

TAFSEER AS-SA'DI

JUZ' 13-15

تفسير السعدي
تفسير المحرر لرحمه في تفسير حليم المناج

'Abdur-Rahmân Nâsir as-Sâdi



الدار العالمية للكتاب الإسلامي



IN THE NAME OF
ALLAH
THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL



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جزء ١٣ - ١٤

Abdur-Rahmân Nâsir as-Sa‘di

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Pronunciation and Transliteration Chart



Arabic script	Pronunciation	Transliterated form
أ	short 'a', as in <i>cat</i>	a
إ — إ	longer 'a', as in <i>cab</i> (not as in <i>cake</i>)	â
ب	/b/ as in <i>bell</i> , <i>rubber</i> and <i>tab</i>	b
ت	/t/ as in <i>tap</i> , <i>mustard</i> and <i>sit</i>	t
ه	takes the sound of the preceding diacritical mark sometimes ending in h (when in pausal form): ah, ih or ooh; or atu(n), ati(n) or ata(n) when uninterrupted	h or t (when followed by another Arabic word)
ث	/th/ as in <i>thing</i> , <i>maths</i> and <i>wealth</i>	th
ج	/j/ as in <i>jam</i> , <i>ajar</i> and <i>age</i>	j
ح	a 'harsher' sound than the English initial /h/, and may occur medially and in word-final position as well	h
خ	as in <i>Bach</i> (in German); may occur initially and medially as well	kh
د	/d/ as in <i>do</i> , <i>muddy</i> and <i>red</i>	d
ذ	as in <i>this</i> , <i>father</i> and <i>smooth</i>	dh

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Trans-literated form
ر	/r/ as in <i>raw</i> , <i>arid</i> and <i>war</i> ; may also be a rolled 'r', as pronounced in Spanish	r
ز	/z/ as in <i>zoo</i> , <i>easy</i> and <i>gaze</i>	z
س	/s/ as in <i>so</i> , <i>messy</i> and <i>grass</i>	s
ش	as in <i>ship</i> , <i>ashes</i> and <i>rush</i>	sh
ص	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /sw/ or /s/ farther back in the mouth	§
ض	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /d/ farther back in the mouth	ɖ
ط	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /t/ farther back in the mouth	ʈ
ظ	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing 'the' farther back in the mouth	ڏ
ع	no close equivalent in English: a guttural sound in the back of the throat	'
غ	no close equivalent in English, but may be closely approximated by pronouncing it like the French /r/ in 'rouge'	gh
ف	/f/ as in <i>fill</i> , <i>effort</i> and <i>muff</i>	f

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Transliterated form
ڧ	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /k/ farther back in the mouth	q
ک	/k/ as in <i>king, buckle</i> and <i>tack</i>	k
ل	/l/ as in <i>lap, halo</i> ; in the word Allah, it becomes velarized as in <i>ball</i>	l
م	/m/ as in <i>men, simple</i> and <i>ram</i>	m
ن	/n/ as in <i>net, ant</i> and <i>can</i>	n
هـ - هـ - هـ	/h/ as in <i>hat</i> ; unlike /h/ in English, in Arabic /h/ is pronounced in medial and word-final positions as well	h
وـ	as in <i>wet</i> and <i>away</i>	w
وـ	long ‘u’, as in <i>boot</i> and <i>too</i>	oo
يـ	as in <i>yard</i> and <i>mayo</i>	y
يـ	long ‘e’, as in <i>eat, beef</i> and <i>see</i>	ee
ـ	glottal stop: may be closely approximated by pronouncing it like ‘t’ in the Cockney English pronunciation of <i>butter</i> : <i>bu'er</i> , or the stop sound in <i>uh-oh!</i>	(omitted in initial position)

Diphthongs

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Trans-literated form
أو، و	long 'o', as in <i>owe, boat</i> and <i>go</i>	au, aw
أي، ي	long 'a', as in <i>aid, rain</i> and <i>say</i>	ay, ai, ei

Diacritical marks (tashkeel)

Name of mark	Pronunciation	Trans-literated form
fatḥah	very short 'a' or schwa (unstressed vowel)	a
kasrah	shorter version of ee or schwa (unstressed vowel)	i
dammah	shorter version of oo	u
shaddah	a doubled consonant is stressed in the word, and the length of the sound is also doubled	double letter
sukoon	no vowel sound between consonants or at the end of a word	absence of vowel



Arabic honorific symbols



(﴿)	<i>Subḥānahu wa Ta'ālā</i>	The Exalted
(﴿ ﴿)	<i>ṣalla Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallam</i>	Blessings and peace be upon him
(﴿ ﴿)	<i>'alayhi as-salām</i>	May peace be upon him
(﴿ ﴿)	<i>raḍiya Allāhu 'anhu</i>	May Allah be pleased with him
(﴿ ﴿)	<i>raḍiya Allāhu 'anhā</i>	May Allah be pleased with her
(﴿ ﴿)	<i>raḍiya Allāhu 'anhūmā</i>	May Allah be pleased with both of them
(﴿ ﴿)	<i>raḍiya Allāhu 'anhūm</i>	May Allah be pleased with all of them
(﴿ ﴿)	<i>raḍiya Allāhu 'anhunna</i>	May Allah be pleased with all of them (females only)



Hadith grade terms



Sound: *saheeh*

Reliable: *hasan*

Weak: *da'eef*

Odd: *ghareeb*

Authentic: includes sound, reliable, or any grade in between

Acceptable: *sakat 'anhu*; the grader of the hadith did not comment on it, meaning that he found nothing unacceptable in it



12.

Soorat Yoosuf

(continued)



﴿ وَمَا أَبْرَى نَفْسٍ إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لِأَمَارَةٍ يَأْشُوءُ إِلَّا مَا رَجْمَرَتِ إِنَّ رَبَّهُ عَفُورٌ تَرَجِّمُ ﴾
﴿ وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ أَتَنْوَى بِهِ أَسْتَحْصِمُهُ لِنَفْسِي فَلَمَّا كَلَمَهُ قَالَ إِنَّكَ الْيَوْمَ لَدِينَنَا مَكِينٌ أَمِينٌ ﴾
﴿ قَالَ أَجْعَلْنِي عَلَى خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ إِنِّي حَفِظٌ عَلَيْهِ ﴾
﴿ وَكَذَلِكَ مَكَّنَاهُ لِيُوسُفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَتَبَوَّأُ مِنْهَا حِيتَ يَشَاءُ ثُصِيبُ بِرَحِيمًا مَنْ نَشَاءُ وَلَا تُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴾
﴿ وَلَا جَرَأُ الْآخِرَةِ حَيْرٌ لِلَّذِينَ مَامَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَنْقُونَ ﴾ (surah Yousuf: ٥٣-٥٧)

- 12:53. Nor do I absolve my own self [of blame], for verily the human soul constantly prompts one to do evil, except for those on whom my Lord bestows His mercy. Verily my Lord is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.¹
- 12:54. The king said: Bring him to me, so that I may appoint him [as an adviser] solely for me. Then when he had spoken with him, he said: Verily from this day you will be in a position of high standing with us, and entrusted with our affairs.
- 12:55. Yoosuf said: Put me in charge of the storehouses of the land; indeed I will manage them carefully and wisely.
- 12:56. Thus We established Yoosuf in the land, so that he was free to do therein whatever he willed. We bestow Our mercy upon

¹ The meanings of the verses of the Qur'an in this book (with some minor changes to the punctuation) have been translated by the translator. (Editor)

whomever We will, and We will not cause the reward of those who do good to be lost.

12:57. But verily the reward of the hereafter is better, for those who believe and are mindful of Allah.

Having admitted that she did indeed try to seduce Yoosuf (*'alayhi as-salām* – peace be upon him) and affirmed that she did not in fact betray her husband (as the seduction attempt failed), the wife of al-'Azeez countered any possible impression of self-praise on her part by saying:

﴿Nor do I absolve my own self [of blame]﴾ that is, I do not absolve myself of the attempt at seduction, or of wanting that and being very eager and scheming to attain it

﴿for verily the human soul constantly prompts one to do evil﴾ that is, it is always prompting one to do evil, such as shameful deeds and other sins, for it is the vehicle of the Shaytān, through which he gains access to people

﴿except for those on whom my Lord bestows His mercy﴾ and saves such a one from his soul that prompts him to do evil, until his soul becomes content with its Lord, submits to the call of guidance and resists the caller of doom. That does not come from the soul itself; rather it is by the grace and mercy of Allah (*Subḥānahu wa Ta'ālā* – Glorified and Exalted is He) towards His slave.

﴿Verily my Lord is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful﴾ that is, He is Oft-Forgiving to the one who commits sins if he repents and turns back to Him

﴿Most Merciful﴾ because He accepts his repentance and enables him to do righteous deeds. This is the correct view, that these are the words of the wife of al-'Azeez, not the words of Yoosuf, as the context has to do with her words, because at that point Yoosuf was still in prison and was not present.

When the king and the people realised that Yoosuf was completely innocent, the king sent for him, saying:

﴿Bring him to me, so that I may appoint him [as an adviser] solely for me﴾ that is, so that I may appoint him to serve me only and bring him close to me. So they brought him, with honour and respect

﴿Then when he had spoken with him﴾, he was impressed with his words and thought even more highly of him. So he said to him:

﴿Verily from this day you will be in a position of high standing with us, and entrusted with our affairs﴾ that is, you will be well established and entrusted with secrets.

﴿Yoosuf said﴾, seeking that which was in the public interest:
﴿Put me in charge of the storehouses of the land﴾ that is, in charge of the treasury of the land, and the storehouse in which the yield of the land was kept, as a keeper and controller

﴿indeed I will manage them carefully and wisely﴾ that is, I will be careful with whatever I am put in charge of, so nothing will be lost of it inappropriately. I will monitor what comes in and what goes out, for I have knowledge of how to manage things, when to give and when to withhold, and how to handle all manner of things. This was not because Yoosuf was eager to be in a position of authority; rather he cared about the public interest, and he knew that he was competent and honest, and able to take good care of things, which they did not know.

Hence he asked the king to put him in charge of the storehouses of the land, and the king did that.

﴿Thus﴾ by means of what is mentioned above
﴿We established Yoosuf in the land, so that he was free to do therein whatever he willed﴾ of living a life of ease and abundance, and holding a position of high status
﴿We bestow Our mercy upon whomever We will﴾ that is, this was by the mercy of Allah to Yoosuf, that He bestowed upon him and decreed for him; it was not limited to worldly blessings.

﴿and We will not cause the reward of those who do good to be lost﴾. Yoosuf (ﷺ) was one of the most prominent of those who do good, so he would have good in this world and good in the hereafter. Hence Allah says:

﴿But verily the reward of the hereafter is better﴾ than the reward of this world

﴿for those who believe and are mindful of Allah﴾ that is, for those who combine mindfulness of Allah with faith.

It is through mindfulness of Allah and piety that prohibited matters, both major and minor sins, are given up, and it is through perfect faith that the heart believes in what Allah has commanded it to believe, and the actions of the heart (beliefs) and physical actions, both obligatory and recommended, follow that.



﴿وَجَاءَ إِخْرَوْهُ يُوسُفَ فَدَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَعَرَفَهُمْ وَهُمْ لَمْ يُنْكِرُونَ ﴾٤٤﴿ وَلَمَّا جَهَّزْهُمْ بِمَهَارَاهُمْ قَالَ أَتُنُورُ يَا أَخَّنِي لَكُمْ مِنْ أَلَّا تَرَوْنَ أَنِّي أُفِي الْكَيْلَ وَأَنَا خَيْرُ الْمُنْزَلِينَ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَأْتُنِي بِهِ فَلَا كَيْلَ لَكُمْ عِنِّي وَلَا نَقْرَوْنَ ﴾٤٥﴿ قَالُوا سَنُرُودُ عَنْهُ أَبَاهَا وَلَنَا لَفْعَلُونَ ﴾٤٦﴿ وَقَالَ لِفُتَنِيهِ أَجْعَلُوكُمْ يُصَنْعِنُهُمْ فِي رِحَالِمِهِ لَعَلَّهُ يَعْرُفُونَهَا إِذَا أَنْقَلَبُوا إِنَّ أَهْلِهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ لَرَجَعُوكُمْ إِلَى أَبِيهِمْ قَالُوا يَاتَابَانَا مُنْعِنْ مِنَ الْكَيْلِ فَأَنْسَلَ مَعْنَى أَخَّنِي نَكْتَلَ وَلَنَا لَهُ لَحْفَظُونَ ﴾٤٧﴿ قَالَ هَلْ مُنْعِنْ مِنَ الْكَيْلِ قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَمْسَكْتُمْ عَلَى أَخْيِي مِنْ قَبْلُ فَأَلَّا اللَّهُ خَيْرُ حَفَظَهَا وَهُوَ أَحَمَّ الْأَرْجَيْنَ ﴾٤٨﴿ وَلَمَّا فَتَحْوَمَتْهُمْ وَجَدُوكُمْ يُصَنْعِنُهُمْ رَدَتْ إِلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا يَاتَابَانَا مَا بَنَغَى هَذِهِ بِصَنْعِنَا رَدَتْ إِلَيْنَا وَنَبَرَ أَهْلَنَا وَنَحْفَظُ أَخَانَا وَنَزَدَادُ كَيْلَ بَعْرِي ذَلِكَ كَيْلَ يَسِيرٌ ﴾٤٩﴿ قَالَ لَنْ أُنْسِلَهُ مَعَكُمْ حَتَّى تُؤْتُنُونَ مَوْنِقَاتِنَ اللَّوْلَانِي بِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يُحَاطَ بِكُمْ فَلَمَّا آتَوْهُ مَوْنِقَهُمْ قَالَ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَا نَفَوْلُ وَكِيلٌ ﴾٥٠﴿ وَقَالَ يَسِيرٌ لَا

تَدْخُلُوا مِنْ بَابٍ وَجِيرٍ وَادْخُلُوا مِنْ بَابِ شَفَرَقَةٍ وَمَا أَغْنَى عَنْكُمْ مِنْ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ^{١٧}
 إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكِّلُ ^{١٨}فَإِنَّهُمْ كَلُونَ وَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا مِنْ
 حَيْثُ أَمْرَهُمْ أَبُوهُمْ مَا كَانَ يُغْنِي عَنْهُمْ مِنْ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا حَاجَةً فِي نَفْسٍ
 يَعْقُوبَ قَضَاهَا وَإِنَّهُ لَذُو عِلْمٍ لِمَا عَلَمْنَاهُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

(سورة يوسف: ٦٨-٥٨) ﴿٢١﴾

- 12:58. The brothers of Yoosuf came and presented themselves before him; he immediately recognised them but they did not recognise him.
- 12:59. When he had supplied them with their provisions, he said: Bring to me a brother of yours through your father; do you not see that I give full measure and am the best of hosts?
- 12:60. If you do not bring him to me, you will never again receive a single measure [of provisions] from me, nor will you come near me.
- 12:61. They said: We will try to persuade his father to let him go, and we will surely do it.
- 12:62. Yoosuf said to his servants: Put their trade goods [with which they had bartered] in their saddlebags so that they may discover them when they return to their people; perhaps they will come back.
- 12:63. When they returned to their father, they said: O our father, we have been denied any further provisions [unless we take our brother with us]; send our brother with us, so that we may get our measure [of provisions], and we will surely keep him safe.
- 12:64. Ya'qoob said: Am I to trust you with him as I once trusted you with his brother? But Allah is the best of guardians, and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.
- 12:65. When they opened their baggage, they discovered that their trade goods had been returned to them. They said: O our father, what more could we ask? These trade goods of ours have been

returned to us. We will get [more] provisions for our household, and take care of our brother, and receive an extra camel-load. That is an easy measure [to obtain].

- 12:66. Ya'qoob said: I will never send him with you unless you swear a solemn oath to me, by Allah, that you will surely bring him back to me, unless you are overwhelmed by circumstances. Then when they had sworn their solemn oath to him, he said: Allah is witness over what we say.
- 12:67. And he said: O my sons, do not enter [all] by one gate; enter by different gates. I cannot avail you anything against [the decree of] Allah; Allah's decree alone prevails. In Him I put my trust, and in Him let all that trust put their trust.
- 12:68. Although they entered [the city] as their father had instructed them, it would not have availed them anything against [the decree of] Allah, yet a need in Ya'qoob's soul was satisfied. Verily he was possessed of knowledge because of what We had taught him, but most people have no knowledge.

When Yoosuf (ﷺ) took charge of the storehouses of the land, he managed them well. He grew a huge amount of crops throughout the land of Egypt during the years of abundance, and allocated large depots in which he collected a great deal of food, which he kept and managed in the best manner. Then when the years of drought began, and the drought spread as far as Palestine, where Ya'qoob and his sons lived, Ya'qoob sent his sons to Egypt for provisions.

﴿The brothers of Yoosuf came and presented themselves before him; he immediately recognised them but they did not recognise him﴾ that is, they did not realise who he was.

﴿When he had supplied them with their provisions﴾ that is, when he had weighed out for them as he weighed out for others; it was part of his good management that he did not give any individual more than one camel load. He had asked them about their situation,

and they told him that they had a brother who was with his father, namely Binyâmeen.

﴿He said﴾ to them: ﴿Bring to me a brother of yours through your father﴾ – he encouraged them to bring him, and said: ﴿do you not see that I give full measure and am the best of hosts﴾ in generosity towards my guests?

Then he warned them of the consequences if they did not bring him: ﴿If you do not bring him to me, you will never again receive a single measure [of provisions] from me, nor will you come near me﴾. That was because he knew that they had no choice but to come to him, and that would make them bring their brother.

﴿They said: We will try to persuade his father to let him go﴾ – this indicates that Ya‘qoob (ﷺ) was very attached to Binyâmeen and could not bear to be apart from him, for he found consolation in him after the loss of Yoosuf. Therefore he needed to be persuaded to send him with them.

﴿And we will surely do it﴾ that is, what you have instructed us to do.

﴿Yoosuf said to his servants: Put their trade goods﴾ that is, with which they had bought their provisions

﴿in their saddlebags so that they may discover them﴾ that is, the trade goods

﴿when they return to their people; perhaps they will come back﴾ – that was because he felt uncomfortable taking the trade goods in return for the provisions. What appears to be the case is that he wanted to encourage them by showing generosity towards them, by giving them full measure and then by returning their trade goods to them without them realising.

﴿When they returned to their father, they said: O our father, we have been denied any further provisions﴾ that is, if you do not send our brother with us.

﴿send our brother with us, so that we may get our measure [of provisions]﴾ that is, let that be a means of us getting our measure of provisions. Then they promised to take care of him, as they said: ﴿and we will surely keep him safe﴾ from any harm that may befall him.

﴿Ya‘qoob said: Am I to trust you with him as I once trusted you with his brother?﴾ That is, you previously gave me a stronger promise than this to keep Yoosuf safe, yet you did not fulfil the promise you made. Therefore I do not trust your promise; rather I trust Allah (ﷻ).

﴿But Allah is the best of guardians, and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy﴾ that is, He knows my situation and I hope that He will have mercy on me, so He will protect him and bring him back to me. It was as if these words softened his heart to the idea of sending Binyâmeen with them.

Moreover, ﴿When they opened their baggage, they discovered that their trade goods had been returned to them﴾. This indicates that they were aware that Yoosuf had returned them deliberately and that he wanted them to keep them. So they said to their father, encouraging him to send their brother with them: ﴿O our father, what more could we ask?﴾ That is, what further kindness could we seek, when he has given us full measure and has returned our trade goods to us as a goodwill gesture, which is indicative of his sincerity and good attitude?

﴿These trade goods of ours have been returned to us. We will get [more] provisions for our household﴾ that is, if we take our brother with us, he will be a means of us being given provisions, so we will get more provisions for our household and we will bring them what they need of food

﴿and take care of our brother, and receive an extra camel-load﴾ if he goes with us, for Yoosuf gives each person a camel load.

﴿That is an easy measure﴾ that is, it is easily obtained, because it will not take any longer than usual and there is a clear interest in doing so.

﴿Ya‘qoob said﴾ to them: ﴿I will never send him with you unless you swear a solemn oath to me, by Allah, that you will surely bring him back to me, unless you are overwhelmed by circumstances﴾ that is, unless something happens to you that you have no power to deal with and cannot ward it off.

﴿Then when they had sworn their solemn oath to him﴾ pledging to do as he asked

﴿he said: Allah is witness over what we say﴾ that is, His witness over us is sufficient, and His care will suffice us. When he sent Binyâmeen with them, he advised them that when they reached Egypt: ﴿do not enter [all] by one gate; enter by different gates﴾. That was because he feared the evil eye, as they were so many and good-looking, for they were all the sons of one man.

﴿I cannot avail you anything against [the decree of] Allah﴾ for His decree will inevitably come to pass

﴿Allah’s decree alone prevails﴾ that is, His will and decree and His command, for whatever He decrees and rules will inevitably happen
 ﴿In Him I put my trust﴾ that is, I rely upon Allah, not on my advice to you of taking certain measures

﴿and in Him let all that trust put their trust﴾ for by doing so, all aims will be achieved and all harm will be warded off.

When they left and ﴿they entered [the city] as their father had instructed them﴾, that action ﴿would not have availed them anything against [the decree of] Allah, yet a need in Ya‘qoob’s soul was satisfied﴾ which was the result of compassion and love for his children; therefore by giving them this advice, he put his mind at rest.

This was not due to any lack of knowledge on his part, for he was one of the noble Messengers and devoted scholars. Hence Allah says of him: ﴿Verily he was possessed of knowledge﴾ that is, he had great knowledge

﴿because of what We had taught him﴾ that is, he did not acquire knowledge by his own strength; rather it was by the grace of Allah Who taught him

﴿but most people have no knowledge﴾ of the consequences and subtleties of things. This applies to the knowledgeable among them; some knowledge may be hidden from them and they may be unaware of some rulings and requirements.



﴿وَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَى يُوسُفَ إِلَيْهِ أَخَاهُ قَالَ إِنِّي أَخْوَكَ فَلَا تَبْتَهِنْ
بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴾٦٧﴿ فَلَمَّا جَهَنَّمُ بِمَهَارِزِهِمْ جَعَلَ السِّقَايَةَ فِي رَحْلِ
أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ أَذْنَ مُؤْذِنَ أَيْتَهَا الْعِيرِ إِنَّكُمْ لَسَرَفُونَ ﴾٦٨﴿ فَأَلْوَأُ وَأَقْبَلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ مَا ذَا
تَقْدُونَ ﴾٦٩﴿ قَالُوا نَفْقُدُ صَوَاعَ الْمَلِكِ وَلَمَنْ جَاءَ بِهِ حَمْلُ بَعِيرٍ وَآنَّا بِهِ
رَعِيمٌ ﴾٧٠﴿ قَالُوا تَالَّهُ لَقَدْ عِلْمَتُمْ مَا جِئْنَا لِتُقْسِدَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا كَانَ سَرَقِينَ
فَالَّذِي فَنَّا جَرَوْهُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ كَذَّابِينَ ﴾٧١﴿ قَالُوا جَرَوْهُمْ مَنْ وُجِدَ فِي رَحْلِهِ
فَهُوَ جَرَوْهُ كَذَّاكَ بَخْرِي الظَّالِمِينَ ﴾٧٢﴿ فَبَدَا بِأَوْعِيَتِهِمْ قَبْلَ وَعَاءَ أَخِيهِ
ثُمَّ اسْتَخْرَجَهَا مِنْ وَعَاءِ أَخِيهِ كَذَّاكَ كَذَّاكَ لِيُوسُفَ مَا كَانَ لِيَأْخُذُ أَخَاهُ فِي
دِينِ الْمَلِكِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ نَرَفَعُ دَرَجَتَنِي مَنْ نَشَاءُ وَفَوْقَ كُلِّ ذِي عِلْمٍ
عَلَيْهِ ﴾٧٣﴿ قَالُوا إِنْ يَسْرِقُ فَقَدْ سَرَقَ أَخَاهُ مِنْ قَبْلٍ فَأَسْرَهَا يُوسُفُ
فِي نَقْسِيَهِ وَلَمْ يُبَدِّلْهَا لَهُمْ قَالَ أَنْتُمْ سُرُّ مَكَانًا وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَصْنَعُونَ
قَالُوا يَتَأَبَّهَا الْعَزِيزُ إِنَّهُ لَهُ أَبَا شَيْخًا كَيْرًا فَخُذْ أَحَدَنَا مَكَانًا إِنَّا نَرَكَ
مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴾٧٤﴿ قَالَ مَعَادِ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَأْخُذَ إِلَامَ وَجَدْنَا مَتَعَنًا عِنْهُ إِنَّا إِذَا
أَظَلَّمُوْنَ ﴾٧٥﴿ (سورة يوسف: ٦٩-٧٥)

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- 12:69. When they came into Yoosuf's presence, he lodged his brother with himself [and said]: Verily I am your brother, so do not be saddened by their past actions.
- 12:70. Then when he had given them their provisions, he placed the drinking-cup in his brother's saddlebag. Then a crier called out: O people of the caravan, you are thieves!
- 12:71. They said, turning towards them: What have you lost?
- 12:72. They said: We have lost the king's goblet. Whoever brings it will have a camel-load [of provisions, as a reward]; I guarantee it.
- 12:73. [The brothers] said: By Allah, you know that we did not come to cause mischief in the land, and we are not thieves.
- 12:74. [The Egyptians] said: Then what should the penalty for this be, if you are [found to be] lying?
- 12:75. They said: The penalty should be that the one in whose saddlebag it is found should be enslaved in recompense thereof. Thus do we punish wrongdoers.
- 12:76. So he began with their baggage before his brother's baggage, then he took it [the goblet] out of his brother's baggage. Thus We devised a plan for Yoosuf, for he could not have detained his brother under the king's law, unless Allah so willed. We raise in status whomsoever We will; above each one who is possessed of knowledge is one more knowing.
- 12:77. They said: If he steals, there was a brother of his who stole before him. But Yoosuf kept his thoughts to himself and did not disclose anything to them. He said [to himself]: You are in a worse position; and Allah knows best the truth of what you say.
- 12:78. They said: O ruler of the land, verily he has a father who is elderly and venerable; take one of us, instead of him, for indeed we see that you are a kind man.

12:79. Yoosuf said: Allah forbid that we should take any but the man with whom our property was found, for in that case we should surely be unjust.

﴿When they﴾ that is, the brothers
﴿came into Yoosuf's presence, he lodged his brother﴾, namely his full brother, Binyâmeen, whom he had instructed them to bring, **﴿with himself﴾** and made him join him; he singled him out from among his brothers and told him the real situation.

﴿[and said]: Verily I am your brother, so do not be saddened﴾ that is, grieved **﴿by their past actions﴾**, for the outcome will be good for us. Then he told him what his plan was and the trick he wanted to use so that he would stay with him until the matter was concluded.

﴿Then when he had given them their provisions﴾ that is, when he had weighed out provisions for each of his brothers, including this brother,

﴿he placed the drinking-cup﴾ which was a vessel from which he drank, and also used for measuring **﴿in his brother's saddlebag. Then﴾** they loaded up their luggage, but when they set out, **﴿a crier called out: O people of the caravan, you are thieves!﴾** Perhaps this caller did not know what was really going on.

﴿They﴾ namely the brothers of Yoosuf **﴿said, turning towards them﴾** in order to dispel suspicion, for the thief does not care about anything except getting away from the one from whom he stole, so that he can get away with his theft. But these people turned and came towards them, because they had no concern except to dispel the accusation that had been made against them, so they said: **﴿What have you lost?﴾** And they did not say, "What have we stolen from you?" because they were certain that they were innocent of theft.

﴿They said: We have lost the king's goblet. Whoever brings it will have a camel-load﴾ that is, as a reward for finding it
﴿I guarantee it﴾ – this was said by the caller who was looking for it.

﴿[The brothers] said: By Allah, you know that we did not come to cause mischief in the land﴾ by committing all kinds of sins
﴿and we are not thieves﴾, for stealing is one of the worst kinds of causing mischief in the land. They only swore because they were confident that the Egyptians were aware that they were not causing mischief and were not thieves, as they knew them very well and were aware that they were people of dignity and piety, who could not have committed this theft; those who accused them knew that they could not have done that. This is a more eloquent way of refuting the accusation than saying, “By Allah we did not cause mischief in the land and we did not steal anything.”

﴿[The Egyptians] said: Then what should the penalty for this be, if you are [found to be] lying?﴾ and if it is found in your possession.

﴿They said: The penalty should be that the one in whose saddlebag it is found should be enslaved in recompense thereof﴾ that is, the one in whose saddlebag it is found should become the slave of the owner of the stolen item. According to their religion, if the thief was proven to be guilty, he would become the property of the owner of the stolen wealth. Hence they said: ﴿Thus do we punish wrongdoers﴾.

﴿So he﴾ the inspector ﴿began with their baggage before his brother's baggage﴾, so that there would be no suspicion that it had been done deliberately. When he did not find anything in their baggage, ﴿then he took it [the goblet] out of his brother's baggage﴾. It does not say “he found it” or “his brother stole it”, so as to reflect the reality of the situation.

Having described how Yoosuf accomplished what he wanted to do of keeping his brother with him in such a way that his other brothers would not realise it, Allah says: ﴿Thus We devised a plan for Yoosuf﴾ that is, We made easy for him this plan which enabled him to achieve something that was not blameworthy

﴿for he could not have detained his brother under the king's law﴾ because there was nothing in that law that allowed enslavement of

the thief; rather they had some other penalty in such cases. Therefore if the ruling had been referred to the king's law, Yoosuf would not have been able to keep his brother with him. But he made the ruling come from them, so that he might achieve his aim.

﴿We raise in status whomsoever We will﴾ by means of beneficial knowledge and knowledge of ways and means of achieving desired goals, as We raised Yoosuf in status

﴿above each one who is possessed of knowledge is one more knowing﴾. Above each one who has knowledge is one who is more knowledgeable than him, until knowledge ends with the Knower of the unseen and the seen.

When the brothers of Yoosuf saw what happened, ﴿They said: If he﴾ – namely this brother – ﴿steals﴾, there is nothing surprising about that, because ﴿there was a brother of his who stole before him﴾. They were referring to Yoosuf (); what they meant by saying this was to declare their own innocence. In other words: this one and his brother may commit acts of theft, but they are not our full brothers.

These words implied a great deal of disparagement, but Yoosuf kept his thoughts to himself ﴿and did not disclose anything to them﴾ that is, he did not respond to their words in a way that would be displeasing to them; rather he restrained his anger and kept it to himself.

﴿He said [to himself]: You are in a worse position﴾ because you blamed us when you are worse than us in that regard

﴿and Allah knows best the truth of what you say﴾ that is, He knows better than others, as you are accusing us of theft when Allah knows that we are innocent.

Then they tried to appease him, hoping that he would let their brother go with them. ﴿They said: O ruler of the land, verily he has a father who is elderly and venerable﴾ and he cannot bear to be apart from him; it is too difficult for him to be separated from him.

﴿take one of us, instead of him, for indeed we see that you are a kind man﴾, so be kind to us and to our father by doing that.

But ﴿Yoosuf said: Allah forbid that we should take any but the man with whom our property was found﴾ that is, this would be wrongdoing on our part, if we were to punish an innocent person for the crime of the one with whom we found our property. He did not say “the one who stole”, in order to avoid lying.

﴿for in that case﴾, if we punished someone other than the one in whose saddlebag it was found

﴿we should surely be unjust﴾ as we would be imposing punishment on one who was innocent.



﴿فَلَمَّا أَنْتَنُشُوا مِنْهُ خَلَصُوا بِعِيشَا قَالَ كَيْرُهُمْ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ أَبَاكُمْ قَدْ أَخْذَ عَيْنَكُمْ مَوْقِيْنَ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَمِنْ قَبْلِ مَا فَرَطْتُمْ فِي يُوسُفَ فَلَنْ أَبْرَأَ الْأَرْضَ حَتَّى يَأْذَنَ لِي أَبِي أَوْ يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْيَ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحَكَمِينَ ﴾٨٣﴿ أَرْجِعُوكُمْ إِلَيْكُمْ فَقُولُوا يَكْبَانَا إِنَّكَ أَبْنَكَ سَرَقَ وَمَا شَهَدْنَا إِلَّا بِمَا عَلِمْنَا وَمَا كُثُرَ لِغَيْبِ حَفْظِنَا ﴾٨٤﴿ وَسَلِّ الْقَرْيَةَ إِلَيَّ كُثُرَ فِيهَا وَالْعِيرَ إِلَيَّ أَقْلَنَا فِيهَا وَإِنَّا لَصَدِيقُونَ ﴾٨٥﴿ قَالَ بَلْ سَوْتُ لَكُمْ أَنْ شَكْمُ أَمْرًا فَصَبَرْ جَيْلَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَنِي بِهِمْ جَيْعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴾٨٦﴾ (سورة يوسف: ٨٣-٨٠)

- 12:80. When they despaired of him [responding to their request], they conferred privately. The eldest of them said: Do you not know that your father took a solemn oath from you, by Allah, and before this you failed with regard to Yoosuf? Therefore I will not leave this land until my father gives me leave or Allah decides for me, and He is the best to decide.
- 12:81. Go back to your father and say: O our father, indeed your son has committed theft; we can only tell you what we saw and we could not guard against what we could not foresee.

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- 12:82. Ask in the town where we have been and ask the caravan in which we returned; we are indeed telling the truth.
- 12:83. Ya'qoob said: Nay; rather your souls have tempted you to do something evil. But I will bear this patiently, and in good grace. Perhaps Allah will bring them all back to me, for verily He is the All-Knowing, Most Wise.
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When the brothers of Yoosuf despaired of him allowing them to take their brother back with them,

﴿they conferred privately﴾ that is, they got together on their own, with no one else present, and started to discuss the issue amongst themselves.

﴿The eldest of them said: Do you not know that your father took a solemn oath from you, by Allah﴾ that you would look after him and that you would bring him back, unless you were overwhelmed by circumstances?

﴿and before this you failed with regard to Yoosuf﴾. So you did two things: your previous failure with regard to Yoosuf, and your failure to bring his brother back later on. I am too ashamed to face my father,
﴿Therefore I will not leave this land﴾ that is, I will stay in this land and will remain here

﴿until my father gives me leave or Allah decides for me﴾ that is, He decrees that I should come on my own or with my brother

﴿and He is the best to decide﴾.

Then he advised them what to say to their father. He said:
﴿Go back to your father and say: O our father, indeed your son has committed theft﴾ that is, he has been detained for theft and we could not bring him to you despite our best efforts. We are not telling you about something of which we have no knowledge; rather we can only tell you what we saw, because we saw the goblet taken out of his saddlebag
﴿and we could not guard against what we could not foresee﴾ that is, if we had known what we could not foresee, we would not have been

eager and we would not have insisted that he should go with us, and we would not have given you our solemn oath. But we did not think that the matter would end like this.

﴿Ask if you doubt what we say (in the town where we have been and ask the caravan in which we returned) for they are aware of what we are telling you
 ﴿we are indeed telling the truth﴾ and we are not lying or changing the story; rather this is what really happened.

When they went back to their father and told him this news, he was very upset; his grief intensified and he accused them again about this matter, as he had accused them in the first case.

﴿Ya'qoob said: Nay; rather your souls have tempted you to do something evil. But I will bear this patiently, and in good grace﴾ that is, he resorted to patience and good grace that is not accompanied by discontent, panic or complaints to people. Then he began to hope for relief, when he saw that things had got worse and his distress had become severe. Therefore he said: ﴿Perhaps Allah will bring them all back to me﴾ namely Yoosuf, Binyâmeen and their eldest brother who had stayed in Egypt.

﴿for verily He is the All-Knowing﴾ Who knows my situation and my need for His relief and favour, and my desperate need for His kindness
 ﴿Most Wise﴾ Who has decreed for everything a timescale and an end for all things, according to His divine wisdom.



﴿وَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَتَسَفَّرُ عَلَى يُوسُفَ وَأَتِيَّصَتْ عَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْحُزْنِ فَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ
 ﴾ قَالُوا تَالَّهِ تَفَتَّأْرِيْخَ دَكْرُ يُوسُفَ حَقَّ تَكُونَ حَرَصًا أَوْ تَكُونَ مِنَ
 الْأَهْلِكِينَ ﴾ قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَشْكُوْبَأَنِي وَحْزِنِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَأَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا
 تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ (سورة يوسف: ٨٤-٨٦)

- 12:84. And he turned away from them, and said: Alas for Yoosuf! And his eyes became white with grief, and he was burdened with silent sorrow.
- 12:85. They said: By Allah, you will not cease to remember Yoosuf until your health is ruined or you die.
- 12:86. He said: I only complain of my distress and sorrow to Allah, and I know from Allah what you do not know.

That is, Ya'qoob (ﷺ) turned away from his sons after they told him this news, and he was very sad and grieved. His eyes turned white because of the grief and sorrow in his heart that caused him to weep a great deal.

﴿and said: Alas for Yoosuf!﴾ That is, his old and deep-rooted sorrow and longing, that had remained hidden, now rose to the surface and this calamity, which was minor in comparison to the first calamity, reminded him of that earlier calamity. His sons, who were surprised at his state, said to him:

﴿By Allah, you will not cease to remember Yoosuf﴾ that is, you keep on remembering Yoosuf in all situations
 ﴿until your health is ruined﴾ that is, until you lose all power and become unable to move or talk
 ﴿or you die﴾.

﴿He﴾ that is, Ya'qoob ﴿said: I only complain of my distress and sorrow﴾ that are in my heart ﴿to Allah﴾ alone, not to you or to any other people. So say whatever you want.

﴿and I know from Allah what you do not know﴾, that He will return them to me and I will have the joy of being reunited with them.



﴿يَنْبَئُ أَذْهَبُوا فَتَحَسَّسُوا مِنْ يُوْسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ وَلَا تَأْتِشُوا مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يَأْتِشُ مِنْ رَوْحَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴾AV﴿ فَمَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَيْنَهُ قَالُوا يَاتِيهَا الْعَزِيزُ

مَسْنَانَا وَهُنَّا الظَّرُورُ وَجَئْنَا بِضَيْعَةٍ مُّزْجَنَةٍ فَأَوْفِ لَنَا الْكِيلَ وَتَصَدَّقَ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ الْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ ﴿٨٨-٨٧﴾ (سورة يوسف)

- 12:87. O my sons, go and seek news of Yoosuf and his brother, and do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Verily no one despairs of the mercy of Allah but the disbelieving people.
- 12:88. When they came into his presence, they said: O ruler of the land, hardship has befallen us and our family, and we have brought merchandise of scant worth. So give us full measure, and be charitable to us, for Allah rewards the charitable.

Ya‘qoob (ﷺ) said to his sons: «O my sons, go and seek news of Yoosuf and his brother» that is, try hard to look for them «and do not despair of the mercy of Allah» for hope makes a person try hard to achieve what he hopes for, whereas despair leads to apathy and giving up. The best that people can hope for is the grace, kindness and mercy of Allah.

«Verily no one despairs of the mercy of Allah but the disbelieving people» for – because of their disbelief – they think it unlikely that He will bestow mercy upon them and they think His mercy is far off, so do not be like the disbelievers.

This indicates that a person’s hope of the mercy of Allah will be commensurate with the level of his faith.

So they went, and «When they came into his presence» that is, when they entered upon Yoosuf «they said», beseeching him:

«O ruler of the land, hardship has befallen us and our family, and we have brought merchandise of scant worth. So give us full measure, and be charitable to us» that is, we and our family are in desperate need «and we have brought merchandise of scant worth» that is, merchandise that no one is interested in and is of little value

﴿So give us full measure﴾ that is, even though the goods we offer do not match what we seek, be charitable to us by giving more than is our due

﴿for Allah rewards the charitable﴾ in this world and the hereafter.

When they had finished their plea for help and expressed how desperate they were, Yoosuf was very moved and felt sorry for them, and he told them who he was and rebuked them.



﴿قَالَ هَلْ عِلْمُكُمْ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ بِيُوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ جَنَاحُونَ ﴾١٩١ ﴿قَالُوا أَئْنَاكَ لَآتَنَا يُوسُفَ قَالَ أَنَا يُوسُفُ وَهَذَا أَخِيٌّ قَدْ مَرَّ بِنَا اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّهُ مَنْ يَتَّقِي وَيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيقُ بِأَجْرِ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴾١٩٢ ﴿قَالُوا تَالَّهِ لَقَدْ مَاءِرَكَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنَّ كُثُرَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴾١٩٣ ﴿قَالَ لَا تَثْرِيبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ يَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ أَرَحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ ﴾١٩٤﴾ (سورة يوسف: ٩٢-٩٤)

- 12:89. He said: Do you know what you did to Yoosuf and his brother, when you were ignorant?
- 12:90. They said: Could it be that you are Yoosuf? He said: I am Yoosuf, and this is my brother. Allah has indeed been gracious to us. Verily, whoever fears Allah and is patient, Allah will not cause the reward of those who do good to be lost.
- 12:91. They said: By Allah, verily Allah has favoured you above us, and we were indeed in the wrong.
- 12:92. He said: There is no reproach against you this day. May Allah forgive you, for He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.

﴿He said: Do you know what you did to Yoosuf and his brother﴾ – as for Yoosuf, it is clear what they did to him; as for his brother, it

may have been – and Allah knows best – what they said about him: ﴿If he steals, there was a brother of his who stole before him﴾ (12: 77), or it may have been the incident that separated him from his father, of which they were the cause.

﴿when you were ignorant﴾ this is a kind of excuse for their misbehaviour, attributing it to their ignorance, or it may be a rebuke to them, because they did the deeds of ignorant people even though that was not befitting for them.

They realised that the one who was addressing them was Yoosuf, and they said: ﴿Could it be that you are Yoosuf? He said: I am Yoosuf, and this is my brother. Allah has indeed been gracious to us﴾ by blessing us with piety and fear of Allah, and establishing us in the land. That is because ﴿Verily, whoever fears Allah and is patient﴾ that is, he avoids doing what Allah has prohibited and is patient in bearing pain and calamity and in complying with the commands, ﴿Allah will not cause the reward of those who do good to be lost﴾ for these things are part of doing good, and Allah will not cause the reward of those who do good to be lost.

﴿They said: By Allah, verily Allah has favoured you above us﴾ that is, He has favoured you above us in terms of sublime characteristics and attitude, and beautiful traits, but we mistreated you in the worst manner, and we strove to cause you harm and keep you away from your father. But Allah ﴿did﴾ favoured you and enabled you to attain what you wanted

﴿and we were indeed in the wrong﴾ – this was a clear and blunt admission on their part of the offence that they had committed against Yoosuf.

But Yoosuf ﴿رضي الله عنه﴾ said to them, out of generosity and kindness: ﴿There is no reproach against you this day﴾ that is, I will not reproach you or blame you

﴿May Allah forgive you, for He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy﴾. So he forgave them completely, without shaming them by mentioning their previous sins, and he prayed for forgiveness and mercy for them. This is the ultimate kindness and goodness that only comes from the best of people, the elite of the chosen.



﴿أَذْهَبُوا بِقَمِيمِي هَذَا فَالْقُوَّهُ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ أَيْ يَأْتِ بَصِيرًا وَأَنْوَفٍ بِأَهْلِكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴾٣٧﴿ وَلَمَّا فَصَلَّتِ الْعِيرُ قَالَ أَبُوهُمْ إِنِّي لَأَجِدُ رِيحَ يُوسُفَ لَوْلَا أَنْ تُفَيَّدُونِ ﴾٣٨﴿ قَالُوا تَاللهِ إِنَّكَ لِفِي ضَلَالٍ كَالْفَادِيرِ ﴾٣٩﴿ فَلَمَّا أَنْ جَاءَ الْبَشِيرُ الْقُسْهُ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ، فَأَرَتَهُ بَصِيرًا قَالَ اللَّهُمَّ أَقْلِ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾٤٠﴿ قَالُوا يَا ابْنَاهُ أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَنَا ذُنُوبِنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا حَاطِئِينَ ﴾٤١﴿ قَالَ سَوْفَ أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ رَبِّ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴾٤٢﴿ (سورة يوسف: ٩٨-٩٣)

- 12:93. Take this shirt of mine and place it over my father's face; he will recover his sight. Then come [back] to me with all of your family.
- 12:94. When the caravan set out, their father said: Verily I can smell the fragrance of Yoosuf, even though you may think me senile.
- 12:95. They said: By Allah, you are still lost in your old delusions!
- 12:96. Then when the bearer of glad tidings came, he placed [the shirt] over his face, and he [immediately] recovered his sight. He said: Did I not say to you, I know from Allah what you do not know?
- 12:97. They said: Our father, pray to Allah to forgive us our sins, for we were indeed in the wrong.
- 12:98. He said: I shall ask my Lord to forgive you, for verily He is the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Yoosuf (ﷺ) said to his brothers: «Take this shirt of mine and place it over my father's face; he will recover his sight» because every disease is treated with its opposite; this shirt held traces of the fragrance of Yoosuf, grief and longing for whom had taken deep root in his father's heart, to an extent known only to Allah, but when his father smelled it, his heart found relief and his sight was restored. There was divine wisdom in that which people do not fully understand, but Yoosuf was aware of that.

«Then come [back] to me with all of your family» that is, your children and your clan, and all those who are connected to you, so that the reunion will be complete and hardship and lack of provision will be removed from you.

«When the caravan set out» from Egypt, heading towards Palestine, Ya'qoob smelled the fragrance of the shirt and said: «Verily I can smell the fragrance of Yoosuf, even though you may think me senile» that is, you make fun of me and think I do not know what I am saying. That is because he realised that they were surprised at what had happened to make him say that, and what he expected from them did indeed happen, as they said:

«By Allah, you are still lost in your old delusions!» That is, you are still like one who is lost at sea, and you do not know what you are saying.

«Then when the bearer of glad tidings» that Yoosuf and his brothers and their father would soon be reunited

«came, he placed [the shirt] over his face, and he [immediately] recovered his sight» that is, his sight was restored, after his eyes had turned white with grief, and he said to those of his children and his family who were present, who had rejected his view and been surprised at it, triumphantly rejoicing in the blessing that Allah had bestowed upon him: «Did I not say to you, I know from Allah what you do not know?», as I was hoping to meet Yoosuf, and I was expecting relief from worry, distress and grief.

Then they admitted their sin, and rightfully so: «They said: Our father, pray to Allah to forgive us our sins, for we were indeed in the wrong» when we did what we did to you.

«He said» hastening to respond to their request: «I shall ask my Lord to forgive you, for verily He is the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful» and I hope that He will forgive you and have mercy upon you, showering His mercy upon you. It was said that he delayed seeking forgiveness for them until the time just before dawn, which is the best time to pray for forgiveness and the time when such prayer is more likely to be answered.



﴿فَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَى يُوسُفَ مَا وَيْدَ إِلَيْهِ أَبُوئِيهِ وَقَالَ أَدْخُلُوا مَصْرَ إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا شَاءَ﴾ (٩٩) وَرَفَعَ أَبُوئِيهِ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَخَرُّوا لَهُ سُجْدَةً وَقَالَ يَكْبَتْ هَذَا تَأْوِيلُ رُؤْيَايِّنِي مِن قَبْلٍ قَدْ جَعَلَهَا رَبِّي حَقًا وَقَدْ أَخْسَنَ بِإِذْ أَخْرَجَنِي مِنَ السِّجْنِ وَجَاهَ بِكُمْ مِنَ الْبَدْوِ مِنْ بَعْدِ أَن نَزَّلَ الشَّيْطَانُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ إِخْرَقَتْ إِنَّ رَبِّي لَطِيفٌ لِمَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾ (١٠٠) (سورة يوسف: ٩٩-١٠٠)

- 12:99. Then when they came into Yoosuf's presence, he lodged his parents with himself and said: Enter Egypt, if Allah wills, safe and secure.
- 12:100. He seated his parents in the highest place of honour, and they fell down in prostration before him. He said: O my father, this is the fulfilment of my dream of old. My Lord has made it come true. He has indeed been gracious to me, when He rescued me from prison and brought you here from the desert, after Shayṭân had sown discord between me and my brothers. Verily my Lord is gracious to whomever He will, for He is the All-Knowing, Most Wise.

﴿Then when﴾ Ya‘qoob and his sons, and all their families, had made preparations and travelled from their land to go and join Yoosuf in Egypt and live there, when they reached him and ﴿came into Yoosuf’s presence, he lodged his parents with himself﴾ that is, he made them join him and he singled them out to be close to him, showing them a great deal of respect, kindness, honour and veneration ﴿and said﴾ to all of his family: ﴿Enter Egypt, if Allah wills, safe and secure﴾ from all harm and fear. So they entered Egypt in that happy state and were delivered from hardship and misery, and they attained happiness and joy.

﴿He seated his parents in the highest place of honour﴾ that is, on the king’s throne, where al-‘Azeez sat

﴿and they fell down in prostration before him﴾ that is, his father, his mother and his siblings fell down in prostration before him by way of respect and honour.

﴿He said﴾, when he saw that and he saw them prostrating to him: ﴿O my father, this is the fulfilment of my dream of old﴾ when he saw eleven stars and the sun and moon prostrating to him. This was the fulfilment of that dream, when it finally came to pass.

﴿My Lord has made it come true﴾ and He did not make it a jumbled, confusing dream.

﴿He has indeed been gracious to me﴾ and very kind
 ﴿when He rescued me from prison and brought you here from the desert﴾. This is an example of his gentle and eloquent talk, as he mentioned his situation in prison, but he did not mention his situation in the well, because he had completely forgiven his brothers. Therefore he did not mention their wrongdoing and he described their coming from the desert as being an example of Allah’s kindness to him.

He did not say: Hunger and hardship have brought you here, and he did not say: Allah has been gracious to you. Rather he said: ﴿He has indeed been gracious to me﴾, pointing out that the divine kindness was directed to him. Blessed be the One Who bestows His mercy

upon whomever He will of His slaves, and He grants mercy to them from Him, for He is the Bestower.

﴿after Shaytân had sown discord between me and my brothers﴾. He did not say: The Shaytân misled my brothers; rather it was as if the sin and ignorance were on both parts. Praise be to Allah Who humiliated and defeated the Shaytân and brought us together after this difficult separation.

﴿Verily my Lord is gracious to whomever He will﴾ He causes His kindness to reach His slave from where he does not expect it, and He causes him to attain high status by means of things that he dislikes ﴿for He is the All-Knowing﴾ Who knows the visible and hidden aspects of all things and the secrets in people's hearts.

﴿Most Wise﴾ in doing what is appropriate and causing events to occur at decreed times.



﴿رَبِّيْ قَدْ أَتَيْتَنِي مِنَ الْمُلْكِ وَعَلَمْتَنِي مِنْ تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ فَاطَّرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ أَنْتَ وَلِيٌّ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ تُوفِّنِي مُسْلِمًا وَالْحِقْنِي بِالصَّنْلِحِينَ﴾

(سورة يوسف: ١٠١) 

12:101. O my Lord, You have indeed given me some authority and taught me something of the interpretation of dreams. O Originator of the heavens and the earth, You are my Protector in this world and in the hereafter. Cause me to die as a Muslim [submitting to Your will], and join me with the righteous.

When Allah gave Yoosuf power and authority in the land, and reunited him with his parents and brothers, and after Allah granted him great knowledge, he said, acknowledging with gratitude the blessing of Allah and asking Him to make him steadfast in Islam:

﴿O my Lord, You have indeed given me some authority﴾ – as he was put in charge of the storehouses of the land, to manage as he saw fit, and he was an important adviser to the king
 ﴿and taught me something of the interpretation of dreams﴾ – the Arabic wording may refer to the interpretation of the revealed Books, as well as the interpretation of dreams and other kinds of knowledge
 ﴿O Originator of the heavens and the earth, You are my Protector in this world and in the hereafter. Cause me to die as a Muslim [submitting to Your will]﴾ that is, make me always adhere to Islam and be steadfast therein, until You cause me to die as a Muslim. This supplication was not by way of seeking to hasten death.
 ﴿and join me with the righteous﴾ namely the Prophets, the righteous, the pure and the chosen.



﴿ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهُ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَنْهُمْ إِذْ أَجْمَعُوا أَنْهُمْ وَهُمْ يَنكِرُونَ﴾
 (سورة يوسف: ١٠٢)

12:102. This is an account of the unseen [the distant past], which We reveal to you [O Muhammad]; you were not with them when they agreed upon their plot and they were scheming.

When Allah told this story to Muhammad (*salla Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* – blessings and peace be upon him), Allah said to him:
 ﴿This﴾ namely the story that We have related to you
 ﴿is an account of the unseen [the distant past]﴾. Were it not for Our sending revelation to you, this great story could not have reached you, because you were not present with them
 ﴿when they﴾ namely the brothers of Yoosuf
 ﴿agreed upon their plot and they were scheming﴾ against him, when they pledged to separate him and his father, and they were in a

situation where no one could see them except Allah (ﷻ) and no one could know about it unless Allah informed him of it.

This is like what Allah (ﷻ) said when He told the story of Moosâ and what happened to him, and mentioned the situation that people had no way of knowing except by His revelation:

﴿You were not there on the western side [of the mountain] when We decreed for Moosâ the commission, nor did you witness that event.﴾
(al-Qasas 28: 44)

This is the clearest indication that what the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) brought is true.



﴿وَمَا أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ وَلَوْحَدَتْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَمَا تَنَاهُمْ عَنِيهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَكَانُوا مِنْ أَهْلِيَّةٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يَمْرُونَ عَلَيْهَا وَهُمْ عَنْهَا مُغَرِّضُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُمْ بِاللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُمْ مُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ أَفَأَمْنَى أَنْ تَأْتِيهِمْ عَذَابُ اللَّهِ أَوْ تَأْتِيهِمُ الْسَّاعَةُ بَقْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾﴾
(Surah Yousuf: 103-107)

- 12:103. But most of humankind will not believe, no matter how eagerly you desire it.
- 12:104. No reward do you ask of them for this. It is but a reminder to the worlds.
- 12:105. How many are the signs in the heavens and the earth which they pass by without paying them any heed!
- 12:106. And most of them believe not in Allah except that they ascribe partners to Him.
- 12:107. Do they feel secure that the overwhelming scourge of Allah's punishment will not come upon them, or that the Hour will not come upon them suddenly when they least expect it?

Here Allah (ﷻ) says to His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ): ﴿But most of humankind will not believe, no matter how eagerly you desire it﴾, for their thoughts and aims have become corrupt, so the eagerness of those who would sincerely advise them is of no avail, even if there are no impediments to guidance, in the sense that those would-be advisers are teaching them and calling them to that which is good for them and will ward off harm from them without asking for any reward or compensation, and even if they establish all evidence and proof that points to the truthfulness of their message. Hence Allah says:

﴿No reward do you ask of them for this. It is but a reminder to the worlds﴾ so that they may remember that which will benefit them and thus do it, and that which will harm them and thus refrain from it.

﴿How many are the signs in the heavens and the earth﴾ that point to the oneness of Allah ﴿which they pass by without paying them any heed﴾.

Yet despite that, even if there is some belief on the part of some of them, ﴿most of them believe not in Allah except that they ascribe partners to Him﴾. Even if they affirm the Lordship of Allah (ﷻ) and acknowledge that He is the Creator, Provider and Controller of all things, they still ascribe partners to Allah in His divinity and oneness. For those who have reached this state (of ascribing partners to Allah), there is nothing left for them but that the punishment should befall them and come upon them suddenly whilst they feel safe. Hence Allah says:

﴿Do they feel secure﴾ that is, do those who do these deeds and turn away from the signs of Allah feel safe ﴿that the overwhelming scourge of Allah's punishment will not come upon them﴾ that is, a punishment that will overwhelm them all and eradicate them
 ﴿or that the Hour will not come upon them suddenly when they least expect it﴾ that is, for they deserve that, so let them repent to Allah and refrain from anything that may be a cause of their punishment.



﴿ قُلْ هَذِهِ وَسِيلَةٌ أَذْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي وَسَبَخْنَ اللَّهُ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴾ (١٠٩) وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقَرْئَةِ أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عِقْبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَدَارُ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِلَّذِينَ آتَقْنَا أَنَّفَالًا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴾ (١١٠) (سورة يوسف)

- 12:108. Say [O Muhammad]: This is my way; I call to Allah on the basis of clear evidence – I and those who follow me. Glory be to Allah! And I am not one of those who ascribe partners to Allah.
- 12:109. We did not send before you any but men to whom We gave revelation, from among the people of the cities. Have they not travelled in the land and seen what was the fate of those who came before them? But the abode of the hereafter is better for those who fear Allah. Will you not then understand?

Here Allah says to His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ): «Say» to the people

«This is my way» that is, my way to which I call; it is the way that leads to Allah and to paradise, the way that is based on knowledge of the truth, acting upon it and giving it precedence, and based on devoting worship to Allah alone with no partner or associate.

«I call to Allah» that is, I urge and encourage people to turn to their Lord, and I warn them against that which keeps them away from Him. Moreover, I do that «on the basis of clear evidence» for my religion, that is, on the basis of knowledge and certainty beyond any shadow of a doubt, about which there are no reservations. And, likewise, «those who follow me» also call to Allah as I do, on the basis of certainty. So «Glory be to Allah», and exalted be He far above what is attributed to Him that is not befitting to His Majesty or is contrary to His perfection.

﴿And I am not one of those who ascribe partners to Allah﴾ in any of my affairs; rather I worship Allah, devoting my worship sincerely to Him alone.

﴿We did not send before you any but men﴾ that is, We did not send angels or any other type of creature, so why then do your people find it strange that you are sent as a Messenger, and claim that you are no better than them? But you have a good example in the Messengers who were sent before you.

﴿to whom We gave revelation, from among the people of the cities﴾ that is, they were not from the desert; rather they were from among the people of the cities, who are more rational and more mature in thinking, so that their case and their message would be clear.

﴿Have they not travelled in the land﴾ if they do not believe what you say ﴿and seen what was the fate of those who came before them﴾, and how Allah destroyed them for their disbelief; so beware lest you do what they did and thus the same fate befall you as befell them.

﴿But the abode of the hereafter﴾ that is, paradise and what it contains of eternal delights

﴿is better for those who fear Allah﴾ by obeying His commands and avoiding what He prohibits, for the delights of this world are imperfect, tainted and fleeting, whereas the delights of the hereafter are perfect, complete and never-ending; rather they are eternal and will forever increase and continue:

﴿...a gift without end.﴾ (*Hood 11: 108*)

﴿Will you not then understand?﴾ that is, do you not have reason with which to give precedence to that which is better over that which is inferior?

* * *

﴿حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَسْتَيْسَ الرُّسُلُ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ كُشِّبُوا جَاءَهُمْ نَصْرًا فَنُجِّيَ مَنْ شَاءَ وَلَا يُرَدُّ بَأْسُنَا عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ۝ لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبَرَةٌ لِّأُولَئِكَ﴾

أَلَا إِنَّمَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُقْرَئَ وَلَكِنْ تَصْدِيقًا لِّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْعِيلًا
 كُلُّ شَقِّ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾ (سورة يوسف: ١١٠-١١١)

- 12:110. Then when the Messengers despaired and [the people] thought that the promise [made to the Messengers] was false, Our help came to them, and those who We willed were saved. Our punishment is never averted from the transgressors.
- 12:111. In their stories there is a lesson for people of understanding. This [the Qur'an] is not a fabricated tale, but a confirmation of [the scriptures] that came before it, an explanation of all things, and guidance and mercy to people who believe.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He sent the noble Messengers, but the wicked transgressors disbelieved in them, and that Allah gave them respite so that they might believe; He continued to give them respite until they reached such a high degree of harshness towards the Messengers that the latter, despite their complete certainty and strong belief in the promise and warnings of Allah, began to feel a kind of despair and a kind of faltering in knowledge and certainty. When matters reached that state, «Our help came to them, and those who We willed were saved» namely the Messengers and their followers. «Our punishment is never averted from the transgressors» that is, Our punishment is never averted from those who committed offences and transgressed the limits set by Allah.

«Then man will have no power to help himself nor anyone to help him.» (*at-Tāriq* 86: 10)

«In their stories» that is, in the stories of the Prophets and Messengers with their people «there is a lesson for people of understanding» that is, they learn from them, as the stories speak of both good and bad people, and explain that those who do what they did will get what they got of honour or humiliation, respectively. They also learn from these stories

what Allah has of attributes of perfection and great wisdom, and that Allah is the One Who alone should be worshipped, with no partner or associate.

﴿This [the Qur'an] is not a fabricated tale﴾ that is, the Qur'an – in which Allah tells you these stories of the unseen – is not fabricated tales

﴿but﴾ it is ﴿a confirmation of [the scriptures] that came before it﴾ namely the previous Books; it is in harmony with them and testifies to their truth

﴿an explanation of all things﴾ that people need to know of the fundamental and minor issues of faith and of proof and evidence.

﴿and guidance and mercy to people who believe﴾ for they – because of what they gain from it of knowledge of the truth to which they give precedence – attain guidance, and by what they attain of reward in this world and the hereafter, they will also attain mercy.

Note:

Here we will list some of the lessons that may be derived from this great story, at the beginning of which Allah says: ﴿We relate to you [O Muhammad] the best of stories﴾ (12: 3) and He says: ﴿Verily in Yoosuf and his brothers there are lessons for those who enquire﴾ (12: 7) and at the end of this story, He says: ﴿In their stories there is a lesson for people of understanding﴾ (12: 111).

Here we will list some lessons other than those which have been mentioned above:

- This story is one of the best and clearest of stories, because it moves from one situation to another, from trial to trial, from trial to blessing, from humiliation to honour, from slavery to a position of authority, from separation and fragmentation to reunion and harmony, from sorrow to joy, from ease to hardship, from hardship to ease, from restriction to abundance, from denial to admission. Blessed be the One Who told the story and told it well, making it abundantly clear.

- It shows that there is a basis for dream interpretation and that knowledge of dream interpretation is one of the important branches of knowledge that Allah gives to whomever He will among His slaves. What this knowledge is mostly based on is connection and similarity in names and attributes. In the dream that Yoosuf saw, the sun, moon and stars were prostrating to him, and the connection here was that these lights were the adornment and beauty of heaven, and the sky is useful because of them. Similarly, the Prophets and scholars are the adornment and beauty of the earth, and by them people are guided in the darkness as they are guided by the lights (of the heavenly bodies mentioned above). Moreover, his father and mother were his origin, and his brothers were branches that stemmed from them, so it was appropriate that the origin should be greater in illumination and size than that which stemmed from it. Therefore the sun represented his mother, the moon represented his father and the stars represented his brothers. Moreover, the Arabic word for sun (*shams*)² is feminine, therefore it represented his mother. The words for moon (*qamar*) and stars (*kawâkib*) are masculine, therefore they represented his father and his brothers. It is also appropriate that the one who prostrates respects and venerates the one to whom he prostrates, and the one who is prostrated to is respected and venerated. Therefore this indicated that Yoosuf would be respected and honoured by his parents and brothers, which necessitated that he would be chosen and favoured in terms of knowledge and attributes that would lead to him being thus venerated and respected. Hence his father said to him: «Thus your Lord will choose you and teach you the interpretation of dreams and events» (12: 6).

² Wherever possible, Arabic terms have been translated into English. In cases where we have chosen to retain the Arabic, the transliterated word or phrase is shown in italics the first time it appears in the text. The term is also defined in the glossary found at the end of this book. (Editor)

In the case of the dreams of the two young men, his interpretation with regard to the first dream, in which the person saw himself pressing grapes for wine, was based on the fact that the one who presses the grapes is usually a servant to someone else, and that pressing is done for the sake of another person. Therefore Yoosuf interpreted the dream as he did, and told him that he would pour wine for his master, which implied that he would get out of prison.

In the case of the one who dreamt that he was carrying bread on his head from which the birds were eating, he interpreted it as referring to the skin and flesh of his head, and his brains, and that what was carried would be exposed to the birds in such a way that the birds would be able to eat from his head. From his situation, he realised that he would be killed and crucified after his death, and his body would be left out for the birds so that they could eat from his head, which would only occur in the case of crucifixion after execution.

He interpreted the king's dream of the cows and ears of corn as referring to years of plenty and years of drought. The connection in this case is that the people's situation and interests are tied to those of the king; if his situation is good or bad then their situation will be likewise. Similarly, the people's well-being and livelihood is connected to the yield of crops.

With regard to cows (oxen), they are used to till the soil and bring water to it, and if the yield is good they grow fat, but if there is drought, they grow lean. In years of abundance the ears of corn are plentiful and green, but at times of drought they are few and dry; they are the best crop that land may produce.

- This story offers evidence for the truthfulness of the prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ), as he told this long story to his people, although he had not read the scriptures of earlier nations or studied with anyone. His people saw him living among them,

morning and evening, and they knew that he was unlettered and could neither read nor write. But this story is in accordance with what is mentioned in the previous Books, although he was not with them when they agreed upon their plot and they were scheming (12: 102).

- We should keep away from the causes of evil and conceal what we fear, because Ya‘qoob said to Yoosuf: ﴿O my son, say nothing of this dream to your brothers, lest they plot evil against you﴾ (12: 5).
- It is permissible to tell a person something that may upset him by way of advice, because Ya‘qoob said to him: ﴿lest they plot evil against you﴾ (12: 5).
- The blessing that Allah bestows upon a person is also a blessing for anyone who is connected to him of the members of his household, his relatives and his friends, and they may get what he gets because of that, as Ya‘qoob said, explaining the dream of Yoosuf: ﴿Thus your Lord will choose you and teach you the interpretation of dreams and events, and He will complete His favour to you and to the family of Ya‘qoob﴾ (12: 6). When the blessing was completed for Yoosuf, the family of Ya‘qoob also attained honour and power in the land, and were granted happiness and joy, and that was because of Yoosuf.
- Justice is required in all affairs, not only in the way in which the ruler treats his people or anything less than that; it is even required in the way a father treats his children in terms of love, giving of gifts, and so on. Not treating them equally will lead to trouble for the father and will cause problems. Therefore when Ya‘qoob gave precedence to Yoosuf in terms of love, and preferred him over his brothers, they did what they did, which led to bad consequences for themselves and for their father and brothers.

- This story contains a warning of the bad consequences of sin, and that one sin may lead to many other sins; one sin cannot be committed unless many others were committed before it. When the brothers of Yoosuf wanted to separate him from his father, they used various kinds of tricks to achieve that; they told lies on several occasions, and they forged the evidence of the blood-stained shirt and came weeping in order to deceive their father. It is not far-fetched to say that perhaps they had discussed the matter a great deal, and perhaps that discussion continued until they met Yoosuf again, and the more they discussed it, the more lies and fabrications there were about what happened. This is the negative consequences of sin and the effects that result from it both before and after it is done.
- What matters is having a good end, not having a bad start. The sons of Ya'qoob (ﷺ) did what they did in the beginning, which was one of the gravest and most blameworthy of deeds, but in the end they repented sincerely and attained complete forgiveness from their father and from Yoosuf, who prayed for forgiveness and mercy for them. If a person gives up his rights and forgives another, then Allah is the best of those who show mercy.

Therefore – according to the more correct opinion – they were Prophets, because Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...We sent revelation to Ibrâheem, Ismâ'eel, Is-hâq, Ya'qoob and his sons...﴾ (*an-Nisâ' 4: 163*)

This refers to the twelve sons of Ya'qoob and their offspring. This is supported by the fact that Yoosuf saw them in his dream as bright stars, and stars give light and guidance, which are attributes of the Prophets; if they were not Prophets, then they were rightly guided scholars.

- In this story we also see that Allah blessed Yoosuf (ﷺ) with knowledge, forbearance and noble characteristics; he called

people to Allah and to His religion, and he forgave his brothers who had wronged him, on his own initiative, and he completed that by not blaming or reproaching them. Then he honoured his parents greatly and treated his brothers – and indeed all people – with kindness.

- Some evils are less serious than others, and committing the lesser of two evils is preferable to committing the greater. When the brothers of Yoosuf agreed to either kill or banish him, one of them said: ﴿Do not kill Yoosuf; but if you must do something, throw him into the hidden depths of a well﴾ (12: 10). What he said was better than what the others said, and was less serious; because of it the major sin of his brothers was reduced in severity.
- If anything is passed from hand to hand (by buying and selling) and becomes part of people's property, and it is not known that it was acquired unlawfully, there is no sin on the one who handles it by way of buying, selling, using or benefitting from it. Yoosuf's brothers sold him in a haram transaction that was not permissible, then the caravan took him to Egypt where they sold him, and he remained with his masters as a slave and was well-treated by them. Allah called this transaction selling ﴿They [his brothers] sold him for a small price﴾ (12: 20); even though it was haram on the part of Yoosuf's brothers, it was permissible on the part of those who bought him.
- This *soorah* warns against being alone with women from whom temptation is feared, and it also warns against the type of love that may cause harm. The wife of al-'Azeez did what she did because of being alone with Yoosuf, which persisted until she attempted seduction and then told lies about him, and he was imprisoned for a long time because of her.
- The inclination that Yoosuf felt towards the woman, which he then gave up for the sake of Allah, was a means of drawing

closer to Allah, because that inclination came from the soul that prompts evil, which is something natural in most people. But when he compared it with the love of Allah and fear of Him, love and fear of Allah overcame the inclinations and the whims and desires of the soul. Thus he was one:

﴿...who feared standing before his Lord and restrained himself from base desires.﴾ (*an-Nâzi'ât* 79: 40)

– and he was one of the seven whom Allah will shade in the shade of His Throne on the day when there will be no shade but His, one of whom is:

«A man who is called (to sin) by a woman of high status and beauty, but he says: I fear Allah.» (Bukhari and Muslim)³

Rather the inclination for which a person is to be blamed is that which persists and becomes resolve, and may lead to action.

- If faith enters a person's heart and he is sincere towards Allah in all his affairs, then Allah will ward off from him, by means of his faith and sincerity, all kinds of evil and shameful deeds, and the means that lead to sin, as a reward for his faith and sincerity, because He says: ﴿and he felt inclined towards her; were it not that he saw a sign from his Lord [he would have succumbed]. Thus We averted from him evil and shameful deeds. Verily He was one of Our chosen slaves.﴾ (*12: 24*).
- If a person sees a place in which there is temptation and the means that lead to sin, he should get as far away as possible, so that he will be able to be safe from sin. When the woman in

³ All hadiths in this text have been checked and verified by IIPH's researchers. It is rare, but it does happen that a hadith is not verifiable within the timeframe of researching and editing the book. In that case, a decision is made by the editorial board as to whether or not to include the hadith. It is IIPH's policy not to include weak hadiths or fabricated (fake) hadiths in our publications. If a weak hadith is included in any text, it is only because the author of the book discusses it as a weak hadith. (Editor)

whose house Yoosuf was living wanted to seduce him, he tried to flee from her and ran to the door in order to save himself from her evil.

- Circumstantial evidence is to be resorted to when there is doubt or confusion. If a man and his wife dispute about the pots and vessels in the house, what is good for the man is his and what is good for the woman is hers, if there is no proof to indicate what belongs to whom. The same applies if there is a dispute between a carpenter and a blacksmith concerning the tools of their trades, when there is no proof; actions are to be based on seeing similarities and likenesses (and the tools that are appropriate to one of these crafts are to be given to the appropriate craftsman). The witness in the case of Yoosuf testified on the basis of circumstantial evidence, ruling on the basis of the tear in the chemise. Based on the fact that it was torn from the back, he deduced that Yoosuf was telling the truth and the woman was lying.

Another example of the application of this principle was that Yoosuf deduced from the fact that the goblet was found in the saddlebag of his brother that his brother had stolen it, without the proof of a testimony or confession. Based on that, if the stolen property is found in the possession of the thief, especially if he is known for stealing, then he is to be deemed a thief. This is stronger than testimony. By the same token, if a man vomits wine, then the *hadd* punishment is to be carried out on that basis, so long as there is no impediment to doing so. Hence Allah called this ruling a witness, as He said: ﴿A witness from her own household suggested﴾ (12: 26).

- The beauty that Yoosuf possessed was both outward and inward. As for his outward beauty, it caused the woman in whose house he was living to do what she did, and it caused the women whom she brought together when they criticised her for that

to cut their own hands and say: ﴿This is no mortal; this can be none but a noble angel!﴾ (12: 31). As for his inward beauty, it was his great dignity in refraining from sin, even though there were many motives for doing it, and the subsequent testimony to his innocence given by the wife of al-'Azeez and the other women. Hence the wife of al-'Azeez said: ﴿I did indeed try to seduce him, but he resisted﴾ (12: 32), and later on she said: ﴿Now the truth has come to light. It was I who tried to seduce him; verily he was telling the truth﴾ (12: 51). And the women said: ﴿Allah forbid! we know of no evil on his part﴾ (12: 51).

- Yoosuf (ﷺ) chose prison over sin. This is what a person should do if he is tested with the choice of two things – either committing sin or undergoing a worldly punishment; he should choose the worldly punishment over committing the sin which incurs a severe punishment in this world and the hereafter. Hence one of the signs of faith is that a person hates to go back to disbelief after Allah has saved him from it, as he would hate to be thrown into the fire.
- The individual should turn to Allah and seek His protection when faced with the temptation to sin, and he should say that he has no power or strength of his own, because Yoosuf (ﷺ) said: ﴿Unless You protect me from their wiles, I may succumb and lapse into folly﴾ (12: 33).
- Knowledge and reason call a person to good and forbid evil, whereas ignorance and folly call a person to go along with his whims and desires even if they are harmful to himself.
- Just as the person should be a true slave to Allah at times of ease, he should also be a true slave to Him at times of hardship. Yoosuf (ﷺ) kept calling people to Allah, and when he was put in prison he continued to do so. He called the two young men to affirm the oneness of Allah and he told them to give up ascribing partners to Him. As an example of his smartness,

when he saw that they were open to his call – as they thought positively of him and said to him: «we see that you are a man of virtue and knowledge» (12: 36), and they came to him so that he could interpret their dreams for them, and he saw that they were eager to learn their interpretation from him – he saw that as an opportunity and made the most of it. So he called them to Allah (ﷻ) before interpreting their dreams, as that would be more helpful in achieving his aims and goals. First of all he explained to them that what had brought him to the level of perfection and knowledge that they saw was his faith, his affirmation of Allah's oneness and his shunning of the path of those who did not believe in Allah and the Last Day. This was an indirect call to them, then he called them directly, explaining what was wrong with polytheism and the proof against it, and the reality of pure monotheism and the proof for it.

