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Sura Al-Kahf's relation with anti-Christ: A thematic study in the light of Prophetic Tradition

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Abstract

This paper explores the profound theological, psychological, and ideological relationship between the opening ten verses of Surah al-Kahf and the ultimate trial of Al-Masih ad-Dajjal (the Anti-christ). Grounded in the authentic tradition of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)—who promised protection from the Dajjal to those who memorize these verses—the analysis demonstrates that the trials of the Dajjal are fundamentally spiritual and cognitive deceptions rather than mere physical spectacles. Through a verse-by-verse thematic breakdown, the study reveals how the Quranic text systematically deconstructs the core vulnerabilities exploited by the Antichrist. Verses of this surah establish an unbending standard of truth to counter moral relativism and postmodern confusion.

The beginning of Surah al-Kahf provides a continuous, powerful defense against the deceptions of the Dajjal by first establishing an unbending standard of truth to fight confusion and moral relativism. Building on this foundation, it rejects unverified speculation and false divinity claims to safeguard absolute monotheism against charismatic impostors, while also offering a psychological framework to manage emotional burnout and societal despair during periods of intense polarization. Furthermore, it exposes the transience of material adornments, breaking the psychological hold of wealth and luxury that the Dajjal will weaponize.

Finally, through the example of the Companions of the Cave, it provides a blueprint for principled non-conformity, strategic retreat from systemic tyranny, and reliance on divine guidance. Ultimately, this analysis positions the opening of Surah al-Kahf not merely as a historical recitation, but as an advanced intellectual and spiritual shield. By equipping believers with cognitive clarity, emotional resilience, and uncompromising faith, these verses serve as a timeless antidote to the greatest deception humanity will ever face.

Keywords: Quran, Sura al-Kahf, Dajjal, Anti-Christ, Protection

1. Introduction

The Quran is the most important and primary source in Islam. It not only talks about spirituality but also governs and streamlines worldly life. It not only talks about the past or present, but also discusses the events that will come, as it is a divine revelation by Allah and He knows best of all. The Quran is a vast literature but concise due to its language mystery which reveals its context meaning with time. It contains 114 chapters that cover vast fields of human life. Among these, there are discussions related to the apocalypse which talk about the future events that are going to happen in future, for instance Gog Magog, etc. The Quran has given us the signs, for which the elaborations are found in the Hadith of Prophet Muhammad. Among the chapters of the Quran, there is a chapter by the name Al-Kahf, which is the 18th chapter, consisting of 110 verses. It was revealed in Mecca at the time when people of Quraysh forcefully denied the

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afterlife and the Day of Judgment. This chapter debates some sole issues which people of Mecca imposed on the Prophet to denounce his prophecy or to falsify him by any means.

One instance as mentioned, “during the peak of persecution and opposition in Makkah, the leaders of the Quraysh wanted to find a way to discredit Prophet Muhammad. Knowing that the Jewish rabbis of Madinah (Yathrib) possessed ancient scriptural knowledge and books of past Prophets, the Quraysh decided to send two intelligent and articulate men—Al-Nadr bin Al-Harith and ‘Uqbah bin Abi Mu’it—to Madinah. They instructed them, go and ask the Jewish rabbis about Muhammad. Describe him to them and tell them what he is saying. They are the people of the first Book, and they have more knowledge of the Prophets than we do. When Al-Nadr and ‘Uqbah arrived in Madinah and consulted the Jewish rabbis, the rabbis recognized the description of the Prophet. Recognizing an opportunity to test his claim, the rabbis told the Qurayshi delegation: “Ask him about three things. If he answers them, then he is a sent Prophet; if he does not, then he is a man fabricating thing, and you may deal with him as you see fit”:

1. About some young men in ancient times, what was their story? For there is a strange and wondrous tale (Ashab al-Kahf).
2. About a man who traveled a great deal and reached the furthest east and west of the earth. What was his story? (Dhu al-Qarnayn).
3. Ask him about the Ruh (the soul or spirit)—what is it?

The two emissaries were thrilled, believing they had secured an unanswerable trap. They returned to Makkah, approached the Prophet Muhammad, and put these three questions to him. In response, the Prophet said: “I will tell you tomorrow about what you have asked me”. However, he omitted saying ‘Insha-Allah’ (If Allah wills). Because of this omission, the revelation was withheld from the Prophet. Fifteen days passed, during which Angel Jibril (Gabriel) did not visit him. The people of Makkah began to mock him, and the Prophet grew deeply distressed and grieved by the silence of the revelation and the taunts of the disbelievers. After fifteen days, Angel Jibril finally brought Surah al-Kahf from Allah. The Surah addressed all three questions directly. It recounted the profound story of the Youths of the Cave (answering the first question). It detailed the journeys of Dhu al-Qarnayn (answering the second question). It also addressed the nature of knowledge, the human soul, and included a gentle divine reminder to the Prophet regarding saying "Insha'Allah" in future matters (mentioned in Verse 23: “And never say of anything, 'Indeed, I will do that tomorrow,' except by adding, 'If Allah wills'”[1]).[2]

Furthermore, a distinct characteristic of this Surah highlighted in the Prophetic tradition is its connection to protection against the Dajjal. It is narrated from Hazrat Abu Darda (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Noble Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said: “Whoever memorizes the first ten verses of Surah Al-Kahf will be protected from the trial of the Dajjal.”[3] A significant point emphasized in the above Hadith is that Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) associated Surah Al-Kahf with protection from the trials of the Dajjal (the Antichrist). In this

[1] The Qur’an, 18:23

[2] Ismāʿīl ibn ʿUmar ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿAẓīm* (*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*), Sura al-Kahf, v. 1.

[3] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Sahih Muslim, Book of Prayer for Travellers and Its Shortening, Chapter: The Virtue of Surah Al-Kahf and Ayat al-Kursi, Hadith No. 1883.

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regard, it is essential to first examine the various Prophetic narrations that describe the existence and nature of the Dajjal.

2. The existence and nature of Dajjal

According to Islamic eschatology, the Dajjal is a major sign of the End Times—a central figure of deception whose appearance will test the faith of humanity. Prophetic traditions describe his physical traits and extraordinary abilities, emphasizing both his literal existence and the profound spiritual trial he presents. Moreover, every Prophet in past had warned against him to his followers, as Anas ibn Malik narrated that the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said: "Allah has sent no prophet who did not warn his people about the false, one-eyed Dajjal. The Dajjal will be one-eyed, whereas your Lord is not one-eyed. Written between the Dajjal's eyes will be the word 'Kafir' (disbeliever)."[4] In addition to that, Prophet (ﷺ) emphasized seeking protection from him so frequently that he commanded Muslims to seek refuge from the trial of the Dajjal in every final tashahhud (تشهّد) of the daily prayers (before making the final salam). Abu Huraira nurrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "When any one of you has recited the tashahhud, let him seek Allah's protection from four things: 'O Allah, I seek refuge in You from the punishment of Hell, the punishment of the grave, the trials of life and death, and the evil of the trial of the False Messiah (Dajjal).'"[5]

I. **Physical Description:** The Prophetic hadith provides distinct markers so that believers can identify him immediately. The Dajjal is described as blind or defective in one eye. Some narrations specify his right eye is floating/protruding like a swollen grape, while others mention his left eye is covered with a thick fold of skin. The Inscription of the letters Kaf, Fa, Ra (representing Kafir or disbeliever) will be written between his eyes. According to the narration in Sahih Muslim, every Muslim—whether literate or illiterate—will be able to read it. It is narrated from Hazrat Hudhaifah (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "I know more about what the Dajjal will have with him than he himself does….. The Dajjal will be blind in one eye, with a thick piece of flesh over it. The word 'Kafir' (disbeliever) will be written between his eyes. Every believer will be able to read it, whether literate or illiterate."[6]

II. **His Duration of Stay:** In the famous, long narration of Nawwas ibn Sam'an, the Companions asked the Prophet how long he would stay on Earth. He replied: 'Forty days, one day like a year, one day like a month, one day like a week, and the rest of his days like your days. As narrated by Nawwas ibn Sam'an al-Kilabi (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) mentioned the Dajjal, he said: "If he appears while I am still among you, I will confront him on your behalf. But if he appears

[4] Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari, Al-Jami' al-Sahih (Sahih al-Bukhari), Book of Virtues, Chapter: The Signs of Prophethood in Islam, Hadith No. 7408.

[5] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim*, Book of Mosques and Places of Prayer, Chapter: Seeking Refuge from Certain Things During Prayer, Hadith No. 558.

[6] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Sahih Muslim, Book of Tribulations and the Signs of the Last Hour, Chapter: Mention of the Dajjal, His Description, and What He Will Have with Him, Hadith No. 2934.

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after I am no longer among you, then each person will have to defend himself against him, and Allah will be my successor in protecting every Muslim. Whoever among you encounters him should recite the opening verses of Surah Al-Kahf, for they will protect you from his trial." We asked, "O Messenger of Allah, how long will he remain on earth?" He replied, "For forty days. One day will be equivalent to a year, another day to a month, another day to a week, and the remaining days will be like your ordinary days." We then asked, "O Messenger of Allah, on the day that will be equivalent to a year, will the five daily prayers we perform on an ordinary day be sufficient for us?" He replied, "No. You must estimate the time for prayer during that day and perform your prayers accordingly." Then Jesus, son of Mary (peace be upon him), will descend near the white minaret to the east of Damascus. He will find the Dajjal at the gate of Ludd (Lod) and will kill him there.[7]

III. **His Trials, Deceptions, and Miracles:** The Dajjal will be granted temporary, miraculous powers by Allah to test humanity like Water and Fire (Paradise and Hell): He will bring forth what looks like water and fire. The Prophet (ﷺ) warned that what the Dajjal calls fire will actually be cool water, and what he calls paradise will actually be hellfire. He will pass by people who reject him, causing them to suffer severe drought and poverty. Conversely, those who follow him will see their lands flourish, crops grow, and livestock return with full udders. It is narrated from Hazrat Hudhaifah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "I know better than the Dajjal himself that he will have with him. He will have two flowing rivers with him. One will appear to be white water, while the other will appear to be blazing fire. If anyone encounters him, let him approach the river that appears to be on fire, close his eyes, lower his head, and drink from it, for it will be cool water….."[8]

IV. **The Killing and Resurrecting of a Believer:** As in Sahih Muslim, a young believer will confront the Dajjal, declaring, "I bear witness that you are the Dajjal whose description the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) gave us." The Dajjal will cut him in two with a sword and walk between the two pieces, then command him to rise. The man will stand back up, completely unharmed, whereupon the Dajjal will try to kill him a second time and fail. This man will proclaim: "By Allah, my insight into your reality is only stronger now!" The Dajjal will attempt to burn or kill him again and fail, after which the believer is recognized as having the strongest faith. It is narrated by Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: "One day, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) gave us a lengthy account of the Dajjal. Among the things he told us was that the Dajjal would come, but the roads leading into Madinah would be forbidden to him. He would stop at a barren, salty land near Madinah. Then a man would come out to meet him. He would be among the best of people, or one of the best of people, and would say to him, 'I bear witness that

[7] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Sahih Muslim, Book of Tribulations and Battles, Chapter: The Emergence of the Dajjal, Hadith No. 4321.

[8] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim*, Book of Tribulations and the Signs of the Last Hour, Chapter: Mention of the Dajjal, His Description, and What He Will Have with Him, Hadith No. 2934.

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you are the Dajjal about whom the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) informed us.' The Dajjal would then say to those around him, 'What do you think, if I kill this man and then bring him back to life, will you still have any doubt about this matter?' They would reply, 'No.' He would then kill the man and bring him back to life. When the man had been restored to life, he would say, 'By Allah, I have never had greater certainty about you than I have now.' The Prophet (ﷺ) added that the Dajjal would attempt to kill the man again, but he would be unable to gain power over him."[9]

V. **Places He Cannot Enter Makkah and Madinah:** The Dajjal will travel to every corner of the earth except for Makkah and Madinah. Authentic traditions state that he will find every gate guarded by rows of angels with unsheathed swords. Then, Madinah will shake three times, causing every hypocrite and disbeliever inside to flee out toward the Dajjal, leaving only the pure believers behind. As narrated by Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "There will be no city that the Dajjal will not enter and traverse, except Makkah and Madinah. Angels will be standing in rows at every entrance to these two cities, guarding and protecting them. Then Madinah will be shaken three times, and through these tremors, Allah Almighty will drive out every disbeliever and hypocrite from it."[10]

VI. **His Demise, Descent of Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus):** The reign of the Dajjal will end with the descent of Jesus (peace be upon him). According to the long narration of Nawwas ibn Sam'an in Sahih Muslim, Jesus will descend at the white minaret in eastern Damascus. Jesus will pursue the Dajjal and overtake him at the Gate of Lod (near modern-day Tel Aviv/Ben Gurion airport). Upon seeing Jesus, the Dajjal will begin to dissolve (much like salt dissolves in water). Jesus will strike him, ending his reign, and falsehood will be utterly defeated. As narrated by Nawwas ibn Sam'an al-Kilabi (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) mentioned the Dajjal, he said: ……Then Jesus, son of Mary (peace be upon him), will descend near the white minaret to the east of Damascus. He will find the Dajjal at the gate of Ludd (Lod) and will kill him there.[11]

3. Diverse opinions on Anti-Christ (Dajjal)

There are diverse opinions of scholars regarding antichrist, whether he is an actual person or meant something else, because of a multitude of Prophetic traditions detailing his emergence, the topic commands significant attention within the fields of hadith studies and Islamic theology. This discussion is further complicated by its intersection with 'aqidah (Islamic creed), a discipline that requires a stringent standard of evidentiary certainty. Traditional methodology

[9] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Sahih Muslim, Book of Tribulations and the Signs of the Last Hour, Chapter: The Description of the Dajjal, the Prohibition of Madinah to Him, and His Killing and Reviving of a Believer, Hadith No. 2938.

[10] Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari, *Al-Jami' al-Sahih (Sahih al-Bukhari)*, Book of the Virtues of Madinah, Chapter: The Dajjal Will Not Enter Madinah, Hadith No. 1881.

[11] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Sahih Muslim, Book of Tribulations and Battles, Chapter: The Emergence of the Dajjal, Hadith No. 4321.

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dictates that matters of core belief must be established through definitive (qat'i) proofs, usually sourced from *mutawqtir* traditions—reports transmitted across generations by an abundance of narrators that completely precludes the possibility of fabrication. Conversely, the majority of narrations detailing the Dajjal are classified as *Ahad* (solitary reports), meaning they do not attain the threshold of absolute definitive proof.[12] This technical distinction creates a theological tension concerning the precise obligation placed upon believers to accept such accounts. Scholars who validate the underlying reliability of these traditions—irrespective of whether they are *mutawatir* or *ahad*—routinely accept them as authentic components of the Prophetic legacy.[13] Nevertheless, integrating these accounts into orthodox belief necessitates nuanced interpretation to prevent the pitfalls of rigid literalism.

Canonical collections of Islamic eschatological traditions feature the theme of the Dajjal prominently, necessitating that any rigorous analysis remain strictly grounded in authentic Prophetic reports to prevent speculation or error. Despite this extensive documentation, precise details regarding his physical appearance remain scarce. Instead, the literature predominantly employs an eschatological framework—categorized by hadith scholars under '*al-Fitan wa Ashrat al-Sa'ah*' (Trials and Signs of the Hour)—that frames the Dajjal as the ultimate adversary and source of supreme tribulation for the community.[14] Understanding his universal significance as a symbol of ultimate falsehood, a widely transmitted narration documented by Imam al-Bukhari in his Sahih, notes that every prophet in history explicitly warned their followers of his impending arrival. As narrated by Abu Al-Yaman, Shu'aib informed us from Az-Zuhri, who said: Salem bin Abdullah informed me that Abdullah bin Umar informed him: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) stood up among the people... then he mentioned the Dajjal, and said: 'I warn you against him, and there is no prophet except that he warned his people of him; Noah warned his people against him. But I will tell you something about him which no prophet told his people: "You should know that he is one-eyed, and Allah is not one-eyed."[15]

Another pivotal narration enriching the discourse on the Dajjal involves the emergence of approximately thirty impostors claiming prophethood in the era preceding the Hour. Commonly designated as 'lesser Dajjals', their appearance serves as a prominent sign signaling the proximity of the Day of Judgment, with this account recorded by Imam al-Bukhari in his *Sahih*, narrated Abu Al-Yaman: Shu'aib informed us, Abu Al-Zinad narrated to us from Abdur-Rahman from Abu Hurairah, that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "The Hour will not be established until two great groups fight each other, resulting in a huge massacre, both of them having the same

[12] Qari Aziz Haider and others, 'An Analytical Study of Hadiths on Dajjal (Antichrist) Interpreted by Peer Mehr Ali Shah Gilani: An Analytical Study', Journal of World Researches (JWR, 2.1 (2022)

[13] See, Jamaluddin Al-Qasimy, Qawa'id At-Tahdits Min Funun Musthalah Al-Hadits.

