

Zamakhsharī. *Kashshāf*.

\_\_\_\_. *Al-Fāʾiq fī gharīb al-ḥadīth wa-l-athar*. Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifa, n.d.

al-Zarkalī, Khayr al-Dīn b. Muḥmūd b. Muḥammad b. ʿAlb. Fāris, al-Dimashqī. *Al-Aʿlām*. Beirut: Dār al-ʿIlm li-l-Malāyīn. 1423/2002.

Zarkashī. *Burhān*.

**See also:** ABŪ BAKR; ADOPTION; ANONYMOUS MENTIONS; ANSĀR; BLOOD MONEY; BADR; CALL TO PRAYER; CAVE; CERTITUDE; CLIENT; COMPANION; COMPILATION OF THE QURʾĀN; CONFIDENCES AND CONFIDANTS; CONSULTATION; CONTENTMENT; DISBELIEVER; HELL; HIJRA; HUNAYN; AL-KHADIR; MADINA; MUḤĀJIRŪNA; MŪSĀ, PEACE UPON HIM; OCCASIONS OF REVELATION; PARADISE; PEOPLE OF THE CAVE; PEOPLE OF THE ELEPHANT; PEOPLE OF AL-RASS; PLEDGE; QURʾĀN; RESURRECTION; SABBATH; TRIBES AND CONFEDERATES; UḤUD; WIVES OF THE PROPHET; ZAYD B. ḤĀRITHA.

MUZAFFAR IQBAL

## COMPETITION

TANĀFUS FĪ-L-DUNYĀ, TAKĀTHUR, ISTIBĀQ FĪ-L-KHAYRĀT

### Definitions and usage

Three Qurʾānic terms denote one or more aspects of competition in good deeds as well as in greed and vain pursuits:

- *tanāfus*, from the root *n-f-s*, which yields both *tanāfus* and *munāfasa*. *Al-munāfasa* is the “diligent effort of the soul (*mujāhadat al-nafs*), seeking to resemble and join those who excel (*lil-tashabbuh bi-l-afāḍil*), without causing harm to others” (Rāghib, *sub n-f-s*). *Tanāfus* is an intense longing, search, and competition for something (*al-raqhba fīhi wal-mughālāt fī ṭalabīhi wal-tazāḥum ʿalayhi*), as in Q 37:61 (*For the like of this, then, let the workers work*) (Suyūṭī, *Muʿtarak*, ḥarf al-fā, fa-l-yatanāfas al-mutanāfisūn). The root *n-f-s* appears 298 times in the Qurʾān in four derived forms; the relevant terms appear twice in Q 83:26, once as the third person singular jussive Form VI verb, “*fa-l-yatanāfas*”, and once as the active plural participle (*al-mutanāfisūna*);
- *istibāq*, from the root *s-b-q*, is the Form VIII verb (“*istabaqa – yastabiqu – istibāqan*”), which has the same meaning as Form III (*sābaqa – yusābiqu – musābaqatan*) and Form VI (*tasābaqa – yatasābaqu – tasābuqan*)—both meaning, “to try to get ahead

of somebody, to vie, to race” (Rāghib, *sub s-b-q*). It is a synonym of “*bādara*—to set out to do something” (Samīn Ḥalabī, *ʿUmdat*, bāb al-sīn, faṣl al-sīn wa-l-bāʾ). The root *s-b-q* occurs 37 times in seven derived forms. Form VIII imperative plural verb (*istabiqū*) is used in two verses (Q 2:148; 5:48) in the sense of vying, both times in the phrase, *vie with one another in good deeds*;

- *takāthur* (“growth, increase”), from the root *k-th-r* (“to be much, many and numerous”), the verbal noun of Form VI verb (“*takāthara – yatakātharu – takāthuran*”) has a negative connotation in the Qurʾānic usage as it represents competition to amass enormous amount of wealth (*al-tabārī fī kathrat al-māl*) and a large number of children (Rāghib, *sub k-th-r*). Such *takāthur* diverts human beings in this worldly life by inculcating deceptive self-importance and vanity (*al-mubāḥāt*), leading to forgetfulness of self-examination (*muḥāsabat al-nafs*) as an inevitable consequence (Suyūṭī, *Muʿtarak*, ḥarf al-hamza, al-ḥākum al-takāthur; 2:28). The root *k-th-r* occurs 167 times in the Qurʾān in ten derived forms. Form III verbal noun (*al-takāthur*, to vie with one another) is used twice (Q 57:20, 102:1). Q 102 is called *al-Takāthur* (“Mutual Rivalry”).

### Compete for Paradise

Believers are urged to *vie with one another in good deeds* (Q 2:148; 3:114; 5:48; 21:90; 23:61) in order to succeed in the Hereafter and enter Paradise (*q.v.*), which is *the supreme success* (Q 4:13, 73; 5:119; 9:72, 89, 100, 111; 10:64; 37:60; 40:9; 44:57; 57:12; 61:12; 64:9; 85:11), also called *the manifest triumph* (Q 6:16; 45:30), attained through Divine pleasure (Q 5:119) and His forgiveness to which they are also asked to hasten (Q 3:133; 57:21). Q 83:18-28 graphically describes the bliss of Paradise, containing the phrase, *So for this let the strivers strive* (fa-l-yatanāfasi-l-mutanāfisūn) (Q 83:26), which is explained by the Successor-Exegete ʿAṭāʾ b. Abī Rabāḥ (27-114/647-732) as something precious (*al-shayʿ al-nafīs*) for which everyone yearns and which everyone wants to possess (Ṭabarī; Baghawī, *sub* Q 83:26). “*Munāfasa* comprises the notions of race (*musābaqa*), striving (*ijtihād*), and constant desire (Ibn al-Jawzī, *Madārij*, faṣl fī-l-ghayra; 3:48). The same idea appears in another verse with different verbal construction: *For the like of this, let the strivers strive* (fa-l-yaʿmalī-l-ʿāmilūn) (Q 37:61). Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (224-310/839-923) considers both Q 37:61 and Q 83:26 to be the Speech of Allah Most