

The Tafsīr of Sūrat Az-Zukhruf (Chapter - 43)

Which was revealed in Makkah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

﴿حَمْدٌ ۝۱﴾ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ ﴿۲﴾ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿۳﴾ وَإِنَّمَا فِي أَرْكِ
الْكِتَابِ لَدَيْنَا لَعَلِّ حَكِيمٌ ﴿۴﴾ أَفَنَضْرِبُ عَنْكُمُ الذِّكْرَ صَفْحًا أَن كُنتُمْ قَوْمًا
مُشْرِكِينَ ﴿۵﴾ وَكَمْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن نَّبِيِّ فِي الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿۶﴾ وَمَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِّن نَّبِيٍّ إِلَّا كَانُوا بِهِ
يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿۷﴾ فَأَهْلَكْنَا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ بَطْشًا وَمَضَىٰ مَثَلُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿۸﴾

﴿1. Hā Mīm.﴾

﴿2. By the manifest Book.﴾

﴿3. Verily, We have made it a Qur'ān in Arabic that you may be able to understand.﴾

﴿4. And verily, it is in the Mother of the Book with Us, indeed exalted, full of wisdom.﴾

﴿5. Shall We then take away the Reminder from you, because you are a people excessive.﴾

﴿6. And how many a Prophet have We sent amongst the men of old.﴾

﴿7. And never came there a Prophet to them but they used to mock at him.﴾

﴿8. Then We destroyed men stronger (in power) than these and the example of the ancients has passed away.﴾

﴿حَمْدٌ ۝۱﴾ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ ﴿۲﴾

﴿Hā-Mīm. By the manifest Book.﴾ means, plain and clear in both wording and meaning, because it was revealed in the language of the Arabs, which is the most eloquent language for communication among people. Allāh says:

﴿إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ﴾

﴿Verily, We have made it﴾ meaning, revealed it,

﴿قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا﴾

﴿a Qur'ān in Arabic﴾ meaning, in the language of the Arabs, eloquent and clear;

﴿لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

﴿that you may be able to understand.﴾ means, that you may understand it and ponder its meanings. This is like the Āyah:

﴿بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ﴾

﴿In the plain Arabic language.﴾ (26:195)

﴿وَرَأَيْنَاهُ فِي أُمِّ الْكِتَابِ لَدَيْنَا لَعَلَّ نَحْنُ خَكِيمٌ﴾

﴿And verily, it is in the Mother of the Book with Us, indeed exalted, full of wisdom.﴾

This explains the high status of the Qur'ān among the hosts on high (the angels), so that the people of earth will respect it, venerate it and obey it.

﴿وَرَأَيْنَاهُ﴾

﴿And verily, it﴾ means, the Qur'ān,

﴿فِي أُمِّ الْكِتَابِ﴾

﴿is in the Mother of the Book﴾ meaning, *Al-Lawḥ Al-Maḥfūz* (the Preserved Tablet). This was the view of Ibn 'Abbās and Mujāhid.^[1]

﴿لَدَيْنَا﴾

﴿with Us,﴾ means, in Our presence. This was the view of Qatādah and others.^[2]

﴿لَعَلَّ﴾

﴿indeed exalted﴾ means, occupying a position of honor and virtue. This was the view of Qatādah.^[3]

[1] Ar-Rāzi, 27:167.

[2] Al-Baghawi 4:133.

[3] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:567.

﴿حَكِيمٌ﴾

﴿full of wisdom.﴾ means, clear, with no confusion or deviation. All of this indicates its noble status and virtue, as Allāh says elsewhere:

﴿إِنَّهُ لَقُرْآنٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٧٦﴾ فِي كِتَابٍ مَكْنُونٍ ﴿٧٧﴾ لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّن رَّبِّ
الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾﴾

﴿That (this) is indeed an honorable recitation. In a Book well-guarded. Which none can touch but the pure. A revelation from the Lord of the all that exists.﴾ (56:77-80)

﴿كَلاَّ إِنَّا نَذْكُرُكَ ﴿٨١﴾ قَدْ نَآءَ ذِكْرُكَ ﴿٨٢﴾ فِي مِصْرٍ مَّكْرُومَةٍ ﴿٨٣﴾ مَرْفُوعَةٍ مُّطَهَّرَةٍ ﴿٨٤﴾ يُأْتِي سَفَرًا ﴿٨٥﴾
كَرِيمٍ يَّرِدُّهُ ﴿٨٦﴾﴾

﴿Nay, indeed it is an admonition. So whoever wills, let him pay attention to it. (It is) in Records held (greatly) in honor, exalted, purified, in the hands of scribes (angels), honorable and obedient.﴾ (80:11-16)

﴿أَنفَضِرْبَ عَنْكُمُ الذِّكْرَ صَفْحًا أَن كُنتُمْ قَوْمًا مُّزِفِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾﴾

﴿Shall We then take away the Reminder (this Qur'ān) from you, because you are a people excessive.﴾

means, 'do you think that We will forgive you and not punish you, when you do not do as you have been commanded?' This was the view of Ibn 'Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with him, Abu Ṣāliḥ, Mujāhid and As-Suddi, and was the view favored by Ibn Jarīr.^[1]

﴿أَنفَضِرْبَ عَنْكُمُ الذِّكْرَ صَفْحًا﴾

﴿Shall We then take away the Reminder (this Qur'ān) from you,﴾

Qatādah said, "By Allāh, if this Qur'ān had been taken away when the first generations of this *Ummah* rejected it, they would have been doomed, but Allāh by His mercy persisted in sending it and calling them to it for twenty years, or for as long as He willed."^[2] What Qatādah said is very good, and his point

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:567, 568.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:568.

is that Allāh, by His grace and mercy towards His creation, did not stop calling them to the truth and to the wise Reminder, i.e., the Qur'ān, even though they were heedless and turned away from it. Indeed, He sent it so that those who were decreed to be guided might be guided by it, and so that proof might be established against those who were decreed to be.

Consolation to the Prophet ﷺ for the Disbelief of Quraysh

Then Allāh consoles His Prophet ﷺ for the disbelief of his people, and commands him to bear it with patience.

﴿وَكَمْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ نَبِيٍّ فِي الْأَوَّلِينَ﴾

﴿And how many a Prophet have We sent amongst the men of old.﴾

meaning, among the sects (communities) of old.

﴿وَمَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ﴾

﴿And never came there a Prophet to them but they used to mock at him.﴾

means, they disbelieved him and mock at him.

﴿فَأَهْلَكْنَا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ بَطْشًا﴾

﴿Then We destroyed men stronger than these﴾ means, 'We destroyed those who disbelieved in the Messengers, and they were stronger in power than these who disbelieve in you, O Muḥammad.' This is like the Āyah:

﴿أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ كَانُوا أَكْثَرَ مِنْهُمْ
وَأَشَدَّ قُوَّةً﴾

﴿Have they not traveled through the earth and seen what was the end of those before them? They were more in number than them and mightier in strength﴾ (40:82).

And there are many similar Āyāt.

﴿وَمَضَىٰ مَثَلُ الْأَوَّلِينَ﴾

﴿and the example of the ancients has passed away.﴾

Mujāhid said, "The way of their life."^[1] Qatādah said, "Their

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21 :571.

٤٩٠

وَالَّذِي نَزَّلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً يَقْدَرُ فَأَنْشَرْنَا بِهِ بَلْدَةً مَيْتًا
 كَذَلِكَ نُخْرِجُوكَ ۝ وَالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَرْوَاحَ كُلَّهَا وَجَعَلَ
 لَكُم مِّنَ الْفَلَاحِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مَا تَرْكَبُونَ ۝ لَسْتُمْ عَلَىٰ ظُهُورِهِ
 تُعْزَذَرُونَ وَإِن مَّا تَرْكَبُونَ إِلَّا آمِنِينَ ۝ إِذَا اسْتَوَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَتَقُولُوا سُبْحَنَ
 الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَنَا هَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُ مُقْرِنِينَ ۝ وَإِنَّا لَنَرَاهُ لَمُتَقِيلُونَ ۝ وَجَعَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ جُزْءًا إِنَّا لَا نَسُبَّكَ
 لَكُفُورٍ مُّبِينٍ ۝ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنَّمَا يَخْلُقُ بَنَاتٍ وَأَصْفَنَكُمْ
 بِالْبَنِينَ ۝ وَإِذَا بَشَّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِمَا ضَرَبَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ مَثَلًا
 ظَلَ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَاطِمٌ ۝ أَوْ مِّنْ يُشْوِؤُا فِي
 الْحِلْيَةِ وَهُوَ فِي الْخِصَامِ غَيْرُ مُبِينٍ ۝ وَجَعَلُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ
 الَّذِينَ هُمْ عِبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ إِنثًا أَشْهَدُوا خَلْقَهُمْ سَتُكْتَبُ
 شَهَادَتُهُمْ وَيُسْأَلُونَ ۝ وَقَالُوا لَوْ شَاءَ الرَّحْمَنُ مَا عَبَدْنَاهُمْ
 مَا لَهُمْ بِذَلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ ۝ أَمْ أَنَاءَ بَنِينَ
 كَتَبْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ فَهُمْ بِهِ مُسْتَمْسِكُونَ ۝ بَلْ قَالُوا
 إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِمْ مُّهْتَدُونَ ۝

punishment. ۱۱۱
 Others said, "Their lesson," i.e., "We made them a lesson for those disbelievers who came after them, that they would suffer the same end as them," as in the *Āyah* at the end of this Sūrah:

﴿فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ سَلَفًا وَمَثَلًا
 لِّلْآخِرِينَ﴾

﴿And We made them a precedent, and an example to later generations.﴾ (43:56);

﴿سُبْحَنَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي قَدْ خَلَقَ فِي
 عِبَادِهِ﴾

﴿this has been the way of Allāh in dealing with His servants﴾ (40:85).

﴿وَلَنْ نَّجِدَ لِسِتْوَىٰ اللَّهِ
 تَبْدِيلًا﴾

﴿and you will not find any change in the way of Allāh.﴾ (33:62)

﴿وَلَمَّا سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ خَلَقَهُنَّ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَلِيمُ ۝ الَّذِي جَعَلَ
 لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا شُعَبًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ۝ وَالَّذِي نَزَّلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ
 مَاءً يَقْدَرُ فَأَنْشَرْنَا بِهِ بَلْدَةً مَيْتًا كَذَلِكَ نُخْرِجُوكَ ۝ وَالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَرْوَاحَ كُلَّهَا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم
 مِّنَ الْفَلَاحِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مَا تَرْكَبُونَ ۝ لَسْتُمْ عَلَىٰ ظُهُورِهِ تُعْزَذَرُونَ إِذَا اسْتَوَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ
 وَتَقُولُوا سُبْحَنَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَنَا هَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُ مُقْرِنِينَ ۝ وَإِنَّا لَنَرَاهُ لَمُتَقِيلُونَ ۝﴾

49. And indeed if you ask them: "Who has created the heavens

[1] At-Tabari 21:571.

and the earth?" They will surely say: "The All-Mighty, the All-Knower created them."﴾

﴿10. Who has made for you the earth like a bed, and has made for you roads therein, in order that you may find your way.﴾

﴿11. And Who sends down water from the sky in due measure, then We revive a dead land therewith, and even so you will be brought forth.﴾

﴿12. And Who has created all the pairs and has appointed for you ships and cattle on which you ride,﴾

﴿13. In order that you may mount on their backs, and then may remember the favor of your Lord when you mount thereon, and say: "Glory to Him Who has subjected this to us, and we could have never had it."﴾

﴿14. And verily, to Our Lord we indeed are to return!"﴾

The Idolators' admission that Allāh is the Sole Creator, and Further Evidence of that

Allāh says: 'If you, O Muḥammad, were to ask these idolators who associate others with Allāh and worship others besides Him,'

﴿مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولَنَّ خَلَقْنَاهُ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَلِيمُ﴾

﴿"Who has created the heavens and the earth?" They will surely say: "The All-Mighty, the All-Knower created them."﴾

In other words, they will admit that the Creator of all that is Allāh Alone, with no partner or associate, yet they still worship others – idols and false gods – alongside Him.

﴿الَّذِي جَمَعَ لَكُمْ الْأَرْضَ مَهْنًا﴾

﴿Who has made for you the earth like a bed,﴾ means, smooth, stable and firm, so that you can travel about in it, and stand on it and sleep and walk about, even though it is created above water, but He has strengthened it with the mountains, lest it should shake.

﴿وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا﴾

﴿and has made for you roads therein,﴾ means, paths between the mountains and the valleys.

﴿لَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ﴾

﴿in order that you may find your way.﴾ means, in your journeys from city to city, region to region, land to land.

﴿وَالَّذِي نَزَّلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً يَقْدَرُ﴾

﴿And Who sends down water from the sky in due measure,﴾ means, according to what is sufficient for your crops, fruits and drinking water for yourselves and your cattle.

﴿فَأَنْشَرْنَا بِهِ بَلْدَةً مَيِّتًا﴾

﴿then We revive a dead land therewith,﴾ means, a barren land, for when the water comes to it, it is stirred (to life), and it swells and puts forth every lovely kind (of growth). By referring to the revival of the earth, Allāh draws attention to how He will bring bodies back to life on the Day of Resurrection, after they have been dead.

﴿كَذَلِكَ نُخْرِجُكَ﴾

﴿and even so you will be brought forth.﴾

Then Allāh says:

﴿وَالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا﴾

﴿And Who has created all the pairs﴾ meaning, of everything that grows in the earth, all kinds of plants, crops, fruits, flowers, etc., and all different kinds of animals.

﴿وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ الْفُلُكِ﴾

﴿and has appointed for you ships﴾ or vessels,

﴿وَالْأَنْعَامَ مَا تَرْكَبُونَ﴾

﴿and cattle on which you ride.﴾ means, He has subjugated them to you and made it easy for you to eat their meat, drink their milk and ride on their backs. Allāh says:

﴿يَسْتَوُوا عَلَى ظُهُورِهِ﴾

﴿In order that you may mount on their backs,﴾ meaning, sit comfortably and securely,

﴿عَلَى ظُهُورِهِ﴾

﴿on their backs﴾ means, on the backs of these kinds of animals.

﴿ثُمَّ تَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ رَبِّكُمْ﴾

﴿and then may remember the favor of your Lord﴾ means, whereby these animals are subjugated to you.

﴿إِذَا اسْتَوَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَتَقُولُوا سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَنَا هَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُ مُقْرِنِينَ﴾

﴿when you mount thereon, and say: "Glory to Him Who has subjected this to us, and we could have never had it."﴾

means, if it were not for the fact that Allāh has subjugated these things to us, we could never have done this by our own strength.' Ibn 'Abbās, Qatādah, As-Suddi and Ibn Zayd said: "We could not have done this ourselves."^[1]

﴿وَأَنَّا إِنَّا لَمُغْلِبُونَ﴾

﴿And verily, to Our Lord we indeed are to return.﴾

means, 'We will return to Him after our death, and our ultimate destination is with Him.' In this Āyah, mention of earthly journeys draws attention to the journey of the Hereafter, just as elsewhere, mention of earthly provision draws attention to the importance of ensuring provision for the Hereafter, as Allāh says:

﴿وَتَسَرَّوْا قُلُوبُكُمْ لِلْغَايَةِ الْآخِرَةِ﴾

﴿And take a provision (with you) for the journey, but the best provision is the Taqwā﴾ (2:197).

And mention of earthly garments is also used to draw attention to the raiment of the Hereafter:

﴿وَرِبَّائًا وَلِبَاسَ الْقَوْلَى ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ﴾

﴿and as an adornment; and the raiment of the Taqwā, that is better﴾ (7:26).

﴿وَجَعَلُوا لَهُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ جُزْأً إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَكَفُورٌ مُبِينٌ﴾ (١٠٠) أَمْ أَعَدَّ مِمَّا يَخْلُقُ بَنَاتٍ وَأَصْفَنَكُمْ بِالْبَنِينَ (١٠١) وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُمْ بِمَا ضَرَبَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ مَثَلًا ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ (١٠٢) أَوْ مَن يُنْشَأُ فِي الْحِلْيَةِ وَهُوَ فِي الْفِصَامِ غَيْرُ مُبِينٍ (١٠٣) وَجَعَلُوا أَلَمَتَهُكَ الَّذِينَ

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21 : 576, 577.

هُمْ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ إِنَّمَا أَشْهَدُوا خَلْقَهُمْ سَتُكُنَّبُ سَهْدَتُهُمْ وَتُنْفَكُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ وَقَالُوا لَوْ شَاءَ
الرَّحْمَنُ مَا عَبَدْنَاهُمْ مَا لَهُمْ بِذَلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

﴿15. Yet, they assign to some of His servants a share with Him. Verily, man is indeed a manifest ingrate!﴾

﴿16. Or has He taken daughters out of what He has created, and He has selected for you sons?﴾

﴿17. And if one of them is informed of the news of that which he sets forth as a parable to the Most Gracious, his face becomes dark, and he is filled with grief!﴾

﴿18. A creature who is brought up in adornments, and who in dispute cannot make itself clear?﴾

﴿19. And they make females the angels who themselves are servants of the Most Gracious. Did they witness their creation? Their testimony will be recorded, and they will be questioned!﴾

﴿20. And they said: "If it had been the will of the Most Gracious, we should not have worshipped them." They have no knowledge whatsoever of that. They do nothing but lie!﴾

Condemnation of the Idolators' attribution of Offspring to Allāh

Here Allāh speaks of the lies and fabrications of the idolators, when they devoted some of their cattle to their false gods and some to Allāh, as He described in Sūrat Al-An'ām where He said:

﴿وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ مِمَّا ذَرَأَ مِنَ الْحَرْثِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ نَصِيبًا فَقَالُوا هَذَا لِلَّهِ بِرِئْسِهِ
وَهَذَا لِشُرَكَائِنَا فَمَا كَانَ لِشُرَكَائِهِمْ فَلَا يَصِلُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
فَهُوَ يَصِلُ إِلَى اللَّهِ شُرَكَائِهِمْ سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿١٣٦﴾﴾

﴿And they assign to Allāh share of the tilth and cattle which He has created, and they say: "This is for Allāh" according to their claim, "and this is for our partners." But the share of their partners reaches not Allāh, while the share of Allāh reaches their partners! Evil is the way they judge!﴾ (6:136).

Similarly, out of the two kinds of offspring, sons and daughters, they assigned to Him the worst and least valuable (in their eyes), i.e., daughters, as Allāh says:

﴿الذَّكَرُ وَلَهُ الْأُنثَىٰ تِلْكَ إِذًا فَنَسَاءٌ ضَرِيبَةٌ ۖ﴾

«Is it for you the males and for Him the females? That indeed is a division most unfair!» (53:21-22)

And Allāh says here:

﴿وَجَعَلُوا لَهُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ جُزْءًا إِنَّ الْإِنسَانَ لَكَفُورٌ مُّبِينٌ ۖ﴾

«Yet, they assign to some of His servants a share with Him. Verily, man is indeed a manifest ingrate!» Then He says:

﴿أَمْ أَخَذَ مِنْهَا بَنَاتٍ وَاصْفَنَكُمْ بِالنِّسَبِ ۖ﴾

«Or has He taken daughters out of what He has created, and He has selected for you sons?»

This is a denunciation of them in the strongest terms, as He goes on to say:

﴿وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُمْ بِمَا صَرَبَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ مَثَلًا ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ۖ﴾

«And if one of them is informed of the news of that which he sets forth as a parable to the Most Gracious, his face becomes dark, and he is filled with grief!»

means, if one of these people is given the news that there has been born to him one of those which he attributes to Allāh, i.e., a daughter, he hates this news and it depresses and overwhelms him so much that he keeps away from people because he feels so ashamed. Allāh says, so how can they dislike that so much and yet they attribute it to Allāh?

﴿أَوْ مَن يُنَادِي فِي الْحَبْلَةِ ۖ وَهُوَ فِي الْفَصَارِ غَيْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ۖ﴾

«A creature who is brought up in adornments, and who in dispute cannot make itself clear?»

means, women are regarded as lacking something, which they make up for with jewelry and adornments from the time of childhood onwards, and when there is a dispute, they cannot speak up and defend themselves clearly, so how can this be attributed to Allāh?

﴿وَجَعَلُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عِبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ إِنثًا ۖ﴾

«And they make females the angels who themselves are servants of the Most Gracious.»

means, that is what they believe about them, but Allāh denounces them for that and says:

﴿أَشْهَدُوا خَلْقَهُمْ﴾

﴿Did they witness their creation?﴾ meaning, did they see Allāh creating them as females?

﴿سَتَكْتُبُ شَهَادَتَهُمْ﴾

﴿Their testimony will be recorded,﴾ means, concerning that,

﴿وَيَسْتَأْذِنُونَ﴾

﴿and they will be questioned!﴾ means, about that, on the Day of Resurrection. This is a stern warning and a serious threat.

﴿وَقَالُوا لَوْ شَاءَ الرَّحْمَنُ مَا عَبَدْنَاهُمْ﴾

﴿And they said: "If it had been the will of the Most Gracious, we should not have worshipped them."﴾

means, (they said:) 'if Allāh had willed, He would have prevented us from worshipping these idols which are images of the angels who are the daughters of Allāh; He knows about this and He approves of it.'

By saying this, they combined several types of error: First: They attributed offspring to Allāh – exalted and sanctified be He far above that. Second: They claimed that He chose daughters rather than sons, and they made the angels, who are the servants of the Most Gracious, female. Third: They worshipped them with no proof, evidence or permission from Allāh. This was based on mere opinion, whims and desires, imitation of their elders and forefathers, and pure ignorance. They used Allāh's decree as an excuse, and this reasoning betrayed their ignorance. Fourth: Allāh denounced them for this in the strongest terms, for from the time He first sent Messengers and revealed Books, the command was to worship Him Alone with no partner or associate, and it was forbidden to worship anything other than Him. Allāh says:

﴿وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الصُّلُوعَ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ مَّنَىٰ
اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَالَةُ فَبُذِّرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَأَنْظَرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَتْ عِقَابُهُ

وَكَذَلِكَ مَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِنْ نَذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا
 إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِمْ مُقْتَدُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾
 قُلْ أُولَٰئِكَ حُتُّوا بَآثَرَهُمْ وَهُمْ كَاذِبُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾
 إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ فَإِن نَّعْمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ
 كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ
 إِنَّنِي بَرَاءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي فَإِنَّهُ سَيِّدِي
 وَأَعْلَاهَا كَلِمَةً بَاقِيَةً فِي عَقِبِهِ ۚ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ بَلْ
 مَنَعْتُ هَٰؤُلَاءَ وَآبَاءَهُمْ حَقَّ جَاءَهُمْ الْحَقُّ وَرَسُولٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٤٢﴾
 وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ قَالُوا هَٰذَا سِحْرٌ وَإِنَّا بِهِ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ وَقَالُوا
 لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ مِنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٤٤﴾ أَهَمْ
 يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ ۚ نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَعيَشتَهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ
 الدُّنْيَا وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِّيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُمْ
 بَعْضًا سَخِرَ يَا وَرَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَلَوْلَا
 أَن يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً لَّجَعَلْنَا لِمَنْ يَكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ
 لِيُصِيبَهُمْ سُقُوطٌ مِّنْ فَضْلِهِ وَمَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

﴿And verily, We have sent among every Ummah a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allāh, and avoid all false deities." Then of them were some whom Allāh guided and of them were some upon whom the straying was justified. So travel through the land and see what was the end of those who denied.﴾ (16:36)

﴿وَمَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رُّسُلِنَا أَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ دُونِ الرَّحْمَنِ آلِهَةً يُعْبَدُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾﴾

﴿And ask those of Our Messengers whom We sent before you: "Did We ever appoint gods to

be worshipped besides the Most Gracious?"﴾ (43:45)

And Allāh says in this Āyah, after mentioning this argument of theirs:

﴿مَا لَهُمْ بِذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ﴾

﴿They have no knowledge whatsoever of that.﴾ meaning, of the truth of what they say and the arguments they put forward.

﴿وَأَن هُمْ إِلَّا يَتْرُفُونَ﴾

﴿They do nothing but lie!﴾ means, they tell lies and fabricate untruths.

﴿مَا لَهُمْ بِذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِن هُمْ إِلَّا يَتْرُفُونَ﴾

﴿They have no knowledge whatsoever of that. They do nothing but lie!﴾

Mujāhid said, "They do not appreciate the power of Allāh."^[1]

﴿لَمْ يَأْتِيَنكُمْ كِتَابٌ مِن قَبْلِهِ. فَهُمْ يَدَّعُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ بَلْ قَالُوا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أَثَرٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِمْ مُّقْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أَثَرٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِمْ مُّقْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ قُلْ أُولَٰئِكَ جُنُودٌ مِّمَّنْ هَدَىٰ مِنَّا وَجَدْتُمْ عَلَيْهِم مَّارَءَ كُرَّ قَالُوا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلُوا يَدَّعُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ فَانقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَنظَرُ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾﴾

﴿21. Or have We given them any Book before this (the Qur'ān) to which they are holding fast?﴾

﴿22. Nay! They say: "We found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we guide ourselves by their footsteps."﴾

﴿23. And similarly, We sent not a warner before you to any town (people) but the luxurious ones among them said: "We found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we will indeed follow their footsteps."﴾

﴿24. He said: "Even if I bring you better guidance than that which you found your fathers following?" They said: "Verily, we disbelieve in that with which you have been sent."﴾

﴿25. So We took revenge on them, then see what was the end of those who denied.﴾

The Idolators have no Proof

Allāh condemns the idolators for worshipping others instead of Allāh with no evidence or proof for doing so.

﴿لَمْ يَأْتِيَنكُمْ كِتَابٌ مِن قَبْلِهِ.﴾

﴿Or have We given them any Book before this﴾ means, before their idolatry.

