

The Tafsīr of Sūrah Luqmān (Chapter - 31)

Which was revealed in Makkah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

سُورَةُ لُقْمَانَ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْقَدْ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْحَكِيمِ ۝ هُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّلْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝ الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ۝ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ۝ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُشْتَرِ لِهَوَاهُ الْحَدِيثَ لِيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَيَتَّخِذَهَا هُزُوًا أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ۝ وَإِذَا نُنَادَىٰ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَتُنَا وَلَّىٰ مُسْتَكْبِرًا ۝ كَانَتْ تَسْمَعُهَا كَانَتْ فِي أذْنَيْهِ وَقَرَأَ فَبِشْرَةِ بَعْدَابٍ أَلَيْسَ ۝ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ النَّعِيمِ ۝ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقًّا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ۚ وَأَلْقَىٰ فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَن تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ ۚ وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍ كَرِيمٍ ۝ هَذَا خَلْقُ اللَّهِ فَأَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقَ الَّذِينَ مِن دُونِهِ ۚ بَلِ الظَّالِمُونَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ

الْقَدْ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْحَكِيمِ ۝ هُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّلْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝ الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ۝ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ۝

- ﴿1. Alif Lām Mīm.﴾
- ﴿2. These are Āyāt of the Wise Book.﴾
- ﴿3. A guide and a mercy for the Muḥsinīn.﴾
- ﴿4. Those who perform the Ṣalāh and give Zakāh and they have faith in the Hereafter with certainty.﴾
- ﴿5. Such are on guidance from their Lord, and such are the successful.﴾

At the beginning of

Sūrat Al-Baqarah we discussed the letters such as those that appear at the beginning of this Sūrah. Allāh has made the Qur'ān a guidance and healing and a mercy for the Muḥsinīn, who are those who do good deeds in accordance with the

Sharī'ah. They establish the obligatory prayers in the proper manner and at the correct times, and follow that with regular, optional and supererogatory prayers; they pay the *Zakāh* to those who deserve it; they uphold the ties of kinship with their relatives; they have certain faith that there will be rewards and punishments in the Hereafter, and they seek the reward with Allāh; they do not show off or seek a reward or thanks from other people. Whoever does this is one of those of whom Allāh says:

﴿أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ﴾

﴿Such are on guidance from their Lord,﴾ meaning, they follow His guidance with clear understanding.

﴿وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

﴿and such are the successful.﴾ in this world and in the Hereafter.

﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْتَرِي لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَتَخَذَمَا هُزُؤًا
أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ۝ وَإِنَّا نَتْلُو عَلَيْهِ مَا يُشْكِرُ ۚ كَانَ لَوْ يَسْمَعُهَا كَانَ فِي
أُذُنَيْهِ وَقَرَّ قَلْبُهُ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ﴾

﴿6. And of mankind is he who purchases idle talk (Lahw Al-Hadīth) to mislead from the path of Allāh without knowledge, and takes it by way of mockery. For such there will be a humiliating torment.﴾

﴿7. And when Our Āyāt are recited to such a one, he turns away in pride, as if he heard them not – as if there were deafness in his ear. So announce to him a painful torment.﴾

The Doomed are preoccupied with Idle Talk and They turn away from the Āyāt of Allāh

When Allāh mentions the blessed – who are those who are guided by the Book of Allāh and benefit from hearing it, as He says:

﴿اللَّهُ زَلَّ أَحْسَنَ الْكَلِمَاتِ كِتَابًا تُنشِئُهَا ثَنَائِي نَشْعِرُ مِنْهُ جُلُودَ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ
نَلِينُ جُلُودَهُمْ وَقُلُوبَهُمْ إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ﴾

﴿Allāh has sent down the Best Statement, a Book, its parts resembling each other (and) oft-repeated. The skins of those who

fear their Lord shiver from it. Then their skin and their heart soften to the remembrance of Allāh ﴿39:23﴾.

He connect that with mention of the doomed, those who turn away from the Qur'ān and do not benefit from hearing the Words of Allāh. Instead, they turn to listening to flutes and singing accompanied by musical instruments. As Ibn Mas'ūd commented about the Āyah:

﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْتَرِي لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ﴾

﴿And of mankind is he who purchases Lahw Al-Ḥadīth to mislead (men) from the path of Allāh﴾,

he said, "This – by Allāh – refers to singing."^[1]

﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْتَرِي لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ﴾

﴿And of mankind is he who purchases Lahw Al-Ḥadīth to mislead (men) from the path of Allāh without knowledge﴾,

Qatādah said: "By Allāh, he may not spend money on it, but his purchasing it means he likes it, and the more misguided he is, the more he likes it and the more he prefers falsehood to the truth and harmful things over beneficial things."^[2]

It was said that what is meant by the words

﴿يَشْتَرِي لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ﴾

﴿purchases idle talks﴾ is buying singing servant girls. Ibn Jarīr said that it means all speech that hinders people from seeing the signs of Allāh and following His path.^[3]

His saying:

﴿لِيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ﴾

﴿to mislead (men) from the path of Allāh﴾

means, he does this to oppose Islām and its followers.

﴿وَيَتَّخِذَهَا مَهْزُومًا﴾

﴿and takes it by way of mockery﴾ Mujāhid said, "This means

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 20:127.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 20:127.

[3] Aṭ-Ṭabari 20:130.

mocking the path of Allāh and making fun of it.”^[1]

﴿أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ﴾

﴿For such there will be a humiliating torment.﴾

Just as they showed no respect to the signs and path of Allāh, so they will be shown no respect on the Day of Resurrection, and they will be subjected to a painful, ongoing torment.

Then Allāh says:

﴿وَإِذَا تُلِّقَ عَلَيْهِ مَا بَشَّرْنَا وَلَّى مُسْتَكْبِرًا كَأَن لَّمْ يَسْمَعْهَا كَأَنَّ فِي أُذُنِهِ وَفْرًا﴾

﴿And when Our Āyāt are recited to such a one, he turns away in pride, as if he heard them not – as if there were deafness in his ear.﴾

means, when these Qur’anic verses are recited to one who is fond of idleness and play, he turns away from them and does not want to hear them. He turns a deaf ear to them as if he can hear nothing, because it annoys him to hear them since he gains no benefit from them and has no interest in them.

﴿فَنَبَشِّرْهُ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ﴾

﴿So announce to him a painful torment.﴾ i.e., on the Day of Resurrection, which will hurt him just as much as listening to the Book of Allāh and its verses hurt him.

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٨﴾ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ حَقًّا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٩﴾﴾

﴿8. Verily, those who believe and do righteous good deeds, for them are Gardens of Delight.﴾

﴿9. To abide therein. It is a promise of Allāh in truth. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.﴾

The Good Destiny of the Believers

Here Allāh mentions the destiny of the righteous in the Hereafter, those who believe in Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ and do righteous deeds in accordance with the Laws of Allāh.

﴿لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ النَّعِيمِ﴾

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 20:131.

﴿for them are Gardens of Delight.﴾ means, there they will enjoy all kinds of delights and pleasures, food, drink, clothing, dwelling-places, means of transportation, women, a light of beauty and delightful sounds, which have never crossed the mind of any human being. They will stay there forever, never leaving and never desiring change.

﴿وَعَدَ اللَّهُ حَقًّا﴾

﴿It is a promise of Allāh in truth.﴾ meaning, this will undoubtedly come to pass, for it is a promise from Allāh, and Allāh never breaks His promise, because He is the Most Generous Bestower Who does what He wills and is able to do all things.

﴿وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ﴾

﴿And He is the All-Mighty,﴾ Who has subjugated all things and to Whom all things submit,

﴿الْحَكِيمُ﴾

﴿the All-Wise.﴾ in what He says and what He does, Who has made this Qur'ān a guidance to the believers.

﴿قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هُدًى وَشِفَاءً وَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ فِي آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرٌ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِمْ عَمًى﴾

﴿Say: "It is for those who believe, a guide and a healing. And as for those who disbelieve, there is heaviness (deafness) in their ears, and it is blindness for them﴾ (41:44).

﴿وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا يَرْيَدُ الْفَٰكِلِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا﴾

﴿And We send down of the Qur'ān that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe, and it increases the wrongdoers nothing but loss.﴾ (17:82)

﴿خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ۚ وَالْأَرْضَ رَوَىٰ أَن تُسَاقَطَ بِكُم وَثَّ بِهَا مِن كُلِّ دَاقِقَةٍ وَآرَاقًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ شَيْءٍ نَّجْوًى كَرِيمٍ ﴿١٠﴾ هَٰذَا خَلْقُ اللَّهِ فَأَرَوُفْ مَاذَا خَلَقَ الَّذِينَ مِن دُونِهِ ۚ بَلِ الْظَّٰلِمُونَ فِي ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١١﴾﴾

﴿10. He has created the heavens without any pillars that you see, and has set on the earth firm mountains lest it should shake with you. And He has scattered therein moving creatures of all

kinds. And We send down water from the sky, and We cause (plants) of every goodly kind to grow therein in pairs,﴾

﴿11. This is the creation of Allāh. So, show Me that which those besides Him have created. Nay, the wrongdoers are in plain error.﴾

Proofs of Tawhīd

Thus Allāh explains His mighty power in creating the heavens and the earth, and everything that is within them and between them. He says:

﴿خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ﴾

﴿He has created the heavens without any pillars﴾

Al-Hasan and Qatādah said, "It does not have any pillars, visible or invisible."^[1]

﴿وَأَلْقَى فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ﴾

﴿and has set on the earth firm mountains﴾

means, the mountains which stabilize and lend weight to the earth, lest it should shake with its water. Allāh says:

﴿أَنْ تَيْدَ بِكُمْ﴾

﴿lest it should shake with you.﴾

﴿وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ﴾

﴿And He has scattered therein moving creatures of all kinds﴾

means, He has placed throughout it all kinds of animals, the total number of whose kinds and colors is known to no one except the One Who created them. When Allāh tells us that He is the Creator, He also reminds us that He is the Provider, as He says:

﴿وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ ثَمَرٍ ذَرْوٍ﴾

﴿And We send down water from the sky, and We cause (plants) of every goodly kind to grow therein in pairs,﴾

meaning, every kind of good produce in pairs, i.e., they are

^[1] At-Ṭabari 20:132.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لَقْمَنَ الْحِكْمَةَ إِذْ أَشْكُرَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿١١﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ لَقْمَنُ لَبَنِيهِ ۖ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ ۖ يَبْنِىْ لَا تَشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾ وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ ۖ وَهَنَا عَلَى وَهْنٍ ۖ وَفَصَّلَهُ ۖ فِي عَمَيْنِ ۖ إِنَّ أَشْكُرَ لِي وَلَوْ لَدَيْكَ إِلَى الْمَصِيرِ ﴿١٣﴾ وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَى أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ ۖ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا ۚ وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفٌ ۚ وَأَتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَىٰ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ مَرْجِعِكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ يَبْنِىْ إِنَّمَا إِنْ تَكُ شِقَالٌ حَبْرٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُنْ فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٥﴾ يَبْنِىْ أَقْرِ الصَّلَاةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۚ وَأَصِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَكَ ۖ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿١٦﴾ وَلَا تُصَغِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ ۖ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿١٧﴾ وَأَقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ ۖ وَأَغْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ ۖ إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ ﴿١٨﴾

beautiful to look at. Ash-Sha'bi said: "People are also produce of the earth, so whoever enters Paradise is goodly and whoever enters Hell is vile."

﴿هَذَا خَلْقُ اللَّهِ﴾

﴿This is the creation of Allāh.﴾ means, all that Allāh has mentioned here of the creation of the heavens and earth and everything in between stems from His power of creation and control alone, and He has no partner or associate in that, Allāh says:

﴿فَأَرَوْنِي مَاذَا خَلَقَ الذِّينَ مِنْ دُونِي﴾

﴿So, show Me that which those besides Him have created.﴾

those idols and rivals whom you worship and call upon.

﴿بَلِ الْغَافِلُونَ﴾

﴿Nay, the wrongdoers﴾ means the idolators who associate others in worship with Allāh

﴿فِي ضَلَالٍ﴾

﴿in error﴾ means, they are ignorant and blind.

﴿بَيِّنٍ﴾

﴿plain﴾ means, it is clear and obvious, and not at all hidden.

﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لَقْمَنَ الْحِكْمَةَ إِذْ أَشْكُرَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ﴾

﴿12. And indeed We bestowed upon Luqmān Al-Hikmah saying: "Give thanks to Allāh." And whoever gives thanks, he gives thanks for (the good of) himself. And whoever is unthankful, then verily, Allāh is All-Rich, Worthy of all praise.﴾

Luqmān

The Salaf differed over the identity of Luqmān; there are two opinions: was he a Prophet or just a righteous servant of Allāh without the prophethood? The majority favored the latter view, that he was a righteous servant of Allāh without being a Prophet. Sufyān Ath-Thawri said, narrating from Al-Ash'ath, from 'Ikrimah, from Ibn 'Abbās, "Luqmān was an Ethiopian slave who was a carpenter."^[1]

'Abdullāh bin Az-Zubayr said, "I said to Jābir bin 'Abdullāh: 'What did you hear about Luqmān?' He said: 'He was short with a flat nose, and came from Nubia.'"^[2]

Yahyā bin Sa'īd Al-Anṣārī narrated from Sa'īd bin Al-Musayyib that "Luqmān was from the black peoples of (southern) Egypt, and had thick lips. Allāh gave him wisdom but withheld prophethood from him."^[3]

Al-'Awzā'i said, "Abdur-Raḥmān bin Ḥarmalah told me; 'A black man came to Sa'īd bin Al-Musayyib to ask him a question, and Sa'īd bin Al-Musayyib said to him: "Do not be upset because you are black, for among the best of people were three who were black: Bilāl, Mahja' the freed slave of 'Umar bin Al-Khaṭṭāb, and Luqmān the Wise, who was a black Nubian with thick lips.'"^[4]

Ibn Jarīr recorded that Khālid Ar-Raba'i said: "Luqmān was an Ethiopian slave who was a carpenter. His master said to him, 'Slaughter this sheep for us,' so he slaughtered it. [His master] said: 'Bring the best two pieces from it,' so he brought out the tongue and the heart. Then time passed, as much as Allāh willed, and [his master] said: 'Slaughter this sheep for us,' so he slaughtered it. [His master] said, 'Bring the worst

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 10:135.

[2] Ibn Abi Ḥātim 9:3097 and *Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr* 5:310.

[3] Aṭ-Ṭabari 20:135.

[4] Aṭ-Ṭabari 20:135.

two morsels from it,' so he brought out the tongue and the heart. His master said to him, 'I told you to bring out the best two pieces, and you brought these, then I told you to bring out the worst two pieces, and you brought these!' Luqmān said, 'There is nothing better than these if they are good, and there is nothing worse than these if they are bad.'"^[1]

Shu'bah narrated from Al-Hakam, from Mujāhid, "Luqmān was a righteous servant, but he was not a Prophet."^[2]
Allāh's saying:

﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ﴾

﴿And indeed We bestowed upon Luqmān Al-Hikmah﴾

means, understanding, knowledge and eloquence.

﴿أَن اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ﴾

﴿saying: "Give thanks to Allāh."﴾ means, 'We commanded him to give thanks to Allāh for the blessings and favors that Allāh had given to him alone among his people and contemporaries.' Then Allāh says:

﴿وَمَن يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّا نُفِيدُهُ﴾

﴿And whoever gives thanks, he gives thanks for (the good of) himself.﴾

meaning, the benefit of that will come back to him, and Allāh's reward is for those who give thanks, as He says:

﴿وَمَن عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِأَنفُسِهِمْ يَهْدُونَ﴾

﴿and whosoever does righteous good deeds, then such will prepare a good place for themselves.﴾ (30:44)

﴿وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ﴾

﴿And whoever is unthankful, then verily, Allāh is Rich, Worthy of all praise.﴾

He has no need of His servants and He will not be harmed by that, even if all the people of the earth were to disbelieve, for He has no need of anything or anyone besides Himself. There

^[1] At-Ṭabari 20:135.

^[2] At-Ṭabari 20:134.

is no God but He, and we worship none but Him.

﴿وَلَيْدَ قَالَ لِقَمْنُ لِأَنَّهُ. وَهُوَ يَعْلَمُ يَبْقَى لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾
 وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَلَّةً أُمَّهُ وَهِيَ عَلَى وَهْنٍ وَفَصَّلَهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنْ أَشْكُرَ لِي
 وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَى الْمَصِيرِ ﴿١٤﴾ وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَى أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا
 وَصَاحِبَهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَىٰ نُرِّ إِلَىٰ مَرْجِعِكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا
 كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

﴿13. And when Luqmān said to his son when he was advising him: "O my son! Join not in worship others with Allāh. Verily, joining others in worship with Allāh is a great Zulm (wrong) indeed."﴾

﴿14. And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship, and his weaning is in two years - give thanks to Me and to your parents. Unto Me is the final destination.﴾

﴿15. But if they strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not; but behave with them in the world kindly, and follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience. Then to Me will be your return, and I shall tell you what you used to do.﴾

Luqmān's Advice to His Son

Allāh tells us how Luqmān advised his son. His full name was Luqmān bin 'Anqā' bin Sadūn, and his son's name was Thārān, according to a saying quoted by As-Suhayli. Allāh describes him in the best terms, and states that he granted him wisdom. Luqmān advised his son, the closest and most beloved of all people to him, who deserved to be given the best of his knowledge. So, Luqmān started by advising him to worship Allāh Alone, and not to associate anything with Him. Then he warned him:

﴿إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

﴿Verily, joining others in worship with Allāh is a great Zulm (wrong) indeed.﴾

meaning, it is the greatest wrong.

Al-Bukhārī recorded that ‘Abdullāh said: “When the Āyah

﴿الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ﴾

﴿It is those who believe and confuse not their belief with Zulm﴾(6:82)

was revealed, the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ were distressed by this, and said, ‘Who among us does not confuse his belief with Zulm?’ The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

﴿إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ بِذَلِكَ، أَلَا تَسْمَعُ إِلَى قَوْلِ لُقْمَانَ: ﴿يَنْبَغِي لَا تَشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّكَ الْفَرَكُ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾﴾

‘That is not what it means. Have you not heard what Luqmān said: ﴿O my son! Join not in worship others with Allāh. Verily, joining others in worship with Allāh is a great Zulm (wrong) indeed﴾?’”

It was recorded by Muslim.^[1]

When Luqmān advised his son to worship Allāh Alone, he also told him to honor his parents. This is like the Āyah,

﴿وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا﴾

﴿And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents﴾ (17:23).

These two things are often mentioned together in the Qur’ān. Allāh says here:

﴿وَوَضَعْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ لِيُرِيدَ مَوْلَاهُ أُمًّا وَمَنْ عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ﴾

﴿And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship,﴾

Mujāhid said: “The hardship of bearing the child.”^[2] Qatādah said: “Exhaustion upon exhaustion.”^[3] ‘Aṭā’ Al-Khurāsānī said: “Weakness upon weakness.”

﴿وَفَصَّلَهُ فِي عَمَلَيْنِ﴾

[1] *Faṭḥ Al-Bārī* 8:372

[2] *Aṭ-Ṭabari* 20:137.

[3] *Aṭ-Ṭabari* 10:137.

﴿and his weaning is in two years﴾ means, after he is born, he is breastfed and weaned within two years. This is like the Āyah,

﴿وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَدَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُنَمِّئَ الرِّضَاعَةَ﴾

﴿The mothers shall give suck to their children for two whole years, for those who desire to complete the term of suckling﴾ (2:233).

On this basis, Ibn 'Abbās and other Imāms understood that the shortest possible period of pregnancy was six months, because Allāh says elsewhere:

﴿وَحَلَمَهُ وَفَضَّلَهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا﴾

﴿and the bearing of him, and the weaning of him is thirty months﴾ (46:15).

Allāh mentions how the mother brings the child up, and how she gets tired and suffers stress from staying up with the child night and day, to remind the son of her previous kind treatment of him. This is like the Āyah,

﴿وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْنِي كَمَا رَحِمْتَنِي صَغِيرًا﴾

﴿and say: "My Lord! Bestow on them Your mercy as they did bring me up when I was young."﴾ (17:24).

Allāh says here:

﴿أَنْ أَشْكُرَ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ﴾

﴿give thanks to Me and to your parents. Unto Me is the final destination.﴾

means, 'I will reward you most generously for that.'

﴿وَلَنْ جَهْدَاكَ عَلَى أَنْ تَشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِيعُهُمَا﴾

﴿But if they strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not;﴾

means, if they try hard to make you follow them in their religion, then do not accept that from them, but do not let that stop you from behaving with them in the world kindly, i.e. treating them with respect.

﴿وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ﴾

﴿and follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience.﴾

means, the believers.

﴿ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ مَوْجِعِكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

﴿Then to Me will be your return, and I shall tell you what you used to do.﴾

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī recorded in *Al-'Ishrah* that Sa'd bin Mālik said, "This Āyah,

﴿وَلِينَ جَهْدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِى مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا﴾

﴿But if they strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not;﴾

was revealed concerning me. I was a man who honored his mother, but when I became Muslim, she said: 'O Sa'd! What is this new thing I see you doing? Leave this religion of yours, or I will not eat or drink until I die, and people will say: Shame on you, for what you have done to me, and they will say that you have killed your mother.' I said, 'Do not do that, O mother, for I will not give up this religion of mine for anything.' She stayed without eating for one day and one night, and she became exhausted; then she stayed for another day and night without eating, and she became utterly exhausted. When I saw that, I said: 'O my mother, by Allāh, even if you had one hundred souls and they were to depart one by one, I would not give up this religion of mine for anything, so if you want to, eat, and if you want to, do not eat.' So she ate."^[1]

﴿يَبْقَىٰ إِلَهُهَا إِنَّ تِلْكَ شِقَاقَ حَبَرٍ مِّنْ خَرَدَلٍ فَتَكُنْ فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي السَّعَوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
بِأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٦﴾ يَبْقَىٰ أَقْبَرُ الْعِلَاوَةِ وَأَمْرٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَنَّهُ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَأَصْبَرَ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَكَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزَمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَا تُصَيِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ فِي
الْأَرْضِ مَرَمًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿١٨﴾ وَأَقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَأَغْضُضْ مِن صَوْتِكَ إِنَّ
أَنكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ النَّفِيرِ ﴿١٩﴾﴾

[1] Mentioned by Ibn Al-Athīr in *Usd Al-Ghābah* 2:216.

