

## The Muqaddam and the Mu'akhkhar.

This, the first of two sections, deals with verses that remain ambiguous on face value. But knowing that they belong to the category known as 'advancing and retarding' (*l-taqdim and l-ta'khir*) brings clarity to them. Though some of the pious ancestors have made passing references to them, such verses in fact, ought to have been dealt with exclusively in a separate work. Ibn Abū Ḥātim thus quotes Qatāda with reference to the verse, "Wa lā tu`jibuka amwāluhum wa lā aulāduhum; innamā yurīdu Allahu li yu`adhdhibahum fi al-hayāt al-duniya."(9:85)<sup>1</sup> as saying: "This verse belongs to the genre of *taqdim*, and should be understood as follows: "*fa lā tu`jibuka amwāluhum wa la aulāduhum fi al-hayāt al-duniya; innamā yurīdu Allahu li yu`adhdhibahum biha fi al-`ākhira.*"<sup>2</sup>

He also considers the verse, "*wa laulā kalimatun sabaqat min rabbika lakāna lizāman wa ajalun musamma.*"<sup>3</sup> (129:20) as a case of *tadīm*. He reconstructs it thus: "*wa laula kalimatun sabaqat min rabbika wa ajalun musamma lakāna lizāma.*"<sup>4</sup>

And he quotes Mujāhid with regard to the verse, "*anzala `alā `abdihī al-kitāb wa lam yaj`al lahū iwaja qayyiman...*"<sup>5</sup> (1:18) as saying that it too, belongs to the category of *taqdim* and *ta'khir* and must be understood as: *anzala `alā `abdihī al-kitāb qayyiman wa lam yaj`al*

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<sup>1</sup>"Let not their wealth or their offspring enthrall you; God but wants to chastise them thereby in this worldly life."(55:9)

<sup>2</sup>"Let not the wealth and the offspring that they possess in *the life of this world* enthrall you; God but wants to chastise them thereby in the hereafter."

<sup>3</sup>"Now, but for a decree that had been issued by your Sustainer *and a term set (by Him)* (their punishment) would have occurred (instantly)."

<sup>4</sup>"Now, but for a decree that had already been issued it would have occurred (instantly)."

<sup>5</sup>"(He) sent down this divine scripture upon his servant without causing it to be crooked; (it is thus) unerringly straight."

*lahū`iwaja.*<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>(He) it is Who revealed to his servant this divine scripture which is without errors and without crookedness.

And he quotes Qatāda as saying that the verse "*innī mutawaffīka wa rāfi`uka ilayya,*"<sup>7</sup>(55:3) also belongs to the said category and must be understood thus: "*innī rāfi`uka ilayya wa mutawaffīka.*"<sup>8</sup>

And he quotes `Ikrima as saying that the verse: "*lahum `adhābun shadīdun bimā nasū yaum al-hisāb,*"<sup>9</sup> (26:38) also belongs to the said category, and must be understood thus: "*Lahum yaum al-hisāb `adhābun shadīdun bimā nasū.*"<sup>10</sup>

And Ibn Jarīr quotes Ibn Zayd as saying that the verse "wa laula fadl Allah `alaikum wa rahmatuhu la ittaba`tum al-shaitāna illā qalīlan"<sup>11</sup> (83:4) also belongs to the said category and must be interpreted as "*adhā`ū bihī illa qalīlan minhum; wa laulā fadl Allah `alaikum wa rahmatuhū lam yanju qalīlun wa la kathīr*"<sup>12</sup>

And he quotes Ibn `Abbās as saying that the verse: "*Fa qālū arinā Allah jahratan.*"<sup>13</sup> (153:4), also belongs to the said category. Even when they see God, in person, they still say loudly: '*Arinā Allah!*' Ibn Jarir adds that it was their question that was put loudly.

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<sup>7</sup>I will certainly cause you to die and raise you up to me (thereafter).

<sup>8</sup>I will certainly raise you up to me by causing you to die.

<sup>9</sup>For them is a grievous punishment for having forgotten the Day of Reckoning.

<sup>10</sup>For them, on the day of Reckoning, is a grievous punishment for having forgotten.

<sup>11</sup>And but for God's bounty and mercy upon you, all but a few among you would certainly have obeyed Satan.

<sup>12</sup>All but a few of (the weak in faith have a tendency) to circulate (secret matters of the community). And but for the bounty and the mercy of God upon you none among them whatsoever would be saved.

<sup>13</sup> They said, 'Show us God face to face!'

The same is true for the verse: "Wa idh qatalum nafsan fa iddāra'tum fihā."<sup>14</sup><sup>15</sup> Baghawī argues that this particular verse, its actual location in recitation notwithstanding, is in fact, the opening statement of this parable. Al-Wāhidī maintains that though the controversy about the identity of the murderer is put at the end, it in fact occurred before the incident of the slaughter of the cow. This was because the audience, when told by God: "God commands you. . ." realized that the cow was being slaughtered only to pin-point the true killer who till then, had been hidden from them. When it was clear that they comprehended this, God went on to say: "Recall your having slain a man and having cast blame for this on each other. . ." (2:72) , and your having asked Moses for a solution, and being told: "God orders you to slaughter a cow."

Another example is the verse: "afa ra`ayta man ittakhadha ilāhahū hawāhu"<sup>16</sup> (23:45). If rearranged correctly (in terms of syntax ) the verse would read "*hawāhu ilāhahu*", because one who takes his God as his object of desire can surely not be rebuked. In recognition of this interpretation, the second accusative in the verse (*ilāhahu*) was put in front.

And if the term *aḥwā* in the verse, "Akhraja al-mar`ā faja`alahū guthā`an ahwā"<sup>17</sup> (4:87) means green, it would serve as an attribute of the word *al-mar`a*, and together they would read: "He produces them green". It is put at the end however, to maintain the meter.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, the term *sūd* in the verse "*Gharābīb sūd*"<sup>19</sup> (27:35) would normally be placed in front, for *ghirbīb* means pitch black.

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<sup>14</sup>(O, Children of Israel) recall your having slain an (innocent) human being and having cast the blame of this crime upon each other.

<sup>15</sup>I-Hussain b. Mas`ud Baghawī, *Ma`Alim 'l-Tanzil* (Beirut: Dar 'l-Ma`rifa, 1985).

<sup>16</sup>Have you focused on oen who takes, as his deity, his own desires.

<sup>17</sup>He who brings forth lush verdure, causing it thereafter to turn to swarthy stubble.

<sup>18</sup>(He who) brings forth verdure that is lush, and thereafter, causes it to become swarthy stubble.

<sup>19</sup>(And mountains that are) raven-black. The point here is that the noun in this phrase, *sūd* would normally placed before its adjective, *gharābīb*.

As for the verse, "Fa daḥikat fa bashsharnāha"<sup>20</sup> (71:11) it should be understood as "*Fa bashsharnāha fa dahikat.*"<sup>21</sup>

And only if the words "*hamma bihā*" in the verse "*Wa laqad hammat bihī wa hamma bihā laulā an r'ā burhān rabbihī*"(24:12)<sup>22</sup> are put at the end would Joseph be absolved of lustful intent.

The second category consists of verses where *taqdīm* and *ta'khīr* occur but with no apparent ambiguities. In his work *l-Muqaddima Fī Sirr l-Fādl l-Muqaddima* Shams 'l-Dīn b. 'l-Sā'igh quotes the most popular view that such constructions serve to accentuate particular aspects of these verses. Similarly, Sībawayh in his work, says that, in broad terms, *taqdīm* occurs where aspects of a verse need special mention. He also indicated a desire to further explain these aspects. This in general then, is the wisdom behind such constructions. As for their details, I have had made clear ten kinds of *taqdīm* and *ta'khīr* verses as they appear in the Qur'an. These are:

1. *l-Tabarruk*: to gain blessings, by advancing, for example, the name of God Almighty in matters that are significant. An example is the verse, "Shahida Allah annahū lā ilāha illā huwa wa al-malā'ikatu wa 'ulu al-'ilmi."(18:3)<sup>23</sup> and the verse, "Wa i`lamū annamā ghanimtum min shay' fa anna li Allāhi khumsuhū wa li al-rasūl."(41:8)<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>(And his wife) laughed, and We gave her glad tidings.

<sup>21</sup>We gave her glad tidings, and she laughed,

<sup>22</sup>And indeed she desired him, and he did her; (and he would have succumbed to her invitation) had he not witnessed evidence from his Lord.

<sup>23</sup>God Himself bears witness, as do the angels, as well as those endowed with knowledge, that there is no deity except Him.

