

Surah 74. Al-Muddaththir

Asad: O THOU [in thy solitude] enfolded!¹

Malik: O Muddaththir (the one enveloped - one of the nicknames of Prophet Muhammad)!

Mustafa Khattab:

O you covered up ?in your clothes?!

Pickthall: O thou enveloped in thy cloak,

Yusuf Ali: O thou wrapped up (in a mantle)! ⁵⁷⁷⁸

Transliteration: Ya ayyuha almuḏḏaththirū

Author Comments

1 - The expression muddaththir (an abbreviated form of mutadaththir) signifies "one who is covered [with something]" or "enfolded [in something]"; and all philologists point out that the verb dathara, from which the above participial noun is derived, may equally well have a concrete or abstract connotation. Most of the commentators understand the phrase "O thou enfolded one" in its literal, concrete sense, and assume that it refers to the Prophet's habit of covering himself with a cloak or blanket when he felt that a revelation was about to begin. Razi, however, notes that this apostrophe may well have been used metaphorically, as an allusion to Muhammad's intense desire for solitude before the beginning of his prophetic mission (cf. introductory note to surah {96}: and this, according to Razi, would explain his being thus addressed in connection with the subsequent call, "Arise and warn" - i.e., "Give now up thy solitude, and stand up before all the world as a preacher and warner."

5778 - In these wonderful early verses there is a double thread of thought: (1) A particular occasion or person is referred to; (2) a general spiritual lesson is taught. As to (1), the Prophet was now past the stage of personal contemplation, lying down or sitting in his mantle; he was now to go forth boldly to deliver his Message and publicly proclaim the Lord: his heart had always been purified, but now all his outward doings must be dedicated to Allah, and conventional respect for ancestral customs or worship must be thrown aside; his work as a Messenger was the most generous gift that could flow from his personality, but no reward or appreciation was to be expected from his people, but quite the contrary; there would be much call on his patience, but his contentment would arise from the good pleasure of Allah. As to (2), similar stages arise in a minor degree in the life of every good man, for which the Prophet's life is to be a universal pattern.

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