
15.
Soorat al-Hijr
(Makki)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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



الرَّ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ وَقُرْآنٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿١﴾ زُبْمًا يُوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ
كَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٢﴾ ذَرَّهُمْ يَأْكُلُوا وَيَسْتَمْتَعُوا وَيُلْهِمُ الْأَمَلُ فَسَوْفَ يَعْمُونَ
﴿٣﴾ وَمَا أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا وَلَهَا كِتَابٌ مَعْلُومٌ ﴿٤﴾ مَا تَسْبِقُ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ أَجْلَهَا
وَمَا يَسْتَخِرُونَ ﴿٥﴾ (سورة الحجر: ١-٥)

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

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

15:4. We never destroyed any city but its appointed time had previously been decreed.

15:5. No nation can bring its appointed time forward, nor can they delay it.

Here Allah (ﷻ) says, speaking highly of His Book and praising it: ﴿These are verses of the Book﴾, verses that point to the best of meanings and the most sublime of aims and goals ﴿and a clear Qur'an﴾ that explains real facts in the best and clearest of phrases, in the most straightforward manner. This dictates that all people should follow it, accept its rulings and receive it with approval, joy and happiness.

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

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

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

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



﴿ وَقَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِي نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ إِنَّكَ لَمَجْنُونٌ ﴿٦﴾ لَوْ مَا تَأْتِينَا بِالْمَلٰئِكَةِ
 إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٧﴾ مَا نُنزِلُ الْمَلٰئِكَةَ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَمَا كَانُوا إِذَا مُنظَرِيْنَ
 ﴿٨﴾ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحٰفِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٦-٩)

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

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

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

«Why do you not bring the angels to us» to testify that the message that you bring is sound

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فِي شَيْعِ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَمَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿١١﴾ كَذَلِكَ نَسْلُكُهُ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٢﴾ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ. وَقَدْ خَلَتْ سُنَّةَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٣﴾﴾ (سورة الحجر: ١٠-١٣)

15:10. Indeed We sent Messengers before you among the communities of old.

15:11. No Messenger came to them but they ridiculed him.

15:12. Thus we let it [disbelief] enter the hearts of the evildoers.

15:13. They will not believe in it [the Qur'an], although the precedent of the earlier peoples is well established.

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

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

«No Messenger came to them», calling them to true guidance «but they ridiculed him».

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

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



﴿وَلَوْ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَظَلُّوا فِيهِ يَعْرُجُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ لَقَالُوا إِنَّمَا سُكَّرَتْ أَبْصَارُنَا بَلْ نَحْنُ مُسْحُورُونَ ﴿١٥﴾﴾ (سورة الحجر: ١٤-١٥)

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

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

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

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

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



﴿وَلَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا فِي السَّمَاءِ بُرُوجًا وَرَبَّتْهَا لِلنَّظِيرِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَحَفِظْنَاهَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ رَّجِيمٍ ﴿١٧﴾ إِلَّا مَنِ اسْتَرَقَ السَّمْعَ فَأَتْبَعَهُ شِهَابٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٨﴾ وَالْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَاهَا

وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رُجُومًا وَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَوْزُونٍ ﴿١٦﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَعَاشٍ
 وَمَنْ لَسْتُمْ لِّلَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ (سورة الحجر: ١٦-٢٠)

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

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

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

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

«But if any of them manages to eavesdrop» – on some occasions, some of the devils may manage to covertly eavesdrop on heaven and snatch some news «he is pursued by a clearly visible flame» that is, a flame that is bright and clear, which kills him or stuns him.

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

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

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

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

﴿And We have appointed means of livelihood therein for you﴾ such as crops and livestock, and all kinds of professions and crafts.

﴿and for those for whom you are not the providers﴾ that is, We have blessed you with male and female slaves, and livestock, for your benefit and best interests. You are not the providers; rather Allah has made them subject to you and has guaranteed their provision.



﴿وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا عِنْدَنَا خَزَائِنُهُ وَمَا نُنزِلُهُ إِلَّا بِإِقْدَارٍ مَّعْلُومٍ﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٢١)

(٢١)

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

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

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

﴿and We send it down﴾ that is, whatever is preordained of all things, rain and otherwise
 ﴿only in a predetermined measure﴾ so it is never more or less than what Allah has decreed.



﴿وَأَرْسَلْنَا الرِّيحَ لَوَاقِحَ فَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَسْقَيْنَاكُمُوهُ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ لَهُ بِمُخَذَّرِينَ﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٢٢)

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

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

﴿you are not in control of its sources﴾ that is, you have no power to store and save it; rather Allah stores it for you and causes it to flow from springs in the land, out of mercy and kindness towards you.



﴿وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ نُحْيِيهِ وَنُمِيتُهُ وَنَحْنُ الْوَارِثُونَ﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٢٣-٢٥)
 ﴿وَلَقَدْ عَلَّمْنَا الْمُسْتَقْدِمِينَ مِنْكُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَلَّمْنَا الْمُسْتَأْخِرِينَ﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٢٣-٢٥) ﴿وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ إِنَّهُ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٢٣-٢٥)

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

- 15:24. Well do We know those of you who have gone before and those who are yet to come.
- 15:25. Verily it is your Lord Who will gather them together; verily He is Most Wise, All-Knowing.

That is, He alone, with no partner or associate, is the One Who gives life and creates things from nothing, after they were nothing worth mentioning, and causes them to die at the time He has decreed. ﴿and We are of [all things] heirs﴾. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Verily, it is We Who will inherit the earth and all who are upon it, and to Us they will be brought back.﴾ (Maryam 19: 40)

That is not difficult or impossible for Allah, for He knows the earlier and later generations of humankind, and He knows what the earth consumes of them (cf. 50: 4) and what is scattered of their bodies. He is the One Whose power cannot be frustrated by anyone, and He will recreate His slaves and gather them to Him.

﴿verily He is Most Wise, All-Knowing﴾ He does what is appropriate and will requite each person for his deeds; if they were good then the outcome will be good, and if they were bad then the outcome will be bad.



﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَلٍ مِنْ حَمَلٍ مَسْنُونٍ ﴿١٩﴾ وَالْبَلَّانَ خَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ مِنْ نَارِ السَّمُورِ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي خَلِيقٌ بَشَرًا مِنْ صَلْصَلٍ مِنْ حَمَلٍ مَسْنُونٍ ﴿٢١﴾ فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ، وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ، سَاجِدِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾ فَسَجَدَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَى أَنْ يَكُونَ مَعَ السَّاجِدِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾ قَالَ يَا بَلِيسَ مَا لَكَ لَا تَكُونَ مَعَ السَّاجِدِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾ قَالَ لَمْ أَكُنْ لَأَسْجُدَ لِبَشَرٍ خَلَقْتَهُ، مِنْ صَلْصَلٍ

مِنْ حَمَلٍ مَسْنُونٍ ﴿٣٧﴾ قَالَ فَأَخْرَجْ مِنْهَا فِائِكَ رَجِيمٌ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكَ اللَّعْنَةَ يَوْمَ
 الْيَوْمِ ﴿٣٩﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ فَأَنْظِرْنِي إِلَى يَوْمٍ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾ قَالَ فِائِكَ مِنَ الْمُنظَرِينَ ﴿٤١﴾ إِلَى
 يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ الْمَعْلُومِ ﴿٤٢﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأُزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ
 أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾ قَالَ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ عَلَيَّ مُسْتَقِيمٌ
 ﴿٤٥﴾ إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ إِلَّا مَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَإِنَّ
 جَهَنَّمَ لَمَوْعِدُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ لَهَا سَبْعَةُ أَبْوَابٍ لِكُلِّ بَابٍ مِنْهُمْ جُزْءٌ مَقْسُومٌ ﴿٤٨﴾

(سورة الحجر: ٢٦-٤٤)

- 15:26. Indeed We created man from sounding clay, made from black mud moulded into shape.
- 15:27. And the *jinn* We created before that, from intensely hot fire.
- 15:28. And [remember] when your Lord said to the angels: Verily I am going to create a human being from sounding clay, made from black mud moulded into shape.
- 15:29. So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him the soul which I created for him, fall down in prostration before him.
- 15:30. Thereupon, the angels all fell down in prostration,
- 15:31. Except Iblees; he refused to be among those who prostrated.
- 15:32. Allah said: O Iblees, what is the matter with you, that you were not among those who prostrated?
- 15:33. Iblees said: I am not one to prostrate to a human being whom You created from sounding clay, made from black mud moulded into shape.
- 15:34. Allah said: Then get out of here, for you are accursed,
- 15:35. And verily the curse will be upon you until the Day of Judgement.
- 15:36. Iblees said: O my Lord, grant me respite until the day they are resurrected.
- 15:37. Allah said: You are among those who are granted respite,
- 15:38. Until the day of the time appointed.

- 15:39. Iblees said: My Lord, because You have caused me to be misguided, I will certainly make [evil] fair-seeming to them on earth, and I will certainly mislead them all,
- 15:40. Except Your chosen [and sincere] slaves among them.
- 15:41. Allah said: This [the way of My chosen (and sincere) slaves] is a path which will lead straight to Me.
- 15:42. Verily you will have no power over My slaves, except those misguided ones who choose to follow you.
- 15:43. And verily, hell is the promised destiny for them all.
- 15:44. It has seven gates, each gate having its allotted share of them.

Here Allah mentions the blessings that He bestowed upon our father Adam (ﷺ) and what happened with his enemy Iblees, including the warning to us of his evil and temptation.

«Indeed We created man» that is, Adam (ﷺ)
 «from sounding clay, made from black mud moulded into shape» that is, clay that has dried after fermenting, until it makes a sound. Black mud moulded into shape is mud that has changed in colour and odour, and has been left alone for a long time.

«And the jinn» here the word is taken as referring to the father of the jinn, namely Iblees

«We created before that» before the creation of Adam
 «from intensely hot fire».

When Allah wanted to create Adam, He said to the angels:
 «Verily I am going to create a human being from sounding clay, made from black mud moulded into shape. So when I have fashioned him» that is, shaped his body completely
 «and breathed into him the soul which I created for him, fall down in prostration before him» – and they obeyed the command of their Lord.

«Thereupon, the angels all fell down in prostration». This is affirmation after affirmation, to highlight the fact that not one of

them disobeyed, out of respect for the command of Allah and in order to honour Adam, for he knew what they did not know.

«Except Iblees; he refused to be among those who prostrated». This was the beginning of his enmity towards Adam and his offspring.

«Allah said: O Iblees, what is the matter with you, that you were not among those who prostrated? Iblees said: I am not one to prostrate to a human being whom You created from sounding clay, made from black mud moulded into shape». He was too arrogant to obey the command of Allah, and he expressed enmity towards Adam and his offspring, for he was too proud of his race and said: I am better than Adam.

«Allah said», punishing him for his rejection of the command and his arrogance:

«Then get out of here, for you are accursed» that is, condemned, shamed and cast far away from the mercy of Allah

«until the Day of Judgement». This and similar verses indicate that he will persist in his disbelief and continue to be far away from goodness.

«Iblees said: O my Lord, grant me respite until the day they are resurrected. Allah said: You are among those who are granted respite, until the day of the time appointed». The divine response to his supplication was not an honour in his case; rather it was a test and trial from Allah for him and for people, so that it might become clear who will be sincere and obey his Lord instead of his enemy, and who will not be like that. Hence Allah warned us against him in the strongest terms and explained to us what He wants from us.

«Iblees said: My Lord, because You have caused me to be misguided, I will certainly make [evil] fair-seeming to them on earth» that is, I shall make this world fair-seeming to them and call them to give it precedence over the hereafter, so that they will commit all types of sins.

«and I will certainly mislead them all» that is, I shall bar them all from the straight path

«Except Your chosen [and sincere] slaves among them» that is, those whom You choose and select for their sincerity, faith and trust in You.

«Allah said: This [the way of My chosen (and sincere) slaves] is a path which will lead straight to Me» it is straightforward and leads to Me and to My paradise.

«Verily you will have no power over My slaves» to make them incline towards whatever you want of all types of misguidance; because of their true servitude to their Lord and compliance with His commands, Allah will help them and protect them from the Shayṭān.

«except those misguided ones» – the word translated here as «misguided» is the opposite of rightly guided; it refers to one who knows the truth but shuns it. There are two types of misguided people, those who know the truth but shun it and those who go astray because they are not aware of the truth.

«who choose to follow you» and are content to be your allies and obedient to you instead of being obedient to the Most Gracious.

«And verily, hell is the promised destiny for them all» that is, for Iblees and his troops.

«It has seven gates», each gate lower than another.

«each gate having its allotted share of them» that is, of the followers of Iblees, according to their deeds. Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

«Then they will be thrown headlong into hell, both they [the false gods] and those who went astray.» (ash-Shu'arā' 26: 94)

Having mentioned what He has prepared of torment and severe punishment for His enemies, the followers of Iblees, Allah then tells us what He has prepared for His close friends of great reward and eternal bliss:



﴿إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٤٥﴾ أَذْخَلُوهَا بِسُلْكِ عَامِنِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِّنْ غَلِيٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَابِلِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ لَا يَمَسُّهُمْ فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَمَا

هُم مِّنْهَا يُمَخَّرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ نَبِّئْ عِبَادِيَ أَنِّي أَنَا الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَأَنَّ عَذَابِي هُوَ الْعَذَابُ الْأَلِيمُ ﴿٥٠﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٤٥-٥٠)

- 15:45. Verily the righteous will be amidst gardens and springs.
 15:46. [It will be said to them:] Enter here in peace and security.
 15:47. We will remove all ill feelings from their hearts; they will be like brethren seated on couches facing one another.
 15:48. There no fatigue will touch them, nor will they [ever] be made to leave.
 15:49. Tell My slaves that I am indeed the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.
 15:50. And that My punishment is indeed the painful punishment.

﴿Verily the righteous﴾ who kept away from obeying the Shayṭān and from all that he called them to of sin and evil
 ﴿will be amidst gardens and springs﴾ that contain all kinds of trees bearing all kinds of delicious fruit that are ready to eat at all times.

It will be said to them when they enter it: ﴿Enter here in peace and security﴾, for there will be no death, sleep, toil, tiredness, or cessation of joy and bliss that will never decrease, and there will be no sickness, grief, worry or any other ills.

﴿We will remove all ill feelings from their hearts﴾, so their hearts will remain free of any resentment or envy, and they will be pure and filled with mutual love.

﴿they will be like brethren seated on couches facing one another﴾ – this indicates that they will visit one another and gather together, with good etiquette among them, as they will all face one another, with no one turning his back on anyone; they will recline on those couches that are adorned with pearls and all kinds of gems.

﴿There no fatigue will touch them﴾ either visibly or invisibly, because Allah will create them anew and give them a perfect life in which they will not be vulnerable to any ills.

﴿nor will they [ever] be made to leave﴾ at any time.

Having mentioned both encouragement and warning by describing what He has created in paradise and hell, Allah then tells us of His divine attributes that will help one attain paradise:

﴿Tell My slaves﴾ that is, inform them in definitive terms, supported by evidence

﴿that I am indeed the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful﴾ for if they understand the perfect nature of His mercy and forgiveness, they will strive hard, taking all measures that could lead them to attain His mercy, and they will give up sin and repent therefrom, so that they may attain His forgiveness.

However, hope should not let them get carried away and feel safe and secure from punishment, so tell them: ﴿that My punishment is indeed the painful punishment﴾ that is, in fact there is no punishment except the punishment of Allah, of which no one could estimate the severity or understand the nature thereof. We seek refuge with Him from His punishment. If they knew that:

﴿...None can punish as He will punish on that day, and none can bind as He will bind.﴾ (al-Fajr 89: 25-26)

– they would be careful and would keep away from anything that could bring this punishment upon them. So the individual's heart should always be between fear and hope; when he thinks of the mercy, forgiveness, generosity and kindness of his Lord, that fills him with hope, but when he thinks of his sins and shortcomings with regard to his duties towards his Lord, that instils fear in him and makes him give up his sin.



﴿وَنَبِّئُهُمْ عَنْ ضَيْفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ﴿٥١﴾ إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ إِنَّا مِنْكُمْ وَجِئُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ قَالُوا لَا نَوْجَلُ إِنَّا نَبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ عَلَيْكَ ﴿٥٣﴾ قَالَ أَبَشَّرْتُمُونِي عَلَىٰ أَنْ مَسَّنِيَ

الْكِبْرِ فِيمَ بَشِّرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ قَالُوا بَشِّرْنَا بِالْحَقِّ فَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ الْفٰنِطِينَ
 ﴿٥٢﴾ قَالَ وَمَنْ يَقْنَطُ مِن رَّحْمَةِ رَبِّهِ إِلَّا الضَّالُّونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٥١-٥٦)

- 15:51. Tell them about the guests of Ibrâheem,
 15:52. When they came to him and said: Peace. He said: Truly we are afraid of you.
 15:53. They said: Do not be afraid; we bring you glad tidings of a son endowed with knowledge.
 15:54. He said: Do you bring me glad tidings when old age has overtaken me? What kind of glad tidings are you bringing me?
 15:55. They said: We give you glad tidings in truth; so do not despair.
 15:56. Ibrâheem said: Who despairs of the mercy of his Lord except those who go astray?

Here Allah (ﷻ) says to His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ):

«Tell them about the guests of Ibrâheem» that is, tell them about that amazing story, for in your telling them the stories of the Messengers and what happened to them there are lessons for them and examples for them to follow, especially Ibrâheem al-Khaleel (the close friend of Allah), whose path Allah has instructed us to follow. His guests were the noble angels; Allah honoured him by making them his guests.

«When they came to him and said: Peace» that is, they greeted him with salâm and he returned the greeting.

«He said: Truly we are afraid of you» that is, scared. That was because, when they entered upon him, he thought that they were guests, so he rushed to offer them food and he hastened to bring them a roasted calf. But when he saw that their hands did not reach out towards it, he had misgivings about them and conceived a fear of them (11: 70), and thought that they might be thieves and the like.

«They said» to him: «Do not be afraid; we bring you glad tidings of a son endowed with knowledge» namely Is-hâq (ﷺ). This good

news implied that the child would be a male, not a female. «Endowed with knowledge» means one who possesses a great deal of knowledge. Elsewhere, Allah says:

«We gave him the glad tidings of Is-hâq, a Prophet, one of the righteous.» (as-Saffât 37: 112)

Ibrâheem said, in amazement at this good news: «Do you bring me glad tidings» of a child «when old age has overtaken me?» This is indicative of a kind of despair of ever having a child.

«What kind of glad tidings are you bringing me?» That is, on what basis are you giving me this good news, when there is no possible means of it happening?

«They said: We give you glad tidings in truth» of which there can be no doubt, because Allah is able to do all things, and you in particular – O people of this household – are people upon whom Allah has bestowed His mercy and blessings, so it is no wonder that Allah should bestow His favour and kindness upon you.

«so do not despair» or be among those who do not expect any good to happen; rather keep hoping for the generosity, kindness, grace and favour of Allah. Ibrâheem responded to them by saying:

«Who despairs of the mercy of his Lord except those who go astray?» that is, those who have no knowledge of their Lord and His perfect power. As for the one whom Allah has blessed with guidance and great knowledge, there is no way he can despair because he knows that there are many ways and means for the mercy of Allah to reach him. When they had given him this good news, he realised that they had been sent on an important mission.



﴿ قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكُمْ أَيُّهَا الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ قَالُوا إِنَّا أُرْسِلْنَا إِلَى قَوْمٍ مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾ إِلَّا آءَالَ لُوطٍ إِنَّا لَمُنَجُّوهُمْ أجمعين ﴿٥٩﴾ إِلَّا أَمْرًا لَهُ. فَدَرْنَا إِنَّهَا لَمِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ ﴾

﴿٦٠﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاءَ عَالَ لُوطٍ الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ مُنْكَرُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ قَالُوا بَلْ
 حَسْبُنَاكَ يَمَّا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَمْتَرُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ وَأَتَيْنَكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّا لَصَادِقُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ فَأَسْرِ
 بِأَهْلِكَ بِقِطْعٍ مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ وَاتَّبِعْ أَدْبَارَهُمْ وَلَا يَلْبِغُ مِنكَ أَحَدٌ وَامْضُوا حَيْثُ تُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾
 وَقَضَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ ذَلِكَ الْأَمْرَ أَنَّ دَابِرَ هَتُولَاءِ مَقْطُوعٌ مُّصْبِحِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾ وَجَاءَ
 أَهْلَ الْمَدِينَةِ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ قَالَ إِنَّ هَتُولَاءِ ضَيْفِي فَلَا تَفْضَحُونِ ﴿٦٨﴾ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا
 تُخْرِفُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾ قَالُوا أَوْلَمْ نُنْهَكْ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾ قَالَ هَتُولَاءِ بَنَاتِي إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَعَالِينَ ﴿٧١﴾
 لَعَنَّاكَ إِنَّمَتْ لَيْ سَكَرْتَهُمْ يَعْهَدُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ فَأَخَذْتَهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ مُشْرِقِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾ فَجَعَلْنَا
 عَلَيْهِمْ سَافِلَهَا وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حِجَارَةً مِّن سِجِّيلٍ ﴿٧٤﴾ إِنْ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةٌ لِّلْمُتَوَسِّمِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾
 وَإِنهَا لَيْسِيلٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٧٦﴾ إِنْ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ ﴿سورة الحجر: ٥٧-٧٧﴾

- 15:57. Ibrâheem said: Then what is your business, O messengers?
- 15:58. They said: We have been sent to a wicked people [who are to be destroyed],
- 15:59. except the household of Loot; we will save them all,
- 15:60. except his wife. We decreed that she should be one of those who stayed behind.
- 15:61. When the messengers came to the household of Loot,
- 15:62. He said: You are strangers [to me].
- 15:63. They said: We have come to you with that [the punishment] concerning which they had doubts.
- 15:64. We have brought to you that which is inevitably due [the punishment], and indeed we are telling the truth.
- 15:65. So depart with your family in the dead of night, with yourself bringing up the rear. Let no one among you look back, but go on to where you are commanded.
- 15:66. We made this decree known to him, that the last remnants of those [sinners] would be wiped out by the morning.
- 15:67. The people of the city came, exulting at the news [of the arrival of those young men].

- 15:68. Loot said: These are my guests, so do not put me to shame.
 15:69. Fear Allah, and do not disgrace me.
 15:70. They said: Did we not forbid you to offer hospitality to anyone?
 15:71. Loot said: Here are my daughters [to marry],⁹ if you must.
 15:72. By your life. [O Muhammad,] they were wandering blindly in their lustful frenzy.
 15:73. So the blast overtook them at sunrise,
 15:74. And We turned [their city] upside down and let loose upon them a shower of stones of baked clay.
 15:75. Surely in that there are signs for the discerning.
 15:76. And it [the city] is on a road that is still travelled.
 15:77. Surely in that there is a sign for the believers.

﴿Ibrâheem said﴾ to the angels
 ﴿Then what is your business, O messengers?﴾ That is, for what purpose have you been sent?

﴿They said: We have been sent to a wicked people﴾ that is, people who have committed a great deal of evil and whose evil has become widespread; we have been sent to punish them
 ﴿except the household of Loot﴾ that is, except Loot and his family
 ﴿except his wife. We decreed that she should be one of those who stayed behind﴾ that is, those who will remain and be punished; as for Loot, We will bring him and his family forth, and save him from the punishment. Ibrâheem began to argue with the messengers about destroying them, and he pleaded with them, but it was said to him:
 ﴿O Ibrâheem, cease your pleading, for verily the decree of your Lord has gone forth; verily there is coming to them a punishment that cannot be averted.﴾ (Hood 11: 76)

⁹ What is meant by ﴿my daughters﴾ is "the daughters of my nation". Loot was urging his people to give up their immoral ways and marry women in a lawful and pure manner.

Then the angels departed.

«When the messengers came to the household of Loot, he said» that is, Loot said to them: «You are strangers [to me]» that is, I do not recognise you and I do not know who you are.

«They said: We have come to you with that [the punishment] concerning which they had doubts» that is, we have come to you with the punishment that they doubted and they disbelieved you when you warned them about it.

«We have brought to you that which is inevitably due [the punishment]» and it is not a joke

«and indeed we are telling the truth» in what we say to you.

«So depart with your family in the dead of night» that is, during the night when people are asleep and no one will know of your departure
«Let no one among you look back»; rather hasten and hurry
«but go on to where you are commanded» – it was as if they had a guide to show them the way in which they should go.

«We made this decree known to him» that is, We told him in definitive terms

«that the last remnants of those [sinners] would be wiped out by the morning» that is, the punishment would come upon them in the morning and would overwhelm them and eradicate them.

«The people of the city came» that is, the city in which Loot was living

«exulting at the news [of the arrival of those young men]» that is, telling one another the good news of the guests of Loot and how handsome they were, because they had the power to overwhelm them and they had the intention of committing evil deeds with them. So they came to the house of Loot and started to argue with him about his guests, and Loot sought refuge with Allah from them and said:

«These are my guests, so do not put me to shame. Fear Allah, and do not disgrace me» that is, remember first of all that Allah is

watching, and if you have no fear of Allah, then at least do not put me to shame with regard to my guests and transgress against them in this abhorrent manner.

«They said» in response to his pleas, and only answering his request not to disgrace him: «Did we not forbid you to offer hospitality to anyone?» That is, we warned you not to do that, and whoever has received the warning is left with no excuse.

«Loot said» to them, because of the tremendous pressure he felt he was under:

«Here are my daughters [to marry], if you must». But they paid no attention to his words, hence Allah said to His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ):

«By your life, [O Muhammad,] they were wandering blindly in their lustful frenzy». This frenzy resulted from their love of committing evil and they did not care about anyone who tried to stop them or who blamed them.

When the messengers explained the situation to Loot, his anxiety and distress dissipated, and he obeyed the command of his Lord by taking his family and departing at night, so they were saved.

As for the people of the city, «the blast overtook them at sunrise», which was a time when the punishment would be more severe.

«And We turned [their city] upside down» on them «and let loose upon them a shower of stones of baked clay» which even went after some who were alone in some part of the city.

«Surely in that there are signs for the discerning» that is, those who reflect and ponder and who have insight, for they will understand the point of this story, which is that anyone who has the audacity to disobey Allah, especially by committing this grave evil deed, will be punished by Allah in the worst way, as in the story of these people who dared to commit the most abhorrent of evil deeds.

«And it» that is, the city of the people of Loot

﴿is on a road that is still travelled﴾ and it is known to the travellers who pass by that land.

﴿Surely in that there is a sign for the believers﴾.

One of the lessons that we learn from this story is that Allah (ﷻ) cared for His close friend Ibrâheem (ﷺ), for Loot was one of his followers and those who believed in him, so it was as if he was a student of his. When Allah wanted to destroy the people of Loot, as they deserved that punishment, He commanded His messengers to pass by Ibrâheem (ﷺ), so that they might give him the glad tidings of a son and tell him the purpose for which they had been sent; he argued with them about destroying those people, until the angels convinced him and he felt at ease with it.

Similarly in the case of Loot (ﷺ), because they were his fellow countrymen, perhaps he was seized with pity and compassion for them, so Allah decreed that events should take place by means of which he would become angry and upset with them, to the point that he could not wait for their punishment to come, when it was said to him:

﴿...Verily, their appointed time is the morning; is not the morning nigh?﴾ (Hood 11: 81)

When Allah (ﷻ) willed to destroy a city, their evil and transgression increased, and when it reached an ultimate level the punishments that they deserved befell them.



