, 'That is permitted and there is nothing wrong with it.'

It is related that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said to Jarīr ibn 'Abdullāh al-Bajalī when he came to him with his people wanting to go to Syria, 'Will you go to Kufa if you have a third of every land grant and captives after the fifth has been taken?' A group of the *fukahā'* said that: al-Awzā'ī, Makḥūl, Ibn Ḥaywah and others. They thought that the fifth was from the entire spoils (*ghanīmah*) and that booty (*nafl*) was after the fifth. Then the spoils were shared between the people of the army. Ishāq, Aḥmad and Abū 'Ubayd said that. Abū 'Ubayd said, 'People today believe that there is no booty from the spoils until the fifth has been taken.' Mālik said,

‘It is not permitted for the leader to say to an expedition, “You can have a third of what you take.”’ Saḥnūn said, ‘When a leader says to an expedition, “You can have what you take. You do not have to pay the fifth on it,” that is not permitted. If it occurs, what was taken has to be returned because this ruling is aberrant and not permitted or carried out.’

Mālik recommended that the leader only take the fifth from what is openly visible, such as turbans, horses and swords. Some scholars forbade the ruler to give booty in the form of gold, silver, pearls and the like. Some said that it is permitted in any form and that is sound based on the statement of ‘Umar and what is demanded by the āyah. Allah knows best.

**Have *taqwā* of Allah and put things right between you. Obey Allah and His Messenger if you are believers.’**

Allah commands *taqwā* and putting things right. It means: ‘Collaborate on the command of Allah in making the supplication, “O Allah, heal division!”’ It means the state by which there is gatheredness. This indicates that there is disagreement between people or that they incline to quarrelling with one another as is stated in the *ḥadīth*. *Taqwā* has already been discussed (2:2). It means: ‘Have *taqwā* of Allah in respect of your words and deeds and put things right between you.’ ‘Obey Allah and His Messenger’ regarding the matter of spoils and the like and the phrase ‘if you are believers’ indicates that the path of the believers is to obey what has been commanded. It is said that the conjunction ‘in – if’ here means ‘when’.

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَّتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ  
 زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيَمْسُرُونَ زَكَاةَهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾  
 أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا لَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

**2-4 The believers are those whose hearts tremble when Allah is mentioned, whose faith is increased when His Signs are recited to them, and who put their trust in their Lord; those who establish the prayer and give of what We have provided for them. They are in truth the believers. They have high ranks with their Lord and forgiveness and generous provision.**

Scholars say that this āyah is encouragement to cling to obedience to the Messenger ﷺ in respect of what he commands regarding dividing up the booty. *Wajal* is fear. In the present tense of the verb there are four dialectical forms: