

The Tafsīr of Sūrat Lam Yakun (Al-Bayyinah)^[1] (Chapter - 98)

Which was revealed in Al-Madinah

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ recited this Sūrah to Ubayy
Imām Aḥmad recorded from Anas bin Mālik that the
Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said to Ubayy bin Ka'b,

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَمَرَنِي أَنْ أَقْرَأَ عَلَيْكَ ﴿لَمْ يَكُنِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ﴾»

«Verily, Allāh has commanded me to recite to you ﴿Those who disbelieve from among the People of the Scripture﴾.»

Ubayy said, "He (Allāh) mentioned me by name to you?" The Prophet ﷺ replied,

«نعم»

«Yes.» So he (Ubayy) cried.^[2] Al-Bukhārī, Muslim, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasā'ī all recorded this Ḥadīth from Shu'bah.^[3]

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّكَّابِ الْعَظِيمِ

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

﴿لَمْ يَكُنِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالشُّرَكِيِّينَ مُنْفَكِينَ حَتَّى تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَةُ ۝۱﴾ رَسُولٌ مِنَ
اللَّهِ يَتْلُو صُحُفًا مُطَهَّرَةً ۝۲ فِيهَا كُتِبَ قِسْمَةٌ ۝۳ وَمَا تَفَرَّقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا
جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَةُ ۝۴ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا
الزَّكَاةَ ۚ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ ۝۵﴾

﴿1. Those who disbelieve from among the People of the Scripture and the idolators, were not going to leave until there came to them the Bayyinah.﴾

[1] This Sūrah is also known as Al-Bayyinah.

[2] Aḥmad 3 :130.

[3] Faṭḥ Al-Bārī 8 :597, Muslim 1 :550, Tuḥfat Al-Aḥwadhī 10 :294, and An-Nasā'ī in Al-Kubrā 6 :520.

- ﴿2. A Messenger from Allāh, reciting purified pages.﴾
 ﴿3. Wherein are upright Books.﴾
 ﴿4. And the People of the Scripture differed not until after there came to them the Bayyinah.﴾
 ﴿5. And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allāh, making religion purely for Him alone, Ḥunafā', and that they perform Ṣalāh and give Zakāh, and that is the right religion.﴾

Mentioning the Situation of the Disbelievers among the People of the Scripture and the Idolators

As for the People of the Scripture, they are the Jews and the Christians, and the idolators are the worshippers of idols and fire among the Arabs and the non-Arabs. Mujāhid said, they are not going

﴿سُفَّيْنَ﴾

﴿to leave﴾ "Meaning, they will not be finished until the truth becomes clear to them."^[1] Qatādah also said the same thing.^[2]

﴿حَتَّى تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَةُ﴾

﴿until there came to them the Bayyinah.﴾ meaning, this Qur'ān. This is why Allāh says,

﴿لَا يَكْفِي الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالشُّرَكِيِّنَ مُفْكَيْنَ حَتَّى تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَةُ﴾

﴿Those who disbelieve from among the People of the Scripture and idolators, were not going to leave until there came to them the Bayyinah.﴾

Then He explains what the Bayyinah is by His saying,

﴿رَسُولٌ مِنْ اللَّهِ يَتْلُو صُفْهًا مُمَطَّرَةً﴾

﴿A Messenger from Allāh, reciting purified pages.﴾

meaning, Muḥammad ﷺ and the Magnificent Qur'ān he recites, which is written down among the most high gathering in purified pages. This is similar to Allāh's statement,

^[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 24:539.

^[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 24:539.

﴿ فِي صُحُفٍ مُّكَرَّمَةٍ ۖ رُّفُوعَةٍ مُّطَهَّرَةٍ ۚ بِأَيْدِي سَفَرَةٍ ۚ كِرَامٍ بَرَرَةٍ ۝۱۱ ﴾

﴿In Records held in honor. Exalted, purified, in the hands of scribes (angels). Honorable and obedient.﴾ (80:13-16)

Then Allāh says,

﴿ فِيهَا كُتِبَ قِسْمَةٌ ۝۱۲ ﴾

﴿Wherein are upright Books.﴾ Ibn Jarīr said, "Meaning in the purified pages are Books from Allāh that are upright, just and straight. They have no mistakes in them because they are from Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic."¹¹

The Differing only occurred after the Knowledge came

Allāh says,

﴿ وَمَا نَفَرَكَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَةُ ۝۱۳ ﴾

﴿And the People of the Scripture differed not until after there came to them the Bayyinah.﴾

This is similar to Allāh's statement,

﴿ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَةُ وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝۱۴ ﴾

﴿And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves after the Bayyinat came to them. It is they for whom there is an awful torment.﴾ (3:105)

This refers to the people of those divinely revealed Scriptures that were sent down to the nations that were before us. After Allāh established the proofs and evidences against them, they divided and differed concerning that which Allāh had intended in their Scriptures, and they had many differences. This is like what has been reported in a *Ḥadīth* that has many routes of transmission,

«إِنَّ الْيَهُودَ اخْتَلَفُوا عَلَى إِحْدَى وَسَبْعِينَ فِرْقَةً، وَإِنَّ النَّصَارَى اخْتَلَفُوا عَلَى ثَلَاثٍ وَسَبْعِينَ فِرْقَةً، وَاسْتَفْتَرَفُوا هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةَ عَلَى ثَلَاثٍ وَسَبْعِينَ فِرْقَةً، كُلُّهَا فِي النَّارِ إِلَّا وَاحِدَةً»

«Verily, the Jews differed until they became seventy-one sects. And verily, the Christians differed until they became seventy-

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 24:540.

two sects. And this Ummah will divide into seventy-three sects, and all of them will be in the Fire except one.»

They said, "Who are they, O Messenger of Allāh?" He ﷺ replied,

«مَا أَنَا عَلَيْهِ وَأَصْحَابِي»

«(Those who are upon) what I and my Companions are upon.»^[1]

The Command of Allāh was merely that They make their Religion solely for Him

Allāh says,

﴿وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ﴾

«And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allāh, making religion purely for Him alone,»

This is similar to Allāh's statement,

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ﴾

«And We did not send any Messenger before you but We revealed to him: Lā ilāha illā Anā.» (21:25)

Thus, Allāh says,

﴿حُنَفَاءَ﴾

«Hunafā'»

meaning, avoiding *Shirk* and being truly devout to *Tawhīd*. This is like Allāh's statement,

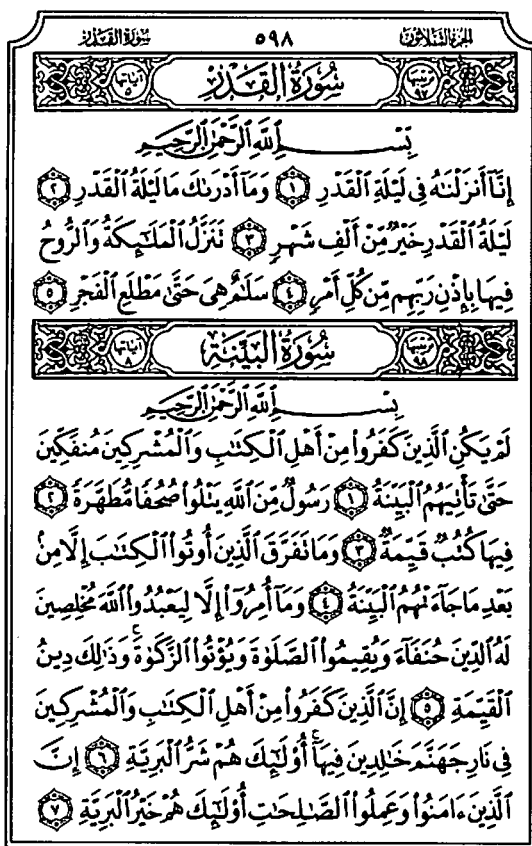
﴿وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الصَّلُوتَ﴾

«And Verily, We have sent among every Ummah a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allāh, and avoid the *Ṭāghūt* (false deities).» (16:36)

A discussion of the word *Hanīf* has already been mentioned previously and in *Sūrat Al-An'ām*, so there is no need to repeat it here.^[2]

^[1] Al-Qurṭubī 4:159, 160. Similar with At-Tirmidhi.

^[2] See volume three, the *Tafsīr* of *Sūrat Al-An'ām* (6:79), and volume four, the *Tafsīr* of *Sūrat Al-A'rāf* (7:30).