﴿16. "O my son! If it be (anything) equal to the weight of a grain of mustard seed, and though it be in a rock, or in the heavens or on the earth, Allāh will bring it forth. Verily, Allāh is Subtle, Well-Aware."﴾

﴿17. "O my son! Perform the Ṣalah, enjoin the good, and forbid the evil, and bear with patience whatever befalls you. Verily, these are some of the important commandments."﴾

﴿18. "And turn not your face away from men with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allāh likes not any arrogant boaster."﴾

﴿19. "And be moderate in your walking, and lower your voice. Verily, the harshest of all voices is the braying of the asses."﴾

This is useful advice which Allāh tells us Luqmān gave, so that people may follow it and take it as a good example. He said:

﴿يٰٓبُنَيَّ اِنۡ تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبِّ خَرْدَلٍ﴾

﴿O my son! If it be (anything) equal to the weight of a grain of mustard seed,﴾

means, if a wrong action or a sin be equal to the size of a grain of mustard seed.

﴿يَأْتِ بِهَا اللّٰهُ﴾

﴿Allāh will bring it forth.﴾ means, He will bring it forth on the Day of Resurrection, when it is placed in the Scales of justice and everyone is rewarded or punished for his actions – if they are good, he will be rewarded and if they are bad he will be punished. This is like the Āyāt:

﴿وَنُفَعُ الْمَوْزِينَ الْقَيْسَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ فَلَا تَظْلُمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا﴾

﴿And We shall set up Balances of justice on the Day of Resurrection, then none will be dealt with unjustly in anything﴾ (21:47).

﴿مَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ ﴿٧﴾ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ ﴿٨﴾﴾

﴿So, whosoever does good equal to the weight of a speck of dust shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of a speck of dust shall see it.﴾ (99:7-8)

Even if this tiny thing were to be hidden inside a solid rock or anywhere in the heavens and the earth, Allāh will bring it forth, because nothing is hidden from Him, not even the weight of a speck of dust in the heavens or on the earth. Allāh says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ﴾

﴿Verily, Allāh is Subtle, Well-Aware.﴾ meaning, His knowledge is subtle, for nothing is hidden from Him, no matter how small, subtle and minute.

﴿خَبِيرٌ﴾

﴿Well-Aware.﴾ even of the footsteps of an ant in the darkest night.

Then he (Luqmān) said:

﴿يَبْنِيْٓ أَقِيْرَ الصَّلٰوةِ﴾

﴿O my son! Perform the Ṣalāh,﴾ meaning, offer the prayer properly at the appointed times.

﴿وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَنْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ﴾

﴿enjoin the good, and forbid the evil,﴾

meaning, to the best of your ability and strength.

﴿وَأَصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَكَ﴾

﴿and bear with patience whatever befalls you.﴾

Luqmān knew that whoever enjoins what is good and forbids what is evil, will inevitably encounter harm and annoyance from people, so he told him to be patient.

﴿إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزَمِ الْأُمُورِ﴾

﴿Verily, these are some of the important commandments.﴾

means, being patient when people cause harm or annoyance is one of the most important commandments.

﴿وَلَا تُصَوِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ﴾

﴿And turn not your face away from men with pride﴾

means, 'do not turn your face away from people when you speak to them or they speak to you, looking down on them in an arrogant fashion. Rather be gentle towards them and greet them with a cheerful face,' as it says in the Ḥadīth:

«وَلَوْ أَنَّ تَلْقَى أَخَاكَ وَوَجْهَكَ إِلَيْهِ مُتَبَسِّطٌ، وَإِيَّاكَ وَإِسْبَالَ الْإِزَارِ فَإِنَّهَا مِنَ الْمَخِيلَةِ، وَالْمَخِيلَةُ لَا يُحِبُّهَا اللَّهُ»

«... even if it is only by greeting your brother with a cheerful countenance. And beware of letting your lower garment trail below your ankles, for this is a kind of boasting, and Allāh does not like boasting.»^[1]

﴿وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا﴾

﴿nor walk in insolence through the earth.﴾

means, 'do not be boastful, arrogant, proud and stubborn. Do not do that, for Allāh will hate you.' So he said:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ﴾

﴿Verily, Allāh likes not any arrogant boaster.﴾

meaning, one who shows off and admires himself, feeling that he is better than others. And Allāh says:

﴿وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّكَ لَن تَخْرِقَ الْأَرْضَ وَلَن تَبْلُغَ لِبَالًا طُولًا﴾

﴿And walk not on the earth with conceit and arrogance. Verily, you can neither rend nor penetrate the earth nor can you attain a stature like the mountains in height.﴾ (17:37).

We have already discussed this in detail in the appropriate place.^[2]

The Command to be Moderate in Walking

﴿وَأَنْصِبْ فِي مَشْيِكَ﴾

﴿And be moderate in your walking.﴾ means, walk in a moderate manner, neither slow and lazy nor excessively fast, but be moderate, somewhere in between these two extremes.

﴿وَأَغْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ﴾

﴿and lower your voice.﴾ means, do not exaggerate in your speaking and do not raise your voice unnecessarily. Allāh says:

[1] Abu Dāwūd 4:345.

[2] See volume five, the Tafsīr of Sūrat Al-Isrā' (17:37)

﴿إِنْ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْرَاتِ لَصَوْتُ النَّيْبِ﴾

«Verily, the harshest of all voices is the braying of the asses.»

Mujāhid and others said, "The most ugly of voices is the voice of the donkey, i.e., when a person raises his voice, the resulting noise is like the voice of a donkey in its loudness. Moreover this is hateful to Allāh. Likening a loud voice to that of a donkey implies that it is forbidden and extremely blameworthy, because the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

«لَيْسَ لَنَا مِثْلُ الشَّوْءِ، الْعَائِدُ فِي هَيْبَةٍ كَالْكَلْبِ يَبْقَى ثُمَّ يَعُودُ فِي قَيْبِهِ»

«It is not befitting us to be an evil parable. The person who takes back his gift, he is like a dog that vomits and then goes back to his vomit.»^[1]

The Advice of Luqmān

This is very useful advice, which the Qur'ān tells us about Luqmān. Many other proverbs and words of advice were also narrated from him, some examples of which we will quote below, as basic principles:

Imām Aḥmad recorded that Ibn 'Umar said, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

«إِنْ لُقْمَانَ الْحَكِيمِ كَانَ يَقُولُ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا اسْتَوْدَعَ شَيْئًا حَفِظَهُ»

«Luqmān the Wise used to say: when something is entrusted to the care of Allāh, He protects it.»^[2]

It was narrated that As-Sarī bin Yahyā said: "Luqmān said to his son: 'Wisdom puts the poor in the company of kings.'"^[3]

It was also narrated that 'Awn bin 'Abdullāh said: "Luqmān said to his son: 'O my son! When you come to a gathering of people, greet them with *Salām*, then sit at the edge of the group, and do not speak until you see that they have finished speaking. Then if they remember Allāh, join them, but if they speak of anything else, then leave them and go to another group'."^[4]

[1] *Tuḥfat Al-Aḥwadhī* 4:522.

[2] Aḥmad 2:87.

[3] *Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr* 5:316.

[4] *Az-Zuhd* by Ibn Al-Mubārak 332.