[14] See, Abdul Wahab Abdus Salam Thawilah, Al-Masih Al-Muntazhar Wa Nihayatu Al-'Alam.

[15] Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari, Al-Jami' al-Sahih (Sahih al-Bukhari), Book of the Stories of the Prophets, Chapter: The Statement of Allah, Mighty and Majestic: {And We certainly sent Noah to his people}, Hadith no. 3337.

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claim; and until about thirty impostors, liars, appear, each of them claiming that he is the Messenger of Allah."[16]

Surpassing mere claims of prophethood, numerous traditions depict the Dajjal as wielding deceptive powers that obscure the line between truth and falsehood. Among his most unsettling trials is the manifestation of what appears to be a paradise and a hellfire—though, according to the Prophet, their true natures are reversed. This striking imagery highlights that the Dajjāl's primary weapon is psychological illusion rather than raw physical might, with the following account preserved in Sahih al-Bukhari, narrated Abu Nu'aym: Shayban narrated to us from Yahya, from Abu Salamah, who said: I heard Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with them, say: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Shall I not tell you a narration about the Dajjal which no prophet has told his people? He is one-eyed, and he will come with something resembling paradise and hellfire; so that which he calls paradise is hellfire, and I warn you against him as Noah warned his people."[17]

These traditions offer a potent symbolic illustration of the Dajjal's deception, where his capacity to invert spiritual perception—making hell look like paradise and vice versa—acts as a metaphor for falsehood disguised as truth. In an environment heavily influenced by surface-level appearances, the hadith cautions believers to look past outward realities and anchor themselves in divine guidance, notably advising them to seek refuge in God and recite the opening verses of Surah al-Kahf to bridge scriptural knowledge with spiritual defense. On a theological level, this swapping of paradise and hell embodies a wider moral disorientation in which evil is glorified while virtue is made to seem obsolete or hazardous. Consequently, the Dajjal transcends being merely an individual persona, functioning instead as a representation of systemic deception, moral collapse, and the subversion of sacred principles, utilizing human fear and desire to lure people away from truth under the guise of salvation.

A recurring motif within the traditions concerning the Dajjal is the divine sanctuary afforded to Makkah and Madinah. While the Dajjal is prophesied to roam the rest of the earth unchecked, these two holy cities are strictly barred to him. This restriction extends beyond a simple geographical barrier, highlighting their profound spiritual purity and continuous divine protection—a concept explicitly detailed in the narrations of Sahih al-Bukhari that Anas ibn Malik narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) who said: "There is no city which the Dajjal will not enter, except for Makkah and Madinah. There is no mountain pass (or entrance) among its passes, but there are angels standing in ranks guarding it. Then Madinah will shake with its inhabitants three tremors, and God will expel every disbeliever and hypocrite from it."[18] Despite variations in wording among the narrators, the accounts consistently highlight three core motifs: the absolute

[16] Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari, Al-Jami' al-Sahih (Sahih al-Bukhari), Kitāb al-Fitan, Hadith no. 7121.

[17] Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari, Al-Jami' al-Sahih (Sahih al-Bukhari), Book of the Stories of the Prophets, Chapter: The Statement of Allah, Mighty and Majestic: {And We certainly sent Noah to his people}, Hadith no. 3338.

[18] Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari, Al-Jami' al-Sahih (Sahih al-Bukhari), Book of the Virtues of Medina, Chapter: The Dajjal Will Not Enter Medina, Hadith no. 1881.

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barrier preventing the Dajjal from entering Makkah and Madinah, the presence of angels guarding every route into the cities, and an eschatological tremor that purifies Madinah by driving out disbelievers and hypocrites. This upheaval acts as an act of divine cleansing, reinforcing the sacredness of the sanctuaries. Together, these traditions reassure believers by framing Islam's holiest sites as secure bastions immune to the Dajjal's deception, thereby emphasizing the importance of seeking refuge in these spaces, both physically and spiritually, to preserve one's faith during turbulent end times.[19]

4. Detailed analysis of the first Ten verses of Surah al-Kahf

The connection between Surah al-Kahf, particularly its opening verses, and Al-Masih ad-Dajjal (the Antichrist) is firmly established in authentic Prophetic traditions. Understanding why these verses serve as an intellectual and spiritual safeguard against one of humanity's greatest trials requires examining their central themes and how they relate to the nature of Dajjal's deception. The first ten verses of Surah al-Kahf establish a strong theological foundation by emphasizing divine guidance, the authority of the Quran, the distinction between truth and falsehood, and the importance of faith and righteous action.

Verses 1–3: These verses begin with the praise of Allah for revealing the Quran to His servant, a book free from crookedness, contradiction, and deviation. Described as straight and upright, the Quran serves as an absolute standard of truth, warning those who reject divine guidance of severe punishment while giving glad tidings to believers who perform righteous deeds and promising them an everlasting reward. In a modern world characterized by rapidly changing ideologies, moral relativism, conflicting viewpoints, and overwhelming amounts of information, these verses provide a timeless foundation for intellectual and spiritual clarity. The Arabic term '*Iwija'* (عوجا), meaning crookedness or deviation, highlights the Quran's freedom from fundamental flaws or distortion, while the concept of '*Qayyim'* (قيم) emphasizes its uprightness, consistency, and capacity to guide humanity.