﴿وَإِنْ كَانَ أَصْحَابُ الْأَيْكَةِ لظَالِمِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾ فَانْقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ وَإِنَّهُمَا لَبِإِمَارٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٧٩﴾﴾

(سورة الحجر: ٧٨-٧٩)

15:78. And the dwellers of the Wood were also wrongdoers;

15:79. So We exacted retribution upon them. They are both on a well-known highway.

They were the people of Shu'ayb. Allah described them as the dwellers of the Wood, which was an area with a lot of trees, as a reminder of His blessings to them and that they did not show gratitude; rather their Prophet Shu'ayb came to them and called them to affirm the oneness of Allah and to stop wronging people with regard to weights and measures, and he tried very hard to persuade them. But they persisted in their wrongdoing with regard to the rights of their Creator and the rights of other people, therefore Allah described them as wrongdoers.

«So We exacted retribution upon them» and the punishment of the day of overshadowing gloom overtook them; surely it was the punishment of a terrible day (cf. 26: 189).

«They are both» that is, the lands of the people of Loot and of the dwellers of the Wood

«on a well-known highway» that is, on a clear highway on which travellers pass by them all the time, and their ruins can be seen; thus people of understanding learn a lesson from that.



﴿وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبَ أَصْحَابُ الْحِجْرِ الْمُرْسِلِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَأَيُّنَّهُمْ أَيُّنَّا فَكَانُوا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَكَانُوا يَنْجِتُونَ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا آمِنِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾ فَآخَذْتَهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ مُضِحِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ فَمَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٨٠-٨٤)

15:80. The people of al-Hijr also rejected the Messengers.

15:81. We sent them Our signs, but they persisted in turning away from them.

15:82. They carved out dwellings in the mountains, feeling secure.

15:83. So the blast overtook them in the morning.

15:84. And of no avail to them was all that they had acquired.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the people of al-Hijr, who were the people of Ṣâliḥ who lived in al-Hijr, the well-known rocky tract in the land of Hejaz. They disbelieved in the Messengers; that is, they disbelieved in Ṣâliḥ, and whoever disbelieves in one Messenger has disbelieved in all the Messengers, for their call is one and when one of them is rejected, it is not because of his character; rather it is because of what he brought of truth that all the Messengers brought.

﴿We sent them Our signs﴾ that pointed to the soundness of the message of truth that Ṣâliḥ brought. One of these signs was the she-camel, which was one of the great signs of Allah.
 ﴿but they persisted in turning away from them﴾ out of arrogance and insolence towards Allah.

One of the many blessings that Allah had bestowed upon them was that ﴿They carved out dwellings in the mountains, feeling secure﴾, from fear and they felt at ease in their lands. If they had been grateful for that blessing and had believed in their Prophet Ṣâliḥ (ﷺ), Allah would have granted them abundant provision and honoured them with all kinds of reward in this world and the hereafter. But – when they disbelieved and hamstrung the she-camel, and they rebelled against the command of their Lord and said:

﴿...O Ṣâliḥ, bring us that with which you are threatening us, if you are indeed one of the Messengers [of Allah]!﴾ (*al-A'râf* 7: 77)

– then ﴿the blast overtook them in the morning﴾ and tore their hearts from their chests, and morning found them lying lifeless in their homes, along with what accompanied that of ongoing disgrace and curses.

﴿And of no avail to them was all that they had acquired﴾ because when the decree of Allah comes to pass, it cannot be put back by numbers of troops or strength of supporters or abundance of wealth.



﴿وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَأَيُّمٌ فَاصْفَحِ
 الصَّفْحَ الْجَمِيلَ ﴿٨٥﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ الْخَلْقُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٨٦﴾﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٨٥-٨٦)

- 15:85. We have not created the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, except for a true purpose. And, verily, the Hour is surely coming, so [O Muhammad] bear with them graciously.
- 15:86. Verily your Lord is the Creator of all, the All-Knowing.

That is, We did not create them in vain for any false purpose, as the enemies of Allah think; rather We only created them ﴿for a true purpose﴾, part of which was that they, along with all that they contain, should point to the perfection and power of their Creator, and the vastness of His mercy and wisdom, and His all-encompassing knowledge, which proves that He alone is to be worshipped, with no partner or associate.

﴿And, verily, the Hour is surely coming﴾ no doubt about it, ﴿Indeed, the creation of the heavens and the earth is a greater matter than the creation [or recreation] of humankind...﴾ (Ghâfir 40: 57)

﴿so [O Muhammad] bear with them graciously﴾ – this refers to forbearance without causing any offence to them; rather it means responding to their mistreatment with kindness and to their misdemeanours with forgiveness, so as to attain a great deal of reward with your Lord, for everything that is meant to happen is close at hand.

A better meaning than that which I have mentioned above occurred to me, which is that what is enjoined is gracious forbearance, which is graciousness that is free of resentment or offence in word or deed, as opposed to forbearance that is not gracious, which is inappropriate forbearance. So one should not be forbearing when what is required is punishment, such as punishment for transgressors and wrongdoers for whom nothing is effective except punishment. This is what is meant.

«Verily your Lord is the Creator of all, the All-Knowing» that is, nothing that He created and is encompassed by His knowledge can escape Him, and applies to all created things.



﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَاكَ سَبْعًا مِنَ الْمَثَانِي وَالْقُرْآنَ الْعَظِيمَ ﴿٨٧﴾ لَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا
بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَخَفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾ وَقُلْ إِنِّي أَنَا
النَّذِيرُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿٨٩﴾ كَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الْمُقْتَسِمِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾ الَّذِينَ جَعَلُوا الْقُرْآنَ
عِضِينَ ﴿٩١﴾ فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَسْأَلَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾﴾ (سورة

الحجر: ٨٧-٩٣)

- 15:87. We have given you the seven oft-repeated ones and the glorious Qur'an.
- 15:88. Do not look longingly at the good things We have given some among them to enjoy, nor grieve over them, but lower your wing [in humility and gentleness] to the believers.
- 15:89. And say [O Muhammad]: Verily I am the clear warner [of a punishment that will befall you],
- 15:90. Like [the punishment] that We sent down upon the discriminators,
- 15:91. Those who break the Qur'an into different parts.
- 15:92. So, by your Lord, We will surely question them all
- 15:93. About what they used to do.

Here Allah (ﷻ) says, reminding His Messenger (ﷺ) of His favours to him:

«We have given you the seven oft-repeated ones» According to the correct view, this refers to the seven long chapters: al-Baqarah, Āl 'Imrān, an-Nisā', al-Mā'idah, al-An'ām, al-A'rāf, and al-Anfāl along with at-Tawbah. Or it may refer to al-Fātiḥah, because it contains

seven verses. That is because the seven long chapters frequently mention the oneness of Allah, knowledge of the unseen and sublime rulings, which are repeated throughout.

According to the view that al-Fātiḥah is the seven oft-repeated ones, what is meant here is that they are seven verses that are repeated in every *rak'ah*. As Allah has given him the Glorious Qur'an with the seven oft-repeated ones, then He has given him the best thing for which people may compete and the greatest thing in which the believers may rejoice.

﴿Say: In the grace of Allah and in His mercy – in that let them rejoice. That is far better than all they could accumulate.﴾ (Yoonus 10: 58)

Hence Allah says after that:

﴿Do not look longingly at the good things We have given some among them to enjoy﴾ that is, do not admire them in such a way that causes you to become distracted by worldly desires that those who live a life of ease are enjoying and by which the ignorant are deceived; rather be content with what Allah has given you of the seven oft-repeated ones and the Glorious Qur'an

﴿nor grieve over them﴾ for there is nothing good to be hoped for from them and there is no benefit to be expected.

But in the believers you have the best alternative to them and the best compensation, so ﴿lower your wing [in humility and gentleness] to the believers﴾ that is, deal softly with them, with good manners, love, generosity and friendship.

﴿And say [O Muhammad]: Verily I am the clear warner [of a punishment that will befall you]﴾ that is, fulfil your duty of warning and conveying the message to relatives and strangers, enemies and friends, for if you do that, then you are not at all accountable for them nor are they accountable for you (cf. 6: 52).

﴿Like [the punishment] that We sent down upon the discriminators﴾ who strive to bar people from the path of Allah.

«Those who break the Qur'an into different parts» – they describe it according to their whims and desires; some of them call it magic and others call it soothsaying or fabrication, and other expressions of disbelief and rejection, using their criticism of it to bar people from true guidance.

«So, by your Lord, We will surely question them all» that is, all those who criticise, condemn, distort and alter it
 «About what they used to do» – this is a stern warning and rebuke to them for doing what they did.



﴿ فَاصْدَعْ بِمَا تُؤْمَرُ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٩٤﴾ إِنَّا كَفَيْنَاكَ الْمُسْتَهْزِئِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾ الَّذِينَ
 يَجْعَلُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾ وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ يَضِيقُ صَدْرُكَ بِمَا
 يَقُولُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾ فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَكُن مِّنَ السَّاجِدِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾ وَأَعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ
 الْيَقِينُ ﴿٩٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحجر: ٩٤-٩٩)

- 15:94. Therefore proclaim what you are commanded to, and turn away from those who ascribe partners to Allah.
- 15:95. Verily, We will suffice you against those who ridicule you,
- 15:96. Those who set up another god beside Allah; but they will come to know.
- 15:97. We know you are distressed by what they say.
- 15:98. So glorify and praise your Lord, and be among those who prostrate [to Him].
- 15:99. And worship your Lord until that which is certain [namely, death] comes to you.

Then Allah instructed His Messenger (ﷺ) to pay no attention to them or to others, and to proclaim that which Allah had instructed him to proclaim, and to convey the message to everyone, not letting

anything stand in his way or prevent him from conveying the message, and not being deterred by what the ignorant said.

﴿and turn away from those who ascribe partners to Allah﴾ that is, do not pay any attention to them, and refrain from trading insults with them; focus on your mission instead.

﴿Verily, We will suffice you against those who ridicule you﴾ and the message you brought. This is a promise from Allah to His Messenger (ﷺ) that those who ridiculed him would not be able to harm him, and that Allah would suffice him against them by means of whatever kinds of punishment He willed. And He did indeed do that, for no one openly ridiculed the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and the message he brought but Allah destroyed him and caused him to die in the worst manner.

Then Allah explained that just as they offended His Messenger (ﷺ), they also offended Allah by setting up beside Him ﴿another god﴾ when He alone is their Lord, Creator and Controller. ﴿but they will come to know﴾ the consequences of their deeds when the Day of Resurrection comes.

﴿We know you are distressed by what they say﴾ to you of disbelief and ridicule, and We are able to eradicate them by means of the punishment and to hasten for them that which they deserve. But Allah gives them respite although He does not let them get away with it.

﴿So glorify and praise your Lord, and be among those who prostrate [to Him]﴾ that is, remember Allah a great deal, glorify and praise Him, and pray, for that will give you comfort and put you at ease, and it will help you in all your affairs.

﴿And worship your Lord until that which is certain [namely, death] comes to you﴾ that is, carry on at all times seeking to draw closer to Allah by means of various kinds of acts of worship. The Prophet (ﷺ) obeyed the command of his Lord and persisted in worship until that which is certain came to him from his Lord.

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



16.
Soorat an-Naḥl
(Makki)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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



﴿أَنَّا أَمْرُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوهُ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١﴾ يُزِيلُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ
بِالرُّوحِ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ عَلَىٰ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ أَنْ أَنْذِرُوا أَنَّهُ لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاتَّقُونِ ﴿٢﴾﴾

(سورة النحل: ١-٢)

- 16:1. The decree of Allah is at hand, so do not seek to hasten it. Glorified and exalted be He, far above the partners they ascribe to Him!
- 16:2. He sends down the angels with His revelation by His command to whomever among His slaves He wills, saying: Proclaim that there is no god but I, so fear Me.
-

Here Allah confirms that what He promised is close at hand, and offers reassurance that it will indeed come to pass:

﴿The decree of Allah is at hand, so do not seek to hasten it﴾ for it is coming, and that which is coming is near at hand.

﴿Glorified and exalted be He far above the partners they ascribe to Him﴾ such as a child, spouse or equal, and other things that the

polytheists attributed to Him that are not befitting to His majesty or are contrary to His perfect nature.

Having declared Himself to be above that which His enemies ascribe to Him, Allah then mentions the revelation that He sent down to His Prophets, that one must believe in with regard to the perfect attributes of Allah:

«He sends down the angels with His revelation», which brings (spiritual) life to people's hearts

«by His command to whomever among His slaves He wills» who He knows to be righteous, to carry His message.

The main idea and focus of the call of all of the Messengers is: «Proclaim that there is no god but I, so fear Me» that is, the focus is on knowing Allah (ﷻ) and affirming His oneness through the attributes of greatness which are the attributes of divinity, and worshipping Him alone, with no partner or associate. This is the message with which Allah sent down His Books and sent His Messengers.

Then Allah mentions the proof and evidence for that:



﴿خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ تَعَلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٢﴾ خَلَقَ
 الْإِنسَانَ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١﴾ وَالْأَنْعَامَ خَلَقَهَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا
 دِفْءٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٥﴾ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا جَمَالٌ حِينَ تُرْبِحُونَ وَحِينَ
 تُسْرِحُونَ ﴿٦﴾ وَتَحْمِلُ أُنْفُسَ الْكُفْمِ إِلَىٰ بَلَدٍ لَّئِنْ تَكُونُوا بِلَيْغِهِ إِلَّا بِشِقِّ الْأَنْفُسِ
 إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾ وَالْحَيْلَ وَالْغَالَ وَالْحَمِيرَ لِتَرْكَبُوهَا وَزِينَةً
 وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨﴾ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ قَصْدُ السَّبِيلِ وَمِنْهَا جَايِزٌ وَلَوْ شَاءَ
 لَهَدَيْكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٩﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ٣-٩)

- 16:3. He created the heavens and the earth for a true purpose. Exalted be He far above the partners they ascribe to Him!
- 16:4. He created man from a drop of semen, then he becomes argumentative, able to express himself.
- 16:5. And He created the livestock animals for you; they are a source of warm clothing [and blankets] and other benefits, and of their [meat] you eat.
- 16:6. You find beauty in them when you bring them home in the evening and when you drive them out to pasture [in the morning].
- 16:7. And they carry your heavy loads to lands that you could not [otherwise] reach without great hardship. Verily your Lord is indeed Compassionate, Most Merciful.
- 16:8. And [He has created] horses, mules and donkeys for you to ride and use for show, and He will yet create things of which [today] you have no knowledge.¹⁰
- 16:9. It is for Allah to show the straight path, and there are [other] paths which deviate from the right course. If He had so willed, He could have guided all of you.

This chapter is called the chapter of blessings, for at the beginning of it Allah mentions the basic blessings and at the end of it He mentions other blessings that complete those basic blessings. He tells us that He created the heavens and the earth for a true purpose, so that people may contemplate them and thus realise the greatness of their Creator and what He possesses of attributes of perfection, and so that they may know that He created them as a dwelling place for His slaves who worship Him by adhering to what He enjoined upon them of duties and laws that He sent down on the lips of His Messengers. Hence He declares Himself to be above what the polytheists ascribe

¹⁰ This may refer to other means of transportation, as suggested by some commentators.

as partners to Him, as He says: «Exalted be He far above the partners they ascribe to Him» that is, He describes Himself to be above and far greater than the partners they ascribe to Him, for He is the true God, and it is not appropriate for people to worship, love and humble themselves to any but Him.

Having mentioned the creation of the heavens and the earth, He then mentions the creation of that which is in them.

He starts with the noblest of that creation, which is man:

«He created man from a drop of semen» then He caused it to develop and grow until it became a complete human with perfect limbs and faculties both visible and invisible. Then he bestowed upon him abundant blessings until, when he reached the level of (physical and mental) completeness, he became filled with pride and self-admiration. «then he becomes argumentative, able to express himself». It may be that what is meant is that man becomes argumentative with his Lord, ungrateful to Him, arguing with His Messengers and rejecting His revelations. Thus he forgets his initial creation and the blessings that Allah has bestowed upon him, so he uses those blessings for sinful purposes. Or it may be that what is meant is that Allah created man from a drop of semen, then He causes him to pass through the stages of development until he becomes a man of reason who is able to express himself, think, develop his views, argue and discuss. So let the individual give thanks to his Lord Who caused him to develop from a stage where he had no power at all and acquire all these abilities.

«And He created the livestock animals for you» that is, He created them for your sake, for your benefit and in your interests. One of the great benefits that you derive from them is that «they are a source of warm clothing [and blankets]» because from their wool, hair and skins you make garments, furnishings and tents.

«and» you have in them «other benefits» besides those mentioned above

«and of their [meat] you eat».

﴿You find beauty in them when you bring them home in the evening and when you drive them out to pasture [in the morning]﴾ that is, at the time when they rest in the evening and at the time when they go out to pasture. That is because the beauty is not for them; rather it is for you, because you are the ones who enjoy their beauty and you also find beauty in your garments, your children and your wealth, and you admire that.

﴿And they carry your heavy loads﴾ and even carry you ﴿to lands that you could not [otherwise] reach without great hardship﴾. Allah has caused them to be of service to you, so that you ride on some of them and on others you carry whatever loads you wish to distant lands and faraway regions.

﴿Verily your Lord is indeed Compassionate, Most Merciful﴾ because He has subjected to you that which you need. So to Him be praise as befits the majesty of His Countenance, the greatness of His power and the abundance of His generosity and kindness.

﴿And [He has created] horses, mules and donkeys﴾ and caused them to be of service to you

﴿for you to ride and use for show﴾ that is, sometimes you use them for necessary purposes such as riding, and sometimes you use them for the sake of beauty and show. No mention is made of eating, because it is prohibited to eat mules and donkeys, and horses are not usually used for food; in fact it may be prohibited to slaughter them for food, for fear that they may become extinct. However it is proven in *as-Saḥeeḥayn* (the two authentic Hadith collections of Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim) that the Prophet (ﷺ) allowed the eating of horsemeat.

﴿and He will yet create things of which [today] you have no knowledge﴾ that would come about after the revelation of the Qur'an, of means of transportation in which people ride on land and sea, and in the air, and that they use for their own benefit and in their interests. They are not mentioned in specific terms, because Allah (ﷻ) did not

mention in His Book anything but that which people knew (at that time), or they knew something similar to it. As for that which had no comparison at that time, if He had mentioned it they would not have known it or understood what was meant. So He mentioned that in very general terms that may include what they knew and what they did not know. The same may be said concerning the way in which he mentions the blessings of paradise; He mentions by name those which we know or see something similar, such as palm trees, grapes and pomegranates, and He refers in general terms to that of which we know no comparison, as in the verse in which He says:

﴿In them are two kinds of every fruit.﴾ (*ar-Rahmān* 55: 52)

Similarly, here Allah mentions means of transportation that people knew (at the time of revelation) – such as horses, mules, donkeys, camels and ships – and He mentioned others in general terms, ﴿and He will yet create things of which [today] you have no knowledge﴾.

Having mentioned paths in a literal or physical sense, and stated that He created means for people to travel those paths, such as camels and the like, Allah then mentions the spiritual path that leads to Him:

﴿It is for Allah to show the straight path﴾ that is, the straight path that is the shortest and most straightforward path that leads to Allah.

As for the path that is deviant in terms of beliefs and actions, this is a description of everything that is contrary to the straight path, for it cuts one off from Allah and leads to the abode of doom. So those who are guided follow the straight path by their Lord's leave, and those who deviate follow deviant paths.

﴿If He had so willed, He could have guided all of you﴾ but He guided some by His kindness and grace, and He did not guide others, in accordance with His wisdom and justice.



﴿ هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً لَكُمْ مِنْهُ شَرَابٌ وَمِنْهُ شَجَرٌ فِيهِ تُسِيمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ يُنْبِتُ لَكُمْ بِهِ الزَّرْعَ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالنَّخِيلَ وَالْأَعْنَابَ وَمِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١١﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٠-١١)

- 16:10. It is He Who sends down water from the sky; from it you drink, and from it grow the plants on which you pasture your livestock.
- 16:11. With it He causes to grow for you grains, olives, date palms, grapes and all kinds of fruits. Verily in that there are signs for people who reflect.

Thus those who reflect conclude how perfect is the power of Allah, Who sends this water from clouds that are soft and gentle by nature, and they conclude how perfect is His mercy, as He made in the clouds a great deal of water from which they may drink, give their flocks to drink and irrigate their crops, which then bring forth abundant fruit and great blessings.



﴿ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَاتٌ بِأَمْرِ رَبِّكَ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٢)

- 16:12. And He has made the night and the day, and the sun and moon, to be of service to you, and the stars are also made subservient by His command. Verily in that there are signs for people of understanding.

That is, He has made these things subject to you for your benefit and to serve various interests, to the extent that you cannot do without them at all. So by night you sleep and rest, and by day you go out to

seek your livelihood and pursue your religious and worldly interests. From the sun and the moon there comes light which benefits the trees, crops and plants, and reduces moisture and dispels cold that may harm the land and people's bodies, and other necessities that are connected to the existence of the sun and moon.

In the sun and moon and in the stars there is adornment for the heavens, and they are used for the purpose of navigation in the dark on land and sea, for telling the time and working out dates; these are signs of varying kinds and significance. All of that is referred to here, where Allah says:

﴿Verily in that there are signs for people of understanding﴾ that is, for those who have minds that they use to reflect and ponder, for that is the purpose for which their minds are created and prepared, so that they may understand what they see and hear, unlike the heedless who gain no benefit from seeing except like animals that have no reason.



﴿وَمَا ذَرَأَ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَذَّكَّرُونَ﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٣)

16:13. And [He has made to be of service to you] all that He has created on earth of different kinds of things. Verily in that there are signs for people who pay heed.

That is, in all that Allah has created for His slaves and scattered across the surface of the earth, such as animals, trees, plants and so on, of various colours and types, there is a sign of Allah's perfect might, immense generosity and abundant grace. This indicates that none should be worshipped but Him alone, with no partner or associate.

﴿for people who pay heed﴾ that is, for those who bear in mind that which will benefit them of useful knowledge, and they reflect

upon that which Allah calls them to contemplate, so that they may pay heed to the evidence that points to Him.



﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ الْبَحْرَ لِتَأْكُلُوا مِنْهُ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا وَتَسْتَخْرِجُوا مِنْهُ
جِلِيَّةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا وَتَرَى الْفُلْكَ مَوَاجِرَ فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٤)

16:14. It is He Who has made the sea to be of service, so that you may eat from it succulent meat [fish] and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear. And you see the ships ploughing through the waves so that you may seek the bounty of Allah and so that you may give thanks.

That is, He alone, with no partner ﴿has made the sea to be of service﴾ and He has prepared it to offer you different types of benefits ﴿so that you may eat from it succulent meat﴾ this refers to the various kinds of fish that are caught from the sea ﴿and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear﴾ which add beauty to your beauty ﴿And you see the ships ploughing through the waves﴾ that is, ploughing through the huge waves with their bows, which take them from one land to another, carrying travellers, provisions and goods by means of which they seek provision and the bounty that Allah has bestowed upon them.

﴿and so that you may give thanks﴾ to the One Who made these things available for you and prepared them, and so that you may praise Allah Who has blessed you with them. To Allah be all praise and thanks, for He has given people that which is in their interests and to their benefit, more than they ask for and wish for, and He has given them some of all that they ask for. We cannot praise Him enough; rather He is as He has praised Himself.



﴿وَأَلْقَى فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَن تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَأَنْهَارًا وَسُبُلًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ وَعَلَّمَنَّاكَ وَالنَّجْمِ هُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٦﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٥-١٦)

16:15. And He has set on the earth mountains standing firm, lest it shake with you; and rivers and paths so that you may find your way,

16:16. And landmarks. And by the stars too people find their way.

Allah ﴿has set﴾ for the sake of His slaves ﴿on the earth mountains standing firm﴾. This refers to huge mountains, lest the earth move and shake with the people on it. Hence they are able to till the land, build on it and walk on it. By His mercy, He has created therein rivers which He causes to run from a distant land to another land that is desperate for water, so that they are provided with water for themselves, their flocks and their crops. There are rivers that flow on the surface of the earth, and there are rivers underground which people access by digging, until they reach what Allah has subjected for them, and bring forth the water using buckets and other equipment. By His mercy, He has created in the earth paths, that is roads which connect distant lands,

﴿so that you may find your way﴾ to those places. You may even find a land that is surrounded with mountains, but Allah has created passes and routes by means of which people may reach such lands.



﴿أَفَمَن يَخْلُقُ كَمَن لَّا يَخْلُقُ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٨﴾ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُسْرُوتُ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ لَا يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْئًا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ أَمْوَاتٌ غَيْرُ

أَحْيَاءُ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ ۚ فَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
 بِالْآخِرَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ مُنْكِرَةٌ وَهُمْ مُسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ لَاجِرْمَ أَنْتَ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا
 يُعْلِنُونَ ۗ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ ﴿١٨﴾ ﴿سورة النحل: ١٧-٢٣﴾

- 16:17. Is then He Who creates like one who cannot create? Will you not then pay heed?
- 16:18. If you [try to] count the blessings of Allah, you cannot count them all. Verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.
- 16:19. Allah knows what you conceal and what you disclose.
- 16:20. Those they call upon besides Allah create nothing; they are themselves created.
- 16:21. They are dead, lifeless; and they do not know when they will be resurrected.¹¹
- 16:22. Your God is One God. As for those who do not believe in the hereafter, their hearts refuse to know, and they are arrogant.
- 16:23. Undoubtedly Allah knows what they conceal and what they disclose. Verily He does not love the arrogant.

Having mentioned what He created of mighty entities and what He has bestowed of great blessings, Allah then tells us that no one resembles him and He has no equal or rival.

﴿Is then He Who creates﴾ all these things and does whatever He wills

﴿like one who cannot create﴾ anything, small or great.

﴿Will you not then pay heed?﴾ And acknowledge that the only One Who can create is more deserving of all worship. Just as He is one in His power of creation and control, so too He is one in His divinity and He alone is deserving of worship.

¹¹ This refers to the idols, which are inanimate and cannot hear, see or reason; they do not know when the Hour will come. (Ibn Katheer)

Just as He had no partner when He created you and others, do not ascribe to Him partners or rivals in worship; rather devote your worship sincerely to Him alone.

«If you [try to] count the blessings of Allah» without thanking Him «you cannot count them all», let alone give proper thanks, for His blessings to His slaves, both apparent and hidden, are as many as the breaths they take and the moments that pass. This applies to all kinds of blessings, both those of which people are aware and those of which they are not aware, which includes what He wards off from them of calamity. The blessings are more than can be counted.

«Verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful» for He is pleased with a little thanks from you, even though His blessings are so many. As it is the case that His mercy is vast, His generosity extends to all and His forgiveness is available to all, so His knowledge encompasses them all.

«Allah knows what you conceal and what you disclose» unlike those that are worshipped besides Him, for they «create nothing» small or great; «they are themselves created» – so how can they create anything when they themselves need to be created by Allah (ﷻ)?

Moreover, they possess no attributes of perfection at all, whether that be knowledge or anything else.

«They are dead, lifeless»; they neither hear, nor see, nor understand anything. Should such things be taken as gods besides the Lord of the worlds? How foolish the polytheists are in their thinking, and how misguided and corrupt they are, for they are misguided by the most obviously corrupt ideas and they regard as equal one who is lacking in all aspects, possesses no attributes of perfection and can do nothing, and One Who is perfect in all aspects, to Whom belong all attributes of perfection in the greatest and most complete manner. He is possessed of all-encompassing knowledge, immense power and abundant mercy that fills the entire universe; to Him be all praise and

glory, for He is possessed of might and greatness that none of His creation can fully comprehend.