﴿٢٠﴾

٤١٣

﴿٢١﴾

الَّذِينَ تَرَوْنَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَسْبَغَ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعَمَهُ ظَهْرَهُ وَبَاطِنَهُ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُجَادِلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَلَا هُدًى وَلَا كِتَابٍ مُنِيرٍ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أَوَّلُوكَ كَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ يَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿٢١﴾ وَمَن يُسْلِمْ وَجْهَهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَلَا يَحْزَنكَ كُفْرُہٗ ۚ إِنَّمَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ فَنِّئْتُهُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿٢٣﴾ نُمْنِعُهُمْ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ نَضْطَرُّهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ غَلِيظٍ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّن خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ لِلَّهِ مَّا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَلَوْ أَن سَآءَ فِي الْأَرْضِ مِن شَجَرَةٍ أَقْلَمٌ وَالْبَحْرِ يَمْدٌ ۖ مِن بَعْدِهِ سَبْعَةُ أَبْحُرٍ مَّا نَفِذْتَ كَلِمَتُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ مَا خَلَقَكُمْ وَلَا يَعْثُبُكُمْ إِلَّا كَفْسٌ وَحِدٌ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

﴿٢٠﴾ تَرَوْنَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَسْبَغَ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعَمَهُ ظَهْرَهُ وَبَاطِنَهُ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُجَادِلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَلَا هُدًى وَلَا كِتَابٍ مُنِيرٍ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أَوَّلُوكَ كَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ يَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿٢١﴾

﴿20. See you not that Allāh has subjected for you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is on the earth, and has completed and perfected His graces upon you, apparent and hidden? Yet of mankind is he who disputes about Allāh without knowledge or guidance or a Book giving

light!﴾

﴿21. And when it is said to them: "Follow that which Allāh has sent down," they say: "Nay, we shall follow that which we found our fathers (following)." Even if Shayṭān invites them to the torment of the Fire?﴾

Reminder of Blessings

Here Allāh reminds His creation of the blessings He bestows upon them in this world and the Hereafter. In the heavens He has subjugated for them the stars which give them light during the night and during the day, and He has created clouds, rain, snow and hail, and made the heavens a canopy which covers and protects them. On earth He has created for them stability and rivers, trees, crops and fruits; He has

completed and perfected His graces upon them, apparent and hidden, by sending Messengers, revealing Books and removing doubts and excuses. Yet despite all this, not all the people believe, and indeed there are those who dispute concerning Allāh, that is, His *Tawhīd*, and His sending the Messengers. Their dispute is without knowledge and they have no sound evidence or valid inherited Book. Allāh says:

﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُجَادِلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَلَا هُدًى وَلَا كِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾

﴿And among men is he who disputes about Allāh, without knowledge or guidance, or a Book giving light (from Allāh).﴾
(22:8)

meaning clear and unambiguous.

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ﴾

﴿And when it is said to them﴾ means, to these people who dispute about the Oneness of Allāh.

﴿أَتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ﴾

﴿"Follow that which Allāh has sent down,"﴾

means, the pure Divine Laws that He has sent down to His Messengers,

﴿قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا﴾

﴿they say: "Nay, we shall follow that which we found our fathers (following).">﴾

means, they have no other proof except the fact that they are following their forefathers. Allāh says:

﴿أَوَلَوْ كَانُوا يَرَوْْنَ أَنَّ آبَاءَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ﴾

﴿Even though their fathers did not understand anything nor were they guided?﴾ (2:170)

meaning, 'what do you think, you who take the forefathers' deeds as proof, that they were misguided and you are following in their footsteps?' Allāh says:

﴿أَوَلَوْ كَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ يَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ﴾

﴿Even if Shayṭān invites them to the torment of the Fire?﴾

﴿وَمَن يُسْلِمْ وَجْهَهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ﴾

الْأُمُورِ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَلَا يَحْزِنُكَ كُفْرُهُٓ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ فَنُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿٢٣﴾ نُنَبِّئُهُمْ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ نَضْطَرُّهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابٍ غَلِيظٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

﴿22. And whosoever submits his face (himself) to Allāh, while he is a Muḥsin, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold. And to Allāh return all matters for decision.﴾

﴿23. And whoever disbelieves, let not his disbelief grieve you. To Us is their return, and We shall inform them what they have done. Verily, Allāh is the All-Knower of what is in the breasts.﴾

﴿24. We let them enjoy for a little while, then in the end We shall oblige them to (enter) a great torment.﴾

Allāh tells us that whoever submits his face to Allāh, i.e., does deeds sincerely for His sake, submits to His commandments and follows His Laws,

﴿وَمَنْ مَّحْسِنٌ﴾

﴿while he is a Muḥsin﴾ i.e., doing what his Lord has commanded and abstaining from what He has forbidden,

﴿فَقَدْ اسْتَسْلَكَ بِالْمَوْزِ الْوَقْفَ﴾

﴿then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold.﴾

means, he has received a firm promise from Allāh that He will not punish him.

﴿وَالِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَلَا يَحْزِنُكَ كُفْرُهُ﴾

﴿And to Allāh return all matters for decision. And whoever disbelieves, let not his disbelief grieve you.﴾

means, 'do not grieve over them, O Muḥammad, because they disbelieve in Allāh and in the Message you have brought, for their return will be to Allāh and He will tell them what they used to do,' i.e., He will punish them for it.

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ﴾

﴿Verily, Allāh is the All-Knower of what is in the breasts.﴾

and nothing whatsoever is hidden from Him. Then Allāh says:

﴿نُنَبِّئُهُمْ قَلِيلًا﴾

﴿We let them enjoy for a little while,﴾ means, in this world,

﴿ثُمَّ نَضْطَرُّهُمْ﴾

﴿then in the end We shall oblige them﴾ means, 'We shall cause them,'

﴿إِلَّا عَذَابٌ غَلِيظٌ﴾

﴿to (enter) a great torment.﴾ means, a torment that is terrifying and difficult to bear. This is like the Āyah,

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ لَا يُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾ مَتَّعٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ ﴿٧٠﴾ ثُمَّ نُذِيقُهُمُ الْعَذَابَ الشَّدِيدَ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٧١﴾﴾

﴿"Verily, those who invent a lie against Allāh, will never be successful." Enjoyment in this world! and then unto Us will be their return, then We shall make them taste the severest torment because they used to disbelieve.﴾ (10:69-70)

﴿وَلَمَّا سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ﴿٧٣﴾﴾

﴿25. And if you ask them: "Who has created the heavens and the earth," they will certainly say: "Allāh." Say: "All the praises and thanks be to Allāh!" But most of them know not.﴾

﴿26. To Allāh belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth. Verily, Allāh, He is Al-Ghanī, Worthy of all praise.﴾

The Idolators admitted that Allāh is the Creator

Allāh tells us that these idolators who associated others with Him admitted that Allāh Alone, with no partner or associate, is the Creator of heaven and earth yet they still worshipped others besides Him who they recognized were created by Him and subjugated to Him. Allāh says:

﴿وَلَمَّا سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ﴾

﴿And if you ask them: "Who has created the heavens and the earth," they will certainly say: "Allāh." Say: "All the praises and thanks be to Allāh!"﴾

By their admitting that, proof is established against them,

﴿بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

﴿But most of them know not.﴾

Then Allāh says:

﴿لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ﴾

﴿To Allāh belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth.﴾
meaning, He created it and has dominion over it.

﴿اِنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيْدُ﴾

﴿Verily, Allāh, He is Al-Ghanī, Worthy of all praise.﴾

means, He has no need of anyone or anything besides Himself, and everything else is in need of Him. He is Worthy of praise for all that He has created, so praise be to Him in the heavens and on earth for all that He has created and decreed, and He is worthy of praise in all affairs.

﴿وَلَوْ اَنَّآ فِي الْاَرْضِ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ اَقْلَمٌ وَالْبَحْرُ يَدُّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ سَبْعَةُ اُبْحُرٍ مَا نَفَدَتْ
كَلِمَتُ اللّٰهِ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿٧﴾ مَا خَلَقَكُمْ وَلَا بِعَنُكُمۡ اِلَّا كَنَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ
سَمِيْعٌ بَصِيْرٌ ﴿٨﴾﴾

﴿27. And if all the trees on the earth were pens and the sea, with seven seas behind it to add to it, yet the Words of Allāh would not be exhausted. Verily, Allāh is All-Mighty, All-Wise.﴾

﴿28. The creation of you all and the resurrection of you all are only as a single person. Verily, Allāh is All-Hearer, All-Seer.﴾

The Words of Allāh cannot be counted or exhausted

Allāh tells us of His might, pride, majesty, beautiful Names and sublime attributes, and His perfect Words which no one can encompass. No human being knows their essence or nature, or how many they are. As the Leader of Mankind and Seal of the Messengers ﷺ said:

﴿لَا اُحْصِي ثَنَاءَ عَلَيَّكَ اَنْتَ كَمَا اُنْتَبَيْتَ عَلَيَّ نَفْسِكَ﴾

«I cannot praise You enough; You are as You have praised yourself.»^[1]

Allāh says:

[1] Muslim 1:352.

﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّ فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ أَقْلَدٌ وَالْبَحْرُ بَدْدٌ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ سَبْعَةُ أَبْحُرٍ مَا نَفِدَتْ
كَلِمَاتُ اللَّهِ﴾

﴿And if all the trees on the earth were pens and the sea, with seven seas behind it to add to its, yet the Words of Allāh would not be exhausted.﴾

meaning, even if all the trees on earth were made into pens and the sea was made into ink, and topped up with seven more like it, and they were used to write the Words of Allāh showing His might, attributes and majesty, the pens would break and the ink would run dry, even if more were brought. The number seven is used to indicate a large amount, it is not to be taken literally or to be understood as referring to the seven oceans of the world, as was suggested by those who took this idea from Israelite stories, which we neither believe nor reject. As Allāh says elsewhere:

﴿قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا لِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّي لَنَفِدَ الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنفَدَ كَلِمَاتُ رَبِّي وَلَوْ جِثَا بَيْنِيلِهِ.
مَدَامَا﴾

﴿Say: "If the sea were ink for the Words of my Lord, surely, the sea would be exhausted before the Words of my Lord would be finished, even if We brought like it for its aid."﴾ (18:109).

The words

﴿يَبِينِلِهِ﴾

﴿like it﴾ do not mean merely another one, but another like it and another and another and another, etc., because there is no limit to the signs and Words of Allāh.

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾

﴿Verily, Allāh is All-Mighty, All-Wise.﴾

means, He is All-Mighty and has subjugated all things to His will, so nothing can prevent what He wills, and none can oppose or put back His decision. He is All-Wise in His creation, commands, Words, actions, Laws and all His affairs.

﴿مَّا خَلَقَكُمْ إِلَّا كَتَفَرُّ وَجِدْوْهُ﴾

﴿The creation of you all and the resurrection of you all are only

٤١٤
 ﴿لَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ
 وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ
 بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٣٦﴾ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ
 مِن دُونِهِ الْباطِلُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿٣٧﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ
 الْفَلَكَ يَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ يَنْصَعِتُ أَنَّهُ لِيُرِيكُمْ مِنْ آيَاتِهِ إِنَّ
 فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَإِذَا غَشِيَهُمْ مَوْجٌ
 كَاطِلٌ دَعَوْا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ فَلَمَّا بَلَغَهُمُ الْإِلَهَ الْأَمْرُ
 فَمِنْهُمْ مُّقْتَصِدٌ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِآيَاتِنَا إِلَّا كُلُّ خَسَّارٍ كَفُورٍ ﴿٣٩﴾
 يَتَأْتِيَ النَّاسَ أَنْفَارٌ رِّجْمُهُمْ وَأُخْفُوا يَوْمًا لَا يُجْزَىٰ وَالَّذِي
 عَنِ وَلَدِهِ وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ هُوَ جَارٍ عَنِ وَلَدِهِ شَيْئًا إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ
 حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم بِاللَّهِ
 الْغُرُورُ ﴿٤٠﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَيُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ
 وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا
 وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٤١﴾
 سُورَةُ الشُّعَرَاءِ

as a single person.﴾

means, His creation and resurrection of all of mankind on the Day of Resurrection is, in relation to His power, like the creation and resurrection of a single soul; all of this is easy for Him.

﴿إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾ ﴿٤١﴾

﴿Verily, His command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, "Be!" - and it is!﴾ (36:82)

﴿وَمَا أَمْرُنَا إِلَّا وَجِدَةٌ كَلَمْحٍ بِالْبَصَرِ﴾ ﴿٤٢﴾

﴿And Our

commandment is but one as the twinkling of an eye.﴾ (54:50).

This means He only has to command a thing once, and it will happen. There is no need for Him to repeat it or confirm it.

﴿فَلَمَّا هُوَ زَجْرَةٌ وَجِدَةٌ ﴿٤٣﴾ فَلَمَّا هُمْ بِالسَّاهِرَةِ﴾ ﴿٤٤﴾

﴿But it will be only a single Zajrah.^[1] When behold, they find themselves on the surface of the earth alive after their death.﴾ (79:13)

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ﴾

﴿Verily, Allāh is All-Hearer, All-Seer.﴾ means, just as He hears all that they say, so He also sees all that they do, as if He is

[1] See the Tafsīr of Sūrat Aṣ-Ṣāffāt (37:19).

hearing and seeing a single soul. His power over all of them is like His power over a single soul, Allāh says:

﴿مَّا خَلَقَكُمْ وَلَا يَعْنِيكُمْ إِلَّا كَنَفٍ وَحِيدٍ﴾

«The creation of you all and the resurrection of you all are only as a single person.»

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي إِكَّانٍ مُّسَمًّى وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ۝۲۹ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ الْبَاطِلُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْكَبِيرُ ۝۳۰﴾

«29. See you not that Allāh merges the night into the day, and merges the day into the night, and has subjected the sun and the moon, each running its course for a term appointed; and that Allāh is All-Aware of what you do.»

«30. That is because Allāh, He is the Truth, and that which they invoke besides Him is falsehood; and that Allāh, He is the Most High, the Most Great.»

The Might and Power of Allāh

Allāh tells us that He

﴿يُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ﴾

«merges the night into the day,» meaning, He takes from the night and adds to the day, so that the day becomes longer and the night shorter, which is what happens in summer when the days are longest; then the day starts to become shorter and the night longer, which is what happens in winter.

﴿وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي إِكَّانٍ مُّسَمًّى﴾

«and has subjected the sun and the moon, each running its course for a term appointed;»

It was said that this means, each runs within its set limits, or it means until the Day of Resurrection; both meanings are correct. The first view is supported by the *Ḥadīth* of Abu Dharr, may Allāh be pleased with him, in the Two *Ṣaḥīḥs*, according to which the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

«يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ! أَتَدْرِي أَيْنَ تَذْهَبُ هَذِهِ الشَّمْسُ؟»

«O Abu Dharr! Do you know where this sun goes?» I (Abu Dharr) said: "Allāh and His Messenger know best." He said:

«فَإِنَّهَا تَذْهَبُ فَتَسْجُدُ تَحْتَ الْعَرْشِ، ثُمَّ تَسْتَأْذِنُ رَبَّهَا فَيُوشِكُ أَنْ يُقَالَ لَهَا: ارْجِعِي مِنْ حَيْثُ جِئْتِ»

«It goes and prostrates beneath the Throne, then it seeks permission from its Lord, and soon it will be said: "Go back from whence you came."»^[1]

Ibn Abi Hātim recorded that Ibn 'Abbās said, "The sun is like flowing water, running in its course in the sky during the day. When it sets, it travels in its course beneath the earth until it rises in the east." He said, "The same is true in the case of the moon." Its chain of narration is *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

﴿وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ﴾

«and that Allāh is All-Aware of what you do.» This is like the Āyah,

﴿أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ﴾

«Know you not that Allāh knows all that is in the heaven and the earth?» (22:70).

The meaning is that Allāh is the Creator Who knows all things, as He says:

﴿اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَرَبَّ الْأَرْضِ وَمَنْهَا﴾

«It is Allāh Who has created seven heavens and of the earth the like thereof» (65:12).

﴿ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ الْبَطِيلُ﴾

«That is because Allāh, He is the Truth, and that which they invoke besides Him is falsehood;»

means, He shows you His Signs so that you may know from them that He is the Truth, i.e., He truly exists and is truly divine, and that all else besides Him is falsehood. He has no need of anything else, but everything else is dependent on

^[1] Al-Bukhārī no. 4803, Muslim no. 159.