<sup>24</sup>Know that whatever booty you acquire one-fifth thereof belongs to God and His apostle.

2. *Al-Ta`zīm*: to glorify, as in the following verses, "Wa man yuṭī`i Allah wa al-rasūl"(13:4) <sup>25</sup>;  
"Inna Allah wa malā`ikatahu yusallūna `alā al-nabiyy." (56:33)<sup>26</sup>, and, "Wa Allahu wa rasūluhū  
ahaqqu an yurđūhu."(62:9)<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>And whosoever obeys God and His messenger . . .

<sup>26</sup>God, along with His angels are blessing the Prophet.

<sup>27</sup>Whilst it is God and His Prophet whose pleasure they ought to seek.

3. *Al-Tashrīf*: to honor, by putting the male before the female, in the verse: "Inna al-muslimīna wa al-muslimāti..."(35:33)<sup>28</sup>; or the freedman over the slave: "'l-ḥurr bi al-ḥurr wa al-`abd bi al-`abd wa al-'unthā bi al-'unthā.(178:2)<sup>29</sup>, or the living over the dead: "yukhriju 'l-ḥayya min 'l-mayyit"(6:95)<sup>30</sup> and "Wa mā yastawī al-āḥyā' wa lā al-amwāt".(22:35)<sup>31</sup>; or horses over other animals: "Wa al-Khaila wa al-bighāla wa al-ḥamīra lī tarkabūhā".(8:16)<sup>32</sup>; or hearing over seeing: "wa `alā sam`ihim wa `alā absārihim"(2:7)<sup>33</sup>, and "Inna al-sam`a wa al-basara wa al-fu'āda"(36:17)<sup>34</sup> and, "In akhadha Allāh sam`akum wa absārakum" (6:46) Ibn `Atiyya quotes Al-Naqqāsh as saying, that in light of the verse "*In akhadha Allahu sam`akum wa absārakum*", God would seem to favor hearing over seeing.(36:17)<sup>35</sup> It is for this reason that in describing Himself in the verse: "*samī' alīm*" hearing comes first. Other examples are: favoring Muhammad (s) over Noah (a.s.) and those with him as in the verse: "Wa idh akhadhnā min al-nabiyyīna mīthāqahum wa minka wa min Nūh"(7:33)<sup>36</sup>; favoring the apostles over the prophets in the verse: "Min rasūl wa lā nabiyyin"(52:22)<sup>37</sup>; favoring the *muhajirs* over the

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<sup>28</sup>Verily, the Muslim male and the Muslim female ...

<sup>29</sup>The free for the free, the slave for the slave, and the woman for the woman.

<sup>30</sup>"He extracts the living from the dead."

<sup>31</sup>The living and the dead are certainly not equal.

<sup>32</sup>(And He has created) horses, mules and asses for you to ride.

<sup>33</sup>"And over their hearing, and over their seeing."

<sup>34</sup>Verily, the hearing, the sight, and the heart will be called upon to account.

<sup>35</sup>(What if God) took away your hearing and your sight.!

<sup>36</sup>And remember that We did take a solemn pledge from the Prophets, and from you, and from Noah.

<sup>37</sup>(Whenever We despatched) any apostle or prophet. . .

*ansār* in the verse: "Wa al-sābiquna al-awwalūna min al-muhājirīna wa al-ansār"(100:9)<sup>38</sup>; and wherever mentioned in the Quran, favoring humans over the *jinn*. In the chapter on women, the Quran favors the Prophets, then those who confirmed the truth, then the martyrs, and then the righteous ones. It also favors Ishmael over Isaac because he is older, and because the Prophet Muhammad (s) is of his progeny. Although Moses appears generally before Aron--because of having spoken directly to God--in the chapter *Tāhā*, Aron is mentioned first in keeping with the meter. Also, Gabriel is mentioned before Michael because of his superiority. Generally human beings are mentioned before animals and inanimate objects as in the verse: "Matā`an lakum wa li an`āmikum"(32:80)<sup>39</sup> and: "Yusabbihu lahū man fi al-samāwāti wa al-ard wa al-tayr sāffāt"(41:24)<sup>40</sup>. But in the verse "Ta`kulu minhu an`āmuhum wa anfusuhum"(27:32)<sup>41</sup> animals are mentioned before humans because animal feed appears in the beginning of the verse. The same however, is not the case for the aforementioned verse 32:80: the word *lakum* therein is meant to conform to the prior verse "Fal yandhur al-insān ilā ta`āmihī"(25:80)<sup>42</sup> Also, believers are always mentioned before non-believers, the righteous (*ashāb al-yamīn*) before the wicked (*ashāb al-shimāl*), the skies before the earth, and the sun before the moon, except in the verse: "khalāqa sab`a samāwātin tibāqa wa ja`ala al-qamara fihinna nuran wa ja`ala al-shamsa sirājā"(3:67)<sup>43</sup>. Some explain this as essential for the meter in the verse, and others that the