Unlike contemporary perspectives that often treat truth as subjective or dependent on individual preferences and cultural circumstances, the Quran establishes a stable moral and spiritual framework that transcends temporary social trends and shifting human opinions. This unwavering standard of truth becomes especially significant when considering the trial of Dajjal, whose deception will challenge people's ability to distinguish reality from falsehood. The opening verses also present a balanced approach to human motivation by combining warnings with glad tidings. The warning of severe consequences encourages accountability and discourages wrongdoing, while the promise of a good and everlasting reward inspires hope, perseverance, and righteous conduct. This balance offers a meaningful response to the existential anxiety and uncertainty experienced in contemporary society, reminding believers that their lives possess a greater purpose and that their righteous deeds contribute to an eternal future.

Furthermore, these verses establish a direct relationship between faith and action by specifying that the promise of glad tiding is for those who believe and perform righteous deeds. Faith, therefore, is not merely a private conviction or an abstract spiritual sentiment; it must be

[19] Muhammad Zaini, The Dajjāl in Islamic Prophetic Tradition: Between Literalism and Symbolic Interpretation, el-sunan journal of hadith and religious studies Volume 3, Number 1, April 2025.

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reflected in ethical behavior, responsible decisions, and beneficial contributions to society. In an age of digital distractions, misinformation, and moral ambiguity, the Quran encourages believers to evaluate ideas critically through the principles of divine guidance rather than blindly accepting prevailing opinions. By strengthening faith, providing intellectual clarity, and establishing a consistent moral framework, the opening verses of Surah al-Kahf prepare believers to recognize and resist deception. These teachings are particularly relevant to the trial of Al-Masih Ad-Dajjal, as remaining firmly grounded in the Quran and acting according to its guidance can help protect a believer from confusion, falsehood, and spiritual misguidance.

Verses 4–5: These verses directly refute the false claim that Allah has taken a son, emphasizing that those who make such assertions possess no authentic knowledge or divine authority to support them, nor can their beliefs be justified merely by the traditions of their ancestors. After establishing the Quran as the ultimate standard of truth, these verses address a significant theological deviation and warn against attributing qualities or relationships to Allah that contradict His absolute uniqueness and perfection. Their message extends beyond historical theological disputes, offering a broader critique of human arrogance, unfounded ideologies, speculative worldviews, and the tendency to shape religious beliefs according to personal desires or cultural expectations. In the modern age of information overload, social media, and rapidly spreading opinions, the warning against making claims without knowledge remains particularly relevant. Unverified information, popular ideologies, and repeated assumptions can easily be accepted as established truths simply because they are widely circulated or inherited from previous generations. The Quran challenges believers to develop intellectual humility by grounding their understanding of reality in authentic divine revelation rather than blindly following cultural traditions, popular opinions, or unsupported speculation.

These verses also reject the tendency to anthropomorphize God by attributing human characteristics, familial relationships, or limitations to the Creator. Such ideas reflect an attempt to understand the Divine through the restricted categories of human experience, whereas Allah transcends all created beings and cannot be compared to anything in creation. More broadly, the context encourages reflection on modern ideologies and worldly systems that are sometimes treated as unquestionable authorities, including excessive individualism, materialism, or the absolute glorification of political and social institutions. When human ideas are elevated above all criticism, they risk replacing divine guidance with fallible human constructs.

It further emphasizes the seriousness of making false claims about Allah by describing such statements as grave and alarming. This highlights the intellectual, spiritual, and moral responsibility associated with speech, particularly when discussing matters of faith and the nature of the Creator. Words and ideas are not insignificant, as they shape individual beliefs, moral values, social institutions, and humanity's understanding of its purpose. Misrepresenting the nature of Allah can therefore lead to profound distortions in both personal spirituality and collective ethical life. For contemporary believers, these verses provide a framework for cultivating discernment, questioning unsupported claims, and evaluating prevailing cultural narratives through the principles of authentic revelation. They also reinforce the central Islamic principle of Tawhid, which affirms the absolute oneness and uniqueness of Allah. By maintaining a pure understanding of the Creator as incomparable to His creation, believers

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protect their faith from speculative distortions and ensure that their ultimate devotion and obedience remain directed toward Allah alone. In relation to the trial of Al-Masih Ad-Dajjal, these teachings are especially significant because they strengthen the believer's understanding of divine uniqueness and help establish clear theological criteria for distinguishing the true Creator from any created being who falsely claims divine status.

Verse 6: This verse of Surah al-Kahf offers a profound message of compassion, emotional understanding, and reassurance by addressing Prophet Muhammad's intense sorrow over the rejection of the divine message. Allah consoles the Prophet, reminding him not to allow grief over people's refusal to believe to overwhelm him. This verse highlights the emotional challenges associated with leadership, spiritual guidance, and a sincere commitment to the well-being of others. In the modern context, its message is particularly relevant to educators, social reformers, community leaders, and individuals who dedicate themselves to promoting truth and positive change but experience exhaustion when their efforts are met with resistance or indifference. The expression describing the Prophet as being overwhelmed by grief illustrates the emotional burden that can arise when people care deeply about others yet struggle to influence their choices. Such experiences resemble what is commonly understood today as emotional burnout or compassion fatigue, in which prolonged concern for others can lead to psychological exhaustion. The verse also draws attention to the danger of assuming excessive responsibility for other people's decisions, beliefs, and actions. Although genuine concern naturally produces sadness when others reject guidance, individuals cannot ultimately control the hearts or choices of those they seek to help.