﴿فَهُمْ يَدَّعُونَ﴾

﴿to which they are holding fast?﴾ means, with regard to what they are doing. This is not the case. This is like the Āyah:

﴿أَمْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانًا فَهُمْ يَنْكُرُونَهُ ﴿٢٥﴾﴾

﴿Or have We revealed to them an authority (a Scripture),

[1] At-Ṭabari 21 :583.

which speaks of that which they have been associating with Him?﴾ (30:35)

meaning, that did not happen. Then Allāh says:

﴿بَلْ قَالُوا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ مِثْلِ الَّذِي هُمْ يُنْفِرُونَ ۚ﴾

﴿Nay! They say: "we found our fathers following a certain way and religion (Ummah), and we guide ourselves by their footsteps."﴾

meaning, they have no grounds for their belief in idolatry apart from the fact that they are imitating their fathers and forefathers who were following a certain *Ummah* or way, i.e., religion. The word *Ummah* is used in a similar manner elsewhere, where Allāh says:

﴿إِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً﴾

﴿And verily, this your religion (Ummah) is one religion﴾ (23:52), and they said;

﴿وإِنَّا عَلَىٰ مِثْلِهِمْ﴾

﴿and we by their footsteps﴾ means, behind them

﴿يُنْفِرُونَ﴾

﴿We guide ourselves﴾ This is their claim with no evidence. Then Allāh points out that what these people say was already said by those who were like them among the nations of the past who disbelieved in the Messengers. Their hearts and their words are similar.

﴿كَذَٰلِكَ مَا أَقَالُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا قَالُوا سَاحِرٌ أَوْ مُجُنٌّ ۖ إِنَّا نَحْنُ قَوْمٌ مَّاغُورُونَ ۚ﴾

﴿Likewise, no Messenger came to those before them but they said: "A sorcerer or a madman!" Have they transmitted this saying to these? Nay, they are themselves a people transgressing beyond bounds!﴾ (51:52-53)

And Allāh says here:

﴿وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِنْ نَذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ مِثْلِ الَّذِي هُمْ يُنْفِرُونَ ۚ﴾

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

٤٩٢

الزُّكْرُوفِ

وَلِيُؤْيِيَهُمْ أَتُونَا وَسُرَّرَ عَلَيْهَا يُنْكِرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَزُخْرُفًا وَإِنْ
كُلَّ ذَلِكَ لَمَّا مَتَعَ الْخَبِيرُ وَالْذُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ
لِلْمُتَفِينِ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَمَنْ يَعِشْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ نُفَيْضُ لَهُ مِنْهُ مَا يَشِيطُنَا
فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَصُدُّوهُمْ عَنْ السَّبِيلِ وَيُخَسِّبُونَ
أَنْهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ حَتَّى إِذَا جَاءَهُ نَادَا فَاذْهَبْ بِبَنِيكَ وَبَيْنَكَ
بَعْدَ الْمَسْرِقَيْنِ فَيَنْسُ الْقَرِينُ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَلَنْ يَفْعَلَكَ يَوْمَ
إِذْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَتُكْفَرُونَ فِي الْعَذَابِ مُشْتَرِكُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ أَفَأَنْتَ تُسْمِعُ
الصُّمَّ أَوْ تَهْدِي الْعُمْى وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٢٧﴾
فَإِنَّمَا نَذِيرٌ بِكَ فَإِنَّا مِنْهُمْ مُنْقِمُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ أَوْزُرْنَاكَ الَّذِي
وَعَدْتَهُمْ فَإِنَّا عَلَيْهِمْ مُقَدِّرُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَاسْتَمْسِكْ بِالَّذِي أُوحِيَ
إِلَيْكَ إِنَّكَ عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَإِنَّهُ لَذِكْرٌ لَكَ وَلِقَوْمِكَ
وَسَوْفَ تُنْقَلُونَ ﴿٣١﴾ وَسَلِّ مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رُسُلِنَا
أَجْعَلْنَا مِنْ دُونِ الرَّحْمَنِ إِلَهًا يُعْبَدُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا
مُوسَى بِآيَاتِنَا إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ فَقَالَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ
رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِآيَاتِنَا إِذَا هُمْ مِنْهَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

﴿And similarly, We sent not a warner before you to any town (people) but the luxurious ones among them said: "We found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we will indeed follow their footsteps."﴾

Then He says:

﴿قُلْ﴾

﴿Say﴾ - 'O Muḥammad, to these idolators -' ^[1]

﴿أَوَلَوْ جُنَّكَ بِأَعْدَىٰ مَا وَجَدْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ جَنَاحًا ۖ قَالُوا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ كَافِرُونَ﴾

﴿"Even if I bring you better guidance than that which you found your fathers following?" They said: "Verily, we disbe-

lieve in that with which you have been sent."﴾

'Even if they were convinced of the truth of what you have brought to them, they will not follow it, because of their evil intentions and their arrogance towards the truth and its people.'

﴿فَاتَّخَذْنَا مِنْهُمْ﴾

﴿So We took revenge on them﴾ means, on the disbelieving nations, by inflicting various kinds of punishments, as Allāh

[1] In the recitation of Ḥaḥṣ and Ibn 'Āmir, it is "He said" as appears in the common copy of Qur'ān. The majority of the scholars of the past recited it as Ibn Kathīr mentioned it here, with the meaning "Say:" See the *Tafsīr* of Al-Baghawī, Aṭ-Ṭabari, Al-Wāḥidī, Ibn 'Aṭīyah etc.

has described in the stories of those nations.

﴿فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ﴾

﴿then see what was the end of those who denied﴾ means, see what became of them, how they were destroyed and how Allāh saved the believers.

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّنِي بَرَاءٌ مِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ إِلَّا إِلَٰهِيَ فَطَرَنِي فَإِنَّهُ سَيَهْدِينِ ﴿٦٧﴾ وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةً بَاقِيَةً فِي عَقْبِهِ. لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾﴾ بَلْ مَنَعْتَ هَٰؤُلَاءِ مَا وَادَّعَوْنَا وَيَدَّعَاكَ وَكَرِهْنَا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٦٩﴾ أَهَرَأَيْتُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾﴾ وَأَمَّا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ فَمَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ إِلَّا سَخِرَ مِنْهُمْ بَعْضُ دَرَجَاتٍ مِّنَ رَبِّكَ عَنَّا سَخِرْنَا مِصْرَتَهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِّيَتَّخِذَ الْبَعْضُ مِنَ الْبَعْضِ سَخِرْنَا وَرَحِمْتَ رَبُّكَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ وَلَوْلَا أَن يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً لَّجَعَلْنَا لِمَن يَكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ لِيُضِلَّهُمْ قُبْحًا مِّنْ فَسَادٍ وَمَعَٰيجَ عَلَيَّا يَظْهَرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾﴾ وَلِيُضِلَّهُمْ قُبْحًا مِّنْ فَسَادٍ وَمَعَٰيجَ عَلَيَّا يَظْهَرُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾﴾ وَرُحِقُوا لَكُمُ الْكَيْدُ لَمَّا مَنَعْنَا لِكُلِّ لَٰئِمٍ مَّا رَاٰهُ يَسْتَفْهِمُ لَكُمْ لِيَتَلَذَّذُوا فِيهَا يَكُمَلُوا وَيُكَذِّبُوا بِمَا لَمْ يُنَالُوا ﴿٧٤﴾﴾ وَرُحِقُوا لَكُمُ الْكَيْدُ لَمَّا مَنَعْنَا لِكُلِّ لَٰئِمٍ مَّا رَاٰهُ يَسْتَفْهِمُ لَكُمْ لِيَتَلَذَّذُوا فِيهَا يَكُمَلُوا وَيُكَذِّبُوا بِمَا لَمْ يُنَالُوا ﴿٧٥﴾﴾

﴿26. And (remember) when Ibrāhīm said to his father and his people: "Verily, I am innocent of what you worship,"﴾

﴿27. "Except Him Who created me; and verily, He will guide me."﴾

﴿28. And he made it a word lasting among his offspring, that they may turn back.﴾

﴿29. Nay, but I gave to these and their fathers to enjoy, till there came to them the truth, and a Messenger making things clear.﴾

﴿30. And when the truth came to them, they said: "This is magic, and we disbelieve therein."﴾

﴿31. And they say: "Why is not this Qur'ān sent down to some great man of the two towns?"﴾

﴿32. Is it they who would portion out the mercy of your Lord? It is We Who portion out between them their livelihood in this world, and We raised some of them above others in ranks, so that some may employ others in their work. But the mercy of your Lord is better than what they amass.﴾

﴿33. And were it not that mankind would have become of one community, We would have provided for those who disbelieve in the Most Gracious, silver roofs for their houses, and elevators whereby they ascend,﴾

﴿34. And for their houses, doors, and thrones on which they could recline,﴾

﴿35. And adornments of gold. Yet all this would have been nothing but an enjoyment of this world. And the Hereafter with your Lord is for those who have Taqwā.﴾

Ibrāhīm's Declaration of Tawhīd

Here Allāh tells us about His servant, Messenger and close Friend, the leader of the monotheists and the father of all subsequent Prophets, from whom Quraysh were descended and claimed to have taken their religion. He disowned his father's and his people's worship of idols and said:

﴿إِنِّي بَرَاءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي فَإِنَّهُ سَيُدِينُنِي ﴿٢٧﴾ وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةً بَاقِيَةً فِي عَقِبِهِ.﴾

﴿"Verily, I am innocent of what you worship, except Him Who created me; and verily, He will guide me." And he made it a Word lasting among his offspring.﴾

The Word means the worship of Allāh Alone with no partner or associate, and the denunciation of all gods apart from Him, i.e., *Lā ilāha illallāh*. He left this word as an example to be followed by those of his progeny who were guided by Allāh.

﴿لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ﴾

﴿that they may turn back.﴾ means, come back to this word.

Ikrimah, Mujāhid, Ad-Ḍaḥḥāk, Qatādah, As-Suddi and others commented on the *Āyah*:

﴿وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةً بَاقِيَةً فِي عَقِبِهِ.﴾

﴿And he made it a Word lasting among his offspring.﴾

"This means, *Lā ilāha illallāh*, and there are still those among his offspring who say it."^[1] A similar view was narrated from

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:589.

Ibn 'Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with him. Ibn Zayd said, "The word of Islām," ^[1] which refers to the same thing suggested by the group.

How the People of Makkah turned away from the Messenger ﷺ and opposed Him, and His Response

Allāh further says:

﴿بَلْ مَنَعْتُ هَٰؤُلَاءَ﴾

﴿Nay, but I gave to these﴾ means, the idolators,

﴿وَأَبَاءَهُمْ﴾

﴿and their fathers﴾ means, they lived a long life in their misguidance.

﴿حَتَّىٰ جَاءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ وَرَسُولٌ مُّبِينٌ﴾

﴿till there came to them the truth, and a Messenger making things clear.﴾

means, his message is clear and his warning is clear.

﴿وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ قَالُوا هَٰذَا سِحْرٌ وَإِنَّا بِهِ كَافِرُونَ﴾

﴿And when the truth came to them, they said: "This is magic, and we disbelieve therein."﴾

means, they were arrogant and stubborn, and they pushed him away out of disbelief, envy and transgression.

﴿وَقَالُوا﴾

﴿And they say﴾ means, objecting to that which Allāh has revealed to him,

﴿لَوْلَا نَزَلَ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ﴾

﴿Why is not this Qur'ān sent down to some great man of the two towns?﴾

meaning, why was this Qur'ān not revealed to some man who was great and prominent in their eyes, from the two towns, i.e., Makkah and Aṭ-Ṭā'if? This was the view of Ibn 'Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with him, 'Ikrimah, Muḥammad bin Ka'b

[1] Al-Qurṭubī 21 : 77.

Al-Quraṣi, Qatādah, As-Suddi and Ibn Zayd.^[1]

Several scholars of *Tafsīr* stated that by this, the Quraysh meant Al-Walīd bin Al-Mughīrah and 'Urwah bin Mas'ūd Ath-Thaqafi. The apparent meaning is that what they meant was a great man from either of the two towns. Allāh responded to their rejection by saying:

﴿أَمْ يَفْقَهُونَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ﴾

﴿Is it they who would portion out the mercy of your Lord?﴾

meaning, the matter has nothing to do with them; it is for Allāh to decide. Allāh knows best where to direct His Message, and He does not reveal it except to the one who is the purest in heart and soul, and of the noblest descent.

Then Allāh points out that He differentiates among His creation in terms of what He gives them of wealth, provision, intellect, understanding and other visible and hidden strengths:

﴿وَحَنُوفًا مِّنْ بَيْنِهِمْ مَّعِيشَتُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا﴾

﴿It is We Who portion out between them their livelihood in this world,﴾

﴿لِيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا سُلْحَارًا﴾

﴿so that some may employ others in their work.﴾ It was said that this means that some employ others in their work, because one needs the other, and vice versa. This was the view of As-Suddi and others.^[2]

﴿وَرَحْمَتُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ﴾

﴿But the mercy of your Lord is better than which they amass.﴾

means, the mercy of Allāh towards His creation is better for them than the wealth and conveniences of this world which they possess.

Wealth is not a Sign of Divine Pleasure

﴿وَلَوْلَا أَن يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً﴾

[1] At-Ṭabari 21 :592, 593.

[2] At-Ṭabari 21 :595.

﴿And were it not that mankind would have become of one community,﴾

means, 'were it not for the fact that many ignorant people would think that Our giving them wealth was a sign that We love the person to whom We give it, and thus they would have agreed upon disbelief for the sake of wealth.' This is the view of Ibn 'Abbās, Al-Ḥasan, Qatādah, As-Suddi and others.^[1]

﴿أَجْمَلْنَا لِمَن يَكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ لِبُيُوتِهِمْ سُفُفًا مِّن فِضَّةٍ وَمَعَارِجَ﴾

﴿We would have provided for those who disbelieve in the Most Gracious, silver roofs for their houses, and elevators﴾

means, ladders and staircases of silver. This was the view of Ibn 'Abbās, Mujāhid, Qatādah, As-Suddi, Ibn Zayd and others.^[2]

﴿عَلَيَّهَا يَظْهَرُونَ﴾

﴿whereby they ascend,﴾ means, go up. And their houses would have doors, i.e., locks on their doors,

﴿وَسُرُرًا عَلَيَّهَا يَنكَبُونَ﴾

﴿and thrones on which they could recline,﴾ means, all of that would be made of silver.