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<sup>38</sup>(God is pleased with) those first and foremost (of Muslims) from among the migrants (of Mecca as well as their) hosts (in Medina).

<sup>39</sup>A delight for you as well as for your animals.

<sup>40</sup>Everyone in heaven and on earth sing His praises, and so too the birds as they spread out their wings.

<sup>41</sup>(We do indeed...bring forth herbage) of which your animals partake and so do you.

<sup>42</sup>Let man then ponder the source of his food.

<sup>43</sup>(Have you not seen how God) created, in perfect synchrony, the seven heavens, and set up, therein, the moon as a light, and the sun as a radiant lamp.

inhabitants of the heavens—as alluded to by the pronoun in the verse (*fīhinna*)—benefit more from the moon than do earthlings. Ibn al-Anbārī explains that the face of the moon illuminates the sky dwellers, and its back, the earth dwellers. And because most of its light illuminates the sky dwellers, God Almighty used the words: *fīhinna*.

Then, there is the unseen world which is generally mentioned before the seen, which in the case of the verse "Alim al-ghayb wa 'l-shahāda"(22:59)<sup>44</sup> is because knowledge of the unseen is more noble. But in deference to the meter in the chapter, this rule is not followed the verse : "Ya`lamu 'l-sirra wa akhfā"(7:20)<sup>45</sup>

4:*Al-Munāsaba*: to maintain conformity. This may occur between the first mentioned item in a verse and its contents, as is the case in the verse : "Wa lakum fihā jamālun hīna turīhūna wa hīna tasrahūn."(6:16)<sup>46</sup> Beauty admittedly, is beauty, regardless of whether it manifests itself in the morning or in the evening. Nonetheless, with regard to cattle, it would be in the evening, after they have eaten, that is, that their beauty would be most resplendent. In the mornings, before they have eaten, it is less so. In like vein is the verse: "wa alladhīna idhā anfaqū lam yusrifū wa lam yaqturū"(67:25)<sup>47</sup>, where *yusrifū* is negated first because giving is itself a noble gesture. And in the verse, "Wa urīkum 'l-barq khaufan wa ṭama`an"(24:30)<sup>48</sup> fear comes before hope because initially, on seeing the first bolt of lightning, one is filled with fear, whereas the hope for rain occurs only after several such bolts have fallen.

In the verse "Wa ja`alnāhā wa ibnahā āyatan lil`ālamīn.(91:21)<sup>49</sup> she (Mary) comes

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<sup>44</sup>God knows all things, both hidden and open.

<sup>45</sup>(Behold! He knows) He knows all secrets, and (even that which is) more hidden

<sup>46</sup>(And He creates cattle); you find beauty in them in the evenings when you drive them home and in the mornings when you take them out to pasture.

<sup>47</sup>And those who, whenever they spend, are neither wasteful nor miserly.

<sup>48</sup>(Among His wonders is that) He shows you His signs that fill you with fear, but also with hope.

<sup>49</sup>And We caused her and her son to be a sign for all of humanity.

before her son (Jesus) because the previous verse “Wa allatī aḥsanat farjahā” focuses largely on her. But in the verse "Wa ja`alnā ibn Maryama wa ummahū..."(50:23) the son comes first in order to conform with the previous verse where Moses comes first.