In a world increasingly characterized by ideological polarization, misinformation, and persistent disagreement, people often measure their success by how effectively they persuade others or produce immediate results. However, this verse offers a different perspective by emphasizing the importance of fulfilling one's responsibility to communicate the truth sincerely rather than attempting to force others to accept it. The Prophet's distress demonstrates the depth of his compassion, but Allah's reassurance establishes that the rejection of guidance by others should not become a source of overwhelming personal suffering. Their refusal does not necessarily indicate a failure in the message or the sincerity of the person conveying it; rather, it reflects the reality that people possess their own choices and may resist even clear guidance. This divine consolation also establishes an important boundary between responsibility and control, reminding those who work for social, moral, or spiritual improvement that their duty is to make sincere efforts while leaving ultimate guidance to Allah. From a contemporary psychological perspective, this principle encourages emotional resilience, self-compassion, and a sustainable approach to leadership and advocacy. Constantly carrying the burden of other people's decisions can undermine personal well-being and make long-term service increasingly difficult. Therefore, believers should focus on the sincerity of their intentions, the integrity of their actions, and the clarity of the message they convey rather than becoming consumed by outcomes beyond their control. They should also recognize the importance of rest, emotional balance, and healthy personal boundaries when facing repeated disappointment. Ultimately, it teaches that compassion must be accompanied by wisdom and emotional restraint. It encourages individuals to remain committed to truth and guidance without allowing the rejection of others to destroy their inner

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peace, reminding them that they are responsible for their efforts, while the ultimate guidance of hearts belongs to Allah.

Verses 7–8: In these verses, Surah al-Kahf emphasizes the temporary nature of worldly life by explaining that Allah has made the earth's beauty and adornments a means of testing humanity to determine who performs the best deeds. Everything that people admire and pursue, including wealth, luxury, social status, technological achievements, and material possessions, serves a temporary purpose and will eventually disappear when the earth is reduced to barren ground. These verses offer a powerful reminder of the limitations of materialism and challenge the modern tendency to measure success and personal worth through consumption, financial prosperity, and outward appearances. The Quran describes the attractions of the world as '*zeenah'* (زينة), meaning adornment or embellishment, which is not inherently evil but functions as a test of human priorities, intentions, and behavior.

In contemporary society, these worldly attractions are amplified through consumer culture, social media, advertising, and the constant pursuit of fashionable products and prestigious lifestyles. As a result, people may become preoccupied with acquiring possessions, maintaining an ideal public image, and achieving social recognition, mistakenly believing that these things provide lasting happiness or establish their ultimate value. However, verse 7 clarifies that the purpose of worldly adornment is not simply to encourage accumulation but to test who performs the best deeds. The emphasis is therefore on the quality of human actions, sincerity, moral character, and beneficial contributions to others rather than the quantity of wealth or possessions one acquires.

Verse 8 reinforces this lesson by declaring that everything on the earth will eventually be transformed into barren ground, illustrating the inevitable disappearance of material beauty and prosperity. This reality is reflected in the rise and decline of economic empires, the deterioration of physical structures, the obsolescence of technological achievements, and the eventual loss of possessions that once appeared valuable and permanent. Economic instability, environmental changes, and the natural passage of time further demonstrate the uncertainty of material circumstances. When individuals base their identities and happiness entirely on wealth, appearance, or professional status, they become vulnerable to anxiety and disappointment whenever these temporary advantages diminish. Recognizing the impermanence of world life, therefore, encourages a more stable understanding of personal worth and helps people develop resilience in the face of changing circumstances.

These verses also provide practical guidance for contemporary believers by encouraging them to enjoy lawful worldly blessings without becoming enslaved by them. Wealth, technology, professional achievements, and social influence can all be used positively when directed toward ethical and beneficial purposes rather than selfish competition or the pursuit of recognition. Instead of making accumulation the primary goal of life, believers are encouraged to invest in enduring values such as education, community welfare, spiritual development, kindness, and righteous deeds. By prioritizing moral excellence over material success, individuals can maintain a balanced relationship with worldly possessions while preparing for the eternal life to come. Ultimately, it reminds humanity that the world is a temporary testing ground rather than a permanent destination, and that true success lies not in the adornments one possesses but in the quality of one's faith, character, and actions. This understanding is particularly relevant to the

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trial of Al-Masih Ad-Dajjal, as attachment to worldly wealth, power, and apparent prosperity can make people more vulnerable to deception, whereas a firm awareness of the temporary nature of worldly life helps believers remain committed to Allah and the enduring truths of faith.

Verses 9–10: These verses introduce the story of the Ashab al-Kahf, or the Companions of the Cave, shifting the discussion from the temporary nature of worldly life to a practical example of steadfast faith and moral courage. These verses describe a group of young believers who withdrew to a cave to protect their faith from a hostile and oppressive environment. Rather than compromising their religious convictions for worldly comfort, social acceptance, or personal security, they chose to preserve their relationship with Allah despite the difficulties they faced. Their story demonstrates that true success is not measured by conformity to prevailing social or political expectations but by the ability to remain faithful to one's principles in the face of adversity. In the modern context, this lesson is particularly relevant in societies where peer pressure, ideological conformity, institutional corruption, or fear of social rejection may encourage individuals to abandon their values. The courage of the young believers illustrates the importance of principled non-conformity and reminds people that standing for truth may sometimes require sacrifices in status, comfort, and security. Their decision to seek refuge in a cave also highlights the importance of withdrawing from environments that threaten one's faith and moral integrity.