«Your God is One God»; He is Allah, the One, the Self-Sustaining, and there is none like unto Him. People of faith and reason have great awe and veneration for Him in their hearts, they love Him greatly and devote to Him all that they can of both physical and financial acts of worship. All their feelings are attached to Him and all their physical deeds are devoted to Him. They praise Him by affirming His most beautiful names and attributes, and His sublime actions.

«As for those who do not believe in the hereafter, their hearts refuse to know» this great fact which no one denies except the most utterly ignorant and stubborn of people; this fact is the oneness of Allah (tawḥeed).

«and they are arrogant» that is, they are too arrogant to worship Him.

«Undoubtedly» that is, indeed

«Allah knows what they conceal and what they disclose» of evil deeds

«Verily He does not love the arrogant»; rather He hates them immensely and will requite them according to their deeds.

«...Verily, those who are too arrogant to worship Me will enter hell in humiliation.» (Ghāfir 40: 60)



﴿ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ مَاذَا أُنزِلَ رَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا أَسْطِيرَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٤﴾ لِيَحْمِلُوا أَوْزَارَهُمْ كَامِلَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمِنْ أَوْزَارِ الَّذِينَ يُضِلُّونَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ أَلِيسَ مَا يَزُرُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ قَدْ مَكَرَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَأَنَّ اللَّهَ بَيِّنَهُمْ مِنَ الْفَوَاحِشِ فخرَ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّقْفُ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَأَتَنَّهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ ثُمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُخْزِبُهُمْ وَيَقُولُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِمْ أَلَيْسَ لَكُمْ تُسَلِّمُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ فِيهِمْ قَالَ الَّذِينَ أوتُوا الْعِلْمَ إِنَّ الْخِزْيَ الْيَوْمَ وَالسُّوءَ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٧﴾ الَّذِينَ

تَوَفَّنَهُمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ ظَالِمِيۡٓ اَنْفُسِهِمْۙ فَالْقَوْمُ اَسٰٓءَ مَا كُنَّا نَعْمَلُۙ مِنْ سُوۡءِۙ بَلٰٓءٍۙ اِنَّ اِلٰهَۙ
 عَلِيۡمٌۙ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوۡنَ ﴿۲۸﴾ فَاَدْخَلُوۡا اَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ خٰلِدِيۡنَ فِيۡهَاۙ فَلَيْسَ مَثْوٰٓى
 الْمُتَكَبِّرِيۡنَ ﴿۲۹﴾ (سورة النحل: ۲۴-۲۹)

- 16:24. When they are asked: What has your Lord sent down? they say: Tales of the ancients.
- 16:25. Hence on the Day of Resurrection they will bear the full weight of their own burdens, as well as some of the burdens of those without knowledge, whom they misled. Miserable indeed will be their burden.
- 16:26. Those who came before them [also] plotted and planned, but Allah struck at the foundations of what they built and the roof fell down on them from above; the punishment came upon them from a direction they did not expect.
- 16:27. Then on the Day of Resurrection He will disgrace them and will say: Where are My [so-called] partners for whose sake you used to oppose [the Prophets and the believers]? Those who were given knowledge will say: Verily today disgrace and punishment will befall the disbelievers,
- 16:28. Those whose souls the angels take [in death] when they are wronging themselves. They will offer their submission, saying: We did not do anything wrong. [It will be said to them:] Nay; verily Allah has full knowledge of what you used to do;
- 16:29. So enter the gates of hell, to abide therein forever. Wretched indeed is the abode of the arrogant!

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us how vehemently the polytheists rejected His revelations:

«When they are asked: What has your Lord sent down?» That is, if they are asked about the Qur'an and the revelation, which is the greatest blessing that Allah has bestowed upon His slaves: What do you say about it? Do you appreciate and acknowledge this blessing,

or are you ungrateful and stubbornly reject it? The answer they give is the worst and silliest answer, because they describe it as «Tales of the ancients» that is, lies fabricated by Muhammad (ﷺ) about Allah, and it is no more than stories of the earlier peoples that have been handed down from generation to generation; some of them are true and some of them are false. They gave this opinion and called their followers to adopt it; hence they carry their own burden and the burden of all those who follow them until the Day of Resurrection.

«as well as some of the burdens of those without knowledge, whom they misled» that is, some of the burden of those blind followers who had no knowledge except what they called them to, so they will bear the sin of what they called them to. As for those who had knowledge, each one will bear his own burden of sin, because he knew what they knew.

«Miserable indeed will be their burden» that is, how miserable will be the burden that will weigh heavily upon them, the burden of their own sin and the sin of those whom they led astray.

«Those who came before them [also] plotted and planned» against their Messengers: they came up with all kinds of elaborate tricks to reject the message they brought.

«but Allah struck at the foundations of what they built» that is, He dealt with the matter at the root.

«and the roof fell down on them from above» and what they had plotted and planned became the punishment that was inflicted upon them.

«the punishment came upon them from a direction they did not expect». That was because they thought that this elaborate plot would benefit them and protect them from the punishment, but their punishment came through that which they had built and for which they had laid the foundation (of specious arguments).

This is a beautiful example of how Allah foiled the plots of His enemies: they thought and reflected on what the Messengers

had wrought, after they decided to reject it, and they came up with principles and rules based on falsehood, to which they referred in order to refute what the Messengers had brought. They also used tricks to cause harm to the Messengers and those who followed them, but their plot became a disaster for them and their planning became the cause of their ruin and destruction, because their plot was evil:

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

That is the case in this world, but the punishment of the hereafter is another matter. Hence Allah says here: ﴿Then on the Day of Resurrection He will disgrace them﴾ that is, He will put them to shame before all people and will expose their lies and fabrications against Him.

﴿and will say: Where are My [so-called] partners for whose sake you used to oppose [the Prophets and the believers]?﴾ That is, you fought and showed enmity towards Allah and His party for their sake, and you claimed that they were partners to Allah. When He asks them this question, they will have no response but to admit that they were misguided and to acknowledge that they were stubborn, so they will say:

﴿...They are lost from us. And they will testify against themselves that they were disbelievers.﴾ (al-A'râf 7: 37)

﴿Those who were given knowledge﴾ that is, the devoted scholars ﴿will say: Verily today﴾ that is, on the Day of Resurrection ﴿disgrace and punishment will befall the disbelievers﴾.

This highlights the virtue of the scholars, for they are the speakers of truth in this world and will be the speakers of truth on the Day of Resurrection, for their words carry weight before Allah and before His creation.

Then Allah tells us what will happen to them at the time of death, and on the Day of Resurrection:

﴿Those whose souls the angels take [in death] when they are wronging themselves﴾ that is, they take their souls when they are in that

state, when they have committed a great deal of wrongdoing and transgression. It is known what the wrongdoers will face on the Day of Resurrection, of all kinds of punishment, disgrace and humiliation.

«They will offer their submission» they will surrender and will deny that which they used to worship besides Allah, saying: «We did not do anything wrong». But it will be said to them:

«Nay» you did do wrong, for «verily Allah has full knowledge of what you used to do». So their denial will be to no avail. This will occur at some stage of the Day of Resurrection; they will deny what they used to do in this world, thinking that this will benefit them. But when their physical faculties testify against them and what they used to do becomes clear, they will admit it and confess. Hence they will not enter hell until they acknowledge their sins.

«So enter the gates of hell» – all those who committed a particular deed will enter through the appropriate gate.

«Wretched indeed is the abode of the arrogant!» Namely the fire of hell, for it is the abode of sorrow and regret, a place of misery, pain, distress, anguish and the wrath of the Ever-Living, the Self-Sustaining and All-Sustaining. The painful punishment will never be reduced or alleviated, not even for a single day, for the Most Merciful Lord will have turned away from them and caused them to taste the grievous punishment.



﴿ وَقِيلَ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا مَاذَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ قَالُوا خَيْرٌ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ وَلِدَارُ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ وَلَنِعْمَ دَارُ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾ جَنَّاتٌ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا يُجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ لَهُمْ فِيهَا مَا يَشَاءُونَ كَذَلِكَ يَجْزِي اللَّهُ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ الَّذِينَ نَفَقْتُمْ الْمَلِيكَةَ طَيِّبِينَ يَقُولُونَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾

- 16:30. But when it is said to those who fear Allah: What has your Lord sent down? they say: All that is good. For those who do good, there is good [reward] in this world, and the abode of the hereafter is better, and how excellent is the abode of those who fear Allah,
- 16:31. Gardens of perpetual abode, which they will enter, through which rivers flow. There they will have all that they wish for. Thus does Allah reward those who fear Him,
- 16:32. Those whose souls the angels take [in death] in a state of purity, saying [to them]: Peace be upon you; enter paradise as a reward for your deeds.

Having mentioned what the disbelievers said about the revelation, Allah now tells us what the pious said, and that they acknowledged and affirmed that what Allah had sent down was indeed a great blessing and immense good that Allah had bestowed upon His slaves. So they accepted and welcomed that blessing, and they submitted to Allah and give thanks to Him for it, then they learned it and acted in accordance with it.

«For those who do good» in worshipping Allah (ﷻ) and showing kindness to the slaves of Allah,

«there is good [reward] in this world» namely abundant provision, a life of ease, reassurance, security and happiness.

«and the abode of the hereafter is better» than this world and all that is in it of various kinds of pleasures and desirable things. For the joy of this life is little and is filled with troubles, and it will soon come to an end, unlike the joy of the hereafter. Hence Allah says: «and the abode of the hereafter is better, and how excellent is the abode of those who fear Allah».

«Gardens of perpetual abode, which they will enter, through which rivers flow. There they will have all that they wish for» that is, no matter what they wish for and want, they will get it in the most perfect

and complete manner. They will not be able to ask for any kind of joy that would bring them delight and immense pleasure, but it will be granted to them. Hence Allah will give the people of paradise all that they wish for, to the extent that He will even prompt them to ask for some kinds of joy that never crossed their minds.

Blessed be He Whose generosity never ends and to Whose abundance there is no limit; there is nothing like unto Him in His essence, attributes and deeds, and in how these attributes are manifested, and in the greatness of His sovereignty and dominion.

﴿Thus does Allah reward those who fear Him﴾ and fear His wrath and punishment by fulfilling what He has enjoined upon them of obligatory beliefs, actions and words having to do with His rights and the rights of His slaves, and by refraining from that which Allah has prohibited to them.

﴿Those whose souls the angels take [in death]﴾ when they are persisting in that fear of Allah ﴿in a state of purity﴾ that is, when they are pure and free of any shortcomings or impurity that could reach them and undermine their faith. So their hearts are content with knowing and loving Allah, their tongues constantly remember and praise Him, and their physical faculties are constantly focused on acts of obedience and turning to Him.

﴿Those whose souls the angels take [in death] in a state of purity, saying [to them]: Peace be upon you﴾ that is, the perfect greeting is for you, and safety from all ills, for now you are safe from all that you may dislike.

﴿enter paradise as a reward for your deeds﴾ which includes your faith in Allah and submission to His command. Good deeds are the means of admission to paradise and salvation from hell, and they were able to do those good deeds by the grace and mercy of Allah, not by their own strength and power.



﴿ هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ أَمْرُ رَبِّكَ كَذَلِكَ فَعَلَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ فَأَصَابَهُمْ سَيِّئَاتُ مَا عَمِلُوا وَحَاقَ بِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٣٣-٣٤)

- 16:33. Are they [the disbelievers] waiting for the angels to come to them, or for the decree of your Lord to come to pass? Likewise did those who came before them. It is not Allah Who wronged them, but it was they who wronged themselves.
- 16:34. The evil consequences of their deeds overtook them, and the very thing [punishment] they used to ridicule overwhelmed them.

Here Allah (ﷻ) asks: Are these people to whom the revelations came but they did not believe, and they were exhorted but they did not pay heed, waiting ﴿for the angels to come to them﴾ to take their souls in death

﴿or for the decree of your Lord to come to pass﴾ namely the punishment that will befall them, for they deserve that it should befall them?

﴿Likewise did those who came before them﴾ – they rejected and disbelieved, then they did not believe, until the punishment came upon them.

﴿It is not Allah Who wronged them﴾ when He punished them ﴿but it was they who wronged themselves﴾ for they were created to worship Allah, so that they might attain His pleasure and admittance to paradise, but they wronged themselves and abandoned the purpose for which they were created, and exposed themselves to permanent humiliation and eternal misery.

﴿The evil consequences of their deeds overtook them﴾ that is, the punishment that resulted from their deeds

«and the very thing [punishment] they used to ridicule overwhelmed them» – when their Messengers told them about the punishment, they would ridicule it and mock those who told them of it, so the very thing that they used to mock overwhelmed them.



﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا عَبَدْنَا مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ نَحْنُ وَلَا آبَاؤُنَا وَلَا حَرَمْنَا مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ كَذَلِكَ فَعَلَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَهَلْ عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا أَلْبَغُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٣٥)

16:35. Those who ascribe partners to Allah say: If Allah had so willed, we would not have worshipped anything besides Him – neither we nor our fathers – and we would not have declared anything forbidden without His sanction. Likewise did those who came before them. Is the duty of the Messengers anything other than conveying the message in the clearest way?

That is, the polytheists tried to justify their polytheism by saying that it was the will of Allah, and that if Allah had not willed it, they would not have ascribed partners to Him or prohibited any of the livestock animals that He had permitted, such as the *baḥeerah*, *waṣeelah*, *hām*,¹² and so on, without His sanction. This was a false argument, because if that were true, Allah would not have punished

¹² These words refer to certain categories of camels to which certain taboos were applied during the *jāhiliyah*.

Baḥeerah: a she-camel whose milk was dedicated to the idols.

Sā'ibah: a she-camel that was let loose for the sake of their false gods and no load was to be carried on it.