As for the verse "Wa kullan ātaynāhū ḥukman wa `ilman"(79:21)<sup>50</sup>, sound judgement is mentioned therein before knowledge, although the latter generally precedes the former. This was done in order to maintain continuity with the previous verse which reads: "Idh yahkumāni fi al-harth."(78:21)<sup>51</sup> And *Munāsaba*: may also occur where there is a need to maintain conformity between the location of a word in a verse and its actual meaning. The following are examples hereof:

A.'l-awwalu wa al-ākhiru.(3:57)<sup>52</sup>

B.Wa laqad `alimnā al-mustaqdimīna minkum wa laqad `alimnā al-musta'khirīn.(24:15)<sup>53</sup>

C.Liman shā'a minkum an yataqaddama au yata'akhhara.(3:74)<sup>54</sup>

D.Bimā qaddama wa akhhara.(13:75)<sup>55</sup>

E.Thullatun min al-awwalīna wa thullatun min al-ākhirīn.(13:56)<sup>56</sup>

F.Li Allāhi al-'amru min qablu wa min ba`du.(4:30)<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>And unto each of them we bestowed sound judgement and knowledge.

<sup>51</sup>(And remember) David and Soloman *who gave judgement* about a field (into which someone's cattle had strayed).

<sup>52</sup>(He is) the first and the last.

<sup>53</sup>And We do know well those who came before you as well as those who will follow you.

<sup>54</sup>(This is a warning) for those among you who come farward as well as those who tarry.

<sup>55</sup>(On that day man will be informed) of what he had done or had left undone.

<sup>56</sup>(The foremost in faith and good works) will comprise of many of those from the past and some from later times.

<sup>57</sup>God has all control, initially and ultimately.

G.Wa lahū 'l-hamd fī 'ulā wa 'l-ākhīra.(70:28)<sup>58</sup>

In the verse "Fa li Allah 'l-ākhīratu wa al-'ulā".(25:53)<sup>59</sup> the word *al-ākhīra* comes first to maintain the meter, just as is the case with the verse "Jama`nākum wa al-awwalīn"(38:77)<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>To Him belongs all praise in the beginning and in the end.

<sup>59</sup>(Unto God belongs) the hereafter as well as this life.

<sup>60</sup>When We will have gathered you and those before you.

5.*Al-Haththu*:to encourage and to motivate the performance of an act which is in danger of being neglected. Thus in the verse "Min ba`di wasiyyatin yūsī bihā au dain."(11:4)<sup>61</sup> bequests come first although the law requires that debts be discharged before bequests.

6.*Al-Sabaq*: to mention things in order of their existence. This may occur either in terms of time, as in the appearance of night before day, darkness before light, David before Soloman, the `Ad people before the Thamūd, Adam before Noah, Noah before Abraham, Abraham before Moses, Moses before Jesus, and David before Solomon. In the verse "Yastafī min al-malā`ikati rusulan wa min al-nās"(75:22)<sup>62</sup> angels are mentioned before human beings. Similarly, in the following verses wives, are mentioned before children: "Qul li azwājika wa banātika"(59:33)<sup>63</sup>; and in the following verse, slumber before sleep: "Lā ta'khdhuhū sinatun wa la naum.(225:2)<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>(The estate of the deceased should be distributed only) after the bequests (have been discharged) or debts (paid off)

<sup>62</sup>(God, in His majesty) appoints, as His messengers, angels as well as human beings.

<sup>63</sup>(O Prophet) tell your wives and your daughters. . .(to draw their outer garments over themselves.

<sup>64</sup>Neither slumber nor sleep overcomes Him.

Or they occur in terms of their revelation, as in the verses "Suhuf Ibrāhīm wa Mūsā"(18:87)<sup>65</sup> and "Wa anzala al-Taurāt wa al-Injīl min qablu hudan li al-nās wa anzala al-Furqān"(4:3)<sup>66</sup> Or in the order of their importance as in "Irka`ū wa 'usjudū"(77:22)<sup>67</sup>; "Fa igsilū wujūhakum wa aydiyakum"(6:5)<sup>68</sup>, and "Inna al-Safa wa al-Marwata min sha`āir Allah"(158:2)<sup>69</sup>. It was thus, with regard to the latter, that the Prophet said "We begin (the walk between the two hills) in the order mentioned by God Himself."<sup>70</sup>

Things are also mentioned in their natural order as in the following two verses: "Mathna wa thulātha wa rubā`"(3:4)<sup>71</sup> and "Ma yakūnu min najwa thalatha illa huwa rābi`uhum wa lā khamsat illā huwa sādisuhum"(7:58)<sup>72</sup>. Numbers too, are mentioned in this order, except in the verse "An taqūmū li Allah mathna wa furādā`"(46:34) where, to emphasize the importance of unity and cooperation in the performance of good, that order is reversed.<sup>73</sup>

7. *Al-Sababiyya*: to show cause and effect. The word *al-`Azīz* for example, always appears before

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<sup>65</sup>Indeed all this has already been discussed in earlier revelations- in those of Abraham and Moses.