﴿وَزُخْرَفًا﴾

﴿And adornments﴾ means, and gold. This was the view of Ibn 'Abbās, Qatādah, As-Suddi and Ibn Zayd.^[3]

﴿وَأَن كُلَّ ذَلِكَ لَمَّا مَتَّعُ لِلْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا﴾

﴿Yet all this would have been nothing but an enjoyment of this world.﴾

means, all that belongs to this transient world which is insignificant before Allāh. He hastens their reward for good deeds in the form of luxuries in this world, so that when they reach the Hereafter, they will have no good merits with Allāh for which they may be rewarded, as was reported in the *Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīth*.^[4] It was reported in another *Ḥadīth*:

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:597.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:600.

[3] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:601, 602.

[4] Muslim 4:2162.

«لَوْ أَنَّ الدُّنْيَا تَرَدُّ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ جَنَاحَ بُعُوضَةٍ مَا سَقَى مِنْهَا كَافِرًا شَرْبَةً مَاءٍ»

«If this world were worth a gnat's wing before Allāh, He would not give a disbeliever a drink of water.»^[1] Al-Baghawi narrated its chain of narration.^[2]

﴿وَالْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

«And the Hereafter with your Lord is (only) for those who have Taqwā.»

means, it is exclusively for them, and no one else will share it with them. When 'Umar bin Al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allāh be pleased with him, visited the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ in seclusion, when he was keeping away from his wives, and he saw him resting on a rough mat which had left marks on his side, his eyes filled with tears and he said, "O Messenger of Allāh, look at this Chosroes and this Caesar with all that they have, and you are the best of Allāh's creation." The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was reclining, but he sat up and said:

«أَوْ فِي شَكٍّ أَنْتَ يَا ابْنَ الْخَطَّابِ؟»

«Are you in doubt, O son of Al-Khaṭṭāb?»

Then he ﷺ said:

«أُولَئِكَ قَوْمٌ عُجِّلَتْ لَهُمْ طَيِّبَاتُهُمْ فِي حَيَاتِهِمُ الدُّنْيَا»

«Those are people for whom the enjoyments are hastened in this world.»^[3] According to another report:

«أَمَا تَرْضَى أَنْ تَكُونَ لَهُمُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَنَا الْآخِرَةُ»

«Does it not please you that this world is for them and the Hereafter is for us?»^[4]

In as the Two Ṣaḥiḥs and elsewhere, it is reported that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

«لَا تَشْرَبُوا فِي آيَةِ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ، وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا فِي صِحَافِهَا، فَإِنَّهَا لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا»

^[1] At-Tirmidhi 6:611.

^[2] Al-Baghawi 4:138. Similar was recorded by At-Tirmidhi and other.

^[3] Muslim 2:113.

^[4] Muslim 2:110.

وَلَنَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ»

«Do not drink from vessels of gold and silver, and do not eat from plates of the same, for these things are for them in this world and for us in the Hereafter.»^[1]

Allāh has granted these things to them in this world because it is insignificant, as was reported by At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Mājah via Abu Hāzim from Sahl bin Sa'd, who said, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

«لَوْ كَانَتِ الدُّنْيَا تَرَبُّنٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ جَنَاحَ بُعُوضَةٍ مَا سَفَى مِنْهَا كَافِرًا شَرْبَةً مَاءٍ أَبَدًا»

«If this world were worth a gnat's wing before Allāh, He would never give a disbeliever a drink of water.» At-Tirmidhi said: "Ḥasan Ṣaḥīh."

﴿وَمَنْ يَعْشُ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ نُفَيِّضْ لَهُ شَيْطَانًا فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ﴾ ٣٦ ﴿وَأَنْتُمْ لَبِئْسَ تُصَدِّقُونَ عَنِ السَّيْلِ وَيَعْتَكِبُونَ أَنْتُمْ مُنْهَدُونَ﴾ ٣٧ ﴿حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَنَا قَالَ بَلَغْتَ لَبَنِِّي وَيَبَنَّاكَ بَعدَ الشَّرَافِينِ فَيَنْسُ الْقَرِينُ﴾ ٣٨ ﴿وَلَنْ يَنْفَعَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ إِذْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَكْثَرُ فِي الْمَذَابِ مُشْتَرِكُونَ﴾ ٣٩ ﴿أَفَأَنْتُمْ تُسْمِعُ الْأَعْمَىٰ أَوْ تَهْدِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَمَنْ كَانَتْ فِي صُلْبِهِ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَنصُرْهُ﴾ ٤٠ ﴿فَأَمَّا نَذَبَ بِكَ فَإِنَّا لَنُفَعِّلُهُمْ مَنَافِعَ﴾ ٤١ ﴿أَوْ نُرِيكَ الْآلِيَّ وَعَدْنَاهُمْ فَإِنَّا عَلَيَّهِمْ مُفْتَدِرُونَ﴾ ٤٢ ﴿فَأَسْمِعْ بِالْآلِيَّ أَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾ ٤٣ ﴿وَأَنْتُمْ لَذِكْرُ لَكُمْ وَلَقَوْلِكُمْ وَتَوَفَّ تَتَلَوْنَ﴾ ٤٤ ﴿وَمَثَلُ مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رُسُلِنَا أَجْمَلًا مِنْ دُونِ الرَّحْمَنِ﴾ ٤٥ ﴿إِلَهُهُ يُعْبَدُونَ﴾ ٤٦ ﴿

﴿36. And whosoever Ya'shu (turns away blindly) from the remembrance of the Most Gracious, We appoint for him Shayṭān to be a Qarīn (a companion) to him.﴾

﴿37. And verily, they hinder them from the path, but they think that they are guided aright!﴾

﴿38. Till, when (such a one) comes to Us, he says, "Would that between me and you were the distance of the two easts (or the east and west) a worst companion (indeed)!"﴾

﴿39. It will profit you not this Day as you did wrong, (and) that you will be sharers in the punishment.﴾

﴿40. Can you make the deaf to hear, or can you guide the blind

[1] Faṭḥ Al-Bāri 9:465, Muslim 3:1637.

or him who is in manifest error?﴾

﴿41. And even if We take you away, We shall indeed take vengeance on them.﴾

﴿42. Or (if) We show you that wherewith We threaten them, then verily, We have perfect command over them.﴾

﴿43. So hold you fast to that which is revealed to you. Verily, you are on the straight path.﴾

﴿44. And verily, this is indeed a Dhikr for you and your people, and you will be questioned.﴾

﴿45. And ask whom We sent before you of Our Messengers: "Did We ever appoint gods to be worshipped besides the Most Gracious?"﴾

The Shayṭān is the Companion of the One Who turns away from Ar-Raḥmān

﴿وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعْ﴾

﴿And whosoever Ya'shu (turns away blindly)﴾ means, whoever willfully ignores and turns away

﴿عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ﴾

﴿from the remembrance of the Most Gracious,﴾ Al-'Ashā (the root of Ya'sh) refers to weakness of vision; what is meant here is weakness of insight.

﴿نَقِضَ لَهُ شَيْطَانًا فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ﴾

﴿We appoint for him Shayṭān to be a Qarīn (a companion) to him.﴾

This is like the Āyāt:

﴿وَمَنْ يُكَذِّبِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّ لَهُ الْهُدَى﴾

﴿And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger after the right path has been shown clearly to him﴾ (4:115),

﴿فَلَنَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ﴾

﴿So when they turned away, Allāh turned their hearts away﴾ (61:5), and

﴿وَقَفِضْنَا لَهُمْ قُرْآنًا فَزَيَّنُوا لَهُمْ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ﴾

﴿And We have assigned for them intimate companions, who have made fair seeming to them, what was before them and what was behind them﴾ (41:25).

Allāh says here:

﴿وَأَنَّهُمْ لَصُدُورُهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُم مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَنَا﴾

﴿And verily, they hinder them from the path, but they think that they are guided aright! Until, when he comes to Us,﴾

meaning, for this person who willfully neglects true guidance, We send to him a *Shayṭān* to lead him astray and show him the path to Hell. When he comes before Allāh on the Day of Resurrection, he will complain about the *Shayṭān* who was appointed to accompany him.

﴿قَالَ بَلَّيْتَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ بَعْدَ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ فَيَنسُ الْقُرْآنَ﴾

﴿he says, "Would that between me and you were the distance of the two easts – a worst companion (indeed)!"﴾

Some of them recited it;

(حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَنَا)

(Till, when they both come to Us.)

referring to the companion *Shayṭān* and the one whom he accompanies. Then Allāh says:

﴿وَلَنْ يَنفَعَكُم الْيَوْمَ إِذ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنَّكُم فِي الْعَذَابِ مُشْتَرِكُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾﴾

﴿It will profit you not this Day as you did wrong, (and) that you will be sharers in the punishment.﴾

means, 'your being together in the Fire will not help you in the slightest, and you will both partake of the painful punishment.' Allāh says:

﴿أَفَأَن تَسْمِعُ الْأَعْمَىٰ أَوْ تَهْدِي السُّبْحَىٰ وَمَنْ كَانَتْ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾

﴿Can you make the deaf to hear, or can you guide the blind or him who is in manifest error?﴾

means, 'that is not up to you. All you have to do is convey the Message, but you do not have to guide them. Allāh guides whomsoever He wills and sends astray whomsoever He wills, and He is Wise and Just in doing so.'

Allāh's Vengeance upon the Enemies of His Messenger ﷺ will surely come to pass

Allāh further says:

﴿فَإِنَّمَا نَذْهَبَنَّ بِكَ فَإِنَّا مِنْهُمْ مُنْقِمُونَ﴾

﴿And even if We take you away, We shall indeed take vengeance on them.﴾

means, 'We will inevitably wreak vengeance upon them and punish them, even if you pass away.'

﴿أَوْ نُرْسِلَكَ إِلَىٰ آلِهِمْ وَعَدْتَهُمْ فَإِنَّا عَلَيْهِمْ مُّقْدِرُونَ﴾

﴿Or (if) We show you that wherewith We threaten them, then verily, We have perfect command over them.﴾

means, 'We are able to do both,' but Allāh will not take His Messenger ﷺ (in death) until He gives him the joy of seeing his enemies brought low and gives him power and authority over them and their wealth. This was the view of As-Suddi and was the opinion favored by Ibn Jarīr.^[1]

Encouragement to adhere to the Qur'ān

Allāh then says;

﴿فَاسْتَبِصِرْ بِالَّذِي أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾

﴿So hold you fast to that which is revealed to you. Verily, you are on the straight path.﴾

means, hold fast to the Qur'ān which has been sent down to your heart, for it is truth and what it leads to is truth that shows the way to the straight path that leads to Gardens of Delight and eternal, everlasting goodness.

﴿وَإِنَّهُ لَذِكْرٌ لَّكَ وَلِقَوْمِكَ﴾

﴿And verily, this is a Dhikr for you and your people,﴾

It was said that this means, 'it is an honor for you and your people;' this was the view of Ibn 'Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with him, Mujāhid, Qatādah, As-Suddi and Ibn Zayd.^[2]

This means that it is an honor for them in that it was

[1] At-Ṭabari 21:609.

[2] At-Ṭabari 21:610, 611.

revealed in their language, so they are the people who have the best understanding of it among mankind and hence are obliged to be the most steadfast in adhering to its commandments. This is how the best of them were, the first immigrants and those who emulated them and followed them. It was also said that the meaning of the phrase;

﴿وَأَنذَرْتُكُمْ لَئِذَا لَكُمْ وَلَفُؤُكُمْ﴾

﴿And verily, this is indeed a Dhikr for you and your people,﴾ was that 'it was sent to remind you and your people.' The fact that they are singled out does not exclude others. This is like the Āyāt:

﴿لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ كِتَابًا فِيهِ ذِكْرُكُمْ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٠﴾﴾

﴿Indeed, We have sent down for you (O mankind) a Book in which there is Dhikrukum (your Reminder). Will you not then understand?﴾ (21:10)

﴿وَأَنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ ﴿٢١﴾﴾

﴿And warn your tribe of near kindred﴾ (26:214)

﴿وَسَوْفَ تُسْأَلُونَ﴾

﴿and you will be questioned.﴾ means, 'about this Qur'ān, and how you acted upon it and what your response to it was.'