Waṣeelah: a she-camel that produced female offspring the first and second times she gave birth, with no male offspring in between; she was also let loose for the sake of the idols.

those who came before them, when they ascribed partners to Him and He punished them most severely. If He had liked that action on their part, He would not have punished them. But their only aim was to reject what the Messengers had brought. Otherwise they were fully aware that there was no justification that they could present before Allah, for Allah had issued commands and prohibitions to them, and had granted them the ability to do what He had enjoined upon them, and had given them the strength and willpower from which their deeds stemmed. So their basing their justification on the divine will and decree was utter falsehood. Moreover, everyone realises, on the basis of his common sense, that man is able to do whatever he wants, without anyone stopping him. So they combined disbelief in Allah and His Messengers with rejection of the conclusion that was based on rational thinking and common sense.

«Is the duty of the Messengers anything other than conveying the message in the clearest way?» that reaches the heart, so that no one has any excuse before Allah. If the Messengers have conveyed the commands and prohibitions of their Lord to them, but they used the divine decree as an excuse for not responding to the call, then the Messengers have no control over the matter; rather the people's reckoning is with Allah (۞).



﴿وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ ۗ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ هَدَىٰ اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَالَةُ ۚ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكذِبِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ٣٦-٣٧) ﴿٣٧﴾ يَهْدِي مَنْ يُضِلُّ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَّاصِرِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾﴾

Hâm: a stallion camel that was let loose for the sake of the idols after siring a particular number of offspring, and was not required to carry any load.

- 16:36. Indeed We sent to every nation a Messenger [saying]: Worship Allah [alone] and shun false gods. Among them were some whom Allah guided, and some for whom misguidance became inevitable. So travel through the land and see what was the fate of the deniers.
- 16:37. Though you [O Prophet] may be eager for them to be guided, Allah does not guide those whom He leaves to go astray, and they will have no helpers.

Here Allah tells us that His proof has been established against all nations; there is no nation, earlier or later, but Allah sent a Messenger to them, and all the Messengers brought the same call and the same religion, which is worship of Allah alone with no partner or associate. ﴿Worship Allah [alone] and shun false gods﴾. The nations fell into two categories with regard to their response to the call of the Messengers or their lack thereof:

﴿Among them were some whom Allah guided﴾ so they followed the Messengers in belief and deed
 ﴿and some for whom misguidance became inevitable﴾ so they followed the path of error.
 ﴿So travel through the land﴾ either physically or by thinking and reasoning
 ﴿and see what was the fate of the deniers﴾, for by doing so you will see wonders; you will not see any who disbelieved but the consequences for them led to destruction.

﴿Though you [O Prophet] may be eager for them to be guided﴾ and strive your utmost for that purpose
 ﴿Allah does not guide those whom He leaves to go astray﴾ and even if he took all measures, no one can guide him except Allah
 ﴿and they will have no helpers﴾ to protect them from the punishment of Allah.



﴿وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَا يَبْعَثُ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَمُوتُ بَلَى وَعَدَّا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا وَلَكِنَّ
 أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي يُخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ
 كَفَرُوا أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَاذِبِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾ إِنَّمَا قَوْلُنَا لِشَيْءٍ إِذَا أَرَدْنَاهُ أَنْ نَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ
 ﴿٤٠﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ٣٨-٤٠)

- 16:38. They swear their most solemn oaths by Allah that Allah will not raise up those who die. Nay, it is a promise by which He is bound, but most people do not realise.
- 16:39. [They will be raised up] so that He may make clear to them that concerning which they differ, and so that those who disbelieved may realise that they were lying.
- 16:40. When We will something, We merely say to it, 'Be!' and it is.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the polytheists who rejected His Messenger (ﷺ), that ﴿They swear their most solemn oaths by Allah﴾ that is, they swear so as to affirm that the promise of Allah is false, and that Allah will not resurrect the dead, and that He is not able to bring them back to life after they have turned to dust. But Allah (ﷻ) says, affirming that they are lying: ﴿Nay﴾, He will resurrect them and gather them on a day concerning which there is no doubt.

﴿it is a promise by which He is bound﴾ and He will not break it or change it

﴿but most people do not realise﴾ – as part of their immense ignorance, they deny the resurrection and the requital.

Then He mentions the wisdom behind the requital and the resurrection: ﴿[They will be raised up] so that He may make clear to them that concerning which they differ﴾ of issues both major and minor, and He will explain and clarify the facts.

«and so that those who disbelieved may realise that they were lying» when they see their deeds result in regret, and they realise that the gods on whom they called besides Allah will avail them nothing, when the decree of your Lord (namely His punishment) comes to pass, and they see what they used to worship become fuel for hell, for the sun and moon will be rolled up, the stars will be scattered, and it will become clear to those who worshipped them that they were subjugated slaves of Allah who were in need of Him at all times. That is not difficult or hard for Allah, for when He wills something, He merely says to it, 'Be!' and it is, without any objection or refusal; rather it comes to pass in accordance with His will.



﴿وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُوا لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً ۗ وَلَا جَزَاءَ لَآخِرَةٍ أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾﴾ (سورة

النحل: ٤١-٤٢)

- 16:41. To those who migrated in the cause of Allah after having been wronged, We will surely grant them good in this world, and verily the reward of the hereafter will be greater, if only they knew.
- 16:42. [They are those] who patiently persevere and put their trust in their Lord.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the virtue of those believers who were tested

«those who migrated in the cause of Allah» that is, for His sake and seeking His pleasure

«after having been wronged» as they were subjected to persecution and harm by their people, who put pressure on them in order to bring them back to disbelief and polytheism. So they left behind their

homeland and their loved ones, and moved away out of obedience to the Most Gracious. Allah tells us that they will have two rewards: reward in this world in the form of abundant provision and a life of ease that they saw with their own eyes, after they migrated, prevailed over their enemies, conquered new lands, acquired immense booty from them and became wealthy; Allah gave them good things in this world.

﴿and verily the reward of the hereafter﴾ which Allah has promised them on the lips of His Messenger (ﷺ)

﴿will be greater﴾ than the reward of this world, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Those who believe, migrate, and strive and fight in Allah's cause, offering their wealth and their lives, are of a higher rank before Allah. It is they who will triumph. Their Lord gives them glad tidings of mercy from Him and His good pleasure, and of gardens in which eternal bliss will be theirs, to abide therein forever. Verily with Allah there is an immense reward.﴾ (at-Tawbah 9: 20-22)

﴿if only they knew﴾ that is, if only they had certain knowledge of what there is with Allah of reward for those who believe in Him and migrate in His cause, not one of them would have stayed behind.

Then Allah describes His close friends (*awliyā'*): ﴿[They are those] who patiently persevere﴾ in heeding the commands and prohibitions of Allah, and in accepting the decree of Allah, even if it is painful, and in bearing the harm and trials that they suffer in His cause.

﴿and put their trust in their Lord﴾ that is, they rely on Him in doing what He loves; they do not rely on themselves. Thus they attain success and their affairs become sound, for patience and trust in Allah are the prerequisites for success in all affairs. No one misses out on anything good except because of lack of patience and lack of effort in what is expected of him, or because of failing to put one's trust in Allah and rely upon Him.



﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُوْحِيَ إِلَيْهِمْ فَتَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالزُّبُرِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَنْفَكِّرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ٤٣-٤٤)

16:43. We did not send before you [O Muhammad] any but men to whom We gave revelation. So [O people] ask those who have knowledge,¹³ if you do not know.

16:44. [We sent them] with clear signs and the scriptures, and We have sent down to you the Reminder [the Qur'an], so that you may explain to the people what has been sent down to them and so that they may reflect.

That is, you are not unprecedented among the Messengers, for We did not send angels before you; rather We sent men who were perfect, not women

﴿to whom We gave revelation﴾ of laws and rulings, and this was by His bounty and kindness towards people, without any effort on their part.

﴿So [O people] ask those who have knowledge﴾ of the earlier scriptures

﴿if you do not know﴾ the stories of the earlier peoples and you are not sure whether Allah sent men as Messengers before.

So ask of the people who have knowledge of that, to whom the earlier scriptures were sent down, for they learned them and understood them, and it is established according to all of them that Allah only sent men to whom He granted revelation, from among the people of the

¹³ This may refer to: Jewish and Christian scholars who have knowledge of the previous scriptures; Muslim scholars who have knowledge of the Qur'an; or those who have knowledge of the history of earlier nations.

cities. The general meaning of this verse points to implicit praise for people of knowledge, and indicates that the highest type of knowledge is knowledge of the revealed Book of Allah, as Allah instructs those who do not know to refer to them in all cases. It also implies praise for people of knowledge, as Allah instructed us to ask them so that the ignorant one may do what is required of him. This indicates that Allah entrusted them with His revelation and that they are enjoined to purify themselves and strive to attain attributes of perfection.

The best people of knowledge are those who have knowledge of this Holy Qur'an, for they are people of knowledge in a true sense and are more deserving of this title than others. Hence Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿and We have sent down to you the Reminder [the Qur'an]﴾ in which there is mention of what people need to know about religious and worldly issues,

﴿so that you may explain to the people what has been sent down to them﴾ this includes explanation of the words and explanation of the meanings

﴿and so that they may reflect﴾ upon it, and learn some of its treasures and knowledge, according to their ability and focus on it.



﴿ أَفَأَمِنَ الَّذِينَ مَكَرُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ أَنْ يَخْسِفَ اللَّهُ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضَ أَوْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ
حَيْثُ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ أَوْ يَأْخُذَهُمْ فِي تَقْلِبِهِمْ فَمَا هُمْ بِمُعْجِزِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ أَوْ يَأْخُذَهُمْ عَلَى
تَخَوُّفٍ فَإِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٤٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٤٥-٤٧)

16:45. Do then those who devise evil plots feel sure that Allah will not cause the earth to swallow them up, or that the punishment will not come upon them from a direction they do not expect?

16:46. Or that He will not seize them suddenly in the midst of their comings and goings, and they can never escape it?

16:47. Or that He will not seize them when they are apprehensive of the impending calamity? Verily your Lord is Most Compassionate, Most Merciful

Here Allah seeks to alarm the disbelievers who commit various kinds of sins, by reminding them that the punishment may come upon them suddenly when they are not aware. The punishment may come upon them from above, or from beneath them, as in the case of a landslide and the like, or it may come upon them whilst they are going about their business and not thinking about it at all, or it may come upon them when they are apprehensive about the punishment. They cannot escape Allah in any of these scenarios; rather they are under His control and their forelocks are in His Hand.

But He is Most Compassionate, Most Merciful and He does not hasten the punishment for the sinners; rather He gives them respite, grants them well-being and bestows provision upon them, whilst they offend Him and His close friends. Yet despite that He opens the gates of repentance to them, calls them to give up the bad deeds that harm them, and promises in return for that the best honours and forgiveness for what they have committed of sins. So let the sinner feel ashamed before his Lord, for the blessings of Allah are descending upon him at all times whilst his sins are ascending to his Lord at all times. Let him realise that Allah gives respite but He does not let the sinner get away with it, for when He seizes the sinner, His grasp is the grasp of One Who is Almighty, Omnipotent. Let him repent to Allah and turn back to Him in all his affairs, for He is Most Compassionate, Most Merciful.

Let him hasten to seek His all-encompassing mercy and great kindness, and let him follow the paths that lead to the grace of the Most Merciful Lord, by fearing Him and striving to do that which He loves and is pleased with.



﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَيَنْفَعِيهِمْ ظِلُّهُ، عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَالشَّمَائِلِ سُجَّدًا لِلَّهِ وَهُمْ دَاخِرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ دَابَّةٍ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَهُمْ لَا يُسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾﴾ (سورة

النحل: ٤٨-٥٠)

- 16:48. Have they not seen the things that Allah has created, and how their shadows move to the right and the left, prostrating to Allah in all humility?
- 16:49. To Allah prostrates all that is in the heavens and every living creature on earth, as do the angels, and they are not arrogant.
- 16:50. They fear their Lord above them, and they do what they are commanded.

«Have they» that is, those who doubt the oneness, greatness and perfection of their Lord

«not seen the things that Allah has created» that is, all of His creations and how their shadows move

«to the right and the left, prostrating to Allah» that is, they all prostrate to their Lord, humbling themselves before His greatness and majesty

«in all humility» that is, they are humbled, under His control and subjugation; their forelocks are in the Hand of Allah and under His control.

«To Allah prostrates all that is in the heavens and every living creature on earth» humans and animals alike

«as do the angels» – the angels are mentioned specifically after all creatures have been mentioned in general terms, because of their virtue and noble nature, and because they worship Allah a great deal. Hence He says: «and they are not arrogant» that is, they do not disdain to worship Him, despite their large numbers and their great size and power, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿The Messiah would never disdain to be a slave to Allah, nor would the angels who are close to Him...﴾ (an-Nisā' 4: 172)

﴿They fear their Lord above them﴾. Having praised them for their constant obedience and submission to Allah, He then praises them for their fear of Allah Who is above them in terms of His essence, might and perfect attributes, and they are beneath Him, so they are humble and subjugated.

﴿and they do what they are commanded﴾ that is, no matter what Allah (ﷻ) commands them to do, they obey His command willingly.

The prostration of created beings to Allah is of two types. The first is involuntary prostration, which points to His attributes of perfection and majesty; this is applicable to all creatures, believers and disbelievers, righteous and evildoers, humans and animals. The second is voluntary prostration, which is applicable only to His close friends and believing slaves, among the angels and others.



﴿ وَقَالَ اللَّهُ لَا نَتَّخِذُ إِلَّا الْهَمِينَ أَنْبِيَاءَ إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ فَإِنِّي فَارِهِبُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ وَلَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَهُ الدِّينُ وَاصِبًا أَفَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَمَا يَكُفُّ عَنْهُ مَنْ تَعَمَّرَ فَعِنَ اللَّهُ تُرَادًا إِذَا مَسَّكُمْ الضَّرُّ فَالِيهِ تَجْتَرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ تُرَادًا إِذَا كَشَفَ الضَّرَّ عَنْكُمْ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنْكُمْ بِرَبِّهِمْ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ لِيَكْفُرُوا بِمَا آتَيْنَاهُمْ فَتَمَتَّعُوا فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة

النحل: ٥١-٥٥)

- 16:51. Allah has said: Do not take two gods [for worship], for He is but One God, so fear none but Me.
- 16:52. To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth, and constant obedience is due to Him alone. Will you then fear anyone other than Allah?
- 16:53. Whatever blessing you have, it is from Allah, then when misfortune afflicts you, it is to Him that you cry out for help.