- One should start with what is most important, then the next most important, and so on. If a *mufti* is asked a question, but the questioner needs to know something else more than he needs to know what he asked about, then the mufti should teach him what he needs to know before answering his question. This is a sign of sincerity and smartness on the part of the teacher, and indicates that his advice and teaching are good. When the two young men asked Yoosuf about their dreams, before he interpreted the dreams he called them to Allah alone, with no partner or associate.
- If a person finds himself faced with hardship and difficulty, there is nothing wrong with him seeking the help of anyone who has the ability to save him or to tell others about his situation. This is not regarded as complaining to other humans, because it is something normal; people usually seek one another's help. Hence Yoosuf said to the young man who he thought would be saved: «Mention me to your master» (12: 42).

- It should and must be confirmed that the teacher should be completely sincere in his teaching; he should not make it a means of attaining some financial gain, status or other benefit, and he should not refuse to teach or be insincere in teaching, if the questioner does not do what his teacher tells him to do. Yoosuf (ﷺ) asked one of the two young men to mention him to his master, but he did not do so and he forgot, but when the need arose to ask Yoosuf, they sent that young man to him, and he came and asked him about the meaning of that dream. However, Yoosuf did not rebuke him or tell him off for not mentioning him sooner; rather he answered his question completely.
- The one who is asked should tell the one who is asking about that which will benefit him of matters connected to his question, and he should guide him to the way that will benefit him in both religious and worldly terms. This comes under the heading of perfect sincerity and smartness, and good advice. Yoosuf (ﷺ) did not only interpret the king's dream, he also – in addition to that – told them what they should do during those years of plenty, of collecting and storing up a great deal of food.
- A person is not to be blamed for trying to ward off accusations from himself and seeking to prove his innocence; rather he is to be commended for that, as Yoosuf refused to come out of prison until it became clear to them that he was innocent with regard to the women who had cut their hands.
- This story highlights the virtue of knowledge, namely knowledge of rulings, laws, dream interpretation, management and education; it indicates that knowledge is superior to having a good image, even if it is as beautiful as Yoosuf was. Because of his beauty, Yoosuf went through all these trials and was imprisoned, but because of his knowledge he attained honour and high status, and was established in the land. All that is good

in this world and the hereafter is the result and consequences of knowledge.

- Knowledge of dream interpretation is one of the branches of Islamic knowledge, and the person will be rewarded for learning and teaching it. Hence it is not permissible to try to interpret dreams without knowledge.
- There is nothing wrong with a person speaking of the qualities he has, of knowledge and deeds, if there is an interest to be served by that, he is not intending to show off, and he is not lying, because Yoosuf said: ﴿Put me in charge of the storehouses of the land; indeed I will manage them carefully and wisely﴾ (12: 55). Similarly, seeking a position of authority is not blameworthy if the one who seeks it will do his best to fulfil his duties towards Allah and towards His slaves. There is nothing wrong with seeking such a position if one is more qualified for it than others. What is blameworthy is seeking such a position when one is not qualified for it, or if there is someone else who is of the same calibre or better, or if one is not seeking thereby to establish the command of Allah. In all such cases it is not permissible to seek positions of authority.
- Allah is most generous, and He bestows good upon His slave in this world and the hereafter. There are two means of attaining good in the hereafter, namely faith and piety, and that is better than worldly reward and acquiring worldly possessions. The individual should remind himself and make himself long for the reward of Allah, and he should not feel sad if he sees worldly people and their pleasures when he himself is not able to have the same things; rather he should console himself by thinking of the reward of Allah in the hereafter and His great bounty, because Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿But verily the reward of the hereafter is better, for those who believe and are mindful of Allah﴾ (12: 57).

- There is nothing wrong with collecting and storing provision – if the intention is to give it back to the people without harming them – because Yoosuf instructed them to collect provisions and food during the years of plenty in preparation for the years of drought. This is not contrary to putting one's trust in Allah; rather a person should put his trust in Allah whilst taking appropriate measures that will benefit him in both religious and worldly terms.
- Yoosuf managed things well when he was put in charge of the storehouses of the land, as their store of crops became so abundant that the people of neighbouring regions came to Egypt to seek provision from the Egyptians, because they knew that supplies were available, to the extent that he did not weigh out for anyone more than he needed for himself, or less, and no one who came was given any more than a single camel load.
- It is prescribed to be hospitable and honour one's guests, and this is one of the ways of the Messengers, because Yoosuf said to his brothers: ﴿do you not see that I give full measure and am the best of hosts?﴾ (12: 59).
- Thinking negatively of someone – when there is circumstantial evidence that points to that – is not prohibited. Ya'qoob said to his sons, when he refused to send Yoosuf with them and they tried very hard to persuade him, then they came to him and told him that the wolf had eaten Yoosuf: ﴿Nay; rather your souls have tempted you to do something evil﴾ (12: 18). And he said to them concerning the other brother: ﴿Am I to trust you with him as I once trusted you with his brother?﴾ (12: 64). Then when Yoosuf kept him (his brother) with him, and his brothers came to their father, he again said to them ﴿Nay; rather your souls have tempted you to do something evil﴾ (12: 83), even though they had not been negligent on the second occasion, they had

previously done something that caused their father to say what he did, and there was no blame on him for that.

- Using means to ward off the evil eye and other ills, or to remove them once they have occurred, is not prohibited; rather it is permissible even when nothing will happen except the divine will and decree, because the means are also part of the divine will and decree. That is because Ya'qoob instructed his sons: ﴿O my sons, do not enter [all] by one gate; enter by different gates﴾ (12: 67).
- It is permissible to use tricks to attain one's rights, and knowing hidden ways of achieving one's aims is something that is praiseworthy. What is prohibited is using tricks to avoid obligations or commit prohibited acts.
- The one who wants to give a wrong impression to someone else in order to avoid disclosing something that he does not want to disclose may use vague words and vague actions that will prevent him from telling lies, as Yoosuf did when he put the goblet in his brother's saddlebag, then brought it out in order to give the impression that he was a thief, but there was no proof except circumstantial evidence that would give a wrong impression to his brothers. After that he said: ﴿Allah forbid that we should take any but the man with whom our property was found﴾ (12: 79) and he did not say “the man who stole our property”. By the same token, he did not say “we found our property with him”; rather he used general words that might be applicable to him or to someone else. There is nothing wrong with that, as it is only giving an impression that he was a thief in order to achieve the desired result and to keep his brother with him. This wrong impression of his brother was corrected after matters had become clear.
- It is not permissible for a person to testify except on the basis of what he knows and is certain of, either because he saw it or

because he heard it from someone whom he trusts and he feels at ease with it, because they said: ﴿we can only tell you what we saw﴾ (12: 81).

- This was a great trial with which Allah tested His Prophet and chosen one Ya‘qoob (ﷺ), as He decreed that he should be separated from his son Yoosuf, from whom he could not bear to be apart for even an hour, for doing so would grieve him deeply. The separation between them lasted for a long time, no less than thirty years, during which grief never left the heart of Ya‘qoob. ﴿And his eyes became white with grief, and he was burdened with silent sorrow﴾ (12: 84).

Then matters got worse when he was separated from his other son, the full brother of Yoosuf. Yet he was patient in bearing the decree of Allah, seeking reward from Him, as he had pledged to bear it patiently, and in good grace, and he undoubtedly fulfilled his pledge. This is not contrary to his words ﴿I only complain of my distress and sorrow to Allah﴾ (12: 86), for complaining to Allah is not contrary to patience; rather what is contrary to it is complaining to people.

- Relief comes with difficulty, for with hardship comes ease. Therefore when Ya‘qoob’s grief had gone on for a long time and had reached the ultimate point, and the family of Ya‘qoob were in a state of desperation (due to the famine), at that point Allah decreed relief, so the reunion came at the time of worst hardship and desperation. Thus they attained reward along with the joy of reunion. From this it is known that Allah tests His close friends with hardship and ease, in order to test their patience and gratitude and thus increase their faith, certainty and knowledge of Him.
- It is permissible for a person to tell others about what he is going through and what he is suffering of sickness, poverty and the like, not by way of discontent, because the brothers of Yoosuf

said: ﴿O ruler of the land, hardship has befallen us and our family﴾ (12: 88), and Yoosuf did not object to them saying that.

- This soorah highlights the virtue of fearing Allah and being patient, and tells us that all good in this world and the hereafter is the result of fearing Allah and being patient, and those who attain these characteristics will have the best consequences, because Yoosuf said: ﴿Allah has indeed been gracious to us. Verily, whoever fears Allah and is patient, Allah will not cause the reward of those who do good to be lost﴾ (12: 90).
- The one whom Allah has blessed with ease after hardship, poverty and difficulty should acknowledge the blessing that Allah has bestowed upon him, and he should always remember his former situation so that he will give thanks to Allah every time he remembers it, because Yoosuf (ﷺ) said: ﴿He has indeed been gracious to me, when He rescued me from prison and brought you here from the desert﴾ (12: 100).
- Allah showed great kindness to Yoosuf, as He caused him to go through these situations and made him go through hardship and trials so that he might reach thereby the highest goals and the most sublime status.
- The individual should always beseech Allah to make him steadfast in his faith and he should take measures to achieve that, asking Allah to grant him a good end and perfect blessing, because Yoosuf (ﷺ) said: ﴿O my Lord, You have indeed given me some authority and taught me something of the interpretation of dreams. O Originator of the heavens and the earth, You are my Protector in this world and in the hereafter. Cause me to die as a Muslim [submitting to Your will], and join me with the righteous﴾ (12: 101).

This is what Allah has enabled me to list of the lessons that we learn from this blessed story. The one who reflects upon it will surely find others.

We ask Allah (ﷻ) for beneficial knowledge and accepted deeds, for He is Most Generous.

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat Yoosuf.
All praise and thanks are for Allah, and may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), his family, and his Companions abundantly until the Day of Judgement.



13.

Soorat ar-Ra'd

(Madani)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
اللَّهُ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ
*In the name of Allah,
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*



﴿الْأَرْ رَبُّكَ مَا يَنْهَا الْكَوَافِرُ وَالَّذِي أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ الْحَقُّ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ (سورة الرعد: ١)

13:1. Alif. Lâm. Meem. Râ'.⁴ These are verses of the Book. That which has been revealed to you from your Lord [O Muhammad] is the truth, but most people do not believe.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that this Qur'an is verses of the Book which highlight everything that people need to know of fundamental and minor issues of religion, and that what has come down to the

⁴ Groups of letters (*al-huroof al-muqatta'ah*) appear at the beginning of several soorahs. The most correct scholarly view states that we are required to believe in them as they appear to be, without delving into their meaning, knowledge of which we should leave to Allah. We believe that they were not revealed in vain, and that there is wisdom behind them of which we are not aware.

Messenger (ﷺ) from his Lord is plain truth, because what it tells of stories is true and its commands and prohibitions are just, supported by definitive evidence and proof. Therefore whoever studies it and learns it will be one of those who know the truth, which makes it obligatory upon him to do that which Allah loves.

﴿but most people do not believe﴾ in this Qur'an, because they turn away from it either out of ignorance and lack of interest in it, or out of stubbornness and wrongdoing. Therefore most people do not benefit from it, because the means of benefiting from it are absent in their case.



﴿اللَّهُ الَّذِي رَفَعَ السَّمَاوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ثُمَّ أَسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَسَعَرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ
كُلُّ يَجْرِي لِأَجْلِ شَسَمٍ يُدِيرُ الْأَمْرَ يُفْصِلُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ يَلْقَاءُونِي تُوقَنُونَ ﴾١
وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَدَ الْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوْسَى وَأَنْهَرًا وَمِنْ كُلِّ الشَّمَرَاتِ جَعَلَ فِيهَا رَزْجَيْنِ
أَنْتِينِ يُعْشِي الْأَيَّلَ الْهَارِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴾٢﴾ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ قَطْعَ
مُتَجَوِّرَاتٌ وَجَتَتْ مِنْ أَغْتَبِ وَرَرَعٍ وَخَيْلٍ صَنْوَانٌ وَغَيْرُ صَنْوَانٍ يُسْقَى بِمَاءٍ وَجِلَدٍ
وَنَفَضِّلُ بَعْضَهَا عَلَى بَعْضٍ فِي الْأَكْثَلِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

(سورة الرعد: ٤-٢)

- 13:2. It is Allah Who raised the heavens without any pillars that you can see, and then rose over the Throne [in a manner that befits His majesty]. He made the sun and moon to be of service, each running its course for an appointed time. He governs all affairs, and explains the signs in detail, so that you may be certain of the meeting with your Lord.
- 13:3. He is the One Who spread out the earth and placed therein mountains standing firm and rivers, and of every fruit He has

placed therein two kinds,⁵ and He draws the veil of night over the day. Surely in that there are signs for people who reflect.

- 13:4. And on earth there are adjoining [yet different] tracts of land, and gardens of grapevines, grains and date palms, growing in clusters from one root or standing alone. They are irrigated with the same water, yet We cause some of them to excel others in taste. Surely in that there are signs for people of understanding.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He is the only One Who has the power of creation, control, might and authority, which indicates that He alone is deserving of worship, and none should be worshipped except Him.

﴿It is Allah Who raised the heavens﴾ with their greatness and vastness, by His mighty power

﴿without any pillars that you can see﴾ that is, it has no pillars beneath it; if it did have pillars you would see them.

﴿and then﴾ after He created the heavens and the earth, He ﴿rose over the Throne﴾ that is, His mighty Throne, which is the highest of all created things; He rose above it in a manner that befits His majesty and perfection.

﴿He made the sun and moon to be of service﴾ to the interests of people and of their flocks and crops

﴿each﴾, both the sun and the moon, ﴿running its course﴾ under the control of the Almighty, the All-Knowing, ﴿for an appointed time﴾ along a systematic course without slowing down or ceasing, until the appointed time comes, which is when Allah will roll up this universe and move them to the hereafter which is the eternal abode. At that time, Allah will roll up the heavens and change them, and He will change the earth. So He will fold up the sun and moon, and put them together, then they will be thrown into hell so that those who

⁵ This refers to two types of each fruit, for example, black and white, sweet and sour, small and big, and so on.

worshipped them will see that they did not deserve to be worshipped, whereupon they will feel intense regret, and those who disbelieved will realise that they were following falsehood.

﴿He governs all affairs, and explains the signs in detail﴾, in this passage, Allah (ﷻ) mentions together His combined powers of creation and command. In other words, Allah the Almighty rose above the Throne of sovereignty and He controls all affairs in the upper and lower realms. So He creates and grants provision, making people rich or poor, raising some and lowering others, honouring some and humiliating others. He helps the one who stumbles to get up again, He relieves distress, He causes His decree to come to pass at times of which He has prior knowledge, at the time written by His pen, and He sends the noble angels to do what He has appointed them to do.

He sends down the divine Books to His Messengers, explaining what people need to know of laws and regulations, commands and prohibitions. He explains and clarifies that in detail, ﴿so that you may be certain of the meeting with your Lord﴾. The abundance and clarity of the evidence are among the means of attaining certainty in all that is revealed, especially the fundamental beliefs such as the resurrection and the bringing forth of the dead from their graves.

Moreover, it is known that Allah (ﷻ) is Most Wise and does not create anything in vain, nor does He abandon them without care. Just as He sent Messengers and revealed His Books with commands and prohibitions for His slaves, He will inevitably move them to an abode where they will be requited; those who did good will be requited with the best reward and those who did evil will be punished according to their evil deeds.

﴿He is the One Who spread out the earth﴾ that is, He created it for His slaves, making it spacious, blessed and habitable, and He deposited in it all that they need to help them survive.

﴿and placed therein mountains standing firm﴾ that is, great mountains, lest the earth shake with its people. Were it not for the mountains, it

would have shaken with its people, because it cannot remain firm and stable without the mountains standing firm, which Allah has made like pegs for the earth.

﴿and﴾ He has placed therein ﴿rivers﴾ to give water to humans and their livestock and crops; by means of it He brings forth much good from trees, crops and fruits; hence He says: ﴿and of every fruit He has placed therein two kinds﴾ that is, two types of everything that people need.

﴿and He draws the veil of night over the day﴾ so the world becomes dark and every creature goes back to its abode and rests from its toil and striving during the day. Then when they have had what they need of sleep, the day overtakes the night, whereupon they wake up and go about their business during the day.

﴿By His mercy He has made for you night and day, so that you may rest therein and seek His bounty, and so that you may give thanks.﴾
(*as-Qasas* 28: 73)

﴿Surely in that there are signs﴾ of the divine ﴿for people who reflect﴾ upon them, and contemplate them and realise that what they point to is that the One Who created them and is controlling them and disposing of their affairs is Allah, besides Whom there is no other god and none who is rightfully worshipped but Him, and that He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful; He has power over all things, is Most Wise in all that He does, and He is deserving of praise for what He has created and ordained, may He be blessed and exalted.

One of the signs of the perfection of His might and the brilliance of His creation is that He has created ﴿on earth ... adjoining [yet different] tracts of land﴾ in which there are different types of trees and plants, ﴿and gardens of grapevines, grains and date palms﴾ and other plants. Among the date palms are some ﴿growing in clusters from one root﴾ that is, a number of trees with one root

﴿وَرِزْقًا مُّنْتَدِرًا﴾ that is, each tree is on its own. But all of them
 ﴿وَمُّرْسَلًا مِّنْهُ﴾ are irrigated with the same water, on the same land.

﴿يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ﴾ yet We cause some of them to excel others in taste, and also in colour, benefit and deliciousness. For one part of the land may be good, on which a great deal of grass, vegetation, trees and crops grow, yet an adjoining part of the land may have no vegetation at all, as it does not retain water. A third area may retain water, but not produce any vegetation, and another area may produce crops and trees, but not grass and the like. So fruits may vary, some being sweet, some bitter, and some in between.

Is this variation something that is decided by the nature of the land? Or does that occur by the decree of the Almighty, the Most Merciful?

﴿إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَذِكْرًا لِّلْفَلَقِ﴾ Surely in that there are signs for people of understanding, that is, people who have reason which guides them to that which will benefit them and leads them to understand the instructions, commands and prohibitions of Allah. As for people who do not pay heed, and those who are unwise, they wander blindly in the darkness of their misguidance, unable to find a way; they are not guided to their Lord and they do not understand anything of what He has revealed.



﴿وَإِنْ تَعْجَبْ فَعَجَبْ قَوْلُمْ إِذَا كَانَ تُرَبَّاً إِنَّا لَفِي خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ﴾ اُولَئِكَ
 الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ وَأُولَئِكَ الْأَغْلَلُ فِي أَغْنَافِهِمْ وَأُولَئِكَ أَمْحَنُ الْأَنَارَ هُمْ
 فِيهَا خَلِيلُونَ ﴿٥﴾ (سورة الرعد: ٥)

- 13:5. If you wonder, then you should surely wonder at their saying:
 When we have become dust, will we then be created anew?
 These are the ones who disbelieve in their Lord. They are
 the ones on whose necks will be placed yokes; they will be
 inhabitants of the fire and will abide therein forever.

It may be that what is meant by the phrase «If you wonder» is: if you wonder at the greatness of Allah and the abundance of the evidence for His oneness; what is even more amazing than that is the disbelievers' rejection and denial of the resurrection. «When we have become dust, will we then be created anew?» means: this is very unlikely and it is not possible, according to their claim, that after they have become dust, Allah will bring them back to life. In their ignorance, they compared the power of the Creator to the power of created beings. Because they saw that it is not possible for created beings to do such a thing, they thought that it was also impossible for the Creator to do it, but they forgot that Allah created them the first time, when they were nothing.

It may also be that what is meant is: if you wonder at their denial of the resurrection, then indeed that is strange. For a person to see the clear signs and definitive evidence for the resurrection, about which there can be no doubt, then to deny it, is something that is indeed very strange. But that is not strange in the case of «the ones who disbelieve in their Lord» and deny His oneness, even though it is the clearest and most obvious of things.

«They are the ones on whose necks will be placed yokes» that will prevent them from being guided, because they were called to faith but they did not believe, and guidance was presented to them but they did not follow it. Thus a seal was placed on their hearts as a punishment for not believing in Him the first time.
 «they will be inhabitants of the fire and will abide therein forever» and will never emerge from it.



﴿وَتَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ قَبْلَ الْحَسَنَةِ وَقَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُونَ وَإِنْ رَبَّكَ لَذُو مَقْفَرَةٍ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَىٰ ظُلْمِهِمْ وَإِنْ رَبَّكَ لَشَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴾ (٦) (سورة الرعد: ٦)

13:6. They ask you to hasten on the evil before the good, even though punishment befell people of their ilk who came before them. But indeed your Lord is forgiving to humankind despite all their wrongdoing, and indeed your Lord is severe in punishment.

Here Allah tells us of the ignorance of those who disbelieve in His Messenger (ﷺ) and ascribe partners to Him, who received admonition but did not pay heed, and against whom proof was established but they did not submit to it; rather they openly rejected it, using as evidence the fact that Allah, the One, the Subduer, was showing forbearance towards them and not hastening the punishment, for them to argue that they were in the right, and they tried to hasten the punishment, saying: ﴿...O Allah, if this is indeed the truth from You, then rain down upon us stones from the sky or send us a painful punishment.﴾ (*al-Anfāl* 8: 32)

Yet despite the fact that ﴿punishment befell people of their ilk who came before them﴾ that is, the punishments of Allah that befell the disbelieving nations, why then do they not reflect on their situation and give up their ignorance?

﴿But indeed your Lord is forgiving to humankind despite all their wrongdoing﴾ that is, He continues to bestow blessings upon them, sending down His kindness and pardon to people when they are still doing evil and their acts of disobedience are still ascending to Him.

They disobey Him but He calls them to repent; they commit offences but He does not deprive them of His blessings and kindness, and if they repent to Him then they are His beloved, because He loves those who repent and He loves those who purify themselves. But if they do not repent, then He tests them with calamities in order to purify them from their sin.

﴿Say [Allah says]: O My slaves who have transgressed against yourselves [by sinning greatly], do not despair of the mercy of Allah, for verily Allah forgives all sins. Verily, it is He Who is the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴾ (*az-Zumar* 39: 53)

﴿and indeed your Lord is severe in punishment﴾ to those who persist in sin and refuse to repent, seek forgiveness and turn to the Almighty, the Oft-Forgiving. So let people beware of His punishment of the evildoers, for verily His punishment is painful and severe (*cf.* 11: 102).



﴿وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْهِ أَيَّةً مِّنْ رَّبِّهِ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنذِّرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ﴾

(سورة الرعد: ٧)

- 13:7. Those who disbelieve say: Why has no sign been sent down to him from his Lord? You are but a warner, and for every people there is a guide.

That is, the disbelievers demand from you (O Muhammad ﷺ) signs that they specify, and they say: ﴿Why has no sign been sent down to him from his Lord?﴾, giving this as an excuse for not responding to the Messenger ﷺ. But in fact he is no more than a warner who has no control over anything, for it is Allah Who sends down the signs. Moreover, Allah has already supported him with clear evidence that is not hidden from people of understanding, and by it the one who seeks the truth may be guided. As for the disbeliever who – because of his injustice and ignorance – demands specific signs from Allah, these demands are false and fabricated. If any sign were to come to him, no matter what it was, he would not believe and would not submit, because his refusal to believe was not due to any lack of evidence for the soundness of faith; rather it was due to his own whims and desires. ﴿and for every people there is a guide﴾ that is, a caller who calls them to guidance, namely the Messengers and their followers, who have proof and evidence that points to the soundness of the guidance they have.



﴿اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَحْمِلُ كُلُّ انْثَى وَمَا تَغْيِضُ الْأَرْحَامُ وَمَا تَرْدَادُ وَكُلُّ شَقْوٍ
عِنْدَهُ بِمِقْدَارٍ ﴾٨١﴿عَلَمَ الرَّفِيقُ وَالشَّهِيدُ الْكَبِيرُ الْمُتَعَالُ ﴾٨٢﴾سَوَاءٌ مِّنْكُمْ
مَنْ أَسْرَ الْقَوْلَ وَمَنْ جَهَرَ بِهِ، وَمَنْ هُوَ مُسْتَخِفٌ بِالْأَيْمَلِ وَسَارِبٌ بِالْهَارِ ﴾٨٣﴿لَهُ
مَعْبُوتٌ مَنْ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَمَنْ خَلْفَهُ، يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا يُقَوِّي حَنَّ
يُغَيِّرُوا مَا يَأْنِسُهُمْ وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوءًا فَلَا مَرَدَ لَهُ، وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَالٍ﴾

(سورة الرعد: ٨-١١)

- 13:8. Allah knows what every female bears, and by how much the wombs may fall short or increase. With Him everything is regulated according to a determined measure.
- 13:9. He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Most Great, the High Exalted.
- 13:10. It is the same [to Him] whether any of you conceals his speech or declares it openly, and whether he hides under the cover of the night or walks openly in the light of day.
- 13:11. For each [person], there are angels in succession, before him and behind him, watching over him by the command of Allah. Verily Allah does not change the condition of a people until they themselves change their own attitude and conduct. But once Allah has intended ill for a people, then it cannot be averted, nor will they find, besides Him, any protector.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the vastness of His knowledge and that He encompasses all things.

﴿Allah knows what every female﴾, human or otherwise, ﴿bears, and by how much the wombs may fall short﴾ that is, as a result of miscarriage or not reaching full growth
 ﴿or increase﴾ that is, when the foetus reaches full growth.

﴿With Him everything is regulated according to a determined measure﴾ and it does not go beyond what is decreed or fall short; it only increases or decreases in accordance with what is decreed by His wisdom and knowledge.

﴿He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Most Great﴾ in His essence and in His names and attributes
﴿the High Exalted﴾ above all of His creation, by His essence and His decree and His power.

﴿It is the same [to Him]﴾ in His knowledge, hearing and sight
﴿whether any of you conceals his speech or declares it openly, and whether he hides under the cover of the night﴾ that is, he stays in the place where he is hidden
﴿or walks openly in the light of day﴾.

﴿For each [person], there are angels in succession﴾ who come to him in succession by night and by day.

﴿before him and behind him, watching over him by the command of Allah﴾ that is, they watch over him, body and soul, protecting him from all who want to do him harm and recording his deeds, and they are always with him. In addition to that, the knowledge of Allah encompasses him, for Allah sends these keepers to watch over people, so that nothing of their situations or deeds is hidden and nothing of that will be forgotten.

﴿Verily Allah does not change the condition of a people﴾ in terms of blessings, bounty and prosperity
﴿until they themselves change their own attitude and conduct﴾ by shifting from faith to disbelief, from obedience to disobedience, or from gratitude for the blessings of Allah to insolence because of them; in such cases Allah takes those blessings away from them.

By the same token, if people change their condition of sin, and shift towards obedience to Allah, Allah will change the miserable situation in which they were to one of blessing, happiness, joy and mercy.

﴿But once Allah has intended ill for a people﴾ that is, punishment and hardship, or something they dislike, then His will must inevitably be done,

﴿then it cannot be averted﴾ and no one can protect them from it ﴿nor will they find, besides Him, any protector﴾ to take charge of their affairs, bring them what they like and ward off from them what they dislike. So let them beware of persisting in that which Allah dislikes, lest the punishment befall them that will not be averted from the evildoers.



﴿هُوَ الَّذِي يُرِيكُمُ الْبَرْقَ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَيُنَشِّئُ السَّحَابَ أَثْقَالًا١٢ وَيُسَيِّحُ الرَّعْدَ بِحَمْدِهِ، وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ، وَيُرِسِّلُ الصَّوَاعِقَ فَيُصَيِّبُ بِهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُمْ يُجْهَدُونَ فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ شَدِيدُ الْعَذَابِ﴾ (سورة الرعد: ١٢-١٣)

(١٢)

13:12. He is the One Who shows you the lightning, giving rise to both fear and hope, and gathers up the heavy clouds.

13:13. The thunder glorifies and praises Him, as do the angels, in awe of Him. He sends thunderbolts and strikes therewith whomever He wills, yet they dispute about Allah, Who is inexorable in His power.

﴿He is the One Who shows you the lightning, giving rise to both fear and hope﴾ that is, fear of the thunderbolts and destruction, and other kinds of harm to crops and the like, and hope for its goodness and benefits.

﴿and gathers up the heavy clouds﴾ loaded with abundant rain, which brings benefits to people and the land.

﴿The thunder glorifies and praises Him﴾. Thunder is the sound that is heard from the clouds, which alarms people. It is subjugated to the control of its Lord and it glorifies and praises Him
 ﴿as do the angels, in awe of Him﴾ that is, they also glorify and praise their Lord, out of fear of Him, for they fear His power and might.
 ﴿He sends thunderbolts﴾ namely the fire (lightning) that emerges from the cloud
 ﴿and strikes therewith whomever He wills﴾ among His slaves, according to His will
 ﴿...Allah, Who is inexorable in His power﴾ that is, He is mighty in power and strength. He does not will anything but He does it; nothing can be too difficult for Him and no one can escape Him.

As He alone is the One Who drives the rain and the clouds for people, in which is the substance of their provision, and as He is the One Who controls all things, and to Him are subjugated the mighty creations that people fear and are disturbed by, and as Allah is mighty in power, then He is the only One Who deserves to be worshipped, with no partner or associate. Hence He says:



﴿لَهُ دُعَةٌ لِّكُوٰنٍ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لَا يَسْتَجِيْبُونَ لَهُمْ يَشَاءُ إِلَّا كَبْسِطٌ كَفَيْهِ إِلَى الْأَمْامِ
 لِيَتَلْعَبُ فَاهُ وَمَا هُوَ بِتَلْغِيْهِ وَمَا دُعَاهُ الْكُفَّارُ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ﴾ (سورة الرعد: ١٤)

- 13:14. To Him alone should all supplication be addressed, for those to whom they offer supplication besides Him will never respond in any way. They are like a man who stretches out his hands towards water, [hoping] that it will come to his mouth; but it will never reach it. The supplication of those who disbelieve is all in vain.

That is, to Allah alone ﴿should all supplication be addressed﴾; this refers to worshipping Him alone with no partner or associate,

and sincerely devoting supplication to Him, asking only of Him. In other words, He is the only One to Whom all supplication should be addressed and on Whom all fear, hope, love and repentance should be focused, because His divinity is true, and the so-called divinity of all others is false.

﴿for those to whom they offer supplication besides Him﴾ of the idols and rivals that they regard as partners of Allah

﴿will never respond in any way﴾ that is, they will never respond to those who call upon them and worship them in any way, small or great, whether with regard to matters of this world or of the hereafter.

﴿They are like a man who stretches out his hands towards water﴾ that his hands cannot reach because it is far away

﴿[hoping] that it will come to his mouth﴾ by means of his stretching out his hands towards it, because he is thirsty, so the severity of his thirst makes him stretch out his hands towards the water that is far away and that he cannot reach.

This is the state of the disbelievers who call upon other gods besides Him that will never answer them at all and will bring them no benefit at the time of greatest need, because they themselves are lacking and those upon whom they call are also lacking; they do not possess an atom's weight of anything on earth or in heaven, and they have no share of anything on earth or in heaven; the one who calls upon them will never receive any help from them.

﴿The supplication of those who disbelieve is all in vain﴾ because of the falseness of those on whom they call besides Allah. Thus their worship and supplication is invalid because the means become invalid if the end is invalid. As Allah (ﷻ) is the only true Sovereign, worship of Him is valid and the benefit thereof will continue in this world and the hereafter.

This likening of their calling upon anything other than Allah to the one who stretches out his hand towards water, hoping that it will come to his mouth, is one of the best likenesses, because it likens it

to something impossible. Just as this is impossible, what is likened to it is also impossible. Making something conditional upon something that is impossible is the most eloquent way of denying that it will ever happen. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿But as for those who reject Our revelations and turn away from them with arrogance, the gates of heaven will not be opened for them, nor will they enter paradise, until a camel can pass through the eye of a needle...﴾ (al-A'rāf 7: 40)



﴿وَلَلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا وَظَلَّلُهُمْ بِالْغَدْرِ وَالْأَصَالِ﴾

(سورة الرعد: ١٥) ﴿١٥﴾

13:15. To Allah prostrate all those who are in the heavens and on earth, willingly or unwillingly, as do their shadows, in the morning and in the afternoon.

That is, everything that the heavens and earth contain is subjugated to their Lord and they all prostrate to Him

﴿willingly or unwillingly﴾. The former refers to those who prostrate and submit voluntarily and by choice, such as the believers; the latter refers to those who are too arrogant to worship their Lord, but their natural state belies that, because their shadows prostrate *(in the morning and in the afternoon)* that is, the shadows of all created things prostrate at the beginning and end of the day, and everything prostrates according to its situation, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿...There is not a thing that does not glorify Him with praise, but you do not understand their glorification...﴾ (al-Isrā' 17: 44)

As all creatures prostrate to their Lord, willingly or unwillingly, He is the true God Who deserves to be worshipped, and the divinity

of all others is false. Hence Allah states that they are false and gives proof for that, as He says:



﴿ قُلْ مَنْ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ قُلْ اللَّهُ أَفَلَا يَعْلَمُ مِنْ دُونِهِ أُولَئِكَ لَا يَكُونُ لَهُ شَفَاعَةٌ وَلَا هُنَّ بِهِ مُحْتَدَرٌ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَى وَالْبَصِيرُ أَمْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الظَّلْمَةُ وَالنُّورُ أَمْ جَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ خَلَقُوا كَخَلْقِهِ فَتَشَبَّهُ الْجَنَّى عَلَيْهِمْ قُلْ اللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْفَهِيرُ ﴾ (١٦)

(سورة الرعد: ١٦)

- 13:16. Say [O Muhammad]: Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth? Say: [It is] Allah. Say: Have you then taken as protectors, besides Him, those that have no power either to benefit or harm themselves? Say: Is the blind man equal to one who can see? Or are the depths of darkness equal to the light? Or do they ascribe to Allah partners who have created [anything] as He has created, so that both creations appear to them alike? Say: Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the One, the Subjugator.

That is, say to these polytheists who ascribe idols as partners to Allah and love them as they should love Him, and do all kinds of acts of worship and devotion for them: have you lost your minds to the extent that you have taken something other than Him as protectors to which you offer worship when they are not deserving of that, for they **﴾have no power either to benefit or harm themselves﴾**, but you turn away from seeking the protection of the One Who is possessed of the most perfect names and attributes, the One Who is in control of the living and the dead, in Whose Hand is the power of creation and control, the power to bring benefit or cause harm? Worship of Allah alone and the worship of those who ascribe partners to Him are not equal, just as the one who is blind and the one who can see are not equal, and just as darkness and light are not equal.

If they have any doubt, and they ascribe partners to Him, claiming that these partners can create as He does and do what He does, then remove this doubt and confusion from their minds on the basis of proof that Allah alone is the true God, and say to them: ﴿Allah is the Creator of all things﴾ so it is impossible that anything can be created by itself.

It is also impossible that anything could come to be without a creator. Thus it is inevitable that it must have a God Who created it, with no partner or associate in His creation, because He is the One, the Subjugator, and oneness and subjugation belong only to Allah alone. As for created beings, each created being has another created being above it that subjugates it, and above that one there must be another subjugator, and so on all the way up to the subjugation of the One, the Subjugator. So divine subjugation and oneness are interconnected, belonging to Allah alone. Therefore on the basis of purely rational thinking, whatever is called upon besides Allah has no share in creation and thus worship thereof is invalid.



﴿أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَسَالَتْ أَوْدِيَةٌ بِقَدَرِهَا فَأَحْتَمَلَ السَّيْلُ زِيدًا رَأِيًّا وَمَتَاعًا يُوقَدُونَ عَلَيْهِ فِي الْأَنَارِ أَبْغَاهَ حَلْيَةً أَوْ مَتَعَ زِيدًا مِثْلَهُ كَذَلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْحَقَّ وَالْبَطْلَ فَمَا أَزَّدَ فِي دُهْبَبٍ جُفَاهُ وَمَا مَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ فَيَنْتَكُ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَذَلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَنْتَالَ﴾ (W)

(سورة الرعد: ١٧)

- 13:17. He sends down water from the sky and the watercourses flow, each according to its measure, and the torrent carries with it a rising foam. And from that [ore] which they heat in the fire to make ornaments and utensils rises a similar foam. Thus Allah depicts truth and falsehood: the foam is cast away as a worthless

thing, while that which is of benefit to people remains in the earth. Thus does Allah set forth comparisons.

Here Allah (ﷻ) likens the guidance that He sent down to His Messenger (ﷺ) for the well-being of hearts and souls to the water that He sent down for physical benefits, and He likens the abundant common benefit of that guidance, that is essential for all people, to the abundant and essential common benefit that rain brings. He likens the hearts that carry guidance of varying levels to the valleys through which water flows. The large valley that can take a lot of water is like the heart that can take a great deal of knowledge, and the small valley that takes little water is like the heart that only takes a little knowledge, and so on.

And He likens the doubts and whims and desires that there may be in people's hearts, when truth reaches them, to the foam that floats on top of the water, or that rises to the top of the ore that they heat with fire in order to purify it and cast it into shape when they want to make adornments from it. That foam continues to float on top of the water, making it dirty and impure, until it disappears, leaving behind that which benefits people of pure water and pure adornments.

In like manner, the heart continues to dislike and resist doubts and desires by means of sound proof and strong resolve, until they vanish and the heart is left pure and clean, containing nothing but that which benefits people, namely knowledge that is based on truth and gives precedence to it, and desires truth, for falsehood disappears and is erased by truth.

﴿...Falsehood is always bound to perish.﴾ (*al-Isrā' 17: 81*)

And Allah says here: ﴿Thus does Allah set forth comparisons﴾ in order to make truth distinct from falsehood and guidance distinct from misguidance.



﴿لِلَّذِينَ أَسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمُ الْحُسْنَىٰ وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَسْتَجِبُوا لَهُمْ لَوْلَا أَنَّ لَهُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَوِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لَأَفْتَدُوا بِهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمْ شُوَّهُ الْخَسَابِ وَمَا أُنْهُمْ جَاهِنَّمُ وَيَقْنَصُ الْهَادِي﴾ (سورة الرعد: ١٨)

(١٨)

13:18. For those who respond to their Lord, there will be the best reward, while for those who do not respond to Him, if they had all that is on earth and as much again, they would offer it as a ransom. But theirs will be a terrible reckoning; their abode will be hell, what a wretched resting-place.

When Allah (ﷻ) made truth distinct from falsehood, He stated that people are of two types: those who respond to their Lord, and He mentioned their reward, and those who do not respond, and He mentioned their punishment.

﴿For those who respond to their Lord﴾ that is, whose hearts submit to knowledge and faith, and they comply physically with the commands and prohibitions, thus becoming in harmony with what their Lord wants from them. For them there will be **(the best reward)**, that is, they will be in the best state and will have a great reward.

For they have the best attributes and traits, and they will have of reward in this world and the hereafter that which no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever crossed the mind of man.

﴿while for those who do not respond to Him﴾ after He set forth these comparisons and likenesses for them, and explained the truth for them, they will not be in a good state. Hence **(if they had all that is on earth)** of gold, silver and other wealth, **(and as much again, they would offer it as a ransom)** to escape the punishment of the Day of Resurrection, but it will not be accepted from them, and how could it be accepted?

﴿But theirs will be a terrible reckoning﴾, for it will be a reckoning that will include all that they did before of evil deeds, and all that they neglected of duties towards Allah and towards other people. All of that has been written down and recorded against them, and they will say: ﴿...Woe to us! What sort of record is this, that leaves no deed, small or great, unaccounted for? They will find all they did recorded there, and your Lord will not wrong anyone.﴾ (al-Kahf 18: 49)

And after this terrible reckoning, ﴿their abode will be hell﴾ which will combine all kinds of torment, such as severe hunger, painful thirst, blazing fire, the fruit of Zaqqoom (a horrible tree in hell), bitter cold, *daree'* (dry, bitter and thorny fruit) and all the different kinds of torment that Allah has mentioned.

﴿what a wretched resting-place﴾ that is, the place in which they will settle and abide forever.



﴿أَفَمَنْ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ الْحَقَّ كَمْ هُوَ أَعْمَقُ إِيمَانَذْكُرُ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ ١٩﴾
 ﴿الَّذِينَ يُؤْفَوْنَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَنْقَضُونَ الْبِيْتَقَ ٢٠﴾
 ﴿وَالَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ مَا أَمْرَ اللَّهُ يَدْعُهُ أَنْ يُوَصَّلَ وَيَخْشُونَ رَبَّهُمْ وَيَخَافُونَ سُوءَ الْحِسَابِ ٢١﴾
 ﴿وَالَّذِينَ صَرَبُوا أَبْتِغَاهُ وَجْهَ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًا وَعَلَانِيَةً وَيَدْرُهُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ أُولَئِكَ لَمْ يُغْنِيَ اللَّدَارِ ٢٢﴾
 ﴿جَنَّتُ عَذْنَ يَنْخُلُونَهَا وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ وَأَزْوَجُهُمْ وَذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ وَالْعَلَيْكُمْ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ ٢٣﴾
 ﴿سَلَمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنَعَمْ عَفْعَى الدَّارِ ٢٤﴾ (سورة الرعد: ١٩-٢٤)

الرعد: ١٩-٢٤

- 13:19. Is then the one who knows that what has been sent down to you from your Lord is the truth like one who is blind? It is only people of understanding who will pay heed,
- 13:20. Those who fulfil Allah's covenant and do not break their solemn pledge,

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- 13:21. Those who uphold the bonds that Allah has commanded to be upheld, and fear their Lord, and dread a terrible reckoning,
 - 13:22. Those who patiently persevere, seeking the Countenance of their Lord, and establish prayer, and spend from that which We have provided for them, secretly and openly, and repel evil with good; for them the end will be [best] in the hereafter,
 - 13:23. Gardens of perpetual abode, which they will enter together with the righteous among their fathers, their spouses, and their offspring. Angels will enter unto them from every gate [saying]:
 - 13:24. Peace be upon you because you patiently persevered. How excellent is the ultimate end!
-

Here Allah (ﷻ) highlights the difference between the people of knowledge and action, and the opposite:

﴿Is then the one who knows that what has been sent down to you from your Lord is the truth﴾ and understands it and acts upon it
﴿like one who is blind﴾ and does not recognise the truth or act upon it? The difference between them is like the difference between heaven and earth. Hence it is the individual's duty to think and reflect as to which of the two groups is better off and will have the better outcome, and then to give precedence to that group and follow their path. But not everybody thinks about what will benefit him or harm him.

﴿It is only people of understanding who will pay heed﴾ that is, people of sound reasoning and mature thinking, who are the elite of people and the chosen ones among the sons of Adam. If you ask about their description, you will not find any better than the description that Allah gives of them here:

﴿Those who fulfil Allah's covenant﴾ that He made with them and enjoined upon them, of carrying out their duties towards Him in the most perfect manner, which means fulfilling it completely and with sincerity

﴿and﴾ part of fulfilling the covenant perfectly is that they ﴿do not break their solemn pledge﴾ that is, the covenant that they made to Allah and by which they are bound. That includes all the covenants, promises, vows and oaths that people make. No person can be regarded as one of the people of understanding who will have that great reward unless he fulfils his covenants completely and perfectly, without undermining them or undoing them.

﴿Those who uphold the bonds that Allah has commanded to be upheld﴾ – this is general and applies to every bond that Allah has commanded people to uphold, which includes believing in Him and His Messenger (ﷺ), loving Him and His Messenger (ﷺ), submitting in full servitude to Him alone, with no partner or associate, obeying His Messenger (ﷺ), upholding ties with their fathers and mothers, honouring them in word and deed and not disobeying them, upholding ties with relatives and kin by treating them kindly in word and deed, and paying attention to spouses, friends and servants by giving them their rights in full, whether religious or worldly.

The reason that makes a person uphold the bonds that Allah has instructed him to uphold is fear of Allah and fear of the Day of Reckoning. Hence Allah says: ﴿and fear their Lord﴾ that is, their fear of Him and of meeting Him on the Day of Reckoning prevents them from daring to disobey Allah or to fall short in anything that Allah has enjoined, for fear of punishment and in hope of reward.

﴿Those who patiently persevere﴾ in complying with the commands and heeding the prohibitions by staying away from what is forbidden, and in accepting the decree of Allah that may be painful, without complaining about it.

But that is on condition that this patience be based on ﴿seeking the Countenance of their Lord﴾ and not on any other, corrupt, purpose or aim. This beneficial patience by means of which a person restrains himself, seeking thereby the pleasure of his Lord and hoping to draw closer to Him and attain His reward, is the patience which is unique

to the believers. As for the ordinary type of patience that is common among people, that is no more than showing how calm and tough one may be, which may lead to pride and showing off. This may be attained by both righteous and immoral people, believers and disbelievers; this is not the type of patience that is truly praiseworthy.

﴿and establish prayer﴾ with all its essential parts and optional extras, fulfilling all its conditions, both outwardly and inwardly
﴿and spend from that which We have provided for them, secretly and openly﴾ – that includes obligatory spending, such as *zakâh* and expiation, as well as that spending which is recommended; they spend as needed, secretly and openly
﴿and repel evil with good﴾ that is, if someone mistreats them in word or deed, they do not respond in kind; rather they respond with kindness.

So they give to those who withhold from them, they forgive those who wrong them, they uphold ties with those who cut them off, and they treat kindly those who mistreat them. If they respond with kindness to the one who mistreats them, then how do you think they would respond to one who does not mistreat them?

﴿for them﴾ that is, those who have these noble characteristics and good traits
﴿the end will be [best] in the hereafter﴾. This is explained in the following verse: ﴿Gardens of perpetual abode﴾ that is, where they will abide forever and never leave or want to leave, because they will not see anything better than it, because of what it contains of delight and joy that is all that one could ever want.

Part of that perfect delight and joy is that they will enter it ﴿together with the righteous among their fathers﴾ that is, their parents, both male and female

﴿their spouses﴾ that is, husbands or wives; the word translated here as ﴿spouses﴾ may also refer to peers, counterparts, friends and loved ones

﴿Angels will enter unto them from every gate﴾ congratulating them on being safe and greeting them, as an honour from Allah to them. They will say:

﴿Peace be upon you﴾ that is, you are now safe, and this is a greeting from Allah to you, which means that you are now safe and kept away from anything that is disliked, and you have attained all that you like.

﴿because you patiently persevered﴾ that is, your patience is what brought you to this blessed state and these beautiful gardens

﴿How excellent is the ultimate end!﴾

It is worthwhile for one who cares about his soul and appreciates its value to strive hard in the hope that he will adopt some of the qualities of the people of understanding, so that perhaps he may attain this abode which is the wish of all hearts, where all pleasures and joy are to be found. For such as this let people strive and compete.



﴿وَالَّذِينَ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيقَاتِهِ، وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوَصَّلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْكُفْرَةُ وَلَمْ سُورَةُ الدَّارِ ﴾٢٥﴿ (سورة الرعد: ٢٥)

- 13:25. But those who break Allah's covenant after it has been made binding, and sever the bonds that Allah has commanded to be upheld, and spread mischief in the land – upon them is the curse and for them is a wretched end.

Having mentioned the situation of the people of paradise, Allah tells us that the people of hell will be in the opposite situation:

﴿But those who break Allah's covenant after it has been made binding﴾ that is, after Allah made it binding through His Messengers and confirmed it, they did not respond by submitting; rather they responded by turning away and breaking the covenant

﴿and sever the bonds that Allah has commanded to be upheld﴾ so they did not uphold the ties between them and their Lord by believing and doing righteous deeds, and they did not uphold the ties of kinship or do the duties that were required of them; rather they spread mischief on earth by disbelieving, committing sin, barring people from the path of Allah and making it seem crooked.

﴿upon them is the curse﴾ that is, they are cast far away and condemned by Allah, His angels and His believing slaves

﴿and for them is a wretched end﴾ namely hell, with all that it contains of painful punishments.



﴿فَاللَّهُ يَسْعِطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ وَفَرِحُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا مَتَّعٌ﴾ (سورة الرعد: ٢٦)

- 13:26. Allah grants abundant provision to whomever He wills, or gives it in scant measure. [The disbelievers] rejoice in the life of this world, but the life of this world, compared to the hereafter, is nothing but a fleeting pleasure.

That is, Allah alone grants abundant provision and gives freely of His bounty to whomever He will, and He restricts it and gives it in small measure to whomever He will.

﴿[The disbelievers] rejoice in the life of this world﴾, which makes them feel content with it to the extent that they neglect the hereafter, and that is due to their lack of reason.

﴿but the life of this world, compared to the hereafter, is nothing but a fleeting pleasure﴾ that is, it is something insignificant that a person enjoys for a brief while, but then he will leave his family and friends behind, and it will be followed by lengthy suffering.



﴿وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّهِ قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضْلِلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ أَنَابَ ﴾٢٧ ﴿الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطَمِّنُ فُؤُلُومُهُمْ يَذْكُرُ اللَّهُ أَلَا يَذْكُرُ
اللَّهُ تَطَمِّنُ الْقُلُوبُ ﴾٢٨ ﴿الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ طُوبٌ لَهُمْ وَحُسْنٌ
مَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَعْمَلُونَ﴾ (سورة الرعد: ٢٧-٢٩)

- 13:27. Those who disbelieve say: Why has no sign been sent down to him from his Lord? Say: Verily Allah leaves to stray whomever He wills and guides unto Himself whoever turns to Him,
- 13:28. those who believe and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of Allah, for verily in the remembrance of Allah hearts find comfort.
- 13:29. Those who believe and do righteous deeds, joy will be theirs, and a blissful journey's end.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about those who disbelieve in the revelations of Allah and behave stubbornly towards the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), demanding things from him and saying, ﴿Why has no sign been sent down to him from his Lord?﴾, and claiming that if a sign came, they would believe. Allah responded to them by saying:

﴿Say: Verily Allah leaves to stray whomever He wills and guides unto Himself whoever turns to Him﴾ that is, seeks His pleasure. For guidance and misguidance are not under their control, so that they can make that dependent upon signs. Moreover, they are lying:

﴿Even if We did send angels down to them, and the dead spoke to them, and We gathered together all things before them [to testify to the truth], they still would not believe, unless Allah willed it. But most of them are ignorant [of this fact].﴾ (an-An'ām 6: 111)

The Messenger (ﷺ) is not obliged to bring the specific sign that they demand; rather if he brings them a sign that is enough to prove

that the message he brings is true, that is sufficient and the goal has been achieved. In fact that will be more beneficial to them than their demand for the signs that they specify, because if the sign came to them in accordance with their demand and they did not believe in it, that would result in the punishment being hastened for them.

Then Allah (ﷻ) describes the sign of the believers: «those who believe and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of Allah» that is, their anxiety and worries are dispelled and replaced with joy and pleasure.

«for verily in the remembrance of Allah hearts find comfort» that is, this is their nature and it is to be expected that they would not find comfort in anything except remembrance of Allah, for nothing brings greater pleasure to the heart and nothing is more desirable or sweeter than loving the Creator, feeling close to Him and knowing Him. According to how much the heart knows and loves Allah, it will remember Him to that degree. This is based on the assumption that what is meant by remembrance of Allah is when a person remembers his Lord (*dhikr*) by glorifying Him, proclaiming His oneness, magnifying Him and so on.

It was also suggested that what is meant by the remembrance of Allah is His Book that He sent down as a reminder to the believers. Based on that, what is meant by hearts finding comfort in the remembrance of Allah is that when the heart comes to know the meanings and rulings of the Qur'an, it feels reassured by them, for they point to clear truth that is supported by evidence and proof. Thus the hearts are reassured, for they cannot find reassurance except by means of certainty and knowledge, which is found in the Book of Allah that is certainly complete and perfect. As for other books that are not based on it, the heart does not feel at ease with them; rather the heart will remain troubled because of the contradictory nature of their evidence and rulings.

﴿...If it [the Qur'an] had been from anyone other than Allah, they would surely have found therein many contradictions.﴾ (*an-Nisā' 4: 82*)

This is only known to those who are well-versed in the Book of Allah and who study it and other branches of knowledge, for they find a huge difference between them and it.

﴿Those who believe and do righteous deeds﴾ that is, they believe with all their hearts in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day, and they confirm this faith by doing righteous deeds which includes deeds of the heart, by loving Allah, fearing Him and putting their hope in Him, as well as physical deeds such as prayer and the like.

﴿joy will be theirs, and a blissful journey's end﴾ that is, they will be in a good state and have a good return on the Day of Resurrection, because of what they attain of the pleasure of Allah and His honour in this world and the hereafter. They will attain complete rest and perfect reassurance. The word *toobâ*, translated here as *(joy)*, may also refer to the tree of Toobâ in paradise, in the shade of which a person may travel for one hundred years without covering the entire distance, as is mentioned in the *sahih* hadiths.



﴿كَذَلِكَ أَرْسَلْنَاكَ فِي أُمَّةٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قِبْلَهَا أُمُّمٌ تَتَلَوَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الَّذِي أَوحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ بِالرَّحْمَنِ قُلْ هُوَ رَبُّ الْأَلْهَامِ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلُونَ وَإِلَيْهِ مَنِّيَّب﴾ (٢٠)

(سورة الرعد: ٢٠)

- 13:30. Thus We have sent you to a nation before whom other nations have passed away, so that you may recite to them that which We have revealed to you, yet they disbelieve in the Most Gracious. Say: He is my Lord, there is no god but He; in Him I put my trust and to Him I turn.

Here Allah says to His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ): ﴿Thus We have sent you﴾ to your people, to call them to true guidance ﴿to a nation before whom other nations have passed away﴾ to whom We sent Our Messengers. You are not the first of the Messengers, such that they should find your message strange, and you are not speaking of your own accord; rather you recite to them the revelations of Allah that Allah reveals to you, which purify hearts and souls.

But in fact your people disbelieve in the Most Gracious, so they did not respond to His mercy and kindness – the greatest aspect of which is that We have sent you to them as a Messenger and We have sent down to you a Book – by accepting it with gratitude and thanks; rather they responded by rejecting and denying. Why do they not learn a lesson from those who came before them of nations who rejected their Messengers, and how Allah punished them for their sins? ﴿Say: He is my Lord, there is no god but He﴾; this includes both types of *tawheed* (oneness of Allah): the oneness of divinity and the oneness of Lordship.

He is my Lord Who has cared for me by sending His blessings upon me since He created me, and He is my God in Whom ﴿I put my trust﴾ in all my affairs ﴿and to Him I turn﴾ that is, and devote all my acts of worship to Him and I turn to Him for my needs.



﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّ قُرْئَانَنَا سِيرَتٍ بِهِ الْجِبَالُ أَوْ فُطِعَتٍ بِهِ الْأَرْضُ أَوْ كُلُّمٍ بِهِ الْمَوْقَعَ بِلَّهُ الْأَمْرُ جَمِيعًا أَفَلَمْ يَأْتِيَنَّكَ مَاءً مَنْوَأً لَوْ يَسْأَمِهُ اللَّهُ لَهَدَى النَّاسَ حَيَّاً وَلَا يَرَأُلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا تُصِيبُهُمْ بِمَا صَنَعُوا قَارِعَةً أَوْ تَحْلُلُ قَرِيبًا مِنْ دَارِهِمْ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَنَّ وَعْدُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ أَمْبِيَادَ﴾ (سورة الرعد: ٣١)

13:31. If there were a Qur'an with which the mountains could be moved, the earth could be cleft and the dead could be made to

speak [they still would not believe]. But surely all things are subject to Allah's will. Do those who believe not know that if Allah had so willed, He could have guided all humanity? Calamities will continue to befall those who disbelieve, for their deeds, or to strike close to their homes, until the promise of Allah comes to pass, for Allah does not break His promise.

Here Allah highlights the superiority of the Holy Qur'an over all other revealed Books:

﴿If there were a Qur'an with which the mountains could be moved﴾ from their places

﴿the earth could be cleft and the dead could be made to speak [they still would not believe]. But surely all things are subject to Allah's will﴾ and He brings forth the signs that are in accordance with His wisdom. So what is wrong with the disbelievers and what makes them demand specific signs as they do? Do they or anyone else have any control over the matter?

﴿Do those who believe not know that if Allah had so willed, He could have guided all humanity?﴾ So let them realise that Allah is able to guide them all, but it was not His will to do so. Rather He guides whomever He will and He leaves astray whomever He will.

﴿Calamities will continue to befall those who disbelieve﴾ for their disbelief, but they will not learn any lesson or pay heed. Allah ﷺ will keep sending calamities upon them, one after another, which will strike them in their homes or nearby, yet they persist in their disbelief. ﴿until the promise of Allah comes to pass﴾, of sending down an ongoing punishment for which there can be no relief

﴿for Allah does not break His promise﴾. This is a threat and a warning to them that what Allah promised them because of their disbelief, stubbornness and wrongdoing will surely come to them.



﴿ وَلَقَدْ أَسْتَهِنَّ بِرُسُلٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ فَأَنْلَيْتُ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِمْ أَخْذَتْهُمْ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبًا ﴾ (سورة الرعد: ٣٢)

- 13:32. Indeed Messengers before you [O Muhammad] were ridiculed, but I granted respite to those who disbelieved, then I punished them, and how [terrible] was My retribution!

Here Allah says to His Messenger (ﷺ), to reassure and console him:
 ﴿Indeed Messengers before you [O Muhammad] were ridiculed﴾;
 you were not the first one to be disbelieved and persecuted
 ﴿but I granted respite to those who disbelieved﴾ in their Messengers;
 that is, I granted them respite until they thought that they would not
 be punished
 ﴿then I punished them﴾ with all types of punishment
 ﴿and how [terrible] was My retribution!﴾ It was a severe punishment
 and painful torment. So these people who disbelieve in you and
 ridicule you should not be deceived because of Our respite, for they
 have an example in the nations who came before them. So let them
 beware lest the same fate befall them as befell those people



﴿ أَفَنْ هُوَ قَايمٌ عَلَى كُلِّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ قُلْ سَمِعُوهُمْ أَمْ تُنْتَهُونَهُ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ يُظَاهِرُونَ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بَلْ زُيَّنَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مَكْرُهُمْ وَصُدُّوا عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَنْ يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَالَّهُ مِنْ هَادِيٍّ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةِ أَشَقُّ وَمَا هُمْ بِمَالِهِمْ مِنَ وَاقِفٍ ﴾ (سورة الرعد: ٣٤-٣٣).

- 13:33. Is He Who watches over every soul and what it earns [like any other]? And yet they ascribe partners to Allah. Say: Name

them; or do you presume to tell Allah of something that He does not know on earth, or is it [just] a show of words? But their contrivance is made fair-seeming to those who disbelieve and they are barred from the path. For those whom Allah has caused to go astray, no one can guide.

- 13:34. For them is punishment in the life of this world, but indeed the punishment of the hereafter will be harder still. And they will have no defender against Allah.

﴿Is He Who watches over every soul and what it earns﴾, and requites it in this world and the hereafter on the basis of justice and fairness – this refers to Allah (ﷻ); can He be like one who is not like that?

Hence Allah says: ﴿And yet they ascribe partners to Allah﴾ when He is Allah, the One, the Self-Sustaining, Who has no partner, no equal and no peer.

﴿Say﴾ to them, if they are speaking the truth

﴿Name them﴾ so that it will be known what they are

﴿Or do you presume to tell Allah of something that He does not know on earth﴾ for if He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen, and He does not know that He has a partner, it will thus be known that this claim of His having a partner is false, and that you are like one who is informing Allah that He has a partner at the time when He does not know that, but this is the falsest of falsehood. Hence Allah says: ﴿Or is it [just] a show of words?﴾ That is, the most that can be said of such a claim is that it is no more than words that you utter.

In reality there is no god but Allah, and no one among creation deserves to be worshipped in any way whatsoever.

﴿But their contrivance is made fair-seeming to those who disbelieve﴾ that is, what they devised, namely their disbelief, ascription of partners to Allah, and disbelief in His revelations

﴿and they are barred from the path﴾ that is, from the straight path that leads to Allah and to His paradise

﴿For those whom Allah has caused to go astray, no one can guide﴾ because no one has any control over the matter.

﴿For them is punishment in the life of this world, but indeed the punishment of the hereafter will be harder still﴾ than the punishment of this world, because it is so severe and everlasting.

﴿And they will have no defender against Allah﴾ to protect them from the punishment of Allah, for when He sends His punishment upon them, no one can ward it off.



﴿مَثْلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ بَغْرِيٌّ مِّنْ تَحْنَاهَا الْأَنْهَرُ أَكْلُهَا دَائِمٌ وَظُلْهَا يَنْكَ عَقِبَ الَّذِينَ أَنْقَوْا وَعَقِبَ الْكُفَّارِنَ الْأَنْارُ﴾ (٣٥) (سورة الرعد: ٣٥)

13:35. The likeness of paradise, which the pious are promised, [is that of a garden] through which rivers flow; its food is perpetual, and so is its shade. Such will be the end for those who fear Allah, and the end for the disbelievers will be the fire.

﴿The likeness of paradise, which the pious﴾ that is, those who refrain from that which Allah has forbidden to them and do not fall short in that which He has enjoined upon them

﴿[is that of a garden] through which rivers flow﴾ that is, rivers of honey, rivers of wine, rivers of milk and rivers of water that flow without ditches and irrigate those gardens and trees, which bear all kinds of fruit.

﴿its food is perpetual, and so is its shade. Such will be the end for those who fear Allah﴾ that is, it will be their ultimate destination
 ﴿and the end for the disbelievers will be the fire﴾ and how obvious is the difference between them.



﴿وَالَّذِينَ مَا تَنْهَمُ الْكِتَابَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا أُنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمِنَ الْأَخْرَابِ مَنْ يُشَكِّرُ بَعْضَهُ،
قُلْ إِنَّمَا أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ وَلَا أُشْرِكُ بِهِ إِلَيْهِ أَدْعُوا وَإِلَيْهِ مَوْلَىٰ﴾ (سورة الرعد: ٣٦)

(الرعد: ٣٦)

13:36. Those to whom We gave the scripture rejoice in that which is revealed to you, but there are some groups who reject parts of it. Say: I am commanded to worship Allah, and not to ascribe partners to Him. To Him I call and to Him is my return.

﴿Those to whom We gave the scripture﴾ that is, those whom We blessed with it and with knowledge thereof

﴿rejoice in that which is revealed to you﴾ so they believe in it and they rejoice in the harmony between the Books and how they confirm one another. This refers to those among the people of the two Books who believed.

﴿but there are some groups who reject parts of it﴾ that is, among the disbelieving groups who deviated from the truth there are those who reject part of this Qur'an and do not believe in it.

﴿...Whoever is guided, it is for his own benefit, and whoever goes astray, it is to his own detriment...﴾ (az-Zumar 39: 41)

You are but a warner, calling people to Allah.

﴿Say: I am commanded to worship Allah, and not to ascribe partners to Him﴾ that is, to devote worship solely to Allah alone

﴿To Him I call and to Him is my return﴾ that is, to Him I will go back, and He will reward me for what I did of calling people to His religion and striving to do what I was commanded to do.



﴿وَكَذَلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ حُكْمًا عَرَبِيًّا وَلَيْنَ اتَّبَعَتْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بَعْدَمَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا وَاقِفٍ﴾ (سورة الرعد: ٣٧)

13:37. Thus have We revealed it, a precise Book in Arabic. If you were to follow their whims and desires, after the knowledge that has come to you, you would have neither protector nor defender against Allah.

That is, We have sent down this Qur'an, a precise Book in Arabic; that is, well-composed in Arabic, in the clearest and most eloquent of languages, so that there will be no doubt or confusion concerning it, and so that it alone will be followed without compromise, and that which opposes it and contradicts it of the whims and desires of those who have no knowledge will not be followed.

Hence Allah warned His Messenger ﷺ – even though he was infallible and protected from error, which was a great blessing from Allah – so that his Ummah would be subject to the same set of rulings: ﴿If you were to follow their whims and desires, after the knowledge that has come to you﴾ that is, the clear knowledge which forbids you to follow their whims and desires
 ﴿you would have neither protector﴾ to protect you so that you could attain what you want ﴿nor defender against Allah﴾ to defend you from harm.



﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَحَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ أَرْوَاجًا وَدُرْرِيَّةً وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِعَايَةً إِلَّا يَأْذِنَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ أَجْلٍ كِتَابٌ ﴿٢٨﴾ يَتَحَوَّلُوا اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثِيتُ وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ﴾ (سورة الرعد: ٣٩-٣٨)

- 13:38. We sent Messengers before you [O Muhammad], and gave them wives and children. It was not given to any Messenger to bring a sign except by Allah's leave. For everything there is a time ordained.
- 13:39. Allah erases and confirms whatever He wills, and with Him is the Mother of the Book [*al-Lawh al-Mahfoodh*].⁶

That is, you are not the first Messenger to be sent to people, such that they could find your message strange.

﴿We sent Messengers before you [O Muhammad], and gave them wives and children﴾ so do not let your enemies criticise you for having wives and children, as your fellow Messengers did. Why should they criticise you for that, when they know that the Messengers before you did likewise, unless it is for their own corrupt ulterior motives?

If they ask you for a specific sign, you have no control over the matter. ﴿It was not given to any Messenger to bring a sign except by Allah's leave﴾ and Allah does not give permission for such things except at the exact time that He has decreed for it.

﴿For everything there is a time ordained﴾ and it cannot be brought forward or put back from that time. The fact that they are seeking to hasten the signs or the punishment does not mean that Allah has to bring forward something that He has decreed should happen later, even though He can do whatever He wills.

﴿Allah erases and confirms whatever﴾ decrees ﴿He wills﴾, and this erasing and alteration applies to matters other than what Allah has already decreed by His knowledge and written with His

⁶ *Al-Lawh al-Mahfoodh*: the Preserved Tablet, the place where the decrees of Allah are kept. According to the hadith:

«The first thing that Allah created was the Pen, and He said to it: Write! It said: What shall I write? He said: Write the decrees of all things until the Hour begins.» (Recorded by Abu Dâwood; al-Albâni graded it as reliable) That was written in *al-Lawh al-Mahfoodh*.

pen, for the latter is not subject to any alteration or change, for it is impossible for there to be any shortcoming in the knowledge of Allah. Hence He says: ﴿and with Him is the Mother of the Book﴾, namely al-Lawh al-Mahfoodh, which is the reference point of all things, because it is the basis thereof, and everything else branches from it.

Rather changes and alterations may occur in minor issues, such as people's actions during the day and night that are recorded by the angels, and Allah creates causes for the confirmation or erasure thereof that do not go beyond what is written in al-Lawh al-Mahfoodh. For example, Allah has ordained that righteousness, upholding ties and doing good deeds should be causes for being granted a long life and abundant provision; He has ordained that sins should be causes for loss of blessing in provision and lifespan; He has ordained the taking of measures for protecting oneself against fatal accidents and injury as a means of safety; and He has ordained that exposing oneself to risks is a cause of damage and injury. It is He Who controls all things according to His will and decree, and whatever He controls does not take a course contrary to that which He already knew and wrote in al-Lawh al-Mahfoodh.



﴿وَإِنَّ مَا تُرِيكُ بَعْضَ الَّذِي نَعْدُمُ أَوْ نَتَوَفَّيْنَكَ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلْغُ وَعَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ
﴿أَوْلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا نَقِّلُ الْأَرْضَ تَنْصُصًا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا وَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ لَا مَعْقِلَ لِحَكْمِهِ
وَهُوَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ﴾ (سورة الرعد: ٤١-٤٠)

- 13:40. Whether We show you [O Muhammad] some of that with which We have threatened them or We cause you to die [before that], your duty is only to convey the message, and the Reckoning is for Us.

13:41. Do they not see that We gradually reduce the land [in their control] from its outlying borders? When Allah decrees [a thing], none can reverse His decree, and He is swift in reckoning.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ): do not hasten the punishment of which they were warned, for if they persist in their transgression and disbelief, it is inevitable that that of which they were warned will befall them.

﴿Whether We show you﴾ that in this world, so you have the delight of seeing it

﴿Or We cause you to die﴾ before it reaches them, that is not your concern.

﴿Your duty is only to convey the message﴾ to people, and explain it
﴿And the Reckoning is for Us﴾, so We will bring people to account for what they did of their obligations and what they neglected, and We will reward or punish them accordingly.

Then Allah says, warning the disbelievers: ﴿Do they not see that We gradually reduce the land [in their control] from its outlying borders?﴾ It was said that this refers to destruction of the disbelievers and eradication of the wrongdoers, or that it refers to the conquest of the lands of the polytheists, and reducing them in wealth and numbers. And there were other suggestions concerning the meaning.

However what appears to be the case – and Allah knows best – is that what is meant here is that Allah would cause the lands of these disbelievers to be swept by a wave of conquests, and that calamities would begin to strike the outlying areas as a warning to them before the decline began to take effect and before Allah caused them to be struck by calamities of a type that no one can ward off. Hence He said: ﴿When Allah decrees [a thing], none can reverse His decree﴾. That includes both His *shar'i* rulings and universal laws.

These decrees and rulings that Allah ordains are of the highest level of precision, with no shortcomings. Rather they are based on fairness and justice, so no one can reverse them and there is no way to undermine them. This is in contrast to the rulings of others, which may or may not be in harmony with the truth.

﴿and He is swift in reckoning﴾ that is, so do not seek to hasten the punishment, for everything that is meant to happen is close at hand.



﴿وَقَدْ مَكَرَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَلِلَّهِ الْمَكْرُ جَيْعَانًا يَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ وَسَيَعْلَمُ الْكُفَّارُ لِمَنْ عَقِبَ الدَّارِ ﴾٤٢﴿ وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَسْتَ مُرْسَلًا قُلْ كَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ ﴾٤٣﴾ (سورة الرعد: ٤٢-٤٣)

(٤٣)

13:42. Those who came before them [also] plotted and planned, but Allah is master of all planning. He knows what each soul earns, and the disbelievers will come to know for whom the end will be [best] in the hereafter.

13:43. The disbelievers say: You are not a Messenger. Say: Allah is sufficient as a witness between me and you, and [so are] those who have knowledge of the scriptures.

﴿Those who came before them [also] plotted and planned﴾ against their Messengers and against the truth the Messengers brought, but their plots did not avail them in anything and did not achieve any goal, because they were fighting and opposing Allah, and ﴿Allah is master of all planning﴾. No one can plot and plan except by His leave and subject to His will and decree. Hence if they plot against His religion, the plot will backfire and lead to nothing but frustration and regret, for

Allah ﴿knows what each soul earns﴾ that is, He knows its concerns and thoughts, and all that it does, both outwardly and inwardly.

Plots are inevitably part of what the soul earns, so their plots are not hidden from Allah and therefore it is not possible for them to come up with a plot that will harm the truth and its people and benefit themselves in any way.

﴿and the disbelievers will come to know for whom the end will be [best] in the hereafter﴾ that is, for them or for the Messengers. It is well known that the end will be best for those who fear Allah, not for the disbelievers.

﴿The disbelievers say: You are not a Messenger﴾ that is, they disbelieve in you and they disbelieve in the message with which you were sent

﴿Say﴾ to them, when they demand a witness for that: ﴿Allah is sufficient as a witness between me and you﴾ and His witness is on the basis of His words, His actions and His approval. As for His words, they are what Allah has revealed to the most truthful of His creation, by means of which He confirmed his messengerhood.

As for His actions, that is because Allah (ﷻ) supported His Messenger (ﷺ) and granted him victory that was beyond his means and those of his Companions and followers. This was testimony from Allah based on actions and support.

As for His approval, Allah told the Messenger (ﷺ) that he was indeed His Messenger and that people were enjoined to follow him. So whoever follows him attains the pleasure and honour of Allah, and whoever does not follow him is subject to hell and divine wrath. Allah approved of his message; if he had fabricated anything and attributed it falsely to Allah, He would have hastened to punish him.

﴿and [so are] those who have knowledge of the scriptures﴾ – this includes all the scholars of the people of the two Books, for they testify in favour of the Messenger. Those among them who believe

in the Messenger (ﷺ) and follow the truth proclaim this testimony that they were obliged to give, and whoever withholds it, the fact that Allah tells us that he has a testimony that he is withholding carries more weight than if he himself were to disclose it openly. If he did not have any testimony to disclose, he would have responded that he had no testimony on the basis of proof. His silence proves that he has testimony that he is concealing. The only reason why Allah said that the testimony of the People of the Book should be sought is because they are people who have knowledge of this matter, and testimony is only to be sought from people who have more knowledge of the matter than others. This is in contrast to those who have nothing to do with it, such as the illiterate polytheist Arabs and others; there was no benefit in seeking their testimony, because they had no experience or knowledge of the matter. And Allah knows best.

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat ar-Ra'd.

All praise and thanks are for Allah, and may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), his family, and his Companions abundantly until the Day of Judgement.



14.

Soorat Ibrâheem

(Makki)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the name of Allah,
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*



﴿الرُّ كَتَبَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ يَأْذِنِ
رَبِّهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطِ الْعَزِيزِ الْمُوَيْدِ ﴿١﴾ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي
الْأَرْضِ وَوَيْلٌ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مِنْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ ﴿٢﴾ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَحْجُونَ الْحَيَاةَ
الَّذِينَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْآخِرَةِ وَيَصُدُّونَكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَيَعْثُونَهَا عَوْجًا أَوْلَئِكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ
بَعِيرٌ﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ٣-٤)

14:1. Alif. Lâm. Râ'.⁷ [This is] a Book that We have revealed to you, so that you may lead the people forth from the depths of darkness into light, by their Lord's leave, to the path of the Almighty, the Praiseworthy,

⁷ Groups of letters (al-huroof al-muqatta'ah) appear at the beginning of several soorahs. The most correct scholarly view states that we are required to believe in them as they appear to be, without delving into their meaning, knowledge of which we should leave to Allah. We believe that they were not revealed in vain, and that there is wisdom behind them of which we are not aware.

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- 14:2. [the path of] Allah, to Whom belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth. And woe to the disbelievers from a severe punishment!
 - 14:3. Those who prefer the life of this world to the hereafter, who bar [people] from the path of Allah, and seek to make it appear crooked; those are the ones who have gone far astray.
-

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He sent down His Book to His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) to benefit humankind and to bring them forth from the darkness of ignorance, disbelief, bad attitudes and all kinds of sin to the light of knowledge, faith and good attitudes. ﴿by their Lord's leave﴾ that is, they could not do that which Allah wants and loves them to do except by the will and help of Allah. This encourages people to seek the help of their Lord.

Then He explains further the light to which this Book guides them: ﴿to the path of the Almighty, the Praiseworthy﴾ that is, the path that leads to Him and to paradise, which involves knowing the truth and acting upon it. Mentioning ﴿the Almighty, the Praiseworthy﴾ after mentioning the path that leads to Him indicates that the one who follows this path will be honoured and protected by the might of Allah, even if he has no supporters except Him, and he will have a good end in all his affairs.

This indicates that the path of Allah is one of the greatest proofs of what Allah possesses of sublime attributes of perfection, and that the One Who set up the straight path for His slaves is almighty in power and praiseworthy in words, actions and rulings, and that He is to be loved and worshipped with acts of worship that lead one on the straight path. Just as He has dominion of the heavens and the earth, as their Creator, provider and controller, He also has the right to issue religious rulings to His slaves, because they belong to Him and it is not befitting for Him to leave them without guidance.

Having made the proof and evidence clear, Allah then warns those who do not submit to that, as He says: ﴿And woe to the disbelievers

from a severe punishment» for they have not given due recognition to Allah and they have not complied with His commands.

Then He describes them as being «Those who prefer the life of this world to the hereafter», so they are happy and content with it, and they are heedless about the hereafter

«who bar [people] from the path of Allah» that He has set up for His slaves and explained it in His Books and on the lips of His Messengers. But these people have made a declaration of enmity and war against their Lord

And they «seek to make it» that is, the path of Allah «appear crooked» that is, they are keen to make it seem off-putting and ugly, so as to turn people away from it. But Allah insists that His light must be perfected, even though the disbelievers hate it.

«those» who are described here «are the ones who have gone far astray» because they have gone astray themselves and have caused others to go astray, and they opposed and fought Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). What misguidance could be worse than this? As for the people of faith, they are the opposite of them, for they believe in Allah and His revelations, they prefer the hereafter over this world, and they call people to the path of Allah, making it look as beautiful as they can and highlighting how straight it is (as opposed to being crooked).



﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانِ قَوْمِهِ لِتُبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ فَإِنْ يَعْمَلُوا مَا شَاءُوا وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾ (٤) (سورة إبراهيم: ٤)

14:4. We did not send any Messenger but [he spoke] in the language of his own people, in order to make [things] clear to them. Then Allah leaves astray whomever He wills and guides whomever He wills, and He is the Almighty, Most Wise.

By His kindness to His slaves, Allah never sent any Messenger **﴿but [he spoke] in the language of his own people, in order to make [things] clear to them﴾** that they needed to know, so that they might be able to learn what he brought to them, which is different from the situation if he had spoken in a language other than theirs, for then they would have needed to learn that language in which he spoke, then understand what he had said. Then once the Messenger has explained what they are enjoined and forbidden to do, and the proof of Allah has been established against them,

﴿Then Allah leaves astray whomever He wills﴾ of those who did not submit to true guidance, and He guides whomever He will among those whom He has chosen for His mercy.

﴿and He is the Almighty, Most Wise﴾. Because He is Almighty, He is the only One Who has the power to guide or leave astray, and to control the hearts and direct them as He will. By His wisdom, he does not ordain guidance or misguidance except as is appropriate.

This verse is quoted as evidence that acquiring branches of knowledge having to do with the Arabic language, that lead to understanding of the words of Allah and of His Messenger (ﷺ), is something that is required and is dear to Allah, because knowledge of what He revealed to His Messenger (ﷺ) cannot be attained otherwise, except in cases where people are in such a situation that they have no need of that, which applies if they become well-versed in Arabic and grow up with it from an early age, and it is second nature to them. In that case, there is no need to put effort into that and they become fit to read the words of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) and understand them immediately, as the *Sahābah* (رضي الله عنهم) did.



﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا أَتَ أَخْرِجُ قَوْمَكَ مِنْ الظُّلْمَاتِ إِلَى الْفُورِ وَذَكِّرْهُمْ بِآيَاتِنِّمُ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآتَيْتَ لِكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورًا﴾

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ أَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ أَنْجَنَاكُمْ مِنْ
كَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسْوِمُونَكُمْ شَوَّهَ الْعَذَابِ وَيَدْعُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ
نِسَاءَكُمْ وَفِي ذَلِكُمْ بَلَاءٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ① وَإِذْ تَأذَنَ رَبُّكُمْ
لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِنْ كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ ② وَقَالَ مُوسَى إِنْ
تَكْفُرُوا أَنْتُمْ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَيْعَانًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ③ (سورة إبراهيم: ٨-٥)

- 14:5. We sent Moosâ with Our signs, [saying]: Bring your people forth from the depths of darkness into light and remind them of the blessings of Allah. Surely in that there are signs for every steadfastly patient and deeply thankful person.
- 14:6. And [remember] when Moosâ said to his people: Remember Allah's blessing upon you, when He delivered you from the people of Pharaoh, who were subjecting you to grievous torment, slaughtering your sons and letting your womenfolk live; in that was a great trial from your Lord.
- 14:7. And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed: If you give thanks, I will surely give you more, but if you are ungrateful, verily My punishment is indeed severe.
- 14:8. And Moosâ said: Even if you are ungrateful, you and all who are on earth together, verily Allah is Self-Sufficient, Praiseworthy.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He sent Moosâ with great signs that confirmed the truth and validity of the message he brought, and enjoined upon him the same instructions as He enjoined upon His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) and, indeed, upon all the Messengers: «Bring your people forth from the depths of darkness into light» that is, from the darkness of ignorance and disbelief of all kinds, to the light of knowledge and faith, and all that is connected to them «and remind them of the blessings of Allah» that He has bestowed upon them, and His kindness towards them.

﴿Surely in that﴾ that is, in the blessings that Allah bestows upon His slaves

﴿there are signs for every steadfastly patient and deeply thankful person﴾ that is, the one who is steadfastly patient at times of hardship and difficulty, and deeply thankful for times of ease and blessings.

Allah's blessings are indicative of His perfect power, immense generosity and perfect justice and wisdom. Hence Moosâ (ﷺ) obeyed the command of his Lord and reminded his people of the blessings of Allah, saying:

﴿Remember Allah's blessing upon you﴾ that is, in your hearts and verbally

﴿when He delivered you from the people of Pharaoh, who were subjecting you to grievous torment﴾ inflicting the severest persecution. He then explained that by saying:

﴿slaughtering your sons and letting your womenfolk live﴾ that is, they left the women alive and did not kill them

﴿in that﴾ namely your deliverance

﴿was a great trial from your Lord﴾ that is, a great blessing, or it may mean: in that torment from Pharaoh and his chiefs with which you were tested there was a great trial for you from Allah, to see whether you would be patient or not.

Moosâ said to them, urging them to give thanks for the blessings of Allah: ﴿And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed﴾ that is, announced and promised

﴿If you give thanks, I will surely give you more﴾ of My blessings
﴿but if you are ungrateful, verily My punishment is indeed severe﴾ – that punishment includes taking away from them the blessing that He had bestowed upon them. Gratitude means acknowledging in one's heart the blessings of Allah, praising Allah for them and using them to seek the pleasure of Allah (ﷻ). Ingratitude is the opposite of that.

﴿And Moosâ said: Even if you are ungrateful, you and all who are on earth together﴾ you will never harm Allah in the slightest

﴿verily Allah is Self-Sufficient, Praiseworthy﴾. Acts of obedience do not add to His dominion and acts of disobedience do not detract from it, for He is perfectly self-sufficient, praiseworthy in His essence, names, attributes and actions. He has no attributes but attributes of the utmost praiseworthiness and perfection, He has no names but the best of names and He does no actions but actions of the utmost goodness.



﴿أَلَّا يَأْتِكُمْ بَنُو الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ قَوْمٌ نُوحٌ وَعَادٌ وَثَمُودٌ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ لَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا اللَّهُ جَاءَهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَرَدُوا أَيْدِيهِمْ فِي أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَقَالُوا إِنَّا كُفَّارٌ بِمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مَهْدِيَّا وَإِنَّا لَعِنِي شَلَّقَ مِمَّا نَدْعُونَا إِلَيْهِ مُرِيبٌ ﴾ ١٤ ﴾ قَالَتْ رُسُلُهُمْ أَفَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَكُّ فَاطِرُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يَدْعُوكُمْ لِغَفْرَانِكُمْ مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُؤْخِرُكُمْ إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُسَمٍّ قَالُوا إِنَّا إِنْ أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِنْنَا تُرِيدُنَا أَنْ نَصْدُونَا عَنَّا كَاتَبَتْ يَعْبُدُءَابَاؤُنَا فَأَتُونَا سُلَطَانٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴾ ١٥ ﴾ قَالَتْ لَهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ إِنَّنَّمَا تَحْسُنُ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ وَثَلَّكُمْ وَلَكُنَّ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَمَا كَاتَ لَنَا أَنْ تَأْتِيَكُمْ سُلَطَانٌ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلِيَتَوَكَّلَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾ ١٦ ﴾ وَمَا لَنَا أَلَّا نَتَوَكَّلَ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدَنَا شُبُّلًا وَلَنَصِيرَكُمْ عَلَى مَا إِذَا يَسْمُونَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلِيَتَوَكَّلَ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ ﴾ ١٧ ﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ٩-١٢)

- 14:9. Have the stories not reached you of those who came before you – the people of Nooh, ‘Ad and Thamood, and those who came after them? No one knows them but Allah. Their Messengers came to them with clear signs, but they put their hands to their mouths and said: Indeed we disbelieve in that with which you have been sent, and indeed we are in grave doubt about that to which you are calling us.
- 14:10. Their Messengers said: Can there be any doubt about Allah, the Originator of the heavens and the earth? He calls you so

that He may forgive some of your sins and give you respite for an appointed term. They said: You are but human beings like ourselves! You want to turn us away from that which our forefathers used to worship; then bring us some clear proof.

- 14:11. Their Messengers said to them: Indeed we are but human beings like yourselves, but Allah bestows His favour upon whomever He wills of His slaves. It is not within our power to bring you any proof except by Allah's leave. And in Allah let the believers put their trust.
- 14:12. Why should we not put our trust in Allah when He has guided us in our paths? We will surely be patient and steadfast in bearing whatever harm you cause us. And in Allah let all that trust put their trust.

Here Allah alerts His slaves to the way in which He dealt with the disbelieving nations when the Messengers came to them and they rejected them, so He punished them in this world with the punishment that was seen and heard by people.

﴿Have the stories not reached you of those who came before you – the people of Nooh, ‘Ad and Thamood﴾ – Allah has told their stories in His Book, and explained them.

﴿and those who came after them? No one knows them but Allah﴾ because there were many of them, but their stories have been lost.

In the case of all of these nations ﴿Their Messengers came to them with clear signs﴾ that is, with evidence that confirmed the truthfulness of the message they brought. Allah did not send any Messenger but He gave him clear signs so that humans could believe in him. But when their Messengers came to them with clear signs, they did not accept them; rather they were too arrogant to believe.

﴿but they put their hands to their mouths﴾ that is, they did not believe in the message that had come to them and they did not say anything to indicate that they had faith. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...They put their fingers in their ears to keep out the stunning thunderclap, for fear of death...﴾ (al-Baqarah 2: 19)

﴿and said﴾ bluntly to their Messengers

﴿Indeed we disbelieve in that with which you have been sent, and indeed we are in grave doubt about that to which you are calling us﴾ that is, we find it confusing and unclear. They disbelieved in it and did wrong.

Hence ﴿Their Messengers said﴾ to them:

﴿Can there be any doubt about Allah﴾ that is, His existence is the clearest and most obvious of all things. Whoever has doubts about Allah, ﴿the Originator of the heavens and the earth﴾, on Whose existence the existence of all things is based, will not have any trust in anything that is known, even tangible things. Hence the Messengers addressed the people on the basis that they did not have any doubts about Allah, because there can be no doubt about Him.

﴿He calls you﴾ to that which will benefit you and is in your best interests

﴿so that He may forgive some of your sins and give you respite for an appointed term﴾ that is, so that He may reward you for responding to His call, in this world and in the hereafter. He did not call you so that He might benefit from your worship; rather the benefit will all come back to you.

But they responded to their Messengers in a foolish and ignorant manner, saying to them:

﴿You are but human beings like ourselves﴾ that is, how can you be favoured above us by means of prophethood and messengership?

﴿You want to turn us away from that which our forefathers used to worship﴾ so how can we give up the beliefs and way of our forefathers for the sake of your beliefs? How can we obey you, when you are but human beings like ourselves?

﴿then bring us some clear proof﴾ that is, clear evidence. What they meant was a sign that they themselves specified, otherwise their Messengers had already brought clear signs to them.

﴿Their Messengers said to them﴾ in response to their demands and objections:

﴿Indeed we are but human beings like yourselves﴾ that is, it is indeed true that we are human beings like yourselves, ﴿but﴾ there is nothing in that to justify your rejection of what we have brought of truth, for ﴿Allah bestows His favour upon whomever He wills of His slaves﴾. If Allah bestows His revelation and message upon us, that is by His bounty and favour, and no one has the right to prevent or restrict the bounty and favour of Allah. Look at what we have brought you; if it is truth, then accept it, and if it is otherwise, then reject it, but do not make our condition (of being human) a reason for rejecting the message that we have brought to you. You say ﴿then bring us some clear proof﴾, but it is not within our power to do so and we have no control over the matter.

﴿It is not within our power to bring you any proof except by Allah's leave﴾ for He is the One Who will send it to you, if He will, but if He does not will, He will not send it to you, for He only does that which is dictated by His wisdom and mercy.

﴿And in Allah﴾ and in nothing else ﴿let the believers put their trust﴾. So they rely on Him to bring that which is in their best interests, and to ward off that which will harm them, because they are fully aware of His complete power, perfect care and all-encompassing generosity, and they trust that He will suffice them. Their trust in Him will be commensurate with the level of their faith.

Thus it is known that putting one's trust in Allah is obligatory, and that it is one of the requirements of faith and one of the major acts of worship that Allah loves and is pleased with, because all other acts of worship are connected to it.

﴿Why should we not put our trust in Allah when He has guided us in our paths?﴾ That is, what is there to prevent us from putting our trust in Allah, when we are following truth and guidance, and whoever follows truth and guidance, His guidance compels us to strive to attain perfect trust. Moreover, the believer knows that Allah has guaranteed to help and suffice the one who is guided, which inspires him to put his trust in Him. This is in contrast to the one who is not following truth and guidance, for he has no assurance from Allah, so his situation is the opposite of that of one who has put his trust in Allah.

This is like a hint from the Messengers to their people, pointing to a great sign, which is that – in most cases – their people had power and had the upper hand over them, so their Messengers were challenging them by telling them that they were putting their trust in Allah to ward off the plots of their people against them, and that they were certain that Allah would take care of them and suffice them. And Allah did indeed take care of them and suffice them against their evil, even though they were so keen to destroy them and extinguish the truth that they had. This is like what Nooh (ﷺ) said to his people:

﴿...O my people, if my presence among you and my reminding you of the signs of Allah have become too much for you to bear, then in Allah I have put my trust, so decide on your course of action, you and your [so-called] partners, leaving no room for uncertainty, then carry out your decision concerning me, and give me no respite.﴾ (*Yoonus 10: 71*)

– and it is like what Hood (ﷺ) said:

﴿...I call Allah to witness, and you too are my witnesses, that I disavow all those whom you ascribe as partners to Allah. So scheme against me, all of you, and give me no respite.﴾ (*Hood 11: 54-55*)

﴿We will surely be patient and steadfast in bearing whatever harm you cause us﴾ that is, and we will persist in calling you, and admonishing you and reminding you, and we will not worry about whatever harm you may cause us, for we will try to bear with patience

whatever harm you cause us, seeking reward with Allah and out of sincerity towards you, in the hope that Allah will guide you if we persist in reminding you.

﴿And in Allah﴾ alone, and in no one else ﴿let all that trust put their trust﴾, for putting one's trust in Him is the key to all goodness.

It should be noted that the Messengers' trust in Allah was for the noblest and most sublime of aims, for they put their trust in Him to establish and support His religion, guide His slaves and save them from misguidance. This is the most perfect kind of trust in Allah.



﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِرُسُلِهِمْ لَتُخْرِجُنَّكُمْ مِّنْ أَرْضِنَا أَوْ لَتَنْعُوذُنَّ فِي مِيَانِنَا قَاتِلُنَا رَبِّنَا هُنَّ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴾١٧﴾ وَلَنَتَكُونُوكُمُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَابِي وَخَافَ وَعِيدَ ﴾١٨﴾ وَاسْفَتُهُوَا وَنَابَ كُلُّ جَبَارٍ عَنِيهِ ﴾١٩﴾ إِنَّ وَرَآءِيَهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَيُسْقَى مِنْ تَأْوِيلَ صَدِيقِي ﴾٢٠﴾ يَتَجَزَّعُهُ دَلَائِكَادِ يُشِيقُهُ وَيَأْتِيهِ الْمَوْتُ مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمُيَمِّنَةٍ وَمِنْ وَرَآءِيَهُ عَذَابٌ غَيْظٌ ﴾٢١﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ١٣-١٧)

- 14:13. The disbelievers said to their Messengers: We will certainly drive you out of our land, unless you return to our religion. But their Lord revealed to them: Indeed We will certainly destroy the evildoers,
- 14:14. And We will certainly cause you to dwell in the land after they are gone. This is for those who fear standing before Me [on the Day of Resurrection], and who heed My warning.
- 14:15. [The Messengers] sought victory and help [from Allah], and every obstinate tyrant met with frustration.
- 14:16. Ahead of him is hell, and he will be given putrid water to drink.

14:17. He will sip it unwillingly, hardly able to swallow it. Death will come at him from all directions, yet he will not die. And ahead of him will be a harsh punishment.

Having mentioned the Messengers' call to their people and their persistence and never giving up, Allah then tells us how matters with their people deteriorated further:

﴿The disbelievers said to their Messengers﴾, threatening them: ﴿We will certainly drive you out of our land, unless you return to our religion﴾. This was the ultimate rejection, and there was no hope for them after this, because they did not stop at turning away from guidance; rather they threatened the Messengers with expulsion from their land, which they claimed as their own and said that the Messengers had no right to be there. This is the worst kind of injustice, because Allah sent His slaves to inhabit the earth, and He commanded them to worship Him, and He made the earth and everything on it to be of service to them in order to help them to worship Him.

So whoever uses that to help him worship Allah, using it is permissible for him and there is no blame on him. But whoever uses it to help him disbelieve and commit acts of disobedience, it cannot be exclusively for him and it is not permissible for him. Thus it is known that in reality the enemies of the Messengers have no right to the land from which they threatened to expel the Messengers. If we judge the matter on the basis of custom, the Messengers are among the inhabitants of the land, so for what reason can the people deny them a right that is clearly theirs? Is this anything but a complete lack of religious commitment and decency?

Hence when the plot against the Messengers reached that level, there was nothing left but for the decree of Allah to be executed and for Allah to come to the aid of His close friends.

﴿But their Lord revealed to them: Indeed We will certainly destroy the evildoers﴾ with all kinds of punishments.

﴿And We will certainly cause you to dwell in the land after they are gone﴾ – this was the good end that Allah granted to the Messengers and their followers, as a reward ﴿for those who fear standing before Me [on the Day of Resurrection]﴾, and remember that Allah is always watching and can see them

﴿and who heed My warning﴾ that is, what I have threatened to those who disobey Me, which should make them refrain from doing that which Allah dislikes and hasten to do that which Allah loves.

﴿[The Messengers] sought victory and help [from Allah], and every obstinate tyrant met with frustration﴾ that is, those who opposed Allah and the truth, and opposed the slaves of Allah, behaved with arrogance in the land and stubbornly rejected the Messengers became losers in this world and the hereafter.

﴿Ahead of him is hell﴾ that is, hell awaits the stubborn tyrant, and he will inevitably enter it and taste the severe punishment

﴿and he will be given putrid water to drink﴾ that is, it is putrid in its colour, taste and foul stench, and it is extremely hot.

﴿He will sip it unwillingly﴾ out of severe thirst

﴿hardly able to swallow it﴾. When it is brought near his face, it will roast it, and when it reaches his stomach, it will destroy whatever it passes through of his innards.

﴿Death will come at him from all directions, yet he will not die﴾ that is, the severe punishments of all types will come towards him, each one of which will be so severe that he will reach the point of death, but Allah has decreed that they will not die. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...Death will not be decreed for them, so that they might die, nor will its punishment be alleviated for them. Thus do We requite every disbeliever. There they will cry out loud...﴾ (*Fâtih* 35: 36-37)

﴿And ahead of him﴾ that is, the obstinate tyrant

﴿will be a harsh punishment﴾ that is, a severe punishment, the nature and severity of which no one knows except Allah (ﷻ).



﴿مَثُلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِرْتِهَمٌ أَعْنَاثُهُمْ كَرْمَادٍ أَشَدَّتْ يَهُ الرَّبْعُ فِي يَوْمٍ عَاصِفٌ لَا يَقْدِرُونَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا عَلَى شَقْنُوْ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الضَّلَالُ الْعَبِيدُ﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ١٨)

- 14:18. The deeds of those who disbelieve in their Lord are like ashes which the wind scatters on a stormy day. No advantage will they gain from their deeds; that is straying far into error.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the deeds of the disbelievers. What is meant is either the deeds that they intended for Allah, in the way in which they will be lost and invalidated, and the way in which they will be diminished and disappear like ashes, which are formed of the smallest and lightest of particles; when the wind blows them away on a very stormy day, no trace is left of them and no advantage is gained from them, because they diminish and disappear. This is the likeness of the good deeds of the disbelievers: ﴿No advantage will they gain from their deeds﴾, not even an atom's weight, because they are based on disbelief and rejection.

﴿that is straying far into error﴾ because their efforts became invalid and their deeds became worthless.

Or it may be that what is meant is the efforts of the disbelievers in opposing the truth, for they put a great deal of hard work and effort into that, but their plot backfires and they will never harm Allah or His Messengers or their followers, or what they have of the truth, in the slightest.



﴿أَلَوْ تَرَ أَكَ اللهُ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ إِنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ دُهْنِكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِمَلِكٍ جَدِيدٍ﴾ (٦) وَمَا ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللهِ يَعْزِيزِهِ ﴿وَبَرَزَوا إِلَهًا جَمِيعًا فَقَالَ الصُّعْفَاقُتُولِلَّذِينَ أَسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا كُنُّمْ بَعَدَ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ شَغْنُونَ عَنَّا مِنْ عَذَابِ اللهِ مِنْ شَقْنُوْ قَالُوا

لَوْ هَدَنَا اللَّهُ هَدَيْتَنَا كُمْ سَوَاءٌ عَيْنَا أَجْرٌ عَنَا أَمْ صَبَرْنَا مَا لَنَا مِنْ مَحِيصٍ

(سورة إبراهيم: ١٩-٢١) ﴿١٩﴾

- 14:19. Do you not see that Allah has created the heavens and the earth for a true purpose? If He so willed, He could destroy you and bring a new creation [in your place].
- 14:20. And that is not difficult for Allah.
- 14:21. They will all appear before Allah, then those who were weak will say to those who were arrogant: We were your followers; can you then protect us at all against Allah's punishment? They will say: If Allah had guided us, we would have guided you. It makes no difference to us [now] whether we panic or show patience, for we have no escape.

Here Allah (ﷻ) points out to His slaves that He (has created the heavens and the earth for a true purpose) that is, so that all creatures may worship Him and know Him, and heed His commands and prohibitions; and so that by means of the heavens and the earth and all that they contain, people may conclude what Allah possesses of perfect attributes; and so that they may know that the One Who created the heavens and the earth, with all their greatness and vastness, is able to create them anew so as to requite them for their good deeds and bad deeds. But His power and will are not limited to that. Hence He says: (If He so willed, He could destroy you and bring a new creation [in your place]).

It may be that what is meant is that He could take you away and bring another people in your stead, who would be more obedient to Allah than you. Or it may be that what is meant is that He could cause you to die then bring you back by resurrecting you as a new creation. This interpretation is supported by what is mentioned afterwards about the Day of Resurrection.

﴿And that is not difficult for Allah﴾ that is, it is not beyond Him; rather it is very easy for Him.

﴿The creation and resurrection of all of you are [for Allah, as easy] as [the creation and the resurrection of] a single soul...﴾ (*Luqmân* 31: 28)

﴿It is He Who originates creation then repeats it, and that is [even] easier for Him...﴾ (*ar-Room* 30: 27)

﴿They﴾ that is, all creatures

﴿will all appear before Allah﴾ when the Trumpet is blown and they emerge from their graves for the meeting with their Lord. They will stand on land that is a smooth, levelled plain (*cf.* 20: 106), in which you will see no depression or elevation (*cf.* 20: 107). They will appear before Him and nothing of them will be hidden from Him. When they emerge, they will begin to argue, and each will speak in his own defence and try to protect himself as much as he can, but there is no way they will be able to do that.

﴿then those who were weak﴾ that is, the followers and imitators
 ﴿will say to those who were arrogant﴾ namely the leaders of misguidance who were followed

﴿We were your followers﴾ that is, in the previous world; you told us to go astray, making it fair-seeming to us, and you misled us.

﴿can you then protect us at all against Allah's punishment?﴾ That is, by even an atom's weight

﴿They﴾ that is, the leaders who were followed

﴿will say﴾: We led you astray as we ourselves were led astray (*cf.* 28: 63).

﴿If Allah had guided us, we would have guided you﴾. So no one can help anyone else.

﴿It makes no difference to us [now]﴾ with regard to the punishment
 ﴿whether we panic or show patience, for we have no escape﴾ that is, we have no refuge to which we can flee and no way to escape the punishment of Allah.



﴿وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَنُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَغَدَرَ لَكُمْ فَأَنْفَقْتُ كُلَّمَا كَانَ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَنٍ إِلَّا أَنْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَأَسْتَجَبْتُ لَيِّ فَلَا تَلْمُوْنِي وَلَوْمُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ مَا أَنَا بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ وَمَا أَنْشَدُ بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ إِلَيِّ كَفَرْتُ بِمَا أَشْرَكَتُكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ وَأَذْخِلْ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْنَاهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَلِيلِينَ فِيهَا يَادِنَ رَبِيعَةً تَحْمِئُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَمٌ﴾ (سورة Ibrahim: ٢٢-٢٣)

- 14:22. And Shaytān will say, when the matter is decided: Verily Allah gave you a true promise; I also gave you promises, but I betrayed you. I had no power over you, except that I called you and you responded to me. So do not blame me; blame yourselves. I cannot help you, nor can you help me. I disavow your erstwhile association of me with Allah. Verily for the wrongdoers there will be a painful punishment.
- 14:23. But those who believe and do righteous deeds will be admitted to gardens through which rivers flow, to abide therein forever by their Lord's leave. Their greeting therein will be: Peace.

﴿And Shaytān﴾ who is the cause of all the evil that happened and will ever happen in this world
 ﴿will say﴾, addressing the people of hell and disavowing them
 ﴿when the matter is decided﴾ and the people of paradise have entered paradise and the people of hell have entered hell
 ﴿Verily Allah gave you a true promise﴾ on the lips of His Messengers, but you did not obey Him. If you had obeyed Him, you would have attained the supreme triumph.
 ﴿I also gave you promises﴾ of good things
 ﴿but I betrayed you﴾ and what I promised you of false wishes did not happen and will never happen.

﴿I had no power over you﴾ that is, I had no proof to support what I said

﴿except that I called you and you responded to me﴾. In other words: that is all I had, that I called you to whatever I wanted and I made it fair-seeming to you, then you responded to me, following your whims and desires. As that is the case, ﴿do not blame me; blame yourselves﴾ because you were the cause and it is your fault that the punishment has become inevitable for you.

﴿I cannot help you﴾ that is, I cannot save you from the distress in which you find yourselves

﴿nor can you help me﴾; each of us will have his own share of punishment.

﴿I disavow your erstwhile association of me with Allah﴾ that is, I disavow your having made me a partner with Allah, for I am not a partner to Allah, and there was no obligation to obey me.

﴿Verily for the wrongdoers﴾ who wronged themselves by obeying the Shaytân

﴿there will be a painful punishment﴾ in which they will abide forever.

By His kindness towards His slaves, Allah warned them against obeying the Shaytân and told them about the ways in which he tries to tempt man and what his goal is, for his aim is to cause man to enter hell. Here Allah tells us that when the Shaytân and his followers enter hell, he will disavow them in this manner and reject their association of him with Allah.

﴿...And none can inform you like [the One Who is] all-aware.﴾ (*Fâtih* 35: 14)

It should be noted that in this verse, Allah tells us that the Shaytân has no power, and elsewhere He says:

﴿He has power only over those who take him as an ally and, under his influence, ascribe partners to Allah.﴾ (*an-Nahl* 16: 100)

The power which Allah tells us the Shaytân does not possess is the power of proof and evidence. He has no proof at all for that to

which he calls people. All that he has is specious arguments that he presents to make falsehood fair-seeming, so that people will have justification in their minds to commit sin.

As for the power which Allah tells us that the Shaytān has, it is power by means of temptation to commit sin, in the case of his allies; he strongly incites them to commit sin and they are the ones who gave him this power over themselves, by taking him as an ally and joining his party. Hence he has no power over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord. Having mentioned the punishment of the wrongdoers, Allah then tells us about the reward of those who obey Him:

﴿But those who believe and do righteous deeds﴾ that is, adhere to the teachings of religion in word, deed and beliefs
 ﴿will be admitted to gardens through which rivers flow﴾ in which they will find all the pleasures that they could desire, such as no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and it has never crossed the mind of man.
 ﴿to abide therein forever by their Lord's leave﴾ that is, not by their own strength and power, but by the strength and power of Allah
 ﴿Their greeting therein will be: Peace﴾ that is, they will greet one another with *salām* and kind words.



﴿أَلمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِّكَوْمَةَ طَيْبَةَ كَشْجَرَقَ طَيْبَةَ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَقَرْعَهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ﴾١٦﴿ تُوقَنُ أَكْلُهَا كُلًّا حِينَ يَأْذِنُ رَبِّهَا وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴾١٧﴿ وَمَثُلُ كَوْمَةٍ خَيْشَةَ كَشْجَرَقَ خَيْشَةَ أَجْعَنَتَ مِنْ قَوْقَى الْأَرْضِ مَا لَهَا مِنْ قَرَارٍ ﴾١٨﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ٢٤-٢٦)

14:24. Do you not see how Allah compares a good word to a good tree?
 Its root is firm and its branches reach to the sky.

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- 14:25. It yields its fruit at all times, by its Lord's leave. Allah makes such comparisons for people so that they may pay heed.
- 14:26. But an evil word is like an evil tree, uprooted from the surface of the earth; it has no stability.
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﴿Do you not see how Allah compares a good word﴾ namely the testimony that there is no god but Allah, and what stems from that ﴿to a good tree﴾ namely the date palm.

﴿Its root is firm﴾ that is, solidly rooted in the earth
﴿and its branches reach to the sky﴾. This tree constantly offers many benefits, as ﴿It yields its fruit at all times, by its Lord's leave﴾
This is how the tree of faith is: its roots are firmly established in the heart of the believer in terms of knowledge and belief, and its branches include good words, righteous deeds, good attitudes and good manners, which constantly rise to heaven, as the person's good deeds and good words, which are produced by the tree of faith, ascend from the individual to Allah, which brings benefits to the believer and to others.

﴿Allah makes such comparisons for people so that they may pay heed﴾ to what He has enjoined upon them and forbidden to them, by giving likenesses in order to explain some concepts and liken them to tangible things. Thus the meanings intended by Allah become very clear, and this is by His mercy and kind manner of teaching; to Allah be the most perfect praise. This is a description of the word of tawheed (affirmation of the oneness of Allah) and how firmly established it is in the heart of the believer.

Then Allah mentions the opposite of that, which is the word of disbelief and all that stems from it:

﴿But an evil word is like an evil tree﴾, the fruit of which is unpleasant to eat and has an unpleasant taste. This refers to the colocynth and similar plants.

﴿Uprooted from the surface of the earth﴾ that is, it is not firm and it has no roots to hold it steady, and it does not produce any good fruit; rather if there is any fruit, it is foul and evil. This is how the word of disbelief and sin is; it is not rooted in the heart in any beneficial way and it does not bear any fruit but evil words and evil deeds which cause harm to the individual and are of no benefit to him, so no righteous deed ascends from him to Allah and he does not benefit himself or anyone else.



﴿يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الْشَّاَبِطِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ
وَيُضَلِّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ وَيَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ٢٧)

- 14:27. Allah will make steadfast those who believe, with the word that stands firm, in this world and in the hereafter. But Allah leaves the wrongdoers to go astray; Allah does whatever He wills.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He will make steadfast His believing slaves, namely those who do what is required of them of having strong faith in the heart which must be manifested in their attitude and behaviour. Allah will make them steadfast in the life of this world, when they are faced with specious arguments and doubts, by guiding them to certainty, and when they are tempted by desires, by bestowing upon them strong resolve whereby they will give precedence to that which Allah loves over their own whims and desires.

And at the end of life, at the moment of death, He will make them steadfast in their Islamic religion and give them a good end; in the grave, when they are questioned by the two angels, He will guide them to the correct answer. When it is said to the deceased: Who is your Lord? What is your religion? Who is your Prophet? He will

guide them to the correct answer, so the believer will say: Allah is my Lord, Islam is my religion and Muhammad (ﷺ) is my Prophet.

﴿But Allah leaves the wrongdoers to go astray﴾ from the straight path in this world and the hereafter, but Allah does not wrong them; rather they wrong themselves.

This verse offers proof for the trial, punishment and blessing in the grave, which are mentioned in numerous texts from the Prophet (ﷺ) which speak of and describe the trial in the grave, and the blessings and punishment therein.



﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ بَدَّلُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ كُفْرًا وَأَحْلَوْا قَوْمَهُمْ دَارَ الْبَوَارِ ٢٨ جَهَنَّمُ يَصْلَوْنَهَا وَيَتَسَّرُ الْقَرَارُ ٢٩ وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنَدَادًا لِيُضْلِلُوا عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ قُلْ تَمَّتُوا فَلَمَّا مَصِيرَكُمْ إِلَى النَّارِ ٣٠﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ٢٨ - ٣٠)

- 14:28. Have you not seen those who have repaid Allah's blessings with ingratitude, and caused their people to dwell in the abode of ruin,
- 14:29. In hell? They will enter it, an evil place to settle in!
- 14:30. They set up rivals to Allah, to lead people astray from His path. Say [O Muhammad]: Take your pleasure now, for verily your journey's end will be the fire.

Here Allah (ﷻ) describes the situation of those among the disbelievers of Quraysh who rejected His Messenger (ﷺ), and where they ended up.

﴿Have you not seen those who have repaid Allah's blessings with ingratitude﴾ – the blessing of Allah is the sending of Muhammad (ﷺ) to them to call them to that which would bring them good in this world and in the hereafter, and to salvation from the ills of this world and the

hereafter. But they responded to this blessing by rejecting it, showing ingratitude for it, turning away from it themselves and turning others away from it, until they ﴿caused their people to dwell in the abode of ruin﴾ namely hell, because they caused them to go astray, thus they were a cause of disaster for their own people when they thought that they were benefitting them. One aspect of that is that they made it fair-seeming to them to go out on the day of Badr to fight Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), then the events of that day took their course and many of their leaders and prominent figures were killed in the battle.

﴿In hell? They will enter it﴾ and its heat will surround them in all directions
 ﴿an evil place to settle in﴾.

﴿They set up rivals to Allah﴾ that is, so-called equals and partners
 ﴿to lead people astray from His path﴾ that is, to lead people astray from the path of Allah because of what they set up of rivals to Allah, and calling people to worship them

﴿Say [O Muhammad]﴾ to them, as a warning:
 ﴿Take your pleasure now﴾ and enjoy your disbelief and misguidance for a little while, but that will not benefit you
 ﴿for verily your journey's end will be the fire﴾ that is, your ultimate destination, and what a wretched journey's end.



﴿قُلْ لِعَبْدَيَ الَّذِينَ مَا مَنَّوْا يَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًا وَعَلَانِيَةً مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا يَبْغُونَ فِيهِ وَلَا خَلَلٌ ﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ٣١)

14:31. Tell My slaves who believe that they should establish prayer and spend from that which We have provided for them, in secret and in public, before the day comes when there will be no bargaining and no friendship.

That is, tell My believing slaves, commanding them to do that which is in their best interests, to make the most of the opportunity before it is too late

﴿that they should establish prayer﴾ both outwardly and inwardly
 ﴿and spend from that which We have provided for them﴾ that is, from the blessings that We have bestowed upon them, in small or great amounts

﴿in secret and in public﴾ – this includes obligatory spending, such as zakâh and spending on those on whom one is obliged to spend, as well as recommended spending such as giving in charity and the like.

﴿before the day comes when there will be no bargaining and no friendship﴾ that is, when nothing will be of any benefit and there will be no way to make up what has been missed, whether by buying and selling, or giving gifts to friends and loved ones, and each person, on that day, will have enough to preoccupy him (*cf. 80: 37*). So let him think of what he has prepared for the hereafter and let him check his deeds and take stock of himself before the great reckoning.



﴿أَللّٰهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاً فَإِخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الشَّرَبَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْفُلْكَ لِتَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ يَأْمُرُهُ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْأَنْهَارَ ۝ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ دَاهِيَنَ ۝ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْأَيْلَلَ وَالنَّهَارَ ۝ وَءَاتَنَكُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ ۝ وَإِنْ تَعْدُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا يُنْخِصُوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ ۝﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ۳۲-۳۴)

- 14:32. It is Allah Who has created the heavens and the earth, and sent down water from the sky; and brought forth therewith fruits as a provision for you. He has made the ships to be of service to you so that they may sail on the sea by His command, and He has also made the rivers to be of service to you.

14:33. And He has made the sun and moon to be of service to you, both constant in their courses, and He has made the night and day to be of service to you.

14:34. Of everything you have asked for, He has given you some. But if you [try to] count the blessings of Allah, you cannot count them all. Verily man is highly unjust, exceedingly ungrateful.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that it is He alone (Who has created the heavens and the earth), as vast and great as they are, (and sent down water from the sky) namely the rain that Allah sends down from the clouds (and brought forth therewith) that is, by means of that water (fruits) of various kinds (as a provision for you) and your livestock. (He has made the ships) and other vessels (to be of service to you so that they may sail on the sea by His command). It is He Who has enabled you to build them and given you the power to do so, and He has caused them to float on the water so that they may carry you and your trade goods and luggage to the land to which you are headed.

(and He has also made the rivers to be of service to you) so that you may irrigate your crops and trees, and drink from them.

(And He has made the sun and moon to be of service to you, both constant in their courses) – they never slow down or cease; rather they continue running in their courses to serve your interests, such as calculating time and managing your affairs in the interests of your physical well-being and that of your animals, crops and fruits.

(and He has made the night and day to be of service to you) so that by night you may rest and by day you may see in order to go about seeking of His bounty.

(Of everything you have asked for, He has given you some) that is, He has given you some of everything that you hope for or need,

that you ask Him for either implicitly or explicitly, of livestock, tools, other things that may be made by man, and so on.

﴿But if you [try to] count the blessings of Allah, you cannot count them all﴾ let alone give thanks for them all

﴿Verily man is highly unjust, exceedingly ungrateful﴾ that is, this is the nature of man with regard to the fact that he is a wrongdoer and sinner, who falls short in his duty towards his Lord and is ungrateful for the blessings of Allah; he does not give thanks for them or acknowledge them, except those whom Allah guides, so they give thanks for His blessings, acknowledge the rights of their Lord and fulfil those rights.

These blessings highlight various types of the many blessings that Allah bestows upon His slaves, some in general terms and some in specific terms, because of which Allah calls His slaves to give thanks to Him and remember Him. He urges them to do so and encourages them to ask of Him and call upon Him during the hours of the night and day, just as His blessings are repeatedly bestowed upon them at all times.



﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّي أَجْعَلْ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ مَاءً كَمَا وَأَخْتَبَيْ وَبَيْ أَنْ تَغْبَدَ
الْأَصْنَامَ﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ٣٥)

14:35. And [remember] when Ibrâheem said: My Lord, make this city one of peace and security, and preserve me and my children from worshipping idols.

﴿And [remember] when Ibrâheem said﴾, offering this beautiful supplication in this beautiful situation:

﴿My Lord, make this city﴾ namely the Haram of Makkah

﴿one of peace and security﴾ and Allah answered his supplication by His decree. Allah made it something sacred and ordained measures to

protect its sanctity, as is well known, to the extent that no wrongdoer ever intended evil for it but Allah destroyed him, as He did with the people of the elephant and others.

Having prayed for safety for the city, Ibraheem then prayed for himself and his children to be protected and guided; he said: «and preserve me and my children from worshipping idols» that is, keep me and them far away from worshipping them or being involved with them.

The reason why he feared for himself and for his children was the fact that there were so many people who were confused and fell into the error of idol worship.



﴿رَبِّ إِنَّمَا أَضَلَّنَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّالِمِينَ فَمَن يَعْقِلُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنْ عَصَافِ فَإِنَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ٣٦)

14:36. My Lord, they [the idols] have indeed led many people astray.
So whoever follows me, then he is indeed of me, and whoever disobeys me – then verily You are Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

﴿My Lord, they [the idols] have indeed led many people astray﴾ that is, many people have gone astray because of them.

﴿So whoever follows me﴾ and the message of divine oneness and devotion solely to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, that I have brought
﴿then he is indeed of me﴾ because there is complete harmony and agreement on that, and whoever loves people and follows them becomes one of them.

﴿and whoever disobeys me – then verily You are Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful﴾. This is an example of the compassion of Ibraheem (ﷺ), as he prayed for forgiveness and mercy from Allah for the sinners,

and Allah (ﷻ) is more merciful than him towards His slaves, and He does not punish anyone but those who rebel against Him.



﴿وَرَبِّنَا إِنِّي أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّقِ بَوَادٍ عَيْرَ ذِي رَّبْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْنِكَ الْمُحَرَّمَ رَبِّنَا لِيُقْبِلُوا
أَصَلَّوَةً فَاجْعَلْ أَفْعِدَةً مِنْ أَنَّا إِنْ تَهُوَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَارْزُقْهُمْ مِنَ الْأَمْرَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَشْكُرُونَ﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ٣٧)

14:37. Our Lord, I have settled some of my offspring in a valley without cultivation, by Your Sacred House, O our Lord, so that they may establish prayer. So make the hearts of some people incline towards them, and provide them with fruits, so that they may give thanks.

﴿Our Lord, I have settled some of my offspring in a valley without cultivation, by Your Sacred House﴾ that was when Ibrâheem brought Hâjar, the mother of Ismâ‘el, and her son Ismâ‘el (ﷺ), who was still an infant, from Greater Syria, and left them in Makkah which – at that time – was not inhabited and there was no one there. When he left them there, he offered this supplication to his Lord, beseeching Him and putting his trust in his Lord.

﴿Our Lord, I have settled some of my offspring﴾ that is, not all of my offspring, for Is-hâq and his other sons were still in Greater Syria. Rather he settled Ismâ‘el and his offspring in Makkah.

﴿in a valley without cultivation﴾ that is, because the land of Makkah is not fit for cultivation.

﴿O our Lord, so that they may establish prayer﴾ that is, make them people who affirm Your oneness and establish prayer, for establishing prayer is one of the most important and most virtuous acts of worship; whoever establishes prayer has established his religion.

﴿So make the hearts of some people incline towards them﴾ that is, make them love them and the place in which they are residing.

Allah answered his prayer and, from the descendants of Ismâ'eel, brought forth Muhammad (ﷺ), who called his offspring to the Islamic religion, the path of their father Ibrâheem, and they responded to him and became people who established prayer.

And Allah ordained pilgrimage to this House, where the offspring of Ibrâheem settled, and He created in it something that attracts people's hearts, so that people come on pilgrimage to it and can never have enough of it; the more a person frequents it, the more he longs for it and feels attached to it. That is because Allah has attributed it (the Kaaba) to Himself (by calling it His House).

﴿and provide them with fruits, so that they may give thanks﴾ – and Allah answered this supplication, as a result of which fruits of all kinds are brought to it. Thus you see that fruits are available in Makkah at all times, and provisions come to it from all directions.



﴿رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ مَا نَخْفِي وَمَا نُعْلِمُ وَمَا يَخْفَى عَلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ٣٨)

14:38. Our Lord, verily You know what we conceal and what we disclose; from Allah, verily nothing is hidden on earth or in the heavens.

﴿Our Lord, verily You know what we conceal and what we disclose﴾ that is, You know us better than we know ourselves, so we ask You, as You are taking care of us and You are guiding us, to enable us to attain that which is in our best interests, both those of which we are aware and those of which we are unaware, in accordance with Your knowledge and mercy.

﴿from Allah, verily nothing is hidden on earth or in the heavens﴾ – that includes this supplication by which Ibrâheem (ﷺ) only intended good and to give abundant thanks to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.



﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي وَهَبَ لِي عَلَى الْكِبَرِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِنَّ رَبِّي لَسَيِّدُ الدُّعَاءِ﴾

(سورة إبراهيم: ٣٩) ﴿١﴾

14:39. Praise be to Allah Who, despite my old age, has bestowed upon me Ismâ‘el and Is-hâq, for verily my Lord hears all prayers.

For this gift is one of the greatest of blessings, and the fact that they came despite his old age, at a time when one gives up all hope of having children, is another blessing; and the fact that they were righteous Prophets is a further blessing.

﴿for verily my Lord hears all prayers﴾ that is, He soon answers the one who calls upon Him; I called upon Him and He did not let me down. Then he prayed for himself and his offspring:



﴿رَبِّي أَجْعَلِنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبِّكَا وَتَقْبَلْ دُعَاءَ رَبِّنَا﴾

﴿أَغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ﴾ (سورة إبراهيم: ٤١-٤٠) ﴿٢﴾

14:40. My Lord, make me one who establishes prayer, and some of my offspring also, our Lord, and accept my supplication.

14:41. Our Lord, forgive me, my parents, and the believers on the day when the Reckoning will take place.

Allah answered all of this supplication, except that his supplication for his father was only because of a promise that he had made to him.

But when it became clear that his father was an enemy of Allah, he disavowed him.



﴿وَلَا تَحْسِبَنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيًّا عَنْهَا يَعْمَلُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنَّمَا يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ
تَشَاهَدُ فِيهِ الْأَبْصَرُ ﴾ مُهَمَّطِينَ مُقْبِعِينَ رُءُوسُهُمْ لَا يَرَنُّ إِلَيْهِمْ طَرْفَهُمْ وَاقْتَدِيرُهُمْ
هَوَاءٌ ﴾ (٤٢-٤٣) (سورة إبراهيم: ٤٢-٤٣)

- 14:42. Never think that Allah is unaware of what the evildoers are doing; He is only giving them respite until a day when the eyes will stare fixedly [in horror].
- 14:43. They will rush headlong, heads raised, eyes unblinking and hearts void.

This is a stern threat to the wrongdoers and consolation to those who are wronged.

«Never think that Allah is unaware of what the evildoers are doing» when He gives them respite and grants them ample provision, allowing them to travel in the land safely and with ease. This is not an indication that they are in a good state, for Allah gives respite to the wrongdoer and gives him more time so that he may increase in sin until, when He seizes him, He will not let him go.

«Such is the punishment of your Lord, when He punishes the cities that are given to wrongdoing; verily His punishment is painful and severe.» (Hood 11: 102)

Here wrongdoing includes wrongdoing towards one's Lord (that is, sin) and wrongdoing towards the slaves of Allah.

«He is only giving them respite until a day when the eyes will stare fixedly [in horror]» that is, the eyes will not blink because of the intensity of the horrors and disturbing turmoil that they see.

﴿They will rush headlong﴾ that is, they will hasten to respond to the caller when he summons them to appear before Allah for the reckoning, and they will have no option to refuse and no escape or refuge

﴿heads raised﴾ that is, their hands will be tied to their chins, and as a result their heads will be raised

﴿eyes unblinking and hearts void﴾ that is, their hearts will have risen to the throats, and they will be overwhelmed with worry, distress, grief and anxiety.



﴿وَأَنذِرِ النَّاسَ يَوْمَ يَأْتِيهِمُ الْعَذَابُ فَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا رَبَّنَا أَخْرِنَا إِلَى أَجْكَلٍ فَرِبْسٌ بُحْتٌ دَعَوْتَكَ وَنَسَعْيَ الرَّسُلُ أَوْلَمْ تَكْثُرُوا أَفَسَمْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلٍ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ زَوَالٍ ﴿٤٤﴾ وَسَكَنْتُمْ فِي مَسَكِينَ اللَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفَسَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ لَكُمْ كَيْفَ فَعَلَنَا بِهِمْ وَضَرَبْنَا لَكُمُ الْأَمْثَالَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَقَدْ مَكْرُوا مَكْرُهُمْ وَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَكْرُهُمْ وَلَمْ كَانْ مَكْرُهُمْ لِيَنْزُلَ مِنْهُ الْعِبَالُ ﴿٤٦﴾﴾

(سورة إبراهيم: ٤٤-٤٦)

- 14:44. Warn the people of the day when the punishment will befall them. Then those who did wrong will say: Our Lord, give us a brief respite, so that we may respond to Your call and follow the Messengers! But did you not swear before that you would never leave [this world for the hereafter]?
- 14:45. You lived in the dwellings of those who had wronged themselves, and it was clear to you how We had dealt with them; We presented to you many examples.
- 14:46. They hatched their plots, but their plots were known to Allah; although their plots were such that they would even move mountains.

Here Allah (ﷻ) says to His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ): ﴿Warn the people of the day when the punishment will befall them﴾ that is, describe that day to them, and warn them against the deeds that will incur a punishment that, when it comes with all its turmoils and troubles,

﴿those who did wrong﴾ by disbelieving and committing all kinds of sins

﴿will say﴾, regretting what they did and asking to go back when it is too late:

﴿Our Lord, give us a brief respite﴾ that is, send us back to the previous world, for now we understand

﴿so that we may respond to Your call﴾ for Allah calls to paradise
﴿and follow the Messengers﴾ – but all of this will be so that they might escape the punishment, otherwise they are lying by making this promise:

﴿...And even if they were sent back, they would surely go back to that which was forbidden to them...﴾ (*al-An'âm 6: 28*)

Therefore they will be rebuked and it will be said to them: ﴿But did you not swear before that you would never leave [this world for the hereafter]?﴾ But now you have clearly broken your oath and the falseness of your oath has become apparent.

Moreover, you were not short of clear signs; rather ﴿You lived in the dwellings of those who had wronged themselves, and it was clear to you how We had dealt with them﴾ by sending all kinds of punishment upon them, and how Allah sent the punishments upon them when they disbelieved in the clear signs. We presented clear likenesses and comparisons that left no room for doubt at all, but these signs were to no avail in your case; rather you turned away and persisted in your falsehood, until matters took the course they did and now this day has come when no apology will be to any avail.

﴿They hatched their plots﴾ that is, those who disbelieved in the Messengers hatched their plots and managed to do what it was decreed that they should do

﴿but their plots were known to Allah﴾ that is, He encompassed them with His knowledge and power, and their plots backfired on them.

﴿...but the plotting of evil affects none but its authors...﴾ (*Fâtir* 35: 43)

﴿although their plots were such that they would even move mountains﴾ that is, the plot of the disbelievers against the Messengers who brought the truth was such that, because of its enormity, firmly-rooted mountains could have been moved from their places. In other words:

﴿They have put tremendous effort into plotting and scheming.﴾ (*Nooh* 71: 22)

– that could not be estimated, but Allah foiled their plot and made it backfire.

This includes every opponent who plotted against the Messengers in order to support falsehood or undermine the truth. The point is that their plots could not avail them anything and could never harm Allah in the slightest; rather they only harmed themselves.



﴿فَلَا تَحْسِنَ اللَّهُ مُحْلِفٌ وَعِدَةٍ، رُسُلُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ ذُو أَنْتَقَاءٍ ﴾٤٧﴿ يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ الْأَرْضُ عَيْرَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَوَاتُ وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ ﴾٤٨﴿ وَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّقْرَبِينَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ ﴾٤٩﴿ سَرَابِيلُهُمْ مِنْ قَطَرَانٍ وَتَغْشَى وُجُوهُهُمُ النَّارُ لِيَجْزِيَ اللَّهُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَا كَسَبَتْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴾٥٠﴿ هَذَا بِلَغَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَيُشَدِّرُوا يَوْمًا وَلَيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّا هُوَ إِلَهٌ وَحْدَهُ وَلَيَذَكَّرُ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابُ ﴾٥١﴾ (سورة)
ابراهيم: ٤٧-٥٢

14:47. Never think that Allah would fail in His promise to His Messengers. Verily, Allah is Almighty, an Avenger.

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- 14:48. [His promise will be fulfilled] on the day when the earth will be changed to another earth and so will the heavens, and [all people] will appear before Allah, the One, the Subjugator.
- 14:49. And you will see the evildoers that day bound together in shackles,
- 14:50. Their garments of pitch and fire enveloping their faces,
- 14:51. So that Allah may requite each soul according to what it has earned; verily, Allah is swift in reckoning.
- 14:52. This [Qur'an] is a message for humankind, that they may be warned thereby and that they may know that there is but One God, and that people of understanding may pay heed.
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﴿Never think that Allah would fail in His promise to His Messengers﴾ to save them and to save and bless their followers, and to destroy their enemies, causing them to fail in this world and punishing them in the hereafter. This is inevitable, because His promise is true and was given on the lips of the most truthful of His creation, namely the Messengers, which is the most authentic of statements, especially as it is in accordance with divine wisdom, divine laws and sound reasoning, and nothing is beyond Allah (ﷻ), for ﴿Allah is Almighty, an Avenger﴾ that is, if He wants to wreak vengeance upon someone, that person cannot escape Him or frustrate Him.

﴿[His promise will be fulfilled] on the day when the earth will be changed to another earth and so will the heavens﴾ that is, the heavens will be changed to other heavens. This refers to a change in attributes, not in essence, for on the Day of Resurrection the earth will become flat and all mountains and landmarks will be removed from its surface. So it will become a smooth, levelled plain, in which you will see no depression or elevation (*cf. 20: 106-107*). The sky will be like molten brass (*cf. 70: 8*) because of the severity of the terrors of that day, then Allah (ﷻ) will roll it up in His Right Hand.

﴿and [all people] will appear﴾ that is, all people will emerge from their graves on the Day of Resurrection and will appear in a place where nothing of them will be hidden from Allah. They will appear ﴿before Allah, the One, the Subjugator﴾ that is, the One Who is unique in His greatness, names, attributes and mighty deeds, and in His subjugation of all creation, as all of them are under His control; none of them move or halt except by His leave.

﴿And you will see the evildoers﴾ those whose characteristic is evil and a great deal of sin, on ﴿that day bound together in shackles﴾ that is, chained together; all those who committed the same kind of evil deeds will be bound together with chains of fire and will be led away to their punishment in the most humiliating, horrible and terrifying manner.

﴿Their garments of pitch﴾ because of the severity of the fire raging in them and its heat and foul stench

﴿and fire enveloping their faces﴾ which are the noblest part of the body. That is, the fire will surround their faces, burning them from all sides, so it is more likely that other parts of their bodies will suffer in like manner. This is not injustice towards them on Allah's part; rather it is the requital for what they earned. Hence Allah (ﷺ) says: ﴿So that Allah may requite each soul according to what it has earned﴾ of good or evil, with justice and fairness in which there is no element of injustice whatsoever.

﴿verily, Allah is swift in reckoning﴾ this is like the verse in which Allah (ﷺ) says:

﴿The Day of Reckoning for humankind has drawn near, and yet they turn away in heedlessness.﴾ (*al-Anbiyâ' 21: 1*)

It may be that what is meant is that He is quick in reckoning, so He will complete the reckoning of all people in an instant, just as He grants them provision and manages their affairs simultaneously, and nothing distracts Him from anything, for that is not difficult for Him.

As He has explained things clearly in this Qur'an, Allah says, praising it: ﴿This [Qur'an] is a message for humankind﴾ that is, it is a message that they need in order to reach the highest levels of honour, because of what it contains of both basic and minor matters, and everything else that people need to know.

﴿that they may be warned thereby﴾ because of what it contains of warnings against evil deeds, and because of what it tells us about what Allah has prepared of punishment for those who do them.

﴿and that they may know that there is but One God﴾ as He has presented in it different types of evidence and proof for His divinity and oneness, by means of which this issue reached the level of certainty.

﴿and that people of understanding﴾ that is, people of perfect reason ﴿may pay heed﴾ to that which will benefit them, so that they may do it, and to that which will harm them, so that they may refrain from it. Thus they became people of understanding and insight, because by means of the Qur'an their knowledge and understanding increased and they attained enlightenment, when they learned it directly from the Prophet ﷺ, for it only calls to the most sublime characteristics and actions, and could only be based on the strongest and clearest evidence. If the smart person adheres to this principle, he will always be ascending and learning the best qualities. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat Ibrâheem.

All praise and thanks are for Allah, and may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his family, and his Companions abundantly until the Day of Judgement.



15.

Soorat al-Hijr

(Makki)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the name of Allah,
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*



﴿الرُّ تِلْكَ مَا يَتَبَّعُ وَقُرْءَانٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١﴾ رَبِّمَا يَوْمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ
كَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٢﴾ ذَرْهُمْ يَأْكُلُوا وَيَسْتَعْوِدُونَ وَلِهُمُ الْأَمْلَ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ
﴿٣﴾ وَمَا أَهْلَكَنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا وَلَهَا كِتابٌ مَّعْلُومٌ ﴿٤﴾ مَا تَسْبِقُ مِنْ أَمْةٍ أَجَلَهَا
وَمَا يَسْتَخِرُونَ ﴿٥﴾﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٥-١)

- 15:1. Alif. Lâm. Râ'.⁸ These are verses of the Book and a clear Qur'an.
- 15:2. There will come a time when those who disbelieve will wish that they had been Muslims.
- 15:3. Leave them to eat and enjoy themselves, and let [false] hope divert them. They will come to know.

⁸ Groups of letters (al-huroof al-muqatta'ah) appear at the beginning of several chapters. The most correct scholarly view states that we are required to believe in them as they appear to be, without delving into their meaning, knowledge of which we should leave to Allah. We believe that they were not revealed in vain, and that there is wisdom behind them of which we are not aware.

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- 15:4. We never destroyed any city but its appointed time had previously been decreed.
 - 15:5. No nation can bring its appointed time forward, nor can they delay it.
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Here Allah (ﷻ) says, speaking highly of His Book and praising it: ﴿These are verses of the Book﴾, verses that point to the best of meanings and the most sublime of aims and goals ﴿and a clear Qur'an﴾ that explains real facts in the best and clearest of phrases, in the most straightforward manner. This dictates that all people should follow it, accept its rulings and receive it with approval, joy and happiness.

As for those who respond to this immense blessing by rejecting it and disbelieving in it, they are among the disbelievers who have gone astray; for them there will come a time when they will wish that they had been Muslims, that is, that they had followed its rulings. That will be when the veil is removed and the first signs of the hereafter and the precursors of death begin to appear. At every stage of the hereafter, they will wish that they had been Muslims, but the time for that will have passed; however in this world they are deceived.

﴿Leave them to eat and enjoy themselves﴾ and enjoy their pleasures ﴿and let [false] hope divert them﴾ that is, they hope to live for a long time in this world, and that distracts them from the hereafter ﴿They will come to know﴾ that what they are following is false, and that their deeds increase them in loss. So they should not be deceived by the fact that Allah (ﷻ) is giving them respite, for this is His way with all nations.

﴿We never destroyed any city﴾ that deserved punishment ﴿but its appointed time﴾ for its destruction ﴿had previously been decreed﴾.

﴿No nation can bring its appointed time forward, nor can they delay it﴾ nevertheless, the consequences of sin will inevitably catch up with the sinner, even if that is at a later stage.



﴿وَقَالُوا يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِي نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِكْرُ إِنَّكَ لَمَعْجُونٌ ﴾ ٦ ﴿ لَوْ مَا تَأْتِنَا بِالْمَلَئِكَةِ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴾ ٧ ﴿ مَا نُنَزِّلُ الْمَلَئِكَةَ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَمَا كَانُوا إِذَا مُنْظَرِينَ ﴾ ٨ ﴿ إِنَّا نَخْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الْكِتَابَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَغَافِرُونَ ﴾ ٩﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٦-٩)

- 15:6. They say: O you to whom the Reminder [the Qur'an] has been sent down, you are surely insane!
- 15:7. Why do you not bring the angels to us, if you are telling the truth?
- 15:8. We do not send down the angels except for just cause, and then in that case, they [the disbelievers] would have no respite.
- 15:9. Verily it is We Who have sent down the Reminder [the Qur'an], and verily it is We Who will preserve it.

The disbelievers said to Muhammad (ﷺ) by way of mockery:
﴿O you to whom the Reminder [the Qur'an] has been sent down﴾, or so you claim

﴿you are surely insane!﴾ If you think that we will follow you and give up what we found our forefathers following, just because you say so.

﴿Why do you not bring the angels to us﴾ to testify that the message that you bring is sound

﴿if you are telling the truth﴾. As you have not brought the angels, then you are not telling the truth. This was the ultimate unfairness and ignorance.

As for being unfair, that is obvious, because this was insolence towards Allah and stubbornness in demanding specific signs that

He had not chosen to send, because the aim was achieved and proof was established by means of many other signs that pointed to the soundness of the message He brought. As for ignorance, they could not differentiate between that which was in their best interests and that which was detrimental to their interests. There was nothing good for them in the angels coming down; rather Allah does not send down the angels except for just cause, after which there is no respite for anyone who does not follow the truth or submit to it.

﴿and then in that case﴾ that is, when the angels were sent down, if they had not believed – and they will never believe – ﴿they [the disbelievers] would have no respite﴾. So their demand for the angels to be sent down is hastening their own doom and destruction, for faith is not under their control; rather it is in the Hand of Allah.

﴿Even if We did send angels down to them, and the dead spoke to them, and We gathered together all things before them [to testify to the truth], they still would not believe, unless Allah willed it. But most of them are ignorant [of this fact].﴾ (*al-An'am* 6: 111)

This Qur'an would be sufficient sign for them, if they were sincere. Hence Allah says here:

﴿Verily it is We Who have sent down the Reminder [the Qur'an]﴾ in which there is a reminder of all things, and clear proof, by means of which a person will be reminded if he wants to be reminded.

﴿and verily it is We Who will preserve it﴾ at the time of revelation and after its revelation. At the time of revelation, Allah protected it from the tampering of any accursed devil, and after revelation Allah deposited it in the heart of His Messenger (ﷺ), where it took root, then it was deposited in the hearts of his Ummah. Allah protected its words from being changed and from anything being added or subtracted, and He protected its meanings from alteration. So no one can distort any of its meanings but Allah will inspire scholars who will highlight the true meaning. This is one of the greatest signs of Allah, and one of His blessings to His believing slaves. Another

way in which Allah protects it is that He protected people from their enemies, and no enemy will be given the upper hand in such a way that he will eradicate them.



﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فِي شِعَّابِ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١﴾ وَمَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهِزُونَ ﴿٢﴾ كَذَلِكَ نَسْلُكُهُ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣﴾ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَقَدْ خَلَتْ شَهَادَةُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٤﴾﴾ (سورة الحجر: ١٠-١٣)

- 15:10. Indeed We sent Messengers before you among the communities of old.
- 15:11. No Messenger came to them but they ridiculed him.
- 15:12. Thus we let it [disbelief] enter the hearts of the evildoers.
- 15:13. They will not believe in it [the Qur'an], although the precedent of the earlier peoples is well established.

Here Allah (ﷻ) said to His Prophet (ﷺ), when the polytheists disbelieved in him: This was the pattern with past nations and communities.

﴿Indeed We sent Messengers before you among the communities of old﴾ that is, to past nations and groups.

﴿No Messenger came to them﴾, calling them to true guidance **﴿but they ridiculed him﴾**.

﴿Thus we let it [disbelief] enter the hearts of the evildoers﴾ that is, those whose characteristics were wrongdoing and telling lies; We punished them when their hearts were equally filled with disbelief and their attitudes towards their Prophets and Messengers became similar in terms of mockery, ridicule and lack of faith. Hence Allah says: **﴿They will not believe in it [the Qur'an], although the precedent of the earlier peoples is well established﴾** that is, this is the way of

Allah with them, to destroy those who do not believe in the revelations of Allah.



﴿ وَلَوْ فَنَّحَا عَنْهُمْ بَابًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَظَلُّوا فِيهِ يَعْرُجُونَ ﴾ ١٦
 أَبْصَرُوا بَلْ تَعْمَلُونَ قَوْمٌ مَسْحُورُونَ ﴾ ١٥ ﴾ سورة الحجر : ١٤-١٥ ﴾

- 15:14. Even if a gate in heaven was opened to them, and they began to ascend through it,
- 15:15. They would still say: Our eyes are befuddled; indeed we have been bewitched!

That is, even if every great sign came to them, they would not believe and they would arrogantly reject it.

﴿Even if a gate in heaven was opened to them﴾ and they began to ascend through it, and they saw with their own eyes, they would still say, because of their wrongdoing and stubbornness, denying this sign: **﴿Our eyes are befuddled﴾** that is, they have become intoxicated and confused, so that we see things that are not real.

﴿indeed we have been bewitched!﴾ That is, this is not real; rather it is magic. When people reach such a level of denial, there is no hope for them whatsoever.

Then Allah mentions the signs that point to the truth that the Messengers brought:



﴿ وَلَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا فِي السَّمَاءِ بُرُوجًا وَرَتَّبْنَاهَا لِلنَّظَرِينَ ﴾ ١٧
 وَحَفَظْنَاهَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَنٍ رَّجِيمٍ ﴾ ١٨ ﴾ إِلَّا مَنْ أَسْرَقَ السَّمَاءَ فَأَنْبَعَهُ رِيشَابٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴾ ١٩
 وَالْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَاهَا

وَالْقَنَىٰ فِيهَا رَوْسٌ وَأَنْبَتَنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَنْقٍ وَمَوْرُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ فِيهَا مَعْدِيشٌ
وَمَنْ لَشَّمَ لَهُ زِيقَنَ ﴿١٧﴾ (سورة الحجر: ١٦-١٧)

- 15:16. We have placed big stars in the heaven, and made it lovely to behold.
- 15:17. And We have guarded it from every accursed devil.
- 15:18. But if any of them manages to eavesdrop, he is pursued by a clearly visible flame.
- 15:19. And the earth We have spread out, and set therein mountains standing firm, and caused to grow therein all kinds of things in due proportion.
- 15:20. And We have appointed means of livelihood therein for you and for those for whom you are not the providers.

Here Allah points out the perfect nature of His power and His mercy towards His creation:

﴿We have placed big stars in the heaven﴾ that is, the great stars by means of which people navigate in darkness on land and sea
 ﴿and made it lovely to behold﴾ – if it were not for the stars, the sky would not have this beautiful and amazing appearance. This calls the onlooker to reflect upon it, contemplate its significance, and see the indications of its Creator.

﴿And We have guarded it from every accursed devil﴾ – when a devil tries to eavesdrop, he is pursued by a shooting flame. Thus the heaven remains outwardly beautified with bright stars and is invisibly guarded and protected from troubles.

﴿But if any of them manages to eavesdrop﴾ – on some occasions, some of the devils may manage to covertly eavesdrop on heaven and snatch some news

﴿he is pursued by a clearly visible flame﴾ that is, a flame that is bright and clear, which kills him or stuns him.

Sometimes the flame may strike him before that devil can convey the news to his familiar, so the news of heaven is prevented from reaching the earth, and sometimes he throws it to his familiar before the flame strikes him, and his familiar then takes it and adds one hundred lies to it, and he uses that word that was heard from heaven to prove himself.

﴿And the earth We have spread out﴾ that is, We have made it spacious and have made both humans and animals able to move about, seeking their provision and settling in various spots.

﴿and set therein mountains standing firm﴾ that is, huge mountains that protect the earth, by Allah's leave, from moving; they make it firm so that it does not shift.

﴿and caused to grow therein all kinds of things in due proportion﴾ that is, things that are of benefit and have value, that people need, such as palm trees, grapevines, different kinds of trees and all types of plants.

﴿And We have appointed means of livelihood therein for you﴾ such as crops and livestock, and all kinds of professions and crafts. ﴿and for those for whom you are not the providers﴾ that is, We have blessed you with male and female slaves, and livestock, for your benefit and best interests. You are not the providers; rather Allah has made them subject to you and has guaranteed their provision.



﴿وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا عِنْدَنَا خَزَائِينُهُ وَمَا نَنْزِلُهُ إِلَّا يَقْدَرُ مَعْلُومٌ﴾ (٥٦) (سورة الحجر)

(٢١)

15:21. And there is not a thing but its sources are under Our control, and We send it down only in a predetermined measure.

That is, no one has any control over any kind of provision except Allah. Its sources are in His Hand; He gives to whomever He will

and He withholds from whomever He will, according to His all-encompassing wisdom and mercy.

﴿وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ مَا شَاءَ فَأَنْتُمْ كُلُّهُو وَمَا أَنْشَأْنَاهُ لَكُمْ﴾
¶ that is, whatever is preordained of all things, rain and otherwise

﴿وَمَا أَنْشَأْنَاهُ لَكُمْ﴾ so it is never more or less than what Allah has decreed.



﴿وَأَرْسَلْنَا الْرِّيحَ لَوْقَعَ فَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَا شَاءَ فَأَنْتُمْ كُلُّهُو وَمَا أَنْشَأْنَاهُ لَكُمْ﴾
¶ ﴿بِخَزِينَاتِ﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٢٢)

15:22. And We send the fecundating winds and bring down rain from the sky, thus providing you with water; you are not in control of its sources.

That is, We have made the winds to be of service, winds of mercy that fecundate the clouds as the male fecundates the female, resulting in rain by Allah's leave, which Allah gives to people to drink, water their flocks and irrigate their land, and it remains stored in the land for their needs, in accordance with His decree and mercy.

﴿وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَرْجِعُونَ﴾ that is, you have no power to store and save it; rather Allah stores it for you and causes it to flow from springs in the land, out of mercy and kindness towards you.



﴿وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ نُحْيِي وَنُمْتِي وَنَحْنُ الْوَرَثُونَ﴾ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَلَقَدْ عِلِّمْنَا الْمُسْتَقْدِمِينَ مِنْكُمْ وَلَقَدْ عِلِّمْنَا الْمُسْتَخِرِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَلَمَّا رَأَيْكُمْ هُوَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ إِلَيْنَا حَكِيمٌ عَلَمٌ﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٢٣-٢٤)

15:23. Verily it is We Who give life and cause death, and We are of [all things] heirs.

- 15:24. Well do We know those of you who have gone before and those who are yet to come.
- 15:25. Verily it is your Lord Who will gather them together; verily He is Most Wise, All-Knowing.

That is, He alone, with no partner or associate, is the One Who gives life and creates things from nothing, after they were nothing worth mentioning, and causes them to die at the time He has decreed. ﴿and We are of [all things] heirs﴾. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Verily, it is We Who will inherit the earth and all who are upon it, and to Us they will be brought back.﴾ (*Maryam* 19: 40)

That is not difficult or impossible for Allah, for He knows the earlier and later generations of humankind, and He knows what the earth consumes of them (*cf. 50: 4*) and what is scattered of their bodies. He is the One Whose power cannot be frustrated by anyone, and He will recreate His slaves and gather them to Him.

﴿verily He is Most Wise, All-Knowing﴾ He does what is appropriate and will requite each person for his deeds; if they were good then the outcome will be good, and if they were bad then the outcome will be bad.



﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَنَ مِنْ صَلْصَلٍ مِّنْ حَمَّا مَسْتُورٍ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَالْجَانَّ خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ قَبْلٍ مِّنْ نَارٍ
السَّمُومِ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَلَذِذَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي خَلَقْتُ بَشَرًا مِّنْ صَلْصَلٍ مِّنْ حَمَّا مَسْتُورٍ
فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾ فَسَجَدَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ
كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ إِلَآ إِنَّلِيسَ أَقَدَ أَنْ يَكُونَ مَعَ السَّاجِدِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾ قَالَ يَتَبَالِيلِش
مَا لَكَ أَلَا تَكُونَ مَعَ السَّاجِدِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ قَالَ لَمْ أَكُنْ لَّا سُجَدْ لِي شَرِّ خَلْقَتَهُ مِنْ صَلْصَلٍ

مِنْ حَمِيلَ مَسْتُونٍ ﴿٢٦﴾ قَالَ فَأَخْرَجَ مِنْهَا فَإِنَّكَ رَجِيمٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكَ اللَّعْنَةَ إِلَى يَوْمِ
الَّذِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾ قَالَ رَبِّي فَأَنْظِرْنِي إِلَى يَوْمِ يَقْبَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ قَالَ فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنْظَرِينَ إِلَى
يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ الْعَلُومِ ﴿٣٠﴾ قَالَ رَبِّي إِنِّي أَغْوَيْنِي لِأَزْرِنَ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يَعْرِفُهُمْ
أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الصَّالِحُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ قَالَ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ عَلَىٰ مُسْتَقِيمٍ
إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَنِسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَبَعَكَ مِنَ الْفَارِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَإِنَّ
جَهَنَّمَ لَمَوْعِدُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾ لَمَّا سَبَعَةُ أَبْوَابٍ لِكُلِّ بَابٍ مِنْهُمْ جُنُزٌ مَفْسُومٌ ﴿٣٥﴾

(سورة الحجر: ٤٤-٢٦)

- 15:26. Indeed We created man from sounding clay, made from black mud moulded into shape.
- 15:27. And the *jinn* We created before that, from intensely hot fire.
- 15:28. And [remember] when your Lord said to the angels: Verily I am going to create a human being from sounding clay, made from black mud moulded into shape.
- 15:29. So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him the soul which I created for him, fall down in prostration before him.
- 15:30. Thereupon, the angels all fell down in prostration,
- 15:31. Except Iblees; he refused to be among those who prostrated.
- 15:32. Allah said: O Iblees, what is the matter with you, that you were not among those who prostrated?
- 15:33. Iblees said: I am not one to prostrate to a human being whom You created from sounding clay, made from black mud moulded into shape.
- 15:34. Allah said: Then get out of here, for you are accursed,
- 15:35. And verily the curse will be upon you until the Day of Judgement.
- 15:36. Iblees said: O my Lord, grant me respite until the day they are resurrected.
- 15:37. Allah said: You are among those who are granted respite,
- 15:38. Until the day of the time appointed.

- 15:39. Iblees said: My Lord, because You have caused me to be misguided, I will certainly make [evil] fair-seeming to them on earth, and I will certainly mislead them all,
- 15:40. Except Your chosen [and sincere] slaves among them.
- 15:41. Allah said: This [the way of My chosen (and sincere) slaves] is a path which will lead straight to Me.
- 15:42. Verily you will have no power over My slaves, except those misguided ones who choose to follow you.
- 15:43. And verily, hell is the promised destiny for them all.
- 15:44. It has seven gates, each gate having its allotted share of them.

Here Allah mentions the blessings that He bestowed upon our father Adam (ﷺ) and what happened with his enemy Iblees, including the warning to us of his evil and temptation.

﴿Indeed We created man﴾ that is, Adam (ﷺ)
 ﴿from sounding clay, made from black mud moulded into shape﴾
 that is, clay that has dried after fermenting, until it makes a sound.
 Black mud moulded into shape is mud that has changed in colour and odour, and has been left alone for a long time.

﴿And the jinn﴾ here the word is taken as referring to the father of the jinn, namely Iblees
 ﴿We created before that﴾ before the creation of Adam
 ﴿from intensely hot fire﴾.

When Allah wanted to create Adam, He said to the angels:
 ﴿Verily I am going to create a human being from sounding clay, made from black mud moulded into shape. So when I have fashioned him﴾
 that is, shaped his body completely
 ﴿and breathed into him the soul which I created for him, fall down in prostration before him﴾ – and they obeyed the command of their Lord.

﴿Thereupon, the angels all fell down in prostration﴾. This is affirmation after affirmation, to highlight the fact that not one of

them disobeyed, out of respect for the command of Allah and in order to honour Adam, for he knew what they did not know.

﴿Except Iblees; he refused to be among those who prostrated﴾. This was the beginning of his enmity towards Adam and his offspring.

﴿Allah said: O Iblees, what is the matter with you, that you were not among those who prostrated? Iblees said: I am not one to prostrate to a human being whom You created from sounding clay, made from black mud moulded into shape﴾. He was too arrogant to obey the command of Allah, and he expressed enmity towards Adam and his offspring, for he was too proud of his race and said: I am better than Adam.

﴿Allah said﴾, punishing him for his rejection of the command and his arrogance:

﴿Then get out of here, for you are accursed﴾ that is, condemned, shamed and cast far away from the mercy of Allah

﴿until the Day of Judgement﴾. This and similar verses indicate that he will persist in his disbelief and continue to be far away from goodness.

﴿Iblees said: O my Lord, grant me respite until the day they are resurrected. Allah said: You are among those who are granted respite, until the day of the time appointed﴾. The divine response to his supplication was not an honour in his case; rather it was a test and trial from Allah for him and for people, so that it might become clear who will be sincere and obey his Lord instead of his enemy, and who will not be like that. Hence Allah warned us against him in the strongest terms and explained to us what He wants from us.

﴿Iblees said: My Lord, because You have caused me to be misguided, I will certainly make [evil] fair-seeming to them on earth﴾ that is, I shall make this world fair-seeming to them and call them to give it precedence over the hereafter, so that they will commit all types of sins.

﴿and I will certainly mislead them all﴾ that is, I shall bar them all from the straight path

﴿Except Your chosen [and sincere] slaves among them﴾ that is, those whom You choose and select for their sincerity, faith and trust in You.

﴿Allah said: This [the way of My chosen (and sincere) slaves] is a path which will lead straight to Me﴾ it is straightforward and leads to Me and to My paradise.

﴿Verily you will have no power over My slaves﴾ to make them incline towards whatever you want of all types of misguidance; because of their true servitude to their Lord and compliance with His commands, Allah will help them and protect them from the Shaytan.

﴿except those misguided ones﴾ – the word translated here as ﴿misguided﴾ is the opposite of rightly guided; it refers to one who knows the truth but shuns it. There are two types of misguided people, those who know the truth but shun it and those who go astray because they are not aware of the truth.

﴿who choose to follow you﴾ and are content to be your allies and obedient to you instead of being obedient to the Most Gracious.

﴿And verily, hell is the promised destiny for them all﴾ that is, for Iblees and his troops.

﴿It has seven gates﴾, each gate lower than another.

﴿each gate having its allotted share of them﴾ that is, of the followers of Iblees, according to their deeds. Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿Then they will be thrown headlong into hell, both they [the false gods] and those who went astray.﴾ (*ash-Shu'arā' 26: 94*)

Having mentioned what He has prepared of torment and severe punishment for His enemies, the followers of Iblees, Allah then tells us what He has prepared for His close friends of great reward and eternal bliss:



﴿إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴾٦١﴿ أَذْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَامٍ إِمَّا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِحْرَانًا عَلَى سُرُرٍ مُفَرَّشَاتٍ ﴾٦٢﴿ لَا يَأْتُهُمْ فِيهَا نَصْبٌ وَمَا

هُمْ مِنْهَا بِسْعَرِحِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ تَبَقَّىٰ عَبَادِي أَفَنَّا الْغَفُورُ الرَّجِيمُ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَأَنَّ عَذَابِي
 هُوَ الْعَذَابُ الْأَلِيمُ ﴿٤٨﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٤٥ - ٤٨)

- 15:45. Verily the righteous will be amidst gardens and springs.
- 15:46. [It will be said to them:] Enter here in peace and security.
- 15:47. We will remove all ill feelings from their hearts; they will be like brethren seated on couches facing one another.
- 15:48. There no fatigue will touch them, nor will they [ever] be made to leave.
- 15:49. Tell My slaves that I am indeed the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.
- 15:50. And that My punishment is indeed the painful punishment.

﴿Verily the righteous﴾ who kept away from obeying the Shayṭān and from all that he called them to of sin and evil
 ﴿will be amidst gardens and springs﴾ that contain all kinds of trees bearing all kinds of delicious fruit that are ready to eat at all times.

It will be said to them when they enter it: ﴿Enter here in peace and security﴾, for there will be no death, sleep, toil, tiredness, or cessation of joy and bliss that will never decrease, and there will be no sickness, grief, worry or any other ills.

﴿We will remove all ill feelings from their hearts﴾, so their hearts will remain free of any resentment or envy, and they will be pure and filled with mutual love.

﴿they will be like brethren seated on couches facing one another﴾ – this indicates that they will visit one another and gather together, with good etiquette among them, as they will all face one another, with no one turning his back on anyone; they will recline on those couches that are adorned with pearls and all kinds of gems.

﴿There no fatigue will touch them﴾ either visibly or invisibly, because Allah will create them anew and give them a perfect life in which they will not be vulnerable to any ills.

﴿nor will they [ever] be made to leave﴾ at any time.

Having mentioned both encouragement and warning by describing what He has created in paradise and hell, Allah then tells us of His divine attributes that will help one attain paradise:

﴿Tell My slaves﴾ that is, inform them in definitive terms, supported by evidence

﴿that I am indeed the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful﴾ for if they understand the perfect nature of His mercy and forgiveness, they will strive hard, taking all measures that could lead them to attain His mercy, and they will give up sin and repent therefrom, so that they may attain His forgiveness.

However, hope should not let them get carried away and feel safe and secure from punishment, so tell them: ﴿that My punishment is indeed the painful punishment﴾ that is, in fact there is no punishment except the punishment of Allah, of which no one could estimate the severity or understand the nature thereof. We seek refuge with Him from His punishment. If they knew that:

﴿...None can punish as He will punish on that day, and none can bind as He will bind.﴾ (*al-Fajr* 89: 25-26)

– they would be careful and would keep away from anything that could bring this punishment upon them. So the individual's heart should always be between fear and hope; when he thinks of the mercy, forgiveness, generosity and kindness of his Lord, that fills him with hope, but when he thinks of his sins and shortcomings with regard to his duties towards his Lord, that instils fear in him and makes him give up his sin.



﴿وَنَذِهُمْ عَنْ ضَيْفٍ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ﴿٥١﴾ إِذَا دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ إِنَّا مِنْكُمْ وَجِلُونَ قَالُوا لَا تَنْجَلْ إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِعُلُمٍ عَلَيْكَ ﴿٥٢﴾ قَالَ أَبْشِرْتُمُونِي عَلَىٰ أَنْ مَسَخِي﴾

الْكَبِيرُ فِيمَ تُبَشِّرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ قَالُوا يَا شَرِيكَنَا بِالْحَقِّ فَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْمُغْنِطِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾ قَالَ وَمَنْ يَقْنَطُ مِنْ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّهِ إِلَّا الضَّالُّونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٥١-٥٣)

- 15:51. Tell them about the guests of Ibrâheem,
- 15:52. When they came to him and said: Peace. He said: Truly we are afraid of you.
- 15:53. They said: Do not be afraid; we bring you glad tidings of a son endowed with knowledge.
- 15:54. He said: Do you bring me glad tidings when old age has overtaken me? What kind of glad tidings are you bringing me?
- 15:55. They said: We give you glad tidings in truth; so do not despair.
- 15:56. Ibrâheem said: Who despairs of the mercy of his Lord except those who go astray?

Here Allah (ﷻ) says to His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ):
 «Tell them about the guests of Ibrâheem» that is, tell them about that amazing story, for in your telling them the stories of the Messengers and what happened to them there are lessons for them and examples for them to follow, especially Ibrâheem al-Khaleel (the close friend of Allah), whose path Allah has instructed us to follow. His guests were the noble angels; Allah honoured him by making them his guests.

«When they came to him and said: Peace» that is, they greeted him with salâm and he returned the greeting.
 «He said: Truly we are afraid of you» that is, scared. That was because, when they entered upon him, he thought that they were guests, so he rushed to offer them food and he hastened to bring them a roasted calf. But when he saw that their hands did not reach out towards it, he had misgivings about them and conceived a fear of them (II: 70), and thought that they might be thieves and the like.

«They said» to him: «Do not be afraid; we bring you glad tidings of a son endowed with knowledge» namely Is-hâq (ﷺ). This good

news implied that the child would be a male, not a female. «endowed with knowledge» means one who possesses a great deal of knowledge. Elsewhere, Allah says:

«We gave him the glad tidings of Is-hâq, a Prophet, one of the righteous.» (*as-Sâffât* 37: 112)

Ibrâheem said, in amazement at this good news: «Do you bring me glad tidings» of a child «when old age has overtaken me?» This is indicative of a kind of despair of ever having a child.

«What kind of glad tidings are you bringing me?» That is, on what basis are you giving me this good news, when there is no possible means of it happening?

«They said: We give you glad tidings in truth» of which there can be no doubt, because Allah is able to do all things, and you in particular – O people of this household – are people upon whom Allah has bestowed His mercy and blessings, so it is no wonder that Allah should bestow His favour and kindness upon you.

«so do not despair» or be among those who do not expect any good to happen; rather keep hoping for the generosity, kindness, grace and favour of Allah. Ibrâheem responded to them by saying:

«Who despairs of the mercy of his Lord except those who go astray?» that is, those who have no knowledge of their Lord and His perfect power. As for the one whom Allah has blessed with guidance and great knowledge, there is no way he can despair because he knows that there are many ways and means for the mercy of Allah to reach him. When they had given him this good news, he realised that they had been sent on an important mission.



﴿ قَالَ فَمَا خَطِبُكُمْ أَيُّهَا الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴾٥٧﴿ قَالُوا إِنَّا أُرْسَلْنَا إِلَى قَوْمٍ مُّشْرِكِينَ إِلَّا مَالَ لُوطٍ إِنَّا لَمُنْجُونُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴾٥٨﴾

فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَالُوتِي الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿١﴾ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّنْكَرُونَ ﴿٢﴾ قَالُوا بَلْ
 ٰ حِشْتَكَ بِمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَتَّمِرُونَ ﴿٣﴾ وَأَتَيْنَاهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّا لَصَدِيقُونَ ﴿٤﴾ فَأَسْرَ
 ٰ يَأْهَلَكَ يُقْطِعُ مِنَ الظَّلَلِ وَأَتَيْنَاهُمْ لَا يَلْنَفِتُ مِنْكُمْ أَحَدٌ وَأَمْضُوا حَيْثُ تُؤْمِنُونَ
 ﴿٥﴾ وَقَضَيْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ ذَلِكَ الْأَمْرَ أَنَّ دَارِي هَتْلَاءَ مَقْطُوعٌ مُّصِيرُونَ ﴿٦﴾ وَجَاءَهُمْ
 أَقْلُ الْمَدِينَةِ يَسْتَبِئُونَ ﴿٧﴾ قَالَ إِنَّ هَتْلَاءَ ضَيْفٌ فَلَا نَفْضُهُونَ ﴿٨﴾ وَلَقَوْا اللَّهَ وَلَا
 هُنْزُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾ قَالُوا أَوْلَمْ تَنْهَاكُ عَنِ الْمُنَاهِيْنَ ﴿١٠﴾ قَالَ هَتْلَاءَ بَنَاقٌ إِنْ كُنْتُ فَنْعِلَانِ
 لَعْنُوكَ إِنَّهُمْ لَفِي سَكَرٍ نَّاهِيْمٌ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿١١﴾ فَأَخْذَهُمُ الْقِسْيَمُ مُشْرِقُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ فَجَعَلْنَا
 عَلَيْهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَنْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حِجَارَةً مِنْ سِجِيلٍ ﴿١٣﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِيْنَ لِلْمُتَوَسِّيْنَ
 وَلَنَّهَا لِسَبِيلٍ مُّقِيمٍ ﴿١٤﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِيْنَ لِلْمُعْذَمِيْنَ ﴿١٥﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٥٧-٧٧)

- 15:57. Ibrâheem said: Then what is your business, O messengers?
- 15:58. They said: We have been sent to a wicked people [who are to be destroyed].
- 15:59. except the household of Loot; we will save them all,
- 15:60. except his wife. We decreed that she should be one of those who stayed behind.
- 15:61. When the messengers came to the household of Loot,
- 15:62. He said: You are strangers [to me].
- 15:63. They said: We have come to you with that [the punishment] concerning which they had doubts.
- 15:64. We have brought to you that which is inevitably due [the punishment], and indeed we are telling the truth.
- 15:65. So depart with your family in the dead of night, with yourself bringing up the rear. Let no one among you look back, but go on to where you are commanded.
- 15:66. We made this decree known to him, that the last remnants of those [sinners] would be wiped out by the morning.
- 15:67. The people of the city came, exulting at the news [of the arrival of those young men].

- 15:68. Looṭ said: These are my guests, so do not put me to shame.
- 15:69. Fear Allah, and do not disgrace me.
- 15:70. They said: Did we not forbid you to offer hospitality to anyone?
- 15:71. Looṭ said: Here are my daughters [to marry],⁹ if you must.
- 15:72. By your life, [O Muhammad,] they were wandering blindly in their lustful frenzy.
- 15:73. So the blast overtook them at sunrise,
- 15:74. And We turned [their city] upside down and let loose upon them a shower of stones of baked clay.
- 15:75. Surely in that there are signs for the discerning.
- 15:76. And it [the city] is on a road that is still travelled.
- 15:77. Surely in that there is a sign for the believers.

﴿Ibrâheem said﴾ to the angels
 ﴿Then what is your business, O messengers?﴾ That is, for what purpose have you been sent?

﴿They said: We have been sent to a wicked people﴾ that is, people who have committed a great deal of evil and whose evil has become widespread; we have been sent to punish them
 ﴿except the household of Looṭ﴾ that is, except Looṭ and his family
 ﴿except his wife. We decreed that she should be one of those who stayed behind﴾ that is, those who will remain and be punished; as for Looṭ, We will bring him and his family forth, and save him from the punishment. Ibrâheem began to argue with the messengers about destroying them, and he pleaded with them, but it was said to him:
 ﴿O Ibrâheem, cease your pleading, for verily the decree of your Lord has gone forth; verily there is coming to them a punishment that cannot be averted.﴾ (*Hood 11: 76*)

⁹ What is meant by ﴿my daughters﴾ is “the daughters of my nation”. Looṭ was urging his people to give up their immoral ways and marry women in a lawful and pure manner.

Then the angels departed.

﴿When the messengers came to the household of Loot, he said﴾ that is, Loot said to them: ﴿You are strangers [to me]﴾ that is, I do not recognise you and I do not know who you are.

﴿They said: We have come to you with that [the punishment] concerning which they had doubts﴾ that is, we have come to you with the punishment that they doubted and they disbelieved you when you warned them about it.

﴿We have brought to you that which is inevitably due [the punishment]﴾ and it is not a joke

﴿and indeed we are telling the truth﴾ in what we say to you.

﴿So depart with your family in the dead of night﴾ that is, during the night when people are asleep and no one will know of your departure

﴿Let no one among you look back﴾; rather hasten and hurry

﴿but go on to where you are commanded﴾ – it was as if they had a guide to show them the way in which they should go.

﴿We made this decree known to him﴾ that is, We told him in definitive terms

﴿that the last remnants of those [sinners] would be wiped out by the morning﴾ that is, the punishment would come upon them in the morning and would overwhelm them and eradicate them.

﴿The people of the city came﴾ that is, the city in which Loot was living

﴿exulting at the news [of the arrival of those young men]﴾ that is, telling one another the good news of the guests of Loot and how handsome they were, because they had the power to overwhelm them and they had the intention of committing evil deeds with them. So they came to the house of Loot and started to argue with him about his guests, and Loot sought refuge with Allah from them and said:

﴿These are my guests, so do not put me to shame. Fear Allah, and do not disgrace me﴾ that is, remember first of all that Allah is

watching, and if you have no fear of Allah, then at least do not put me to shame with regard to my guests and transgress against them in this abhorrent manner.

﴿They said﴾ in response to his pleas, and only answering his request not to disgrace him: ﴿Did we not forbid you to offer hospitality to anyone?﴾ That is, we warned you not to do that, and whoever has received the warning is left with no excuse.

﴿Loot said﴾ to them, because of the tremendous pressure he felt he was under:

﴿Here are my daughters [to marry], if you must﴾. But they paid no attention to his words, hence Allah said to His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ):

﴿By your life, [O Muhammad,] they were wandering blindly in their lustful frenzy﴾. This frenzy resulted from their love of committing evil and they did not care about anyone who tried to stop them or who blamed them.

When the messengers explained the situation to Loot, his anxiety and distress dissipated, and he obeyed the command of his Lord by taking his family and departing at night, so they were saved.

As for the people of the city, ﴿the blast overtook them at sunrise﴾, which was a time when the punishment would be more severe.

﴿And We turned [their city] upside down﴾ on them
﴿and let loose upon them a shower of stones of baked clay﴾ which even went after some who were alone in some part of the city.

﴿Surely in that there are signs for the discerning﴾ that is, those who reflect and ponder and who have insight, for they will understand the point of this story, which is that anyone who has the audacity to disobey Allah, especially by committing this grave evil deed, will be punished by Allah in the worst way, as in the story of these people who dared to commit the most abhorrent of evil deeds.

﴿And it﴾ that is, the city of the people of Loot

﴿is on a road that is still travelled﴾ and it is known to the travellers who pass by that land.

﴿Surely in that there is a sign for the believers﴾.

One of the lessons that we learn from this story is that Allah (ﷻ) cared for His close friend Ibrâheem (ﷺ), for Looṭ was one of his followers and those who believed in him, so it was as if he was a student of his. When Allah wanted to destroy the people of Loot, as they deserved that punishment, He commanded His messengers to pass by Ibrâheem (ﷺ), so that they might give him the glad tidings of a son and tell him the purpose for which they had been sent; he argued with them about destroying those people, until the angels convinced him and he felt at ease with it.

Similarly in the case of Loot (ﷺ), because they were his fellow countrymen, perhaps he was seized with pity and compassion for them, so Allah decreed that events should take place by means of which he would become angry and upset with them, to the point that he could not wait for their punishment to come, when it was said to him: ﴿...Verily, their appointed time is the morning; is not the morning nigh?﴾ (Hood 11: 81)

When Allah (ﷻ) willed to destroy a city, their evil and transgression increased, and when it reached an ultimate level the punishments that they deserved befell them.



﴿وَلَنْ كَانَ أَخْبَثُ الْأَيْكَةَ لَظَالِمِينَ فَانْقَمَّنَا مِنْهُمْ وَلَنَّهُمَا لَيَامَارُ مُبِينٌ﴾

(سورة الحجر: 78-79)

15:78. And the dwellers of the Wood were also wrongdoers;

15:79. So We exacted retribution upon them. They are both on a well-known highway.

They were the people of Shu'ayb. Allah described them as the dwellers of the Wood, which was an area with a lot of trees, as a reminder of His blessings to them and that they did not show gratitude; rather their Prophet Shu'ayb came to them and called them to affirm the oneness of Allah and to stop wronging people with regard to weights and measures, and he tried very hard to persuade them. But they persisted in their wrongdoing with regard to the rights of their Creator and the rights of other people, therefore Allah described them as wrongdoers.

﴿So We exacted retribution upon them﴾ and the punishment of the day of overshadowing gloom overtook them; surely it was the punishment of a terrible day (*cf. 26: 189*).

﴿They are both﴾ that is, the lands of the people of Loot and of the dwellers of the Wood

﴿on a well-known highway﴾ that is, on a clear highway on which travellers pass by them all the time, and their ruins can be seen; thus people of understanding learn a lesson from that.



وَلَدَّ كَذَبَ أَخْنَثَ الْحِجْرَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَإِلَيْهِمْ أَيَّتَنَا فَكَانُوا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ
وَكَانُوا يَنْجِنُونَ مِنَ الْمُجَالِ بِمُؤْنَةٍ عَامِلِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ فَأَخْذَنَاهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ مُضَرِّعِينَ
فَأَغْنَى عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٨٠-٨٤)

15:80. The people of al-Hijr also rejected the Messengers.

15:81. We sent them Our signs, but they persisted in turning away from them.

15:82. They carved out dwellings in the mountains, feeling secure.

15:83. So the blast overtook them in the morning.

15:84. And of no avail to them was all that they had acquired.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the people of al-Hijr, who were the people of Šâlih who lived in al-Hijr, the well-known rocky tract in the land of Hejaz. They disbelieved in the Messengers; that is, they disbelieved in Šâlih, and whoever disbelieves in one Messenger has disbelieved in all the Messengers, for their call is one and when one of them is rejected, it is not because of his character; rather it is because of what he brought of truth that all the Messengers brought.

﴿We sent them Our signs﴾ that pointed to the soundness of the message of truth that Šâlih brought. One of these signs was the she-camel, which was one of the great signs of Allah.

﴿but they persisted in turning away from them﴾ out of arrogance and insolence towards Allah.

One of the many blessings that Allah had bestowed upon them was that ﴿They carved out dwellings in the mountains, feeling secure﴾, from fear and they felt at ease in their lands. If they had been grateful for that blessing and had believed in their Prophet Šâlih (ﷺ), Allah would have granted them abundant provision and honoured them with all kinds of reward in this world and the hereafter. But – when they disbelieved and hamstrung the she-camel, and they rebelled against the command of their Lord and said:

﴿...O Šâlih, bring us that with which you are threatening us, if you are indeed one of the Messengers [of Allah]!﴾ (*al-A'râf* 7: 77)

– then ﴿the blast overtook them in the morning﴾ and tore their hearts from their chests, and morning found them lying lifeless in their homes, along with what accompanied that of ongoing disgrace and curses.

﴿And of no avail to them was all that they had acquired﴾ because when the decree of Allah comes to pass, it cannot be put back by numbers of troops or strength of supporters or abundance of wealth.



﴿وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَآتِيَةٌ فَاصْبِرْ﴾
الصَّفَحَ الْجَيْلِيَّ ﴿٨٥﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ الْخَلِقُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٨٦﴾ (سورة العجر: ٨٥-٨٦)

15:85. We have not created the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, except for a true purpose. And, verily, the Hour is surely coming, so [O Muhammad] bear with them graciously.

15:86. Verily your Lord is the Creator of all, the All-Knowing.

That is, We did not create them in vain for any false purpose, as the enemies of Allah think; rather We only created them (for a true purpose), part of which was that they, along with all that they contain, should point to the perfection and power of their Creator, and the vastness of His mercy and wisdom, and His all-encompassing knowledge, which proves that He alone is to be worshipped, with no partner or associate.

(And, verily, the Hour is surely coming) no doubt about it,
 (Indeed, the creation of the heavens and the earth is a greater matter than the creation [or recreation] of humankind...) (Ghâfir 40: 57)

(so [O Muhammad] bear with them graciously) – this refers to forbearance without causing any offence to them; rather it means responding to their mistreatment with kindness and to their misdemeanours with forgiveness, so as to attain a great deal of reward with your Lord, for everything that is meant to happen is close at hand.

A better meaning than that which I have mentioned above occurred to me, which is that what is enjoined is gracious forbearance, which is graciousness that is free of resentment or offence in word or deed, as opposed to forbearance that is not gracious, which is inappropriate forbearance. So one should not be forbearing when what is required is punishment, such as punishment for transgressors and wrongdoers for whom nothing is effective except punishment. This is what is meant.

﴿Verily your Lord is the Creator of all, the All-Knowing﴾ that is, nothing that He created and is encompassed by His knowledge can escape Him, and applies to all created things.



﴿وَلَقَدْ أَنْذَكَ سِعَامِنَ الْمَثَافِ وَالْقُرْبَاتِ الْمَظِيمِ ﴾٨٧﴿ لَا تَمْدَدْ عَيْنَكَ إِلَى مَا مَتَّعْنَا^١
بِهِ أَزْوَجًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَخْفَضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴾٨٨﴿ وَقُلْ إِنَّا
الَّذِي زَيَّ الْمِيتُ ﴾٨٩﴿ كَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الْمُفْتَسِمِينَ ﴾٩٠﴿ الَّذِينَ جَعَلُوا الْقُرْبَانَ
عِصْيَنَ ﴾٩١﴿ فَوْرَيْكَ لِتَسْعَلَهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ ﴾٩٢﴿ عَنَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴾٩٣﴿﴾ (سورة
الحج: ٨٧-٩٣)

- 15:87. We have given you the seven oft-repeated ones and the glorious Qur'an.
- 15:88. Do not look longingly at the good things We have given some among them to enjoy, nor grieve over them, but lower your wing [in humility and gentleness] to the believers.
- 15:89. And say [O Muhammad]: Verily I am the clear warner [of a punishment that will befall you],
- 15:90. Like [the punishment] that We sent down upon the discriminators,
- 15:91. Those who break the Qur'an into different parts.
- 15:92. So, by your Lord, We will surely question them all
- 15:93. About what they used to do.

Here Allah (ﷻ) says, reminding His Messenger (ﷺ) of His favours to him:

﴿We have given you the seven oft-repeated ones﴾ According to the correct view, this refers to the seven long chapters: al-Baqarah, Al 'Imrân, an-Nisâ', al-Mâ'idah, al-An'âm, al-A'râf, and al-Anfâl along with at-Tawbah. Or it may refer to al-Fâtihah, because it contains

seven verses. That is because the seven long chapters frequently mention the oneness of Allah, knowledge of the unseen and sublime rulings, which are repeated throughout.

According to the view that al-Fatiha is the seven oft-repeated ones, what is meant here is that they are seven verses that are repeated in every *rak'ah*. As Allah has given him the Glorious Qur'an with the seven oft-repeated ones, then He has given him the best thing for which people may compete and the greatest thing in which the believers may rejoice.

﴿Say: In the grace of Allah and in His mercy – in that let them rejoice. That is far better than all they could accumulate.﴾ (*Yoonus 10: 58*)

Hence Allah says after that:

﴿Do not look longingly at the good things We have given some among them to enjoy﴾ that is, do not admire them in such a way that causes you to become distracted by worldly desires that those who live a life of ease are enjoying and by which the ignorant are deceived; rather be content with what Allah has given you of the seven oft-repeated ones and the Glorious Qur'an

﴿nor grieve over them﴾ for there is nothing good to be hoped for from them and there is no benefit to be expected.

But in the believers you have the best alternative to them and the best compensation, so ﴿lower your wing [in humility and gentleness] to the believers﴾ that is, deal softly with them, with good manners, love, generosity and friendship.

﴿And say [O Muhammad]: Verily I am the clear warner [of a punishment that will befall you]﴾ that is, fulfil your duty of warning and conveying the message to relatives and strangers, enemies and friends, for if you do that, then you are not at all accountable for them nor are they accountable for you (*cf. 6: 52*).

﴿Like [the punishment] that We sent down upon the discriminators﴾ who strive to bar people from the path of Allah.

﴿Those who break the Qur'an into different parts﴾ – they describe it according to their whims and desires; some of them call it magic and others call it soothsaying or fabrication, and other expressions of disbelief and rejection, using their criticism of it to bar people from true guidance.

﴿So, by your Lord, We will surely question them all﴾ that is, all those who criticise, condemn, distort and alter it

﴿About what they used to do﴾ – this is a stern warning and rebuke to them for doing what they did.



﴿فَاصْدِعْ بِمَا تُؤْمِنْ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٩١﴾ إِنَّا كَفَيْنَاكَ الْمُسْتَهْزِئِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾ الَّذِينَ
يَعْمَلُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا أَخَرَ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾ وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ يَضْبِطُ صَدْرَكَ بِمَا
يَقُولُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾ فَسَيَّحْ مُحَمَّدَ رَبِّكَ وَكُنْ مِنَ الْمُسَيْحِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾ وَأَعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْنِيَكَ
الْيَقِينُ ﴿٩٦﴾﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٩٤-٩٩)

- 15:94. Therefore proclaim what you are commanded to, and turn away from those who ascribe partners to Allah.
- 15:95. Verily, We will suffice you against those who ridicule you.
- 15:96. Those who set up another god beside Allah; but they will come to know.
- 15:97. We know you are distressed by what they say.
- 15:98. So glorify and praise your Lord, and be among those who prostrate [to Him].
- 15:99. And worship your Lord until that which is certain [namely, death] comes to you.

Then Allah instructed His Messenger (ﷺ) to pay no attention to them or to others, and to proclaim that which Allah had instructed him to proclaim, and to convey the message to everyone, not letting

anything stand in his way or prevent him from conveying the message, and not being deterred by what the ignorant said.

﴿And turn away from those who ascribe partners to Allah﴾ that is, do not pay any attention to them, and refrain from trading insults with them; focus on your mission instead.

﴿Verily, We will suffice you against those who ridicule you﴾ and the message you brought. This is a promise from Allah to His Messenger ﷺ that those who ridiculed him would not be able to harm him, and that Allah would suffice him against them by means of whatever kinds of punishment He willed. And He did indeed do that, for no one openly ridiculed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the message he brought but Allah destroyed him and caused him to die in the worst manner.

Then Allah explained that just as they offended His Messenger ﷺ, they also offended Allah by setting up beside Him ﴿another god﴾ when He alone is their Lord, Creator and Controller.

﴿but they will come to know﴾ the consequences of their deeds when the Day of Resurrection comes.

﴿We know you are distressed by what they say﴾ to you of disbelief and ridicule, and We are able to eradicate them by means of the punishment and to hasten for them that which they deserve. But Allah gives them respite although He does not let them get away with it.

﴿So glorify and praise your Lord, and be among those who prostrate [to Him]﴾ that is, remember Allah a great deal, glorify and praise Him, and pray, for that will give you comfort and put you at ease, and it will help you in all your affairs.

﴿And worship your Lord until that which is certain [namely, death] comes to you﴾ that is, carry on at all times seeking to draw closer to Allah by means of various kinds of acts of worship. The Prophet ﷺ obeyed the command of his Lord and persisted in worship until that which is certain came to him from his Lord.

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat al-Hijr.
All praise and thanks are for Allah, and may the blessings and
peace of Allah be upon Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), his family, and
his Companions abundantly until the Day of Judgement.



16.

Soorat an-Nahl

(Makki)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the name of Allah,
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*



﴿أَنَّ أَمْرَ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَسْتَعِجُوهُ سُبْحَنَهُ وَتَعَلَّمَ عَمَّا يُشَكِّوْنَ ﴾١٦١﴿ يَنْزِلُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ
بِالرُّوحِ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ أَنْ آتِيَرُوْنَا أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاتَّقُونَ ﴾١٦٢﴾

(سورة النحل : ١٦١-١٦٢)

- 16:1. The decree of Allah is at hand, so do not seek to hasten it.
Glorified and exalted be He, far above the partners they ascribe to Him!
- 16:2. He sends down the angels with His revelation by His command to whomever among His slaves He wills, saying: Proclaim that there is no god but I, so fear Me.

Here Allah confirms that what He promised is close at hand, and offers reassurance that it will indeed come to pass:

﴿The decree of Allah is at hand, so do not seek to hasten it﴾ for it is coming, and that which is coming is near at hand.

﴿Glorified and exalted be He far above the partners they ascribe to Him﴾ such as a child, spouse or equal, and other things that the

polytheists attributed to Him that are not befitting to His majesty or are contrary to His perfect nature.

Having declared Himself to be above that which His enemies ascribe to Him, Allah then mentions the revelation that He sent down to His Prophets, that one must believe in with regard to the perfect attributes of Allah:

﴿He sends down the angels with His revelation﴾, which brings (spiritual) life to people's hearts

﴿by His command to whomever among His slaves He wills﴾ who He knows to be righteous, to carry His message.

The main idea and focus of the call of all of the Messengers is: ﴿Proclaim that there is no god but I, so fear Me﴾ that is, the focus is on knowing Allah (عَزَّوجلَّ) and affirming His oneness through the attributes of greatness which are the attributes of divinity, and worshipping Him alone, with no partner or associate. This is the message with which Allah sent down His Books and sent His Messengers.

Then Allah mentions the proof and evidence for that:

* * *

﴿خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ تَعْلَمَ عَنَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ١٧ خَلَقَ
الْإِنْسَنَ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ حَصِيدٌ مُّبِينٌ ١٨ وَالْأَنْعَمَ خَلَقَهُ لَكُمْ فِيهَا
دِفَّةٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ١٩ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا جَمَالٌ حِينَ تُرْجَحُونَ وَحِينَ
تُرْجَحُونَ ٢٠ وَتَخْيِلُ أَنفَالَكُمْ إِنَّ بَلَدَنَا لَمْ تَكُونُوا بِلِفِيهِ إِلَّا يُشَقِّ الْأَنْفُسُ
إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ٢١ وَالْأَنْيَلَ وَالْأَغَالَ وَالْحَمِيرَ لَرَكَبُوهَا وَرَزَيْنَاهُ
وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ٢٢ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ قَصْدُ السَّبِيلِ وَمِنْهَا جَاءَتْ رَوْشَأَهُ
مَهَدَكُمْ أَجَمَعِينَ ٢٣﴾ (٩-٢٣) سورة النحل:

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- 16:3. He created the heavens and the earth for a true purpose. Exalted be He far above the partners they ascribe to Him!
- 16:4. He created man from a drop of semen, then he becomes argumentative, able to express himself.
- 16:5. And He created the livestock animals for you; they are a source of warm clothing [and blankets] and other benefits, and of their [meat] you eat.
- 16:6. You find beauty in them when you bring them home in the evening and when you drive them out to pasture [in the morning].
- 16:7. And they carry your heavy loads to lands that you could not [otherwise] reach without great hardship. Verily your Lord is indeed Compassionate, Most Merciful.
- 16:8. And [He has created] horses, mules and donkeys for you to ride and use for show, and He will yet create things of which [today] you have no knowledge.¹⁰
- 16:9. It is for Allah to show the straight path, and there are [other] paths which deviate from the right course. If He had so willed, He could have guided all of you.
-

This chapter is called the chapter of blessings, for at the beginning of it Allah mentions the basic blessings and at the end of it He mentions other blessings that complete those basic blessings. He tells us that He created the heavens and the earth for a true purpose, so that people may contemplate them and thus realise the greatness of their Creator and what He possesses of attributes of perfection, and so that they may know that He created them as a dwelling place for His slaves who worship Him by adhering to what He enjoined upon them of duties and laws that He sent down on the lips of His Messengers. Hence He declares Himself to be above what the polytheists ascribe

¹⁰ This may refer to other means of transportation, as suggested by some commentators.

as partners to Him, as He says: ﴿Exalted be He far above the partners they ascribe to Him﴾ that is, He describes Himself to be above and far greater than the partners they ascribe to Him, for He is the true God, and it is not appropriate for people to worship, love and humble themselves to any but Him.

Having mentioned the creation of the heavens and the earth, He then mentions the creation of that which is in them.

He starts with the noblest of that creation, which is man: ﴿He created man from a drop of semen﴾ then He caused it to develop and grow until it became a complete human with perfect limbs and faculties both visible and invisible. Then he bestowed upon him abundant blessings until, when he reached the level of (physical and mental) completeness, he became filled with pride and self-admiration. ﴿then he becomes argumentative, able to express himself﴾. It may be that what is meant is that man becomes argumentative with his Lord, ungrateful to Him, arguing with His Messengers and rejecting His revelations. Thus he forgets his initial creation and the blessings that Allah has bestowed upon him, so he uses those blessings for sinful purposes. Or it may be that what is meant is that Allah created man from a drop of semen, then He causes him to pass through the stages of development until he becomes a man of reason who is able to express himself, think, develop his views, argue and discuss. So let the individual give thanks to his Lord Who caused him to develop from a stage where he had no power at all and acquire all these abilities.

﴿And He created the livestock animals for you﴾ that is, He created them for your sake, for your benefit and in your interests. One of the great benefits that you derive from them is that ﴿they are a source of warm clothing [and blankets]﴾ because from their wool, hair and skins you make garments, furnishings and tents.

﴿and﴾ you have in them ﴿other benefits﴾ besides those mentioned above

﴿and of their [meat] you eat﴾.

﴿You find beauty in them when you bring them home in the evening and when you drive them out to pasture [in the morning]﴾ that is, at the time when they rest in the evening and at the time when they go out to pasture. That is because the beauty is not for them; rather it is for you, because you are the ones who enjoy their beauty and you also find beauty in your garments, your children and your wealth, and you admire that.

﴿And they carry your heavy loads﴾ and even carry you ﴿to lands that you could not [otherwise] reach without great hardship﴾. Allah has caused them to be of service to you, so that you ride on some of them and on others you carry whatever loads you wish to distant lands and faraway regions.

﴿Verily your Lord is indeed Compassionate, Most Merciful﴾ because He has subjected to you that which you need. So to Him be praise as befits the majesty of His Countenance, the greatness of His power and the abundance of His generosity and kindness.

﴿And [He has created] horses, mules and donkeys﴾ and caused them to be of service to you ﴿for you to ride and use for show﴾ that is, sometimes you use them for necessary purposes such as riding, and sometimes you use them for the sake of beauty and show. No mention is made of eating, because it is prohibited to eat mules and donkeys, and horses are not usually used for food; in fact it may be prohibited to slaughter them for food, for fear that they may become extinct. However it is proven in *as-Saheehayn* (the two authentic Hadith collections of Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim) that the Prophet ﷺ allowed the eating of horsemeat.

﴿and He will yet create things of which [today] you have no knowledge﴾ that would come about after the revelation of the Qur'an, of means of transportation in which people ride on land and sea, and in the air, and that they use for their own benefit and in their interests. They are not mentioned in specific terms, because Allah ﷺ did not

mention in His Book anything but that which people knew (at that time), or they knew something similar to it. As for that which had no comparison at that time, if He had mentioned it they would not have known it or understood what was meant. So He mentioned that in very general terms that may include what they knew and what they did not know. The same may be said concerning the way in which he mentions the blessings of paradise; He mentions by name those which we know or see something similar, such as palm trees, grapes and pomegranates, and He refers in general terms to that of which we know no comparison, as in the verse in which He says:

﴿In them are two kinds of every fruit.﴾ (*ar-Rahmān* 55: 52)

Similarly, here Allah mentions means of transportation that people knew (at the time of revelation) – such as horses, mules, donkeys, camels and ships – and He mentioned others in general terms, ﴿and He will yet create things of which [today] you have no knowledge﴾.

Having mentioned paths in a literal or physical sense, and stated that He created means for people to travel those paths, such as camels and the like, Allah then mentions the spiritual path that leads to Him:

﴿It is for Allah to show the straight path﴾ that is, the straight path that is the shortest and most straightforward path that leads to Allah.

As for the path that is deviant in terms of beliefs and actions, this is a description of everything that is contrary to the straight path, for it cuts one off from Allah and leads to the abode of doom. So those who are guided follow the straight path by their Lord's leave, and those who deviate follow deviant paths.

﴿If He had so willed, He could have guided all of you﴾ but He guided some by His kindness and grace, and He did not guide others, in accordance with His wisdom and justice.



﴿ هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاهِ لَكُمْ مِنْ شَرَابٍ وَمِنْهُ شَجَرٌ فِيهِ شَيْءُونَ
يُنْبِتُ لَكُمْ بِهِ أَرْزَعَ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالْخَيْلَ وَالْأَغْنَى وَمِنْ كُلِّ الشَّمَائِلِ
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ ﴾ (النحل: ١٠-١١) ﴿ ١١﴾

- 16:10. It is He Who sends down water from the sky; from it you drink, and from it grow the plants on which you pasture your livestock.
- 16:11. With it He causes to grow for you grains, olives, date palms, grapes and all kinds of fruits. Verily in that there are signs for people who reflect.

Thus those who reflect conclude how perfect is the power of Allah, Who sends this water from clouds that are soft and gentle by nature, and they conclude how perfect is His mercy, as He made in the clouds a great deal of water from which they may drink, give their flocks to drink and irrigate their crops, which then bring forth abundant fruit and great blessings.



﴿ وَسَخَرَ لَكُمْ أَيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرُ وَالنُّجُومُ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ بِأَمْرِهِ إِنَّ
فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقُلُونَ ﴾ (النحل: ١٢) ﴿ ١٢﴾

- 16:12. And He has made the night and the day, and the sun and moon, to be of service to you, and the stars are also made subservient by His command. Verily in that there are signs for people of understanding.

That is, He has made these things subject to you for your benefit and to serve various interests, to the extent that you cannot do without them at all. So by night you sleep and rest, and by day you go out to

seek your livelihood and pursue your religious and worldly interests. From the sun and the moon there comes light which benefits the trees, crops and plants, and reduces moisture and dispels cold that may harm the land and people's bodies, and other necessities that are connected to the existence of the sun and moon.

In the sun and moon and in the stars there is adornment for the heavens, and they are used for the purpose of navigation in the dark on land and sea, for telling the time and working out dates; these are signs of varying kinds and significance. All of that is referred to here, where Allah says:

﴿Verily in that there are signs for people of understanding﴾ that is, for those who have minds that they use to reflect and ponder, for that is the purpose for which their minds are created and prepared, so that they may understand what they see and hear, unlike the heedless who gain no benefit from seeing except like animals that have no reason.



﴿وَمَا ذَرَأَ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُخْلِفًا أَوْ نَمَّا إِنْ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِكْرٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يَذَّكَّرُونَ﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٣)

16:13. And [He has made to be of service to you] all that He has created on earth of different kinds of things. Verily in that there are signs for people who pay heed.

That is, in all that Allah has created for His slaves and scattered across the surface of the earth, such as animals, trees, plants and so on, of various colours and types, there is a sign of Allah's perfect might, immense generosity and abundant grace. This indicates that none should be worshipped but Him alone, with no partner or associate.

﴿for people who pay heed﴾ that is, for those who bear in mind that which will benefit them of useful knowledge, and they reflect

upon that which Allah calls them to contemplate, so that they may pay heed to the evidence that points to Him.



﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ الْبَحْرَ لِتَأْكُلُوا مِنْهُ لَحْمًا طَرِيرًا وَسَتَخْرُجُوا مِنْهُ
جِلَانًا تَلْبَسُونَهَا وَتَرَى الْفُلُكَ مَوَاحِدَ فِيهِ وَلَتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
وَلَمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٤)

16:14. It is He Who has made the sea to be of service, so that you may eat from it succulent meat [fish] and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear. And you see the ships ploughing through the waves so that you may seek the bounty of Allah and so that you may give thanks.

That is, He alone, with no partner (has made the sea to be of service) and He has prepared it to offer you different types of benefits (so that you may eat from it succulent meat) this refers to the various kinds of fish that are caught from the sea
(and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear) which add beauty to your beauty
(And you see the ships ploughing through the waves) that is, ploughing through the huge waves with their bows, which take them from one land to another, carrying travellers, provisions and goods by means of which they seek provision and the bounty that Allah has bestowed upon them.

(and so that you may give thanks) to the One Who made these things available for you and prepared them, and so that you may praise Allah Who has blessed you with them. To Allah be all praise and thanks, for He has given people that which is in their interests and to their benefit, more than they ask for and wish for, and He has given them some of all that they ask for. We cannot praise Him enough; rather He is as He has praised Himself.



وَالْقَنِ في الْأَرْضِ رَوَسِكَ أَن تَبِيدَ يَكُمْ وَأَنْهَرَا وَسَبَلًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهتَدُونَ
وَعَلَّمْتَ وَيَأْنَجِيمْ هُمْ يَهتَدُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٥)

16:15. And He has set on the earth mountains standing firm, lest it shake with you; and rivers and paths so that you may find your way,

16:16. And landmarks. And by the stars too people find their way.

Allah (has set) for the sake of His slaves (on the earth mountains standing firm). This refers to huge mountains, lest the earth move and shake with the people on it. Hence they are able to till the land, build on it and walk on it. By His mercy, He has created therein rivers which He causes to run from a distant land to another land that is desperate for water, so that they are provided with water for themselves, their flocks and their crops. There are rivers that flow on the surface of the earth, and there are rivers underground which people access by digging, until they reach what Allah has subjected for them, and bring forth the water using buckets and other equipment. By His mercy, He has created in the earth paths, that is roads which connect distant lands,

(so that you may find your way) to those places. You may even find a land that is surrounded with mountains, but Allah has created passes and routes by means of which people may reach such lands.



أَفَمَنْ يَخْلُقُ كَمْ لَا يَخْلُقُ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَإِن تَعْدُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا
تُخْصُّوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لِغَفْرَانٍ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُسْرُوْكَ وَمَا تُعْلَمُوْكَ
وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَا يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْئاً وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ أَمْوَاتٌ عِزْيزٌ

أَخْيَاءٌ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبَعَثِرُونَ ﴿٦﴾ إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَجْدٌ فَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِالآتِرَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ مُنْكَرٌ وَهُمْ مُسْتَكَدِرُونَ ﴿٧﴾ لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يَشْرُونَ وَمَا
يُعْلِمُونَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَحِبُّ الْمُسْتَكَدِرِينَ ﴿٨﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٧-٢٣)

- 16:17. Is then He Who creates like one who cannot create? Will you not then pay heed?
- 16:18. If you [try to] count the blessings of Allah, you cannot count them all. Verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.
- 16:19. Allah knows what you conceal and what you disclose.
- 16:20. Those they call upon besides Allah create nothing; they are themselves created.
- 16:21. They are dead, lifeless; and they do not know when they will be resurrected.¹¹
- 16:22. Your God is One God. As for those who do not believe in the hereafter, their hearts refuse to know, and they are arrogant.
- 16:23. Undoubtedly Allah knows what they conceal and what they disclose. Verily He does not love the arrogant.

Having mentioned what He created of mighty entities and what He has bestowed of great blessings, Allah then tells us that no one resembles him and He has no equal or rival.

﴿Is then He Who creates﴾ all these things and does whatever He wills
 ﴿like one who cannot create﴾ anything, small or great.
 ﴿Will you not then pay heed?﴾ And acknowledge that the only One Who can create is more deserving of all worship. Just as He is one in His power of creation and control, so too He is one in His divinity and He alone is deserving of worship.

¹¹ This refers to the idols, which are inanimate and cannot hear, see or reason; they do not know when the Hour will come. (Ibn Katheer)

Just as He had no partner when He created you and others, do not ascribe to Him partners or rivals in worship; rather devote your worship sincerely to Him alone.

﴿If you [try to] count the blessings of Allah﴾ without thanking Him ﴿you cannot count them all﴾, let alone give proper thanks, for His blessings to His slaves, both apparent and hidden, are as many as the breaths they take and the moments that pass. This applies to all kinds of blessings, both those of which people are aware and those of which they are not aware, which includes what He wards off from them of calamity. The blessings are more than can be counted.

﴿Verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful﴾ for He is pleased with a little thanks from you, even though His blessings are so many. As it is the case that His mercy is vast, His generosity extends to all and His forgiveness is available to all, so His knowledge encompasses them all.

﴿Allah knows what you conceal and what you disclose﴾ unlike those that are worshipped besides Him, for they ﴿create nothing﴾ small or great;

﴿they are themselves created﴾ – so how can they create anything when they themselves need to be created by Allah (ﷻ)?

Moreover, they possess no attributes of perfection at all, whether that be knowledge or anything else.

﴿They are dead, lifeless﴾; they neither hear, nor see, nor understand anything. Should such things be taken as gods besides the Lord of the worlds? How foolish the polytheists are in their thinking, and how misguided and corrupt they are, for they are misguided by the most obviously corrupt ideas and they regard as equal one who is lacking in all aspects, possesses no attributes of perfection and can do nothing, and One Who is perfect in all aspects, to Whom belong all attributes of perfection in the greatest and most complete manner. He is possessed of all-encompassing knowledge, immense power and abundant mercy that fills the entire universe; to Him be all praise and

glory, for He is possessed of might and greatness that none of His creation can fully comprehend.

﴿Your God is One God﴾; He is Allah, the One, the Self-Sustaining, and there is none like unto Him. People of faith and reason have great awe and veneration for Him in their hearts, they love Him greatly and devote to Him all that they can of both physical and financial acts of worship. All their feelings are attached to Him and all their physical deeds are devoted to Him. They praise Him by affirming His most beautiful names and attributes, and His sublime actions.

﴿As for those who do not believe in the hereafter, their hearts refuse to know﴾ this great fact which no one denies except the most utterly ignorant and stubborn of people; this fact is the oneness of Allah (tawheed).

﴿and they are arrogant﴾ that is, they are too arrogant to worship Him.

﴿Undoubtedly﴾ that is, indeed

﴿Allah knows what they conceal and what they disclose﴾ of evil deeds
 ﴿Verily He does not love the arrogant﴾; rather He hates them immensely and will requite them according to their deeds.

﴿...Verily, those who are too arrogant to worship Me will enter hell in humiliation.﴾ (*Ghâfir* 40: 60)



﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ مَاذَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ قَالُوا أَسْطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ١٦١ لِيَحْمِلُوا أَوزَارَهُمْ كَامِلَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ وَمَنْ أَوزَارَ الدِّينَ يُضْلَلُونَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَرُؤُونَ ١٦٢ قَدْ مَكَرَ الظَّالِمُونَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَأَفَ اللَّهُ بُلْتَهُمْ مِنْ الْقَوَاعِدِ فَخَرَّ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّقْفُ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَأَتَاهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ١٦٣ ثُمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ يُغَزِّيَهُمْ وَيَقُولُ أَئِنَّ شَرَكَاءِكُمْ الَّذِينَ كُفَّرُوكُمْ فِيهِمْ قَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ إِنَّ الْخَرْزَى الْيَوْمَ وَالشَّوَّهَ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ ١٦٤ الَّذِينَ

نَوْفَقُهُمُ الْمَلِئَكُ ظَالِمٌ أَنْفَسِهِمْ فَأَلْقَوْا السَّلَّ مَا كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ مِنْ سُوءٍ بَلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ مِمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ فَادْخُلُوا أَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ خَلَدِينَ فِيهَا فَلِئْسَ مَثْوَى الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾ (سورة النحل: ٢٤-٢٩)

- 16:24. When they are asked: What has your Lord sent down? they say: Tales of the ancients.
- 16:25. Hence on the Day of Resurrection they will bear the full weight of their own burdens, as well as some of the burdens of those without knowledge, whom they misled. Miserable indeed will be their burden.
- 16:26. Those who came before them [also] plotted and planned, but Allah struck at the foundations of what they built and the roof fell down on them from above; the punishment came upon them from a direction they did not expect.
- 16:27. Then on the Day of Resurrection He will disgrace them and will say: Where are My [so-called] partners for whose sake you used to oppose [the Prophets and the believers]? Those who were given knowledge will say: Verily today disgrace and punishment will befall the disbelievers,
- 16:28. Those whose souls the angels take [in death] when they are wronging themselves. They will offer their submission, saying: We did not do anything wrong. [It will be said to them:] Nay; verily Allah has full knowledge of what you used to do;
- 16:29. So enter the gates of hell, to abide therein forever. Wretched indeed is the abode of the arrogant!

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us how vehemently the polytheists rejected His revelations:

﴿When they are asked: What has your Lord sent down?﴾ That is, if they are asked about the Qur'an and the revelation, which is the greatest blessing that Allah has bestowed upon His slaves: What do you say about it? Do you appreciate and acknowledge this blessing,

or are you ungrateful and stubbornly reject it? The answer they give is the worst and silliest answer, because they describe it as «Tales of the ancients» that is, lies fabricated by Muhammad (ﷺ) about Allah, and it is no more than stories of the earlier peoples that have been handed down from generation to generation; some of them are true and some of them are false. They gave this opinion and called their followers to adopt it; hence they carry their own burden and the burden of all those who follow them until the Day of Resurrection.

﴿as well as some of the burdens of those without knowledge, whom they misled﴾ that is, some of the burden of those blind followers who had no knowledge except what they called them to, so they will bear the sin of what they called them to. As for those who had knowledge, each one will bear his own burden of sin, because he knew what they knew.

﴿Miserable indeed will be their burden﴾ that is, how miserable will be the burden that will weigh heavily upon them, the burden of their own sin and the sin of those whom they led astray.

﴿Those who came before them [also] plotted and planned﴾ against their Messengers: they came up with all kinds of elaborate tricks to reject the message they brought.

﴿but Allah struck at the foundations of what they built﴾ that is, He dealt with the matter at the root.

﴿and the roof fell down on them from above﴾ and what they had plotted and planned became the punishment that was inflicted upon them.

﴿the punishment came upon them from a direction they did not expect﴾. That was because they thought that this elaborate plot would benefit them and protect them from the punishment, but their punishment came through that which they had built and for which they had laid the foundation (of specious arguments).

This is a beautiful example of how Allah foiled the plots of His enemies: they thought and reflected on what the Messengers

had wrought, after they decided to reject it, and they came up with principles and rules based on falsehood, to which they referred in order to refute what the Messengers had brought. They also used tricks to cause harm to the Messengers and those who followed them, but their plot became a disaster for them and their planning became the cause of their ruin and destruction, because their plot was evil:

﴿... but the plotting of evil affects none but its authors...﴾ (*Fâtir* 35: 43)

That is the case in this world, but the punishment of the hereafter is another matter. Hence Allah says here: ﴿Then on the Day of Resurrection He will disgrace them﴾ that is, He will put them to shame before all people and will expose their lies and fabrications against Him.

﴿and will say: Where are My [so-called] partners for whose sake you used to oppose [the Prophets and the believers]?﴾ That is, you fought and showed enmity towards Allah and His party for their sake, and you claimed that they were partners to Allah. When He asks them this question, they will have no response but to admit that they were misguided and to acknowledge that they were stubborn, so they will say:

﴿...They are lost from us. And they will testify against themselves that they were disbelievers.﴾ (*al-A'râf* 7: 37)

﴿Those who were given knowledge﴾ that is, the devoted scholars ﴿will say: Verily today﴾ that is, on the Day of Resurrection ﴿disgrace and punishment will befall the disbelievers﴾.

This highlights the virtue of the scholars, for they are the speakers of truth in this world and will be the speakers of truth on the Day of Resurrection, for their words carry weight before Allah and before His creation.

Then Allah tells us what will happen to them at the time of death, and on the Day of Resurrection:

﴿Those whose souls the angels take [in death] when they are wronging themselves﴾ that is, they take their souls when they are in that

state, when they have committed a great deal of wrongdoing and transgression. It is known what the wrongdoers will face on the Day of Resurrection, of all kinds of punishment, disgrace and humiliation.

﴿They will offer their submission﴾ they will surrender and will deny that which they used to worship besides Allah, saying: ﴿We did not do anything wrong﴾. But it will be said to them:

﴿Nay﴾ you did do wrong, for ﴿verily Allah has full knowledge of what you used to do﴾. So their denial will be to no avail. This will occur at some stage of the Day of Resurrection; they will deny what they used to do in this world, thinking that this will benefit them. But when their physical faculties testify against them and what they used to do becomes clear, they will admit it and confess. Hence they will not enter hell until they acknowledge their sins.

﴿So enter the gates of hell﴾ – all those who committed a particular deed will enter through the appropriate gate.

﴿Wretched indeed is the abode of the arrogant!﴾ Namely the fire of hell, for it is the abode of sorrow and regret, a place of misery, pain, distress, anguish and the wrath of the Ever-Living, the Self-Sustaining and All-Sustaining. The painful punishment will never be reduced or alleviated, not even for a single day, for the Most Merciful Lord will have turned away from them and caused them to taste the grievous punishment.



﴿وَقِيلَ لِلَّذِينَ آتَقْوَا مَاذَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ فَالَّذِينَ أَخْسَنُوا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَلَدَأُ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ وَلَنَعَمْ دَارُ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٦﴾ جَئَتُ عَدِنَ يَدْخُلُوهَا بَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَرُ لَمْ فِيهَا مَا يَشَاءُونَ كَذَلِكَ يَعْزِزِي اللَّهُ الْمُنْقَصِينَ ﴿٧﴾ الَّذِينَ نَوَفَّهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ لَا يَقُولُونَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ أَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَسْلُونَ ﴿٨﴾﴾

(سورة النحل: ٣٢-٣٠)

- 16:30. But when it is said to those who fear Allah: What has your Lord sent down? they say: All that is good. For those who do good, there is good [reward] in this world, and the abode of the hereafter is better, and how excellent is the abode of those who fear Allah,
- 16:31. Gardens of perpetual abode, which they will enter, through which rivers flow. There they will have all that they wish for. Thus does Allah reward those who fear Him,
- 16:32. Those whose souls the angels take [in death] in a state of purity, saying [to them]: Peace be upon you; enter paradise as a reward for your deeds.

Having mentioned what the disbelievers said about the revelation, Allah now tells us what the pious said, and that they acknowledged and affirmed that what Allah had sent down was indeed a great blessing and immense good that Allah had bestowed upon His slaves. So they accepted and welcomed that blessing, and they submitted to Allah and give thanks to Him for it, then they learned it and acted in accordance with it.

﴿For those who do good﴾ in worshipping Allah ﴿﴿﴾ and showing kindness to the slaves of Allah,

﴿there is good [reward] in this world﴾ namely abundant provision, a life of ease, reassurance, security and happiness.

﴿and the abode of the hereafter is better﴾ than this world and all that is in it of various kinds of pleasures and desirable things. For the joy of this life is little and is filled with troubles, and it will soon come to an end, unlike the joy of the hereafter. Hence Allah says: ﴿and the abode of the hereafter is better, and how excellent is the abode of those who fear Allah﴾.

﴿Gardens of perpetual abode, which they will enter, through which rivers flow. There they will have all that they wish for﴾ that is, no matter what they wish for and want, they will get it in the most perfect

and complete manner. They will not be able to ask for any kind of joy that would bring them delight and immense pleasure, but it will be granted to them. Hence Allah will give the people of paradise all that they wish for, to the extent that He will even prompt them to ask for some kinds of joy that never crossed their minds.

Blessed be He Whose generosity never ends and to Whose abundance there is no limit; there is nothing like unto Him in His essence, attributes and deeds, and in how these attributes are manifested, and in the greatness of His sovereignty and dominion.

﴿Thus does Allah reward those who fear Him﴾ and fear His wrath and punishment by fulfilling what He has enjoined upon them of obligatory beliefs, actions and words having to do with His rights and the rights of His slaves, and by refraining from that which Allah has prohibited to them.

﴿Those whose souls the angels take [in death]﴾ when they are persisting in that fear of Allah

﴿in a state of purity﴾ that is, when they are pure and free of any shortcomings or impurity that could reach them and undermine their faith. So their hearts are content with knowing and loving Allah, their tongues constantly remember and praise Him, and their physical faculties are constantly focused on acts of obedience and turning to Him.

﴿Those whose souls the angels take [in death] in a state of purity, saying [to them]: Peace be upon you﴾ that is, the perfect greeting is for you, and safety from all ills, for now you are safe from all that you may dislike.

﴿enter paradise as a reward for your deeds﴾ which includes your faith in Allah and submission to His command. Good deeds are the means of admission to paradise and salvation from hell, and they were able to do those good deeds by the grace and mercy of Allah, not by their own strength and power.



﴿ هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَأْتِيهِمُ الْآيَاتُ كُلُّهُنَّ أَوْ يَأْتِيَهُنَّ أَمْرٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكَ كَذَلِكَ فَعَلَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَمَا ظَلَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴾ فَاصَابُهُمْ سَيِّئَاتُ مَا عَمِلُوا وَحَاقَ بِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴾ (٣٤-٣٣) (سورة النحل: ٣٤-٣٣)

- 16:33. Are they [the disbelievers] waiting for the angels to come to them, or for the decree of your Lord to come to pass? Likewise did those who came before them. It is not Allah Who wronged them, but it was they who wronged themselves.
- 16:34. The evil consequences of their deeds overtook them, and the very thing [punishment] they used to ridicule overwhelmed them.

Here Allah (ﷻ) asks: Are these people to whom the revelations came but they did not believe, and they were exhorted but they did not pay heed, waiting (for the angels to come to them) to take their souls in death

(or for the decree of your Lord to come to pass) namely the punishment that will befall them, for they deserve that it should befall them?

(Likewise did those who came before them) – they rejected and disbelieved, then they did not believe, until the punishment came upon them.

(It is not Allah Who wronged them) when He punished them (but it was they who wronged themselves) for they were created to worship Allah, so that they might attain His pleasure and admittance to paradise, but they wronged themselves and abandoned the purpose for which they were created, and exposed themselves to permanent humiliation and eternal misery.

(The evil consequences of their deeds overtook them) that is, the punishment that resulted from their deeds

﴿and the very thing [punishment] they used to ridicule overwhelmed them﴾ – when their Messengers told them about the punishment, they would ridicule it and mock those who told them of it, so the very thing that they used to mock overwhelmed them.



﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا عَبَدَنَا مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَنَحْنُ وَلَا مَابَآؤُنَا وَلَا حَرَّمَنَا مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَكَذَلِكَ فَعَلَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَهَلْ عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلْغُ الْمُبِينُ﴾ (٢٥) (سورة النحل)

(٢٥)

16:35. Those who ascribe partners to Allah say: If Allah had so willed, we would not have worshipped anything besides Him – neither we nor our fathers – and we would not have declared anything forbidden without His sanction. Likewise did those who came before them. Is the duty of the Messengers anything other than conveying the message in the clearest way?

That is, the polytheists tried to justify their polytheism by saying that it was the will of Allah, and that if Allah had not willed it, they would not have ascribed partners to Him or prohibited any of the livestock animals that He had permitted, such as the *baheerah*, *waṣeelah*, *hām*,¹² and so on, without His sanction. This was a false argument, because if that were true, Allah would not have punished

¹² These words refer to certain categories of camels to which certain taboos were applied during the *jāhilīyah*.

Baheerah: a she-camel whose milk was dedicated to the idols.

Sā'ibah: a she-camel that was let loose for the sake of their false gods and no load was to be carried on it.

Waṣeelah: a she-camel that produced female offspring the first and second times she gave birth, with no male offspring in between; she was also let loose for the sake of the idols.

those who came before them, when they ascribed partners to Him and He punished them most severely. If He had liked that action on their part, He would not have punished them. But their only aim was to reject what the Messengers had brought. Otherwise they were fully aware that there was no justification that they could present before Allah, for Allah had issued commands and prohibitions to them, and had granted them the ability to do what He had enjoined upon them, and had given them the strength and willpower from which their deeds stemmed. So their basing their justification on the divine will and decree was utter falsehood. Moreover, everyone realises, on the basis of his common sense, that man is able to do whatever he wants, without anyone stopping him. So they combined disbelief in Allah and His Messengers with rejection of the conclusion that was based on rational thinking and common sense.

﴿Is the duty of the Messengers anything other than conveying the message in the clearest way?﴾ that reaches the heart, so that no one has any excuse before Allah. If the Messengers have conveyed the commands and prohibitions of their Lord to them, but they used the divine decree as an excuse for not responding to the call, then the Messengers have no control over the matter; rather the people's reckoning is with Allah (۴۶).



﴿وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنْ أَقْبِلُوا إِلَهًا وَأَجْتَبُوا لِلظُّفُورَةِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الْضَّلَالَةُ فَسَيِّرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَيْنَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ إِنَّ تَخْرِصَ عَلَى هَذِهِنَّمُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ يُضِلُّ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَصِيرٍ﴾ (سورة النحل: ۳۷-۳۶)

Hâm: a stallion camel that was let loose for the sake of the idols after siring a particular number of offspring, and was not required to carry any load.

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- 16:36. Indeed We sent to every nation a Messenger [saying]: Worship Allah [alone] and shun false gods. Among them were some whom Allah guided, and some for whom misguidance became inevitable. So travel through the land and see what was the fate of the deniers.
- 16:37. Though you [O Prophet] may be eager for them to be guided, Allah does not guide those whom He leaves to go astray, and they will have no helpers.
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Here Allah tells us that His proof has been established against all nations; there is no nation, earlier or later, but Allah sent a Messenger to them, and all the Messengers brought the same call and the same religion, which is worship of Allah alone with no partner or associate. «Worship Allah [alone] and shun false gods». The nations fell into two categories with regard to their response to the call of the Messengers or their lack thereof:

«Among them were some whom Allah guided» so they followed the Messengers in belief and deed

«and some for whom misguidance became inevitable» so they followed the path of error.

«So travel through the land» either physically or by thinking and reasoning

«and see what was the fate of the deniers», for by doing so you will see wonders; you will not see any who disbelieved but the consequences for them led to destruction.

«Though you [O Prophet] may be eager for them to be guided» and strive your utmost for that purpose

«Allah does not guide those whom He leaves to go astray» and even if he took all measures, no one can guide him except Allah

«and they will have no helpers» to protect them from the punishment of Allah.



وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهَدَ أَيْمَنِهِمْ لَا يَبْعَثُ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَمْوَثُ بِلَى وَعْدًا عَيْنِهِ حَقًّا وَلَكِنَّ
أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ إِنَّمَا يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي يَخْلِقُونَ فِيهِ وَلَيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَاذِبِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾ إِنَّمَا قُولُنَا لِشُفُعٍ إِذَا أَرْدَدْنَاهُ أَنْ نَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

(سورة النحل: ٣٨-٣٩)

- 16:38. They swear their most solemn oaths by Allah that Allah will not raise up those who die. Nay, it is a promise by which He is bound, but most people do not realise.
- 16:39. [They will be raised up] so that He may make clear to them that concerning which they differ, and so that those who disbelieved may realise that they were lying.
- 16:40. When We will something, We merely say to it, ‘Be!’ and it is.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the polytheists who rejected His Messenger (ﷺ), that «They swear their most solemn oaths by Allah» that is, they swear so as to affirm that the promise of Allah is false, and that Allah will not resurrect the dead, and that He is not able to bring them back to life after they have turned to dust. But Allah (ﷻ) says, affirming that they are lying: «Nay», He will resurrect them and gather them on a day concerning which there is no doubt.

«it is a promise by which He is bound» and He will not break it or change it
 «but most people do not realise» – as part of their immense ignorance, they deny the resurrection and the requital.

Then He mentions the wisdom behind the requital and the resurrection: «[They will be raised up] so that He may make clear to them that concerning which they differ» of issues both major and minor, and He will explain and clarify the facts.

(and so that those who disbelieved may realise that they were lying) when they see their deeds result in regret, and they realise that the gods on whom they called besides Allah will avail them nothing, when the decree of your Lord (namely His punishment) comes to pass, and they see what they used to worship become fuel for hell, for the sun and moon will be rolled up, the stars will be scattered, and it will become clear to those who worshipped them that they were subjugated slaves of Allah who were in need of Him at all times. That is not difficult or hard for Allah, for when He wills something, He merely says to it, 'Be!' and it is, without any objection or refusal; rather it comes to pass in accordance with His will.



﴿ وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَظْلَمُوا إِنَّبُوْتَنَّهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ وَلِأَجْرٍ الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ تَوْكِيدًا لَّمَّا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ ٤٢ ﴿ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾ (سورة الحجّ: ٤٢-٤١)

الحل: (٤٢-٤١)

- 16:41. To those who migrated in the cause of Allah after having been wronged, We will surely grant them good in this world, and verily the reward of the hereafter will be greater, if only they knew.
- 16:42. [They are those] who patiently persevere and put their trust in their Lord.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the virtue of those believers who were tested

(those who migrated in the cause of Allah) that is, for His sake and seeking His pleasure

(after having been wronged) as they were subjected to persecution and harm by their people, who put pressure on them in order to bring them back to disbelief and polytheism. So they left behind their

homeland and their loved ones, and moved away out of obedience to the Most Gracious. Allah tells us that they will have two rewards: reward in this world in the form of abundant provision and a life of ease that they saw with their own eyes, after they migrated, prevailed over their enemies, conquered new lands, acquired immense booty from them and became wealthy; Allah gave them good things in this world.

﴿and verily the reward of the hereafter﴾ which Allah has promised them on the lips of His Messenger (ﷺ)

﴿will be greater﴾ than the reward of this world, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Those who believe, migrate, and strive and fight in Allah's cause, offering their wealth and their lives, are of a higher rank before Allah. It is they who will triumph. Their Lord gives them glad tidings of mercy from Him and His good pleasure, and of gardens in which eternal bliss will be theirs, to abide therein forever. Verily with Allah there is an immense reward.﴾ (*at-Tawbah* 9: 20-22)

﴿if only they knew﴾ that is, if only they had certain knowledge of what there is with Allah of reward for those who believe in Him and migrate in His cause, not one of them would have stayed behind.

Then Allah describes His close friends (*awliyā'*): ﴿[They are those] who patiently persevere﴾ in heeding the commands and prohibitions of Allah, and in accepting the decree of Allah, even if it is painful, and in bearing the harm and trials that they suffer in His cause.

﴿and put their trust in their Lord﴾ that is, they rely on Him in doing what He loves; they do not rely on themselves. Thus they attain success and their affairs become sound, for patience and trust in Allah are the prerequisites for success in all affairs. No one misses out on anything good except because of lack of patience and lack of effort in what is expected of him, or because of failing to put one's trust in Allah and rely upon Him.



﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا بِرَجَالًا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ فَسَعَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ ﴿بِالْيَمِينِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْذِكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نَزَّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَنْتَكِرُونَ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٤٤-٤٣)

- 16:43. We did not send before you [O Muhammad] any but men to whom We gave revelation. So [O people] ask those who have knowledge,¹³ if you do not know.
- 16:44. [We sent them] with clear signs and the scriptures, and We have sent down to you the Reminder [the Qur'an], so that you may explain to the people what has been sent down to them and so that they may reflect.

That is, you are not unprecedented among the Messengers, for We did not send angels before you; rather We sent men who were perfect, not women

﴿to whom We gave revelation﴾ of laws and rulings, and this was by His bounty and kindness towards people, without any effort on their part.

﴿So [O people] ask those who have knowledge﴾ of the earlier scriptures

﴿if you do not know﴾ the stories of the earlier peoples and you are not sure whether Allah sent men as Messengers before.

So ask of the people who have knowledge of that, to whom the earlier scriptures were sent down, for they learned them and understood them, and it is established according to all of them that Allah only sent men to whom He granted revelation, from among the people of the

¹³ This may refer to: Jewish and Christian scholars who have knowledge of the previous scriptures; Muslim scholars who have knowledge of the Qur'an; or those who have knowledge of the history of earlier nations.

cities. The general meaning of this verse points to implicit praise for people of knowledge, and indicates that the highest type of knowledge is knowledge of the revealed Book of Allah, as Allah instructs those who do not know to refer to them in all cases. It also implies praise for people of knowledge, as Allah instructed us to ask them so that the ignorant one may do what is required of him. This indicates that Allah entrusted them with His revelation and that they are enjoined to purify themselves and strive to attain attributes of perfection.

The best people of knowledge are those who have knowledge of this Holy Qur'an, for they are people of knowledge in a true sense and are more deserving of this title than others. Hence Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿and We have sent down to you the Reminder [the Qur'an]﴾ in which there is mention of what people need to know about religious and worldly issues,

﴿so that you may explain to the people what has been sent down to them﴾ this includes explanation of the words and explanation of the meanings

﴿and so that they may reflect﴾ upon it, and learn some of its treasures and knowledge, according to their ability and focus on it.



﴿أَفَمِنَ الَّذِينَ مَكْرُوْرُوا أَسْبَيْتَهُنَّ أَن يَخْسِفَ اللَّهُ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضَ أَوْ يَأْتِيهِمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَسْتَعْرُونَ ﴾٤٥﴿ أَوْ يَأْخُذُهُمْ فِي نَقْلِيْهِمْ فَمَا هُمْ بِمُعْجِزِيْنَ ﴾٤٦﴿ أَوْ يَأْخُذُهُمْ عَلَىٰ تَحْسُوفٍ فَإِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴾٤٧﴾ (سورة النحل: ٤٥-٤٧)

- 16:45. Do then those who devise evil plots feel sure that Allah will not cause the earth to swallow them up, or that the punishment will not come upon them from a direction they do not expect?
- 16:46. Or that He will not seize them suddenly in the midst of their comings and goings, and they can never escape it?

16:47. Or that He will not seize them when they are apprehensive of the impending calamity? Verily your Lord is Most Compassionate, Most Merciful

Here Allah seeks to alarm the disbelievers who commit various kinds of sins, by reminding them that the punishment may come upon them suddenly when they are not aware. The punishment may come upon them from above, or from beneath them, as in the case of a landslide and the like, or it may come upon them whilst they are going about their business and not thinking about it at all, or it may come upon them when they are apprehensive about the punishment. They cannot escape Allah in any of these scenarios; rather they are under His control and their forelocks are in His Hand.

But He is Most Compassionate, Most Merciful and He does not hasten the punishment for the sinners; rather He gives them respite, grants them well-being and bestows provision upon them, whilst they offend Him and His close friends. Yet despite that He opens the gates of repentance to them, calls them to give up the bad deeds that harm them, and promises in return for that the best honours and forgiveness for what they have committed of sins. So let the sinner feel ashamed before his Lord, for the blessings of Allah are descending upon him at all times whilst his sins are ascending to his Lord at all times. Let him realise that Allah gives respite but He does not let the sinner get away with it, for when He seizes the sinner, His grasp is the grasp of One Who is Almighty, Omnipotent. Let him repent to Allah and turn back to Him in all his affairs, for He is Most Compassionate, Most Merciful.

Let him hasten to seek His all-encompassing mercy and great kindness, and let him follow the paths that lead to the grace of the Most Merciful Lord, by fearing Him and striving to do that which He loves and is pleased with.



﴿أَولَئِرَبُوا إِلَى مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ مِنْ هَمَّٰنْ يَنْقِيُّونَ طِلَّلَهُ عَنِ الْأَيْمَانِ وَالشَّمَائِيلِ سُجَّدَ الْهُوَ وَهُنَّ دَاهِرُونَ ﴾٤٨﴾ وَلَلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ دَانِيَةٍ وَالْمَلِكَةَ وَهُنْ لَا يَسْتَكِرُونَ ﴾٤٩﴾ يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُمْ مِنْ فَوْقَهُمْ وَيَقْعُلُونَ مَا يُؤْمِرُونَ ﴾٥٠﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ٤٨-٥٠)

- 16:48. Have they not seen the things that Allah has created, and how their shadows move to the right and the left, prostrating to Allah in all humility?
- 16:49. To Allah prostrates all that is in the heavens and every living creature on earth, as do the angels, and they are not arrogant.
- 16:50. They fear their Lord above them, and they do what they are commanded.

﴿Have they﴾ that is, those who doubt the oneness, greatness and perfection of their Lord

﴿not seen the things that Allah has created﴾ that is, all of His creations and how their shadows move

﴿to the right and the left, prostrating to Allah﴾ that is, they all prostrate to their Lord, humbling themselves before His greatness and majesty
 ﴿in all humility﴾ that is, they are humbled, under His control and subjugation; their forelocks are in the Hand of Allah and under His control.

﴿To Allah prostrates all that is in the heavens and every living creature on earth﴾ humans and animals alike

﴿as do the angels﴾ – the angels are mentioned specifically after all creatures have been mentioned in general terms, because of their virtue and noble nature, and because they worship Allah a great deal. Hence He says: ﴿and they are not arrogant﴾ that is, they do not disdain to worship Him, despite their large numbers and their great size and power, as Allah ﴿ۚ﴾ says elsewhere:

﴿The Messiah would never disdain to be a slave to Allah, nor would the angels who are close to Him...﴾ (*an-Nisâ' 4: 172*)

﴿They fear their Lord above them﴾. Having praised them for their constant obedience and submission to Allah, He then praises them for their fear of Allah Who is above them in terms of His essence, might and perfect attributes, and they are beneath Him, so they are humble and subjugated.

﴿and they do what they are commanded﴾ that is, no matter what Allah (ﷻ) commands them to do, they obey His command willingly.

The prostration of created beings to Allah is of two types. The first is involuntary prostration, which points to His attributes of perfection and majesty; this is applicable to all creatures, believers and disbelievers, righteous and evildoers, humans and animals. The second is voluntary prostration, which is applicable only to His close friends and believing slaves, among the angels and others.



﴿وَقَالَ اللَّهُ لَا تَنْخُذُوا إِلَهَيْنِ آثَرِينَ إِنَّمَا هُوَ اللَّهُ وَنَحْنُ فِي أَنَا فَارَهُبُونَ ﴾٥١﴿ وَلَمَّا مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَهُ الَّذِينَ وَاصْبَأْنَا أَفْغَنَ اللَّهُ نَنْقَوْنَ ﴾٥٢﴿ وَمَا بِكُمْ مِنْ نَعْصَمَةٍ فِيمَنِ اللَّهُ شَاءَ إِذَا مَسَكَمُ الظُّرُرَ فَإِلَيْهِ يَخْرُوْنَ ﴾٥٣﴿ شَاءَ إِذَا كَشَفَ الظُّرُرَ عَنْكُمْ إِذَا فِرِيقٌ مِنْكُمْ يَرَهُمْ يُشَرِّكُونَ ﴾٥٤﴿ لِيَكْفُرُوا بِمَا إِنْتَ هُمْ فَتَمْسِعُوْا فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴾٥٥﴾ (سورة النحل: ٥١-٥٥)

(النحل: ٥١-٥٥)

- 16:51. Allah has said: Do not take two gods [for worship], for He is but One God, so fear none but Me.
- 16:52. To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth, and constant obedience is due to Him alone. Will you then fear anyone other than Allah?
- 16:53. Whatever blessing you have, it is from Allah, then when misfortune afflicts you, it is to Him that you cry out for help.

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- 16:54. Yet when He has relieved you of your misfortune, some of you ascribe partners to their Lord,
- 16:55. Showing their ingratitude for what We have given them. Take your pleasure now, but you will soon know the consequences.
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Here Allah instructs us to worship Him alone, with no partner or associate, because He is the only One Who bestows blessings and there is no god but Him.

﴿Do not take two gods [for worship]﴾ that is, do not ascribe a partner in divinity to Him when He ﴿is but One God﴾, One in His great attributes and unique in all His actions.

Just as He is One in His essence, names, attributes and actions, so you should worship Him alone. Hence He says: ﴿so fear none but Me﴾, obey My commands and heed My prohibitions, without associating any of My creation with Me, for they under the control of Allah (ﷻ).

﴿To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth, and constant obedience is due to Him alone﴾ that is, devotion, worship and humility at all times are due to Allah alone, so people are required to be sincere towards Allah and to be true slaves to Him.

﴿Will you then fear anyone other than Allah﴾ among the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth? For they do not possess any power to cause you harm or benefit you. It is only Allah Who gives and bestows kindness.

﴿Whatever blessing you have﴾ visible or invisible
﴿it is from Allah﴾ and no one else has any part in that.
﴿then when misfortune afflicts you﴾ such as poverty, sickness or hardship
﴿it is to Him that you cry out for help﴾ that is, you raise your voices, calling upon Him and beseeching Him, because you know that no one wards off harm and hardship except Him, Who alone gives you what

you love and wards off what you hate. Therefore none is deserving of worship except Him alone.

But many people wrong themselves by denying the blessings that Allah has bestowed upon them. When He saved them from hardship, at times of ease they begin to ascribe some of His helpless creation as partners to Him. Hence He says:

﴿Showing their ingratitude for what We have given them﴾ that is, when We saved them from hardship and difficulty.

﴿Take your pleasure now﴾ for a little while, in this world

﴿but you will soon know the consequences﴾ of your disbelief.



﴿وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ نَصِيبًا مِّمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ تَأْلِهَةٌ لَتَشْفَلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَفْرُونَ ﴾
 ٥١ ﴿وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ الْبَنَاتَ سُبْحَانَهُ وَلَهُمْ مَا يَشْهُدُونَ ﴾ ٥٢ وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَهْدُهُمْ بِالْأُنْثَى
 ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُمْ مُسُودًا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ٥٣ يَنْوَرِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مِنْ سُوءٍ مَا يُشَرِّبُ بِهِ أَيْمُسْكُهُ عَلَى
 هُوَنِ امْرَأَ يَدْسُهُ فِي التُّرَابِ أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَخْكُمُونَ ٥٤ لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ مُثْلُ
 السُّوءِ وَلِلَّهِ الْأَعْلَى وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ الْحَكِيمُ ٥٥﴾ (سورة النحل: ٥٠-٥٦)

- 16:56. They allocate a portion of the sustenance We have given them to those whose reality they do not even know. By Allah, you will surely be called to account for the lies you have been fabricating.
- 16:57. And they ascribe daughters to Allah – glory be to Him! – but for themselves they choose what they desire [sons].
- 16:58. When news is brought to one of them of [the birth of] a female infant, his face darkens and he is filled with inward grief.
- 16:59. He hides away from people because of the bad news he has been given. Should he keep her and feel disgraced or bury her in the dust? How evil is their estimate of Allah!
- 16:60. Those who do not believe in the hereafter have evil attributes, and to Allah belong the most sublime attributes, for He is the Almighty, Most Wise.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the ignorance and wrongdoing of the polytheists, and how they fabricated lies against Allah, for they allocated to their idols that knew nothing and could not bring any benefit or ward off any harm, a share of that which Allah had provided and blessed them with. They used the provision He had bestowed to associate others with Him and to draw closer to carved idols, as Allah (ﷻ) tells us elsewhere:

﴿They allocated to Allah a portion of that which He created of crops and livestock. They say: This is for Allah – or so they claim – and this is for our partners [that we ascribe to Him]. Then, that which is allocated for their ‘partners’ never reaches Allah, while that which is allocated for Allah does reach their ‘partners’. How ill they judge.﴾
(al-An'ām 6: 136)

﴿you will surely be called to account for the lies you have been fabricating﴾ and it will be said:

﴿...Has Allah given you leave to do so, or do you fabricate lies against Allah? What do those who fabricate lies against Allah think about the Day of Resurrection?...﴾ (Yoonus 10: 59-60)

Allah will punish them severely for that.

﴿And they ascribe daughters to Allah﴾ because they described the angels who are close to Allah as being His daughters

﴿but for themselves they choose what they desire﴾ namely sons, because they deeply hated to have daughters

﴿When news is brought to one of them of [the birth of] a female infant, his face darkens﴾ with distress at what has befallen him

﴿and he is filled with inward grief﴾ that is, he is filled with grief and sorrow if he is given news of an infant daughter, to the extent that he feels ashamed before his fellow men and tries to hide away because of this bad news. Then later on he thinks, on the basis of corrupt ideas, what he should do about this daughter of whose birth he has been informed.

﴿Should he keep her and feel disgraced﴾ should he let her live, and not kill her, and put up with humiliation and disgrace?

﴿or bury her in the dust﴾ that is, bury her alive. This is a reference to female infanticide for which Allah condemned the polytheists.

﴿How evil is their estimate of Allah!﴾ for they ascribe to Him that which is not befitting to His Majesty, as they ascribe offspring to Him.

But they did not stop there; rather they ascribe the inferior of the two to Him, namely female offspring which they themselves disdained and hated. So how could they ascribe it to Allah (ﷻ)? What a bad judgement this was on their part.

Because this was one of the negative attributes that His enemies, the polytheists, ascribed to Him, Allah (ﷻ) says here: ﴿Those who do not believe in the hereafter have evil attributes﴾ that is, attributes of imperfection and shortcomings

﴿and to Allah belong the most sublime attributes﴾ – this refers to every attribute of perfection, and whatever perfection exists, Allah is more deserving of it, without that implying any kind of shortcoming. To Him belong the most sublime attributes in the hearts of His close friends, which means veneration, respect and love, turning to Him and knowing Him.

﴿for He is the Almighty﴾ Who subjugates all things and to Whom all creatures submit

﴿Most Wise﴾ Who does what is appropriate. So He does not enjoin or do anything but that for which He may be praised and extolled for the divine perfection that is implied thereby.



﴿وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِظُلْمِهِرَ مَا تَرَكَ عَلَيْهَا مِنْ دَائِبٍ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَّا أَجَلٌ مُسَمٌّ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَخِرُونَ سَاعَةً وَلَا يَسْتَقِيمُونَ ﴾٦١﴿﴾ (سورة النحل: ٦١)

- 16:61. If Allah were to take humankind to task for their wrongdoing, He would not leave on [the earth] a single living creature, but He gives them respite for an appointed term. Then when their appointed time comes, they will not be able to delay it for a single moment or bring it forward.

Having mentioned what the wrongdoers fabricated against Him, Allah (ﷻ) here mentions the perfect nature of His forbearance and patience:

﴿If Allah were to take humankind to task for their wrongdoing﴾, no more and no less

﴿He would not leave on [the earth] a single living creature﴾ because He would destroy those who committed the sin as well as others of all types of creatures and animals, for the bad consequences of sin may lead to destruction of crops and livestock.

﴿but He gives them respite for an appointed term﴾ that is, He does not hasten the punishment for them until an appointed time, which is the Day of Resurrection.

﴿Then when their appointed time comes, they will not be able to delay it for a single moment or bring it forward﴾ so let them beware, so long as they are still within the respite period, before the time comes when there will no longer be any respite.



﴿وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ مَا يَكْرَهُونَ وَتَصِفُ الْسِنَّةُ الْكَذِبَ أَنَّ لَهُمُ الْحَسْنَى لَا جُرْمَ أَنَّ لَهُمُ النَّارَ وَأَنَّهُمْ مُغْرَبُونَ ﴾٦٣﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَدْ أَزْسَلَنَا إِلَى أُسُورِ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فَرِيقٌ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَلَهُمْ فَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمُ الْيَوْمَ وَلَهُنَّ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴾٦٤﴾ (سورة التحليل)

(٦٣-٦٤)

- 16:62. They ascribe to Allah that which they dislike [for themselves], and their tongues assert the falsehood that the better things will

be theirs. Without a doubt for them is the fire, and they will be hastened on into it.

- 16:63. By Allah, We indeed sent [Messengers] to nations before you, but Shaytân made their deeds fair-seeming to them [the evildoers]. He is their ally today, and theirs will be a painful punishment.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that the polytheists (ascribe to Allah that which they dislike [for themselves]) of daughters and abhorrent attributes. This refers to the association of others with Allah, by devoting some acts of worship to created beings who are slaves of Allah. Just as they would hate for their slaves – who are created beings just like them – to be their partners and share in that which Allah has provided to them, how can they ascribe partners to Allah from among His slaves?

(and) in addition to this serious offence, (their tongues assert the falsehood that the better things will be theirs) that is, that they will be in a good situation in this world and the hereafter. But Allah refutes that claim by saying: (Without a doubt for them is the fire, and they will be hastened on into it) that is, they will be rushed into it and will remain therein, and will never come out of it.

Then Allah (ﷻ) highlights to His Messenger (ﷺ) that he is not the first Messenger to be rejected, as He says: (By Allah, We indeed sent [Messengers] to nations before you), calling them to affirm the oneness of Allah

(but Shaytân made their deeds fair-seeming to them), so they rejected the Messengers and claimed that what they were following was the truth that would save them from all harm, and that what the Messengers were calling to was the opposite of that. When the Shaytân made their deeds fair-seeming to them, he became their ally, so they obeyed him and followed him and took him as their ally.

(...Will you then take him and his progeny as allies instead of Me, even though they are enemies to you? What a wretched exchange for the wrongdoers!) (al-Kahf 18: 50)

﴿and theirs will be a painful punishment﴾ in the hereafter, because they turned away from being allies of the Most Gracious and were content to be allies of the Shaytân; therefore they deserve that humiliating punishment.



﴿وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا لِتُبَيِّنَ لِهُمْ أَنَّ الَّذِي أَخْنَلُوا فِيهِ وَهُدَىٰ وَرَحْمَةً لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾٦٥﴿ وَاللَّهُ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِيَّةً لِقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ ﴾٦٤﴾ (سورة النحل: ٦٤-٦٥)

- 16:64. We have only sent down the Book to you so that you may make clear to them that wherein they differ, and so that it may be guidance and mercy to people who believe.
- 16:65. Allah sends down from the sky water whereby He gives life to an earth that is dead. Verily in that is a sign for people who listen [attentively].

That is, a sign for people who listen to the exhortation and admonishment of Allah, and understand from that that He alone is deserving of worship and no worship should be devoted to any but Him alone, for He is the One Who bestows blessing by sending down rain and bringing forth all kinds of plants. He is able to do all things, and the One Who gives life to the earth after it was dead is able to give life to the dead. The One Who bestows all these favours is the Possessor of abundant mercy and immense generosity.



﴿وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَنْعَمِ لِعَرْبَةً شُنَقِيكُمْ مَتَافِ بُطْوِينَهُ، مِنْ بَيْنِ فَرَثٍ وَدَمْ لَبَنًا خَالِصًا سَائِغاً لِلشَّرَبِينَ ﴾٦٦﴿ وَمَنْ ثَمَرَتِ النَّجِيلُ وَالْأَغْنَبُ تَنْجُذُونَ مِنْهُ سَكَرًا وَرِزْقًا حَسَنًا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِيَّةً لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقُلُونَ ﴾٦٧﴾ (سورة النحل: ٦٦-٦٧)

- 16:66. And verily in livestock animals too there is a lesson for you. We give you to drink of that [fluid] which is in their bellies, produced alongside faeces and blood: pure milk, palatable to those who drink it.
- 16:67. And from the fruits of date palms and grapevines, you obtain intoxicants, and good provision. Verily in that there is a sign for people of understanding.

﴿And verily in livestock animals too﴾ that Allah has caused to be of service to you

﴿there is a lesson for you﴾ from which you learn of Allah's perfect might and abundant kindness, for he gives you (milk) to drink from their bellies, which contain faeces and blood; from between that comes pure milk that is free of contamination and palatable to those who drink it, because it is delicious, quenches thirst and nourishes. Can this be anything but divine power, not merely the dictates of nature?

What thing in nature can turn fodder that animals eat and the water that they drink, whether it is fresh or salty, into pure milk that is palatable to those who drink it?

Allah (ﷻ) has created many benefits for His slaves in the fruits of the palm tree and grapevine, such as various kinds of provision which is eaten raw and cooked, fresh and preserved, food and drink that they make from their juice and steeped fruits, and the strong drink that was previously permitted, then Allah abrogated the permissibility of all intoxicants, and He replaced that with good things such as *nabeedh* (a drink made by steeping dates and the like) and other kinds of delicious permissible drinks.

﴿Verily in that there is a sign for people of understanding﴾ of the perfect might of Allah, as He brings forth (provision) from trees that are like pieces of lumber, yet they produce delicious fruits. Just as He encompasses all His slaves with His mercy and makes this provision available to them, He is the only God Who is deserving of worship, for He is the only One Who does that.



﴿ وَأَوْحَى رَبُّكَ إِلَى الْعَقْلِ أَنْ أَخْيُذَ مِنَ الْبَلَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمَا يَعِرِشُونَ ٦٨ ﴾
 مِنْ كُلِّ الْثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْتَلِكِ شَبَلَ رَبِّكَ ذُلْلًا يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بُطُونَهَا شَرَابٌ مُّخْتَلِفُ الْأَوْنَدُ
 فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَنْفَكِرُونَ ٦٩ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٦٨-٦٩)

- 16:68. And your Lord inspired the bee [saying]: Make your homes in the mountains or in the trees or in the [hives] that [humans] construct.
- 16:69. Then feed on all kinds of fruit and follow the ways made easy for you by your Lord. There comes forth from their bellies a drink of varying colours, in which there is healing for people. Verily in that there is a sign for people who reflect.

There is a sign in the creation of the little bee, which Allah has inspired and taught in this wondrous manner, and shown it places where it can find food, then come back to the hives which the bees build in the way that Allah has taught them. Then there comes from the bees' stomachs this delicious honey of varying colours, depending on the various flowers on which the bees fed; in it there is healing for people from many sicknesses. This is indicative of the perfect care of Allah (ﷻ) and His perfect kindness to His slaves, and that no one is to be loved and called upon except Him.



﴿ وَاللهُ خَلَقَكُمْ فَتَرَبَّوْنَكُمْ وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرِدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُذَلِّ الْعُمُرَ لِكَيْ لَا يَعْلَمَ بَعْدَ عِلْمِ شَيْئًا إِنَّ اللهَ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ ٧٠ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٧٠)

- 16:70. Allah has created you, then He will take your souls [in death]. Among you are some who are sent back to a feeble age, so that

they know nothing after having known [much]. Verily Allah is All-Knowing, Omnipotent.

Allah (ﷻ) tells us that it is He Who creates people then causes them to go through the stages of life, one after another. Then after they have completed their allotted term, He takes their souls in death; and He causes some of them to live until they are «sent back to a feeble age» that is, the worst state that a person may reach, where he becomes physically weak and in poor health, until even the mind, which is the essence of man, becomes increasingly weak, to the extent that he forgets everything he knew and his mind becomes like that of a child. Hence Allah says: «so that they know nothing after having known [much]. Verily Allah is All-Knowing, Omnipotent». Allah's knowledge and power encompass all things, which includes the stages of life that man goes through, one after another, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿It is Allah Who created you in a state of weakness, then after weakness He gave you strength, then after strength, weakness and grey hair. He creates as He wills, and He is the All-Knowing, Omnipotent.﴾ (ar-Room 30: 54)



﴿وَاللَّهُ فَعَلَ بَعْضُكُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فِي الرِّزْقِ إِنَّمَا الظَّرِيفُونَ فُضِلُواٰ بِرَبِّهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَا مَلَكُوكُتْ أَيْمَنُهُمْ فَهُمْ فِيهِ سَوَاءٌ أَفَيْنَعَمَ اللَّهُ يَحْمَدُونَ ﴾ ﴿٦﴾ (سورة النحل: ٦)

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- 16:71. Allah has favoured some of you above others in what He has provided. Those who are so favoured are unwilling to share their provisions with those slaves whom they own, so that they will all be equal in this respect. Is it Allah's favours they deny?

This is among the evidence of Allah's oneness and the abhorrent nature of ascribing partners to Him. Here He says: just as you all have in common the fact that you are created and granted provision, but He (has favoured some of you above others in what He has provided), by the same token He has made some of you free, with abundant wealth, and He has made others slaves to them, who do not own anything of worldly wealth. Just as the masters are the ones whom Allah has favoured over them in terms of provision, they (are unwilling to share their provisions with those slaves whom they own) and they regard that as something impossible, in like manner those whom you ascribe as partners to Allah are slaves who possess not even an atom's weight of dominion, so how can you regard them as partners to Allah (؟) Can this be anything but the worst of wrongdoing and ingratitude for the blessings of Allah? Hence He says: (Is it Allah's favours they deny?) Had they affirmed the blessing and attributed it to the One Who bestowed it, they would not have ascribed anyone as a partner to Him.



﴿ وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ بَيْنَ وَحْدَةٍ وَرَزْقَكُم مِنْ أَطْبَابِنِتِ أَفِإِلْبَطِيلِ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَيُنْعَمُ اللَّهُ هُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ ۚ وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَعْلَمُ لَهُمْ رِزْقًا مِنَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَسْتَطِعُونَ ۚ فَلَا نَصْرٌ لِلشَّرِّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ وَآتَمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ۚ ۚ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا عَبْدًا مَمْلُوكًا لَا يَقْدِرُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَمَنْ رَزَقْنَاهُ مِنَ رِزْقَنَا فَهُوَ يُنْفِقُ مِنْهُ سِرًا وَجَهْرًا ۗ هَلْ يَسْتُوْنَ ۖ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۚ ۚ وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا رَجُلَيْنِ أَحَدُهُمَا أَبْكَمُ لَا يَقْدِرُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ كُلُّ عَلَى مَوْلَاهُ أَيْسَمَا يُوْجِهُ لَا يَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ ۗ هَلْ يَسْتُوْي هُوَ وَمَنْ يَأْمُرُ بِالْمُعْدُلِ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ۚ ۚ ﴾ (٧٦-٧٢) (سورة النحل: ٧٦-٧٢)

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- 16:72. Allah has given you spouses of your own kind and has given you, through your spouses, children and grandchildren, and provided you with good things as sustenance. Will they then believe in falsehood and show ingratitude for the blessings of Allah,
- 16:73. and will they worship, besides Allah, that which has no power to provide anything for them from the heavens or the earth as sustenance, and can do nothing at all?
- 16:74. So do not liken anything to Allah. Verily Allah knows and you do not know.
- 16:75. Allah makes this comparison: a slave, the property of another, who has no power over anything, and one on whom We have bestowed goodly provision from Us, and he gives of it both in private and in public. Are the two equal? Praise be to Allah. But most of them do not know.
- 16:76. Allah makes [another] comparison: two men, one of whom is mute, unable to do anything, and is a burden on his master; whichever way he directs him, he achieves nothing good. Is he equal to one who enjoins justice and follows a straight path?
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Here Allah tells us about the great blessings that He bestows upon His slaves, as He gives them spouses so that they may find tranquillity in them (*cf. 30: 21*), and He gives them from their spouses children in whom they delight and who help them and meet their needs, and they benefit from them in many ways. And He bestows upon them good and pure provision, of all kinds of food and drink, as well as other visible blessings, more than they can ever enumerate.

﴿Will they then believe in falsehood and show ingratitude for the blessings of Allah﴾ that is, will they believe in falsehood that had no mention before, then Allah created it and it cannot do anything or create anything, and it cannot grant provision or control anything? This is general in meaning and applies to everything that is worshipped

besides Allah: it is false, so how can the polytheists take it for worship besides Allah?

﴿and show ingratitude for the blessings of Allah﴾ by denying them and using them for the purpose of disobeying Allah and disbelieving in Him. Can this be anything other than the worst of wrongdoing, wickedness and foolishness?

﴿and will they worship, besides Allah, that which has no power to provide anything for them from the heavens or the earth as sustenance, and can do nothing at all?﴾ Here Allah tells us of the ignorance and wrongdoing of the polytheists, for they worship besides Him gods that they regard as partners to Allah, when in fact they have no power to provide anything from the heavens or the earth. They do not send down rain or provision, they do not cause any plants to grow on earth, they have no dominion at all over the heavens or the earth, and they cannot do any of these things even if they wanted to.

This is the description of their gods, so how could they regard them as equal to Allah or liken them to the One Who has dominion over the earth and the heavens, to Whom all dominion, praise and power belong? Hence Allah says:

﴿So do not liken anything to Allah﴾ in such a way as to imply equality between Him and His creation.

﴿Verily Allah knows and you do not know﴾. Therefore we should not speak about Him without knowledge, and we should listen to the comparisons that He makes. Hence He makes two comparisons for Himself and for those that are worshipped besides Him. The first comparison is that of a slave who does not own himself or any worldly wealth, and the second is that of a man who is free and wealthy, to whom Allah has granted goodly provision of all types of wealth, and he is generous and likes to give to others, so he spends in secret and openly. Can these two men be equal? No, they are not equal, even though they are both created beings and it is not impossible for them to be regarded as equal.

If they are not equal, then how can a created slave who has no dominion, power or ability – rather he is dependent in all aspects – be equal to the Lord, the Creator, the Sovereign of all realms, Who is able to do all things? Hence Allah praises Himself, and all types of praise are exclusively for Him alone, as He says:

﴿Praise be to Allah﴾. It is as if it was said: if that is the case, then why did the polytheists regard their gods as equal to Allah? He said: ﴿But most of them do not know﴾; if they had truly known, they would not have dared to commit this grave action of ascribing partners to Allah.

The second comparison is that of ﴿two men, one of whom is mute﴾ and can neither hear nor speak

﴿unable to do anything﴾, small or great

﴿and is a burden on his master﴾ that is, his master serves him and he is not able to serve or help himself, so he is lacking in all aspects. Is he equal to one who enjoins justice and follows the straight path, so his words are just and his deeds are righteous? Just as they are not equal, so the one who is worshipped besides Allah, when he is not able to take care of himself in any way – and were it not for Allah taking care of him, he could not have done anything for himself – cannot be equal to and a rival to one who only speaks truth and only does what is praiseworthy.



﴿وَلِلّٰهِ عِيْبُ الْسَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ مِنْ أَسَاطِعَةٍ إِلَّا كَمْحُجُ الْبَصَرِ أَوْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ﴾
إِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿W﴾ (سورة النحل: ٧٧)

16:77. To Allah belongs all that is unseen in the heavens and on earth, and the coming of the Hour will be but as the blinking of an eye or even swifter, for Allah has power over all things.

That is, Allah (﴿الله﴾) is the only One Who has knowledge of the unseen in the heavens and on earth. No one knows what is hidden

and secret except He. That includes knowledge of the Hour; no one knows when it will come except Allah, but when it comes it will be (but as the blinking of an eye or even swifter) than that, then the people will rise from their graves on the Day of Resurrection, and those who want respite will have missed their opportunity. (for Allah has power over all things). As He is possessed of all-encompassing power, it is nothing strange that He will raise the dead.



وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُم مِّنْ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَقْلِمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ
وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْقَادَ لَعَلَّكُمْ شَكُورُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ (سورة النحل: ٧٨)

- 16:78. Allah brought you forth from your mothers' wombs knowing nothing, and He gave you hearing, sight and intellect, so that you may give thanks.

That is, He is the only One Who bestows these blessings, as He (brought you forth from your mothers' wombs knowing nothing) and unable to do anything, then He (gave you hearing, sight and intellect). These three faculties are singled out because of their significance and importance, for they are the key to all knowledge, as no one can acquire knowledge except through one of these three faculties. Otherwise with regard to all other faculties and physical strengths, both visible and hidden, it is He Who has also bestowed them and caused them to develop in them, stage by stage, until each one reaches its optimum level. All of that is so that they may give thanks to Allah by using what He has given them of these physical faculties in obedience to Him. Whoever uses them for other purposes, that will be evidence against him and he will have responded to the blessing in the worst manner.



﴿أَلَّا يَرَوْا إِلَى الظَّيْرِ مُسْخَرَتٍ فِي جَوَّ السَّكَمَاءِ مَا يُعْسِكُهُنَّ إِلَّا اللَّهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلَّغْوِ لَوْمَوْنَ﴾ (٧٩) (سورة النحل: ٧٩)

16:79. Do they not see the birds, enabled to fly in mid-air? None holds them aloft except Allah. Surely in that there are signs for people who believe.

That is, because they are the ones who may benefit from the signs of Allah and reflect upon that which has been made a sign pointing to Him. As for others, when they look, it is in a heedless and careless manner. The sign in the birds is that Allah has created them in such a way that they can fly, then He caused this gentle air to be of service for them, so that they may fly in it, then He instilled in them this ability to move, through which they are able to do that. This is indicative of His perfect wisdom, vast knowledge, divine care for all His creatures and perfect power. Blessed be Allah, the Lord of the worlds.



﴿وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنْ يُوتِكُمْ سَكَنًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنْ جُلُودِ الْأَنْعَمِ بُيوْتًا تَسْتَخِفُوهُنَّا يَوْمَ ظَعْنَكُمْ وَيَوْمَ إِقَامَتُكُمْ وَمِنْ أَصْوَافَهُنَّا وَأَوْبَارِهَا وَأَشْعَارِهَا أَنْثَا وَمَنْتَعًا إِلَى حِينٍ﴾ (٨٠) وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مَا تَحْلُقُ طَذَلًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنْ الْجِبَالِ أَكْنَانًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم سَرِيلًا تَقِيمُكُمُ الْحَرَّ وَسَرِيلًا تَقِيمُكُمْ بَأْسَكُمْ كَذَلِكَ يُتَمَّ نِعْمَةُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ شَلَمُونَ﴾ (٨١) فَإِنْ تَوْلُوا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلْغُ الْمُبِينُ﴾ (٨٢) يَعْرِفُونَ نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنْكِرُونَهَا وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ أَنْكَافِرُونَ﴾ (٨٣-٨٠) (سورة النحل: ٨٣-٨٠)

- 16:80. Allah has made your houses places of rest and repose for you, and He has given you dwellings made from the skins of livestock, which you find light to handle when you travel and when you halt. And from their wool, fur and hair [He has given you] furnishings and other goods [to serve you] for a time.
- 16:81. Allah has made for you, out of what He has created, that which gives you shade. He has made for you in the mountains places of shelter, and He has given you garments to protect you from heat, and garments to protect you in battle. Thus does He perfect His favours to you, so that you may submit to Him.
- 16:82. But if they turn away, your duty is only to convey the message in the clearest way.
- 16:83. They recognise the blessing of Allah, yet they deny it, and most of them are ungrateful.

Here Allah (ﷻ) reminds His slaves of His blessings and expects them to give thanks and acknowledge them.

﴿Allah has made your houses places of rest and repose for you﴾ that is, houses, palaces and the like, to protect you from heat and cold, and to conceal you and your children and your belongings. Inside them you make rooms for different uses, to serve your interests, and in them you keep your wealth and your family, and there are other visible benefits.

﴿and He has given you dwellings made from the skins of livestock﴾ either from the skin itself or from what grows on it, such as wool or hair

﴿which you find light to handle when you travel and when you halt﴾ that is, they are easy to carry when you travel and halt in places where you do not intend to settle, and they protect you from heat, cold and rain, and they protect your goods and luggage from rain.

﴿And from their wool, fur and hair﴾ that come from livestock

﴿[He has given you] furnishings﴾ this includes everything that is made from them, such as vessels, furnishings, clothing, blankets, and so on.

﴿and other goods [to serve you] for a time﴾ that is, you enjoy these things and benefit from them in this world. These are among the things that Allah has caused his slaves to make and produce.

﴿Allah has made for you, out of what He has created﴾ that is, things that you had no part in making

﴿shade﴾ this refers to the shade of trees, mountains, hills and so on
﴿He has made for you in the mountains places of shelter﴾ that is, caves in which you are protected from heat, hail, rain and enemies.

﴿and He has given you garments to protect you from heat﴾. Allah did not mention cold, because it was mentioned earlier in this chapter, at the beginning where He mentions basic blessings, which are things that are essential to man; at the end of the chapter He mentions extra blessings. Protection against the cold is a basic blessing, which is a necessity, and it was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, where Allah says: ﴿And He created the livestock animals for you; they are a source of warm clothing [and blankets] and other benefits﴾ (16: 5).

﴿and garments to protect you in battle﴾ that is, garments that protect you at times of fighting and war. This refers to items such as plate armour, coats of mail and the like. Thus He perfects His favours to you by bestowing upon you innumerable blessings,

﴿so that﴾, when you remember the blessings of Allah and you see these blessings inundating you from all directions

﴿you may submit to Him﴾ that is, to His greatness, and comply with His commands and use His blessings to obey the One Who bestowed them and granted them. Abundance of blessings is one of the causes that lead people to show more gratitude and praise Allah (ع) for them, but the wrongdoers insist on stubbornly rebelling.

Hence Allah says concerning them: ﴿But if they turn away﴾ from Allah and from obedience to Him, after they have been reminded of His blessings and signs

﴿your duty is only to convey the message in the clearest way﴾ that is, it is not your role to guide them; rather you are only expected to

exhort, remind, warn and alarm. Once you have done what is required of you, their reckoning is up to Allah, for they can see His blessings and recognise His favours, but they deny that and show ingratitude. ﴿and most of them are ungrateful﴾ and there is nothing good in them; they do not benefit from the succession of signs because of their corrupt thinking and bad intentions, but they will see how Allah requites every stubborn tyrant who is ungrateful for His blessings and who rebels against Allah and His Messengers.



﴿وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا ثُمَّ لَا يُؤْذَنُ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْبَطُونَ ﴾
 ﴿وَإِذَا رَأَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا الْعَذَابَ فَلَا يُحَقِّفُ عَنْهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنَظَّرُونَ ﴾٤٨
 رَءَاءُ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا شَرَكَاءَ هُنَّ قَالُوا رَبِّنَا هَذُلَّاءُ شَرَكَاءُنَا الَّذِينَ كَانُوا نَدْعُوا
 مِنْ دُونِنَا فَأَلْقَوْا إِلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلَ إِنَّكُمْ لَكَذِبُورُونَ ﴾٤٩
 ﴿وَالْقَوْلُ إِلَى اللَّهِ يَوْمَئِذٍ
 السَّلَامُ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴾٤٧-٤٨ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٤٧-٤٨)

- 16:84. On the day when We raise up a witness from every nation, no excuse will be accepted from those who disbelieved, nor will they be allowed to make amends.
- 16:85. When the wrongdoers see the punishment, it will not be alleviated, nor will they be given any respite.
- 16:86. When those who ascribed partners to Allah see their [so-called] ‘partners’, they will say: Our Lord, these are our [so-called] ‘partners’ whom we used to call upon besides You. But they will respond: You are surely lying.
- 16:87. On that day they will offer total submission to Allah, and the [false gods] of their own invention will be lost from them.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about those who disbelieve in the Day of Resurrection: no excuse will be accepted from them and the

punishment will not be alleviated for them; their so-called partners will disavow them and they will affirm their own disbelief and fabrication of lies against Allah.

﴿On the day when We raise up a witness from every nation﴾ who will testify against it with regard to its deeds and its response to the one who called them to true guidance. Those witnesses whom Allah will raise up will be the most sincere and most just of witnesses, namely the Messengers; once they have given their testimonies, judgement will be passed and ﴿no excuse will be accepted from those who disbelieved﴾ because any excuse they offer, after it becomes certain that what they followed was false, will be an invalid excuse that will not benefit them in the slightest. If they also ask to be sent back to this world so that they may put things right, they will receive no response and that excuse will not be accepted; rather the severe punishment will be hastened for them, and it will not be alleviated for them, and they will be given no respite from the time they see it. There will be no reckoning for them, because they will have no good deeds to their credit; rather their bad deeds will be checked and counted, and they will be shown to them, and they will be made to confess to them and will be exposed to shame.

﴿When those who ascribed partners to Allah see their [so-called] ‘partners’﴾ on the Day of Resurrection, and they realise that they were false and will not be able to deny it

﴿they will say: Our Lord, these are our [so-called] ‘partners’ whom we used to call upon besides You﴾; they have no power to benefit us or intercede for us. They themselves will admit the falseness of those so-called partners, and will disbelieve in them, and there will appear enmity and hostility between them and the so-called partners.

﴿But they will respond﴾ that is, the so-called partners will answer back and say to them: ﴿You are surely lying﴾ because you regarded us as partners to Allah, and you worshipped us besides Him, but we did not instruct you to do that and we did not claim that we deserved to be regarded as divine, so the blame is on you.

At that point they will surrender to Allah and submit to His ruling, and they will realise that they are deserving of punishment.

﴿وَلَمَّا نَهَىٰهُمْ عَنِ الْمُحَاجَةِ فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهُمْ أَعْدَابًا مِّنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمِمَّا كَانُوا
يَفْسِدُونَ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٨٨)

- 16:88. For those who disbelieve and bar others from the path of Allah, We will add punishment to their punishment because they used to spread mischief.

That is, they spread mischief when they themselves disbelieved, rejected the revelations of Allah, fought His Messengers, barred people from the path of Allah, and became promoters of misguidance. Thus they deserve a multiple punishment, just as they committed multiple offences and spread mischief on Allah's earth.

﴿وَلَيَوْمٍ نَّبْعَثُ فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ شَهِيدًا عَلَىٰ
هَؤُلَاءِ وَرَزَّنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تَبَيَّنَ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ
لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٨٩)

- 16:89. On the day when We raise up from every nation, a witness against them from amongst themselves, We will bring you [O Muhammad] as a witness against these [your people]. And We

have sent down to you the Book, explaining all things, and as guidance, mercy and glad tidings for the Muslims.

Having mentioned above that He will raise up a witness from every nation (16: 84), Allah mentions the same thing here, and singles out this noble Messenger (Muhammad [ﷺ]).

﴿We will bring you [O Muhammad] as a witness against these [your people]﴾ that is, to testify concerning your Ummah, good and bad. This is by the perfect justice of Allah (ﷻ): every Messenger will testify concerning his nation, because he is more aware than others of the deeds of his nation, and he will be more just and too compassionate to testify against them except as they deserve.

This is like the verses in which Allah says:

﴿Thus We have made of you an Ummah [nation, community] justly balanced, that you might be witnesses over humankind, and the Messenger might be a witness over you...﴾ (*al-Baqarah* 2: 143)

– and:

﴿How will it be when We bring a witness from every nation and bring you [O Muhammad] as a witness against them? On that day, those who disbelieved and disobeyed the Messenger will wish that the earth could be levelled over them...﴾ (*an-Nisâ'* 4: 41-42)

﴿And We have sent down to you the Book, explaining all things﴾, both the fundamental and minor issues of religion, rulings in this world and the hereafter, and everything that people need to know. It explains fully, in clear words, to the extent that Allah (ﷻ) repeats in it the most important matters that one needs to be aware of at all times. The Qur'an repeats these ideas and discusses them in different words, and with different approaches and proofs, so that they become well-established in people's hearts and bear good fruit, according to how firmly established they are in the heart. Allah (ﷻ) uses clear, short and comprehensive phrases that include many meanings. Consider,

for example, the verse that follows this one, and what it contains of innumerable commands and prohibitions.

As this Qur'an explains all things, it constitutes the proof of Allah against all people. Therefore it has left no excuse for the wrongdoers, and the Muslims benefitted from it, as it became a source of guidance for them, by which they are guided with regard to all their affairs, both religious and worldly. It is also a mercy for them, through which they attain all good in this world and the hereafter. Guidance is that by means of which they attain beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds, and mercy is what results from that of reward in this world and the hereafter, such as spiritual well-being, a sense of reassurance, perfection of reasoning which cannot be perfected unless it is based on the meanings of the Qur'an, which are the most sublime meanings, good deeds, good manners, abundant provision, victory over enemies in word and deed, and attaining the pleasure of Allah (ﷻ) and His paradise, in which are eternal blessings such as no one knows except the Most Merciful Lord.



﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَإِلَيْهِ الْخَسِينُ وَلَا يَنْهَا يَ دِي الْقُرْبَةَ وَيَنْهَا عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٩٠)

(النحل: ٩٠)

- 16:90. Verily Allah enjoins justice, kindness and giving kinsfolk [their due], and He forbids obscenity, wickedness and wrongdoing. He admonishes you, so that you may pay heed.

The justice that Allah enjoins includes justice with regard to His dues and those of His slaves. Justice in this sense involves paying those dues in full, by doing what Allah has ordained of financial and physical duties, and those which are a combination of both, whether

that duty is to Him or to other people, as well as treating other people on the basis of complete justice. So anyone who is in a position of authority should fulfil his duties towards those who are under his authority. This applies equally to the ruler, members of the judiciary, deputies of the ruler and deputies of the judiciary. Justice is what Allah has enjoined upon them in His Book and on the lips of His Messenger (ﷺ), and He has commanded them to adhere to it. Justice in interactions includes the area of buying and selling, as well as all other business transactions; that requires fulfilling all obligations and commitments, not falling short with regard to dues, not cheating, deceiving or wrongdoing others.

Justice is obligatory and kindness is a virtue that is encouraged, such as benefitting people by means of wealth, physical actions, knowledge and other ways of benefitting them. That even includes kindness to animals, including those whose flesh it is permissible to eat and others.

Allah singles out giving kinsfolk their due – even though this is included in the general meaning – so as to emphasise the importance of their rights and encourage fulfilment thereof, because it is a must to uphold ties with them and show kindness towards them. This includes all relatives, both close and distant; the more closely related they are, the more deserving they are of kindness.

﴿and He forbids obscenity﴾ – this refers to every major sin that is regarded as abhorrent according to religious teachings and sound human nature, such as ascribing partners to Allah, unlawful killing, fornication and adultery, stealing, self-admiration, arrogance, looking down on people, and other evil deeds.

Wickedness includes all kinds of sins that have to do with the rights of Allah (ﷻ).

Wrongdoing includes all kinds of transgression against people, whether that has to do with their lives, their wealth or their honour.

This verse is concise and includes all that is enjoined and prohibited; there is nothing that is not included. This is a basic principle to which all minor issues are connected. Anything that involves justice, kindness or giving kinsfolk their due comes under the heading of that which Allah has enjoined; anything that involves obscenity, wickedness or wrongdoing comes under the heading of that which Allah has forbidden. Thus we see the goodness and beauty of that which Allah has enjoined, and the evil and ugliness of that which He has prohibited. Everything that people say or do is to be measured by this standard. Blessed be the One Who put in His words guidance, healing, light and the criterion to distinguish between good and evil in all things.

Hence He says:

﴿He admonishes you﴾ by what He explains to you in His Book, by enjoining on you that which is in your best interests and prohibiting to you that which is detrimental to your interests.

﴿so that you may pay heed﴾ to what He exhorts, and thus understand it, for if you pay heed to it and understand it, you will act in accordance with it, and thus you will attain blessing after which there is no misery.

Having enjoined what is obligatory according to the basic principles of Islamic teaching, Allah then enjoins fulfilling whatever a person commits himself to (of additional obligations):



﴿وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدَ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْقُضُوا الْأَيْمَنَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴾٩١﴿ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّتِي نَقَضَتْ غَزَلَهَا مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ أَنْكَثَنَا نَتَخِذُونَ أَيْمَانَكُمْ دَخْلًا يَبْتَسِمُ كُلُّهُ هِيَ أَرْبَى مِنْ أُمَّةٍ إِنَّمَا يُلْكُمُ اللَّهُ بِهِ وَلَيَبْتَغَنَ لَكُلُّ يَوْمٍ الْقِيمَةَ مَا كُلُّمُ فِيهِ تَغْلِيفُونَ ﴾٩٢﴾ (سورة النحل: ٩١-٩٢)

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- 16:91. Fulfil the covenant of Allah¹⁴ when you have entered into it, and do not break your oaths after you have confirmed them and have made Allah your surety, for verily Allah knows all that you do.
- 16:92. Do not be like the woman who unravels the yarn she has firmly spun, breaking it into strands, by making your oaths a means of deceiving one another, merely because one party may be more numerous than another.¹⁵ Allah is only testing you by means of this, and on the Day of Resurrection He will surely make clear to you the matters concerning which you differed.
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This includes everything that a person promises to his Lord, such as acts of worship and any vows he makes or oaths he swears, if fulfilling them is an act of righteousness. It also includes any covenants between himself and someone else, such as a contract between two parties to a deal, or a promise that a person may make to someone else, committing himself to it. In all such cases he is obliged to fulfil it if he is able to do so. Hence Allah forbade breaking such promises, as He says: ﴿and do not break your oaths after you have confirmed them and have made Allah your surety﴾ by mentioning His name in your pledge. So it is not permissible for you not to comply with that for which you have made Allah your surety, for that would be a failure to venerate Allah and would be disrespectful towards Him, after the other party accepted the oath from you and he accepted this confirmation when you made Allah your surety. Just as the other party trusted you and thought well of you, you should fulfil what you said you would do and assured him of.

¹⁴ Covenant of Allah: this refers to the pledge (*bay'ah*) made when entering Islam.

¹⁵ What is meant is: do not let the small numbers of the Muslims and the greater numbers of the polytheists deceive you into breaking the covenant or pledge (*bay'ah*) you made when you entered Islam.

﴿for verily Allah knows all that you do﴾ and He will requite each person for his deeds, according to his intention and aim.

﴿Do not be﴾, by breaking your covenants, like the worst example that is most indicative of the foolishness of the one who breaks his covenant, which is the likeness of ﴿the woman﴾ who spins a strong thread, then when it has become strong as expected, she undoes it and breaks it into ﴿strands﴾, because she got tired of spinning it, then when she undid it she got tired again, so she did not gain anything except frustration, tiredness, foolishness and lack of reasoning. This is like the one who breaks the covenant he made: he is a wrongdoer and a fool who is lacking in religious commitment and dignity.

﴿by making your oaths a means of deceiving one another, merely because one party may be more numerous than another﴾ that is, it is not appropriate in that case for you to make an oath and enter into a covenant, then look for an opportunity to break it, so the one who gives the covenant is inferior in terms of power and will fulfil it because he has no other choice, not because he respects the covenant and oath but because of his weakness. However, if he is in a position of strength and he sees some worldly benefit in breaking his oath, then he will break it and not care about the covenant of Allah and the oath he made in His name.

All of that is going along with whims and desires, and giving precedence to them over what Allah expects of you and the dictates of human dignity and sound character, just because one party may be more numerous and stronger than another.

This is a trial from Allah by means of which He tests you, as He creates circumstances with which to test people and demonstrate who is sincere and faithful to his word, and who is immoral and evil.

﴿and on the Day of Resurrection He will surely make clear to you the matters concerning which you differed﴾ and He will requite each person according to his deeds, and will expose the betrayer to shame.



﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَنِجَادَةً وَلَكِنْ يُضْلِلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَلَتُشَانَ عَمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾ (٩٣: سورة النحل)

- 16:93. If Allah had so willed, He would have made you a single community, but Allah leaves astray whomever He wills and guides whomever He wills, and you will surely be questioned about what you used to do.

﴿If Allah had so willed﴾ He would have caused all people to be united in following guidance, and He would have made them **﴿a single community﴾**. But He is the only One Who has the power to guide people or leave them to stray. His guiding or leaving astray are among His actions that are connected to His knowledge and wisdom. He bestows guidance upon whoever deserves it, by His grace, and he withholds it from whoever does not deserve it, by His justice. **﴿and you will surely be questioned about what you used to do﴾** of good or evil, then He will requite you for it in the most perfect and just manner.



﴿وَلَا تَنْسِدُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ دَخْلًا بَيْنَكُمْ فَنَزَلَ قَدْمًا بَعْدَ ثُبُوتِهَا وَنَذَرُوا أَسْوَاءَ يَمَانَ صَدَدُوكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَكُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴾ (٩٤: سورة النحل)

- 16:94. Do not make your oaths a means of deceiving one another, lest any foot should slip after being firmly planted and you have to taste the evil [consequences] of having barred people from the path of Allah, and yours will be a grievous punishment.

﴿Do not make your oaths﴾ and your covenants and pledges on the basis of your whims and desires, fulfilling them or breaking them

as you wish, for if you do that, your feet will slip after having been firmly planted on the straight path, and you will (have to taste the evil [consequences]) that is, the punishment that will cause you grief and distress

(of having barred people from the path of Allah) as you went astray and caused others to go astray

(and yours will be a grievous punishment) that will be multiplied.



﴿ وَلَا تَشْرُوْ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا إِنَّمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ ٩٥ مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٌ وَلَنْجَزِينَ الَّذِينَ صَدَرُوا أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴾ ٩٦ مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْجِيَنَّهُ حَيَّةً طَيْبَةً وَلَنُجْزِيَنَّهُ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴾ ٩٧﴾

(سورة التحليل: ٩٤-٩٧)

- 16:95. Do not sell the covenant of Allah for a small price. Surely, that which is with Allah is better for you, if only you knew.
- 16:96. Whatever you have will [inevitably] come to an end, but that which is with Allah is everlasting. And We will surely grant those who are patient their reward according to the best of their deeds.
- 16:97. Whoever does righteous deeds, male or female, and is a believer, We will surely grant him a good life, and We will surely grant them their reward according to the best of their deeds.

Here Allah (ﷻ) warns His slaves against breaking covenants and oaths for the sake of worthless worldly matters.

(Do not sell the covenant of Allah for a small price) that you gain by breaking the covenant and not fulfilling it.

﴿Surely, that which is with Allah﴾ of reward in this world and the hereafter for the one who gives precedence to pleasing Him and fulfils the promise he made to Allah
﴿is better for you﴾ than worthless worldly gain
﴿if only you knew﴾.

So give precedence to that which will abide over that which will cease to be, for whatever you have, even if you have a great deal, ﴿will [inevitably] come to an end﴾ and will perish
﴿but that which is with Allah is everlasting﴾ as He is, so it will never cease to be or perish. Therefore he is not wise who gives precedence to that which is transient and insignificant over that which will abide and is precious. This is like the verses in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿But you [O humankind] prefer the life of this world even though the hereafter is better and more lasting.﴾ (*al-A'la 87: 16-17*)

– and:

﴿...that which is with Allah is best for the righteous.﴾ (*Al 'Imrān 3: 198*)

This offers encouragement to be uninterested in worldly matters, especially that lack of interest which one must develop; this means showing no interest in that which is harmful and distracts one from that which Allah has enjoined and giving it precedence over the rights of Allah. This kind of disinterest in worldly matters is obligatory.

What helps a person to lose interest in worldly matters is comparing in his mind the pleasures and desires of this world with the good things of the hereafter, for he will find such differences that he will be prompted to give precedence to that which is more sublime. The kind of disinterest in worldly matters that is regarded as praiseworthy does not mean devoting all one's time to acts of worship that are limited to rituals such as prayer, fasting, dhikr and so on; rather a person is not truly disinterested in worldly matters until he does whatever he is

able to do of acts both visible and hidden that are enjoined in Islamic teaching and whatever he is able to do of calling people to Allah and to His religion in word and deed. True lack of interest in worldly matters is lack of interest in anything that does not bring benefit in religious or worldly terms, and desiring and striving for everything that is of benefit.

﴿And We will surely grant those who are patient﴾ in obeying Allah and in refraining from disobedience to Him, and who wean themselves from worldly desires that are detrimental to their religious commitment

﴿their reward according to the best of their deeds﴾. Each good deed brings a tenfold reward, up to seven hundredfold, and many times more than that, for Allah will not cause the reward of those who do good to be lost. Hence He mentions the reward of those who do good in this world and the hereafter, as He says:

﴿Whoever does righteous deeds, male or female, and is a believer﴾ therefore faith is a condition of the validity and acceptance of righteous deeds. In fact a deed cannot be called righteous unless it is done on the basis of faith, and the faith which inspires one to do good deeds is certain faith that leads to physical actions, both obligatory and recommended. Whoever combines faith and righteous deeds, ﴿We will surely grant him a good life﴾ by instilling reassurance and tranquillity in his heart, so that he will not pay attention to anything that could cause him any disturbance, and Allah will grant him provision that is lawful and good from where he does not expect.

﴿and We will surely grant them﴾ in the hereafter ﴿their reward according to the best of their deeds﴾, a reward of all types of pleasures such as no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever crossed the mind of man. So Allah will give him good in this world and good in the hereafter.



﴿فَإِذَا قرأتَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَوْدِدْ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ﴾ إِنَّهُ لَنَسَ اللَّهُ سُلْطَنٌ عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ مَاءْمَنُوا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴾ إِنَّمَا سُلْطَنُهُ عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ يَتَوَلَّنَهُ وَالظَّالِمُ هُمُ الْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٩٨-١٠٠)

- 16:98. When you recite the Qur'an, seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Shaytân.
- 16:99. Verily he has no power over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord,
- 16:100. He has power only over those who take him as an ally and, under his influence, ascribe partners to Allah.

That is, when you want to recite the Book of Allah, which is the noblest and most sublime of books, in which there is a prescription for spiritual well-being and a great deal of knowledge, then the Shaytân shows a great deal of interest (in harming a person) when he starts to do righteous deeds, and he tries to divert him from the purpose and goal for which he does those deeds. The way to keep oneself safe from his evil is to turn to Allah and seek refuge in Him from his evil. So the reciter should say: *A'oodhu billâhi min ash-Shaytân ir-rajeem* (I seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Shaytân), pondering the meaning thereof and relying in his heart upon Allah to divert the Shaytân from him, striving hard to resist his insinuating whispers and bad thoughts, and seeking the strongest means of warding him off, which is resorting to faith and depending on Allah.

For the Shaytân (has no power) or control (over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord) alone, with no partner or associate. Allah wards off from the believers who put their trust in Him the evil of the Shaytân, so he has no power or control over them.

Rather he (has power) and control (only over those who take him as an ally) that is, they take him as an ally by turning away from

Allah and starting to obey the Shaytān and joining his party. Therefore they are the ones who make him their ally, then he goads them into committing sin and leads them to the fire.



وَإِذَا بَدَّلَنَا آيَةً مَكَانَهُ أَيْمَهُ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَبْرُزُ فَالْأُولَئِكَ إِنَّمَا
أَنْتَ مُفْتَرٌ بَلْ أَكْثُرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ قُلْ نَزَّلَهُ رُوحُ الْقَدِيسٍ مِنْ رَبِّكَ بِالْحَقِيقَةِ
لِتُبَيَّنَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَهُدَىٰ وَلِتُبَشِّرَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٠٣﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٠٢-١٠٣)

- 16:101. When We replace one verse with another¹⁶ – and Allah knows best what He reveals – they say: You are just making it up! But most of them have no knowledge.
- 16:102. Say: The Pure Spirit has brought it [the Qur'an] down from your Lord in truth, to make firm those who believe, and as guidance and glad tidings for the Muslims.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that those who disbelieve in this Qur'an try to seek out what they think is an argument to support their claim that the Qur'an is fabricated, which is the idea that Allah (ﷻ) is the Most Wise Who issues rulings and replaces one ruling with another, by His wisdom and mercy. When they saw that, they criticised the Messenger (ﷺ) and what he brought, and said: «You are just making it up!» Allah (ﷻ) said: «But most of them have no knowledge», so they are ignorant and have no knowledge of their Lord or of His laws.

It is well known that criticism from an ignorant person that is not based on knowledge carries no weight, for criticism of a thing stems from knowledge of it and what it may contain that dictates praise or criticism.

¹⁶ This refers to the abrogation of one verse of the Qur'an by another.

Hence Allah mentioned His wisdom in doing that, as He said:
﴿Say: The Pure Spirit﴾ namely Jibreel (ﷺ), the angelic messenger who is to be declared above any fault, betrayal or ill
﴿has brought it [the Qur'an] down from your Lord in truth﴾ that is, he has brought it down in truth, and it contains truth in its stories, commands and prohibitions. So there is no way that anyone can criticise it on a sound basis, because once it is known that it is truth, it is known that all that contradicts it is false.

﴿to make firm those who believe﴾ when its verses came down in succession, time after time, and the truth continued to reach their hearts little by little, until their faith became firmer than solid mountains. Moreover, they know that it is true, and when Allah prescribes a ruling, then abrogates it, they know that He has replaced it with something like it or something that is better for them than it, and when He abrogates something, He abrogates it in accordance with divine wisdom and in accordance with reason.

﴿and as guidance and glad tidings for the Muslims﴾ that is, it guides them to the reality of things, distinguishing truth from falsehood, guidance from misguidance, and it gives them glad tidings of a goodly reward in which they will abide forever. The fact that it was revealed piecemeal is more effective in bringing guidance and glad tidings, and has a greater impact than if it were to be revealed all at once, because if it came all at once people would not be able to focus on all of it. Rather Allah would send down a ruling and glad tidings, then when they had understood it, reflected upon it, come to know its meaning and fully grasped it, He would reveal more like it, and so on.

Hence the Companions (ﷺ) reached the optimum level thereby, and their attitudes and manners changed; they attained manners, habits and deeds that surpassed the first and the last. Hence it is more appropriate and more expected that those who come after them should be shaped by the knowledge contained in it, adopt the manners promoted in it, seek its light in the depths of darkness that results from

wrongdoing and ignorance, and make it their guide in all their affairs. Thus their affairs, both spiritual and worldly, will be put in order.



﴿وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يَعْلَمُهُ بَشَرٌ لَكَاتُ الَّذِي يُتَحَدِّثُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَغْبَحَىٰ وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ شَيْئٌ ﴾ هـ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِعِيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَا يَهِدِّهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴾ هـ إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِي الْكَذَبُ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِعِيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأُزْنِيَّكُمْ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ ﴾ هـ (سورة التحليل: ١٠٥-١٠٣)

- 16:103. We know full well that they say: It is but a man who teaches him. But the one to whom they point speaks a foreign tongue, whereas this is eloquent Arabic speech.
- 16:104. As for those who do not believe in the signs of Allah, Allah will not guide them, and theirs will be a painful punishment.
- 16:105. It is those who do not believe in Allah's signs who fabricate falsehood; it is they who are the liars.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about what the polytheists who disbelieved in His Messenger (ﷺ) said:

﴿they say: It is but a man who teaches him﴾ this Book that he has brought. The man they were referring to was one who spoke a foreign tongue, ﴿whereas this﴾ namely the Qur'an, ﴿is eloquent Arabic speech﴾. Could what they said possibly be true? But the liar tells lies and does not think about what his lies will lead to, so what he says is filled with such utter contradictions and flaws that one would reject it as soon as one thinks about it.

﴿As for those who do not believe in the signs of Allah﴾ that clearly point to the manifest truth, they reject it and do not accept it
 ﴿Allah will not guide them﴾ when guidance comes to them, so they will reject it and they are punished by being deprived of it and by being forsaken by Allah

﴿and﴾ in the hereafter, ﴿theirs will be a painful punishment﴾.

﴿It is those who do not believe in Allah's signs﴾ such as those who harbour resentment against His Messenger (ﷺ) after clear proof has come to them

﴿who fabricate falsehood﴾ that is, fabrications and lies come from them

﴿it is they who are the liars﴾ that is, they are the real liars, and this description is more appropriate for them than for anyone else. As for Muhammad (ﷺ), who believes in the signs of Allah and humbles himself before his Lord, it is impossible for him to tell lies about Allah and attribute to Him words that He did not say. His enemies accused him of lying, but what they attributed to him is more fitting for them, so Allah exposed them and highlighted their shameful deeds; to Him be praise.



﴿مَن كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أَكْسَرَهُ وَقْلَهُ، مُظْمَنٌ بِالْأَيْمَنِ وَلِكِنْ مَنْ شَرَحَ بِالْكُفُرِ صَدَرَ فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ أَسْجَحُوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى الْآخِرَةِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي النَّاسَ الْكَافِرِينَ ۝ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَسَعَاهُمْ وَبَصَرُهُمْ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُنَفِّلُونَ ۝ لَا جُرْمَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ هُمُ الْخَسِرُونَ ۝﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٠٦-١٠٩)

16:106. Whoever disbelieves in Allah after having believed – except one who is compelled while his heart remains steadfast in faith – but for those who open their hearts to disbelief, upon them will be the wrath of Allah, and theirs will be a grievous punishment.

16:107. That is because they prefer the life of this world to the hereafter, and because Allah does not guide the disbelieving people.

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- 16:108. These are the ones whose hearts, hearing and sight Allah has sealed up; it is they who are heedless.
- 16:109. Without a doubt, in the hereafter, it is they who will be the greatest losers.
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Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the abhorrent state of those who disbelieve in Allah after having believed, and thus become blind after having seen, and go back to misguidance after having been guided, opening their hearts to disbelief, happy and content with it: they incur great wrath from the Most Merciful Lord Whose wrath, once it is incurred, cannot be resisted and all creatures will be angry with those who incur it.

﴿and theirs will be a grievous punishment﴾ that is, it will be of the utmost severity, in addition to the fact that it will be eternal and everlasting.

﴿That is because they prefer the life of this world to the hereafter﴾ as they have turned their backs on the hereafter, seeking and pursuing trivial worldly gain, and showing no interest in the good of the hereafter. When they chose disbelief over faith, Allah deprived them of guidance, so He did not guide them, because disbelief had become an established part of their character. Therefore He placed a seal on their hearts so that no goodness would enter them, and He placed seals on their hearing and sight, so that nothing beneficial could reach their hearts thereby. Heedlessness enveloped them and they met with failure at every turn; they were deprived of the mercy of Allah which encompasses all things, and that is because it had come to them but they rejected it, and it was presented to them but they did not accept it.

﴿Without a doubt, in the hereafter, it is they who will be the greatest losers﴾ for they will be the ones who lose their own souls, their wealth and their families on the Day of Resurrection; they will miss out on eternal bliss and incur a painful punishment.

This does not apply to those who are forced and compelled to disbelieve when their hearts remain steadfast in faith and they want to believe, for there is no blame and no sin on them. In the case of one who is compelled and forced to do so, it is permissible for him to speak words of disbelief.

This indicates that the words of one who is compelled to issue a divorce, manumit a slave, enter into a transaction of sale or purchase and so on, does not count, and no shar'i rulings can be based on that, because if there is no punishment for uttering the word of disbelief in the case of compulsion, it is more appropriate to apply that ruling to other, less serious issues.



﴿ ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا فِتَنُوا ثُمَّ جَنَحُوا وَصَبَرُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنْ بَعْدِهَا لِغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴾ ١١٠ ﴿ يَوْمَ تَأْنِي كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بُحْجَدُلُ عَنْ نَقِيسِهَا وَتُؤْتَ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَا عَمِلَتْ وَهُنْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴾ ١١١ ﴾ سورة النحل: ١١٠-١١١ ﴾

(النحل: ١١٠-١١١)

- 16:110. But verily your Lord – to those who migrated after persecution, then strove [in jihad] in Allah's cause and patiently persevered – verily your Lord, after all that, will be Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful,
- 16:111. on the day when each soul will come, pleading for itself, and each soul will be paid in full for what it has earned, and no one will be wronged.

That is, verily your Lord Who cares for His sincere slaves by showing kindness to them and blessing them, is also Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful to those who migrated in His cause, leaving behind their homes and wealth, seeking the pleasure of Allah, and were

persecuted to make them return to disbelief, but they persisted in their faith and maintained their certain belief, then strove against the enemies of Allah, striving to bring them into the religion of Allah, in word and deed, and they patiently persevered in these acts of worship which are difficult for most people.

These are the greatest means by which the highest reward and greatest gift may be attained, namely: Allah's forgiveness of sins, both minor and major, which also implies deliverance from every disliked thing; and His vast mercy, by means of which they will attain well-being, and their religious and worldly affairs will be put in order. They will have mercy from Allah on the Day of Resurrection, when «each soul will come, pleading for itself», each one saying: Myself myself – not caring for anyone else. On that day, each person will be desperate for the smallest atom of good.

«and each soul will be paid in full for what it has earned», of good or evil

«and no one will be wronged», so nothing will be added to their bad deeds and nothing will be detracted from their good deeds.

«This day, no soul will be wronged in the least, and you will not be requited for anything other than what you used to do.» (Yâ Seen 36: 54)



وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا قَرْيَةً كَانَتْ أَمْمَةً مُطْهَيَّةً يَأْتِيهَا رِزْقُهَا رَغْدَانٌ كُلُّ
مَكَانٍ فَكَفَرُتْ بِإِنْعَمْ اللَّهِ فَأَذَاقَهَا اللَّهُ لِيَسَ الْجُوعَ وَالْحَرُوفَ بِمَا كَانُوا
يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَكَذَبُوهُ فَأَخْذَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَهُمْ
ظَلَمُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾ (سورة النحل: ١١٢-١١٣)

16:112. Allah presents an example: that of a city which was safe and peaceful, with its provision coming to it in abundance from all directions. Yet it was ungrateful for the blessings of Allah, so

Allah caused it to taste extreme hunger and fear, because of what they used to do.

- 16:113. There came to them a Messenger from among themselves, but they rejected him, so the punishment overtook them in the midst of their evildoing.

This city is Makkah, which is safe and peaceful; and no one therein is to be disturbed. The people of the jahiliyah venerated it to such an extent that one of them might find the murderer of his father and his brother there, but he would not disturb him despite the intense tribal feelings that existed among them and the Arab sense of pride. Thus it attained complete security in a way that was never achieved by any other city. It was also granted abundant provision. Although it was a land in which there were no cornfields and no trees, Allah sent to it provision that came to it from everywhere. Then a Messenger from among them came to them, whose honesty and sincerity they knew well, and he called them to the most perfect of attitudes and manners, and forbade to them all evil things. But they rejected him and were ungrateful for the blessing that Allah had bestowed upon them, so Allah caused them to taste the opposite of what they had been enjoying; He caused them to experience extreme hunger, which is the opposite of abundance, and fear which is the opposite of security. That was because of their actions and disbelief, and their lack of gratitude. «It is not Allah Who wronged them, but it was they who wronged themselves.» (16: 33)



﴿فَلَمَّا مَارَزَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طِبَابًا وَأَشْكَرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ إِيمَانٌ
تَعْبُدُونَ إِنَّمَا حَرَمَ عَيْنَكُمُ الْمُبَيِّنَةَ وَالذَّمَّ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أَهْلَ لِغَنِيَّةِ
اللَّهِ بِهِ ۝ فَمَنْ أَصْطَرَ عَيْنَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ۝ وَلَا تَقُولُوا﴾

لِمَا تَصْنَعُ فَالسِّتْكُمُ الْكَبِيرَ هَذَا حَلَالٌ وَهَذَا حَرَامٌ لِتَفَرَّوْا عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَبِيرِ
إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَوْنَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَبِيرِ لَا يُقْلِحُونَ ﴿١١٨﴾ مَتَّعْ قَلِيلٌ وَلَمْ يَعْدَ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١١٩﴾ وَعَلَى
الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَمَنَا مَا فَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلٍ وَمَا ظَلَّنَا مِنْهُمْ وَلَذِكْنَ كَانُوا أَنْفَسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ

(سورة النحل: ١١٨-١١٤) ﴿١١٩﴾

- 16:114. So eat of that which Allah has provided for you, lawful and good, and be grateful for the blessings of Allah, if it is Him you worship.
- 16:115. He has only forbidden you the meat of animals found dead, and blood, and the flesh of swine, and that on which any name has been invoked other than that of Allah. But if one is forced by necessity, without wilful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits, then verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.
- 16:116. And do not utter falsehood by letting your tongues declare: This is lawful and this is prohibited, thus fabricating lies against Allah. Verily those who fabricate lies against Allah will never prosper.
- 16:117. It is only a brief enjoyment, and theirs will be a painful punishment.
- 16:118. To the Jews We prohibited that which We recounted to you before. We did not wrong them; rather they wronged themselves.

Here Allah (ﷻ) instructs His slaves to eat what He has provided them with of animals, grains, fruits and other things, (lawful and good) that is, so long as it has these two characteristics, so that it is not something that Allah has prohibited and it has not been obtained in any unlawful manner, and the like. So enjoy what Allah has created for you, without being extravagant and without transgressing due limits.

(and be grateful for the blessings of Allah) by acknowledging them in your hearts, praising Allah for them and using them to obey Allah

﴿if it is Him you worship﴾ that is, if you are sincere to Him in worship. So do not give thanks except to Him and do not forget the Bestower of blessings.

﴿He has only forbidden you﴾ things that are harmful, so as to protect you from harm. That includes things such as the following:

- ﴿the meat of animals found dead﴾, which includes everything that died without being slaughtered in the prescribed manner; exempted from that are locusts and fish.
- ﴿and blood﴾ – this refers to blood that has been poured forth (at the time of slaughter); as for that which remains in the veins and flesh, it does not matter.
- ﴿and the flesh of swine﴾ because it is filthy and impure. That includes the flesh, fat and all parts of the pig.
- ﴿and that on which any name has been invoked other than that of Allah﴾ such as that which is slaughtered for idols, graves and the like, because the intention behind it is the ascription of partners to Allah (*shirk*).

﴿But if one is forced by necessity﴾ to eat one of the things that have been prohibited – because of urgent necessity and the fear of dying if one does not eat it – then there is no blame on the individual for that, so long as there is no wilful disobedience or transgression; in other words, so long as he does not want to eat that prohibited thing at a time when there is no need to do so, and he is not going beyond that which is lawful to seek that which is prohibited, and he does not transgress by eating more than is essential. Then these things are permissible, subject to the conditions mentioned above.

﴿And do not utter falsehood by letting your tongues declare: This is lawful and this is prohibited﴾ that is, do not declare things to be prohibited or lawful of your own accord, fabricating lies against Allah and attributing to Him words that He never said.

﴿thus fabricating lies against Allah. Verily those who fabricate lies against Allah will never prosper﴾ either in this world or the

hereafter, for Allah will inevitably humiliate them; even if they have some enjoyment in this world (It is only a brief enjoyment), and their ultimate destiny will be the fire, (and theirs will be a painful punishment).

Allah (ﷻ) has only forbidden impure things to us by His grace, to protect us from everything that is repellent.

But in the case of the Jews, Allah prohibited to them good things that had previously been permitted to them, because of their wrongdoing and as a punishment to them, as in the story in Soorat al-An'âm, where He says:

(To the Jews We forbade every [animal] with undivided hoof, and We forbade to them the fat of cattle and sheep, except that which adheres to their backs or entrails, or is attached to their bones. Thus We requited them for their wilful disobedience; verily We state the truth.) (al-An'âm 6: 146)



﴿فُتَّهُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السُّوءَ بِجَهَنَّمَ ثُمَّ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنْ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴾ (١١٩) (سورة النحل: ١١٩)

16:119. Then verily your Lord, to those who do evil in ignorance then repent and mend their ways – verily your Lord, after that, is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Here Allah encourages His slaves to repent and calls them to turn to Him. He tells us that if anyone does evil in ignorance, there are consequences that result from that. If he commits that sin deliberately, then whatever knowledge he has in his heart will inevitably decrease at the time when he is committing the sin, but if he repents and mends his ways, by giving up the sin, regretting it and doing righteous deeds,

then Allah will forgive him and have mercy on him; He will accept his repentance and restore him to his previous condition, or make him even better.



﴿إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَاتَلَتِ اللَّهَ حَيْنَقًا وَلَرَبُّكَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴾١٦٠﴾ شَاكِرًا
لِأَنَّعْمَاءَ أَجْبَاهُ وَهَدَاهُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴾١٦١﴾ وَمَا يَنْهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ وَإِنَّهُ فِي
الآخِرَةِ لَمَنِ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴾١٦٢﴾ ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ أَنْ أَتِّبِعْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَيْنَقًا وَمَا كَانَ
مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴾١٦٣﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٢٣-١٢٠)

- 16:120. Ibrâheem was indeed an exemplary leader, devoutly obedient to Allah, a monotheist, and he was not one of those who ascribed partners to Allah.
- 16:121. He was ever grateful for His blessings; Allah chose him and guided him to a straight path.
- 16:122. We gave him good in this world, and in the hereafter he will surely be among the righteous.
- 16:123. Then We revealed to you [O Muhammad]: Follow the religion of Ibrâheem, the monotheist, and he was not one of those who ascribe partners to Allah.

Here Allah tells us of the blessings that He bestowed upon His close friend Ibrâheem (ﷺ) and how He singled him out for sublime virtues and perfect characteristics.

﴿إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَاتَلَتِ اللَّهَ حَيْنَقًا﴾ that is, a leader who attained all good characteristics; he was a guide and was himself guided

﴿وَلَرَبُّكَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾ that is, he constantly obeyed his Lord and was sincerely devoted to Him

﴿a monotheist﴾ who turned to Allah in love, repentance and true servitude, turning away from all others besides Him

﴿and he was not one of those who ascribed partners to Allah﴾ in word or deed, or in any circumstances, because he was the leader of the monotheists.

﴿He was ever grateful for His blessings﴾ that is, Allah gave him good in this world and bestowed upon him blessings both visible and hidden, and he gave thanks for them.

The outcome of these sublime characteristics was that ﴿Allah chose him﴾ and singled him out to be His close friend, and made him one of the elite of His creation and one of His slaves who are close to Him.

﴿and guided him to a straight path﴾ in terms of his knowledge and deeds, so he recognised the truth and gave it precedence over all other things.

﴿We gave him good in this world﴾ namely abundant provision, a beautiful wife, righteous offspring and good characteristics

﴿and in the hereafter he will surely be among the righteous﴾ who will be of high status and very close to Allah (﴿۴﴾).

One of the greatest of his virtues is that Allah revealed to the leader of humankind and the most perfect of them that he and his Ummah should follow the religion of Ibrâheem and take him as an example.



﴿إِنَّمَا جِعَلَ أَسْبَاثَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ أَخْتَلُفُوا فِيهِ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِيَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ﴾ (١٢٤) (سورة النحل)

16:124. The Sabbath was only ordained for those who differed concerning it. Verily your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that wherein they differed.

﴿The Sabbath was only ordained﴾ that is, made obligatory
 ﴿for those who differed concerning it﴾ when they went astray from Friday. This refers to the Jews, and their differing was the reason why it was made obligatory upon them to respect and venerate the Sabbath. Otherwise, the real virtue is in Friday, to which Allah guided this Ummah.

﴿Verily your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that wherein they differed﴾ and He will make clear to them who was in the right and who was in the wrong, who deserves reward and who deserves punishment.



﴿أَدْعُ إِنَّ سَبِيلَ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْخَيْرَةِ وَجَذِيلَهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحَسَنُ
 إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهَتَّبِينَ﴾ (١٥) (سورة النحل)

(١٢٥)

16:125. Invite to the way of your Lord on the basis of wisdom and goodly exhortation, and reason with them in the most courteous manner. Verily your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His path, and He knows best who is rightly guided.

That is, let your call to all people, Muslims and disbelievers, inviting them to the straight path of your Lord, which includes beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds, be ﴿on the basis of wisdom﴾, addressing each according to his situation and ability to understand, and the level of his acceptance and submission.

Therefore the call to Islam should be based on knowledge, not ignorance, starting with the most important matters, then the next most important, issues that are clearer in the mind and easier to understand, and are more likely to be fully accepted, presenting the call with kindness and gentleness.

If the person called responds to that approach which is based on wisdom, all well and good; otherwise the caller may use goodly exhortation, which is enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, accompanied by encouragement and warnings, pointing out and listing what interests one may attain by adhering to the commands, and what harms one may incur by indulging in that which is prohibited. It may also involve pointing out the honour of the one who adheres to the religion of Allah and the disgrace of the one who does not do so, or describing what Allah has prepared of reward in this world and the hereafter for those who are obedient to Him and what He has prepared of punishment in this world and the hereafter for those who are disobedient to Him. If the person to whom the call is addressed thinks that what he is following is truth or if he is a promoter of falsehood, then the caller to Islam should reason with him in the most courteous manner. These are the ways which are more likely to bring a response, according to both reason and the texts.

One way of doing that is to use evidence that he believes is sound, because this is more likely to achieve the goal and not lead to argument or trading of insults, which will defeat the purpose and is of no benefit. Rather the aim is to guide people to the truth, not to prove them wrong and the like.

﴿فَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عَوَّقْتُمْ يَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِّلصَّابِرِينَ ۚ وَأَصِيرُ وَمَا صَبَرْتُكَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَنْكُفْ فِي﴾



﴿وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عَوَّقْتُمْ يَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِّلصَّابِرِينَ ۚ وَأَصِيرُ وَمَا صَبَرْتُكَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَنْكُفْ فِي﴾

صَلِّيْقَ مِمَّا يَتَكَبُّرُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْتَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٢٦-١٢٧)

- 16:126. If you retaliate, let your retaliation be commensurate with the wrong that has been done to you. But if you endure patiently, it is indeed better for those who are patient in adversity.

16:127. And be patient and steadfast, for your patience can only be by the help of Allah; do not grieve over them, and do not be distressed because of their plots.

16:128. Verily Allah is with those who fear Him and those who do good.

Here Allah (ﷻ) says – allowing justice yet recommending generosity and kindness:

¶If you retaliate against one who mistreated you in word or deed
¶let your retaliation be commensurate with the wrong that has been
done to you without going beyond that and doing more than was
done to you.

«But if you endure patiently» and refrain from retaliating, and you forgive their offence

«it is indeed better for those who are patient in adversity» than settling scores, for that which is with Allah is ultimately better for you and better in outcome, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿...but whoever forgives and reconciles, his reward is with Allah...﴾
(ash-Shoorâ 42: 40)

Then Allah instructs His Messenger (ﷺ) to be patient in calling people to Allah, and to seek the help of Allah in doing that, and not to rely on himself.

«And be patient and steadfast, for your patience can only be by the help of Allah» for it is He Who helps you to do that makes you steadfast.

﴿do not grieve over them﴾ if you call them and you see that they do not accept your call, for such grief will not benefit you in the slightest. ﴿and do not be distressed﴾ that is, do not be upset and troubled ﴿because of their plots﴾ because their plot will backfire on them, whereas you are among those who fear Him and those who do good.

And Allah is with those who fear Him and do good, giving them His help, guidance and support, for they are the ones who keep away from disbelief and sin, and they do well in worshipping Allah, as they worship Him as if they can see Him, and if they do not see Him, He sees them; and they show kindness to people by striving to benefit them in all ways. We ask Allah to make us among those who fear Him and do good.

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat an-Nahl.

All praise and thanks are for Allah, and may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), his family, and his Companions abundantly until the Day of Judgement.



17.

Soorat al-Isrâ’ (Bani Isrâ’eel)

(Makki)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the name of Allah,
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*



﴿سُبْحَنَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى
الَّذِي بَرَّكَنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيهِ مَنْ مَا يَنْهَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ١)

17:1. Glory be to Him Who took His slave for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Distant Mosque, the environs of which We have blessed, so that We might show him some of Our signs. Verily He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.

Here Allah (ﷻ) declares Himself to be exalted and almighty, for all great actions belong to Him and all great favours come from Him, among which was the fact that He (took His slave) namely His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) (for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque) which is the noblest of all mosques (to the Distant Mosque) which is one of the most virtuous of mosques, for it is the place of the Prophets.

He took him on this journey in a single night, covering a huge distance, and He brought him back the same night, and He showed him some of His signs which increased him in guidance, deep insight, steadfastness and understanding. This was due to Allah's care for him and kindness to him, as He guided him to that which was easy in all his affairs, and He bestowed upon him blessings because of which he surpassed the earlier and later generations.

The apparent meaning of the verse indicates that the Night Journey (*Isrâ'*) occurred at the beginning of the night, and that the journey began from the Sacred Mosque itself, but it is proven in *as-Saheeh* that the Prophet (ﷺ) was taken on the night journey from the house of Umm Hâni' (*radiya Allâhu 'anhâ* – may Allah be pleased with her). Based on that, the virtue that belongs to the Sacred Mosque is applicable to the entire Haram zone; the multiple reward for worship applies to acts of worship anywhere within the Haram zone. This also indicates that the Night Journey involved both body and soul together, otherwise it would not have been a major sign and great virtue.

There are many proven hadiths from the Prophet (ﷺ) about the Night Journey which mention the details of what he saw and state that he was taken on a journey by night to Jerusalem (Bayt al-Maqdis), and then taken up from there to the heavens, until he reached what is above the highest heavens. He also saw paradise and hell, and the Prophets in their various stations in the heavens. Allah enjoined fifty prayers upon him, then he kept going back and asking his Lord to reduce it, based on the advice of Moosâ, the one to whom Allah had spoken directly, until they became five prayers in deed and fifty in reward. He and his Ummah attained great honour on that night, the extent of which no one knows except Allah (ﷻ).

Allah refers to the Prophet (ﷺ) here as a slave, because he attained all that he attained of honour by virtue of being a perfect slave of his Lord.

﴿the environs of which We have blessed﴾ with a lot of trees and rivers, and land that is always fertile.

Another aspect of that blessing is that it is favoured above other mosques, except the Sacred Mosque and the mosque of Madinah; it is encouraged to travel to it for the purpose of worshipping and praying therein. Allah also chose this place as a place for His Prophet (ﷺ) and chosen ones to live.



﴿وَمَاتَنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَبَ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ هُدًى لِّبَنِ إِسْرَائِيلَ أَلَا تَنْجِذُوا مِنْ دُونِ
وَكِيلًا ﴾ ذُرِيَّةٌ مِّنْ حَمَلَنَا مَعَ ثُوجَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَنَّا شَكُورًا ﴾ وَقَضَيْنَا
إِلَى بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ فِي الْكِتَبِ لِتُفْسِدُنَّ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَّتَيْنِ وَلَنَعْلَمَ عُلُوًّا كَبِيرًا
﴿فَإِذَا جَاءَهُ وَعْدُ أُولَئِمَا بَعْنَانَ عَيْكُمْ عِبَادًا لَّنَا أُولَئِكَ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ فَجَاسُوا خَلَلَ
الْدِيَارِ وَكَانَ وَعْدًا مَفْعُولًا ﴾ ثُرَدَدَنَا لَكُمُ الْكَرَّةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنْدَنَنَا كُمْ يَأْمُولَ
وَبَنِينَ وَجَعَنَنَا كُمْ أَكْرَنَنَفِيرًا ﴾ إِنَّ أَحَسَنَتُمْ أَحَسَنتُمْ لَا نَفْسٌ كُوْنُ وَإِنَّ أَسَأْتُمْ
فَلَهَا ﴾ فَإِذَا جَاءَهُ وَعْدُ الْآخِرَةِ لِيُسْتُوْدُوْ وُجُوهَكُمْ وَلَيَدْخُلُوا الْمَسْجِدَ كَمَا
دَخَلُوكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةً وَلِيُسْتَرُوْ مَا عَلَوْتُمْ نَسِيرًا ﴾ عَسَى رَبُّكُمْ أَنْ يَرْجُمَكُمْ وَإِنْ عَدْتُمْ
عَدْنَا وَجَعَلْنَا جَهَنَّمَ لِلْكُفَّارِ حَصِيرًا ﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٨-٢)

- 17:2. We gave Moosâ the Book, and made it a guide for the Children of Israel, [saying]: Do not take any other than Me as a disposer of affairs.
- 17:3. O descendants of those whom We carried with Nooh [in the ark], verily he was a grateful slave.
- 17:4. We declared to the Children of Israel in the Book: You will surely spread mischief in the land twice, and you will surely show great arrogance and tyranny.

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- 17:5. When the first of the two came to pass, We sent against you slaves of Ours possessing great might and power, who wrought havoc throughout the land. And [this] decree was sure to be fulfilled.
- 17:6. Then We allowed you to prevail over them once again; We strengthened you with wealth and offspring, and made you greater in number.
- 17:7. If you do good, you do good for your own selves. If you do evil, you do it to your own detriment. So when the second of the two came to pass, [We sent your enemies against you] to humiliate and suppress you, and to enter the mosque [the temple in Jerusalem] as they did the first time, and to utterly destroy all that fell into their power.
- 17:8. It may be that your Lord will have mercy on you, but if you repeat [the mischief], We will repeat [the punishment]. And We have made hell a place of detention for the disbelievers.
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Allah often mentions the prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ) and the prophethood of Moosâ (ﷺ) together, and He mentions their Books and their laws together, because their Books are the best of all books, their laws are the most perfect of all laws, their prophethoods were the most sublime of prophethoods, and their followers comprise the majority of believers. Hence Allah says here:

﴿We gave Moosâ the Book﴾ namely the Torah
﴿and made it a guide for the Children of Israel﴾ by which they might be guided from the darkness of ignorance to knowledge of the truth
﴿[saying]: Do not take any other than Me as a disposer of affairs﴾ that is, We told them that and We revealed the Book to them for that purpose, so that they might worship Allah alone, turn to Him and take Him alone as a disposer of affairs and controller in all their religious and worldly concerns, and so that they would not be attached to any other than Him, such as created beings that have no power over anything and cannot benefit them in any way.

﴿O descendants of those whom We carried with Nooh [in the ark]﴾ that is, O offspring of those whom We blessed and carried with Nooh, ﴿verily he was a grateful slave﴾ these are words of commendation for Nooh for having given thanks to Allah, as he is described in such terms; this also encourages his descendants to follow his example of gratitude and to remember the blessing that Allah bestowed upon them when He saved them and caused them to inherit the earth, and He caused others to drown.

﴿We declared to the Children of Israel in the Book﴾ that they would spread mischief in the land twice by committing sins, being ungrateful for the blessings of Allah and acting in an arrogant and tyrannical manner. The first time that happened, Allah would give their enemies power over them and wreak vengeance upon them. This was a warning to them so that they might stop and pay heed.

﴿When the first of the two came to pass﴾ that is, the first of the two occasions on which they would spread mischief. When that occurred, ﴿We sent against you﴾ as a punishment ﴿slaves of Ours possessing great might and power﴾ that is, they were courageous and strong in terms of numbers and weapons. Allah granted them victory over you, so they killed you, took your children captive, seized your wealth as plunder and wrought havoc throughout your land, breaking into your houses and entering and desecrating the temple in Jerusalem. ﴿And [this] decree was sure to be fulfilled﴾ that it would come to pass, because they were the cause of it.

The commentators differed concerning the identity of those who were sent against them, but they were unanimously agreed that they were a disbelieving people who came from Iraq or Mesopotamia or elsewhere. Allah sent them against the Children of Israel when they committed many sins, abandoned many of their laws and transgressed in the land.

﴿Then We allowed you to prevail over them once again﴾ that is, over those who had been sent against you, so you expelled them from your land.

﴿We strengthened you with wealth and offspring﴾ that is, We increased your provision and numbers, and We give you more strength against them.

﴿and made you greater in number﴾ than them. This was because of your good deeds and your submission to Allah.

﴿If you do good, you do good for your own selves﴾ because the benefit of that comes back to you, even in this world, as you have seen in your victory over your enemies.

﴿If you do evil, you do it to your own detriment﴾ that is, the harm comes back to you, as Allah showed you by giving your enemies the upper hand over you.

﴿So when the second of the two came to pass﴾ that is, the second time you spread corruption in the land, we sent your enemies against you once more.

﴿to humiliate and suppress you﴾ by defeating you and taking you captive, so that they could enter the temple again as they had done the first time. What is meant by the temple is Bayt al-Maqdis.

﴿and to utterly destroy﴾ that is, ruin and demolish
﴿all that fell into their power﴾ – so they destroyed your houses, your places of worship and your crops.

﴿It may be that your Lord will have mercy on you﴾ and give you the upper hand over them. And He did indeed have mercy on them and give them the upper hand, and He warned them against falling into sin:
﴿but if you repeat [the mischief]﴾ and spread mischief in the land again, ﴿We will repeat [the punishment]﴾. They did repeat their mischief, so Allah sent against them His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) and wrought vengeance upon them. This was the recompense in this world, and that which is with Allah of recompense (in the hereafter) is more terrifying and more fearsome. Hence He says: ﴿And We have

made hell a place of detention for the disbelievers); they will burn therein and will remain there, and they will never emerge from it.

This passage contains a warning for this Ummah against committing sins, lest there befall them what befell the Children of Israel, for the way of Allah (in dealing with sinners) is the same and never changes or alters.

Anyone who examines how the disbelievers and wrongdoers have the upper hand over the Muslims will realise that this is because of the sin of the latter and is a punishment to them; if they adhere to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ), He will give them power in the land and grant them victory over their enemies.



﴿إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلّٰقِي هٰرٰتْ أَقْوَمُ وَبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَيْرًا ۚ وَأَنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالآخِرَةِ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ۚ﴾

(سورة الإسراء: ٩)

- 17:9. Verily this Qur'an guides to that which is most just and right, and gives glad tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds that theirs will be a great reward,
- 17:10. And that for those who do not believe in the hereafter, We have prepared a painful punishment.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the noble status and grandeur of the Qur'an, and that it (guides to that which is most just and right) that is, that which is most upright and sublime of beliefs, deeds and attitudes. Whoever follows that which the Qur'an promotes will be the most perfect and upright of people, and the most guided in all his affairs.

(and gives glad tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds), both obligatory and supererogatory, (that theirs will be a great reward)

which Allah has prepared for them in His paradise, the description of which no one knows except Him.

﴿And that for those who do not believe in the hereafter, We have prepared a painful punishment﴾. Thus the Qur'an includes both glad tidings and warnings. It tells us the means of attaining the glad tidings, namely faith and righteous deeds, and it tells us of that which will incur the warning, which is the opposite of that.



﴿وَيَدْعُ الْإِنْسَنُ بِالشَّرِّ دُعَاءً هُوَ لِلْخَيْرِ وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَنُ عَجُولًا﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ١١)

17:11. Man prays for evil just as he prays for good, for man is ever hasty.

This is because of man's ignorance and haste, for he prays against himself, his children and his wealth when he is angry, and he rushes to pray for that just as he rushes to pray for good. But Allah – by His grace – answers his prayers for good but He does not answer his prayers for evil.

﴿If Allah were to hasten the punishment for people as they would hasten their reward, then their fate would have been sealed...﴾ (Yoonus 10: 11)



﴿وَجَعَلْنَا أَلَيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ مَاءِتَيْنِ فَمَحَوْنَا آيَةَ الظَّلَيلِ وَجَعَلْنَا آيَةَ النَّهَارِ مُبَصِّرَةً لِتَبَغْفِلُوا فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَلِتَعْلَمُوا عَدَدَ السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ فَصَلَّتْهُ تَفْصِيلًا﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ١٢)

17:12. We have made the night and the day as two [of Our] signs. We obscured the sign of the night with darkness and gave light to

the sign of the day, so that you might seek the bounty of your Lord and know the number of the years and the reckoning of time. And We have explained all things in detail.

﴿We have made the night and the day as two [of Our] signs﴾ that is, two signs that point to the perfect nature of Allah's power and the vastness of His mercy, and that no one should be worshipped except Him.

﴿We obscured the sign of the night with darkness﴾ that is, We have made it dark, for the purpose of stillness and rest

﴿and gave light to the sign of the day, so that you might seek the bounty of your Lord﴾ by going about in pursuit of your livelihood, doing your crafts, engaging in trade and setting out on your journeys.

﴿and know﴾ by the alternation of night and day, and the phases of the moon

﴿the number of the years and the reckoning of time﴾, and on the basis of that you run your affairs.

﴿And We have explained all things in detail﴾ that is, We have explained the signs so that all things may be clear, and truth may become distinct from falsehood, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿...We have neglected nothing in the Book...﴾ (*al-An'am* 6: 38)



﴿وَكُلُّ إِنْسَنٍ أَلْزَمْنَا طَبِيرَهُ فِي عَيْقَمَهُ وَنَخْرُجُ لَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ كَتَبَأَلْفَنَهُ مَنْشُرًا﴾

﴿أَفَرَا كَتَبَكَ كُلُّنِي سَقِيسِكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا﴾ (١٤-١٣) (سورة الإسراء: ١٤-١٣)

- 17:13. Every man's deeds We have fastened to his neck, and on the Day of Resurrection We will bring forth for him a record [of his deeds] which he will find spread wide open.
- 17:14. [It will be said to him:] Read your own record; sufficient is your own soul as a reckoner against you this day.

Here Allah tells us of the perfect nature of His justice, for each person's deeds are fastened to his neck. In other words, everything that he does, good or evil, Allah will cause it to adhere to him and not go to anyone else, so that he will not be brought to account for the deeds of anyone else, and no one else will be brought to account for his deeds.

﴿وَالْيَوْمَ نَنْهَاكُمْ عَنِ الْأَعْمَالِ فَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَفْعَلُونَ﴾, and in it will be everything that he did, good or evil, small or great: it will be said to him: ﴿أَنْهِيَ عَنِ الْأَعْمَالِ فَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَفْعَلُونَ﴾. This is the ultimate justice and fairness, that it will be said to the individual: Take account of your own self, so that he will acknowledge his wrongdoing that brought the punishment upon him.



﴿مَنْ أَهْتَدَى فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ حَرَكَ فَإِنَّمَا يَحْرِكُ عَلَيْهَا وَلَا تُنْزَعُ وَازْرَةٌ وَزَرَةٌ أُخْرَى وَمَا كَانَ لِمَعْذِنِينَ حَقَّ نَبَعْثُكَ رَسُولًا ﴾ (١٥) (سورة الإسراء: ١٥)

17:15. Whoever is guided, is only guided for [the good of] his own soul; whoever goes astray, only goes astray to his own detriment, and no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another. Nor do We punish until We have sent a Messenger [to give warning].

The guidance or misguidance of each individual only affects him, and no one can bear the burden of another person's sins or ward off from him even an atom's weight of harm. Allah (ﷻ) is the most just of those who show justice; He does not punish anyone until proof has been established against him by sending the message, then he stubbornly rejects it.

As for the one who submits and follows the proof, or no proof reached him from Allah (ﷻ), Allah will not punish him.

This verse is quoted as evidence to prove that those who lived in the periods between Prophets, and the children of the polytheists (who die in infancy) will not be punished by Allah until He sends a Messenger to them, for He is far above injustice.



﴿ وَإِذَا أَرَدْنَا أَن تُهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمْرَنَا مُتَّرِقِهَا فَسَقُوا فِيهَا حَقَّ عَلَيْهَا الْقُولُ فَدَمَرْنَاهَا تَدِيمِرًا ﴾
 ﴿ وَكُمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنَ الْقُرُونِ مِنْ بَعْدِ نُوحٍ وَكَفَى بِرِبِّكَ بِذُنُوبِ عِبَادِهِ خَيْرًا بَصِيرًا ﴾

(Surah al-Ibrahim: 16-17)

- 17:16. When it is Our will to destroy a city, We command its affluent people [to fear Allah], but they transgress. Thus the punishment becomes inevitable, then We destroy it completely.
- 17:17. How many nations We have destroyed since the time of Nooh! Your Lord is sufficiently aware of the sins of His slaves and sees them all.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that when He wants to destroy any wrongdoing city and eradicate it with His punishment, He commands its affluent people to fear Him, but they transgress, and their transgression reaches such a grave extent that (the punishment becomes inevitable) that is, the decree of punishment cannot be put back (then We destroy it completely).

There were many nations whom Allah destroyed with the punishment after the people of Nooh, such as 'Ad, Thamood, the people of Loot, and others. Allah punished them when their transgression became too much and their disbelief became extreme; at that point, Allah sent upon them His mighty punishment.

﴿Your Lord is sufficiently aware of the sins of His slaves and sees them all﴾, so they have no reason to fear injustice, but the punishment will be commensurate with their deeds.



﴿مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعَاجِلَةَ عَجَلَنَا لَهُ فِيهَا مَا نَشَاءُ لِمَنْ نُرِيدُ ثُرَّ جَعَلْنَا لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَهَا مَذْمُومًا مَدْحُورًا ﴿١٨﴾ وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَى لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَشْكُورًا ﴿١٩﴾ كُلَّا نِيمَدْ هَنْوَلَةَ وَهَنْوَلَةً مِنْ عَطَلَوَرِيكَ وَمَا كَانَ عَطَاءُ رِبِّكَ مَحْظُورًا ﴿٢٠﴾ أَنْظُرْ كِيفَ فَضَلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَلِلآخرَةِ أَكْبَرُ دَرَجَاتٍ وَأَكْبَرُ تَفْضِيلًا ﴿٢١﴾﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ١٨-٢١)

- 17:18. Whoever seeks [the pleasures of] this fleeting life, We hasten therein whatever We will for whomever We please. Then We decree for him hell, which he will enter, disgraced and rejected.
- 17:19. But whoever seeks the hereafter and strives for it as it should be striven for, and is a [true] believer – such are the ones whose effort will be appreciated.
- 17:20. On all – both the latter and the former – We bestow of the bounty of your Lord. Verily the bounty of your Lord is not denied [to anyone].
- 17:21. See how We have bestowed more on some than on others [in this world], but verily the hereafter will have higher ranks and greater degrees of excellence for some over others.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that **﴿Whoever seeks [the pleasures of] this fleeting life﴾** in this world, which will diminish and come to an end, so he works and strives for that, and forgets how he started and how he will end, Allah will hasten for him whatever He wills of its worthless accumulation and pleasures that He has decreed for him

in al-Lawḥ al-Mahfoodh, but it is pleasure that is of no benefit and will not last.

Then He will decree for him in the hereafter (hell, which he will enter), and be punished therein

(disgraced and rejected) that is, in a state of disgrace, shame and condemnation from Allah and from His creation, far removed from the mercy of Allah. Thus punishment and disgrace will be combined for him.

﴿But whoever seeks the hereafter﴾ and is content with it, and gives it precedence over this world

﴿and strives for it as it should be striven for﴾, as taught in the divinely-revealed Books and the prophetic traditions, and acts in accordance with that to the best of his ability,

﴿and is a [true] believer﴾ in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day

﴿such are the ones whose effort will be appreciated﴾ that is, it will be accepted, multiplied and stored up, and they will have their reward with their Lord. In addition to that, they will not miss out on their share of this world, for Allah will bestow worldly bounty on both believers and disbelievers, because He is generous and kind,

﴿Verily the bounty of your Lord is not denied [to anyone]﴾ that is, it is not withheld from anyone; rather all people enjoy His bounty and kindness.

﴿See how We have bestowed more on some than on others [in this world]﴾, because abundance or restriction of provision, ease and hardship, knowledge and ignorance, wisdom and foolishness, and so on, are things in which Allah has blessed some people more than others.

﴿but verily the hereafter will have higher ranks and greater degrees of excellence for some over others﴾. So there is no comparison at all between the delights and pleasures of this world and those of the hereafter. How great is the difference between the one who is in a

lofty dwelling in paradise, enjoying all sorts of pleasures, happiness, bliss and joy, and the one who is suffering in hell, being subjected to a painful punishment, having incurred the wrath of the Most Merciful Lord. In each of these two abodes, the differences between people cannot be enumerated.



﴿لَا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِنَّهَا أَخْرَ فَتَقْعُدْ مَذْمُومًا حَذَرُوا﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٢٢)

17:22. Do not associate with Allah any other god, lest you find yourself disgraced and forsaken.

That is, do not believe that any created being is deserving of any kind of worship or that any of them can be associated with Allah, for that is blameworthy and leads to failure. Allah, His angels and His Messengers have forbidden the ascription of partners to Allah and have condemned in the strongest terms anyone who does that, describing this action in the worst terms, by using such words that one may conclude from them that the one who does this is the worst in characteristics and the most abhorrent in description.

Such a person is a failure in terms of both worldly and religious affairs, to the extent of his detachment from his Lord. Whoever puts his hopes in anything but Allah is a failure and will be left to the one in whom he put his trust, for no one of Allah's creation can benefit anyone except by Allah's leave. Just as the one who believes that there is any other god besides Allah is deserving of blame and is a failure, the one who affirms His oneness and devotes his worship to Allah alone, putting his hopes in Him and no other, is deserving of commendation and will receive help from Allah in all his affairs.



﴿ وَقَضَى رَبُّكَ أَلَا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَنَا إِمَّا يَتَّلَقَّنَ عِنْدَكُمْ الْكِبَرُ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كُلَّهُمَا فَلَا تُقْلِّ لَهُمَا أُفْيٍ وَلَا تُنَهِّرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا فَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ﴾ ٢٣ ﴿ وَأَخْفُضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الْذُلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْجُحُهُمَا كَارِبَيًا صَغِيرًا ﴾ ٢٤ (سورة الإسراء: ٢٣-٢٤)

- 17:23. Your Lord has ordained that you should worship none but Him and show kindness to parents. If one or both of them reach old age in your care, do not say to them even the mildest word of annoyance or reproach them; rather speak to them with respect.
- 17:24. And lower to them the wing of humility out of compassion, and say: My Lord, have mercy on them, as they cared for me when I was small.

Having forbidden the ascription of partners to Him, Allah (ﷻ) enjoins affirmation of His oneness.

﴿Your Lord has ordained﴾ as a religious instruction
 ﴿that you should worship none﴾ of the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth, living or dead
 ﴿but Him﴾, for He is the One, the Eternal, Whom all creatures need, Who possesses all attributes of perfection and the greatest manifestation of those attributes, in such a manner that none of those whom He created resembles Him. He is the Bestower of blessings, both visible and hidden, Who wards off all calamities; the Creator, the Provider, the controller of all matters. He is the only One Who does all of that, and no other has any share of that.

After mentioning His rights, Allah speaks of fulfilling the rights of parents:

﴿and show kindness to parents﴾ that is, be kind to them in all ways, in word and deed, because they are the reason for one's existence, and they have so much love for their child, show him kindness and are

close to him, which confirms the rights of the parent over the child and the obligation of the child to show kindness to them.

﴿If one or both of them reach old age in your care﴾ that is, if they reach this age, at which they become physically weak and need kind and gentle treatment, as is well known,

﴿do not say to them even the mildest word of annoyance﴾ – this is the least offence, but it is a warning against saying anything that could be more offensive than that. What is meant is: do not offend them in the slightest manner.

﴿or reproach them﴾ that is, rebuke them or speak harshly to them. ﴿rather speak to them with respect﴾ in ways that they like, politely and gently, with soft words that will bring joy to their hearts and reassure them. That varies from one situation and time to another, according to people's traditions.

﴿And lower to them the wing of humility out of compassion﴾ that is, be humble towards them, out of compassion and seeking reward from Allah, not because you fear them or hope to get what they have, and other reasons that may deprive one of reward (from Allah).

﴿and say: My Lord, have mercy on them﴾ that is, pray for mercy for them in life and in death, as recompense for their having taken care of you when you were small. From this it is understood that the longer they take care of you, the more rights they have over you. Similarly, if someone other than the parents takes care of a person with regard to his religious and worldly interests, and shows him the right path in a sound manner, that person is indebted to the one who took care of him.



﴿رَبَّكُمْ أَغْنِمُ يَمًا فِي ثَقُولِكُمْ إِن تَكُونُوا صَالِحِينَ فَإِنَّهُ كَانَ لِلأَوَّلِينَ عَفْوًا﴾

(سورة الإسراء: ٢٥)

17:25. Your Lord knows best what is in your hearts. If you are righteous, then verily He is Oft-Forgiving to those who constantly turn to Him [in repentance].

That is, your Lord (ﷻ) sees what is hidden in your hearts of good and evil, and He does not look at your deeds or your physical appearance; rather He looks at your hearts and what is in them of good and evil.

﴿If you are righteous﴾ in the sense that your intentions and aims are focused on pleasing Allah, and you are keen to draw close to Him, and there are no aspirations in your heart that are contrary to the will of Allah,

﴿then verily He is Oft-Forgiving to those who constantly turn to Him﴾ that is, those who turn back to Him at all times. So if Allah sees into a person's heart and knows that there is nothing in it except devotion to Him and love for Him and for that which will bring him closer to Him, then – even if that person sometimes behaves in accordance with human inclinations – Allah will pardon him and forgive him for the occasional slip that is out of character.



﴿وَمَاتِي ذَا الْقُرْبَى حَقَّهُ وَالْمُسْكِنَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَلَا بُدْرَتْبَذِرًا ﴾ ﴿إِنَّ الْمُبَدِّرِينَ كَانُوا إِلَيْنَا لَخَوَانَ الشَّيَاطِينَ وَكَانَ الشَّيَاطِينُ لِرَبِّهِ كُفُورًا ﴾ ﴿وَإِمَّا تَعْرِضَنَّ عَنْهُمْ أَتِيَّةً رَحْمَةً مِّنْ رَبِّكَ رَجُوهُمَا فَقُلْ لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَيْسُورًا ﴾ ﴿وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَى عُنْقِكَ وَلَا تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ فَقَعْدَ مُؤْمِنًا تَحْسُورًا ﴾ ﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَبْسُطُ الْرِزْقَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ يَعْبَادُهُ حَمِيرًا بَصِيرًا ﴾ ﴿سُورَةُ الْإِسْرَاءِ: ٢٦ - ٣٠﴾

17:26. Give kinsfolk their due, and those in need, and wayfarers; but do not squander your wealth wastefully.

- 17:27. For squanderers are the brothers of the devils. And the Shaytân [the Devil] is ever ungrateful to his Lord.
- 17:28. If you [O Muhammad] must turn away from them whilst seeking mercy from your Lord for which you hope,¹⁷ then say to them words of comfort.
- 17:29. Do not keep your hand tied to your neck [like a miser], or stretch it forth to its utmost extent [like a squanderer], lest you become blameworthy and destitute.
- 17:30. Verily your Lord gives abundantly to whomever He will and sparingly [to whomever He will]. Verily He is well aware of His slaves and sees them all.

﴿Give kinsfolk their due﴾ of kindness and honour, both that which is obligatory and that which is sunnah. These rights vary according to the situation, the degree of relationship and the extent of need at different times.

﴿and those in need﴾ – give them their due of zakâh and other forms of charity in order to meet their needs

﴿and wayfarers﴾ this refers to the stranger who is cut off from his homeland. They should all be given from one's wealth, in such a way that does not harm the giver and is not more than is appropriate, because that would come under the heading of squandering, which Allah has prohibited.

﴿For squanderers are the brothers of the devils﴾ because the Shaytân only calls people to that which is blameworthy, so he calls people to be miserly and stingy, then if they disobey him, he calls them to be extravagant and to squander their wealth, whereas Allah (ﷻ) only enjoins moderation in all things and praises people for that, as He says, describing the righteous slaves of the Most Gracious:

¹⁷ This refers to a situation in which he had no resources with which to help them, and was himself hoping for mercy, that is, provision, from his Lord. (at-Tabari)

﴿And who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor stingy, but follow a middle path between the [two].﴾ (*al-Furqān* 25: 67)

﴿Do not keep your hand tied to your neck [like a miser]﴾ this is a metaphor for extreme stinginess and miserliness
﴿or stretch it forth to its utmost extent [like a squanderer]﴾, spending it on that which is not necessary or more than is appropriate.
﴿lest you become﴾, if you do that,
﴿blameworthy﴾ that is, subject to blame for what you did
﴿and destitute﴾ that is, empty-handed, with no wealth left and not deserving any praise.

The command to give kinsfolk their due is addressed to the one who has the means and can afford it. As for the one who does not have the means or cannot afford it, Allah (ﷻ) instructs him to apologise by saying kind words:

﴿If you [O Muhammad] must turn away from them whilst seeking mercy from your Lord for which you hope﴾ that is, if you must turn away from giving to them until some other time, hoping that Allah will make things easier,
﴿then say to them words of comfort﴾ that is, kind and gentle words, with a promise to give them something as soon as you can afford it, and apologise for not being able to give them something at present, so that they may go back reassured and comforted, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿Kind words and forgiveness are better than charity followed by hurtful words...﴾ (*al-Baqarah* 2: 263)

By His kindness towards His slaves, Allah (ﷻ) instructs them to expect mercy and provision from Him. By the same token, promising to give charity and be generous when one can afford it is in itself an act of worship, because thinking of doing a good deed is in itself a good deed. Hence the individual should do whatever he is able to do of good, and he should have the intention to do whatever he is not

able to do, so that he will be rewarded for that and in the hope that Allah may make it easy to do it, because of his hope.

Then Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He grants abundant provision to whomever He will among His slaves, and He grants it sparingly to whomever He will, in accordance with His wisdom.

﴿Verily He is well aware of His slaves and sees them all﴾ and He gives them according to what He knows is good for them, and He deals with them on the basis of kindness and generosity.



﴿وَلَا نَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ خَشْيَةً إِمْلَاقٍ نَحْنُ تَرْزُقُهُمْ وَإِنَّا كُلُّنَا إِنَّ فَتَاهُمْ كَانَ حِطْفًا كَبِيرًا﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٣١)

17:31. Do not kill your children for fear of poverty, for We will provide for them and for you. Verily killing them is a grave sin.

This is by His mercy towards His slaves, for He is more merciful towards them than their own parents. Therefore He forbids parents to kill their children for fear of poverty and want, and He guarantees to provide for all. He informs us that killing them is a grave major sin; in fact it is one of the worst of major sins, because of the loss of mercy from the heart, grave disobedience and transgression by killing children who never did anything wrong.



﴿وَلَا نَقْرِبُوا الْزِنَّ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَحْشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٣٢)

17:32. Do not approach fornication [or adultery], for it is shameful, an abominable way indeed.

The prohibition on approaching the matter is more eloquent than the prohibition on simply doing it, because this includes the prohibition of all precursors that lead to it, for:

«...whoever lets his flocks graze around the protected area will soon find his flocks transgressing upon it.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

That is especially applicable with regard to this matter, as many people have the strongest inclination towards it.

Allah describes fornication (or adultery), because of its abhorrent nature, as «(shameful)» that is, a sin which is regarded as shameful and evil according to Islamic teachings, reason and human nature, because it involves transgression of the sacred limits set by Allah, and it is also a transgression against the woman and against her family or husband, it causes trouble in marriages, mixes lineages, and leads to other negative consequences.

«an abominable way indeed» that is, an evil way, the way of one who has the audacity to commit that grave sin.



﴿وَلَا نَقْتُلُوا النَّفَسَاتِ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَمَنْ قُتِلَ مَظْلومًا فَقَدْ جَعَلَنَا لِوَلِيَهِ سُلْطَانًا فَلَا يُشَرِّفُ فِي الْقَتْلِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مَصْوُرًا ﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٣٣)

17:33. Do not kill, for that is forbidden by Allah, except in the course of justice. If anyone is killed wrongfully, We have given his heir authority [to seek legal retribution or compensation, or to forgive], but he should not exceed the bounds in the matter of killing, for he is already supported [by Islamic law].

This applies to every soul the killing of which is «forbidden by Allah», whether it is young or old, male or female, free or slave, Muslim or a non-Muslim who has a covenant with the Muslims.

﴿except in the course of justice﴾ such as a life for a life; execution of a previously-married adulterer or an (apostate) who leaves his religion and splits from the main body of the Muslims; or cases of self-defence where the attacker cannot be warded off except by killing him.

﴿If anyone is killed wrongfully﴾ that is, unlawfully
 ﴿We have given his heir﴾, who is the closest to him of his male relatives on his father's side and his heirs

﴿authority﴾ to seek legal retribution (*qisâs*) from the killer. That is when the conditions for this retribution are met, namely that the killing was deliberate and the killer was the aggressor (who initiated the fight), and both are of equal standing.

﴿but he﴾ that is, the heir
 ﴿should not exceed the bounds in the matter of killing, for he is already supported [by Islamic law]﴾. Exceeding the bounds means overstepping the mark, either by mutilating the killer, or killing him in a manner different from that in which he killed the victim, or killing someone other than the killer.

This verse indicates that the right to legal retribution belongs to the heir, so no retribution can be exacted except with his permission, and if he forgives the killer, retribution is waived. It also indicates that Allah will help the heir of the victim against the killer and anyone who helped the killer, until he is able to settle the score.



﴿وَلَا نَقْرِبُوا مَالَ الْيَتَامَةِ إِلَّا بِالْقِرَبَىٰ هُنَّ أَحْسَنُ حَقًّا يَنْهَا أَشَدُهُمْ وَأَوْفُوا بِالْعَهْدِ إِنَّ
 الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْئُولاً﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٣٤)

17:34. Do not touch the orphan's property, before he comes of age, except to improve it; and fulfil [all] covenants, for [every] covenant will be asked about.

This highlights Allah's kindness and mercy towards the orphan who has lost his father when he is still small and is not aware of what is in his own best interests, nor is he in a position to achieve that. Allah instructs the orphan's guardians to take care of him and his wealth, and to handle it in a manner that best serves his interests. The guardians are not to touch it (except to improve it) by doing business with it, not exposing it to danger, and working to make it grow. That should continue until the orphan (comes of age), that is, until he reaches puberty and becomes mature. When he comes of age, guardianship over him ends; he becomes in charge of his own affairs and his wealth is to be given to him, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿...Then, if you find that they have sound judgement, hand over their property to them...﴾ (*an-Nisā' 4: 6*)

﴿and fulfil [all] covenants﴾ that you make, whether the covenant is with Allah or with other people
 ﴿for [every] covenant will be asked about﴾ that is, you will be asked whether you fulfilled it or not; if you fulfilled it, then you will have a great reward, but if you did not, then you will carry a great burden of sin.



﴿وَأَوْفُوا الْكِيلَ إِذَا كُلْمُ وَرِثُوا بِالْقِسْطَاسِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا﴾

(سورة الإسراء: ٣٥)

17:35. Give full measure when you measure, and weigh with accurate scales; that is better and more seemly in the end.

This is an instruction to be fair and to give full weight and measure, without overcharging or giving short measure. From the general meaning of the verse it is understood that all kinds of cheating are

prohibited, whether that has to do with price, quality or the terms of any deal entered into, and it is enjoined to be sincere and honest in all dealings.

﴿that is better﴾ than not doing so
 ﴿and more seemly in the end﴾ that is, it leads to better consequences, for by following this advice, one will be safe from any bad consequences and will attain blessing (*barakah*).



﴿وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْتَحْشِلاً﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٣٦)

- 17:36. Do not pursue [beliefs, rumours, slander and the like] of which you have no certain knowledge, for verily, the hearing, the sight, and the heart, all of these will be asked about.

That is, do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge; rather you should make sure that everything you say or do is verified or proven. So do not think that you can get away with it, for it will be recorded either for you or against you.

﴿for verily, the hearing, the sight, and the heart, all of these will be asked about﴾. So the individual – who knows that he is responsible for all that he says and does, and for the way in which he uses his faculties which Allah has created so that he might worship Him – must prepare his answers to that questioning, and that can only be done by using all his faculties in servitude to Allah, doing acts of devotion to Him alone and refraining from that which Allah (ﷻ) hates.



﴿وَلَا تُنْسِى فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرْحًا إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَخْرُقَ الْأَرْضَ وَلَنْ تَبْلُغَ الْجَهَالَ طُولاً ﴾
 ذَلِكَ كَانَ سَيِّئَةً عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ مَكْرُوهًا ﴾٢٧﴿ ذَلِكَ مِنَ آتِيَّتِ رَبِّكَ مِنَ الْحِكْمَةِ وَلَا
 تَجْعَلْ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا أَخْرَى فَنُلَقَّنَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَلُومًا مَذْهُورًا ﴾٢٨﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٣٩-٣٧)

- 17:37. Do not walk on the earth with insolence, for you cannot cleave the earth, nor can you rival the mountains in height.
- 17:38. The evil of all that is hateful to your Lord.
- 17:39. This is part of the wisdom that your Lord has revealed to you [O Muhammad]. Do not associate with Allah any other god, lest you be thrown into hell, blameworthy and outcast.

﴿Do not walk on the earth with insolence﴾ that is, with arrogance, too proud to accept the truth and looking down on others, for if you do that **(you cannot cleave the earth, nor can you rival the mountains in height)** in your arrogance; rather you will be insignificant before Allah and despised by people, hated and resented for having acquired the worst and most reprehensible of characteristics without being able to attain even some of what you are pursuing.

﴿The evil of all that﴾ namely the things that Allah has prohibited, that are mentioned above (17: 22), where Allah says **(Do not associate with Allah any other god)**, and the prohibition on disobedience to parents, and so on,
(is hateful to your Lord) that is, all of that will harm those who do it and Allah **(ه)** hates it and disapproves of it.

(This) that We have explained of these important rulings
(is part of the wisdom that your Lord has revealed to you [O Muhammad]). Wisdom is enjoining good deeds and noble characteristics, and forbidding evil characteristics and bad deeds.

The good deeds mentioned in these verses are part of the sublime wisdom that the Lord of the worlds revealed to the leader of the Messengers in the noblest of Books, so as to enjoin them upon the best of nations. So they are part of that wisdom which, if anyone is granted it, then he has been granted a great deal of good.

This passage ends with the prohibition on worshipping anything other than Allah, as it began: «Do not associate with Allah any other god, lest you be thrown into hell» that is, to abide therein forever, for whoever ascribes any partner to Allah, Allah will forbid paradise to him, and his abode will be hell.

«blameworthy and outcast» that is, lest you be subject to blame, curses and criticism from Allah, His angels and all the people.



﴿أَفَأَصْفَلُكُمْ رِبُّكُمْ بِالْبَنِينَ وَأَنْخَذَ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنَّهُ لِلَّغُوْنَ قُوَّلَا عَظِيْمَا﴾

(سورة الإسراء: ٤٠)

17:40. Has your Lord favoured you with sons and taken for Himself daughters from among the angels? Verily, you are uttering a dreadful word!

This is a stern denunciation of those who claimed that Allah had taken from among His creation daughters.

«Has your Lord favoured you with sons» that is, Has He chosen for you that which is best and perfect, and taken for Himself from among the angels females – as they claimed that the angels were the daughters of Allah.

«Verily, you are uttering a dreadful word!» which implies the worst insolence towards Allah, as you attribute offspring to Him, which would imply need on His part, and would imply that some of His

creation have no need of Him. Moreover, you attributed the inferior of the two to Him, namely the females, when He is the One Who created you, and you say that He chose the males for you. Exalted be Allah far above what the wrongdoers say.



﴿وَلَقَدْ صَرَقْنَا فِي هَذَا الْتُّرْءَانِ لِيَذَكُرُوا وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُمْ إِلَّا نَقُورًا ﴾ ٤١ ﴿ قُلْ تَوَكَّلْ كَانَ مَعَهُ دَاءِ الْمَهْمَةُ ﴾ ٤٢ ﴿ كَمَا يَقُولُونَ إِذَا لَأْتَنَّاهُمْ إِلَى ذِي الْعِزْمَةِ سَيِّلًا ﴾ ٤٣ ﴿ سُبْحَنَهُ وَتَعَلَّى عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ عُلُوًّا كَبِيرًا ﴾ ٤٤ ﴿ تَسْبِحُ لَهُ السَّمَاوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهَا وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَلَكِنَّ لَنْفَقُهُونَ تَسْبِحُهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا ﴾ ٤٥ ﴿ (سورة الإسراء: ٤٤-٤١) ﴾

- 17:41. We have explained [the truth] in this Qur'an in various ways, so that they may pay heed, but it only increases them in aversion.
- 17:42. Say [O Muhammad]: If there were [other] gods with Him, as they say, they would surely have sought a way to the Lord of the Throne.¹⁸
- 17:43. Glory be to Him, and exalted be He far above what they say!
- 17:44. The seven heavens and the earth, and all those who are therein, glorify Him. There is not a thing that does not glorify Him with praise, but you do not understand their glorification. Verily He is Forbearing, Oft-Forgiving.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He has explained all issues to His slaves in this Qur'an. In other words, He discusses various rulings and clarifies them, presenting a great deal of evidence and proof for that to which He calls people, and He exhorts and reminds so that they

¹⁸ What is meant is that they would have sought a way to challenge Him (al-Qurtubi, from Ibn 'Abbas [rādiya Allāhu 'anhu - may Allah be pleased with both of them]]; another view is that they would have sought a way to draw near to Him. (at-Tabari)

will remember that which will benefit them and thus follow it, and that which will harm them and thus refrain from it. But most people insist on turning away from the revelations of Allah, because of their resentment towards the truth and their love for that which they are following of falsehood, to the extent that they are fanatically devoted to the falsehood and they do not listen to the revelations of Allah or pay attention to them.

The issue for which the most proof and evidence is presented is the oneness of Allah, which is the most important of fundamental issues. Allah enjoins it, forbids the opposite, and establishes a great deal of rational and textual proof for it, to the extent that if one listens to some of it, no room will be left in his heart for any doubt or confusion.

Among the evidence for that is the rational evidence that is mentioned here:

﴿Say﴾ to the polytheists who associate another god with Allah:
﴿If there were [other] gods with Him, as they say﴾ that is, according to their claims and fabrications,
﴿they would surely have sought a way to the Lord of the Throne﴾ that is, they would have tried to seek a way to worship Him and draw close to Him, seeking nearness to Him. So how can the weak human being, who realises how great is his need to be a true slave of his Lord, associate another god with Allah? Can this be anything but the worst wrongdoing and the greatest foolishness?

According to this interpretation, the meaning of this verse is similar to that of the verses in which Allah says: ﴿Those upon whom they call themselves seek nearness to their Lord﴾ (17: 57) and:

﴿On the day when He gathers them together with those whom they worshipped besides Allah, He will ask:¹⁹ Did you lead these slaves

¹⁹ This question will be put to those who were wrongfully worshipped, such as the angels, ‘Eesa (عيسى), Prophets, righteous people, ‘saints’, idols and so on.

of Mine astray, or did they stray from the [right] path by themselves? They will say: Glory be to You! It was not proper for us to take anyone as an ally besides You [and worship him]²⁰...» (*al-Furqān* 25: 17-18)

Or it may be that what is meant by the words «If there were [other] gods with Him, as they say, they would surely have sought a way to the Lord of the Throne» is: they would have sought a way to reach Him and they would have tried to challenge Allah (ﷻ), then if they overcame Him, the one who prevailed would be the Lord and God. However, they already knew and admitted that the gods whom they worshipped besides Allah were subjugated and inferior, and had no control over anything. So why did they take them as gods, if they were like that? In this case, the meaning is like that of the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

«Allah has never begotten a son, nor is there any god besides Him. [In that case,] each god would have taken full control of what he had created, and each would have rushed to gain supremacy over the others...» (*al-Mu'minoon* 23: 91)

«Glory be to Him, and exalted be He» that is, He is to be declared holy and far above

«what they say» of ascribing partners and rivals to Him, for He is sublime and great, and His Majesty is so immense that there can be no gods besides Him. Those who say such a thing have gone far astray and committed a grievous wrongdoing.

In comparison to His greatness, great creations are as nothing. In comparison to His Majesty, the greatness of the seven heavens and all those who are in them, and of the seven earths and all those who are in them, is very small indeed.

«... On the Day of Resurrection, the entire earth will be in His grip, and the heavens will be rolled up in His Right Hand...» (*az-Zumar* 39: 67)

²⁰ A question is implied here: so how could we have asked anyone else to take us as allies and worship us besides You? (ash-Shawkāni)

Both the upper and lower realms are inherently in need of Him, and this need is never absent from anyone at any time. This need, in all aspects, is the need for creation, provision and care, a need which they have no choice but to feel until He becomes the object of worship and focus of love, to which they seek to draw near and they turn to Him in all situations. Hence He says:

﴿The seven heavens and the earth, and all those who are therein, glorify Him. There is not a thing﴾ human, animal, tree, plant, inanimate, living or dead ﴿that does not glorify Him with praise﴾ implicitly or explicitly

﴿but you do not understand their glorification﴾ that is, the glorification of all other creatures that do not speak your language, but the Knower of the unseen encompasses them all with His knowledge.

﴿Verily He is Forbearing, Oft-Forgiving﴾ as He does not hasten to punish the one who says concerning Him a word at which the heavens might almost be torn apart, the earth split asunder, and the mountains come tumbling down (*cf. 19: 90*). Rather He gives respite, bestows blessings upon them, overlooks their deeds, grants them provision and calls them to His door, so that they might repent from this grave sin, so that He might give them an immense reward and forgive them. Were it not for His forbearance and forgiveness, the heavens would fall upon the earth and no living creature would be left on the surface of the earth.



﴿وَإِذَا قرأتَ الْقُرْءَانَ جَعَلَنَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ حِجَابًا مَسْتَوِرًا ١٥ وَجَعَلْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكْثَرَهُمْ أَنْ يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي مَا ذَرَنَاهُمْ وَقِرَأُوا وَإِذَا ذَكَرْتَ رَبَّكَ فِي الْقُرْءَانِ وَحْدَهُ، وَلَوْا عَلَىٰ أَذْبَرِهِمْ ثُغُورًا ١٦ تَحْنُ أَعْمَلُهُمْ بِمَا يَسْتَعْمِلُونَ بِهِ إِذَا دَسْتَمُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِذَا هُمْ نَجَوْيَ إِذْ يَقُولُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنْ تَنْبِئُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَسْحُورًا ١٧ أَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ ضَرَبُوا لَكَ الْأَمْثَالَ فَضَلُّوا فَلَا يُسْتَطِعُونَ سَيِّلًا ١٨﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٤٨-٤٥)

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- 17:45. When you recite the Qur'an, We place between you and those who do not believe in the hereafter a hidden barrier,²¹
- 17:46. And We have placed covers on their hearts so that they will not understand it, and deafness in their ears; when you mention your Lord alone in the Qur'an, they turn their backs in aversion.
- 17:47. We know best what they are listening for when they listen to you, and what they say when they converse in private, when the wrongdoers say: [If you were to follow Muhammad] you would be following none but a man who is bewitched.
- 17:48. See what they liken you to! Thus they have gone astray and cannot find a way.
-

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about His punishment of those disbelievers in the truth who reject it and turn away from it: He then bars them from faith, as He says:

﴿When you recite the Qur'an﴾ in which there is exhortation, admonition, guidance, faith, goodness and a great deal of knowledge, ﴿We place between you and those who do not believe in the hereafter a hidden barrier﴾ that prevents them from understanding it correctly, grasping the true meaning and submitting to the goodness to which they are called.

﴿And We have placed covers on their hearts﴾ so that they do not understand the meanings of the Qur'an; rather they listen to it in such a way that proof is established against them
﴿and deafness in their ears﴾ so that they are prevented from hearing.
﴿when you mention your Lord alone in the Qur'an﴾ calling them to affirm His oneness, and forbidding them to ascribe partners to Him
﴿they turn their backs in aversion﴾ and resentment towards that idea, out of love for that which they are following of falsehood. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

²¹ That is so that they will not understand it, as a punishment for their (stubborn) disbelief. (at-Tabari)

﴿When Allah alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the hereafter shrink with aversion, but when [gods] other than Him are mentioned, they rejoice.﴾ (az-Zumar 39: 45)

﴿We know best what they are listening for﴾ that is, We only prevented them from benefiting when they hear the Qur'an because We know that their aim is wrong; they want to find the least reason to criticise it. They are not listening for the purpose of seeking guidance or accepting the truth; rather their intention is not to follow it. One who is like that will not benefit from listening to it in the slightest. Hence Allah says:

﴿...when they listen to you, and what they say when they converse in private, when the wrongdoers say﴾ when they converse in private
 ﴿[If you were to follow Muhammad] you would be following none but a man who is bewitched﴾. If this is the evil conversation that they had amongst themselves, basing it on the assumption that he was bewitched, then it is certain that they were not taking what he said seriously, and they thought that he was simply murmuring, not knowing what he was saying.

﴿See what they liken you to!﴾ This is expressing astonishment because it is the most misguided of likenesses and the furthest from the truth.

﴿Thus they have gone astray﴾ by doing that, or it became a cause of their misguidance, because they base their judgement of him on that assumption, and that which is based on something evil is worse than it.
 ﴿and cannot find a way﴾ that is, they will not be guided in any way, thus their share is pure misguidance and utter wrongdoing.



﴿وَقَالُوا إِذَا كُنَّا عَظِيمًا وَرَفَقَنَا أَئْنَا لَتَبْعُثُنَّ خَلْقًا جَدِيدًا ﴾ ٤٩ ﴿ قُلْ كُونُوا حِجَارَةً أَوْ حَدِيدًا ﴾ ٥٠ أَوْ خَلْقًا مِمَّا يَكْتُرُ فِي صُدُورِكُمْ فَسَيَقُولُونَ مَنْ يُعِيدُنَا قُلِ الَّذِي

فَطَرْكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرْقٍ فَيَنْقُضُونَ إِلَيْكُمْ رُءُوسَهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ مَنْ هُوَ قُلْ عَسَى أَنْ يَكُونَ قَرِيبًا ﴿٤٩﴾ يَوْمَ يَدْعُوكُمْ فَسَتَجِبُونَ بِحَمْدِهِ وَتَظَاهُنَ إِنْ لَيْشَتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

(سورة الإسراء: ٤٩-٥٢) ﴿٤٩﴾

- 17:49. They say: What! When we have turned into bones and dust, will we really be raised up and created anew?
- 17:50. Say: Even if you turned to stone or iron,
- 17:51. or any other substance you think even more unlikely [to be given life]. Then they will say: Who will bring us back [to life]? Say: The One Who brought you into being in the first instance. They will nod their heads at you [in disbelief and mockery] and say: When will that be? Say: It may well be soon.
- 17:52. On the day when He calls you, you will respond by praising Him and think that you have tarried but a short while.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us what was said by those who denied the resurrection, disbelieved in it and thought it unlikely.

﴿They say: What! When we have turned into bones and dust﴾ that is, when our bodies have disintegrated completely,
 ﴿will we really be raised up and created anew?﴾ That is, that will never happen and it is impossible – according to their claim. They demonstrated extreme ignorance when they disbelieved the Messengers of Allah, denied the signs of Allah, and compared the power of the Creator of the heavens and the earth to their puny and weak powers. As they saw that it was impossible for them and they could not do it, they assumed that the power of Allah was equally weak.

Glory be to the One Who made some of His creation, who claimed that they were people of mature thinking and intellect, into an example of ignorance of the most obvious of things, for which there is the clearest proof, in order to show His slaves that no one can achieve

anything except by His help, otherwise there is nothing but doom and misery.

﴿Our Lord, do not let our hearts deviate now after You have guided us, and bestow upon us mercy from Yourself; for You are the Bestower.﴾
(*Āl 'Imrān* 3: 8)

Hence Allah instructed His Messenger (ﷺ) to say to these people who denied the resurrection because they thought that it was unlikely:

﴿Say: Even if you turned to stone or iron, or any other substance you think even more unlikely [to be given life]﴾ that is, so that you will be safe – or so you claim – from the power of Allah reaching you or His will being done concerning you. For you cannot escape Allah, no matter what state you are in and no matter what you are turned to. You have no control over yourselves in this life or after death, so leave control and disposal of affairs to the One Who has power over all things and Who encompasses all things.

﴿Then they will say﴾ when you establish proof against them concerning the resurrection:

﴿Who will bring us back [to life]? Say: The One Who brought you into being in the first instance﴾ As He originated you, when you were nothing worth mentioning, He will recreate you:

﴿...As We originated creation, so We will repeat it...﴾ (*al-Anbiyā'* 21: 104)

﴿They will nod their heads at you [in disbelief and mockery]﴾ that is, in denial and amazement at what you say

﴿and say: When will that be?﴾ That is, when will this resurrection of which you speak come to pass? They are not affirming the idea of the resurrection; rather this is foolishness on their part, and is intended to cause annoyance.

﴿Say: It may well be soon﴾ There is no benefit in knowing the exact time of it; rather the benefit is to affirm it, establish it as a belief and prove it. Otherwise everything that is coming is near at hand.

﴿On the day when He calls you﴾ to the resurrection, and the Trumpet is blown

﴿you will respond by praising Him﴾ that is, you will submit to His command and you will not be able to rebel against Him.

﴿by praising Him﴾ – for He is worthy of praise for all that He does, and He will requite people for their deeds when He gathers them on the Day of Judgement.

﴿and think that you have tarried but a short while﴾ because it will happen so quickly, and whatever you had enjoyed of pleasures will be as if it never happened. This is the event of which the deniers asked ﴿When will that be?﴾ They will regret it bitterly when it comes, and it is said to them:

﴿...This is what you used to deny.﴾ (*al-Muaffifeen* 83: 17)



﴿وَقُلْ لِعِبَادِي يَقُولُوا أَلَّى هِيَ أَحَسْنُ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَنْزَعُ بَيْتَهُمْ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلنَّاسِ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٣﴾ رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ إِنْ يَشَاءُ يَرْحَمُكُمْ أَفَإِنْ يَشَاءُ يُعَذِّبُكُمْ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيلًا ﴿٥٤﴾ وَرَبُّكَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَقَدْ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَ الظَّيْنَكَ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَمَا إِنَّا دَأْوِدَ زَبُورًا ﴿٥٥﴾﴾ (Surah al-isra': 53-55)

17:53. Tell My slaves that they should say what is best,²² for Shaytân sows discord among them. Verily Shaytân is to man an avowed enemy.

17:54. Your Lord knows you best: if He wills, He will have mercy on you and if He wills, He will punish you. We have not sent you [O Muhammad] to be in charge of them.

²² What is meant is to speak in a courteous and gracious manner, and not to respond in kind to harsh words.

17:55. And your Lord knows best all who are in the heavens and on earth. Indeed We have exalted some of the Prophets above others, and to Dâwood We gave the Zaboor [Psalms].

This is by His kindness towards His slaves, as He enjoined upon them the best manners, deeds and words that lead to happiness in this world and the hereafter.

﴿Tell My slaves that they should say what is best﴾ – this is enjoining all words that bring one closer to Allah, such as reading Qur'an, remembering Him (dhikr), acquiring knowledge, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and speaking good and kind words to people in a manner that is appropriate to their various positions and status. If there is a choice between two good things, then it is enjoined to give precedence to the better of the two, if it is not possible to combine both.

Speaking good words leads to developing good manners and doing righteous deeds, for the one who controls his tongue will be in control of all his affairs.

﴿for Shaytân sows discord among them﴾ that is, he strives to create trouble between people in a manner that is detrimental to their religious commitment and worldly affairs. The remedy for that is not to obey him, by avoiding the inappropriate talk to which he calls people, and by being soft and gentle with one another, so as to suppress the Shaytân who seeks to spread discord among them, because he is their true enemy whom they should oppose, for he calls them to:

﴿...become inhabitants of the raging fire.﴾ (*Fâtiir* 35: 6)

As for brothers in Islam, even if the Shaytân manages to sow discord among them and create enmity between them, the right thing to do is strive against their enemy and suppress their inclinations towards evil, through which the Shaytân finds a way to influence

them. By doing so, they will be obeying their Lord, putting their affairs in order and following the path of wisdom.

﴿Your Lord knows you best﴾, better than you know yourselves. Hence He only wants what is good for you and He only enjoins upon you that which is in your best interests. You may want something when the opposite is better.

﴿if He wills, He will have mercy on you and if He wills, He will punish you﴾. Hence He guides whomever He will to take the measures that lead to mercy, and He forsakes whomever He will, so that he will go astray and will become deserving of punishment.

﴿We have not sent you [O Muhammad] to be in charge of them﴾ and to control their affairs and requite them for their deeds. Rather Allah is in charge of them, and your role is to convey the message and guide people to the straight path.

﴿And your Lord knows best all who are in the heavens and on earth﴾ of all types of creatures, so He gives each of them what he deserves, according to His wisdom, and He favours some of them over others in terms of both physical and intangible qualities, just as He favoured some of the Prophets, who all have in common the fact that they received revelation, over others in terms of virtues and characteristics that had to do with what Allah blessed them with of physical characteristics, pleasant manners and attitudes, righteous deeds, number of followers, and revelation of Books to some of them that contained rulings and beliefs, as He sent down to Dâwood the Zaboor (Psalms), which is the well-known Book.

As it is the case that Allah favoured some of them over others, and gave to some of them Books, why do those who reject Muhammad (ﷺ) deny what Allah has sent down to him and what He has blessed him with of prophethood and the Book?



﴿ قُلْ أَدْعُوا الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُم مِنْ دُونِي، فَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ كَشْفَ النُّصُبِ عَنْكُمْ وَلَا تَحْوِيلًا ﴾
 ﴿ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ بِيَنْفُوتٍ إِلَى رَبِّهِمُ الْوَسِيلَةُ أَقْرَبُ وَيَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَهُ، وَيَخَافُونَ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ كَانَ مَحْذُورًا ﴾ (٥٧-٥٦) (سورة الإسراء: ٥٧-٥٦)

- 17:56. Say: Call on those whom you claim [to be gods]²³ besides Him; they have no power to relieve you of harm or divert it from you.
- 17:57. Those upon whom they call themselves seek nearness to their Lord, [competing to see] which of them will be nearest. They hope for His mercy and fear His punishment, for verily the punishment of your Lord is something to be dreaded.

﴿Say﴾ to the polytheists who ascribe partners to Allah and take others as gods which they worship as they worship Allah, and they call upon them as they call upon Him, and instruct them to correct what they claim and believe, if they are sincere:

﴿Call on those whom you claim [to be gods]﴾ besides Allah, and see whether they can benefit you or ward off harm from you, for they **﴿have no power to relieve you of harm or divert it from you﴾**, such as sickness, poverty, hardship and so on. They cannot ward it off at all, and they also have no power to divert it from one person to another, or to change it from hardship to something less severe.

If this is how they are, then why do you call upon them besides Allah? For they have no attributes of perfection and do not do any useful deeds, so taking them as gods is lacking in religious understanding and reason, and it is foolishness.

²³ Those who are falsely worshipped, who are referred to in this and the following verse, are ‘Eesâ, ‘Uzayr and the angels; they have no power to benefit or harm in and of themselves, and are themselves devoted slaves of Allah.

What is astounding is that when foolishness becomes a common practice and is received from misguided parents, a person sees it as being right thinking, and he sees sincere devotion to Allah alone, the One Who is perfect and bestows all blessings, both apparent and invisible, as foolishness and as something strange, as the polytheists said:

﴿Has he made all the gods into one God? This is indeed most strange!﴾
(*Sâd* 38: 5)

Then Allah tells us that those whom they worship besides Allah are completely distracted from them because they are concerned with showing their own need for Allah and seeking to draw near to Him:

﴿Those upon whom they call﴾ among the Prophets, the righteous and the angels

﴿themselves seek nearness to their Lord, [competing to see] which of them will be nearest﴾ that is, they compete in drawing near to their Lord, striving their utmost to do righteous deeds that will bring them closer to Allah and to His mercy, for they fear His punishment, so they avoid everything that may lead to it.

﴿for verily the punishment of your Lord is something to be dreaded﴾ that is, it is something to be feared greatly and one should keep away from anything that could lead to it.

These three things – fear, hope and love – which Allah describes as the characteristics of those who are close to Him are the basis and prerequisites for all goodness. Whoever has all of them, all his affairs will be in order, but if his heart is devoid of them, good things will disperse from around him and he will be surrounded by troubles.

The sign of love is that which Allah mentions, that a person strives hard to do everything that will bring him closer to Allah, and he competes with others in drawing closer to Him, intending all his deeds for Allah alone, being utterly sincere in doing them and doing them in the best possible manner. Whoever claims that he loves Allah, but does not do this, is lying.



﴿وَلَنْ يَنْفَدِعَ إِلَّا نَحْنُ مُهْكِمُوهَا قَبْلَ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ أَوْ مُعَذِّبُوهَا عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا كَانَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَسْطُورًا﴾ (٥٨) (سورة الإسراء: ٥٨)

- 17:58. There is no city but We will destroy it before the Day of Resurrection, or punish it severely. That is written in the Book [of our decrees].²⁴

That is, there is no city among the cities that disbelieved in the Messengers but it will inevitably be destroyed or punished severely before the Day of Resurrection. This is a decree that has been ordained by Allah, and it will inevitably come to pass. So let the disbelievers hasten to turn to Allah and believe in His Messengers, before they reach a point where punishment will become inevitable.



﴿وَمَا مَنَّنَا أَنْ تُرْسِلَ إِلَيْنَاهُ إِلَّا أَنْ كَذَّبَ إِلَيْهَا الْأَوَّلُونَ وَإِلَيْنَا ثُمُودُ الْأَنَاقَةِ مُبَصِّرَةً فَظَلَمُوا إِلَيْهَا وَمَا تُرْسِلُ إِلَيْنَاهُ إِلَّا تَخْوِيفًا﴾ (٦١) وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لَكَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ أَحَاطَ بِالنَّاسِ وَمَا جَعَلَنَا الْأَرْضَ يَا الْقَيْمَنَكَ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَالشَّجَرَةُ الْمَلْعُونَةُ فِي الْقُرْمَانِ وَخَوْفُهُمْ فَمَا يَرِدُهُمْ إِلَّا طُغْيَانًا كَيْرًا﴾ (٦٢) (سورة الإسراء: ٦٠-٦٩)

- 17:59. Nothing prevents Us from sending signs except that the earlier people rejected them. We sent the she-camel to Thamood as a clear sign, yet they rejected her. We send signs only by way of instilling fear.
- 17:60. And [remember] when We said to you: Verily your Lord encompasses humankind [with His knowledge and might]. We

²⁴ That is, *al-Lawh al-Mahfoodh*.

did not make the sight which We showed you,²⁵ and the accursed tree²⁶ [mentioned] in the Qur'an, except as a test for the people. We seek to instil fear in their hearts, but it only increases their inordinate transgression.

Here Allah (ﷻ) refers to His mercy in that He did not send down the signs demanded by the disbelievers. Nothing prevented Him from sending them except the possibility of their rejecting them, for if they had rejected them, the punishment would have been hastened for them and would have come upon them without delay, as happened to earlier generations who disbelieved in His signs.

One of the greatest signs is that which Allah sent to Thamood, namely the great she-camel, but they rejected that sign, so that fate befell them of which Allah tells us in His Book. And these people (the disbelievers of Makkah) are the same: even if great signs were to come to them, they would not believe. What prevented them from believing was not the fact that what the Messenger brought was unclear, as a result of which they were uncertain as to whether it was true or false, for He brought a great deal of proof which pointed to the soundness of the message he brought, which would lead to guidance for anyone who was seeking guidance. Any other sign (that they demanded) would be the same, so they would inevitably think of it as they thought of other signs. Therefore not sending another sign, when this was the case, was better for them.

﴿We send signs only by way of instilling fear﴾ that is, the purpose behind it is not to lead them to faith that could not be achieved otherwise; rather the purpose is to instil fear, so as to deter them (from their obstinate behaviour).

²⁵ This refers to the Prophet's *Isrâ'* (Night Journey).

²⁶ This refers to the tree of *az-Zaqqoom*, mentioned in (*ad-Dukhân* 44: 43-44), from which the people of hell will be fed.

﴿And [remember] when We said to you: Verily your Lord encompasses humankind [with His knowledge and might]﴾, so they have nowhere to turn to and no refuge to escape from Him. This is sufficient for anyone who has intellect to refrain from that which is hateful to Allah, Who encompasses humankind.

﴿We did not make the sight which We showed you, and the accursed tree [mentioned] in the Qur'an, except as a test for the people﴾. The majority of commentators are of the view that the sight mentioned here refers to the Night Journey (Isrâ') and the tree is the tree of az-Zaqoom that grows from the depths of hell.