﴿وَسْأَلُ مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رُسُلِنَا أَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ دُونِ الرَّحْمَنِ إِلَهًا يُعْبَدُونَ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

﴿And ask whom We sent before you of Our Messengers: "Did We ever appoint gods to be worshipped besides the Most Gracious?"﴾

means, 'all the Messengers called their people to the same as that to which you are calling mankind, namely the worship of Allāh Alone with no partner or associate, and they forbade the worship of idols and false gods.' This is like the Āyah:

﴿وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رُسُلًا أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الصُّلُوفَ ﴿١٦﴾﴾

﴿And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allāh, and avoid all false deities."﴾ (16:36)

Mujāhid said that 'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd recited it:

٤٩٣

وَمَا نُرِيهِمْ مِنْ آيَةٍ إِلَّا هِيَ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ أُخْتِهَا وَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِالْعَذَابِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَقَالُوا بَيِّنَاتٍ لَنَا مِنَ السَّاحِرِ دُعَاؤُكَ لَنَا رَبُّكَ بِمَا عَهِدَ عِنْدَكَ إِنَّا لَمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابَ إِذَا هُمْ يَنْكُتُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَنَادَى فِرْعَوْنُ فِي قَوْمِهِ قَالَ يَبْقَرُونَ النَّاسَ لِي مَلِكٌ وَمِنْ هَؤُلَاءِ الْأَنْهَارُ يُجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِي أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ أَمْ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْ هَذَا الَّذِي هُوَ مَهِينٌ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُبِينُ ﴿٥٠﴾ فَلَوْلَا أَلْقَى عَلَيْهِ آسُورَةٌ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ أَوَّجَةً مَعَهُ الْمَلَأَتْ مِنْهُ مَقَرَّيْنِ ﴿٥١﴾ فَاسْتَحَفَّ قَوْمَهُ فَأَطَاعُوهُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾ فَلَمَّا أَصْفَوْنَا أَنْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾ فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ سَلَافًا وَمَثَلًا لِلْآخِرِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾ وَلَمَّا ضُرِبَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَثَلًا إِذَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِدُّونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا إلهُنَا خَيْرٌ أَمْ هُوَ مَا ضَرَبُوهُ لَكَ إِلَّا جَدَلًا بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ خَصِمُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا عَبْدٌ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ مَثَلًا لِبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ مَلَائِكَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ يَخْلُقُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

(وَأَسْأَلِ الَّذِينَ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ قَبْلَكَ [مِنْ رُسُلِنَا])

(And ask those whom We sent before you of Our Messengers.)^[1]

This was narrated by Qatādah, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk and As-Suddi from Ibn Mas'ūd, may Allāh be pleased with him.^[2] Yet this appears to be an explanation rather than an alternate version of recitation. And Allāh knows best.

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَى بِآيَاتِنَا إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ فَقَالَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِآيَاتِنَا إِذَا هُمْ مِنْهَا يَضْحَكُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَمَا نُرِيهِمْ مِنْ آيَةٍ إِلَّا هِيَ أَكْبَرُ

مِنْ أُخْتِهَا وَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِالْعَذَابِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَقَالُوا بَيِّنَاتٍ لَنَا مِنَ السَّاحِرِ دُعَاؤُكَ لَنَا رَبُّكَ بِمَا عَهِدَ عِنْدَكَ إِنَّا لَمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابَ إِذَا هُمْ يَنْكُتُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

﴿46. And indeed We did send Mūsā with Our Āyāt to Fir'awn and his chiefs. He said: "Verily, I am a Messenger of the Lord of all that exists."﴾

﴿47. But when he came to them with Our Āyāt, behold, they laughed at them﴾.

﴿48. And not an Āyāh We showed them but it was greater than its fellow preceding it, and We seized them with torment, in order that they might turn.﴾

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21 :611.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21 :611, 612.

﴿49. And they said (to Mūsā): "O you sorcerer! Invoke your Lord for us according to what He has made a pact with you. Verily, We shall guide ourselves."﴾

﴿50. But when We removed the torment from them, behold, they broke their covenant.﴾

Mūsā was sent with the Message of Tawḥīd to Fir'awn and His Chiefs

Here Allāh tells us about His servant and Messenger Mūsā, peace be upon him, and how He sent him to Fir'awn and his chiefs. That is, his governors, ministers, leaders and followers among the Egyptians and the Children of Israel. Allāh sent him to call them to worship Allāh alone, with no partner or associate, and to forbid them from worshipping anything other than Him. He sent him with mighty signs, such as his hand and his staff, other signs such as the flood, locusts, *Qummal*,^[1] frogs and blood, and the loss of their crops and lives. Yet despite all that they remained arrogant and stubbornly refused to follow him; they rejected his message and made fun of it, and laughed at the one who had brought it.

﴿وَمَا نُرِيهِمْ مِنْ آيَةٍ إِلَّا هِيَ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ أُخْتِهَا﴾

﴿And not an Ayāh We showed them but it was greater than its fellow preceding it,﴾

but despite that they would not give up their sin, misguidance, ignorance and confusion. Every time one of these signs came to them, they would go and implore Mūsā, saying,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا السَّاحِرُ﴾

﴿"O you sorcerer!..."﴾ meaning, expert or knowledgeable one – this was the view of Ibn Jarīr.^[2]

The scholars of that time were the sorcerers or magicians, and magic was not regarded as something reprehensible by them at that time, so this was not a slight on their part. They were in a state of need, so it would not have been appropriate for

^[1] See the discussion of these events in volume four, the *Tafsīr* of *Sūrat Al-Ar'āf* [7:133].

^[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21 :615.

them to insult him. This was a way of honoring him, as they thought. On each occasion, they promised Mūsā that if the torment was lifted from them, they would believe in him and let the Children of Israel go with him, but on each occasion they went back on their word. This is like the *Āyāt*:

﴿فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الْفُلُوكَانَ وَالْجَرَادَ وَالْقُمَّلَ وَالضَّفَادِعَ وَالْدَّمَ ءَايَاتٍ مُّفَصَّلَاتٍ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا
تَجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾ وَلَمَّا رَفَعَ عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّجْزَ قَالُوا يَمْشَى آدَمُ لَكَ رَبُّكَ بِمَا عَاهَدَ عَلَيْكَ لَئِنْ
كَفَفْتَ عَنَّا الرِّجْزَ لَنُؤْمِنَنَّ لَكَ وَلَنُرِيَنَّكَ مَعْلَكَ يَوْمَ إِسْرَائِيلَ ﴿١٣٤﴾ فَلَمَّا كَفَفْنَا عَنْهُمْ
الرِّجْزَ إِلَّا أَجَلٍ هُمْ بِلِقَاؤِهِ إِذَا هُمْ يَنْكُتُونَ ﴿١٣٥﴾﴾

﴿So We sent on them: the flood, the locusts, the Qummal, the frogs, and the blood; manifest signs, yet they remained arrogant, and they were of those people who were criminals. And when the punishment struck them, they said: "O Mūsā! Invoke your Lord for us because of His promise to you. If you remove the punishment from us, we indeed shall believe in you, and we shall let the Children of Israel go with you." But when We removed the punishment from them to a fixed term, which they had to reach, behold! they broke their word!﴾ (7:133-135)

﴿وَنَادَى فِرْعَوْنُ فِي قَوْمِهِ. قَالَ يَاقَوْمِ أَلَيْسَ لِي مُلْكٌ مِّمَّا يَصْرِفُونَ وَهَذِهِ النُّجُومُ الْحَرِيرُ بِإِذْنِي فَلَوْلَا أَنِّي عَلَيْهِ
أَسْرُورٌ مِّنْ ذَهَبٍ أَوْ جِلَّةٌ مَّعَهُ الْمَلَكُوتُ مُفَرِّقِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾ فَاسْتَحَفَّ قَوْمَهُ فَأَطَاعُوهُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا
قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾ فَلَمَّا ءَاَسَفُونَا انْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٣٨﴾ فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ سَلَفًا
وَمَثَلًا لِّلْآخِرِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾﴾

﴿51. And Fir'awn proclaimed among his people (saying): "O my people! Is not mine the dominion of Egypt, and these rivers flowing underneath me. See you not then?"﴾

﴿52. "Am I not better than this one (Mūsā) who is despicable and can scarcely express himself clearly?"﴾

﴿53. Why then are not golden bracelets bestowed on him, or angels sent along with him?"﴾

﴿54. Thus he fooled his people, and they obeyed him. Verily, they were ever a people who were rebellious.﴾

﴿55. So when they angered Us, We punished them, and

drowned them all.﴾

﴿56. And We made them a precedent, and an example to later generations.﴾

Fir'awn's Address to His People and how Allāh punished Him

Allāh tells us how Fir'awn stubbornly persisted in his rebellion and disbelief. He assembled his people and addressed them in a vainglorious fashion, boasting of his dominion over Egypt.

﴿أَلَيْسَ لِي مُلْكُ مِصْرَ وَهَذِهِ الْأَنْهَارُ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِي﴾

﴿Is not mine the dominion of Egypt, and these rivers flowing underneath me?﴾

Qatādah said, "They had gardens and rivers of flowing water."^[1]

﴿أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ﴾

﴿See you not then?﴾ means, 'do you not see my position of might and power?' – implying that Mūsā and his followers were poor and weak. This is like the Āyah:

﴿فَمَحَسَرَ فَأَدَّى ﴿٢٣﴾ فَقَالَ إِنَّا رَبُّكُمُ الْأَعْلَى ﴿٢٤﴾ فَاعْبُدْهُ أَفَلَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾﴾

﴿Then he gathered (his people) and cried aloud, saying: "I am your lord, most high." So Allāh seized him with punishment for his last and first transgression.﴾ (79:23-25)

﴿أَنزِلْنَا خَبِيرٌ مِّنْ هَٰذَا الَّذِي هُوَ مَهِينٌ﴾

﴿Am I not better than this one who is despicable﴾

As-Suddi said, "He was saying, 'indeed I am better than this one, who is despicable'.^[2] Some of the grammarians of Baṣrah^[3] said that Fir'awn – may the curse of Allāh be upon him – was saying that he was better than Mūsā, peace be upon him. But this is an obvious lie, may continued curses be upon him until the Day of Resurrection. By describing Mūsā as despicable he meant – as Sufyān said – insignificant. Qatādah and As-Suddi said, "He meant, weak." Ibn Jarīr said,

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:616.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:616.

[3] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:617.

“He meant, he had no power, authority or wealth.”

﴿وَلَا يَكَادُ يَبِينُ﴾

﴿and can scarcely express himself clearly﴾ means, he cannot speak clearly, he stammers and cannot speak well.

Fir'awn's description of Mūsā as “despicable” is a lie; rather it is he who was despicable and insignificant, lacking in physical, moral and religious terms, and it is Mūsā who was noble, truthful, righteous and upright.

﴿وَلَا يَكَادُ يَبِينُ﴾

﴿and can scarcely express himself clearly﴾. This was also a lie. Although something happened to Mūsā's tongue when he was a child, when it was burnt by a coal. He asked Allāh to loosen the knot from his tongue (i.e., to correct his speech defect) so that they could understand what he said, and Allāh had answered his prayer and said:

﴿قَدْ أُوتِيَٰ مُوسَىٰ﴾

﴿You are granted your request, O Mūsā﴾ (20:36).

It may be the case that some problem remained which he had not asked to be relieved of, as Al-Ḥasan Al-Baṣrī suggested, and that he had asked only to be relieved of that which stood in the way of his conveying the Message. A person cannot be blamed for physical matters over which he has no control. Even though Fir'awn had the intelligence to understand that, he wanted to confuse and mislead his people, who were ignorant and stupid. So he said:

﴿فَلَوْلَا أَلْفَىٰ عَلَيْهِ أَسُورَةٌ مِّن ذَهَبٍ﴾

﴿Why then are not golden bracelets bestowed on him...?﴾

meaning, adornments which are placed on the arms. This was the view of Ibn 'Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with him, Qatādah and others.^[1]

﴿أَوْ جَاءَ مَعَهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ مُقَرَّرِينَ﴾

﴿or angels sent along with him?﴾ meaning, to serve him and to testify that he is telling the truth. He looked only at outward

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:619.

appearances and did not understand the true inner matters that are clearer than what he focused on, if only he had understood that. Allāh says:

﴿فَاسْتَحَفَّ قَوْمُهُ فَأَطَاعُوهُ﴾

﴿Thus he fooled his people, and they obeyed him.﴾

meaning, he confused them and invited them to misguidance, and they responded to him.

﴿إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ﴾

﴿Verily, they were ever a people who were rebellious.﴾

Then Allāh says:

﴿فَلَمَّا ءَاسَفُونَا اُنْتَقِمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ﴾

﴿So when they angered Us, We punished them, and drowned them all.﴾

‘Ali bin Abi Ṭalḥah reported that Ibn ‘Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with him, said it means: “When they angered Us means, they provoked Our wrath.”^[1] Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk said, it means “They made Us angry.” This was also the view of Ibn ‘Abbās, Mujāhid, ‘Ikrimah, Sa‘īd bin Jubayr, Muḥammad bin Ka‘b Al-Quraẓī, Qatādah, As-Suddi and other scholars of *Tafsīr*.^[2]

Ibn Abi Ḥātim recorded that ‘Uqbah bin ‘Āmir, may Allāh be pleased with him, said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

﴿إِذَا رَأَيْتَ اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى يُعْطِي الْعَبْدَ مَا يَشَاءُ، وَهُوَ مُقِيمٌ عَلَى مَعَاصِيهِ، فَإِنَّمَا ذَلِكَ اسْتِزْجَاجٌ مِنْهُ لَهُ،﴾

﴿When you see that Allāh gives a person what he wants even though he is persisting in sin, that means that Allāh is enticing him into destruction.﴾ Then he recited:

﴿فَلَمَّا ءَاسَفُونَا اُنْتَقِمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ﴾

﴿So when they angered Us, We punished them, and drowned them all.﴾^[3]

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:622.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:622; *Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr* 7:383.

