

# أَسْطَاعٌ يَسْطِيعُ

In *Suurat al-Kahf*, aayah 82, we read:

﴿ذَلِكَ تَأْوِيلُ مَا لَمْ تَسْطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا﴾

*This is the interpretation of what you could not patiently bear.*

Here the word:

تَسْطِعُ

is for the normal:

تَسْتَطِعُ

which is baab x from طوع.

The verb اسْتَطَاعَ يَسْتَطِيعُ has another form which is اسْطَاعَ يَسْطِيعُ where the ت has been omitted for phonetic reasons as both ت and ط are from the same point of articulation, and moving the tongue to the same point of articulation twice in succession is slightly difficult.

The pre-Islaamic poet Tarfah (طَرْفَةُ بْنُ الْعَبْدِ) says in his *mu"allaqah*<sup>1</sup>:

فَإِنْ كُنْتَ لَا تَسْطِيعُ دَفْعَ مَنِيَّتِي  
فَدَعْنِي أُبَادِرْهَا بِمَا مَلَكَتْ يَدِي

If you are not able  
To repel my death,  
Let me rush towards it  
With whatever I possess.

The meaning is: if death cannot be avoided, let me enjoy life with the help of the wealth that I possess.

The word مَنِيَّةٌ means 'death', and its plural is مَنَايَا as in:

الْمَنَايَا رَصْدٌ

**The agents of death are lying in ambush...\***

<sup>1</sup> In pre-Islaamic times annual poetic contests were held. The poem adjudged the best that year was suspended from the curtains of the Ka"bah which remained there till the next poem was suspended. There are ten such poems which are called *al-mu"allaqaat* (المُعَلَّقَات) literally meaning 'the suspended ones'.

\* See poetry lesson 4 (admin)

In *Suurat al-Kahf*, aayah 97, the *maaDiy* of اسْطَاعَ occurs:

﴿فَمَا اسْطَاعُوا أَنْ يَظْهَرُوهُ﴾

*So they (Ya'juj and Ma'juj) were not able to scale it (the barrier).*

abdur rahim

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