What is meant is that if these two things have become a trial or test that causes confusion to people, to the extent that the disbelievers become more stubborn in their disbelief and increase in evil, and some of those who had weak faith recanted their faith because what the Prophet (ﷺ) told them – of events that occurred during the Night Journey, and what happened during that journey from the Sacred Mosque to the Distant Mosque – was so extraordinary, and what he told them about a tree growing from the depths of hell was also extraordinary, and this is what made them reject faith and not accept it, then how about if they saw great signs and remarkable extraordinary events? Is that not more likely to lead to an increase in their evil? Therefore Allah had mercy on them and diverted that from them.

Hence you will understand that it is more appropriate that the Qur'an and Sunnah did not describe in clear terms major events that would occur at later times, because when it comes to things the like of which people have never seen, their minds may not accept them if they are told of them before they happen, which may then become a cause of doubt in the hearts of some believers, and may prevent others from entering Islam, as they are put off from it. Rather Allah refers to such matters in very general and ambiguous words that refer to all that will happen.

﴿We seek to instil fear in their hearts﴾ by means of the signs
 ﴿but it only increases their inordinate transgression﴾.



﴿وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلملائِكَةَ أَسْجُدُوا لِأَدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَسْجُدُ لِمَنْ خَلَقَتْ
 طِبِّيَّا ﴾١١﴿ قَالَ أَرْءَيْنِي هَذَا الَّذِي كَرَمْتَ عَلَيَّ لِئَنَّ أَخْرَتْنِي إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ
 لَا أَحْتَنِكَ ذُرْيَتَهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴾١٢﴿ قَالَ أَذْهَبْ فَمَنْ تَيَعَّكَ مِنْهُمْ فَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ
 جَزَاؤُكُمْ جَزَاءُ مَوْفُورًا ﴾١٣﴿ وَاسْتَفِرْ مِنْ أَسْتَطَعْ مِنْهُمْ بِصَوْتِكَ وَاجْلِبْ عَلَيْهِمْ
 بِمَغْيِلِكَ وَرَجِلِكَ وَشَارِكْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ وَعَدْهُمْ وَمَا يَعْدُهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ
 إِلَّا عُرُورًا ﴾١٤﴿ إِنَّ عَبْدَيِ لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ وَكَفَرْ بِرِّيَكَ وَكَيْلًا﴾

(سورة الإسراء: ٦٥-٦٦) ﴿١٥﴾

- 17:61. And [remember] when We said to the angels: Prostrate before Adam, and they [all] prostrated except Iblees. He said: Should I prostrate before one whom You have created from clay?
- 17:62. [Iblees] said: Do you see this one whom You have honoured above me? If You give me respite until the Day of Resurrection, I will surely bring his offspring under my sway, all but a few.
- 17:63. [Allah] said: Go ahead; whoever among them follows you, verily hell will be the recompense of you all, an ample recompense.
- 17:64. Entice whomever among them you can with your voice; mobilise your cavalry and infantry against them;²⁷ share with them in their wealth and their children,²⁸ and make promises to them. But Shayṭân makes promises to them only in order to deceive them.

²⁷ What is meant is use all the means at your disposal against them. (al-Qurtubi)

²⁸ What is meant is causing them to acquire and dispose of wealth in unlawful ways, and to produce children in unlawful ways (by means of fornication).

17:65. Verily you will have no power over My slaves, and sufficient is Allah as a guardian.

Here Allah (ﷻ) points out to His slaves the extent of Shaytān's enmity and his keenness to mislead them, and that when Allah created Adam, he (Shaytān) was too arrogant to prostrate to him.

﴿He said﴾ out of arrogance: ﴿Should I prostrate before one whom You have created from clay?﴾ He claimed that he was better than him, because he had been created from fire. We have mentioned above how wrong this false analogy was, in many aspects.

When it became clear to Iblees that Allah had favoured Adam, he said to Allah: ﴿Do you see this one whom You have honoured above me? If You give me respite until the Day of Resurrection, I will surely bring his offspring under my sway﴾ that is, I will mislead them and not spare anyone,

﴿all but a few﴾. The evil one knew that there would inevitably be some who would oppose him and disobey him.

Therefore Allah said to him: ﴿Go ahead; whoever among them follows you﴾ and chooses you above his true Lord
﴿verily hell will be the recompense of you all, an ample recompense﴾ that is, it is saved for you as requital for your deeds.

Then Allah told him to do all that he could to misguide them, saying: ﴿Entice whomever among them you can with your voice﴾ – this includes everyone who calls others to sin.

﴿mobilise your cavalry and infantry against them﴾ – this includes everyone who rides or walks in the course of committing sin and disobedience towards Allah; he is one of the cavalry and infantry of the Shaytān.

What is meant is that Allah tests people by means of this avowed enemy who calls them to disobey Allah by his words and deeds.

﴿share with them in their wealth and their children﴾ – this includes every sin that is connected to their wealth and children, such as withholding zakâh and expiatory payments, not paying dues, not disciplining children and raising them to do good and keep away from evil, taking wealth unlawfully or using it inappropriately, and acquiring money from bad sources.

In fact many of the commentators stated that sharing with the Shaytân in wealth and children also includes not invoking the name of Allah when eating, drinking and having intercourse, because if a person does not invoke the name of Allah at those times, the Shaytân will have a share of those things with him, as is mentioned in the hadith.

﴿and make promises to them﴾ that is, attractive promises that have no substance. Hence Allah says: ﴿But Shaytân makes promises to them only in order to deceive them﴾ because his promise is false and has no value, such as when he makes sin and false beliefs fair-seeming to them and promises them reward for that, because they think that they are following truth. Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿The Shaytân threatens you with poverty and instructs you to be miserly, but Allah promises you His forgiveness and grace...﴾
(*al-Baqarah* 2: 268)

Having mentioned what the Shaytân wants to do to people, and what helps to protect one from his temptations, which is true servitude to Allah, adherence to faith and putting one's trust in Him, Allah now says: ﴿Verily you will have no power over My slaves﴾ that is, you have no power to tempt them; rather Allah will ward off all evil from them, if they are true slaves to Him, and He will protect them from the accursed Shaytân and suffice them against him.

﴿and sufficient is Allah as a guardian﴾ for the one who puts his trust in Him and complies with His commands.



﴿رَبُّكُمُ الَّذِي يُنْزِلُ لَكُمُ الْفُلُكَ فِي الْبَحْرِ لِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا ﴾ ٦٦ وَإِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الظُّرُفُ فِي الْبَحْرِ ضَلَّ مَنْ نَدْعُونَ إِلَيْهَا فَلَمَّا هَجَنُوكُمْ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ أَعْرَضْتُمْ وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَنُ كُفُورًا ﴾ ٦٧ أَفَأَمْنَثْتُمْ أَنْ يَخْسِفَ بِكُمْ جَانِبَ الْبَرِّ أَوْ يُرِسِّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَاصِبًا ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا لَكُمْ وَكِيلًا ﴾ ٦٨ أَمْ أَمْنَثْتُمْ أَنْ يُعِيدَكُمْ فِيهِ تَارَةً أُخْرَى فَيُرِسِّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ قَاصِفًا مِنَ الرِّيحِ فَيُغَرِّقُكُمْ بِمَا كَفَرْتُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا لَكُمْ عَلَيْنَا يَدًا تَبْيَعًا ﴾ ٦٩ (سورة الإسراء: ٦٦-٦٩)

- 17:66. It is your Lord Who drives forward the ships for you on the sea, so that you may seek of His bounty. Verily He is to you Most Merciful.
- 17:67. When danger threatens you at sea, all those on whom you call disappear [from your minds], except Him alone. But when He brings you safe to dry land, you turn away from Him. Man is ever ungrateful.
- 17:68. Do you then feel secure that He will not cause a tract of dry land to swallow you up, or that He will not send against you a violent squall of pebbles? Then you will find none to protect you.
- 17:69. Or do you feel secure that He will not send you back [to sea] once more, then send against you a tempest and drown you because of your disbelief? Then you will find no one to help you against Us.

Here Allah mentions the blessings that He has bestowed upon people, as He has made to be of service to them ships and other vessels, which He inspired them to make. And He has made the tumultuous sea to be of service to them, carrying them on its surface, so that people may benefit thereby, travelling, carrying their goods and doing trade. This is by His mercy towards His slaves, for He is

ever merciful and compassionate, giving them everything they want and that is useful for them.

One of the signs of His mercy, which indicates that He is the only One Who is deserving of worship, to the exclusion of all others, is that if harm befalls them on the sea, and they fear that they will die because of the high waves, those whom they used to worship besides Allah at times of ease, among the living and the dead, vanish from their minds, and it is as if they never called upon them at any time, because they realise that those (objects of worship) are helpless and incapable of granting relief from hardship. Instead they cry out to the Originator of the earth and the heavens, Whose help all creatures seek at times of hardship, and they call upon Him and beseech Him with utter sincerity in such situations.

But when Allah grants them relief from hardship and brings them safely to the shore, they forget the one on Whom they called, and they associate others with Him that can neither bring benefit nor cause harm, and can neither give nor withhold, and they turn away from showing sincere devotion to their true Lord and Sovereign. This is indicative of man's ignorance and ingratitude, except those whom Allah has guided and blessed with sound reasoning, so they are guided to the straight path. Such a one knows that the One Who grants relief from hardship and saves one from terrors is the only One Who deserves to be shown sincerity in all one's actions, at times of ease and of hardship.

As for the one who fails and is left to his own devices and weak reasoning, at the time of hardship he focuses only on his immediate interests and need to be saved in that situation. But when he is saved and the hardship is over, he thinks in his ignorance that he has managed to escape from Allah, and the idea of consequences in this world never crosses his mind, let alone consequences in the hereafter.

Therefore Allah reminds them by saying: ﴿Do you then feel secure that He will not cause a tract of dry land to swallow you up, or that

He will not send against you a violent squall of pebbles?» That is, He is able to do all things: if He so willed, He would send down punishment upon you which would come upon you from beneath you by means of the earth swallowing you up, or from above you by means of showers of pebbles, and you would be destroyed, so do not think that death or destruction can only come at sea.

If you do think that, then do you feel confident that «that He will not send you back [to sea] once more, then send against you a tempest» that is, a strong wind that destroys everything in its path «and drown you because of your disbelief? Then you will find no one to help you against Us» and Allah does not wrong them in the slightest.



﴿ وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَجَلَّتْهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيْبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَقْسِيمًا ﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٧٠)

- 17:70. We have indeed honoured the sons of Adam, given them means of transportation on land and sea, provided them with good things, and have favoured them above many of those whom We have created.

This is by His generosity and kindness towards them, the full extent of which no one can know. He has honoured the children of Adam in all ways, as He has honoured them with knowledge and reason, sending the Messengers, sending down the Books, making some of them His close friends and chosen ones, and bestowing upon them blessings both visible and invisible.

«given them means of transportation on land» such as camels, mules, donkeys and other means of transportation
 «and sea» such as ships and other vessels

﴿provided them with good things﴾ such as food, drink, clothing and spouses. There is nothing good that has to do with their needs, but Allah has honoured them with it and made it available to them.

﴿and have favoured them above many of those whom We have created﴾ by means of that for which He has singled them out of blessings, virtues and qualities that are not given to other types of creatures.

So will they not give thanks to the One Who has bestowed these blessings and warded off harm? These blessings should not be a barrier between them and the One Who bestowed them, and they should not distract them from worshipping their Lord, let alone be used to disobey Him.



﴿يَوْمَ نَدْعُوا كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِمَا مِنْهُمْ فَمَنْ أُوفِيَ كِتَابَهُ، يُعَذَّبُهُ، فَأُولَئِكَ يَقْرَءُونَ كِتَابَهُمْ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتَبِّلًا ﴿٦٧﴾ وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَنَ فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَنَ وَأَصْلُ سَبِيلًا ﴿٦٨﴾﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٧٢-٧١)

- 17:71. [Mention, O Muhammad] the day when We will summon every community with their leaders. Those who are given their record of deeds in their right hands will read their record; they will never be wronged even by as much as the thread in the groove of a date stone.
- 17:72. Those who are blind [to the truth] in this world will be blind in the hereafter, and even further astray from the path [of truth].

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us how people will be on the Day of Resurrection, and that He will call all people, with their leaders and those who called them to true guidance, namely the Messengers and their deputies. Each nation will be presented, brought by their

Messenger who called them, and their deeds will be judged against the Book to which the Messenger called them: were their deeds in accordance with it or otherwise? Based on this criterion, they will be divided into two groups:

﴿Those who are given their record of deeds in their right hands﴾ because they followed their leader who guided them to the straight path, followed His Book and did a great deal of good deeds and few bad deeds

﴿will read their record﴾ happily and joyfully, rejoicing at what they see in it

﴿they will never be wronged even by as much as the thread in the groove of a date stone﴾ with regard to what they did of good deeds.

﴿Those who are blind [to the truth] in this world﴾ and did not accept the truth or submit to it, rather they followed misguidance
 ﴿will be blind in the hereafter﴾ to following the path that leads to paradise, just as they did not follow it in this world

﴿and even further astray from the path [of truth]﴾ because the requital matches the nature of the deed; as you sow, so shall you reap.

This verse indicates that every nation will be called to its religion and Book: did it act in accordance with it or not? They will not be called to account on the basis of the law of a Prophet whom they were not instructed to follow, for Allah does not punish anyone except after proof is established against him and he chooses to reject it.

People of goodness will be given their records of their deeds in their right hands and they will rejoice greatly; people of evil will be the opposite of that and they will not be able to read their records because of the severity of their distress and grief.



﴿وَلَنْ كَادُوا لِيَقْتُلُوكُمْ عَنِ الَّذِي أَوْعَيْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ لِئَنَّهُمْ عَلَيْنَا عَذَابٌ مُّؤْمِنُونَ وَإِذَا لَآتَخْذَذُوكُمْ خَلِيلًا وَلَوْلَا أَنْ ثَبَّتَنَا لَقَدْ كِدْثَرَتْ تَرَكَنْ إِلَيْهِمْ شَيْئًا قَلِيلًا﴾

إِذَا لَأَذْفَنَكُمْ ضُعْفَ الْحَيَاةِ وَضُعْفَ الْمَهَاجِرَاتِ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْتُمْ نَصِيرًا ٦٤
 وَإِنْ كَادُوا لِيَسْتَفِرُونَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ لِيُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِنْهَا وَإِنَّا لَا يَلْبِسُونَ٦٥
 جَنَاحَكُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ٦٦ سُنْنَةٌ مِنْ قَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكُمْ مِنْ رُسُلِنَا وَلَا يَجِدُ لِشَيْءِنَا٦٧
تَعْوِيلًا ٦٨ (سورة الإسراء: ٧٧-٧٣)

- 17:73. Verily, they were about to tempt you away from that which We have revealed to you [O Muhammad], so that you would fabricate something else and attribute it to Us; then they would have taken you as a close friend.
- 17:74. Had We not kept you steadfast, you would nearly have inclined towards them a little.
- 17:75. In that case, We would have made you taste a double punishment in this life, and a double punishment after death. Then you would have found none to help you against Us.
- 17:76. They were about to hound you from the land in order to expel you therefrom, but in that case they would not have remained there after you, except for a little while.
- 17:77. Such was Our way with the Messengers We sent before you [O Muhammad], and you will find no change in Our way.²⁹

Here Allah (ﷻ) mentions His favour to His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) and how He protected him from those who were keen to tempt him away by all means:

﴿Verily, they were about to tempt you away from that which We have revealed to you [O Muhammad], so that you would fabricate something else and attribute it to Us﴾ that is, they wanted something of you but they did not get it. They used tricks to make you fabricate and attribute to Allah something other than what We revealed to you,

²⁹ What is meant here is that it is the way of Allah to send His punishment upon people if they expelled the Messenger who was sent to them. (at-Tabari)

so that you would bring something that was in accordance with their desires and you would abandon that which Allah had sent down to you.

﴿then﴾ if you had done what they wanted ﴿they would have taken you as a close friend﴾ that is, one who was beloved and dearer to them than their own loved ones, because of what Allah has bestowed upon you of good manners and etiquette that endear you to everyone, near and far, friend and enemy.

But you should understand that they only oppose you and show enmity to you because of the truth that you have brought, not because of your character. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿We know well that what they say grieves you [O Muhammad]. It is not you they disbelieve; rather it is the revelations of Allah that the wrongdoers deny.﴾ (*al-An'ām* 6: 33)

Nevertheless, ﴿Had We not kept you steadfast﴾ in adherence to the truth, and blessed you by enabling you to refrain from responding to their call

﴿you would nearly have inclined towards them a little﴾ because of their persistence and your desire that they be guided.

﴿In that case﴾, if you had inclined towards what they wanted, ﴿We would have made you taste a double punishment in this life, and a double punishment after death﴾ because of the perfect blessing that Allah has bestowed upon you and because of your perfect knowledge. ﴿Then you would have found none to help you against Us﴾ to save you from the punishment that would have befallen you, but Allah (ﷻ) protected you from that which leads to evil and from people, and He made you steadfast and guided you to the straight path, and you did not incline towards them at all. Thus He granted you a perfect blessing.

﴿They were about to hound you from the land in order to expel you therefrom﴾ that is, because they hated for you to stay among them, they almost drove you out of the land and expelled you from it.

If they had done that, they would not have remained there after you, except for a little while, until the punishment came upon them, as is the way of Allah with all nations, which never changes or varies. For every nation that rejected and expelled its Messenger, Allah hastened its punishment.

When those who disbelieved plotted against him and expelled him, it was not long before Allah punished them at Badr, where their leaders were killed and they were weakened; to Him be praise.

This passage points to the individual's great need for Allah to make him steadfast, and indicates that he should keep beseeching his Lord, asking Him to make him firm in his faith, and he should continue striving by all means to attain that, because Allah said to the Prophet ﷺ, who is the most perfect of all people: «Had We not kept you steadfast, you would nearly have inclined towards them a little», so how about others?

It is also a reminder from Allah to His Messenger ﷺ of His blessings and how He protected him against evil. This indicates that Allah loves for His slaves to notice the blessing that He bestows upon them – when they are exposed to temptation – by protecting them from it and keeping them steadfast in their faith.

We also see that the higher a person's status is and the more blessings he receives from Allah, the greater his sin and the more serious the offence if he does something blameworthy, because Allah reminded His Messenger ﷺ that if he did that – although he is far above doing such a thing – then «We would have made you taste a double punishment in this life, and a double punishment after death. Then you would have found none to help you against Us».

These verses also tell us that when Allah wills to destroy a nation, their sins increase and become more serious in nature, thus the punishment becomes inevitable, as is His way with all nations, when they expelled their Messengers.



﴿ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذُلُوكِ الظَّنَمِ إِلَى غَسِيقِ أَبْيَالِ وَقْرَمَانَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْمَانَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا ﴾ ٧٨ وَمِنْ أَبْيَالِ فَتَهَاجِدْ بِهِ، نَافِلَةً لَكَ عَسَى أَنْ يَعْثُكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَحْمُودًا ﴾ ٧٩ وَقُلْ رَبِّ أَدْخِلْنِي مُذَكَّرَ صِدْقِي وَأَخْرِجْنِي مُخْرَجَ صِدْقِي وَاجْعَلْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ سُلْطَنًا تَصِيرًا ﴾ ٨٠ وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَطْلُ إِنَّ الْبَطْلَ كَانَ رَهُوقًا

(سورة الإسراء: ٨١-٧٨) ٨١

- 17:78. Establish prayer at the decline of the sun [from the meridian] until the darkness of the night, and recite the Qur'an at dawn, for verily the recitation at dawn is ever witnessed [by the angels].³⁰
- 17:79. And during the night wake up and pray [*tahajjud*], an additional prayer for you [O Muhammad], so that your Lord may raise you to a station of praise and honour.
- 17:80. Say: My Lord, grant me a goodly entrance and a goodly exit,³¹ and grant me from You a supporting power.
- 17:81. And say: The truth has come and falsehood has perished. Falsehood is always bound to perish.

Here Allah (ﷻ) instructs His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) to establish prayer perfectly, with the proper outward movements and inward focus of mind, at the prescribed times.

﴿ اتَّ الْمَوْلَى إِلَيْهِ الْمُنْتَهَى ﴾ that is, when it begins to sink towards the western horizon, after reaching its zenith. This includes *dhuhr* and '*asr* prayers.

³⁰ The five daily prayers are included in this verse, from *dhuhr* (mid-day) prayer through '*asr* (mid-afternoon) to *maghrib* (sunset) and '*ishâ'* (night-time, when it becomes dark), and finally *fajr* (dawn).

³¹ Many commentators said that this refers to the Prophet's leaving Makkah and entering Madinah.

﴿until the darkness of the night﴾ this includes *maghrib* and ‘*ishâ’* prayers.

﴿and recite the Qur'an at dawn﴾ that is, *fajr* prayer. It is referred to as reciting the Qur'an because it is prescribed to recite at length in this prayer more than in others, and because of the virtue of recitation, because it is witnessed by Allah and by the angels of the night and the angels of the day.

This verse mentions the times of the five daily prayers, and indicates that the prayers that are to take place at these times are obligatory, because the command refers specifically to them.

It also indicates that being on time is a condition of the prayer being valid and that the time is the reason for the prayer being obligatory, because Allah enjoins us to establish the prayers at these times. It also indicates that duhuhr and ‘*aṣr* may be put together for a valid reason, as may *maghrib* and ‘*ishâ’*, because Allah mentioned their times together.

This verse also highlights the virtue of *fajr* prayer and of reciting at length in it, and highlights the fact that recitation is an essential part of the prayer, because calling an act of worship by the name of one of its parts indicates that that part is obligatory.

﴿And during the night wake up and pray [tahajjud]﴾ that is, pray at any part of the night

﴿an additional prayer for you [O Muhammad]﴾ that is, so that prayer at night may be something additional for you, so as to raise you in status, unlike others for whom it is expiation of sins.

And it may be that what is meant is that the five daily prayers are obligatory for you (O Muhammad [ﷺ]) and for the believers, unlike prayers at night, which are obligatory for you in particular (O Muhammad [ﷺ]), because of your special status before Allah; as He wants to honour you, He has made your duties greater than those of others, so as to increase you in reward and so that you may attain thereby the station of praise and glory (*al-maqâm al-mahmood*), which

is the station for which the first and the last will praise him, the station of greater intercession, when the people will seek the intercession of Adam, then Nooh, then Ibrâheem, then Moosâ, then ‘Eesâ, and all of them will excuse themselves and refuse to do it, until they seek the intercession of the leader of the sons of Adam, to ask Allah to relieve them of the distress and anguish of the standing (on the Day of Resurrection). Then he will intercede with his Lord, Who will accept his intercession and make him stand in that station, for which he will be envied by the first and the last, and he will be praised by all people.

﴿Say: My Lord, grant me a goodly entrance and a goodly exit﴾ that is, make my entrance and my exit all in obedience to You and pleasing to You, because that means sincerity and compliance with Allah’s command.

﴿and grant me from You a supporting power﴾ that is, clear evidence and definitive proof for all that I do or do not do.

This is the highest position that Allah may cause a person to attain, that all his situations are good and are means of drawing closer to his Lord, and that – in all situations – he may have clear evidence. This includes beneficial knowledge, righteous deeds and knowledge of various issues and proofs.

﴿And say: The truth has come and falsehood has perished﴾ – the truth is that which Allah revealed to His Messenger Muhammad ﷺ and commanded him to speak and proclaim. The truth has come which nothing can resist, and falsehood has perished, that is it has diminished and vanished.

﴿Falsehood is always bound to perish﴾ that is, this is the nature of falsehood, but it may have the upper hand for a while, if it is not opposed by the truth. But when the truth comes, falsehood diminishes and ends up lifeless. Hence falsehood is only popular at times and in places where there is no knowledge of the revelations and proofs of Allah.



﴿ وَنَزَّلْنَا مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شَفاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا ﴾

(سورة الإسراء: ٨٢) ﴿٨٢﴾

- 17:82. We send down in the Qur'an that which is a healing and mercy for the believers, but it increases the wrongdoers in nothing but loss.

The Qur'an contains healing and mercy, but that is not for everyone; rather it is only for those who believe in it and have knowledge of it. As for the wrongdoers who do not believe in it, or who do not act in accordance with it, its verses only increase them in loss, as proof is established against them by means of it.

The healing that is contained in the Qur'an is broad in scope, and offers healing for spiritual maladies such as doubt, ignorance, corrupt views, deviation and bad intentions. It also contains certain knowledge by means of which all doubts may be dispelled, and exhortation and reminders that dispel all desires that are contrary to the command of Allah. It also offers healing from physical pain and sickness.

With regard to mercy, this refers to what the Qur'an contains of the means of attaining mercy and encouragement to pursue those means; when a person does those things, he will attain mercy, eternal happiness and reward in this world and the hereafter.



﴿ وَإِذَا أَنْقَمْنَا عَلَى الْإِنْسَنِ أَعْرَضَ وَنَأْمَأْنِي، وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ كَانَ يَتُوسَّا ﴾

(سورة الإسراء: ٨٣)

17:83. When We bestow Our blessings upon man, he turns away and draws aside, but if misfortune befalls him, he is filled with despair.

This is the nature of man, by default, except those whom Allah guides. When Allah blesses man, he rejoices in the blessing and becomes insolent because of it, turning away and drawing aside from his Lord; so he does not give thanks and does not remember Him. «but if misfortune», such as sickness and the like «befalls him, he is filled with despair» of anything good, and he loses all hope in his Lord, thinking that this misfortune will last forever.

But in the case of the one whom Allah guides, when blessings come to him he humbles himself before his Lord and give thanks for His blessings, and when misfortune strikes, he beseeches his Lord and puts his hope in Allah to restore his well-being and relieve him of what has befallen him, and thus the calamity is alleviated.



﴿ قُلْ كُلُّ يَعْمَلُ عَلَىٰ شَاكِرٍ تِهِ، فَرَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ هُوَ أَهْدَى سَيِّلًا ﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٨٤)

(84)

17:84. Say: Everyone acts according to his own disposition. But your Lord knows best who is more rightly guided as to the way.

«Say: Everyone» that is, all people «acts according to his own disposition» that is, as befits his nature. If he is one of the chosen and righteous, nothing befits him except to do deeds solely for the sake of the Lord of the worlds. In the case of others, who have been forsaken by Allah and are doomed to failure, nothing befits them except doing deeds for the sake of created beings, and they do not do anything except that which suits them.

﴿But your Lord knows best who is more rightly guided as to the way﴾ so He knows who is fit to be guided, and He guides him; and He knows who is not fit for guidance, so He forsakes him and does not guide him.



﴿وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الْرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّيٍّ وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قِيلًا﴾

(سورة الإسراء: ٨٥)

17:85. They ask you about the soul. Say: The soul is a matter known only to my Lord, and of knowledge you have been granted only a little.

This is an implied rebuke of the one who asks questions with no intention but to show stubbornness and try to frustrate the person questioned, and he does not ask about that which is important. They ask about the soul, which is a hidden matter that not everyone is able to describe properly or know its nature. Moreover, they are lacking in the knowledge they need and failing to ask about it.

Hence Allah instructed His Messenger ﷺ to answer the question by saying: ﴿Say: The soul is a matter known only to my Lord﴾ That is, it is one of the things that He created by saying to it, ‘Be!’ and it was. There is no great benefit in asking about it, when one lacks knowledge of other important issues.

This verse indicates that if a person is asked about something when it would have been more appropriate to ask about something else, he should refrain from answering and point the questioner towards that which he needs to know and which will benefit him.



﴿ وَلَئِنْ شِئْنَا لَنَذْهَبَنَّ بِالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ لَا يَعْدُكَ بِهِ، عَلَيْنَا وَكِيلًا ﴾
 إِلَّا رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ إِنَّ فَضْلَهُ كَانَ عَلَيْكَ كَبِيرًا ﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٨٦-٨٧)

- 17:86. If We so willed, We could surely take away that which We have revealed to you; then you would find no one to help you in recovering it from Us.
- 17:87. But [it has been left with you] by the mercy of your Lord, for His favour to you has been great indeed.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that the Qur'an and the revelation that He gave to His Messenger (ﷺ) was a mercy from Him to the Messenger and His slaves, and it is the greatest blessing of all to His Messenger, for the bounty of Allah towards him is great and no one can evaluate it.

The One Who bestowed it upon you is able to take it away, then you would not find anyone who could recover it for you. So you should be happy to have it and rejoice in it, and do not let the disbelief of the disbelievers and the mockery of those who have gone astray make you sad, for the greatest blessing (namely the Qur'an) was offered to them, but they rejected it, because they are insignificant before Allah and He has forsaken them.



﴿ قُلْ لَئِنْ أَجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُونَ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْءَانِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ، وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِيَقْعِدُنَّ ظَهِيرًا ﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ٨٨)

- 17:88. Say: Verily if all of humankind and the jinn were to come together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could never produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another.

This is definitive proof of the soundness and truth of that which the Messenger (ﷺ) brought, as Allah challenged humankind and the jinn to produce its like, and stated that they would never be able to produce its like; even if they all cooperated to that effect they would never be able to do it.

And it came to pass as Allah told us, for those who disbelieved had the strongest motive to refute it in any way possible, and they had a strong command of the language and were very eloquent. If they had the least ability to meet the challenge, they would have done so.

Thus it is known that they surrendered completely, willingly or otherwise, and declared that they were incapable of producing something to match the Qur'an.

How could one who is created from clay and is lacking in all aspects, who possesses no knowledge, power, will, speech or perfection except that which is granted by his Lord, match the words of the Lord of the earth and the heavens, Who sees all that is hidden, Who is possessed of absolute perfection and majesty, and is worthy of all praise, and if all the sea, with seven more seas besides, were ink and all the trees were pens, the ink would run dry and the pens would wear out, but the words of Allah would never be exhausted?

Just as no one in creation is in any way like unto Allah in any of His attributes, His speech is one of His attributes, in which no one resembles Him. So there is nothing like unto Him in His essence, His names, His attributes and His actions – may He be blessed and exalted.

May he perish, the one who cannot see the difference between the words of the Creator and the words of created beings, and claims that Muhammad (ﷺ) fabricated it and attributed it to Allah, and that he made it up by himself.



﴿ وَلَقَدْ صَرَفْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِي هَذَا الْقُرْءَانِ مِنْ كُلِّ مَثَلٍ فَأَقَبَ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ إِلَّا كُثُورًا ۝ وَقَاتُلُوا لَنَّ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ تَفْجُرَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ يَنْبُوعًا ۝ ۹۱ أَوْ تَكُونَ لَكَ جَنَّةٌ مِنْ تَخْيِيلٍ وَعِنْبَرٍ فَتَفْجُرَ الْأَنْهَارَ خَلْلَهَا تَفْجِيرًا ۝ ۹۲ أَوْ تُسْقَطَ السَّمَاءُ كَمَا زَعَمْتَ عَلَيْنَا كَسْفًا أَوْ تَأْتِي بِاللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ قَبْلًا ۝ ۹۳ أَوْ يَكُونَ لَكَ بَيْتٌ مِنْ رُخْرُفٍ أَوْ تَرْقَ فِي السَّمَاءِ وَلَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لِرُقْبَكَ حَتَّىٰ تُنْزَلَ عَلَيْنَا كِتَابًا نَقْرَئُهُ ۝ قُلْ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّ هَلْ كُنْتُ إِلَّا بَشَرًا رَسُولًا ۝ ۹۴ وَمَا نَعْلَمُ أَنَّ النَّاسَ أَنْ يَوْمَنَا إِذْ جَاءُهُمْ أَهْدَى إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَبْعَثَ اللَّهُ بَشَرًا رَسُولًا ۝ ۹۵ قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَلَائِكَةٌ يَعْشُونَ مُطَمَّيْنَ لَزَلَّنَا عَلَيْهِمْ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ مَلَكًا رَسُولًا ۝ ۹۶ قُلْ كَفَنِ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِ وَبَيْنَكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ يَعْبَادُهُ خَيْرًا بَصِيرًا ۝ ۹۷﴾

(سورة الإسراء: ۸۹-۹۷)

- 17:89. We have explained [the truth] to man in this Qur'an, discussing different issues in various ways, yet most people persist in disbelief.
- 17:90. They say: We will never believe in you until you cause a spring to gush forth from the earth for us;
- 17:91. Or you have a garden of date palms and vines, and you cause rivers to gush forth in their midst;
- 17:92. Or you cause the sky to fall upon us in pieces, as you claimed [will happen on the Day of Resurrection]; or you bring Allah and the angels before us, face to face;
- 17:93. Or you have a house made of gold; or you ascend to heaven, and even then we will not believe in your ascent unless you bring down to us a Book we can read. Say: Glory be to my Lord! Am I anything but a man, sent as a Messenger?

- 17:94. Nothing kept the people from believing, when guidance came to them, except that they said: Has Allah sent a [mere] human as a Messenger?
- 17:95. Say: If there had been angels on earth, walking about and settled therein, We would surely have sent down to them from heaven an angel as a messenger.
- 17:96. Say: Allah is sufficient as a witness between me and you. Verily He is well aware of His slaves and sees them all.

﴿We have explained [the truth] to man in this Qur'an, discussing different issues in various ways﴾ that is, We have various ways of exhortation and comparisons, and We have discussed repeatedly issues that people need to know, so that they may be reminded of them and fear Allah. But only a few of them pay heed, those for whom Allah has previously decreed happiness, and whom Allah helped and guided. But most people insist on showing ingratitude for this blessing, which is the greatest of all blessings, and they showed stubbornness by demanding signs other than the signs that Allah sent to His Prophet ﷺ, and they came up with suggested signs from their own ignorant and unjust minds. Hence they said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who brought this Qur'an which contains all kinds of proof and signs:

﴿We will never believe in you until you cause a spring to gush forth from the earth for us﴾ that is, flowing rivers.

﴿Or you have a garden of date palms and vines﴾ so that you no longer need to walk about in the marketplaces, coming and going.

﴿Or you cause the sky to fall upon us in pieces, as you claimed [will happen on the Day of Resurrection]﴾ that is, as a punishment.

﴿Or you bring Allah and the angels before us, face to face﴾ that is, so we can see them with our own eyes and they testify to the truth of what you have brought.

﴿Or you have a house made of gold﴾ that is, adorned with gold and other materials

﴿Or you ascend to heaven﴾ physically, ﴿and even then we will not believe in your ascent unless you bring down to us a Book we can read﴾.

As this stubbornness and these demands were the words of the most foolish and the most wicked of people, which implied rejection of the truth and an ill-mannered attitude towards Allah, and stemmed from a belief that it was the Messenger (ﷺ) who produced the signs by himself, Allah instructed him to declare Him to be far above that which they ascribed to Him, so He said:

﴿Say: Glory be to my Lord﴾ and exalted be He far above what they say, for His rulings and signs cannot be in accordance with their corrupt whims and desires and their misguided opinions.

﴿Am I anything but a man, sent as a Messenger?﴾ I have no control over the matter at all.

This matter is what prevented most people from believing: the fact that the Messengers who were sent to them were humans of their own kind. But this was by the mercy of Allah towards them; He sent to them Messengers from among themselves, for they would not have been able to learn from angels.

﴿If there had been angels on earth, walking about and settled therein﴾ then they would have been able to see angels and learn from them, so ﴿We would surely have sent down to them from heaven an angel as a messenger﴾ so that they could learn from them.

﴿Say: Allah is sufficient as a witness between me and you. Verily He is well aware of His slaves and sees them all﴾. Part of His testimony in support of His Messenger (ﷺ) is the miracles with which He supported him, the signs that He sent down to him and the victory that He granted him over those who opposed him. If the Messenger had fabricated any lies and attributed them to Allah, He would have seized him by his right hand, then cut off his aorta (*cf.* 69: 44-46). For Allah is All-Aware, All-Seeing, and nothing about His slaves is hidden from Him.



﴿ وَمَن يَهِدَ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهَتَّدٌ وَمَن يُضْلِلُ فَلَنْ يَجِدَ لَهُ مُلْتَبِسًا إِنْ دُونَهُ وَخَسْرَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ عَمِيًّا وَيَكُنَا وَصُمًّا مَا أَنْهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ كُلُّمَا خَتَ زَنْتَهُمْ سَعِيرًا ﴾ ذَلِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِعِيَادِنَا وَقَالُوا أَوْذَا كُلًا عِظَمًا وَرَفَنَا أَوْ نَا لَمْبَعُونَ حَلَقًا جَدِيدًا ﴾ أَوْلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ قَادِرٌ عَلَى أَنْ يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ وَجَعَلَ لَهُمْ أَجْلًا لَا رَبَّ فِيهِ فَإِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا كُفُورًا ﴾ قُلْ لَوْ أَنْتُمْ تَمْلِكُونَ خَزَائِنَ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّيْتُ إِذَا لَأَمْسَكْتُمْ خَشْيَةَ إِلَيْنَاقٍ وَكَانَ إِلَيْسَنْ قَتُورًا ﴾

(سورة الإسراء: ٩٧-١٠٠) ﴿١﴾

- 17:97. Whomever Allah guides is truly guided; whomever He causes to go astray, you will find no one to protect them from Him. On the Day of Resurrection, We will gather them on their faces, blind, dumb and deaf. Their abode will be hell; every time its flames die down, We will increase for them the fierceness of the blaze.
- 17:98. That will be their recompense because they rejected Our revelations and said: What! When we have turned into bones and dust, will we really be raised up and created anew?
- 17:99. Do they not see that Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth, has power to create the like of them? He has decreed an appointed time for them, of which there is no doubt. Yet the wrongdoers persist in disbelief.
- 17:100. Say: If you possessed the treasures of my Lord's bounty, you would surely hold them back for fear of spending, for man is ever miserly.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He is the only One Who has the power to guide or leave astray. Whomever He guides, He shows him the path of ease and protects him from the path of hardship, so that he

will be truly guided. But whomever He sends astray, He will forsake him and leave him to his own devices, so he will have none to guide him other than Allah, and he will have no ally to protect him from the punishment of Allah, when Allah gathers them on their faces by way of humiliation and disgrace, blind and dumb, so that they will not be able to see or speak.

﴿Their abode﴾ that is, their destination
﴿will be hell﴾ in which all distress, anguish and punishment will be combined.

﴿every time its flames die down﴾ and are about to be extinguished
﴿We will increase for them the fierceness of the blaze﴾ that is, We will make it increase in flame. The punishment will never be reduced, nor will they be finished off so that they might die. The punishment will never be alleviated, but Allah ﴿ك﴾ will not wrong them; rather He will requite them for disbelieving in His signs and denying the resurrection of which all the Messengers and Books spoke, and for demanding signs from their Lord and denying His perfect power.

﴿and said: What! When we have turned into bones and dust, will we really be raised up and created anew?﴾ That is, that will never happen, because it is highly unlikely – according to their corrupt way of thinking.

﴿Do they not see that Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth﴾, the creation of which is greater than the creation of man
﴿has power to create the like of them?﴾ Indeed He is able to do that. But **﴿He has decreed an appointed time for them, of which there is no doubt﴾** otherwise, if He so willed, he could have brought them all at once.

﴿Yet﴾, even though He has established proof and evidence for the resurrection, **﴿the wrongdoers persist in disbelief﴾**, unjustly on their part and in rejection of the truth.

﴿Say: If you possessed the treasures of my Lord's bounty﴾ that never runs out or diminishes

«you would surely hold them back for fear of spending» that is, lest what you spend from them runs out, even though it is impossible for the treasuries of Allah to run out. But man is inherently stingy and miserly.



﴿ وَلَقَدْ عَالَيْنَا مُوسَى يَسْعَ إِيمَانِهِ يَنْتَهِ فَسَعَلَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ فَقَالَ لَهُمْ فِرْعَوْنُ إِنِّي لِأَطْنَكَ يَنْمُوسَى مَسْحُورًا ﴾١١﴿ قَالَ لَقَدْ عِلِّمْتَ مَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ أَرَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ بَصَارِرَ وَلِنِّي لِأَطْنَكَ يَنْفِرْعَوْثُ مَشْبُورًا ﴾١٢﴿ فَأَرَادَ أَنْ يَسْفِرَهُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُ وَمَنْ مَعَهُ جِمِيعًا ﴾١٣﴿ وَقُلْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ لِيَنِّي إِسْرَائِيلُ أَسْكُنُوا الْأَرْضَ فَإِذَا جَاءَهُ وَعْدُ الْآخِرَةِ جِئْنَا بِكُمْ لَفِيفًا ﴾١٤﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ١٠١ - ١٠٤)

- 17:101. We gave Moosâ nine clear signs – ask the Children of Israel. When he came to them, Pharaoh said to him: O Moosâ, indeed I think you are bewitched.
- 17:102. Moosâ said: You know full well that none but the Lord of the heavens and the earth has sent down these [signs] as clear evidence. Verily, O Pharaoh, I think that you are doomed!
- 17:103. So he resolved to drive them out of the land, but We drowned him and all those who were with him.
- 17:104. After his death, we said to the Children of Israel: Dwell in the land, but when the appointed time of the hereafter comes, We will bring you all together as a mixed crowd.

That is: you, O Messenger who is supported by signs, are not the first Messenger to be rejected by the people, for before you We sent Moosâ ibn 'Imrân, to whom We spoke directly, to Pharaoh and his people, and We gave him «nine clear signs», each of which on its

own would have been sufficient for anyone whose aim was to follow the truth, such as the snake, the staff, the flood, the locusts, the lice, the frogs, the blood, the plague and the parting of the sea. So if you doubt any of that, ﴿ask the Children of Israel﴾

﴿When he came to them, Pharaoh said to him﴾ despite these signs

﴿O Moosâ, indeed I think you are bewitched﴾.

﴿Moosâ said﴾ to him: ﴿You know full well﴾, O Pharaoh, ﴿that none but the Lord of the heavens and the earth has sent down these [signs] as clear evidence﴾ from Him to His slaves, so your statement is not correct. Rather you only said that in order to deceive your own people and out of disrespect towards their intelligence.

﴿Verily, O Pharaoh, I think that you are doomed!﴾ that is, disgraced and exposed to punishment, subject to condemnation, blame and curses.

﴿So he﴾ namely Pharaoh

﴿resolved to drive them out of the land﴾ that is, to expel them and banish them from the land

﴿but We drowned him and all those who were with him﴾ and we caused the Children of Israel to inherit their land.

Hence Allah says: ﴿After his death, we said to the Children of Israel: Dwell in the land, but when the appointed time of the hereafter comes, We will bring you all together as a mixed crowd﴾ that is, all of you, so that We may requite each one according to his deeds.



﴿وَبِالْحَقِّ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ وَبِالْحَقِّ نَزَّلَ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا﴾ (١٠٥) (سورة الإسراء: ١٠٥)

17:105. With the truth We have sent it [the Qur'an] down, and with the truth it has descended. And We have not sent you but as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner.

That is, with the truth We sent down this Noble Qur'an, speaking of commands and prohibitions, reward and punishment.

﴿With the truth We have sent it [the Qur'an] down﴾ that is, with truth from Allah and justice, and with protection from every accursed devil.

﴿And We have not sent you but as a bearer of glad tidings﴾ to those who obey Allah, of reward in this world and the hereafter
 ﴿and a warner﴾ to those who disobey Allah, of punishment in this world and the hereafter. This requires that there should also be further explanation of the glad tidings and warnings that are given.



﴿وَقُرْنَةً أَنَا فَرَقْتُهُ لِنَقْرَاءَهُ عَلَى النَّاسِ عَلَى مُكْثٍ وَزَرَّنَتْهُ نَزِيلًا ﴾١٥١﴿ قُلْ إِمْنَأْ بِهِ أَوْ لَا تُؤْمِنُوا إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أَتُوا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ إِذَا يُتْسَلَّمُ عَلَيْهِمْ يَخْرُجُونَ لِلأَذْقَانِ سُجَّدًا ﴾١٥٢﴿ وَقَوْلُونَ سُبْحَنَ رَبِّنَا إِنْ كَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّنَا لَمَفْعُولًا ﴾١٥٣﴿ وَيَخْرُجُونَ لِلأَذْقَانِ يَسْكُونُ وَيَزِيدُهُمْ خُشُوعًا ﴾١٥٤﴾ (سورة الإسراء: ١٠٦-١٠٩)

- 17:106. It is a Qur'an that We have revealed with clarity so that you may recite it to the people slowly and with deliberation. And We have sent it down little by little.
- 17:107. Say: Believe in it, or do not believe. Verily, those who were given knowledge before it,³² when it is recited to them, fall down on their faces in prostration,
- 17:108. and they say: Glory be to our Lord. Verily the promise of our Lord is ever bound to be fulfilled.
- 17:109. They fall down on their faces, weeping, and it [the Qur'an] increases them in humility.

³² Namely the People of the Book (Jews and Christians).

That is, and We have sent down this Qur'an with clarity, to distinguish between guidance and misguidance, truth and falsehood (so that you may recite it to the people slowly and with deliberation), so that they may ponder and reflect upon its meanings, and derive knowledge from it.

(And We have sent it down little by little) that is, piecemeal over twenty-three years.

(Whenever they come to you [O Muhammad] with an argument, We reveal to you the truth and the best explanation.) (*al-Furqān* 25: 33)

Once it is clearly established that it is the truth concerning which there is no doubt whatsoever, then (Say) to those who reject it and turn away from it:

(Believe in it, or do not believe), for Allah has no need of you and you will not harm Him in the slightest; rather you only harm yourselves, for Allah has slaves other than you and it is they to whom Allah has given beneficial knowledge.

(when it is recited to them, fall down on their faces in prostration) that is, they are deeply moved by it and they submit to Him.

(and they say: Glory be to our Lord) and exalted be He far above that which is not befitting to His Majesty that the polytheists ascribe to Him.

(Verily the promise of our Lord) of the resurrection and requital for deeds

(is ever bound to be fulfilled) – it will not be broken and there is no doubt about it.

(They fall down on their faces, weeping, and it [the Qur'an] increases them in humility). These people are like those whom Allah blessed of the believers among the People of the Book, such as 'Abdullāh ibn Salām and others, who believed at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) and after that.



﴿ قُلْ أَدْعُوَ اللَّهَ أَوْ أَدْعُوَ الرَّحْمَنَ أَيَّاً مَا نَدْعُوْا لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْخُسْنَىٰ وَلَا جَهَرَ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا خَافَتْ بِهَا وَابْتَغَيْ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا ﴾ ١١١ وَقُلْ حَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَنْجُدْ لَهُ دَالِلٌ إِنْ كَانَ لَهُ شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمُلْكِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وَلِيٌّ مِنَ الْذُلِّ وَكَبِيرٌ تَكْبِيرًا ﴾ ١١٢ (سورة الإسراء: ١١١-١١٢)

- 17:110. Say [O Muhammad]: Call upon Allah, or call upon the Most Gracious [ar-Rahmân].³³ No matter which name you call upon Him by, to Him belong the most beautiful names. Do not raise your voice too loud in prayer, nor say it in too low a voice, but seek a way in between.
- 17:111. And say: Praise be to Allah Who has never begotten a son, and has no partner in His dominion, nor is anyone [needed] to protect Him due to [any] weakness. And magnify Him by proclaiming His greatness.

Here Allah (ﷻ) says to His slaves: «Call upon Allah, or call upon the Most Gracious [ar-Rahmân]» that is, whichever name you choose, for «No matter which name you call upon Him by, to Him belong the most beautiful names» that is, He does not have any name that is not beautiful, such that it would not be permissible to call upon Him by it; rather no matter what name you call upon Him by, it will serve the purpose. What should be done is to call upon Him for whatever is sought by the name that is appropriate to that need.

«Do not raise your voice too loud in prayer» that is, in your recitation
 «nor say it in too low a voice» for neither is allowed.

³³ The polytheists of Quraysh objected when they heard the Prophet (ﷺ) saying: O Allah, O Most Gracious (*Yâ Allâh, yâ Rahmân*). They said: Muhammad enjoins us to call upon One God at the time when he is calling upon two! So this verse was revealed to clarify that there is only One God, to Whom belong the most beautiful names and sublime attributes.

As for raising the voice too loud, if the polytheists who disbelieve in the Qur'an hear it, they revile it and they revile the one who brought it. As for reciting in too low a voice, that does not achieve the purpose because those who want to hear it cannot do so when the voice is too low.

﴿but seek a way in between﴾ that is, between being too loud and too low; in other words, a middle path between the two extremes.

﴿And say: Praise be to Allah﴾ to Whom belong all perfect attributes, praise and glory in all aspects, and Who is far above all faults and shortcomings.

﴿Who has never begotten a son, and has no partner in His dominion﴾; rather all dominion belongs to Allah, the One, the Subduer. Both the upper and lower realms are owned by Him and no one has any share in His dominion.

﴿nor is anyone [needed] to protect Him due to [any] weakness﴾ that is, He does not take anyone from among His creation as a friend in order to seek honour or help from that friendship, for He is the Self-Sufficient, the Most Praiseworthy, Who has no need of any created being on earth or in the heavens. Rather He takes people as close friends out of kindness and mercy towards them.

﴿Allah is the Protector of those who have faith; from the depths of darkness He will lead them forth into light...﴾ (*al-Baqarah* 2: 257)

﴿And magnify Him by proclaiming His greatness﴾ that is, venerate Him and proclaim His greatness by speaking of His great attributes, praising Him by His beautiful names, extolling His glorious actions and honouring Him by worshipping Him alone, with no partner or associate, and showing total devotion to Him alone.

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat al-Isrâ'.

All praise and thanks are for Allah, and may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), his family, and his Companions abundantly until the Day of Judgement.

18.

Soorat al-Kahf

(Makki)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the name of Allah,
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*



الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ الْكِتَابَ وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ عِوْجَامًا ۝ فَإِنَّمَا يُنذِرُ بِأَنَّا
شَدِيدًا مِّنْ لَدُنْهُ وَبُشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا
حَسَنًا ۝ مَنْكِرِينَ فِيهِ أَبْدًا ۝ وَيُنذِرُ الَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوا أَخْذَ اللَّهَ وَلَدًا ۝
مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِّنْ عِلْمٍ وَلَا لِآبَاهِمَ كَبُرَتْ كَلِمَةٌ خَضَعَ مِنْ أَفْرَاهُمْ إِنْ يَقُولُونَ
إِلَّا كَذِبًا ۝ فَلَعْلَكَ بَعْضُهُ نَفَسَكَ عَلَىٰ مَا تَرِهِمْ إِنْ لَّهُ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ
أَسْفًا ۝ (سورة الكهف: ۶-۱)

- 18:1. Praise be to Allah Who has sent down the Book to His slave, and has not allowed any crookedness therein,
- 18:2. a straightforward Book to warn of a severe punishment from Him, and to give glad tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds, that theirs will be a goodly reward,
- 18:3. wherein they will abide forever;
- 18:4. and to warn those who say: Allah has begotten a son.

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- 18:5. They have no knowledge of such a thing, nor did their forefathers. Monstrous is the word that comes out of their mouths. What they say is nothing but a lie.
- 18:6. Are you [O Prophet] going to destroy yourself with grief over them, because they do not believe in this message?
-

Praising Allah is extolling Him for His attributes which are all attributes of perfection, and for His blessings both apparent and hidden, spiritual and worldly. The greatest of all His blessings is His sending down of this great Book to His slave and Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ). So Allah praises Himself, which is an implicit instruction to people to praise Him for sending the Messenger (ﷺ) to them and sending down the Book to them.

Then He describes this Book as having two attributes which imply that it is perfect in all aspects. Firstly He states that there is no crookedness in it, and secondly He affirms that it is straightforward. Stating that there is no crookedness in it implies that there are no lies or falsehoods in its stories, no injustice in its commands and prohibitions, and nothing in it is without purpose.

Affirming that it is straightforward implies that it does not enjoin anything but that which is good, and it does not speak of anything but the most sublime issues, which are the issues that fill the heart with knowledge, faith and wisdom, such as when it tells us of the names, attributes and actions of Allah, and stories of the unseen, future and past. Its commands and prohibitions purify and cleanse souls, make them grow and perfect them, because they are based on perfect justice, fairness, sincerity and true servitude to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, alone, with no partner or associate. With regard to a Book that is described in such terms, it is very appropriate that Allah should praise Himself for having sent it down and that He should remind His slaves of this favour.

﴿to warn of a severe punishment from Him﴾ that is, to warn by means of this Holy Qur'an of the consequences that will result, by His will and decree, for those who go against his command. This includes punishment in this world and punishment in the hereafter. This is also one of His blessings, that He alarms His slaves and warns them of that which will cause them harm and destroy them. This is like the verse in which He, after giving a description of the fire, says: ﴿...Thus Allah instills fear in His slaves: O My slaves, then fear Me!﴾ (*az-Zumar* 39: 16)

By His mercy towards His slaves, He has decreed severe punishments for those who go against His command, and He has explained it to them and described the causes that lead to that.

﴿and to give glad tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds, that theirs will be a goodly reward﴾ that is, and Allah has sent down to His slaves the Book, to give glad tidings to those who believe in Him and in His Messengers and Books, those whose faith is complete. And He enjoined upon them righteous deeds, both obligatory and encouraged, on the basis of both sincerity and following the teachings of the Sunnah.

﴿that theirs will be a goodly reward﴾ – this is the reward that Allah has made dependent on faith and righteous deeds, the greatest and most significant of which is attaining the pleasure of Allah and admittance to paradise, in which there is that which no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever crossed the mind of man.

The fact that the reward is described as goodly indicates that the reward will not be interrupted by anything that could cause annoyance or undermine its joy in any way. If there had been any such element in the reward, it would not have been described as goodly.

Moreover, this goodly reward is one in which ﴿they will abide forever﴾ and it will never leave them and they will never leave it. Rather it is a life of ever-increasing bliss. These glad tidings require

a mention of the deeds that may lead to that of which the glad tidings speak, therefore this Qur'an refers to every good deed that leads to that which will bring joy to the heart.

«And to warn those who say: Allah has begotten a son» namely the Jews, Christians and polytheists who utter such monstrous words. They are not speaking on the basis of certain knowledge, or knowledge that they or their forefathers whom they imitate and follow possessed; rather they followed nothing but conjecture and whims and desires.

«Monstrous is the word that comes out of their mouths» that is, it is something extremely abhorrent that deserves the severest punishment. What could be worse than to describe Allah as taking a child, which implies imperfection and shortcomings, and suggests that someone other than Him has a share with Him in the attributes of Lordship and divinity, and is a lie against Him? «Who does greater evil than he who fabricates lies against Allah?» (18: 15) Hence Allah says here: «What they say is nothing but a lie» that is, a pure lie in which there is no element of truth. See how He proves this notion to be false, gradually moving from one thing to another that is even more wrong. So first of all He says: «They have no knowledge of such a thing, nor did their forefathers», for speaking about Allah without knowledge is undoubtedly prohibited and wrong. Then, secondly, He tells us that it is a reprehensible and abhorrent notion, as He says: «Monstrous is the word that comes out of their mouths». And, thirdly, He states that it is a lie and is contrary to the truth.

The Prophet (ﷺ) was keen for people to be guided and he strove hard to achieve that; he would rejoice and be happy when people were guided and he would feel sad and be filled with sorrow for the misguided disbelievers, out of compassion and pity towards them. Therefore Allah instructed him not to be distracted by worry or sorrow for these people who did not believe in this Qur'an, as He said later in this passage: «Are you [O Prophet] going to destroy yourself with

grief over them, because they do not believe?» (18: 6). And He says elsewhere:

«...So do not let yourself waste away in sorrow for them...» (Fâti'r 35: 8)

«Are you [O Prophet] going to destroy yourself with grief over them? that is, with sorrow over them? For your reward is due from Allah, and if Allah knew of any good in these people, He would have guided them, but He knows that they are fit for nothing but the fire. Therefore He has forsaken them, and they were not guided, so distracting yourself with worry and sorrow for them will not benefit you.

There is a lesson in this and similar verses: the one who is instructed to call people to Allah must convey the message and strive by all possible means to guide them and block the path of misguidance as much as he can, whilst putting his trust in Allah. Then if they are guided, all well and good, otherwise he should not grieve or feel sad, for that weakens one's resolve and saps one's strength, and there is no benefit in it. Rather he should carry on and persist in doing what he is instructed to do and is already doing, for anything other than that is beyond his means. Allah says to His Prophet (ﷺ):

«...you [O Muhammad] cannot guide whomever you like...» (al-Qasas 28: 56)

Moosâ (ﷺ) said:

«...O my Lord, I have control only over myself and my brother...» (al-Mâ'idah 5: 25)

In the case of people other than the Prophets it is even more appropriate to note that they have no control over the guidance of others. Allah (ﷻ) says:

«So admonish [O Muhammad], for you are but sent to admonish; you have no power over them.» (al-Ghâshiyah 88: 21-22)



﴿إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لِمَا لِنَبْلُوْهُ أَيْمَمٌ أَخْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَلَنَا
لَجَيْلُونَ مَا عَلَيْهَا صَعِيدًا جُرْزًا﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٨-٧)

- 18:7. Verily We have made all that is on earth as an adornment for it, in order to test them [humankind] and see which of them are best in conduct.
- 18:8. And verily We will reduce all that is on it to a barren wasteland.

Here Allah tells us that He has made all that is on the face of the earth, delicious food and drink, fine dwellings, trees, rivers, crops, fruits, beautiful scenery, elegant gardens, enchanting voices, delightful images, gold and silver, horses and camels, and so on – all of that Allah has made as an adornment for this realm, and as a trial and test.

﴿in order to test them [humankind] and see which of them are best in conduct﴾ that is, the most sincere and correct in deeds. Yet despite that, Allah will cause all the things mentioned here to diminish, vanish and come to an end, and the earth will become a barren wasteland, all its pleasures gone, its rivers cut off, all traces of goodness disappeared and its delights vanished. This is the reality of this world, which Allah has made clear to us as if we could see it with our own eyes. He warns us against being deceived by it, and encourages us to seek the realm where delights will last forever and the one who reaches it will be blessed; all of that is out of mercy towards us. Those who look at this world as it appears to be, without looking at its reality, will be deceived by its adornments and finery, so they will live in this world like animals, enjoying it like grazing cattle, not paying any attention to the rights of their Lord or caring to know Him; rather their main focus is pursuit of worldly pleasures, regardless of how they attain them or indulge in them. When death approaches such a person, he

feels anxious because he is going to vanish and will no longer enjoy its pleasures, and not because of his deeds of negligence and sin.

But the one who looks at the reality of this world, and understands the purpose of it and of his own creation, will take from it that which will help him to fulfil the purpose for which he was created, and he will make the most of the valuable life that he has been given. So he will regard this world as a place through which he passes, not a place to settle down and have fun, for it is a place through which to travel, not a place of final abode. So he strives hard to know his Lord, obey His commands and do good deeds. This is the best status before Allah, and he deserves from Allah all honour, pleasure and joy. He looks at the reality of this world, whereas the one who is deceived looks only at its outward appearance, and He strives for the sake of his hereafter, whereas the one who wastes his time strives for worldly gain. What a great difference there is between the two.



﴿أَمْ حَسِيْتَ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا مِنْ عَبْدِنَا عَجَّبًا ﴾ ١٥ إِذْ أَوَى
الْفَتَيَّةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَنِئْنَا لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشْدًا
فَضَرَبَنَا عَلَى مَا ذَانُوهُمْ فِي الْكَهْفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدًا ١٦ ثُمَّ بَعْثَتْهُمْ لِنَلْعَمْ أَيَّ
الْمُرْزِقِينَ أَحْصَنَ لِمَا يَسْتَوْ أَمْدًا ١٧﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٩-١٢)

- 18:9. Do you think that the people of the cave and the inscription³⁴ were more wondrous than Our other signs?
- 18:10. When the young men took refuge in the cave, they said: Our Lord, bestow upon us mercy from Yourself, and guide us through our ordeal.

³⁴ The inscription (*ar-rageem*) was a tablet or plaque on which were written the names and lineage of the people of the cave. (*al-Jalālyn*)

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- 18:11. Then We caused them to fall into a deep sleep in the cave for many years.
- 18:12. Then We awoke them so that We might see which of the two parties would best calculate the length of their stay [in the cave].
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﴿Do you think that the people of the cave and the inscription were more wondrous than Our other signs?﴾ This appears in the form of a question, but what is meant is a negatory statement and instruction not to think that the story of the people of the cave and what happened to them was something unprecedented among the signs of Allah, or that it was a brilliant sign of His wisdom that was unique and unparalleled. Rather Allah (ﷻ) has sent many wondrous and amazing signs that were akin to the signs of the people of the cave, and even greater than that. And Allah is still showing His slaves signs in the universe and in their own selves, through which truth becomes distinct from falsehood, and guidance from misguidance. This negatory statement does not mean that the story of the people of the cave was not a wonder, for it is one of the wondrous signs of Allah; rather what is meant is that there are many such wonders, therefore limiting our amazement and wonder to this story only, to the exclusion of others, is a sign of lack of knowledge and reason. Rather the believer should think of all the signs of Allah that Allah calls people to reflect upon, for that is the key to faith and the way to attain knowledge and certainty.

Allah describes them as ﴿people of the cave and the inscription﴾ – which was a plaque on which their names and their story were written – because they stayed in that cave for a long time.

Then Allah tells us their story in brief, followed by more details.

﴿When the young men took refuge in the cave﴾ with the aim of seeking protection for themselves and keeping away from the persecution of their own people,

﴿they said: Our Lord, bestow upon us mercy from Yourself﴾ that is, make us steadfast, protect us from evil and help us to do good.
 ﴿and guide us through our ordeal﴾ that is, make easy for us that which is best for us, and put right all our affairs, both spiritual and worldly. Thus they combined striving and fleeing from persecution to a place where they could hide, with beseeching Allah and asking Him to help them in their ordeal, and demonstrating that they were not relying on themselves or on other people.

Hence Allah answered this supplication and saved them by means of something they never reckoned on.

﴿Then We caused them to fall into a deep sleep in the cave for many years﴾, that is, three hundred and nine years. By means of the sleep mentioned, their hearts were protected from confusion and fear, and they were also protected from their people, so that they might become a clear sign.

﴿Then We awoke them﴾ from their sleep

﴿so that We might see which of the two parties would best calculate the length of their stay [in the cave]\﴾. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿Similarly [as We caused them to sleep], We awoke them so that they might question one another﴾ (18: 19). Learning how long they stayed there and reaching the right figure will lead one to acknowledge the perfect might, wisdom and mercy of Allah (ﷻ), for if they had remained asleep, their story would not have been known to anyone.



﴿نَحْنُ نَقْصُ عَلَيْكَ تَبَاهُم بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّهُمْ فَتَيَّهُمْ أَمَّا مَنْ وَرَبَّهُمْ هُدًى
 وَرَبَّطَنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ قَامُوا فَقَاتُلُوا رَبِّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَنْ تَنْدُعُوا
 ١٣﴾ (سورة الكهف: ١٤-١٣)

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- 18:13. We recount to you their story in truth: they were young men who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance.
- 18:14. We strengthened their hearts when they stood up and declared: Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. We will never call upon any god besides Him; if we did, we would then have uttered an abomination.
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The details of the story begin here. Allah recounts the story to His Prophet ﷺ in truth, and there can be no doubt or confusion concerning it.

﴿they were young men who believed in their Lord﴾ the word translated here as ﴿young men﴾ appears in a plural form which indicates that they were few, that is, less than ten in number. They believed in Allah alone, with no partner or associate, unlike their people.

﴿and We increased them in guidance﴾. In other words, because they took the initiative and were guided to faith in the first place, Allah increased them in guidance, which is beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds, as He says elsewhere:

﴿Allah increases in guidance those who are guided...﴾ (*Maryam 19: 76*)

﴿We strengthened their hearts﴾ that is, We gave them patience and make them steadfast, and We instilled reassurance in their hearts in that alarming situation. This was by Allah's kindness towards them: He enabled them to believe and be guided, and He granted them patience, steadfastness and reassurance.

﴿when they stood up and declared: Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth﴾ that is, the One Who created us and granted us provision, Who controls us and cares for us, is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, the only One Who could create these mighty creations, not those idols and images that do not create or grant provision, and have no power to bring benefit or cause harm, or to cause death, give life or bring about resurrection. They quoted the

oneness of divine Lordship as evidence for the oneness of divinity, hence they said:

﴿We will never call upon any god besides Him﴾ that is, from among created beings

﴿if we did﴾ that is, if we called upon other gods besides Him, after we have come to know that He is the Lord God and it is not permissible or appropriate to worship any but Him

﴿we would then have uttered an abomination﴾ that is, something that is far removed from truth. Thus they combined affirmation of the oneness of Lordship and the oneness of divinity, and adherence to that, with the declaration that He is true and all others besides Him are false. This is indicative of their perfect knowledge of their Lord and increased guidance from Allah.



﴿هَتُولَّ أَقْوَمَا مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَهٌ لَّوْلَا يَأْتُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِشُرُطٍ بَيْنِ
فَعَنْ أَظْلَمَ مِمَّا مَنَّ أَفْرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا ﴾ (١٥) ﴿سورة الكهف: ١٥﴾

18:15. These people of ours have taken for worship gods other than Him; why do they not bring any clear authority for what they do? Who does greater evil than he who fabricates lies against Allah?

Having mentioned what Allah had bestowed upon them of faith and guidance, they then mentioned what their people were following, of taking gods besides Allah. They resented them for that, and stated that their people had no proof for that; rather they were extremely ignorant and misguided.

﴿why do they not bring any clear authority for what they do?﴾ that is, proof and evidence for what they are following of falsehood, but they can never do that; rather that is a fabrication against Allah

on their part, and telling lies about Him, and this is the worst type of wrongdoing. Hence Allah says: «Who does greater evil than he who fabricates lies against Allah?»



﴿وَإِذْ أَعْزَّ لَتَمُومُهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ يَنْشَرُ لَكُمْ رِبُّكُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَيَهْبِطُ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مِرْفَقًا﴾ (سورة الكهف: ١٦)

18:16. Now that you have withdrawn from them and all that they worship, except Allah, take refuge in the cave; your Lord will shower His mercy upon you and will make fitting provision for you in your situation.

They said to one another: As you have withdrawn from your people both physically and in religious terms, there is nothing left but to be saved from their evil and to take measures that will lead to that. That is because they had no way of fighting them and they could not remain among them when they were following a religion other than theirs.

«take refuge in the cave» that is, go and hide there
 «your Lord will shower His mercy upon you and will make fitting provision for you in your situation».

As stated above, Allah tells us that they called upon Him, saying: «Our Lord, bestow upon us mercy from Yourself, and guide us through our ordeal» (18: 10). Thus they combined the declaration that they had no power or strength, turning to Allah to take care of them and praying for that, with trusting that Allah would do that. So it is no wonder that Allah showered His mercy upon them and made fitting provision for them in that situation. He preserved their religious commitment and physical well-being, made them a sign to His creation and made their name renowned, which was part of His mercy towards them. He made

things easy for them, so that even the place where they slept was the most appropriate for their situation. Hence He says:



﴿ وَرَأَىٰ الشَّمْسَ إِذَا طَلَعَتْ تَزَوَّرُ عَنْ كَهْفِهِنَّ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَإِذَا غَرَبَتْ تَقْرُضُهُمْ ذَاتَ الشَّمَائِلِ وَهُمْ فِي فَجُوُودِهِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَيْنِنِّ اللَّهِ مَنْ يَهِدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهَدِّدُ وَمَنْ يُضْلِلْ فَلَنْ يَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا ﴾ (١٧) وَخَسِبُهُمْ أَيْقَاظًا وَهُمْ رُقُودٌ وَنَقْبِلُهُمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَذَاتَ الشَّمَائِلِ وَكُلُّهُمْ بِسِيطٌ ذَرَاعَتِهِ بِالْوَصِيدِ لَوْ أَطْلَعْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَوْلَيْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِرَارًا وَلَمْلَثْتَ مِنْهُمْ رُغْبًا ﴾ (١٨) (سورة الكهف: ١٧-١٨)

- 18:17. You would have seen the sun, when it rose, declining to the right from their cave, and when it set, turning away from them to the left, while they were in the spacious part of it. That was one of the signs of Allah. He whom Allah guides is rightly guided; but he whom Allah causes to go astray, for him you will find no guardian to guide him.
- 18:18. You would have thought they were awake, although they were sleeping. We caused them to turn over, onto their right and left sides, while their dog lay at the cave's entrance with legs outstretched. If you had seen them, you would certainly have turned and fled, filled with fear of them.

Allah protected them from the sun by making available to them a cave where, when the sun rose, it declined to the right away from it, and when it set, it turned away from it to the left, so its heat did not touch them and cause damage to their bodies.

﴿while they were in the spacious part of it﴾ that is, of the cave, namely a wide part of it. That was so that fresh air and breezes could reach them, thus taking away any staleness and protecting them from such discomfort as would exist in a narrow space, especially as they stayed

there for a long time. This is one of the signs of Allah that point to His power and His mercy towards them, and how He answered their prayers and guided them, even in this situation. Hence He says:

﴿He whom Allah guides is rightly guided﴾ that is, there is no way to attain guidance except from Allah, for He guides to all that is best in both realms (this world and the hereafter).

﴿but he whom Allah causes to go astray, for him you will find no guardian to guide him﴾ that is, you will not find anyone to care for him or control his affairs in a way that is good for him, or to show him the way to goodness and success, for Allah has decreed misguidance for him, and none can put back His decree.

﴿You would have thought they were awake, although they were sleeping﴾ that is, if you had seen them, you would have thought they were awake, when in fact they were asleep. The commentators said: that is because their eyes were open, so that they would not be damaged, so the one who looked at them would have thought that they were awake, although they were asleep.

﴿We caused them to turn over, onto their right and left sides﴾ this was also to protect their bodies, for the earth naturally consumes bodies that are in direct contact with it. But by the decree of Allah, He caused them to turn over onto their right and left sides, as much as was needed to prevent the earth causing damage to their bodies. Allah (ﷻ) was able to protect them from the earth without turning them over, but He is Most Wise, and He wanted His universal laws to be consistent and for causes and effects to remain in place.

﴿while their dog lay at the cave's entrance with legs outstretched﴾ that is, the dog that was with the people of the cave experienced the same as they did of sleep, as he was guarding them, lying at the entrance to the cave with his legs outstretched. This has to do with their protection from the earth. As for their protection from other people, Allah tells us that He protected them by means of fear, as He surrounded them with an atmosphere of fear so that if anyone had

come across them, his heart would have been filled with fear, and he would have turned and fled. This is what helped them to remain there for so long without anyone coming to know of them, even though they were very close to the city. The evidence that they were so close is that when they woke up, they sent one of their number to buy some food for them from the city, whilst they stayed there and waited for him. This indicates that they were very close to the city.



﴿ وَكَذَلِكَ بَعْشَهُمْ لِيَسْأَلُوْا بَيْنَهُمْ قَالَ قَاتِلُهُمْ كَمْ لِيَشْتَهِ فَأَلْوَالَنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالُوا رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لِيَشْتَهِ فَأَنْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرَقِكُمْ هَذِهِ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ فَلَيَنْظُرْ أَيْنَا أَزْكَ طَعَامًا فَلَيَأْتِكُمْ بِرِزْقٍ مِنْهُ وَلَيَسْتَأْفِ لَا يُشْعِرُنَّ بِكُمْ أَحَدًا ﴾ ١٩ ﴿ إِنَّهُمْ إِنْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ يَرْجُمُوكُمْ أَوْ يُعِيدُوكُمْ فِي مِلَّتِهِمْ وَلَنْ تُفْلِحُو إِذَا أَبْكَدُا ﴾ ٢٠﴾ (Surah al-Kahf: 19-20)

18:19. Similarly [as We caused them to sleep], We awoke them so that they might question one another. One of them said: How long have you been here? They said: We have been here for a day, or part of a day. They said: Your Lord knows best how long you have been here. Let one of you go to the city with this silver of yours, and find out which is the best food [to be had] and bring some to you. But let him be cautious and not let your presence be known.

18:20. For if they find out about you, they will stone you or force you to return to their religion, and in that case you will never prosper.

﴿Similarly [as We caused them to sleep], We awoke them﴾ from their lengthy sleep

﴿so that they might question one another﴾ that is, so that they might discuss how long they had actually stayed there.

﴿One of them said: How long have you been here? They said: We have been here for a day, or part of a day﴾. This was based on speculation on the speaker's part. It is as if they were confused and uncertain about the length of their stay, hence ﴿They said: Your Lord knows best how long you have been here﴾. Thus they referred knowledge of the matter to the One Whose knowledge encompasses all things, in general terms and in detail.

Perhaps after that Allah (ﷻ) informed them of how long they had remained there, because He awoke them so that they might question one another, and He tells us that they did question one another and give their answers to the best of their knowledge, but at the end of their discussion they were still uncertain. But Allah must have told them the certain answer, and we know that because of the reason why He awoke them, for He would not have done that with no purpose. By His mercy towards the one who seeks the truth in matters that he should learn about and strive for that purpose as much as he can, Allah will clarify matters for him. Moreover we know this from a subsequent verse in which Allah says: ﴿Thus We caused them to be discovered, so that the people might know that the promise of Allah is true and that there can be no doubt about the Hour﴾ (18: 21). If knowledge concerning the length of their stay was not certain, there would not have been a sign or evidence for what is mentioned (in 18: 21, namely the Hour).

Moreover, when they questioned one another, and there happened that of which Allah tells us, they sent one of their number with their silver – that is, the dirhams that they had with them – to buy some food for them to eat from the city that they had left, and they instructed him to choose the best and most delicious food, and to be cautious and exercise stealth when going there, buying it and coming back, so that no one would be aware of his presence or that of his brothers.