Although the cave provided physical shelter, it also symbolized a place of spiritual protection where the believers could preserve their convictions away from external pressures. In today's highly connected world, where social media, constant information, and unhealthy social influences can create emotional and spiritual exhaustion, this idea can be understood as the need to establish personal boundaries and seek environments that support spiritual growth and psychological well-being. Sometimes, stepping away from harmful relationships, unethical workplaces, or destructive social influences becomes necessary to protect one's principles. The actions of the Companions of the Cave also demonstrate that preserving faith and integrity is more important than maintaining public prestige or worldly advantages in an environment that demands moral compromise. When the young believers found themselves in a difficult and uncertain situation, they turned to Allah with the supplication, “Our Lord, grant us from Yourself mercy and prepare for us from our affair right guidance.” This prayer reflects their recognition of human vulnerability and their dependence on divine mercy when facing circumstances beyond their control. By asking for mercy, they sought Allah’s protection and support, while their request for right guidance demonstrated their desire for clarity, wisdom, and the ability to make the correct decisions. Their prayer offers a timeless lesson for people confronting injustice, ethical dilemmas, or overwhelming personal challenges: rather than relying exclusively on their own resources, they should seek Allah’s guidance while acting with patience and conviction.

For contemporary believers, these verses encourage the protection of personal and spiritual boundaries, the cultivation of regular prayer and reflection, and the development of environments that strengthen faith and character. Creating time for Quranic study, quiet contemplation, and spiritual renewal can provide a source of stability amid the distractions and pressures of modern life. Ultimately, it teaches that steadfast faith may require difficult choices, temporary withdrawal, and sacrifices of worldly comfort, but sincere reliance on Allah provides believers

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with hope and direction during periods of uncertainty. In relation to the trial of Al-Masih Ad-Dajjal, the example of the Companions of the Cave is especially meaningful because it demonstrates the importance of remaining firm in one's beliefs when confronted with powerful external pressures, deception, and threats to one's religious convictions.

5. Surah al-Kahf and the Dajjal: A Thematic Analysis

The relationship between the opening ten verses of Surah al-Kahf and Al-Masih Ad-Dajjal is rooted in authentic Prophetic traditions, particularly the hadiths that encourage Muslims to memorize or recite these verses as a means of protection against Dajjal's trial. Islamic scholars explain that this trial will involve more than extraordinary physical events; it will also challenge people's beliefs, judgment, emotional stability, and ability to distinguish truth from falsehood. According to authentic narrations, Dajjal will deceive humanity through extraordinary signs, apparent control over world provisions, and a terrifying display of what seems to be reward and punishment. He will tempt people with prosperity, wealth, and security while threatening those who reject him with hardship and suffering. His greatest deception will be his claim to divinity, through which he will attempt to exploit human ignorance, material desires, fear, and spiritual weakness. The first ten verses of Surah al-Kahf provide a framework for resisting these trials by strengthening theological understanding, correcting attachment to worldly possessions, cultivating steadfastness in faith, and grounding the mind in the unchanging guidance of Allah. Their protective significance can be understood through four closely related dimensions.

The first dimension is the establishment of clear theological understanding and the rejection of false claims of divinity. Verses 1–5 emphasize the perfection of Allah's revelation, the uprightness of the Quran, and the rejection of false claims concerning Allah, including the assertion that He has taken a son. These verses establish that knowledge about Allah must be grounded in authentic divine revelation rather than speculation, inherited assumptions, or deceptive appearances. This foundation is particularly important in relation to Dajjal because his central deception will be his attempt to make people believe that he possesses divine authority. A believer who understands the absolute uniqueness of Allah recognizes that no created being can become the Creator or possess divinity simply by displaying extraordinary abilities. Islamic teachings also establish that Dajjal is a created, limited being and that Allah is far beyond the characteristics and limitations of creation. Authentic Prophetic traditions describe Dajjal as physically imperfect, including the defect in one of his eyes, and teach that Allah is not like him. Consequently, extraordinary displays of power cannot serve as proof of divinity. By reflecting on the opening verses of Surah al-Kahf, believers can develop a sound understanding of Tawhid, or the absolute oneness of Allah, and learn to judge extraordinary claims according to divine guidance rather than being overwhelmed by spectacle, fear, or persuasive deception. These verses therefore help establish the theological clarity needed to reject Dajjal's false claim to divine status.

The second dimension concerns the ability to see beyond material illusions and resist the temptation of wealth, prosperity, and world power. Verses 7–8 explain that Allah has made the earth's adornments a test for humanity and that these attractions will eventually disappear, leaving the earth barren. This teaching reminds believers that wealth, luxury, social influence,

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and physical resources are temporary blessings rather than evidence of ultimate truth or divine status. In authentic hadiths concerning Dajjal, his trial is described as involving extraordinary apparent control over worldly provisions. Some narrations explain that he will command the sky to send rain and the earth to produce vegetation, while those who reject him may face deprivation and hardship. Such circumstances will create an intense test for people whose faith is closely tied to material comfort and immediate security. Those who equate prosperity with divine approval may be tempted to follow Dajjal, while those who experience hardship may begin to doubt their convictions. The message of verses 7–8 directly challenges this way of thinking by teaching that worldly abundance is part of a temporary test and cannot independently establish what is true or false. A believer who deeply understands this principle will be less likely to exchange faith for material gain or interpret worldly deprivation as proof that Allah has abandoned them. Instead, they will recognize that genuine success lies in obedience to Allah, sincerity, and righteous action. Reflecting on the temporary nature of worldly possessions therefore helps believers resist the psychological power of Dajjal's apparent wealth and prosperity, allowing them to remain faithful even when doing so carries material costs.