Him, because everything in heaven and on earth is created by Him and is enslaved by Him; none of them could move even an atom's weight except with His permission. If all the people of heaven and earth were to come together to create a fly, they would not be able to do so. Allāh says:

﴿ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ الْبَطِيلُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ ۝۳۰﴾

﴿That is because Allāh, He is the Truth, and that which they invoke besides Him is falsehood; and that Allāh, He is the Most High, the Most Great.﴾

meaning, He is the Most High and there is none higher than Him, and He is the Most Great Who is greater than everything. Everything is subjugated and insignificant in comparison to Him.

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ الْفُلَّكَ تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِنِعْمَتِ اللَّهِ لِيُرِيكَ مِن مَّآيَتِهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ۝۳۱ وَإِذَا غَشِيَهُمْ مَوَاجٌ كَآظِمَةٌ دَعَاُ اللَّهَ عَظِيمًا لَهُ الَّذِينَ قُلْنَا بَعْثْنَاهُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ فَيُنْفِئُهُمْ مَّقْنِصُدُّ وَمَا يَحْمَدُ بِإِذْنِنَا إِلَّا كُلَّ خَشَّارٍ كَفُورٍ ۝۳۲﴾

﴿31. See you not that the ships sail through the sea by Allāh's grace that He may show you of His signs? Verily, in this are signs for every patient, grateful (person).﴾

﴿32. And when waves cover them like shades, they invoke Allāh, making their invocations for Him only. But when He brings them safe to land, there are among them those that stop in between. And Our Āyāt are not denied except by every Khattār Kafūr.﴾

Allāh tells us that He is the One Who has subjugated the sea so that ships may sail on it by His command, i.e., by His grace and power. For if He did not give the water the strength to carry the ships, they would not sail. So he says:

﴿لِيُرِيكَ مِن مَّآيَتِهِ﴾

﴿that He may show you of His signs﴾ meaning, by His power.

﴿إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ﴾

﴿Verily, in this are signs for every patient, grateful.﴾

means, every person who bears difficulty with patience and

who gives thanks at times of ease. Then Allāh says:

﴿وَلَمَّا غَشِيَهُمْ مَوَّجٌ كَالظُّلَلِ﴾

﴿And when waves cover them like shades,﴾

meaning, like mountains or clouds,

﴿دَعَوْا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ﴾

﴿they invoke Allāh, making their invocations for Him only.﴾

This is like the Āyah,

﴿وَلَمَّا سَكَمَ الْأُنْحَرُ فِي الْبَحْرِ ضَلَّ مَنْ نَدَعُونَ إِلَّا إِلَهُهُ﴾

﴿And when harm touches you upon the sea, those that you call upon vanish from you except Him﴾ (17:67).

﴿فَلَمَّا رَكِبُوا فِي الْفُلِ﴾

﴿And when they embark on a ship...﴾ (29:65)

Then Allāh says:

﴿فَلَمَّا بَجَّنَهُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ فَإِنَّهُمْ مُنْصَدِّقُونَ﴾

﴿But when He brings them safe to land, there are among them those that stop in between.﴾

Mujāhid said, "This refers to the disbelievers – as if he interpreted the word *Muqtaṣid* to mean denier^[1] as in the Āyah,

﴿فَلَمَّا بَجَّنَهُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ﴾

﴿but when He brings them safely to land, behold, they give a share of their worship to others﴾ (29:65).

﴿وَمَا يَجْمَعُهُمْ إِلَّا كُلُّ خَسَارٍ كَافِرٍ﴾

﴿And Our Āyāt are not denied except by every Khattār Kafir.﴾

Khattār means one who betrays or stabs in the back. This was the view of Mujāhid, Al-Ḥasan, Qatādah and Mālik, narrating from Zayd bin Aslam.^[2] This word describes a person who, whenever he makes a promise, breaks his promise, and it refers to the worst form of treachery.

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 20:157.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 20:157.

﴿كَفُورٌ﴾

﴿Kafūr﴾ means, one who denies blessings and does not give thanks for them, rather he forgets them and does not remember them.

﴿يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمۡ وَلِخۡشَوۡا۟ يَوۡمًا لَاۤ يَجۡزِي وَاِلٰهَ عَنۡ وَلَدِيۡهِ وَلَا مَوۡلُوۡدٌ هُوَ جَارٍ عَنۡ وَاِلَدِيۡهِ شَيْئًاۚ اِنَّ وَعۡدَ اللّٰهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُمۡ بِاللّٰهِ الْفَرُوۡدُ ۝۳۳﴾

﴿33. O mankind! Have Taqwā of your Lord, and fear a Day when no father can avail aught for his son, nor a son avail aught for his father. Verily, the promise of Allāh is true, let not then this present life deceive you, nor let the chief deceiver deceive you about Allāh.﴾

The Command to fear Allāh and remember the Day of Resurrection

Here Allāh warns people about the Day of Resurrection, and commands them to fear Him and remember the Day of Resurrection when

﴿لَا يَجۡزِي وَاِلٰهَ عَنۡ وَلَدِيۡهِ﴾

﴿no father can avail aught for his son,﴾ which means, even if he wanted to offer himself as a sacrifice for his son, it would not be accepted from him. The same will apply in the case of a son who wants to sacrifice himself for his father – it will not be accepted from him. Then Allāh reminds them once again with the words:

﴿فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا﴾

﴿let not then this present life deceive you,﴾

meaning, do not let your feelings of contentment with this life make you forget about the Hereafter.

﴿وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُمۡ بِاللّٰهِ الْفَرُوۡدُ﴾

﴿nor let the chief deceiver deceive you about Allāh.﴾

refers to the Shayṭān. This was the view of Ibn ‘Abbās, Mujāhid, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk and Qatādah.^[1] The Shayṭān makes

^[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 20:159.

promises to them and arouses in them false desires, but there is no substance to them, as Allāh says:

﴿يَعِدُهُمْ وَيُمَنِّيهِمْ وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا ۝﴾

﴿He makes promises to them, and arouses in them false desires; and Shayṭān's promises are nothing but deceptions.﴾ (4:120).

Wahb bin Munabbih said: 'Uzayr, peace be upon him, said: "When I saw the misfortune of my people, I felt very sad and distressed, and I could not sleep, so I prayed to my Lord and fasted, and I called upon Him weeping. There came to me an angel and I said to him: 'Tell me, will the souls of the righteous intercede for the wrongdoers, or the fathers for their sons?' He said: 'On the Day of Resurrection all matters will be settled, and Allāh's dominion will be made manifest and no exceptions will be made. No one will speak on that Day except with the permission of the Most Merciful. No father will answer for his son, or any son for his father, or any man for his brother, or any servant for his master. No one will care about anybody except himself, or feel grief or compassion for anyone except himself. Everyone will be worried only about himself. No one will be asked about anybody else. Each person will be concerned only about himself, weeping for himself and carrying his own burden. No one will carry the burden of another.' " This was recorded by Ibn Abi Hātim.

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَيُرْسِلُ الْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ مَّذَا

تَكْسِبُ غَدًا وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ۝﴾

﴿34. Verily, Allāh, with Him is the knowledge of the Hour, He sends down the rain, and knows that which is in the wombs. No person knows what he will earn tomorrow, and no person knows in what land he will die. Verily, Allāh is All-Knower, All-Aware.﴾

The Knower of the Unseen is Allāh

These are the keys of the Unseen, whose knowledge Allāh alone has kept for Himself, and no one else knows them unless Allāh tells him about them. The knowledge of 'when the Hour will occur' is not known to any Prophet who was sent or any angel who is close to Allāh.

﴿لَا يَخْبِيهَا لَوْفَا إِلَّا هُوَ﴾

﴿None can reveal its time but He﴾ (7:187).