[3] Aḥmad 4:145, with slight differences.

وَأَنَّهُ لَئِذَا لَمَسَ السَّاعَةَ فَلَا تَمُوتُ بِهَا وَاتَّبِعُونِ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ
مُّسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾ وَلَا يَصُدُّكُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ إِنَّهُ لَكَا عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ
﴿١٢﴾ وَلَمَّا جَاءَ عِيسَى بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالَ قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِالْحِكْمَةِ
وَلَأُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي تَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ فَأَتَقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا
﴿١٣﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَأَعْبُدُوا هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ
﴿١٤﴾ فَأَخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَيْنِهِمْ قَوْلًا لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا
مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمِ الْبَاسِ ﴿١٥﴾ هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا السَّاعَةَ أَنْ
تَأْتِيَهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ الْأَخِلَاءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ
بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٧﴾ يَتَعَبَادُ لَأَخَوُفُ
عَلَيْكُمْ الْيَوْمَ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
وَكَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنْتُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ
مُخْبَرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِصِحَافٍ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ
وَفِيهَا مَا شَتَّاهِبٌ لِلْأَنفُسِ وَكَذَلِكَ أُعْرِضُ وَاسْتَرْفِعُهَا
خَلِيدُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَتِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ لَكُمْ فِيهَا كَثِيرٌ مِمَّا كُنْتُمْ تُكْفِرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

It was reported that Tāriq bin Shihāb said, "I was with 'Abdullāh, may Allāh be pleased with him, and the issue of sudden death was mentioned. He said, 'It is a relief for the believer and a source of regret for the disbeliever.' Then he recited the Āyah:

﴿فَلَمَّا ءَاسَفُونَا ائْتَقْنَا مِنْهُمْ ءَافَرَقْنَهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ﴾

﴿So when they angered Us, We punished them, and drowned them all﴾. ^[1]

'Umar bin 'Abdul-'Azīz, may Allāh be pleased with him, said, "I found that punishment comes with negligence,

meaning the Āyah:

﴿فَلَمَّا ءَاسَفُونَا ائْتَقْنَا مِنْهُمْ ءَافَرَقْنَهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ﴾

﴿So when they angered Us, We punished them, and drowned them all﴾."

﴿فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ سَلَكًا وَثَنًا لِلْآخِرِينَ﴾

﴿And We made them a precedent, and an example to later generations﴾

Abu Mijlaz said, "Precedent for others who do the same as they did."^[2] He and Mujāhid said, "An example, i.e., a lesson to those

[1] Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr 7:384.

[2] Al-Qurtubī 16:102.

who come after them."^[1] Allāh is the One Who guides to the straight path, and unto Him is the final return.

﴿وَلَمَّا صُرِبَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَتَلًا إِذَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِدُّونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَقَالُوا يَا إِلَهُنَا خَيْرٌ أَمْ هُوَ مَا صَرُّوا لَهُ إِلَّا جَدَلًا بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ خَصِمُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا عَبْدٌ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ مَتَلًا لِبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ ﴿٥٩﴾ وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجْعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ مَلَائِكَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ يَخْلُقُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ لَسَاءَ مَا تَحْكُمُونَ يَا آدَمُوعُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٦٣﴾ وَلَا يَصُدُّكُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ ﴿٦٤﴾ وَلَمَّا جَاءَ عِيسَى بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالَ قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَلِأُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي تَخْتَلَفُونَ فِيهِ فَأَتَقُوا اللَّهَ وَاطِيعُوايَ ﴿٦٥﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٦٦﴾ فَاتَّخَذَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَيْنِهِمْ قَوِيلًا لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْ عَذَابٍ يَوْمَ آيَةِ الْكُرْسِيِّ﴾

﴿57. And when the son of Maryam is quoted as an example, behold, your people cry aloud thereat.﴾

﴿58. And say: "Are our gods better or is he?" They quoted not the above example except for argument. Nay! But they are a quarrelsome people.﴾

﴿59. He was not more than a servant. We granted Our favor to him, and We made him an example for the Children of Israel.﴾

﴿60. And if it were Our will, We would have made angels to replace you on the earth.﴾

﴿61. And he shall be a known sign for (the coming of) the Hour. Therefore have no doubt concerning it. And follow Me! This is the straight path.﴾

﴿62. And let not Shayṭān hinder you. Verily, he (Shayṭān) to you is a plain enemy.﴾

﴿63. And when 'Isā came with clear proofs, he said: "I have come to you with Al-Hikmah,^[2] and in order to make clear to you some of that in which you differ. Therefore have Taqwā of Allāh and obey me."﴾

﴿64. "Verily, Allāh! He is my Lord and your Lord. So worship Him. This is the straight path."﴾

﴿65. But the sects from among themselves differed. So woe to

[1] At-Ṭabari 21:624, Al-Qurṭubi 16:102.

[2] See the Tafsir of Sūrah Ṣād (38:20).

those who do wrong from the torment of a painful Day!﴾

The Contempt of the Quraysh for the son of Maryam, and His true Status with Allāh

Allāh tells us how the Quraysh persisted in their disbelief and stubborn arguments:

﴿وَلَمَّا ضَرِبَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَثَلًا إِنَّا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِدُّونَ﴾

﴿And when the son of Maryam is quoted as an example, behold, your people cry aloud thereat.﴾

Several others narrated that Ibn 'Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with him, Mujāhid, Ikrimah, As-Suddi and Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk said, "They laughed, i.e., they were astounded by that."^[1] Qatādah said, "They were repelled by that and they laughed."^[2] Ibrāhīm An-Nakha'i said, "They turned away."^[3]

The reason for this was mentioned by Muḥammad bin Ishāq in *As-Sīrah*. He said, "According to what I have heard, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ sat down one day with Al-Walīd bin Al-Mughīrah in the *Masjid*, and An-Naḍr bin Al-Ḥārith came and sat down with them. There were also other men from the Quraysh in the gathering. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ spoke, then An-Naḍr bin Al-Ḥārith came up to him and the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ spoke to him until he ﷺ defeated him in argument. Then he ﷺ recited to him and to them,

﴿إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ أَنتُمْ لَهَا وَارِدُونَ﴾

﴿Certainly you and that which you are worshipping now besides Allāh, are (but) fuel for Hell! (Surely) you will enter it.﴾ (21:98)

Then the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ got up and went to sit with 'Abdullāh bin Al-Zab'ari At-Tamīmi. Al-Walīd bin Al-Mughīrah said to him, 'By Allāh, An-Naḍr bin Al-Ḥārith could not match the son of 'Abd Al-Muṭṭalib in argument. Muḥammad claims that we and these gods that we worship are fuel for Hell.' 'Abdullāh bin Az-Zab'ari said, 'By Allāh, if I meet with him I

[1] Al-Qurṭubi 16:103.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:627.

[3] Al-Qurṭubi, 16:103.

will defeat him in argument. Ask Muḥammad whether everyone that is worshipped instead of Allāh will be in Hell with those who worshipped him, for we worship the angels, and the Jews worship 'Uzayr, and the Christians worship the Messiah 'Īsā bin Maryam.' Al-Walīd and those who were sitting with him were amazed at what 'Abdullāh bin Az-Zab'ari said, and they thought that he had come up with a good point. He said this to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, who said:

«كُلُّ مَنْ أَحَبَّ أَنْ يُعْبَدَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَهُوَ مَعَ مَنْ عَبَدَهُ، فَإِنَّهُمْ إِنَّمَا يَعْبُدُونَ الشَّيْطَانَ وَمَنْ أَمَرَهُمْ بِعِبَادَتِهِ»

«Everyone who likes to worship something other than Allāh will be with the one whom he worshipped, for indeed they are worshipping the Shayṭān and whomever told them to worship that person.»

Then Allāh revealed the words:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِنَّا الْحَسَنَةُ أُولَٰئِكَ عَنَّا مُبْعَدُونَ﴾

«Verily, those for whom the good has preceded from Us, they will be removed far therefrom (Hell)» (21:101),

meaning that 'Īsā, 'Uzayr and rabbis and monks who were also worshipped, who spent their lives in devotion towards Allāh. The misguided people who came after them took them as lords instead of Allāh. Concerning the notion of worshipping the angels as daughters of Allāh, the following words were revealed:

﴿وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا سُبْحَنَهُ بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُونَ﴾

«And they say: "The Most Gracious has begotten a son (or children)." Glory to Him! They are but honored servants.» (21:26)

Concerning 'Īsā bin Maryam, the fact that he is worshipped instead of Allāh, and to the amazement of Al-Walīd and the others who were present at the argument, the following was revealed:

﴿وَلَمَّا صُرِبَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَلَأَ إِذَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِدُّونَ﴾

«And when the son of Maryam is quoted as an example, behold, your people cry aloud thereat.»

meaning, they take this argument as a basis for rejecting your message. Then Allāh mentions 'Īsā bin Maryam and says:

﴿إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا عَبْدٌ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ مَثَلًا لِّبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ ۚ وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجْعَلْنَا مِنْكَ مَلَكًا فِي الْأَرْضِ يَخْلُفُونَ ۚ وَإِنَّكُمْ لَوَلِيٌّ لِّلْسَاعَةِ﴾

«He was not more than a servant. We granted Our favor to him, and We made him an example for the Children of Israel. And if it were Our will, We would have made angels to replace you on the earth. And he ('Īsā) shall be a known sign for the Hour.»

meaning, the miracles and signs that happened at his hands, such as raising the dead and healing the sick, are sufficient as signs of the approach of the Hour.

﴿فَلَا تَمْتَرْ بِهَا وَاتَّبِعُونِي هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ﴾

«Therefore have no doubt concerning it. And follow Me! This is the straight path.»^[1]

Ibn Jarīr mentioned that Al-'Awfī reported that Ibn 'Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with him, commented on the Āyah:

﴿وَلَمَّا شَرِبَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَثَلًا إِذَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِيدُونَ﴾

«And when the son of Maryam is quoted as an example, behold, your people cry aloud thereat.»

“This means the Quraysh, when it was said to them:

﴿إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ أَنْتُمْ لَهَا وَرَدُونَ﴾

«Certainly you and that which you are worshipping now besides Allāh, are (but) fuel for Hell! (Surely) you will enter it.» (21:98)

The Quraysh said to him: 'What about 'Īsā bin Maryam?'
He said:

﴿ذَٰكَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولُهُ﴾

«He is the servant and Messenger of Allāh.»

They said, 'By Allāh, he means that we should take him as a lord just as the Christians took 'Īsā son of Maryam as a lord.'

^[1] Ibn Hishām 1:396-398.

Then Allāh said:

﴿مَا صَرَّوْهُ لَكَ إِلَّا جَدَلًا بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ خَصِمُونَ﴾

﴿They quoted not the above example except for argument. Nay! But they are a quarrelsome people﴾.^[1]

﴿وَقَالُوا ءَالِهَتُنَا خَيْرٌ أَوْ هُوَ﴾

﴿And say: "Are our gods better or is he?"﴾. Qatādah said, "They were saying, 'our gods are better than him'." Qatādah said; "Ibn Mas'ūd, may Allāh be pleased with him, recited it

(أَلِهَتُنَا خَيْرٌ أَمْ هَذَا)

(Are our gods better or is this (person)?)” they mean Muḥammad ﷺ.

﴿مَا صَرَّوْهُ لَكَ إِلَّا جَدَلًا﴾

﴿They quoted not the above example except for argument.﴾

means, for the sake of stubborn argument, for they knew that he (Īsā) was not included in the Āyah (21:98), because that would not make sense. The words,

﴿إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ﴾

﴿Certainly you and that which you are worshipping now besides Allāh, are (but) fuel for Hell!﴾ (21:98)

are addressed to the Quraysh, for they used to worship idols and false gods – they did not worship the Messiah so why should he be included in what the Āyah says? What they said was only for the sake of argument; they did not really believe in it.

Imām Aḥmad, may Allāh have mercy on him, recorded that Abu Umāmah, may Allāh be pleased with him, said, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

﴿مَا ضَلَّ قَوْمٌ بَعْدَ هُدًى كَانُوا عَلَيْهِ، إِلَّا أَوْرَثُوا الْجَدَلَ﴾

«No people go astray after having been guided, but they resort to (futile) argument.»

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabarī 21:625. There are similar authentic narrations: *Mushkil Al-Āthār* 1:431, and *Al-Ḥākim* 2:385.

Then the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ recited this Āyah:

﴿مَا صَرَّفُوهُ لَكَ إِلَّا جَدَلًا بَلْ مِرْقَمٌ خَصِمُونَ﴾

﴿They quoted not the above example except for argument. Nay!
But they are a quarrelsome people﴾.^[1]

It was also recorded by At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Mājah and Ibn Jarīr. At-Tirmidhi said, "This Ḥadīth is Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ, we do not know it except from the Ḥadīth of Ḥajjāj bin Dīnār..."^[2]

﴿إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا عَبْدٌ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَيْهِ﴾

﴿He ('Īsā) was not more than a servant. We granted Our favor to him﴾,

means, 'Īsa, peace be upon him; he was no more than one of the servants of Allāh whom Allāh blessed with prophethood and messengership.

﴿وَجَعَلْنَاهُ مَثَلًا لِّبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ﴾

﴿and We made him an example for the Children of Israel﴾.

means, 'a sign, proof and evidence of Our power to do whatever We will.'