<sup>66</sup>In earlier times He had revealed the Torah and the the Gospels-(And He)now reveals the Standard (to determine truth from falsehood).

<sup>67</sup>(O You who believe) Bow down and prostrate yourselves (before God).

<sup>68</sup>(O You who believe) . . .wash your faces and your hands. . .

<sup>69</sup>(Indeed, the two hills)Safa and Marwa are among the symbols of God.

<sup>70</sup>This is part of a longer tradition as found in the *Saḥīḥ* collection of Ibn. Hajjaj 'l-Qushayri Muslim, (Riyadh: Idararat 'l-Buhuth 'l-`ilmiyya, 1991).

<sup>71</sup>(Then marry) two three or four (wives).

<sup>72</sup>There can be no conspiracy of three persons without Him being the fourth among them, nor of five without Him being the sixth. . .

<sup>73</sup>(God is with you) whether you be in company with another, or alone.

*al-Hakīm* because His wisdom is a consequence of His majesty. Similarly, the word *al-`Alīm* appears before *al-Hakīm* because fortitude and perfection are based on knowledge. This order is reversed in chapter six however, because of the need to clarify certain commands.<sup>74</sup>

In the verse "Yuhibbu al-tawwābīna wa yuhibbu al-mutatahhirīna" those who repent comes before those who purify themselves. This is because purification is a consequence of repentance.<sup>75</sup> In the verse "Li kulli affāk athīm" falsehood appears first because it is the cause of sin.<sup>76</sup> Similarly, in the verse "yaguddū min absārihim wa yahfazhū furūjahum" <sup>77</sup> men are first called upon to lower their gazes because eye contact may lead to sexual contact.

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<sup>74</sup>See in this regard 83:6, and 128:6.

<sup>75</sup>(God) loves those who seek His pardon and those who purify themselves.

<sup>76</sup>Woe unto every lying sinner.

<sup>77</sup>(Command all believing men) to restrain their gaze and to protect their chastity.

7-*Al-Kathra*: To show a greater number as in the verse "Fa minkum kāfir wa minkum Mu'min"<sup>78</sup>, where disbelievers, because of their greater number, are mentioned first. Or in the verse "Fa minhum zālimun li nafsihi", (35:32)<sup>79</sup> where for the same reason, the unjust come first, followed by those who follow a middle course, and those foremost in good deeds. And because men are more likely to steal than women they come first in the verse dealing with theft, whereas women come first in the verse of adultery, because it is more prevalent among them. Similarly, in most places in the Qur'an, the mercy of God comes before His wrath because it is greater. This is substantiated by the tradition of the Prophet (s) "Indeed My mercy overwhelms My wrath."<sup>80</sup>

Ibn 'l-Hājib, in his work *l-Amāli* says, with regard to the verse "Inna min azwājikum wa aulādikum `aduwwan lakum fa ihdharūhum" (64:14)<sup>81</sup> that *azwājikum* is mentioned first to indicate that animosity takes place among them, and that it occurs more frequently among spouses than among children. It was also placed first because it best captured the intended meaning. Similarly, the word *amwāl* in the verse "Innama amwālukum wa aulādukum fitna" (64:15) comes first because wealth and calamity are almost inseparable. Thus the Quran says "Inna 'l-insān layatgā an ra'āhu istaghna" (96:6)<sup>82</sup> And because the presence of children does not necessitate the occurrence of calamity in the same way that wealth does, the latter's mention first was thus appropriate.

9-*Al-Taraqqi*: to progress from the lowest to the highest as in the verse "'A lahum arjulun yamshūna bihā am lahum aidin yabtishūna bihā"<sup>83</sup>, which begins with the less noble hands to the more noble legs. Similarly, the eyes are more noble than the hands and hearing more noble than

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<sup>78</sup>(He indeed, created you, but) some among you deny the truth whilst others affirm it.

<sup>79</sup>(And among our servants are those) who are unjust to themselves.