Similarly, no one but Allāh knows when rain will fall, but when He issues the commands, the angels who are entrusted with the task of bringing rain know about it, as do those among His creation whom He wills should know. No one but He knows what is in the wombs of what He wants to create, but when He decrees whether it is to be male or female, and whether it is to be blessed or doomed, the angels who are entrusted with that know about it, as do those among His creation whom He wills should know. No one knows what he will earn tomorrow with regard to this world or the Hereafter.

﴿وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ﴾

﴿and no person knows in what land he will die.﴾

in his own land or elsewhere, in some other land. No one knows this. This Āyah is like the Āyah,

﴿وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ﴾

﴿And with Him are the keys of the Unseen, none knows them but He.﴾ (6:59)

It was reported in the Sunnah that the above five things are called the Keys of the Unseen.

Imām Aḥmad recorded that Buraydah said that he heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ say:

«خَمْسٌ لَا يَعْلَمُهُنَّ إِلَّا اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَيُرْسِلُ الْغَيْثَ وَرِسَالَةٌ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١﴾»

«There are five things which no one knows except Allāh: Verily, Allāh, with Him is the knowledge of the Hour, He sends down the rain, and knows that which is in the wombs. No person knows what he will earn tomorrow, and no person knows in what land he will die. Verily, Allāh is All-Knower, All-Aware.﴾»^[1]

[1] Aḥmad 5:353.

The chain of narrators for this Ḥadīth is Ṣaḥīḥ, although they did not recorded it.

The Ḥadīth of Ibn 'Umar

Imām Aḥmad recorded that Ibn 'Umar said, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

«مَفَاتِيحُ الْغَيْبِ خَمْسٌ لَا يَعْلَمُهُنَّ إِلَّا اللَّهُ: ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَيُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ» ﴿١١﴾

«The Keys of the Unseen are five, which no one knows except Allāh: ﴿Verily, Allāh, with Him is the knowledge of the Hour, He sends down the rain, and knows that which is in the wombs. No person knows what he will earn tomorrow, and no person knows in what land he will die. Verily, Allāh is All-Knower, All-Aware.﴾»^[1]

This was recorded only by Al-Bukhārī, which he narrated in the Book of the Rain Prayer in his Ṣaḥīḥ.^[2] He also recorded it in his Tafsīr with a different chain of narrators, stating that 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar said, "The Prophet ﷺ said:

«مَفَاتِيحُ الْغَيْبِ خَمْسٌ»

«The Keys of the Unseen are five.»” Then he recited:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَيُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ﴾

«Verily, Allāh, with Him is the knowledge of the Hour, He sends down the rain, and knows that which is in the wombs.»^[3]

This too was recorded only by Al-Bukhārī.

The Ḥadīth of Abu Hurayrah

In his Tafsīr of this Āyah, Al-Bukhārī narrated from Abu Hurayrah, may Allāh be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was standing before the people one day when a

[1] Aḥmad 2:24.

[2] Faṭḥ Al-Bāri 2:609.

[3] Faṭḥ Al-Bāri 8:373.

man came to him and said, 'O Messenger of Allāh, what is Īmān?' He said:

«إِيمَانُ أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ، وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلِقَائِهِ، وَتُؤْمِنَ بِالْبَعْثِ الْآخِرِ»

«Īmān is to believe in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers and in the meeting with Him, and to believe in the Resurrection in the Hereafter.»

He said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, what is Islām?' He said:

«الْإِسْلَامُ أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا، وَتُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةَ، وَتُؤْتِيَ الزَّكَاةَ الْمَفْرُوضَةَ، وَتَصُومَ رَمَضَانَ»

«Islām is to worship Allāh Alone and not associate anything in worship with Him, to establish regular prayer, to pay the obligatory Zakāh, and to fast in Ramadān.»

He said, 'O Messenger of Allāh, what is Ihṣān?' He said:

«الْإِحْسَانُ أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ»

«Ihṣān is to worship Allāh as if you see Him, and if you do not see Him, then He sees you.»

He said, 'O Messenger of Allāh, when will the Hour come?' He said:

«مَا الْمَسْئُولُ عَنْهَا بِأَعْلَمَ مِنَ السَّائِلِ، وَلَكِنْ سَأَخْبُذُكَ عَنْ أَشْرَاطِهَا: إِذَا وَلَدَتْ الْأُمُّ رَبَّتَهَا فَذَاكَ مِنْ أَشْرَاطِهَا، وَإِذَا كَانَ الْخُفَاءُ الْعُرَاءُ رُؤُوسَ النَّاسِ فَذَاكَ مِنْ أَشْرَاطِهَا فِي خَمْسٍ لَا يَعْلَمُهُنَّ إِلَّا اللَّهُ: ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَيُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ وَيَمْلَأُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ﴾»

«The one who is asked about it does not know more than the one who is asking, but I will tell you of some of its signs: when the servant woman gives birth to her mistress, that is one of its signs; when the barefoot and naked become leaders of the people, that is one of its signs. The timing of the Hour is one of the five things which no one knows except Allāh: ﴿Verily, Allāh, with Him is the knowledge of the Hour, He sends down the rain, and knows that which is in the wombs....﴾»

Then the man went away, and the Prophet ﷺ said,

«رُدُّوهُ عَلَيَّ»

«Bring him back to me.» They went to bring him back, but they could not find him. He said:

«هَذَا جِبْرِيلُ جَاءَ لِيُعَلِّمَ النَّاسَ دِينَهُمْ»

«That was Jibrīl who came to teach the people their religion.»^[1]

It was also recorded by Al-Bukhārī in the Book of Faith, and by Muslim with several chains of narration.^[2] We have discussed this at the beginning of our commentary on Al-Bukhārī, where we mentioned at length some *Ḥadīths* narrated by the Commander of the faithful 'Umar bin Al-Khaṭṭāb. These were recorded only by Muslim.

﴿وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ﴾

«and no person knows in what land he will die.»

Qatādah said, "There are some things which Allāh has kept to Himself, and they are not known to any angel who is close to Him or any Prophet who was sent by Him.

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ﴾

«Verily, Allāh, with Him is the knowledge of the Hour,»

no one among mankind knows when the Hour will come, in which year or month, or whether it will come at night or during the day.

﴿وَيُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ﴾

«He sends down the rain,» and no one knows when rain will come, night or day.

﴿وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ﴾

«and knows that which is in the wombs.» No one knows what is in the wombs, male or female, red or black, or what it is.

﴿وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا﴾

«No person knows what he will earn tomorrow,»

whether it will be good or bad. You do not know, O son of Ādam, when you will die. You might die tomorrow, you might

[1] *Faḥ Al-Bārī* 8:373.

[2] *Faḥ Al-Bārī* 1:140, Muslim 1:39.

be stricken by calamity tomorrow.

﴿وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ﴾

﴿and no person knows in what land he will die.﴾

means, no person knows where his resting place will be, on the land or in the sea, on a plain or in the mountains.^[1] It says in the *Ḥadīth*:

«إِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ قُبْضَ عَبْدٍ بِأَرْضٍ جَعَلَ لَهُ إِلَيْهَا حَاجَةً»

«If Allāh wants to take a person's soul in a particular land, He will give him a reason to go there.»^[2]

In *Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabīr*, Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abu Al-Qāsim Aṭ-Ṭabarānī recorded that Usāmah bin Zayd said, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

«مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ مِيتَةَ عَبْدٍ بِأَرْضٍ إِلَّا جَعَلَ لَهُ فِيهَا حَاجَةً»

«Allāh does not will that a person should die in a certain land but He gives him a reason to go there.»^[3]

This is the end of the *Tafsīr* of Sūrah Luqmān. Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds. Sufficient for us is Allāh and He is the Best Disposer of affairs.

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 20:160.

[2] Al-Ḥākim 1:42.

[3] Aṭ-Ṭabarānī 1:178.