They also mentioned what they feared if people were to find out about them, for one of two things would happen to them: either they

would stone them and kill them in the worst manner, because of their resentment towards them and their religion, or they would force them to give up their religion and go back to the people's religion, in which case they would never prosper; rather they would lose their religion and would lose out in this world and the hereafter.

From these two verses we learn a number of things:

- It is encouraged to seek knowledge and discuss it, because Allah awoke them for that purpose.
- The proper etiquette to follow in the event of being uncertain about an issue of knowledge; it should be referred to someone who knows about it, and we should not go beyond what we know.
- It is valid to delegate someone to buy and sell on behalf of another person, and to have partners in doing so.
- It is permissible to eat good and delicious food, so long as that does not go to the extent of extravagance that is prohibited, because Allah tells us that they said: ﴿and find out which is the best food [to be had] and bring some to you﴾ (18: 19). This applies especially if a person is used to that and nothing else will suit him. Perhaps this is the evidence for many of the commentators who suggested that these people were the sons of kings, because they told him to bring the best food, that is usually eaten by rich and prominent people.
- It is encouraged to be cautious and keep a low profile, and to keep away from places where one could be persecuted for religious reasons, using discretion and concealing any information about oneself and one's fellow believers. These young men were very devoted to their religion and they fled from religious persecution, leaving their homeland for the sake of Allah.
- Allah tells us how evil could lead to harm and corruption, that should make one hate it and keep away from it. This is the way

of the believers of earlier and later generations, because they said (if the disbelievers forced them to recant their faith): ﴿and in that case you will never prosper﴾ (18: 20).



وَكَذَلِكَ أَعْزَنَا عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَا رَبَّ فِيهَا
إِذْ يَتَسَرَّعُونَ بِيَنْهُمْ أَمْرَهُمْ فَقَالُوا أَبْنُوا عَلَيْهِمْ بُنْيَانًا رَبِّهِمْ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ قَالَ الَّذِينَ
غَلَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَخَذَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ مَسْجِدًا ﴿٢١﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٢١)

- 18:21. Thus We caused them to be discovered, so that the people might know that the promise of Allah is true and that there can be no doubt about the Hour, at a time when they were disputing among themselves concerning the matter [of resurrection]. Some said: Build a structure over them; their Lord knows best about them. Those who prevailed in the matter said: We will surely build a place of worship over them.

Here Allah tells us that He caused the people to find out about the people of the cave. That – and Allah knows best – came about after they had woken up and sent one of their number to buy food for them, and they instructed him to be cautious and keep a low profile. But Allah willed something that was in the people's best interests, and would increase the reward (of the people of the cave), which was that the people would see in them a visible sign of Allah, to show that the promise of Allah is true, beyond any shadow of doubt, and it is not something far-fetched or unlikely, after the people had been disputing about the matter, some of them believing in the promise of resurrection and requital, whilst others denied it. Thus Allah caused their story to increase the believers in insight and certainty, and to establish proof against those who denied it, and the people of the cave attained reward for that.

Allah caused the story to become well known, and He raised them in status until they were held in high esteem by those who discovered them, who said: ﴿Build a structure over them﴾. Allah knows best about them and what their ultimate fate will be.

﴿Those who prevailed in the matter﴾ – who were the people in authority – ﴿said: We will surely build a place of worship over them﴾ where we will worship Allah and remember their story and what happened to them. This is something that is not allowed, as the Prophet ﷺ forbade it and criticised those who do it. The fact that it is mentioned here does not mean that it is not blameworthy. Rather the context here has to do with veneration of the people of the cave and praise for them, and tells us that the respect of those who found out about them reached such a level that they decided to build a place of worship over them, after the people of the cave had been so afraid of their own people and had taken precautions to avoid being discovered, then matters turned out as you see.

This story tells us that whoever flees from persecution for the sake of his religion, Allah will protect him from that; whoever strives to maintain his well-being, Allah will grant him that; whoever seeks refuge with Allah. Allah will grant him refuge and cause him to be a means of guidance for others; whoever puts up with humiliation for His sake, seeking His pleasure, the ultimate consequences will be high status for him that will be achieved in a manner that he does not expect.

﴿...and that which is with Allah is best for the righteous.﴾ (*Al 'Imrān* 3: 198)



﴿سَيَقُولُونَ ثَلَاثَةٌ رَأَيْهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ حَسَنَةٌ سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجَمًا
بِالْغَيْبِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَبْعَةٌ وَثَامِنُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ قُلْ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا

فَلَمْ يُكَلِّفْنَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَرَأَهُوا وَلَا سَتَّفَتْ فِيهِمْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٢﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٢٢)

18:22. Some will say: There were three of them, their dog being the fourth. Others will say: There were five of them, their dog being the sixth, guessing at the unseen. And others will say: There were seven of them, their dog being the eighth. Say [O Muhammad]: My Lord knows best their number. None but a few have any real knowledge of them. So do not enter into discussion with them about them except in a brief and polite manner, or ask any one of them concerning them.

Here Allah tells us of the differences of opinion among the People of the Book regarding the number of the people of the cave. This difference stemmed from guesswork about a matter of the unseen, and their speaking about something of which they had no knowledge. There were three views among them:

Some of them said that there were three of them, with their dog being the fourth. Others said that there were five of them, with their dog being the sixth. After mentioning these two views, Allah tells us that they were guessing at the unseen, which indicates that they were incorrect.

And some of them said that there were seven of them, with their dog being the eighth. This – and Allah knows best – is the correct view, because Allah stated that the first two were wrong, but He did not state that this was wrong, which indicates that it is correct.

This is a kind of dispute which is of no benefit, because knowing how many they were does not serve any interest for people, whether spiritual or worldly, hence Allah (ﷻ) says: «(My Lord knows best their number. None but a few have any real knowledge of them)» and they are the ones who got it right and knew that they got it right. «(So do not enter into discussion)» that is, do not argue or debate

﴿with them about them except in a brief and polite manner﴾ that is, based on knowledge and certainty, which should also serve a purpose. As for arguing that is based on ignorance and guesswork at the unseen, in which there is no benefit – either because the person arguing is stubborn, or the issue is unimportant and there is no religious benefit in knowing about it, such as the number of the people of the cave, and so on – then arguing a great deal about it or discussing it on an ongoing basis is a waste of time and could damage relationships among people for no good reason.

﴿or ask any one of them﴾ namely the People of the Book
 ﴿concerning them﴾ namely the people of the cave. That is because what they say about them is based on guessing at the unseen and speculation that does not serve any real purpose or lead to any certainty. This indicates that it is not allowed to seek fatwas from one who is not fit to issue fatwas, either because he does not have sufficient knowledge concerning the issue asked about, or because he is careless in his talk and may give any answer, as he has no fear of Allah to deter him from doing so. As it is forbidden to ask questions of such a person, it is more appropriate that the person himself should be forbidden to answer questions (because he is ignorant).

This verse also indicates that it may be forbidden to ask a person about some things and not others, so he may be asked about that of which he has knowledge, but not other matters, because Allah did not forbid us to ask them questions in all cases; rather He only forbade us to ask them about the story of the people of the cave and similar matters.



﴿وَلَا نَقُولَنَّ لِشَائِعَةٍ فَاعْلُمْ ذَلِكَ غَدَّاً﴾ (٢٣) إِلَّا أَن يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ وَإِذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ إِذَا
 سَيِّئَتْ وَقُلْ عَسَىٰ أَن يَهْدِيَنَّ رَبِّ لِأَقْرَبَ مِنْ هَذَا رَشَداً﴾ (٢٤) (سورة الكهف: ٢٣-٢٤)

- 18:23. Never say of anything: I will surely do that tomorrow,
 18:24. without adding: If Allah wills. And remember your Lord if you forget,³⁵ and say: I hope that my Lord will guide me to something closer to right guidance than this [matter concerning which I forgot to say: If Allah wills].

This prohibition is like others; although it was addressed to the Messenger (ﷺ) for a specific reason, it is also applicable to all accountable individuals. Allah forbade the individual to say, concerning matters in the future, «I will surely do that» without also mentioning the will of Allah. This is so as to avoid falling into error, which is speaking of the unseen future without being certain as to whether he will do it or not, or whether it will happen or not. That is because failing to say “if Allah wills” is attributing the action to the will of the individual, independently of Allah, and that is not allowed, because the will is all Allah’s.

﴿But you cannot will it unless Allah, the Lord of the worlds, so wills it.﴾ (*at-Takweer* 81: 29)

Moreover, mentioning the will of Allah makes things easier, brings *barakah* (blessing) and is a means of seeking the help of one’s Lord.

But because people are only human, they will inevitably sometimes forget this and not mention the will of Allah (by saying “if Allah wills”). Therefore Allah instructs the individual to say it after that, when he remembers, so as to do what is required and ward off what one seeks to avoid.

From the general meaning of the words «And remember your Lord if you forget» we understand that it is enjoined to remember Allah when one forgets, because that will alleviate forgetfulness and

³⁵ What is meant is that if you realise that you said something you wanted to do in the future without saying “if Allah wills (in shâ’ Allâh)”, you should say this phrase when you realise that, even if that is after a while.

cause the individual to remember what he forgot. Similarly, the one who forgets to remember Allah is instructed to remember his Lord, and not to be among the negligent.

Because the individual needs Allah to help him and guide him to what is right, and protect him from falling into error in word and deed, Allah instructs him to say: «I hope that my Lord will guide me to something closer to right guidance than this [matter concerning which I forgot to say: If Allah wills]». Thus He instructs him to call upon Allah and put his hopes in Him, and trust Him to guide him to that which is closer to right guidance. No wonder that if a person is like this, then he does his utmost and tries hard to seek guidance and the right path, he deserves to be helped and guided, and to receive divine aid that will help him to do the right thing in all his affairs.



﴿وَلَمْ يَشْرُكُ فِي كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلَاثٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَأَزْدَادُهُمْ سَبْعًا ﴾٢٥﴿ قُلْ أَلَّا أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لِي شُرُّوا لَهُمْ غَيْرُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَبْصَرُ بِهِمْ وَأَسْمِعُ مَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا شُرُّكَ فِي حُكْمِهِ أَحَدًا ﴾٢٦﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٢٥-٢٦)

- 18:25. They remained in their cave for three hundred years, plus nine.
- 18:26. Say: Allah knows best how long they remained there. To Him belongs [knowledge of] all that is unseen in the heavens and on earth. How well He sees and how well He hears! Besides Him they have no protector, and He allows none to share in His decree.

Having forbidden the Prophet (ﷺ) to ask the People of the Book about the issue of the people of the cave – because they have no knowledge of that, but Allah is the Knower of the unseen and the seen,

the Knower of all things – He now tells him how long they stayed there, and states that the knowledge of that is with Him alone, for this is a matter of the unseen of the heavens and the earth, and only He has knowledge of the unseen thereof. What He has told us about it on the lips of His Messengers is the certain truth concerning which there is no doubt, and whatever He did not inform His Messengers of, no one in creation can know it.

﴿How well He sees and how well He hears!﴾ This is an expression of admiration of the perfection of His hearing and seeing, which encompass all that can be heard and seen. This comes after the statement that His knowledge encompasses all that can be known.

Then Allah tells us that He alone is the protector in a general sense and in a specific sense, for He is the only One Who takes care of and is in control of all of creation, and Who protects His believing slaves, bringing them forth from the depths of darkness to the light, guiding them to that which is easy and protecting them from that which is difficult and hard. Hence He says: ﴿Besides Him they have no protector﴾ that is, it is He Who protected and took care of the people of the cave, by His kindness and generosity, and He did not leave them to the care of any of His creation.

﴿and He allows none to share in His decree﴾ this includes His universal decree and His religious decree. He is the One Who is in control of His creation, in terms of His will and decree, creation and control, and He is the One Who rules over them in terms of commands and prohibitions, reward and punishment.

Having stated that the unseen of the heavens and the earth belong to Him, so no created being has any way of knowing that except through the way in which He has informed His slaves of it – which is this Qur'an which tells a great deal about unseen matters – Allah ﴿ﷻ﴾ then instructs us to focus on the Qur'an:



﴿وَأَنْتُمْ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِّنْ كِتَابٍ رَّبِّكُمْ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ، وَلَنْ يَجِدُ مِنْ دُونِهِ مُتَّهِدًا﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٢٧)

- 18:27. Recite [and follow] what has been revealed to you [O Muhammad] of the Book of your Lord; none can change His words, and none will you find as a refuge other than Him.

Recitation requires following; in other words, follow what Allah has revealed to you by knowing and understanding its meanings, believing the stories mentioned therein, and complying with its commands and prohibitions, for it is a great Book of which no one can change the words. It does not change because it is true and just, and because it reached the utmost level of beauty and eloquence.

﴿The word of your Lord is perfect in truth and justice...﴾ (*al-An'am* 6: 115)

Because it is perfect, it is impossible for it to change. If it were imperfect, it would be exposed to change, to a greater or lesser extent. This is a commendation of the Qur'an and implicit encouragement to focus on it.

﴿and none will you find as a refuge other than Him﴾ that is, you will never find any other than your Lord to whom you may turn. Once it has become clear that He is the only One to turn to in all one's affairs, this indicates that there is no other option but to worship Him alone and pray to Him at times of ease and of hardship, for He is the only One Who is needed in all situations and the only One to be asked for all one's needs.



﴿وَاصِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهِمْ بِالْفَدْوَةِ وَالْمُشِّيْرِ بُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ. وَلَا تَعْدِ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِيَّةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلَنَا قَبْلَهُ، عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَأَتَّبَعَ هَوَّنَهُ وَكَاتَ أَمْرَهُ، فَرُطَا﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٢٨)

- 18:28. Content yourself with [the company of] those who call upon their Lord every morning and afternoon, seeking His Countenance, and do not turn your eyes away from them, desiring the adornment of the life of this world. And do not obey him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance, who follows his own whims and desires, and is reckless in his deeds.

Here Allah (ﷻ) instructs His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) – and others who are also subject to divine commands and prohibitions – to content themselves with the believers who are obedient and always remember Allah.

﴿those who call upon their Lord every morning and afternoon﴾ that is, at the beginning and end of the day, seeking thereby the Countenance of Allah. He describes them as worshipping Him sincerely, which implies that one should keep company with good people and strive to make oneself content with their company and mix with them, even if they are poor, because there are many benefits in keeping company with them.

﴿and do not turn your eyes away from them﴾ that is, do not overlook them and turn your gaze away from them.

﴿desiring the adornment of the life of this world﴾, for that is harmful and is of no benefit, and it may undermine one's religious interests, because it leads to being attached to this world and focusing one's ideas and thoughts on it, which leads to the heart losing interest in the hereafter. That is because the adornment of this world is pleasing to the onlooker and bewitches the mind, which in turn distracts the

heart from the remembrance of Allah and causes it to focus on pleasures and desires. This will cause him to waste his time and will cause his affairs to be in disarray, and it will lead to eternal loss and everlasting regret. Hence Allah says: ﴿And do not obey him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance﴾, so he becomes heedless of Allah, and He punishes him by making him heedless of His remembrance.

﴿who follows his own whims and desires﴾ that is, he becomes a follower of his own whims and desires and strives to get whatever he desires, even if that leads to his doom and loss, for he takes his own whims and desires as his god, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿Have you seen the one who takes his own whims and desires as his god, whom Allah causes to go astray despite his knowledge...﴾ (*al-Jâthiyah* 45: 23)

﴿and is reckless in his deeds﴾ that is, with regard to his own interests. Allah forbids obeying such a person, because he only calls to that which is bad.

This verse indicates that the one who should be obeyed and who should be a leader of people is the one whose heart is filled with love for Allah, and that is reflected in his speech, so he constantly remembers Allah and seeks the pleasure of his Lord, and he gives precedence to that over his whims and desires. By doing so he is making the most of his time; his affairs are in order, his deeds are righteous and he calls people to that which Allah has blessed him with. Thus he deserves to be followed and to be made a leader.

The contentment mentioned in this verse is contentment and patience in obeying Allah, which is the highest level of contentment and patience. By achieving that, other types of contentment and patience may also be achieved.

This verse indicates that it is encouraged to remember Allah, call upon Him and worship Him at both ends of the day, because Allah

praised people for doing that, and every time Allah praises the doer of an action, this indicates that Allah loves this action, and if He loves it, then He enjoins it and encourages people to do it.



﴿ وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَعَنْ شَاءَ فَلَمْ يُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلَيَكُفِرْ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سَرَادِقُهَا وَإِنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا يَعْلَوْهُ بِمَاءً كَالْمَهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ يُشَّرِّقُ الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْفَقَةً ﴾٣١﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلاً ﴾٣٢﴾ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْجَنَّاتُ عَدِنٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَرُ يُحَمَّلُونَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرِ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبِسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِنْ سُندُسٍ وَلَا سُتُّرٌ قَمَشِكِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكَ يُغَامِرُ الْثَّوَابَ وَحَسِنَتْ مُرْفَقَةً ﴾٣٣﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٣١-٣٣)

- 18:29. Say: This is the truth from your Lord. So let him who will, believe; and let him who will, disbelieve. For the wrongdoers We have prepared a fire which will encompass them like the walls of a pavilion. If they cry for help, they will be given water like boiling oil that will scald their faces. What a dreadful drink, and what a miserable resting-place!
- 18:30. As for those who believe and do righteous deeds, verily We will not cause the reward of those who do good to be lost.
- 18:31. They will have gardens of perpetual abode through which rivers flow. They will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and will wear green garments of fine silk and heavy brocade, reclining therein on couches. What an excellent reward, and what a pleasant resting-place!

That is, say to the people, O Muhammad (ﷺ): This is the truth from your Lord. In other words, guidance has become distinct from misguidance, and the attributes of those who are blessed have become

distinct from the attributes of those who are doomed, by means of what Allah has explained on the lips of His Messenger (ﷺ). Once the truth has become clear and there is no doubt or confusion left concerning it, then ﴿let him who will, believe; and let him who will, disbelieve﴾. In other words, there is no option left but to follow one of the two paths, according to whether one is guided or not. Allah has given man free will, by virtue of which he may either believe or disbelieve, and choose either good or evil. Whoever believes has been guided to that which is right, and whoever disbelieves, proof has been established against him. No one is to be compelled to believe, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿Let there be no compulsion in religion; truth stands out clear from error...﴾ (*al-Baqarah* 2: 256)

The words ﴿So let him who will, believe; and let him who will, disbelieve﴾ are not to be understood as giving permission for both options; rather that is a threat and a warning to those who choose disbelief after the matter has been explained perfectly. By the same token, these words do not mean that the believers should give up fighting the disbelievers.

Then Allah (ﷻ) mentions the final destination of the two groups. ﴿For the wrongdoers﴾ because of their disbelief, evildoing and sin. ﴿We have prepared a fire which will encompass them like the walls of a pavilion﴾ that has no windows or exit, and there is no way to escape from it, and they will be burned by the exceedingly hot fire.

﴿If they cry for help﴾ that is, if they ask for a drink to extinguish the severe thirst that they experience
﴿they will be given water like boiling oil﴾ or like molten lead, because of its extreme heat
﴿that will scald their faces﴾ so how about their innards? Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿...and scalding water will be poured over their heads, which will cause their insides and their skins to melt. They will be lashed with rods of iron.﴾ (*al-Hajj* 22: 19-21)

﴿What a dreadful drink﴾ that they wanted to quench their thirst and reduce the punishment somewhat, but it will increase their thirst and make the punishment more severe

﴿and what a miserable resting-place﴾ the fire will be. This is a negative description of the fire, highlighting what a bad place it is in which to rest, for there will be no rest there; rather it is a harsh and severe punishment that will not be reduced even for a short while. There they will lose all hope and will despair of all goodness, and the Most Merciful will forget them in their punishment, as they forgot Him.

Then Allah tells us about the other group: ﴿As for those who believe and do righteous deeds﴾ that is, they combined belief in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messenger, the Last Day and the divine decree, both good and bad, with righteous deeds, both obligatory and recommended

﴿verily We will not cause the reward of those who do good to be lost﴾. Good deeds are those which are intended for the sake of Allah, in accordance with the teachings of Islam. These are the good deeds which Allah will not cause to be lost in the slightest; rather He will preserve them for those who do them, and He will reward them in full, according to their deeds and by His grace and kindness. He describes their reward in the following verse: ﴿They will have gardens of perpetual abode through which rivers flow. They will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and will wear green garments of fine silk and heavy brocade, reclining therein on couches﴾ that is, those who are described above as having faith and doing righteous deeds will have lofty gardens with many trees and rivers that flow beneath those elegant trees, and fine dwellings. Their adornment therein will be gold and their garments will be of green silk and heavy brocade of a soft type, and they will be reclining on adorned couches covered with

fine cloth. The fact that they will be reclining on couches is indicative of perfect relaxation and the absence of tiredness and exhaustion; they will have servants who will bring them whatever they desire, and to complete the blessing they will abide therein for ever and ever.

This splendid abode will be «an excellent reward» for those who strove hard, and «a pleasant resting-place» in which they will rest and enjoy all that it contains of whatever their hearts desire and their eyes delight in of happiness and joy, never-ending pleasure and blessing. What resting-place could be better than an abode in which the least of its inhabitants may walk in his domain and in what Allah has blessed him with of palaces and gardens, for two thousand years, never thinking that there is any bliss greater than this, as he was given all that he wished for and there was added to that other things that may never have crossed his mind. Moreover, their bliss will be eternal, constantly increasing in beauty and quality. We ask Allah, the Most Generous, not to deprive us of the best of what He has of bliss because of the negative consequences of our shortcomings and sins.

This and similar verses indicate that the adornment is for both males and females, as was mentioned in the *ṣaheeh* hadiths, because it is mentioned in general terms: «They will be adorned». The same also applies to silk and the like.



﴿ وَأَضْرِبْ لَهُم مَثَلًا رَجُلَيْنِ جَعَلْنَا لَأَحَدِهِمَا جَنَّتَيْنِ مِنْ أَعْنَبٍ وَحَفَقْنَاهَا بِنَخْلٍ وَجَعَلْنَا يِنْهَمِا زَرْعًا ﴾ كَلَّا الْجَنَّاتَيْنِ مَا تَأْتَ أَكْلَهَا وَلَمْ تَظْلِمْ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا وَفَجَرْنَا خَلَالَهَا نَهْرًا ﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٣٢-٣٣)

18:32. Present to them the example of two men: to one of them We gave two gardens of grapevines and surrounded them with date palms, with a cornfield lying in between.

18:33. Each garden brought forth its produce and did not fail to yield its best, and We caused a stream to flow through them.

Here Allah says to His Prophet (ﷺ): Present to the people the example of these two men, the one who was grateful for the blessings of Allah and the one who was ungrateful, and their conduct, words and deeds, and what resulted from that of punishment and reward in this world and the hereafter, so that they may pay heed and learn a lesson from them and what happened to them. There is no benefit in knowing the identity of the two men, or the time or place in which they lived, and that does not help one to reach the right conclusion. The lesson may be learned from their story alone, and mentioning other details would be superfluous. One of these two men was the one who was ungrateful for the immense blessings of Allah. Allah gave him two beautiful gardens of grapevines,

﴿and surrounded them with date palms﴾ that is, in these two gardens there were all kinds of fruits, especially the noblest of trees and plants, namely the grapevine and the date palm. The grapevines were in the middle of the garden, with the date palms surrounding them; this gave the gardens a beautiful and elegant look, and exposed the trees and date palms to the sun and wind, which enabled the fruit to reach maturity, ripening and taking shape. In addition to that, between the two gardens there was a cornfield. There is nothing left to know about them except to say: how were the fruits of these two gardens and did they have sufficient water for irrigation?

Allah (ﷻ) tells us that each of the gardens ﴿brought forth its produce﴾ that is, its fruits and crops, in abundance and ﴿did not fail to yield its best﴾. In addition to that, there was a stream running freely through them, bringing a lot of water.



وَكَانَ لَهُ ثَمَرٌ فَقَالَ لِصَاحِبِهِ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَنَّا أَكْثَرُ مِنْكَ مَالًا وَأَعْزَزُ نَفَرًا وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ قَالَ مَا أَطْلَنْتُ أَنْ تَبْدِي هَذِهِ أَبْدًا وَمَا أَطْلَنْتُ الْسَّاعَةَ قَائِمَةً وَلَئِنْ رُدِدْتُ إِلَى رَبِّي لَأَجِدَنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهَا مُنْقَلَبًا

(الكهف: ٣٤-٣٦)

- 18:34. So he was a man of wealth. He said to his companion, as he was conversing with him: I am wealthier than you and have a greater entourage.
- 18:35. He went into his garden, having thus wronged himself, and said: I do not think that this will ever perish,
- 18:36. Nor do I think that the Hour will ever come. Even if I am brought back to my Lord, I will surely find a better place than this.

So that man (was a man of wealth). The word translated here as (wealth) appears (in the original Arabic) in the indefinite form, which implies a great deal of wealth. His two gardens produced their full potential of fruits and crops; their trees began to bend under their load and never suffered from any blight or problem. This is the ultimate in worldly adornments and pleasure with regard to agriculture, therefore this man was deceived by it; he began to boast insolently and he forgot about the hereafter.

As the owner of the two gardens was conversing about some ordinary matters with his companion, who was a believer, he began to boast to him, saying:

(I am wealthier than you and have a greater entourage). He was proud of his great wealth and the power of his supporters, including his slaves, servants and relatives. This was ignorance on his part, for what pride can there be in external matters that are not indicative of any virtue, whether psychological or moral? Rather it is more like the pride of a young boy in wishes that have no basis in reality.

Moreover, he did not stop at boasting in this manner to his companion, until he showed his ignorance and wrongdoing, as he went into his garden, ﴿and said: I do not think that this will ever perish﴾ that is, diminish and come to an end. He was content and pleased with this world, and he denied the resurrection and said: ﴿Nor do I think that the Hour will ever come. Even if I am brought back to my Lord﴾, let us suppose for the sake of argument, ﴿I will surely find a better place than this﴾ that is, He will give me something better than these two gardens. This can only have been one of two things: either he knew the reality of the matter, so he said these words by way of mockery and ridicule, which further increased his disbelief and ingratitude, or this is what he really thought, in which case he was the most ignorant of people, with the least share of reasoning and intellect. What connection can there be between what one is given in this world and what one will be given in the hereafter, such that one might think, on the basis of ignorance, that the one who is given bounty in this world will necessarily be given bounty in the hereafter? Rather what is usually the case is that Allah keeps worldly gains away from His close friends and chosen ones, whilst granting such things in abundance to His enemies, who have no share in the hereafter. What appears to be the case here is that this man knew the reality of the matter, but he said these words by way of mockery and ridicule, based on the fact that Allah says: ﴿He went into his garden, having thus wronged himself﴾. The fact that he is described as having wronged himself when he went into his garden, as a result of what he had said (to his companion), indicates that he was stubborn and obstinate.



﴿قَالَ لَهُ صَاحِبُهُ وَهُوَ مُحَاوِرٌ أَكْفَرَ بِاللَّذِي خَلَقَكَ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ سَوَّطَ رُجُلًا لَدِكَّا هُوَ اللَّهُ رَبِّي وَلَا أُشْرِكُ بِرَبِّي أَحَدًا﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٣٨-٣٧)

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- 18:37. His companion said to him, in the course of his conversation with him: Do you disbelieve in the One Who created you from dust, then from a drop of semen, then fashioned you into a man?
- 18:38. But as for me, [I say that] He is Allah, my Lord, and I will not associate anyone with my Lord.
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His believing companion said to him, advising him and reminding him of his original state, as Allah has created him in this world: ﴿Do you disbelieve in the One Who created you from dust, then from a drop of semen, then fashioned you into a man?﴾ For it is He Who has blessed you by bringing you into existence and providing for you, and He continued to shower you with His blessings and caused you to develop and grow until you became a man, in perfect physical shape and with complete mental faculties. Thus He made the means available to you and bestowed upon you the blessings of this world. So what you possess of worldly wealth was not gained by means of your own strength and power; rather it was by the blessings that Allah (ﷻ) has bestowed upon you. So how can it be fitting for you to disbelieve in and be ungrateful to Allah Who created you from dust, then from a drop of semen, then He fashioned you into a man? How can you deny His blessings and claim that He will not resurrect you, and that if He does resurrect you, He will give you a better garden than this? This is not appropriate and it is not right.

Hence, when his believing companion saw his attitude and how he was persisting in disbelief, ingratitude and transgression, he told him about himself, by way of expressing his gratitude to his Lord and announcing his belief, at a time when he was hearing specious arguments and doubts: ﴿But as for me, [I say that] He is Allah, my Lord, and I will not associate anyone with my Lord﴾. So he affirmed His Lordship and that He is the only Lord, and he committed himself to obeying and worshipping Him alone, and pledged that he would not associate any created being with Him.

Then he told his companion that the blessing that Allah had bestowed upon him of faith and Islam – even though he had little wealth and few children – was the true blessing and that anything other than that was liable to diminish and vanish, then the punishment would come upon him, as he said:



﴿ وَلَوْلَا إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ إِن تَرَنَ أَنَا أَقْلَمُ مِنْكَ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا ﴾ ٣٥ فَسَئَلَ رَبِّهِ أَن يُؤْتِيَنِ حَيْزَرًا مِنْ جَنَّكَ وَرَسِّلَ عَلَيْهَا حُسْبَانًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَتَسْبِحُ صَعِيدًا زَلَّا ﴾ ٣٦﴿ أَوْ يُصْبِحَ مَأْوِهَا غَورًا فَلَنْ تَسْتَطِعَ لَهُ طَلَّا ﴾ ٣٧﴿ وَأَحِيطَ بِشَرِّهِ فَأَصْبِحَ يُقْلِبُ كَتْبَهُ عَلَى مَا أَنفَقَ فِيهَا وَهِيَ خَاوِيَّةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشَهَا وَيَقُولُ ﴾ ٣٨﴿ يَلَيْسَنِي لَمْ أُشْرِكْ بِرِيقَ أَحَدًا ﴾ ٣٩﴿ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ فِتْنَةٌ يَنْصُرُونَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مُنْصِرًا ﴾ ٤٠﴿ هُنَالِكَ الْوَلِيَّةُ لِلَّهِ الْحَقُّ هُوَ خَيْرُ ثَوَابٍ وَخَيْرُ عُقَبًا ﴾ ٤١﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٤٤-٣٩)

- 18:39. Why could you not have said, when you entered your garden: Whatever Allah wills [will come to pass]; there is no power but with Allah? Although you see me less than you in wealth and children,
- 18:40. Yet my Lord may well give me something better than your garden, and send upon [your garden] thunderbolts from heaven, leaving it barren and slippery.
- 18:41. Or its water may disappear under the ground, so that you will never be able to find it again.
- 18:42. And so all his produce was destroyed, and he began to wring his hands in sorrow at the loss of what he had spent on it, as it lay in ruins with all its trellises fallen in, saying: Would that I had never associated anyone with my Lord!
- 18:43. He had none to support him against [the punishment of] Allah, nor was he able to help himself.

18:44. In that case, the only protection is that of Allah, the True God. He gives the best reward and the best outcome.

That is, the believer said to his disbelieving companion: Although you boasted to me about your great wealth and many children, and you see that I have less wealth than you and fewer children, that which is with Allah is better and more lasting, and what is hoped for of His goodness and kindness is superior to everything in this world for which people compete.

﴿Yet my Lord may well give me something better than your garden, and send upon [your garden]﴾, because of which you transgressed and were deceived

﴿thunderbolts from heaven﴾ that is, as a punishment, with heavy rain or otherwise

﴿leaving it﴾ as a result of that

﴿barren and slippery﴾ that is, with its trees uprooted, its fruits destroyed, its crops drowned and its benefits disappeared.

﴿Or its water﴾ that is essential to its survival

﴿may disappear under the ground, so that you will never be able to find it again﴾ that is, it may disappear in such a way that it cannot be reached by digging with pickaxes or by any other means. The believer prayed against his garden in anger for the sake of his Lord, because it had deceived its owner and caused him to transgress and be content with it. He did this in the hope that his companion would turn back to his Lord, come to his senses and realise where he stood.

Allah answered his supplication, ﴿so all his produce was destroyed﴾ that is, the punishment destroyed it and wiped it out, so that there was nothing left of it. All the trees and their fruits, and all his crops, were destroyed, and he regretted it deeply and was very sad.

﴿and he began to wring his hands in sorrow at the loss of what he had spent on it﴾ that is, because he had spent a great deal of his worldly wealth on it, but when it was destroyed and vanished, he had nothing

to compensate for it. He also regretted his ascription of partners to Allah and his evil deeds, therefore he said: ﴿Would that I had never associated anyone with my Lord!﴾.

﴿He had none to support him against [the punishment of] Allah, nor was he able to help himself﴾ that is, when the punishment befell his garden, he lost that which he had boasted about to his companion when he said: ﴿I am wealthier than you and have a greater entourage﴾ (18: 34). They did not ward off this punishment from him at all, at the time when he needed them most, and he could not help himself. How could he have helpers against the decree of Allah that He ordained and brought to pass? For if the inhabitants of heaven and earth were to come together to ward off anything of the decree of Allah, they would not be able to do that.

It is not far-fetched to say that by the mercy and kindness of Allah, the situation of this owner of the garden that was destroyed later improved, and Allah enabled him to turn back to Him and come back to his senses, and give up his rebellion and transgression. That is based on the fact that he expressed regret for his ascription of partners to his Lord, and that Allah took away from him that which had caused him to transgress, and He punished him in this world. If Allah wills good for a person, He hastens to punish him in this world. The grace of Allah cannot be encompassed by human minds, and no one can deny it except one who is an ignorant wrongdoer.

﴿In that case, the only protection is that of Allah, the True God. He gives the best reward and the best outcome﴾ that is, in that case – when Allah sends His punishment upon those who transgressed and gave precedence to the life of this world – and He honours those who believed, did righteous deeds and gave thanks to Allah, and called others to do likewise – it becomes clear that the only protection is that of our True God. Whoever believes in Him and fears Him will be protected by Allah, Who will bestow all kinds of honour upon him and ward off all kinds of punishment and evil from him. But whoever does

not believe in his Lord or take Him as an ally and protector will be a loser in both spiritual and worldly terms. The reward of Allah in this world and the hereafter is the best reward that anyone may hope for.

From this great story we learn a number of lessons, including the following:

- We learn a lesson from the one on whom Allah had bestowed worldly blessings, but that distracted him from the hereafter and caused him to transgress and disobey Allah; those blessings will ultimately vanish and disappear, and even if he enjoys them for a little while, he will be deprived of them for a long time.
- If a person likes something of his wealth or offspring, he should attribute this blessing to the One Who bestowed it upon him and he should say, “*Mâ shâ' Allâh, lâ quwwata illâ billâh* (Whatever Allah wills [will come to pass]; there is no power but with Allah)”. Thus his giving thanks to Allah will be a means for the blessing of Allah to remain with him, because the believer said to his companion: «Why could you not have said, when you entered your garden: Whatever Allah wills [will come to pass]; there is no power but with Allah?» (*18: 39*).
- A person may console himself for missing out on the pleasures and desires of this world by reminding himself of the good things that are with Allah, because that believer said: «Although you see me less than you in wealth and children, yet my Lord may well give me something better than your garden».
- Wealth and children are of no benefit if they do not help one to obey Allah, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:
«It is not your wealth or your children that bring you nearer to Us; but those who believe and do righteous deeds – it is they who will have a multiple reward for their deeds...» (*Saba' 34: 37*)
- One may pray for destruction of the wealth of one who is wealthy if it is the cause of his transgression, disbelief and loss, especially if he thinks that because of his wealth he is superior to the believers, and he boasts to them of that.

The consequences of Allah's protection or the absence thereof will only become clear when the dust settles and recompense becomes due. «In that case, the only protection is that of Allah, the True God. He gives the best reward and the best outcome» (18: 44).



﴿وَاضْرِبْ لَهُم مَّثَلَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَأَخْنَاطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ فَاصْبَحَ هَشِيمًا لَذِرْرَوْهُ الرِّيحُ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّقْدِرًا ﴾٤٥﴿ الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونُ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْبِقِيرَتُ الصَّالِحَتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمْلًا ﴾٤٦﴾

(سورة الكهف: ٤٥-٤٦)

- 18:45. Present to them the likeness of the life of this world: it is like the rain that We send down from the heavens; by means of it, all kinds of plants are brought forth from the earth, but soon they become dry stubble scattered about by the wind. Allah has power over all things.
- 18:46. Wealth and children are the adornment of the life of this world. But righteous deeds of lasting merit bring a better reward with your Lord and are a better source of hope.

Here Allah says to His Prophet (ﷺ) first of all, and subsequently to those who take up his position of teaching and calling people to Allah: Present to the people the likeness of the life of this world, so that they may understand its nature and know it properly, inside and out, and then compare it with the hereafter, and give precedence to that which is most deserving of being given precedence. For the likeness of this world is that of rain that is sent down upon the earth and it brings forth all kinds of beautiful plants at a time when their beauty gladdens the hearts of onlookers and catches the eye of the heedless. Then suddenly they become dry stubble scattered about

by the winds, and those fresh green plants and blossoming flowers disappear, and that splendid view vanishes, and the earth becomes dusty and dry, causing the onlookers to lose interest in it and creating alienation in their hearts.

This is how this world is: whilst the one who focuses on this world is enjoying his youth, surpassing his peers, acquiring wealth, indulging in physical pleasures, fulfilling his desires at all times and thinking that this will continue for the rest of his life, suddenly death comes upon him or he loses his wealth, and his happiness disappears and his joy and pleasure vanish; he is faced with pain and anguish at the loss of his youth, strength and wealth, and he is left with nothing except his deeds, good or bad. At that time the wrongdoer will bite on his hand with regret, when he realises the reality with which he is faced, and he will wish to go back to this world, not to carry on fulfilling his desires, but to make up for what he missed out on at the time of negligence, by repenting and doing righteous deeds.

But the wise and prudent person who is rightly guided imagines himself in this situation and says to himself: Imagine that you have died, for you must inevitably die: which of the two situations would you prefer? To be deceived by the adornment of this realm and enjoying it in the manner of grazing animals, or to strive for that realm where food and shade are always available, in which one will have all that one desires and will enjoy all that delights the eye? Thus a person may know whether he is guided or forsaken, winning or losing.

Hence Allah (ﷻ) tells us that wealth and sons are the adornment of the life of this world, and they are no more than that; what will remain and benefit a person, bringing him joy, are righteous deeds of lasting merit. That includes all acts of obedience, both obligatory and recommended, having to do with the rights of Allah and the rights of His slaves, such as prayer, zakâh, charity, Hajj, 'umrah, *tasbeeh*, *tahmeed*, *tahleel*, *takbeer*, reading Qur'an, seeking beneficial knowledge, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong,

upholding ties of kinship, honouring one's parents, fulfilling the rights of wives, slaves and animals, and all acts of kindness towards people. All of these are righteous deeds of lasting merit, and they bring a better reward with Allah and are a better source of hope. Their reward will remain and be multiplied for ever and ever, and that reward and benefit are hoped for at the time of need. This is what people should compete for and strive to attain.

Reflect on how Allah gives this likeness for this world and how it will diminish, and He tells us that in it there are two types of things:

The first type is adornment that is enjoyed for a short while, then it diminishes without bringing any benefit; rather it may in fact bring harm – this refers to wealth and sons.

The second type will remain and bring eternal benefit; this is the righteous deeds of lasting merit.



﴿ وَيَوْمَ نُسِرُ الْجِبَالَ وَتَرَى الْأَرْضَ بَارِزَةً وَحَشِّرَتْهُمْ فَلَمْ تَفَعَّلْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا ﴾ ٤٧ ﴿ وَعَرَضُوا عَلَى رَبِّكَ صَفَا لَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُوكُ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ بَلْ زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّنَا نَجْعَلَ لَكُمْ مَوْعِدًا ﴾ ٤٨ ﴿ وَوُضَعَ الْكِتَابُ فَرَّى الْمُجْرِمُونَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَوْمَنَا مَالِ هَذَا الْكِتَابِ لَا يَعْلَمُ رَبُّكَ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كِبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَخْصَنَهَا وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا ﴾ ٤٩﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٤٧-٤٩)

- 18:47. And [remember] the day when We will remove the mountains and you will see the earth as a levelled plain; We will gather them all together and not leave any one of them behind.
- 18:48. They will be presented before your Lord in rows, [and He will say]: Now you have come to Us as We created you the first time, even though you claimed that We had not made any such appointment for you.

18:49. And the record of deeds will be placed [in their hands] and you will see the evildoers filled with dread at what it contains. They will say: Woe to us! What sort of record is this, that leaves no deed, small or great, unaccounted for? They will find all they did recorded there, and your Lord will not wrong anyone.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the Day of Resurrection and what it will bring of great terrors and dreadful hardship.

﴿And [remember] the day when We will remove the mountains﴾ that is, He will remove them from their places and make them like sand-hills, then He will make them like carded wool (*cf. 101: 5*), then they will diminish and vanish, becoming like scattered dust, and the earth will be levelled, becoming a smooth, flat plain in which there is no depression or elevation (*cf. 20: 106-107*). Allah will gather together all creatures on that earth, and He will not leave anyone but He will gather him.

Indeed, He will gather together the first and the last from the remotest deserts and the depths of the sea; He will bring them back together after they were scattered and will restore them after they had disintegrated, as a new creation, then they will be presented before him in rows, so that He may check them, examine their deeds and judge between them on the basis of His justice in which there is no unfairness or injustice, and He will say to them: ﴿Now you have come to Us as We created you the first time﴾ that is, without wealth, without family, without tribe. They will have nothing with them except the deeds that they did and whatever they earned of good or evil, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿Now you have come to Us alone, as We created you the first time, and you have left behind all that We had bestowed on you. We do not see with you your intercessors who you claimed were entitled to a share of your worship and devotion...﴾ (*al-An'am 6: 94*)

And here Allah will say, addressing those who denied the resurrection, now that they have seen it with their own eyes: «even though you claimed that We had not made any such appointment for you» that is, you denied the requital for deeds, and you rejected the promises and warnings of Allah, but now you have seen it and tasted it. At that point, the books of deeds that were written by the noble angels will be brought, and people will feel a sense of alarm and distress, and the evildoers will be filled with apprehension. When they see their deeds written down, and their words and actions listed, they will say:

«Woe to us! What sort of record is this, that leaves no deed, small or great, unaccounted for?» That is, no mistake, small or great, has been omitted without being written down and recorded; no deed, whether it was done in private or in public, at night or by day, has been omitted. «They will find all they did recorded there» and they will not be able to deny it

«and your Lord will not wrong anyone». At that time they will be requited and will be made to admit their deeds, and they will be subjected to disgrace and punishment. That is because of what their own hands sent on ahead of them, for Allah does not wrong His slaves; rather they are not beyond His justice or grace.



﴿وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِأَدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ الْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِ أَفَنْتَخِذُونَهُ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُ أُولَئِكَاءِ مِنْ دُونِنَا وَهُنَّ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ يُنَسَّ لِلظَّالِمِينَ بَدَلًا﴾

(سورة الكهف: ٥٠)

18:50. And [remember] when We said to the angels: Prostrate before Adam, and they [all] prostrated except Iblees. He was one of the jinn, so he rebelled against the command of his Lord. Will you then take him and his progeny as allies instead of Me, even

though they are enemies to you? What a wretched exchange for the wrongdoers!

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the enmity of Iblees towards Adam and his progeny. Allah instructed the angels to prostrate to Adam as a sign of honour and respect, and in obedience to the command of Allah, and they obeyed, (except Iblees. He was one of the jinn, so he rebelled against the command of his Lord). He said:

﴿...Should I prostrate before one whom You have created from clay?﴾
(*al-Isra'* 17: 61)

– and:

﴿...I am better than he...﴾ (*al-A'râf* 7: 12)

Thus he manifested his enmity towards Allah and towards your father and you, so how could you take him and his progeny, namely the devils, (as allies instead of Me, even though they are enemies to you? What a wretched exchange for the wrongdoers!). That is, what a bad choice they made for themselves by taking the Shayṭân – who does not enjoin anything upon them but obscenity and evil – as an ally, instead of the Most Gracious, in alliance with Whom all happiness, prosperity and success are to be found.

This verse encourages us to take the Shayṭân as an enemy and mentions that no one takes the Shayṭân as an ally except a wrongdoer, and what wrongdoing could be greater than that of one who takes his real enemy as an ally and turns away from the Most Praiseworthy Protector?

﴿Allah is the Protector of those who have faith; from the depths of darkness He will lead them forth into light. As for those who disbelieve, their protectors are the false gods; from light they will lead them forth into the depths of darkness...﴾ (*al-Baqarah* 2: 257)

And Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...they will have taken the devils as friends and allies instead of Allah...﴾ (*al-A'râf* 7: 30)



﴿ مَا أَشْهَدُهُمْ خَلْقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَا خَلْقَ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَمَا كُنْتُ مُتَّخِذًا
الْعُظَمَاءِ عَضْدًا ﴾ ٥١ وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ نَادُوا شُرَكَاءِ الَّذِينَ رَعَيْتُمْ فَلَمْ
يَسْتَجِبُو لَهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَوْبِقًا ﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٥٢-٥١)

- 18:51. I did not call them [Iblees and his progeny] to witness [or assist in] the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor even the creation of their own selves; I do not seek the assistance of those who lead people astray.
- 18:52. And [remember] the day when He will say: Call on My [so-called] partners, as you claimed. They will call on them, but they will not respond to them. And We will place between them a barrier.

Here Allah (ﷻ) says: I did not call on these devils and these people who have gone astray to witness ﴿the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor even the creation of their own selves﴾ that is, I did not cause them to be present at that time, or consult them concerning it, so how can they be creators of any of that? The Only One Who has the power of creation and control, and Who has perfect wisdom in governing creation, is Allah, the Creator of all things, Who controls them according to His wisdom. So how could partners be ascribed to Him from among the devils, who are taken as allies and obeyed as Allah should be obeyed, when they did not create anything or witness the creation of anything, and they did not assist Allah (ﷻ) in that? Hence He says: ﴿I do not seek the assistance of those who lead people astray﴾ that is, I do not seek their help, for Allah does not need any help in any matter. It is not appropriate or befitting for Allah to give them any measure of control, for they are striving to mislead people and oppose their Lord. Therefore what is appropriate is that they should be kept far away and not be brought close.

Having mentioned the situation of those who ascribe partners to Him in this world, and declared that to be utterly invalid and those who do such a thing to be ignorant and foolish, Allah now tells us about their situation with their so-called partners on the Day of Resurrection. Allah will say to them:

﴿Call on My [so-called] partners﴾ that is, according to your false claim; otherwise, in fact, Allah has no partner on earth or in heaven. He will say: Call them and let them benefit you and save you from troubles.

﴿They will call on them, but they will not respond to them﴾ because all power and sovereignty on that day will belong to Allah, and no one will possess the slightest power to benefit himself or anyone else. ﴿And We will place between them﴾ namely the polytheists and the so-called partners they ascribed to Allah

﴿a barrier﴾ to separate them and keep them apart from one another. At that point the enmity of the so-called partners towards those who described them as such will become apparent, and they will reject them and disavow them, as Allah (ع) says elsewhere:

﴿When humankind are gathered [on the Day of Resurrection], they [the so-called partners] will become their enemies and will reject their worship of them.﴾ (*al-Ahqaf* 46: 6)



﴿وَرَءَاءُ الْمُعْجِرِ مِنَ النَّارِ فَظَلَّوْا أَنَّهُمْ مُّوَاقِعُوهَا وَلَمْ يَجِدُوا عَنْهَا مَصْرِفًا﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٥٣)

(الكهف: ٥٣)

18:53. The evildoers will see the fire and will realise that they are bound to fall into it, and will find no escape from it.

That is, on the Day of Resurrection, when the reckoning is complete and each group of people becomes distinct on the basis of their deeds,

and the punishment becomes due on the evildoers, they will see hell before they enter it, and they will panic and become very anxious, when they realise for certain that they will enter it.

﴿and will find no escape from it﴾ that is, no way out and no one to intercede for them without Allah's permission. This is aimed at scaring them in such a way that causes hearts to tremble.



﴿وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِي هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكَانَ إِلَّا نَسْنَ أَكْثَرَ شَيْءٍ﴾

جَدْلًا ﴿٥٤﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٥٤)

18:54. We have explained [the truth] to man in this Qur'an, discussing different issues in various ways, but man is more than anything argumentative.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the greatness and majesty of the Qur'an and how it encompasses all issues, explaining different matters in different ways, highlighting all types of beneficial knowledge and ways that lead to eternal bliss, and every way that protects against evil and doom. It contains explanations of what is lawful and what is prohibited, requital of deeds, encouragement and deterrents, true stories that benefit the heart by strengthening faith and giving reassurance and light. This dictates that one should surrender to this Qur'an, accept it, follow it, obey the instructions contained therein, and not dispute with it in any issue. Yet despite that, many people argue about the truth after it has become clear, and they debate on the basis of falsehood, seeking to undermine the truth. Hence Allah says: **﴿but man is more than anything argumentative﴾** that is, in debates and disputes concerning the Qur'an, even though that is not appropriate and is not fair on his part. What makes man like that and causes him not to believe in Allah is nothing other than wrongdoing and

stubbornness; it is not due to any shortcomings in the proof and evidence set out in the Qur'an.



﴿ وَمَا مَنَعَ النَّاسَ أَن يُؤْمِنُوا إِذ جَاءَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَسْتَقْرِئُوا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَّا أَن تَأْتِيهِمْ سُنَّةُ الْأُولَائِنِ أَوْ يَأْتِيهِمُ الْعَذَابُ قَبْلًا ﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٥٥)

18:55. Nothing prevents people from believing, now that guidance has come to them, or from seeking the forgiveness of their Lord, except [their demand] that the fate of the earlier peoples should come to them or that the punishment should appear before their eyes.

That is, nothing prevents the people from believing, at a time when guidance has reached them by means of which one may see the difference between guidance and misguidance, truth and falsehood, and proof is established against them, so that it is not lack of clarity that is preventing them from believing, rather wrongdoing and transgression are preventing them from believing so that there is nothing left except for their demand to be fulfilled, for such is the way of Allah, in which He dealt with the earlier peoples: if they did not believe then the punishment should be hastened for them or they should see that the punishment is coming, and behold it face-to-face. In other words, they should fear it and repent from their disbelief before there comes the punishment that cannot be put back.



﴿ وَمَا نَرْسَلُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ وَجَنِيدِلُ الدِّينَ كَفَرُوا بِالْبَطْلِ لِيُدْحِضُوا بِهِ الْحَقَّ وَأَخْنَدُوا أَيْنَقَىٰ وَمَا أَنْزَرُوا هُنَّ رَاٰٰ ﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٥٦)

18:56. We sent the Messengers only as bearers of good news and as warners. Yet with false arguments those who disbelieve seek to undermine the truth, and they make a mockery of My revelations and of the warning they were given.

That is, We did not send the Messengers in vain, or for people to take them as lords, or so that they might call people to themselves; rather We sent them so that they might call the people to all that is good, and forbid all that is evil, and so that they might give glad tidings, if people paid heed, of reward in this world and in the hereafter, and so that they might warn them, if they disobeyed, of punishment in this world and in the hereafter. Thus the proof of Allah was established against people. Yet despite that, the wrongdoers and disbelievers insisted on arguing on the basis of falsehood so as to refute the truth, and they strove to support falsehood as much as they could and to refute and undermine the truth. They ridiculed the Messengers and revelations of Allah, and they revelled in whatever knowledge they had (*cf. 40: 83*), but Allah insisted on perfecting His light, even though the disbelievers hate it (*cf. 9: 32*) and that the truth should prevail over falsehood.

﴿Nay, rather We hurl the truth against falsehood, and it crushes it, whereupon it perishes. Woe to you for what you ascribe [falsely, to Allah].﴾ (*al-Anbiyâ' 21: 18*)

By the wisdom and mercy of Allah, allowing those who argue against the truth on the basis of falsehood to continue is one of the primary means of making the truth clear and making its evidence manifest, and showing falsehood to be evidently false and corrupt. Thus things become clearer by means of this contrast between opposites.

﴿وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ ذِكْرٌ بِيَابَسِ رَبِّهِ، فَأَغْرَضَ عَنْهَا وَنَسِيَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا عَلَىٰ فُلُوْبِهِمْ أَكْنَةً أَنْ يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي عَذَابِهِمْ وَقَرَا وَلَنْ تَدْعُهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَىٰ فَلَنْ يَهْتَدُوْا إِذَا أَبَدَا ﴿٥٧﴾ وَرَبُّكَ الْغَفُورُ دُوْلَ الرَّحْمَةُ لَوْ تُؤْخِذُهُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوا لَعَجَلَ لَهُمُ الْعَذَابَ بَلْ لَهُمْ مَوْعِدٌ لَنْ يَجِدُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ مَوْيِلاً ﴿٥٨﴾ وَتِلْكَ الْقُرْآنُ أَفْلَكَنَّهُمْ لَمَا أَظْلَمُوْا وَجَعَلْنَا لِمَهْلِكِهِمْ مَوْعِدًا ﴿٥٩﴾﴾ (سورة الكهف: ٥٧-٥٩)

- 18:57. And who does greater wrong than one who is reminded of the revelations of his Lord, but turns away from them, forgetting the [deeds] that his hands have wrought? We have placed covers on their hearts so that they will not understand it, and deafness in their ears. Even if you call them to guidance, they will never be guided.
- 18:58. But your Lord is Oft-Forgiving, full of mercy. If He were to take them to task for what they have earned, He would indeed have hastened their punishment; but they have an appointed time, from which they will find no escape.
- 18:59. And those cities did We destroy when they did wrong; We set an appointed time for their destruction.

Here Allah tells us that there is no greater wrongdoing or evil than that of a person who is reminded of the revelations of Allah, to whom truth is made distinct from falsehood, and guidance from misguidance, and he is warned of a punishment and reminded of the reward, but he turns away and does not pay heed to that of which he was reminded, he does not give up what he was following, he forgets what his hands have sent on ahead of sins, and he fails to remember that the Knower of the unseen is always watching him. His wrongdoing is greater than that of the heedless one whom the revelations of Allah did not reach, and he was not reminded of them. Even though the latter is

also a wrongdoer, his wrongdoing is less serious than that of the former, because the one who commits sin despite his awareness and knowledge is worse than one who is not like that.

But Allah will punish him because of his turning away from His revelations, his forgetting about his sins and his being content to follow the path of evil, even though he is aware of that, by closing to him the doors of guidance and placing a cover over his heart that will prevent him from understanding the revelations, so that even if he hears them, he will be unable to understand them in a way that may reach his heart.

﴿and deafness in their ears﴾ that is, deafness that will prevent the revelations from reaching them, and will prevent them from hearing the revelations in such a way that could benefit them. If this is their situation, then there is no way they can be guided.

﴿Even if you call them to guidance, they will never be guided﴾ because the one for whom there is hope of a response to the one who calls him to guidance is the one who has no knowledge. As for these people, who saw then became blind, and they saw the path of truth as true but they shunned it, and they saw the path of misguidance as misguided but they followed it, and Allah punished them by closing their hearts and placing a seal upon them, there is no way at all that they could be guided.

This verse is aimed at scaring the one who shuns the truth after having known it: for a barrier could be set up between him and it, so that he would not be able to follow it after that. Nothing is more alarming or a greater deterrent than that.

Then Allah tells us of the vastness of His forgiveness and mercy, for He forgives sins and accepts the repentance of the one who repents, showering him with His mercy and enfolding him in His kindness. If He were to take people to task for what their hands have wrought of sins, He would hasten the punishment for them. But He is forbearing

and does not hasten the punishment; rather He always gives respite, but He does not forget. The consequences of sin are inevitable, even if they are delayed for a long time. Hence Allah says:

﴿but they have an appointed time, from which they will find no escape﴾ that is, they have an appointed time when they will be requited for their deeds; it is inevitable and they cannot escape it or find any refuge from it or steer clear of it.

This is His way of dealing with the earlier and later generations: He does not hasten the punishment for them; rather He calls them to repent and turn to Him. Then if they repent and turn to Him, He forgives them and has mercy upon them, and He removes the punishment from them. Otherwise, if they persist in their wrongdoing and stubbornness, and the time that He has appointed comes, He sends His punishment down upon them. Hence He says:

﴿And those cities did We destroy when they did wrong﴾ that is, because of their wrongdoing; it was not wrongdoing on Our part.
 ﴿We set an appointed time for their destruction﴾ that is, a preordained time that they cannot bring forward or put back.



﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِفَتَنَتْهُ لَا أَبْرَحُ حَقَّ أَبْلُغُ مَجْمَعَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ أَوْ أَمْضِيَ حُكْمًا ٦١﴾ فَلَمَّا بَلَغَا مَجْمَعَ بَيْنِهِمَا نَسِيَاهُوْتُهُمَا فَأَخْتَذَ سَيْلَهُ فِي الْبَحْرِ سَرِيًّا ٦٢ فَلَمَّا جَاءُوهُ رَأَى قَالَ لِفَتَنَتْهُ إِنَّا عَدَاءُنَا لَقَدْ لَقِينَا مِنْ سَفَرِنَا هَذَا نَصِيبًا ٦٣ قَالَ أَرَيْتَ إِذْ أَوْنَتْنَا إِلَى الصَّخْرَةِ فَإِنِّي سَيِّطُ الْحُوتَ وَمَا أَنْسَيْنِيهِ إِلَّا الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ ذَكْرَهُ وَأَخْذَ سَيْلَهُ فِي الْبَحْرِ عِجْمًا ٦٤﴾

(سورة الكهف: ٦٠-٦٤)

18:60. And [remember] when Moosâ said to his servant: I will not give up until I reach the junction of the two seas, even if it takes me years [of travel].

- 18:61. But when they reached the junction between them, they forgot about their fish, which made its way into the sea and swam away.
- 18:62. When they had travelled further on, Moosâ said to his servant: Bring us our morning meal; truly this journey of ours has exhausted us.
- 18:63. [The servant] said: Do you remember when we rested by the rock? I did indeed forget [to tell you about] the fish; it was none but the Shaytân who caused me to forget. It made its way into the sea in an amazing manner.
- 18:64. [Moosâ] said: That is what we were looking for. So they turned back, retracing their footsteps.

Here Allah tells us about His Prophet Moosâ (ﷺ) and his great eagerness to pursue goodness and seek knowledge. He said to his servant, who was constantly by his side at home and when travelling, whose name was Yoosha' ibn Noon, to whom Allah subsequently granted prophethood:

﴿I will not give up until I reach the junction of the two seas﴾ that is, I will carry on travelling, even if that leads to lengthy hardship and I become exhausted, until I reach the junction of the two seas. That was the place at which, as Allah had revealed to him, he would find one of the knowledgeable slaves of Allah who possessed knowledge that Moosâ did not possess.

﴿even if it takes me years﴾ and I have to travel a long distance. What is meant is that longing and eagerness prompted Moosâ to say these words to his servant. This is indicative of his unwavering resolve and that is why he fulfilled it.

﴿But when they﴾ namely he and his servant
 ﴿reached the junction between them, they forgot about their fish﴾. They had with them a fish which was their provision and from which they used to eat. He had been promised that when he lost the fish, that is where they would find that slave of Allah for whom they were

looking. That fish made its way into the sea, and this was one of the signs.

The commentators said that when they reached that place, some of the sea water splashed onto that fish, which was their provision, then it made its way, by Allah's leave, into the sea and came to life with the other sea creatures.

When Moosâ and his servant passed beyond the junction between the two seas, Moosâ said to his servant: «Bring us our morning meal; truly this journey of ours has exhausted us» that is, we have become tired. That tiredness only began when they travelled beyond that point, otherwise the lengthy travel that had brought them to the junction between the two seas had not caused them to feel tired before that. This was one of the signs that indicated to Moosâ that what he sought was there. Their longing to reach that place had made the journey easy for them, but when they went beyond that point, they began to feel tired. When Moosâ said these words to his servant, the servant said:

«Do you remember when we rested by the rock? I did indeed forget [to tell you about] the fish» that is, did you not know that when we stopped for the night beside that well-known rock, which was between the two seas, «I did indeed forget [to tell you about] the fish; it was none but the Shaytân who caused me to forget. It made its way into the sea in an amazing manner» that is, when it moved towards the sea and leapt into it, that was something amazing.

The servant said this to him, and Moosâ had a promise from Allah that when he lost the fish, he would find al-Khidr. So Moosâ said:

«That is what we were looking for» that is, seeking «So they turned back, retracing their footsteps» and went back to the place where they had forgotten the fish. When they reached that place, they found one of the slaves of Allah, namely al-Khidr; he was a righteous slave, but he was not a Prophet, according to the correct view.



﴿فَوَجَدَا عَبْدًا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا إِلَيْنَاهُ رَحْمَةً مِنْ عِنْدِنَا وَعَلَمْنَاهُ مِنْ لَدُنَّا عِلْمًا ﴾^{٦٥}
 قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَى هَلْ أَتَيْتُكَ عَلَى أَنْ تَعْلَمَنِي وَمَا عَلِمْتَ رُشْدًا ﴾٦٦﴿ قَالَ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِعَ
 مَعِي صَبَرًا ﴾٦٧﴿ وَكَيْفَ تَصِيرُ عَلَى مَا لَنْ تُحْكِمْ بِهِ حُبْرًا ﴾٦٨﴿ قَالَ سَتَسْتَحْدِثُنِي إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ
 صَابِرًا وَلَا أَغْصِي لَكَ أَمْرًا ﴾٦٩﴿ قَالَ فَإِنْ أَتَبْعَتِنِي فَلَا تَسْتَلِنِي عَنْ شَيْءٍ حَقَّ أَخْدُثَ
 لَكَ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا ﴾٧٠﴿ فَانظَلَقَا حَقَّ إِذَا رَكِبَا فِي السَّفِينَةِ خَرْقَهَا ﴾٧١﴿ قَالَ أَخْرَقْنَاهَا لِنَغْرِقَ
 أَهْلَهَا لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا إِمْرًا ﴾٧٢﴿ قَالَ اللَّهُ أَقْلَى إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِعَ مَعِي صَبَرًا ﴾٧٣﴿ قَالَ لَا
 نُؤَاخِذُنِي بِمَا نَسِيْتُ وَلَا تُرْهِقْنِي مِنْ أَمْرِي عُسْرًا ﴾٧٤﴿ فَانظَلَقَا حَقَّ إِذَا لَقِيَا غُلَمًا فَنَلَمْ
 قَالَ أَفْنَلْتَ نَفْسًا زَكِيَّةً يُغْيِرُ نَفْسَهُ لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا لُكْرًا ﴾٧٥﴿ (سورة الكهف: ٦٥-٧٤)

- 18:65. There they found one of Our slaves, on whom We had bestowed mercy from Us and to whom We had taught knowledge of Our own.
- 18:66. Moosâ said to him: May I follow you so that you may teach me something of that sound knowledge that you have been taught?
- 18:67. The man said: You will never be able to have patience with me,
- 18:68. for how can you have patience with something that you cannot fully comprehend?
- 18:69. Moosâ said: You shall find me, if Allah wills, patient; and I will not disobey you in any matter.
- 18:70. The man said: Then if you follow me, do not ask me about anything until I mention it to you myself.
- 18:71. So they set out until, when they had boarded a boat, he scuttled it. Moosâ said: Have you scuttled it in order to drown its passengers? You have certainly done a dreadful thing!
- 18:72. The man said: Did I not say: You will never be able to have patience with me?
- 18:73. Moosâ said: Do not take me to task for what I have forgotten, and do not make it too difficult for me to follow you.

18:74. So they set out until, when they met a boy, he killed him. Moosâ said: Have you killed an innocent soul who killed no one? You have done a terrible thing!

﴿There they found one of Our slaves, on whom We had bestowed mercy from Us﴾ that is, Allah had granted him special mercy, by virtue of which his knowledge increased and he did righteous deeds ﴿and to whom We had taught knowledge of Our own﴾. He was given knowledge that had not been given to Moosâ, although Moosâ (ﷺ) was more knowledgeable than him in most matters, especially matters of faith and the fundamentals of laws and regulations, because he was one of the Messengers of strong resolve, whom Allah favoured over all creation (of his own time) in terms of knowledge, righteous deeds and other things. When Moosâ met him, he presented his request to him, politely seeking his consent:

﴿May I follow you so that you may teach me something of that sound knowledge that you have been taught?﴾ That is, may I follow you on the basis that you teach me some of that sound knowledge that Allah has taught you, by which I may be guided and know the truth with regard to these matters? For Allah had given al-Khiḍr a great deal of inspiration and intuition, through which he could see into the hidden depths of many things that could even be hidden from Moosâ (ﷺ). Al-Khiḍr said to Moosâ: I will not refuse your request, but ﴿You will never be able to have patience with me﴾ that is, you will not be able to follow me and stay by my side, because you will see things that you will not be able to have patience with, things that outwardly appear to be evil, but inwardly are otherwise. Hence he said:

﴿for how can you have patience with something that you cannot fully comprehend?﴾ that is, how can you be patient with a matter when you have no knowledge of either its hidden or apparent aspects and you do not know the purpose behind it or how it will unfold?

Moosâ said: «You shall find me, if Allah wills, patient; and I will not disobey you in any matter». This was resolve on his part, before he was put to the test; resolve is one thing and actually having patience is another matter altogether. Therefore Moosâ (ﷺ) was not able to be patient when he was put to the test.

At that point al-Khiḍr said to him: «Then if you follow me, do not ask me about anything until I mention it to you myself» that is, do not ask any question or raise any objection, until I am the one who tells you about it, at the time when it is appropriate to tell you. So he forbade him to ask him, but he promised to explain to him the reality of things.

«So they set out until, when they had boarded a boat, he scuttled it» that is, al-Khiḍr pulled out a plank of it, and he had a reason for doing that which he was going to explain, but Moosâ (ﷺ) could not be patient, because it appeared outwardly to be something bad, for it was damage to the boat which could have caused its passengers to drown. Hence Moosâ said:

«Have you scuttled it in order to drown its passengers? You have certainly done a dreadful thing!» That is, something serious and awful. This was due to lack of patience on his part, so al-Khiḍr said to him: «Did I not say: You will never be able to have patience with me?» That is, it has happened as I said it would. This was due to forgetfulness on Moosâ's part, so he said: «Do not take me to task for what I have forgotten, and do not make it too difficult for me to follow you» that is, do not be too hard on me, and be easy-going with me; this came about because of forgetfulness, so do not take me to task the first time. Thus he both admitted his error and asked for forgiveness for it, as if he was saying: you should not be harsh with your companion, O Khiḍr. So al-Khiḍr forgave him.

«So they set out until, when they met a boy, he» that is, al-Khiḍr «killed him». Moosâ became very angry and was overtaken by

religious zeal, when his companion killed a small boy who had done no wrong.

﴿Moosâ said: Have you killed an innocent soul who killed no one? You have done a terrible thing!﴾ For what evil could be greater than killing a small child who had done nothing wrong and had not killed anyone? The first time Moosâ had forgotten, but this was not forgetfulness; rather it was a lack of patience.



Glossary of Islamic Terms*



<i>abu</i> (or <i>abi</i>)	أبو، أبي	father (of)
angel	ملائكة	A being made of light who is totally obedient to Allah and has no free will. Allah has assigned some angels specific tasks, like those who record our good and bad deeds, the Angel of Death, the guardians of hell, etc.
'asr	عصر	mid-afternoon; the obligatory prayer at that time
<i>banu</i> (or <i>bani</i>)	بنو، بني	<i>lit.</i> ‘children (of)’; <i>usu.</i> referring to a tribe that claims a common ancestor
<i>bayt</i> <i>al-maqdis</i>	بيت المقدس	the Islamic term for Jerusalem
<i>dhikr Allāh</i>	ذكر الله	remembrance of Allah; specifically, remembering Allah through praising and supplicating to Him
<i>dhuhr</i>	ظهر	early afternoon; the obligatory prayer at that time

* The Arabic words are transliterated according to the conventions of the Transliteration Chart found in this book. If a word has become part of the English language (that is, is found in a dictionary of Standard English), that spelling is used in this book and appears first in this Glossary, with the transliterated form in brackets after it.

dirham	درهم	originally, a silver coin; a unit of currency
fajr	الفجر	dawn; the obligatory prayer at that time
fatwa (<i>fatwah</i>)	فتوى	religious decision or decree
<i>hadd</i>	حد	specific punishments prescribed in Sharia for specific offences such as theft and fornication
hadith (<i>hadeeth</i>)	حديث	a statement or action of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that was remembered and recorded by his Companions and followers
Hajj (<i>Hajj</i>)	حج	the major pilgrimage to the Sacred Mosque, site of the Kaaba in Makkah, to be undertaken by every able Muslim once in his or her lifetime
Haram	حرام	the sacred area surrounding and including the Kaaba in Makkah; any inviolable or holy area
haram (<i>harām</i>)	حرام	forbidden according to Islamic law
Hejaz (<i>Hijâz</i>)	حجاز	the Western region of the Arabian Peninsula, which includes Makkah and Madinah
Iblees	إبليس	another name for Satan (Shayṭân) in Arabic
'ishâ'	عشاء	late evening; the obligatory prayer at that time
<i>isrâ'</i> and <i>mi'raj</i>	الإسراء والمعراج	the night journey of the Prophet (ﷺ) from Makkah to Jerusalem and his ascension from there to visit heaven

<i>jâhiliyah</i>	جاہلیۃ	<i>lit. ‘ignorance’; the age of spiritual darkness before Islam</i>
Jibreel	جبریل	the Arabic name for Gabriel (ﷺ), the archangel who transmitted the verses of the Qur'an and other communications from Allah (ﷻ) to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)
jihad (<i>jihâd</i>)	جهاد	struggle or striving (in Allah's cause)
<i>jinn</i> (plural of <i>jinni</i>)	جن	non-human, rational beings created by Allah from fire, often referred to as ‘demons’ or ‘devils’. They have free will like humans: some are Muslims, others disbelievers; some are obedient to Allah, others disobedient. Satan is a jinni. Some disobedient jinn mislead people into thinking that they can foretell the future, near or distant, or provide people with riches or some sort of power.
<i>juz'</i> (pl. <i>ajzâ'</i>)	جزء	a section of the Qur'an equal to one-thirtieth of the text
Kaaba (<i>Ka'bah</i>)	الکعبۃ	the House of Allah in Makkah, originally built by Prophets Ibrâheem and Ismâ'eel, which Muslims face when they pray
<i>al-Lawh</i> <i>al-Mah-</i> <i>foodh</i>	اللُّوْح المَحْفُوظ	the Preserved Tablet in Heaven on which Allah's words and decrees are written
<i>maghrib</i>	مغرب	sunset; the obligatory prayer at that time
mufti	مفتي	an Islamic scholar who is qualified to deliver formal legal verdicts based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah

<i>Quraysh</i>	قُرَيْشٌ	the dominant tribe in Makkah at the time of the Prophet's mission; their society was based on polytheism
<i>rak'ah</i> (pl. <i>raka'ât</i>)	رَكْعَةٌ	a unit of the formal prayer (<i>salâh</i>)
<i>Šâhâbah</i>	صَحَّابَةٌ	Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)
<i>saheeh</i>	صَحِّحٌ	a grade of hadith: sound or authentic
<i>salâm</i>	السَّلَامُ	<i>lit.</i> ‘peace’; the Islamic greeting of peace
<i>shar'i</i>	شَرْعِيٌّ	of or pertaining to Sharia; Islamic
<i>Shaytân</i>	شَيْطَانٌ	Satan
<i>shirk</i>	شِرْكٌ	associating partners with Allah
<i>soorah</i> or <i>soorat</i>	سُورَةٌ	chapter of the Qur'an
<i>Sunnah</i>	سُنْنَةٌ	the practice and collected sayings of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that together with the Qur'an forms the basis of Islamic law
<i>sunnah</i>	سُنْنَةٌ	acts that are recommended but not mandatory; one who performs them is rewarded, but one who neglects them is not punished
<i>tafseer</i>	تَفْسِيرٌ	exegesis: commentary, or explanation of the meanings (<i>usu.</i> of Qur'anic verses)
<i>tahajjud</i>	تَهَجِّدٌ	voluntary night prayer offered between ' <i>ishâ'</i> and <i>fajr</i>
<i>tahleel</i>	تَهْلِيلٌ	the act of saying <i>lâ ilâha illâ Allâh</i> (there is none worthy of worship other than Allah)

<i>tahmeed</i>	تَحْمِيد	the act of saying <i>Alhamdulillâh</i> (all praises and thanks are for Allah)
<i>takbeer</i>	تَكْبِيرٌ	the act of saying <i>Allâhu akbar</i> (Allah is the Greatest)
<i>tasbeeh</i>	تَسْبِيحٌ	the recitation of phrases glorifying Allah; saying <i>subhân Allâh</i> (glory be to Allah)
<i>tawheed</i>	الْتَّوْحِيد	the oneness of Allah: the knowledge that He alone deserves to be worshipped and that He has no partners
Ummah	أَمَّةٌ	community or nation: <i>usu.</i> used to refer to the entire global community of Muslims
'umrah	عُمْرَةٌ	a minor, non-obligatory pilgrimage to Makkah
unseen	خَفِيٌّ	a term used to denote phenomena or aspects that cannot be known using ordinary human faculties
<i>zakât</i> (or <i>zakah</i>)	زَكَاةٌ	obligatory charity: an 'alms tax' on wealth that is paid by Muslims and be distributed to others who qualify as recipients
Zaqoom	زَقْوُمٌ	the name of a tree in hell that has fruit shaped like devils' heads, which the inhabitants of hell must eat



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