<sup>80</sup>Muhammad b. Isma`il Ed. Muhammad Fu'ad `Abd Al-Baqi Bukhari, *Al-Adab Al-Mufrad* (Beirut: Dar Al-Basha'ir al-Islamiyya, 1988); Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*.

<sup>81</sup>Behold, some of your spouses and your children may turn out to be enemies of you.

<sup>82</sup>Man, indeed, does transgress greatly, when he believes that he is self-sufficient

<sup>83</sup>Do these (idols) have feet with which to walk, or hands with which to grasp?

seeing.

Also in this category are verses in which words with greater meaning are given precedence, such as *l-rahim* which precedes *'al-rahman*, and *l-ra'ūf* which precedes *l-rahīm*. And, the word *l-rasūl* precedes *l-nabī* as is found in the verse "Wa kāna rasūlan nabīyyan"(19:51)<sup>84</sup> Many explanations have been suggested for this last sequence, the most widespread being that it conforms to the meter of the verse.

10. *al-Tadalli* to progress from the highest to the lowest. Examples of this have been furnished by of the following verses:

a- Lā ta'khudhuhū sinatun wa lā naum.(255:2)<sup>85</sup>

b- Lā yughādiru saghīratan wa lā kabīratan. (49:18)<sup>86</sup>

c- Lan yastankifa al-masīhu an yakūna `abdan li Allah wa lā al-malā'ikatu al-muqarrabūna. (172:4)<sup>87</sup>

This then is what was mentioned by Ibn 'l-Sā'igh. Others have mentioned other reasons including:

d- Where the word brought forward is more expressive of ability and more amazing. An example is the verse: Wa minhum man yamshī `alā batanihī. (45:24)<sup>88</sup> and the verse: Wa sakhkharna ma`a Daūd al-jibāl yusabbihna wa al-tair. (79:21)<sup>89</sup> Zamakhshari maintains that mountains that are lifeless, take precedence over living, albeit mute, birds, because the former's submission to Him, and glorification of Him, is by far a greater miracle that provides more astonishing proof of

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<sup>84</sup>(Moses) was an apostle and a prophet.

<sup>85</sup>Neither slumber nor sleep overcomes Him.

<sup>86</sup>(What kind of book is this!) It leaves out nothing, big or small.

<sup>87</sup>Christ does not disdain being a slave unto God, nor do the angels closest to (Him)

<sup>88</sup>(Of the animals that God created) Some crawl on their bellies.

<sup>89</sup>And We subdued the hills, and so too th birds to (Sing our praises)

His omnipotence.<sup>9091</sup>

Another reason for this sequence, of which many examples will follow presently, is the to maintain the meter of the verses. And finally, this sequence is sometimes used to present parenthetical statements that give qualifying information. More on this subject will appear in section 55.

**Note:**

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<sup>90</sup>v.2,p.580

<sup>91</sup>Mahmud b. `Umar Zamakhshari, *Al-Kashshaf `an Haqa'iq 'l-Tanzil* (Bulaq: Al-Matba`l-Amiriyya).

Just as some words may come first in some contexts they may come later in others. This may be because the context itself may so dictate, as was alluded to previously. Or to give special attention to them, some statements begin with, and end with the same words, as in verse, "Yauma tabyaddu wujūh wa taswaddu wujūh" (106:3)<sup>92</sup> Or to show eloquence a single word would assume several positions as in "Wa 'udkhulū 'l-bāb wa qūlū ḥittatun"(58:2)<sup>93</sup> and, "Wa qūlū hittatun wa 'udkhulū al-bāb sujjadan" (161:17).<sup>94</sup> This is also the case in the verses "Innā anzalnā al-Taurāt fīha hudan wa nūr"(44:5)<sup>95</sup> and "Qul man anzala 'l-kitāb alladhī jā'a bihī Mūsa nūran wa hudan li 'l-nās." (91:6)<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>92</sup>On the day when some faces will be whitened."

<sup>93</sup>Enter the gate prostrating, and say "Forgive us our sins"

<sup>94</sup>And say "Forgive us our sins" and enter the gate humbly."

<sup>95</sup>We indeed, revealed the Torah; in it is guidance and light.

<sup>96</sup>(O ye who believe) Who revealed the book that Moses brought as a source of guidance and a light for mankind? See in this regard: Khatīb Iskāfī, *Durrat 'l-Tanzil* (Beirut: Dar 'l-Afāq 'l-Jadīda, 1979)