The third dimension is the cultivation of courage and steadfastness through the example of the Companions of the Cave. Verses 9–10 introduce the Ashab al-Kahf, a group of young believers who withdrew from a hostile environment to preserve their faith and sought Allah's mercy and guidance when confronted with a difficult situation. Their story illustrates that remaining faithful may sometimes require rejecting the demands of a powerful society, sacrificing personal comfort, and distancing oneself from influences that threaten religious conviction. This lesson becomes especially significant in the context of Dajjal because authentic Prophetic traditions warn that his trial will be extraordinarily severe and that people may face intense pressure to abandon their faith. Material deprivation, intimidation, confusion, and the apparent rewards offered to his followers may make steadfastness difficult. The Companions of the Cave provide a model of believers who prioritized their relationship with Allah over the expectations and demands of an oppressive environment. Their prayer, asking Allah to grant them mercy and prepare the right course for their situation, also teaches the importance of seeking divine assistance rather than relying solely on personal strength. By memorizing and reflecting on these verses, Muslims can strengthen their resolve to remain faithful when confronted with social pressure, persecution, or deceptive promises. The story also highlights the wisdom of protecting one's faith by avoiding dangerous influences when necessary, seeking the company of righteous people, and relying on Allah during periods of uncertainty. Thus, verses 9–10 offer a spiritual example of resilience that can help believers prepare for a trial in which maintaining faith may require considerable sacrifice.

The fourth dimension is the development of intellectual and spiritual clarity through attachment to the Quran as a reliable standard of truth. Verse 1 describes the Book revealed by Allah as free from crookedness or deviation, establishing its uprightness as a foundation for guidance. This description is particularly relevant to Dajjal's trial because his deception will challenge people's ability to interpret what they see and distinguish genuine truth from false appearances. When people rely exclusively on their senses, emotions, social consensus, or immediate material circumstances, they may become vulnerable to manipulation, especially when extraordinary

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events appear to contradict their established understanding of reality. Dajjal's trial will exploit precisely this vulnerability by presenting circumstances that may cause people to confuse apparent power with divine authority and temporary prosperity with genuine success. The Quran provides believers with a stable framework through which to evaluate such experiences. By learning its teachings, reflecting on its meanings, and applying its principles, Muslims can develop the ability to question deceptive appearances rather than accepting them uncritically. This does not mean that memorizing verses automatically makes a person immune to every form of deception; rather, sincere memorization, understanding, faith, and consistent practice help cultivate the spiritual discernment needed to resist falsehood. The opening verses of Surah al-Kahf direct attention toward Allah's revelation, the limitations of worldly life, the seriousness of theological truth, and the importance of righteous conduct. These principles can help believers remain grounded when confronted with extraordinary claims or situations designed to overwhelm their judgment.

Taken together, the first ten verses of Surah al-Kahf provide a comprehensive spiritual foundation for confronting the trial of Al-Masih Ad-Dajjal. Verses 1–5 strengthen belief in the absolute oneness of Allah and establish the Quran as the standard against which false theological claims must be judged. Verses 6–8 remind believers that worldly attractions are temporary and that neither prosperity nor deprivation should determine their understanding of divine truth. Verses 9–10 provide the example of the Companions of the Cave, demonstrating the importance of courage, principled resistance, and reliance on Allah when faith is threatened. Throughout this passage, the Quran directs believers away from superficial appearances and toward a deeper understanding of truth, responsibility, and the purpose of human life. The Prophetic encouragement to memorize or recite the opening verses of Surah al-Kahf therefore reflects both a specific spiritual protection associated with Dajjal's trial and a broader lesson about preparing the heart and mind to withstand deception. Muslims should approach this protection through sincere memorization, reflection on the verses' meanings, obedience to Allah, and adherence to the authentic Prophetic guidance concerning Dajjal, including seeking Allah's protection from his trial. Ultimately, these verses teach that protection against deception requires more than the ability to recognize extraordinary events; it requires sound faith, knowledge of divine revelation, freedom from excessive attachment to worldly possessions, and steadfast reliance on Allah when appearances become misleading and the distinction between truth and falsehood is severely tested.

Conclusion

Memorization (*hifz*) combined with comprehension of these verses acts as a spiritual anchor. It equips the believer with theological clarity regarding who Allah is, detachment from worldly temptations, courage to resist tyranny, and steadfastness against systemic deception. The deep thematic architecture of the first ten verses of Surah al-Kahf reveals why memorizing and internalizing them serves as an ultimate defense against Al-Masih Ad-Dajjal. The trials presented by the Dajjal—often described as the greatest fitnah humanity will ever witness—are not merely physical spectacles or crude illusions; they are profound ideological, psychological, and spiritual deceptions designed to exploit human vulnerability to materialism, fake divinity, and shifting standards of truth.

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Dajjal will blur the lines between right and wrong, presenting falsehood as truth and truth as falsehood. The opening verses anchor the believer in the Qayyim (unbending, contradiction-free standard of the Quran), inoculating the mind against moral relativism and postmodern confusion.
The Dajjal will demand to be worshipped as a god, leveraging manufactured miracles and unverified power. Verses 4–5 systematically dismantle false claims to divinity, rejecting speculation and training the believer to maintain absolute monotheism (Tawhid) against charismatic impostors.
The trial of the Dajjal will cause immense despair, grief, and societal upheaval. The divine consolation offered to the Prophet in verse 6 teaches modern believers to anchor their self-worth in sincerity and effort rather than bowing to external pressure or collapsing under compassion fatigue.
The Dajjal will weaponize worldly luxury, promising rain, agricultural abundance, and physical wealth to those who follow him, and withholding them from those who resist. Recognizing that the earth is a temporary testing ground destined to become *sa'idn juruza* (barren ground) shatters the psychological grip of material temptation.
Facing a tyrannical regime, the Companions of the Cave sought sanctuary and divine guidance (Rashad). This mirrors the ultimate choice under the Dajjal's reign: retreating into a spiritual and physical 'cave' of conviction, refusing to compromise core faith for societal or physical survival.
Ultimately, the opening of Surah al-Kahf is a masterclass in psychological fortification, intellectual clarity, and spiritual resilience. It equips the believer with the exact diagnostic tools needed to spot deception, resist mass psychological manipulation, and remain steadfast when the world around them collapses into chaos.

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