﴿وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ مَلَائِكَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ يَخْلُقُونَ﴾

﴿And if it were Our will, We would have made angels to replace you on the earth﴾.

As-Suddi said, "They would have taken your place on (the earth)."^[3] Ibn 'Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with him, and Qatādah said, "They would have succeeded one another just as you succeed one another."^[4] This view is implied by the former veiw. Mujāhid said, "They would have populated the earth instead of you."^[5]

Allah's saying:

﴿وَأَنَّهُ لَمَلَمٌ لِّسَاعَةِ﴾

[1] Aḥmad 5:256.

[2] Tuhfat Al-Ahwadhi 9:130; Ibn Mājah 1:19, Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:629.

[3] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:631.

[4] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:630.

[5] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:630.

﴿And he ('Īsā) shall be a known sign for (the coming of) the Hour.﴾

The correct view concerning this phrase is that it refers to his descent before the Day of Resurrection, as Allāh says:

﴿وَإِنْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لِيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ﴾

﴿And there is none of the People of the Scripture but must believe in him before his death﴾ (4:159).

– meaning before the death of 'Īsā, peace be upon him –

﴿وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا﴾

﴿And on the Day of Resurrection, he will be a witness against them﴾ (4:159). This meaning has the support from an alternate recitation of the *Ayāt*;

(وَإِنَّهُ لَعَلَمٌ لِلسَّاعَةِ)

(And he shall be a known sign for (the coming of) the Hour.) means, evidence that the Hour will surely come. Mujāhid said:

﴿وَإِنَّهُ لَعَلَمٌ لِلسَّاعَةِ﴾

﴿And he shall be a sign for (the coming of) the Hour.﴾

means, sign and "One of the signs of the Hour will be the appearance of 'Īsā son of Maryam before the Day of Resurrection."^[1] Something similar was also narrated from Abu Hurayrah, Ibn 'Abbās, 'Abu Al-Āliyah, Abu Mālik, 'Ikrimah, Al-Ḥasan, Qatādah, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk and others.^[2] Many *Mutawātir Ḥādīths* report that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said that 'Īsā will descend before the Day of Resurrection as a just ruler and fair judge.

﴿فَلَا تَمَرُّكَ يَهَا﴾

﴿Therefore have no doubt concerning it.﴾ means, do not doubt that it will surely come to pass.

﴿وَأَتَّبِعُونِ﴾

﴿And follow Me.﴾ means, 'in what I tell you about it.'

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:632.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:632; Al-Qurṭubi 16:106.

﴿هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ۝ وَلَا يَصُدُّكُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ﴾

﴿This is the straight path. And let not Shayṭān hinder you.﴾
means, from following the truth.

﴿إِنَّكُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ ۝ وَلَمَّا جَاءَ عِيسَى بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالَ قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِالْحِكْمَةِ﴾

﴿Verily, he (Satan) to you is a plain enemy. And when 'Īsā came with (Our) clear proofs, he said: "I have come to you with Al-Ḥikmah..."﴾, meaning prophethood:

﴿وَلَا يَبَيِّنْ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي تَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ﴾

﴿and in order to make clear to you some of the (points) in which you differ.﴾

Ibn Jarīr said, "This means religious matters, not worldly matters."^[1] What he said is good.

﴿فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ﴾

﴿Therefore have Taqwā of Allāh﴾ means, 'with regard to what I command you to do.'

﴿وَأَطِيعُوا﴾

﴿and obey me.﴾ means, 'in what I bring to you.'

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ ۚ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ۝﴾

﴿Verily, Allāh! He is my Lord and your Lord. So worship Him. This is the straight path.﴾

means, 'you and I are enslaved to Him, in need of Him and we commonly share in the worship of Him Alone, associating none with Him.'

﴿هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ﴾

﴿This is the straight path﴾ means, 'what I have brought to you is the straight path, which is the worship of the Lord, may He exalted, Alone.'

﴿فَاخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَيْنِهِمْ﴾

﴿But the sects from among themselves differed.﴾

^[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21 :635.

means, they differed and became parties and factions, some who stated that he (ʿĪsā) was the servant and Messenger of Allāh – which is true – while others claimed that he was the son of Allāh or that he himself was Allāh – glorified be Allāh far above what they say. Allāh says:

﴿قَوْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمٍ أَلِيمٍ﴾

﴿So woe to those who do wrong from the torment of a painful Day﴾!

﴿هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا السَّاعَةَ أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ﴾ (١١) ﴿الْأَخِلَاءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَتُّهُمْ يُتْلَى﴾
 ﴿يَقْعُضُ عَدُوٌّ إِلَى الْمُنْفِيِّ﴾ (١٢) ﴿يَعْبَادُ لَا حَوْلَ عَلَيْكَ الْيَوْمَ وَلَا أَنتَ تَحْزَنُونَ﴾ (١٣) ﴿الَّذِينَ
 آمَنُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَكَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ﴾ (١٤) ﴿ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنتُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ﴾ (١٥) ﴿يُطَافُ
 عَلَيْهِمْ بِصِحَافٍ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ وَفِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهُ الْأَنْفُسُ وَكَذَلِكَ أُفْخِئْتُ وَأَنْتُمْ فِيهَا
 كَاذِبُونَ﴾ (١٦) ﴿وَفِيكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ﴾ (١٧) ﴿لَكُمْ فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ كَثِيرَةٌ
 مِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ﴾ (١٨)

﴿66. Do they only wait for the Hour that it shall come upon them suddenly while they perceive not?﴾

﴿67. Friends on that Day will be foes one to another except those who have Taqwā.﴾

﴿68. My servants! No fear shall be on you this Day, nor shall you grieve,﴾

﴿69. (You) who believed in Our Āyāt and were Muslims.﴾

﴿70. Enter Paradise, you and your wives, in happiness.﴾

﴿71. Trays of gold and cups will be passed round them; (there will be) therein all that their souls desire, and all that eyes could delight in and you will abide therein forever.﴾

﴿72. This is the Paradise, which you have been made to inherit because of your deeds that you used to do.﴾

﴿73. Therein for you will be fruits in plenty, of which you will eat (as you desire).﴾

The Resurrection will come suddenly, and Enmity will arise between close Friends among the Disbelievers

Allāh says, 'do these idolaters who disbelieve in the

Messengers wait'

﴿إِلَّا السَّاعَةَ أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ﴾

﴿only for the Hour that it shall come upon them suddenly while they perceive not?﴾

means, for it is real and will inevitably come to pass, and these negligent people are unprepared for it. When it comes, it will catch them unawares, and on that Day they will feel the utmost regret when regret will not benefit them in the slightest and will not afford them any protection.

﴿الْأَخِلَاءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

﴿Friends on that Day will be foes one to another except those who have Taqwā.﴾

means, every friendship that exists for a purpose other than for the sake of Allāh will turn to enmity on the Day of Resurrection, except for that which is for the sake of Allāh, which will last forever. This is like the statement of Ibrāhīm, peace be upon him, to his people:

﴿إِنَّمَا اتَّخَذْتُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْثَانًا مَّوَدَّةَ بَيْنِكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكْفُرُ بَعْضُكُم بِبَعْضٍ وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ بَعْضُكُم بِبَعْضٍ وَمَأْوَاكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن نَّاصِرِينَ﴾

﴿You have taken (for worship) idols instead of Allāh. The love between you is only in the life of this world, but on the Day of Resurrection, you shall disown each other, and curse each other, and your abode will be the Fire, and you shall have no helper.﴾ (29:25)

Good News for Those with Taqwā on the Day of Resurrection, and Their entry into Paradise

﴿يَسْعَاوُنَ لَهَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْكَ وَلَا أَنتَ حَزِينٌ﴾

﴿My servants! No fear shall be on you this Day, nor shall you grieve.﴾

Then He will give them the glad tidings:

﴿الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَكَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ﴾

﴿(You) who believed in Our Āyāt and were Muslims.﴾

means, their hearts believed and they submitted inwardly and outwardly to the Laws of Allāh.

Al-Mu'tamir bin Sulaymān narrated that his father said: "When the Day of Resurrection comes and the people are resurrected, there will be no one left who will not be filled with terror. Then a caller will cry out:

﴿يَوْمَ لَا حَوْلَ عَلَيْكُمْ الْيَوْمَ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ﴾

﴿My servants! No fear shall be on you this Day, nor shall you grieve.﴾

So all the people will be filled with hope, but this will be followed by the words:

﴿الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَكَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ﴾

﴿(You) who believed in Our Āyāt and were Muslims.﴾

Then all of mankind will be filled with despair apart from the believers.^[1]

﴿ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ﴾

﴿Enter Paradise,﴾ means, they will be told to enter Paradise.

﴿أَنْتُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ﴾

﴿you and your wives,﴾ means, your counterparts

﴿تُحِبُّونَ﴾

﴿in happiness (Tuḥbarūn).﴾ means, in delight and joy.^[2]

﴿يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِصِحَافٍ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ﴾

﴿Trays of gold and cups will be passed round them;﴾

means, fine vessels of gold containing food and drink, without spouts or handles.

^[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21 :639.

^[2] This phrase *Tuḥbarūn* has already been mentioned in *Sūrat Ar-Rūm* [30:15] where there was a narration stating that it means, "Luxury." Ibn Kathīr's view is that it is more general than that, as seen by his comment here.

﴿وَفِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِي الْأَنْفُسُ﴾

[(there will be) therein all that their souls could desire]. Some of them recited:

﴿مَا تَشْتَهِي الْأَنْفُسُ﴾

﴿that their souls desire,﴾

﴿وَلَا تَعْبُدُ الْأَعْيُنُ﴾

﴿and all that eyes could delight in﴾ means, of good food, delightful fragrances and beautiful scenes.

﴿وَأَنْتَ فِيهَا﴾

﴿and you will therein﴾ means, in Paradise

﴿خَالِدُونَ﴾

﴿abide forever﴾ means, you will never leave it or want to exchange it.

Then it will be said to them, as a reminder of the blessing and favor of Allāh:

﴿وَتِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾﴾

﴿This is the Paradise, which you have been made to inherit because of your deeds that you used to do.﴾

means, the righteous deeds which were the cause of your being included in the mercy of Allāh. For no one will be admitted to Paradise by virtue of their deeds alone; that will be by the mercy and grace of Allāh. But the varying ranks and degrees of Paradise will be attained according to one's righteous deeds.

﴿لَا يَنْبَغِي فِيهَا فَكْرٌ كَثِيرٌ﴾

﴿Therein for you will be fruits in plenty,﴾

means, of all kinds.

﴿بِئْسَ مَا تَكُونُونَ﴾

﴿of which you will eat.﴾ means, whatever you choose and desire. When food and drink are mentioned, fruit is also mentioned to complete the picture of blessing and joy. And Allāh knows best.

سُورَةُ الْحَجِّ

٤٩٥

سُورَةُ الْحَجِّ

إِنَّ الْمَجْرِمِينَ فِي عَذَابٍ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾ لَا يَفْتَرُ عَنْهُمْ وَهُمْ فِيهِ مُبْلِسُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ وَمَا ظَلَمْتَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا هُمُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَقَادُوا بِمَلِكٍ لِّقَبْضِ عَيْنَارِكَ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ مَنكِثُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾ لَقَدْ جِئْتُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَكِنْ أَكْثَرَكُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كَذِبُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ أَمْ أَبْرَمُوا أَمْرًا فَإِنَّا مُبْرِمُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾ أَمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّا لَا نَسْمَعُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُمْ بَلَىٰ وَرُسُلْنَا لَدَيْهِمْ يَكْتَئِبُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ قُلْ إِن كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدٌ فَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْعَبِيدِ ﴿٨١﴾ سُبْحَنَ رَبِّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ فَذَرَهُمْ يَخُوضُوا وَيَلْعَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ آيَاتُهُمُ الَّتِي يُوْعَدُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَهُ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَهُ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَبَارَكَ الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَعِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾ وَلَا يَمْلِكُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ الشَّفَعَةَ إِلَّا مَن شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَلَكِنْ سَأَلْتَهُم مِّنْ خَلْقِهِمْ لِيَقُولَنَّ اللَّهُ فَاَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾ وَقِيلَ لَهُ يَرْبِّ إِنَّا هَنَّا قَوْمٌ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ فَأَصْفَحْ عَنْهُمْ وَقُلْ سَلِّمْ وَسَلِّمْ يَوْمَ تَفُوتُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾

﴿٧٤﴾ إِنَّ الْمَجْرِمِينَ فِي عَذَابٍ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ لَا يَفْتَرُ عَنْهُمْ وَهُمْ فِيهِ مُبْلِسُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَمَا ظَلَمْتَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا هُمُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ وَقَادُوا بِمَلِكٍ لِّقَبْضِ عَيْنَارِكَ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ مَنكِثُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ لَقَدْ جِئْتُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَكِنْ أَكْثَرَكُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كَذِبُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾ أَمْ أَبْرَمُوا أَمْرًا فَإِنَّا مُبْرِمُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ أَمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّا لَا نَسْمَعُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُمْ بَلَىٰ وَرُسُلْنَا لَدَيْهِمْ يَكْتَئِبُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

﴿74. Verily, the criminals will be in the torment of Hell to abide therein forever.﴾

﴿75. (The torment) will not be lightened for them, and they will be plunged into destruction with deep regrets, sorrows and in despair therein.﴾

﴿76. We wronged them not, but they were the wrongdoers.﴾

﴿77. And they will cry: "O Mālik (keeper of Hell)! Let your Lord make an end of us." He will say: "Verily, you shall abide forever."﴾

﴿78. Indeed We have brought the truth to you, but most of you have a hatred for the truth.﴾

﴿79. Or have they plotted some plan? Then We too are planning.﴾

﴿80. Or do they think that We hear not their secrets and their private counsel? Yes (We do) and Our messengers are by them, to record.﴾

The Punishment of the Doomed

The description of the state of the blessed is followed by a description of the state of the doomed.