﴿وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ﴾

﴿and perform Ṣalāh﴾
And this is the best of the physical forms of worship.

﴿وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ﴾

﴿and give Zakāh,﴾ This is doing good to the poor and the needy.

﴿وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ﴾

﴿and that is the right religion.﴾ meaning, the upright and just religion, or the nation that is straight and balanced.

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أُولَئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ الْخَالِدِينَ﴾
﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أُولَئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ الْخَالِدِينَ﴾

وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرِّ ﴿٧﴾ جَزَاءُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ ﴿٨﴾

﴿6. Verily, those who disbelieve from among the People of the Scripture and idolators, will abide in the fire of Hell. They are the worst of creatures.﴾

﴿7. Verily, those who believe and do righteous good deeds, they are the best of creatures.﴾

﴿8. Their reward with their Lord is Eternal Gardens, underneath which rivers flow. They will abide therein forever, Allāh will be pleased with them, and they well-pleased with Him. That is for him who fears his Lord.﴾

Mentioning the Worse and Best of Creation and Their Recompense

Allāh informs of what will happen to the wicked disbelievers among the People of the Scripture and the idolators who oppose the Allāh's divinely revealed Books and the Prophets whom He sent. He says that they will be in the fire of Hell on the Day of Judgement and they will abide therein forever. This means that they will remain in it and they will have no way out of it and they will not cease being in it.

﴿أُولَئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ الْبَرِيَّةِ﴾

﴿They are the worst of creatures.﴾ meaning, they are the worst creation that Allāh has fashioned and created.

Then Allāh informs about the situation of the righteous people who believed in their hearts and performed righteous deeds with their bodies. He says that they are the best of creation. Abu Hurayrah and a group of the scholars have used this *Āyah* as a proof that the believers have a status among the creatures that is better than the angels. This is because Allāh says,

﴿أُولَئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ﴾

﴿They are the best of creatures.﴾

Then Allāh says,

﴿جَزَاءُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ﴾

﴿Their reward with their Lord﴾ meaning, on the Day of Judgement.

﴿جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا﴾

﴿is Eternal Gardens underneath which rivers flow. They will abide therein forever,﴾

meaning, having no end, no break and no conclusion.

﴿رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ﴾

﴿Allāh will be pleased with them, and they well-pleased with Him.﴾

The condition of Him being pleased with them is more illustrious than all of the everlasting delights that they will be given.

﴿وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ﴾

﴿and they well-pleased with Him.﴾ Due to the comprehensive favors He has given them.

Then Allāh says,

﴿ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ﴾

﴿That is for him who fears his Lord.﴾ meaning, this is the reward that will be attained by those who revere Allāh and fear Him as He deserves to be feared. This is the person who worships Allāh as if he sees Him, and he knows that even though he does not see Him, indeed Allāh sees him.

Imām Aḥmad recorded from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِخَيْرِ الْبَرِيَّةِ؟»

«Shall I not inform you of the best of creation?»

They said, “Of course, O Messenger of Allāh!” He said,

«رَجُلٌ أَخَذَ بِعِتَانِ فَرَسِهِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، كُلَّمَا كَانَتْ هَيْعَةً اسْتَوَى عَلَيْهِ. أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِخَيْرِ الْبَرِيَّةِ»

«A man who takes the reins of his horse in the way of Allāh, and whenever there is a fearful cry from the enemy, he climbs upon it. Shall I not inform you of the best of creation?»

They said, “Of course, O Messenger of Allāh!” He said,

«رَجُلٌ فِي ثَلَاثَةِ مِائَةٍ مِنَ غَنَمِهِ، يُقِيمُ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتِي الزَّكَاةَ. أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِشَرِّ الْبَرِيَّةِ؟»

«A man who has a flock of sheep and he establishes the prayer and gives the obligatory charity. Shall I not inform you of the worst of creation?»

They said, “Of course.” He said,

«الَّذِي يُسْأَلُ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا يُعْطِي بِهِ»

«The person who is asked by Allāh and he does not give by Him.»^[1]

This is the end of the Tafsīr of Sūrat Lam Yakun (Al-Bayyinah), and all praise and thanks are due to Allāh.

^[1] Aḥmad 2:396.