- 16:54. Yet when He has relieved you of your misfortune, some of you ascribe partners to their Lord,
- 16:55. Showing their ingratitude for what We have given them. Take your pleasure now, but you will soon know the consequences.

Here Allah instructs us to worship Him alone, with no partner or associate, because He is the only One Who bestows blessings and there is no god but Him.

«Do not take two gods [for worship]» that is, do not ascribe a partner in divinity to Him when He «is but One God», One in His great attributes and unique in all His actions.

Just as He is One in His essence, names, attributes and actions, so you should worship Him alone. Hence He says: «so fear none but Me», obey My commands and heed My prohibitions, without associating any of My creation with Me, for they are under the control of Allah (ﷻ).

«To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth, and constant obedience is due to Him alone» that is, devotion, worship and humility at all times are due to Allah alone, so people are required to be sincere towards Allah and to be true slaves to Him.

«Will you then fear anyone other than Allah» among the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth? For they do not possess any power to cause you harm or benefit you. It is only Allah Who gives and bestows kindness.

«Whatever blessing you have» visible or invisible

«it is from Allah» and no one else has any part in that.

«then when misfortune afflicts you» such as poverty, sickness or hardship

«it is to Him that you cry out for help» that is, you raise your voices, calling upon Him and beseeching Him, because you know that no one wards off harm and hardship except Him, Who alone gives you what

you love and wards off what you hate. Therefore none is deserving of worship except Him alone.

But many people wrong themselves by denying the blessings that Allah has bestowed upon them. When He saved them from hardship, at times of ease they begin to ascribe some of His helpless creation as partners to Him. Hence He says:

﴿Showing their ingratitude for what We have given them﴾ that is, when We saved them from hardship and difficulty.

﴿Take your pleasure now﴾ for a little while, in this world

﴿but you will soon know the consequences﴾ of your disbelief.



﴿وَجَعَلُونَ لِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ نَصِيبًا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ ۗ تَاللَّهِ لَشَتَّىٰ عَمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾ وَجَعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ الْبَنَاتَ سُبْحَانَهُ وَلَهُمْ مَا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِالْأُنثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَاطِمٌ ﴿٥٨﴾ يَتَوَارَىٰ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مِنْ سُوءِ مَا بُشِّرَ بِهِ ۚ أَيَسْئَلُهُ عَلَىٰ هُونٍ ۖ أَمْ يَدُسُّهُ فِي التُّرَابِ ۗ أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾ لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ مَثَلُ السَّوْءِ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ الْمَثَلُ الْأَعْلَىٰ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٦٠﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ٥٦-٦٠)

- 16:56. They allocate a portion of the sustenance We have given them to those whose reality they do not even know. By Allah, you will surely be called to account for the lies you have been fabricating.
- 16:57. And they ascribe daughters to Allah – glory be to Him! – but for themselves they choose what they desire [sons].
- 16:58. When news is brought to one of them of [the birth of] a female infant, his face darkens and he is filled with inward grief.
- 16:59. He hides away from people because of the bad news he has been given. Should he keep her and feel disgraced or bury her in the dust? How evil is their estimate of Allah!
- 16:60. Those who do not believe in the hereafter have evil attributes, and to Allah belong the most sublime attributes, for He is the Almighty, Most Wise.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the ignorance and wrongdoing of the polytheists, and how they fabricated lies against Allah, for they allocated to their idols that knew nothing and could not bring any benefit or ward off any harm, a share of that which Allah had provided and blessed them with. They used the provision He had bestowed to associate others with Him and to draw closer to carved idols, as Allah (ﷻ) tells us elsewhere:

﴿They allocated to Allah a portion of that which He created of crops and livestock. They say: This is for Allah – or so they claim – and this is for our partners [that we ascribe to Him]. Then, that which is allocated for their ‘partners’ never reaches Allah, while that which is allocated for Allah does reach their ‘partners’. How ill they judge.﴾
(*al-An‘ām* 6: 136)

﴿you will surely be called to account for the lies you have been fabricating﴾ and it will be said:

﴿...Has Allah given you leave to do so, or do you fabricate lies against Allah? What do those who fabricate lies against Allah think about the Day of Resurrection?...﴾ (*Yoonus* 10: 59-60)

Allah will punish them severely for that.

﴿And they ascribe daughters to Allah﴾ because they described the angels who are close to Allah as being His daughters

﴿but for themselves they choose what they desire﴾ namely sons, because they deeply hated to have daughters

﴿When news is brought to one of them of [the birth of] a female infant, his face darkens﴾ with distress at what has befallen him

﴿and he is filled with inward grief﴾ that is, he is filled with grief and sorrow if he is given news of an infant daughter, to the extent that he feels ashamed before his fellow men and tries to hide away because of this bad news. Then later on he thinks, on the basis of corrupt ideas, what he should do about this daughter of whose birth he has been informed.

«Should he keep her and feel disgraced» should he let her live, and not kill her, and put up with humiliation and disgrace?

«or bury her in the dust» that is, bury her alive. This is a reference to female infanticide for which Allah condemned the polytheists.

«How evil is their estimate of Allah!» for they ascribe to Him that which is not befitting to His Majesty, as they ascribe offspring to Him.

But they did not stop there; rather they ascribe the inferior of the two to Him, namely female offspring which they themselves disdained and hated. So how could they ascribe it to Allah (ﷻ)? What a bad judgement this was on their part.

Because this was one of the negative attributes that His enemies, the polytheists, ascribed to Him, Allah (ﷻ) says here: «Those who do not believe in the hereafter have evil attributes» that is, attributes of imperfection and shortcomings

«and to Allah belong the most sublime attributes» – this refers to every attribute of perfection, and whatever perfection exists, Allah is more deserving of it, without that implying any kind of shortcoming. To Him belong the most sublime attributes in the hearts of His close friends, which means veneration, respect and love, turning to Him and knowing Him.

«for He is the Almighty» Who subjugates all things and to Whom all creatures submit

«Most Wise» Who does what is appropriate. So He does not enjoin or do anything but that for which He may be praised and extolled for the divine perfection that is implied thereby.



﴿وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِظُلْمِهِمْ مَا تَرَكُوا عَلَيْهَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۖ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَجِزُونَ سَاعَةً وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ٦١)

16:61. If Allah were to take humankind to task for their wrongdoing, He would not leave on [the earth] a single living creature, but He gives them respite for an appointed term. Then when their appointed time comes, they will not be able to delay it for a single moment or bring it forward.

Having mentioned what the wrongdoers fabricated against Him, Allah (ﷻ) here mentions the perfect nature of His forbearance and patience:

«If Allah were to take humankind to task for their wrongdoing», no more and no less

«He would not leave on [the earth] a single living creature» because He would destroy those who committed the sin as well as others of all types of creatures and animals, for the bad consequences of sin may lead to destruction of crops and livestock.

«but He gives them respite for an appointed term» that is, He does not hasten the punishment for them until an appointed time, which is the Day of Resurrection.

«Then when their appointed time comes, they will not be able to delay it for a single moment or bring it forward» so let them beware, so long as they are still within the respite period, before the time comes when there will no longer be any respite.



﴿وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ مَا يَكْرَهُونَ وَتَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُهُمُ الْكَذِبَ أَنَّ لَهُمُ الْحُسْنَ لَا جُرْمَ أَنْ هُمْ النَّارُ وَأَنْتُمْ مُقَرَّبُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ تَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمَمٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَرَزَنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمُ الْيَوْمَ وَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٣﴾﴾ (سورة النحل):

(٦٣-٦٢)

16:62. They ascribe to Allah that which they dislike [for themselves], and their tongues assert the falsehood that the better things will

be theirs. Without a doubt for them is the fire, and they will be hastened on into it.

- 16:63. By Allah, We indeed sent [Messengers] to nations before you, but Shayṭān made their deeds fair-seeming to them [the evildoers]. He is their ally today, and theirs will be a painful punishment.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that the polytheists ﴿ascribe to Allah that which they dislike [for themselves]﴾ of daughters and abhorrent attributes. This refers to the association of others with Allah, by devoting some acts of worship to created beings who are slaves of Allah. Just as they would hate for their slaves – who are created beings just like them – to be their partners and share in that which Allah has provided to them, how can they ascribe partners to Allah from among His slaves?

﴿and﴾ in addition to this serious offence, ﴿their tongues assert the falsehood that the better things will be theirs﴾ that is, that they will be in a good situation in this world and the hereafter. But Allah refutes that claim by saying: ﴿Without a doubt for them is the fire, and they will be hastened on into it﴾ that is, they will be rushed into it and will remain therein, and will never come out of it.

Then Allah (ﷻ) highlights to His Messenger (ﷺ) that he is not the first Messenger to be rejected, as He says: ﴿By Allah, We indeed sent [Messengers] to nations before you﴾, calling them to affirm the oneness of Allah ﴿but Shayṭān made their deeds fair-seeming to them﴾, so they rejected the Messengers and claimed that what they were following was the truth that would save them from all harm, and that what the Messengers were calling to was the opposite of that. When the Shayṭān made their deeds fair-seeming to them, he became their ally, so they obeyed him and followed him and took him as their ally.

﴿...Will you then take him and his progeny as allies instead of Me, even though they are enemies to you? What a wretched exchange for the wrongdoers!﴾ (al-Kahf 18: 50)

﴿and theirs will be a painful punishment﴾ in the hereafter, because they turned away from being allies of the Most Gracious and were content to be allies of the Shayṭān; therefore they deserve that humiliating punishment.



﴿وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا لِتُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ وَاللَّهُ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ٦٤-٦٥)

16:64. We have only sent down the Book to you so that you may make clear to them that wherein they differ, and so that it may be guidance and mercy to people who believe.

16:65. Allah sends down from the sky water whereby He gives life to an earth that is dead. Verily in that is a sign for people who listen [attentively].

That is, a sign for people who listen to the exhortation and admonishment of Allah, and understand from that that He alone is deserving of worship and no worship should be devoted to any but Him alone, for He is the One Who bestows blessing by sending down rain and bringing forth all kinds of plants. He is able to do all things, and the One Who gives life to the earth after it was dead is able to give life to the dead. The One Who bestows all these favours is the Possessor of abundant mercy and immense generosity.



﴿وَإِنَّ لِكُلِّ فِي الْأَنْعَامِ لَعِبْرَةً لِّتُنذِرَ بِمَا فِي بُطُونِهِمْ مِنْ بَيْنِ فَرْثٍ وَدَمٍ لَنَا خَالِصًا سَائِغًا لِلشَّارِبِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾ وَمِنْ ثَمَرَاتِ النَّخِيلِ وَالْأَعْنَابِ نَتَّخِذُونَ مِنْهُ سَكَرًا وَرِزْقًا حَسَنًا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ٦٦-٦٧)

- 16:66. And verily in livestock animals too there is a lesson for you. We give you to drink of that [fluid] which is in their bellies, produced alongside faeces and blood: pure milk, palatable to those who drink it.
- 16:67. And from the fruits of date palms and grapevines, you obtain intoxicants, and good provision. Verily in that there is a sign for people of understanding.

﴿And verily in livestock animals too﴾ that Allah has caused to be of service to you ﴿there is a lesson for you﴾ from which you learn of Allah's perfect might and abundant kindness, for he gives you (milk) to drink from their bellies, which contain faeces and blood; from between that comes pure milk that is free of contamination and palatable to those who drink it, because it is delicious, quenches thirst and nourishes. Can this be anything but divine power, not merely the dictates of nature?

What thing in nature can turn fodder that animals eat and the water that they drink, whether it is fresh or salty, into pure milk that is palatable to those who drink it?

Allah (ﷻ) has created many benefits for His slaves in the fruits of the palm tree and grapevine, such as various kinds of provision which is eaten raw and cooked, fresh and preserved, food and drink that they make from their juice and steeped fruits, and the strong drink that was previously permitted, then Allah abrogated the permissibility of all intoxicants, and He replaced that with good things such as *nabeedh* (a drink made by steeping dates and the like) and other kinds of delicious permissible drinks.

﴿Verily in that there is a sign for people of understanding﴾ of the perfect might of Allah, as He brings forth (provision) from trees that are like pieces of lumber, yet they produce delicious fruits. Just as He encompasses all His slaves with His mercy and makes this provision available to them, He is the only God Who is deserving of worship, for He is the only One Who does that.



﴿ وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّعَلِ أَنِ اخْجِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾ ثُمَّ كُلِّي مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلَالًا يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بُطُونِهِنَّ شَرَابٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ، فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِّلنَّاسِ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٦٨-٦٩)

- 16:68. And your Lord inspired the bee [saying]: Make your homes in the mountains or in the trees or in the [hives] that [humans] construct.
- 16:69. Then feed on all kinds of fruit and follow the ways made easy for you by your Lord. There comes forth from their bellies a drink of varying colours, in which there is healing for people. Verily in that there is a sign for people who reflect.

There is a sign in the creation of the little bee, which Allah has inspired and taught in this wondrous manner, and shown it places where it can find food, then come back to the hives which the bees build in the way that Allah has taught them. Then there comes from the bees' stomachs this delicious honey of varying colours, depending on the various flowers on which the bees fed; in it there is healing for people from many sicknesses. This is indicative of the perfect care of Allah (ﷻ) and His perfect kindness to His slaves, and that no one is to be loved and called upon except Him.



﴿ وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُنَوِّفُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُنْفِكُكُمْ وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْذَلِ الْعُمُرِ لِكَيْ لَا يَعْلَمَ بَعْدَ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٧٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٧٠)

- 16:70. Allah has created you, then He will take your souls [in death]. Among you are some who are sent back to a feeble age, so that

they know nothing after having known [much]. Verily Allah is All-Knowing, Omnipotent.