﴿إِنَّ الْمُنَجَّرِينَ فِي عَذَابٍ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ ۖ لَا يُفَرِّجُهُمْ﴾

﴿Verily, the criminals will be in the torment of Hell to abide therein forever. It will not be lightened for them,﴾

meaning, not even for one moment.

﴿وَهُمْ فِيهِ مُبِلِسُونَ﴾

﴿and they will be plunged into destruction with deep regrets, sorrows and in despair therein,﴾

means, they will despair of any goodness.

﴿وَمَا ظَلَمْنَاهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا هُمُ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

﴿We wronged them not, but they were the wrongdoers.﴾

means, by their committing wrong actions after proof had been established against them and Messengers had been sent to them, but they rejected them and rebelled, so they are to be punished accordingly. And your Lord is not at all unjust to (His) servants.

﴿وَنَادُوا بِمَالِكٍ﴾

﴿And they will cry: "O Mālik..."﴾ who is the keeper of Hell.

Al-Bukhārī said, "Ḥajjāj bin Minhāl told us, Sufyān bin 'Uyaynah told us, from 'Amr bin 'Aṭā,' from Ṣafwān bin Ya'lā that his father, may Allāh be pleased with him, said, 'I heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ reciting on the Minbar.

﴿وَنَادُوا بِمَالِكٍ لِّقَضِ عَيْنَا رَبِّكَ﴾

﴿And they will cry: "O Mālik! Let your Lord make an end of us."﴾^[1]

meaning, 'let Him destroy our souls and give us some respite from our predicament.' But it will be as Allāh says:

﴿لَا يَنْصُنْ عَلَيْهِمْ فَيَمُوتُوا وَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِهَا﴾

[1] Faṭḥ Al-Bāri, 8 :431 .

«Neither will it have a complete killing effect on them so that they die nor shall its torment be lightened for them» (35:36).

﴿وَنَجَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنَ الْكَفْرِ ۖ ثُمَّ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَىٰ ۚ﴾

«But it will be avoided by the wretched, who will enter the great Fire. There he will neither die (to be in rest) nor live (a good living).» (87:11-13).

When they ask to be allowed to die, Mālik will answer them:

﴿قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ تَكُونُونَ﴾

«He will say: "Verily, you shall abide forever."» meaning, 'you will have no way out from it and no refuge.' Then the reason why they are doomed will be given, which is their stubborn resistance to the truth. Allāh says:

﴿لَقَدْ جِئْتَكُمْ بِالْحَقِّ﴾

«Indeed We have brought the truth to you,» meaning, 'We have explained it to you clearly and in detail.'

﴿وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَكُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كَرِهُونَ﴾

«but most of you have a hatred for the truth.»

means, 'but your nature could not accept it and did not seek it; on the contrary, you followed and venerated falsehood, and you stood in the way of truth and refused it, and despised its followers.' So they will blame themselves and will feel regret at the time when regret will not be of any benefit to them. Then Allāh says:

﴿أَمْ أَبْرَمُوا أَمْرًا فَإِنَّا مُبْرِمُونَ﴾

«Or have they plotted some plan? Then We too are planning.»

Mujāhid said, "They wanted to plot some evil, but We are also planning."^[1] What Mujāhid said is like the Āyah:

﴿وَمَكْرُؤًا مَكَرًا ۖ وَمَكْرُؤًا مَكَرًا ۖ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ﴾

«So they plotted a plot, and We planned a plan, while they perceived not.» (27:50).

The idolators were trying their utmost to find ways of refuting

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:146.

the truth with falsehood, but Allāh planned it so that the consequences of that would backfire on them. He said in refutation:

﴿أَمْ يَحْسِبُونَ أَنَّا لَا نَسْمَعُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُمْ﴾

﴿Or do they think that We hear not their secrets and their private counsel?﴾

meaning, what they say secretly and openly.

﴿بَلْ وَرُسُلُنَا لَدَيْهِمْ يَكْتُبُونَ﴾

﴿Yes (We do) and Our messengers are by them, to record.﴾

means, 'We know what they are doing, and the angels are also recording their deeds, major and minor.'

﴿قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدٌ فَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْعَبْدِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ سُبْحَنَ رَبِّ الْأَرْضِ رَبِّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ تَدْرَهُمْ بِخُوضُوا وَيَلْعَبُوا حَتَّى يُلَاقُوا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِي يُوْعَدُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَهٌُ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَهٌُ وَهُوَ الْمُغِيْثُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَتَبَارَكَ الَّذِي لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكَ اسْمُكَ الْأَسْمَاءُ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَعِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾ وَلَا يَمْلِكُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ الشَّفَعَةَ إِلَّا مَنْ شِئَ بِإِلْحَاقٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَلَكِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ فَأَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾ وَفِيلِهِ يَرْبِ إِنْ هَؤُلَاءِ قَوْمٌ لَا يُمِنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ فَأَصْمَعَ عَنْهُمْ وَقُلْ سَلِّمْ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾﴾

﴿81. Say: "If the Most Gracious had a son, then I am the first of the worshippers."﴾

﴿82. Glorified is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of the Throne! Exalted be He from all that they ascribe (to Him).﴾

﴿83. So leave them (alone) to speak nonsense and play until they meet the Day of theirs which they have been promised.﴾

﴿84. It is He Who is the only God in the heaven and the only God on the earth. And He is the All-Wise, the All-Knower.﴾

﴿85. And Blessed be He to Whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, and with Whom is the knowledge of the Hour, and to Whom you (all) will be returned.﴾

﴿86. And those whom they invoke instead of Him have no power of intercession - except for those who bear witness to the truth knowingly, and they know.﴾

﴿87. And if you ask them who created them, they will surely say: "Allāh." How then are they turned away?﴾

﴿88. And his saying: "O my Lord! Verily, these are a people who believe not!"﴾

﴿89. So turn away from them, and say: Salām (peace!) But they will come to know.﴾

Allāh has no Offspring

Allāh says:

﴿قُلْ﴾

﴿Say﴾ – 'O Muḥammad' –

﴿إِنْ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدٌ فَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْعَابِدِينَ﴾

﴿If the Most Gracious had a son, then I am the first of the worshippers.﴾

meaning, 'if this were so, then I would worship Him on that basis, because I am one of His servants; I obey all that He commands me and I am not too arrogant or proud to worship Him.' This conditional phrase does not mean that what is described could happen nor that is possible as Allāh says:

﴿لَوْ أَرَادَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَخْلُقَ وَلَدًا لَأَمْطَقَ بِمَا يَخْلُقُ مَا بَيْنَكُمُ مَسْبُكَةً هُوَ اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ﴾

﴿Had Allāh willed to take a son, He could have chosen whom He willed out of those whom He created. But glory be to Him! He is Allāh, the One, the Irresistible.﴾ (39:4). Allāh says here:

﴿سُبْحَنَ رَبِّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبِّ الْمَرْثِ عَنَّا يَعْزُونَ﴾

﴿Glorified is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of the Throne! Exalted be He from all that they ascribe (to Him).﴾

meaning, exalted and sanctified and glorified be the Creator of all things far above having any offspring, for He is Unique, One and Eternally Self-Sufficient. There is none equal to Him or like Him, and He does not have any offspring.

﴿قَدْ رَفَعَهُمْ يَحْضُوا﴾

﴿So leave them (alone) to speak nonsense﴾ means, in their ignorance and misguidance,

﴿وَلْيَلْعَبُوا﴾

﴿and play﴾ in their world,

﴿حَتَّىٰ يُلَاقُوا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِي يُوْعَدُونَ﴾

﴿until they meet the Day of theirs which they have been promised.﴾

which is the Day of Resurrection, i.e., then they will come to know what their end and destination will be on that Day.

The Uniqueness of the Lord

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَهٌ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَهٌ﴾

﴿It is He Who is the only God in the heaven and the only God on the earth.﴾

means, He is the God of those who are in the heavens and the God of those who are on earth; all of them worship Him and are humbled before Him.

﴿وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْقَلِيمُ﴾

﴿And He is the All-Wise, the All-Knower.﴾ This Āyah is like the Āyah:

﴿وَهُوَ اللَّهُ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّكُمْ وَجَهْرَكُمْ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾﴾

﴿And He is Allāh in the heavens and on the earth; He knows what you conceal and what you reveal, and He knows what you earn.﴾ (6:3)

which means, He is the One who is called Allāh in the heavens and on the earth.

﴿وَتَبَارَكَ الَّذِي لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكَ الْكُفْرُ وَالْإِسْكَانُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا﴾

﴿And Blessed be He to Whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them,﴾

means, He is their Creator and Sovereign, the One Who is controlling them with none to resist or oppose His rule. Blessed and exalted be He far above the notion of His having a child. He is eternally free of all faults and shortcomings,

because He is the Lord, the Exalted, the Almighty, the Sovereign of all things, Who is in control of all affairs.

﴿وَعِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ﴾

﴿and with Whom is the knowledge of the Hour,﴾

means, no one knows when it will happen except Him.

﴿وَالَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ﴾

﴿and to Whom you (all) will be returned.﴾ means, and each person will be requited for his deeds; if they are good, then he will be rewarded, and if they are bad, then he will be punished.

The Idols have no Power of Intercession

﴿وَلَا يَمْلِكُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ﴾

﴿And those whom they invoke instead of Him have no power﴾

means, the idols and false gods.

﴿الشفعة﴾

﴿of intercession﴾ means, they are not able to intercede for them.

﴿إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

﴿except for those who bear witness to the truth knowingly, and they know.﴾

This means, but the one who bears witness to the truth has knowledge and insight, so his intercession with Allāh will avail, by His leave.

The Idolators admit that Allāh Alone is the Creator

﴿وَلَكِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ فَأَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ﴾

﴿And if you ask them who created them, they will surely say: "Allāh." How then are they turned away?﴾

means, 'if you ask these idolators who associate others in worship with Allāh,'

﴿مَنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ﴾

﴿who created them, they will surely say: "Allāh."﴾

means, they will admit that He Alone is the Creator of all

things and He has no partner in that. Yet despite that they still worship others alongside Him who have nothing and are able to do nothing. This is the utmost foolishness and stupidity. Allāh says:

﴿فَأَن يُّؤْفَكُونَ﴾

﴿How then are they turned away?﴾

The Prophet's Complaint to Allāh

﴿وَقِيلَ يَرْبِّ إِنَّا هَؤُلَاءِ قَوْمٌ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

﴿And his saying: "O my Lord! Verily, these are a people who believe not!"﴾

means, Muḥammad ﷺ said this; he complained to his Lord about his people who did not believe in him, and said, 'O Lord, these people do not believe.' This is like the Āyah:

﴿وَقَالَ الرَّسُولُ يَرْبِّ إِنَّا هَؤُلَاءِ قَوْمٌ هَؤُلَاءِ لَفِي سُلُوكٍ مِّنْهُمُ الْمُتَكِبُونَ﴾

﴿And the Messenger will say: "O my Lord! Verily, my people deserted this Qur'ān."﴾ (25:30).

This is the view of Ibn Mas'ūd, may Allāh be pleased with him, Mujāhid and Qatādah, and this is how Ibn Jarīr interpreted it.^[1]

Al-Bukhārī said: "Abdullāh – meaning Ibn Mas'ūd, may Allāh be pleased with him – recited (Āyah 88 of Az-Zukhruf):

﴿وَقَالَ الرَّسُولُ يَا رَبِّ﴾

(And the Messenger will say: "O my Lord!")^[2]

Mujāhid said concerning the Āyah:

﴿وَقِيلَ يَرْبِّ إِنَّا هَؤُلَاءِ قَوْمٌ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

﴿And his saying: "O my Lord! Verily, these are a people who believe not!"﴾

"Allāh is stating what Muḥammad ﷺ said."^[3] Qatādah said, "These are the words of your Prophet ﷺ, when he complained

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:656.

[2] Faṭḥ Al-Bārī, 8:431.

[3] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21:656.

about his people to his Lord."^[1]

﴿فَأَصْنَعْ عَنْهُمْ﴾

﴿So turn away from them,﴾ means, from the idolators.

﴿وَقُلْ سَلَامٌ﴾

﴿and say Salām (peace!)﴾ means, 'do not respond to them in the same evil manner in which they address you; but try to soften their hearts and forgive them in word and deed.'

﴿فَسَوْفَ يَكْمُلُ﴾

﴿But they will come to know.﴾ This is a warning from Allāh for them. His punishment, which cannot be warded off, struck them, and His religion and His word was supreme. Subsequently *Jihad* and striving were prescribed until the people entered the religion of Allāh in crowds, and Islām spread throughout the east and the west. And Allāh knows best.

This is the end of the *Tafsīr* of *Sūrat Az-Zukhruf*.

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 21 :656.