Allah (ﷻ) tells us that it is He Who creates people then causes them to go through the stages of life, one after another. Then after they have completed their allotted term, He takes their souls in death; and He causes some of them to live until they are ﴿sent back to a feeble age﴾ that is, the worst state that a person may reach, where he becomes physically weak and in poor health, until even the mind, which is the essence of man, becomes increasingly weak, to the extent that he forgets everything he knew and his mind becomes like that of a child. Hence Allah says: ﴿so that they know nothing after having known [much]. Verily Allah is All-Knowing, Omnipotent﴾. Allah's knowledge and power encompass all things, which includes the stages of life that man goes through, one after another, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿It is Allah Who created you in a state of weakness, then after weakness He gave you strength, then after strength, weakness and grey hair. He creates as He wills, and He is the All-Knowing, Omnipotent.﴾

(ar-Room 30: 54)



﴿وَاللَّهُ فَضَّلَ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ فِي الرِّزْقِ ۖ فَمَا الَّذِينَ فُضِّلُوا بِرَادِي رِزْقِهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَهُمْ فِيهِ سَوَاءٌ ۗ أَفَبِعِزَّةِ اللَّهِ يَجْحَدُونَ﴾ (سورة النحل:

(٧١)

16:71. Allah has favoured some of you above others in what He has provided. Those who are so favoured are unwilling to share their provisions with those slaves whom they own, so that they will all be equal in this respect. Is it Allah's favours they deny?

This is among the evidence of Allah's oneness and the abhorrent nature of ascribing partners to Him. Here He says: just as you all have in common the fact that you are created and granted provision, but He ﴿has favoured some of you above others in what He has provided﴾, by the same token He has made some of you free, with abundant wealth, and He has made others slaves to them, who do not own anything of worldly wealth. Just as the masters are the ones whom Allah has favoured over them in terms of provision, they ﴿are unwilling to share their provisions with those slaves whom they own﴾ and they regard that as something impossible, in like manner those whom you ascribe as partners to Allah are slaves who possess not even an atom's weight of dominion, so how can you regard them as partners to Allah (ﷻ)? Can this be anything but the worst of wrongdoing and ingratitude for the blessings of Allah? Hence He says: ﴿Is it Allah's favours they deny?﴾ Had they affirmed the blessing and attributed it to the One Who bestowed it, they would not have ascribed anyone as a partner to Him.



﴿وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ بَيْنًا
 وَحَفْدَةً وَرَزَقَكُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ أَفِيَا بَاطِلٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَيَنْعَمَتِ اللَّهُ هُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ
 ﴿٧٢﴾ وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَمْلِكُ لَهُمْ رِزْقًا مِنَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ شَيْئًا وَلَا
 يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾ فَلَا تَضْرِبُوا لِلَّهِ الْأَمْثَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾ ﴿صَرَبَ
 اللَّهُ مَثَلًا عَبْدًا مَمْلُوكًا لَا يَقْدِرُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَمَنْ رَزَقْنَاهُ مِنَّا رِزْقًا حَسَنًا فَهُوَ
 يُنْفِقُ مِنْهُ سِرًّا وَجَهْرًا هَلْ يَسْتَوُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
 ﴿٧٥﴾ وَصَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا رَجُلَيْنِ أَحَدُهُمَا أَبْكَمُ لَا يَقْدِرُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ
 كَلٌّ عَلَى مَوْلَاهُ أَيْنَمَا يُوَجِّههُ لَا يَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي هُوَ وَمَنْ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ
 وَهُوَ عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٧٦﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ٧٢-٧٦)

- 16:72. Allah has given you spouses of your own kind and has given you, through your spouses, children and grandchildren, and provided you with good things as sustenance. Will they then believe in falsehood and show ingratitude for the blessings of Allah,
- 16:73. and will they worship, besides Allah, that which has no power to provide anything for them from the heavens or the earth as sustenance, and can do nothing at all?
- 16:74. So do not liken anything to Allah. Verily Allah knows and you do not know.
- 16:75. Allah makes this comparison: a slave, the property of another, who has no power over anything, and one on whom We have bestowed goodly provision from Us, and he gives of it both in private and in public. Are the two equal? Praise be to Allah. But most of them do not know.
- 16:76. Allah makes [another] comparison: two men, one of whom is mute, unable to do anything, and is a burden on his master; whichever way he directs him, he achieves nothing good. Is he equal to one who enjoins justice and follows a straight path?

Here Allah tells us about the great blessings that He bestows upon His slaves, as He gives them spouses so that they may find tranquillity in them (*cf.* 30: 21), and He gives them from their spouses children in whom they delight and who help them and meet their needs, and they benefit from them in many ways. And He bestows upon them good and pure provision, of all kinds of food and drink, as well as other visible blessings, more than they can ever enumerate.

﴿Will they then believe in falsehood and show ingratitude for the blessings of Allah﴾ that is, will they believe in falsehood that had no mention before, then Allah created it and it cannot do anything or create anything, and it cannot grant provision or control anything? This is general in meaning and applies to everything that is worshipped

besides Allah: it is false, so how can the polytheists take it for worship besides Allah?

﴿and show ingratitude for the blessings of Allah﴾ by denying them and using them for the purpose of disobeying Allah and disbelieving in Him. Can this be anything other than the worst of wrongdoing, wickedness and foolishness?

﴿and will they worship, besides Allah, that which has no power to provide anything for them from the heavens or the earth as sustenance, and can do nothing at all?﴾ Here Allah tells us of the ignorance and wrongdoing of the polytheists, for they worship besides Him gods that they regard as partners to Allah, when in fact they have no power to provide anything from the heavens or the earth. They do not send down rain or provision, they do not cause any plants to grow on earth, they have no dominion at all over the heavens or the earth, and they cannot do any of these things even if they wanted to.

This is the description of their gods, so how could they regard them as equal to Allah or liken them to the One Who has dominion over the earth and the heavens, to Whom all dominion, praise and power belong? Hence Allah says:

﴿So do not liken anything to Allah﴾ in such a way as to imply equality between Him and His creation.

﴿Verily Allah knows and you do not know﴾. Therefore we should not speak about Him without knowledge, and we should listen to the comparisons that He makes. Hence He makes two comparisons for Himself and for those that are worshipped besides Him. The first comparison is that of a slave who does not own himself or any worldly wealth, and the second is that of a man who is free and wealthy, to whom Allah has granted goodly provision of all types of wealth, and he is generous and likes to give to others, so he spends in secret and openly. Can these two men be equal? No, they are not equal, even though they are both created beings and it is not impossible for them to be regarded as equal.

If they are not equal, then how can a created slave who has no dominion, power or ability – rather he is dependent in all aspects – be equal to the Lord, the Creator, the Sovereign of all realms, Who is able to do all things? Hence Allah praises Himself, and all types of praise are exclusively for Him alone, as He says:

﴿Praise be to Allah﴾. It is as if it was said: if that is the case, then why did the polytheists regard their gods as equal to Allah? He said: ﴿But most of them do not know﴾; if they had truly known, they would not have dared to commit this grave action of ascribing partners to Allah.

The second comparison is that of ﴿two men, one of whom is mute﴾ and can neither hear nor speak

﴿unable to do anything﴾, small or great

﴿and is a burden on his master﴾ that is, his master serves him and he is not able to serve or help himself, so he is lacking in all aspects. Is he equal to one who enjoins justice and follows the straight path, so his words are just and his deeds are righteous? Just as they are not equal, so the one who is worshipped besides Allah, when he is not able to take care of himself in any way – and were it not for Allah taking care of him, he could not have done anything for himself – cannot be equal to and a rival to one who only speaks truth and only does what is praiseworthy.



﴿وَلِلَّهِ غَيْبُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا أَمْرُ السَّاعَةِ إِلَّا كَلَمْحِ الْبَصَرِ أَوْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ﴾
 ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٧٧)

16:77. To Allah belongs all that is unseen in the heavens and on earth, and the coming of the Hour will be but as the blinking of an eye or even swifter, for Allah has power over all things.

That is, Allah (ﷻ) is the only One Who has knowledge of the unseen in the heavens and on earth. No one knows what is hidden

and secret except He. That includes knowledge of the Hour; no one knows when it will come except Allah, but when it comes it will be ﴿but as the blinking of an eye or even swifter﴾ than that, then the people will rise from their graves on the Day of Resurrection, and those who want respite will have missed their opportunity.

﴿for Allah has power over all things﴾. As He is possessed of all-encompassing power, it is nothing strange that He will raise the dead.



﴿وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُم مِّن بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ
وَالْأَبْصَرَ وَالْأَفْعِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٧٨)

16:78. Allah brought you forth from your mothers' wombs knowing nothing, and He gave you hearing, sight and intellect, so that you may give thanks.

That is, He is the only One Who bestows these blessings, as He ﴿brought you forth from your mothers' wombs knowing nothing﴾ and unable to do anything, then He ﴿gave you hearing, sight and intellect﴾. These three faculties are singled out because of their significance and importance, for they are the key to all knowledge, as no one can acquire knowledge except through one of these three faculties. Otherwise with regard to all other faculties and physical strengths, both visible and hidden, it is He Who has also bestowed them and caused them to develop in them, stage by stage, until each one reaches its optimum level. All of that is so that they may give thanks to Allah by using what He has given them of these physical faculties in obedience to Him. Whoever uses them for other purposes, that will be evidence against him and he will have responded to the blessing in the worst manner.



﴿الْعَيْرُوا إِلَى الطَّيْرِ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ فِي جَوِّ السَّمَاءِ مَا يُمْسِكُهُنَّ إِلَّا اللَّهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ ﴿٧٩﴾ (سورة النحل: ٧٩)

16:79. Do they not see the birds, enabled to fly in mid-air? None holds them aloft except Allah. Surely in that there are signs for people who believe.

That is, because they are the ones who may benefit from the signs of Allah and reflect upon that which has been made a sign pointing to Him. As for others, when they look, it is in a heedless and careless manner. The sign in the birds is that Allah has created them in such a way that they can fly, then He caused this gentle air to be of service for them, so that they may fly in it, then He instilled in them this ability to move, through which they are able to do that. This is indicative of His perfect wisdom, vast knowledge, divine care for all His creatures and perfect power. Blessed be Allah, the Lord of the worlds.



﴿وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّن بُيُوتِكُمْ سَكَنًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّن جُلُودِ الْأَنْعَامِ بُيُوتًا تَسْتَخِفُّونَهَا يَوْمَ ظَعْنِكُمْ وَيَوْمَ إِقَامَتِكُمْ وَمِن أَصْوَابِهَا وَأَشْعَارِهَا أَثْنَا وَمَثَعًا إِلَى حِينٍ﴾ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِمَّا خَلَقَ ظِلَالًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ الْجِبَالِ أَكْنَانًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم سَرَابِيلَ تَقِيكُمُ الْحَرَّ وَسَرَابِيلَ تَقِيكُم بَأْسَكُمْ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٨١﴾ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلْعُ الْمُمِينُ ﴿٨٢﴾ يَعْرِفُونَ نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنْكِرُونَهَا وَأَكْفُرُوهُمْ ﴿٨٣﴾ (سورة النحل: ٨٠-٨٣)

- 16:80. Allah has made your houses places of rest and repose for you, and He has given you dwellings made from the skins of livestock, which you find light to handle when you travel and when you halt. And from their wool, fur and hair [He has given you] furnishings and other goods [to serve you] for a time.
- 16:81. Allah has made for you, out of what He has created, that which gives you shade. He has made for you in the mountains places of shelter, and He has given you garments to protect you from heat, and garments to protect you in battle. Thus does He perfect His favours to you, so that you may submit to Him.
- 16:82. But if they turn away, your duty is only to convey the message in the clearest way.
- 16:83. They recognise the blessing of Allah, yet they deny it, and most of them are ungrateful.

Here Allah (ﷻ) reminds His slaves of His blessings and expects them to give thanks and acknowledge them.

﴿Allah has made your houses places of rest and repose for you﴾ that is, houses, palaces and the like, to protect you from heat and cold, and to conceal you and your children and your belongings. Inside them you make rooms for different uses, to serve your interests, and in them you keep your wealth and your family, and there are other visible benefits.

﴿and He has given you dwellings made from the skins of livestock﴾ either from the skin itself or from what grows on it, such as wool or hair

﴿which you find light to handle when you travel and when you halt﴾ that is, they are easy to carry when you travel and halt in places where you do not intend to settle, and they protect you from heat, cold and rain, and they protect your goods and luggage from rain.

﴿And from their wool, fur and hair﴾ that come from livestock

﴿[He has given you] furnishings﴾ this includes everything that is made from them, such as vessels, furnishings, clothing, blankets, and so on.

﴿and other goods [to serve you] for a time﴾ that is, you enjoy these things and benefit from them in this world. These are among the things that Allah has caused his slaves to make and produce.

﴿Allah has made for you, out of what He has created﴾ that is, things that you had no part in making

﴿shade﴾ this refers to the shade of trees, mountains, hills and so on
 ﴿He has made for you in the mountains places of shelter﴾ that is, caves in which you are protected from heat, hail, rain and enemies.

﴿and He has given you garments to protect you from heat﴾. Allah did not mention cold, because it was mentioned earlier in this chapter, at the beginning where He mentions basic blessings, which are things that are essential to man; at the end of the chapter He mentions extra blessings. Protection against the cold is a basic blessing, which is a necessity, and it was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, where Allah says: ﴿And He created the livestock animals for you; they are a source of warm clothing [and blankets] and other benefits﴾ (16: 5).

﴿and garments to protect you in battle﴾ that is, garments that protect you at times of fighting and war. This refers to items such as plate armour, coats of mail and the like. Thus He perfects His favours to you by bestowing upon you innumerable blessings,

﴿so that﴾, when you remember the blessings of Allah and you see these blessings inundating you from all directions

﴿you may submit to Him﴾ that is, to His greatness, and comply with His commands and use His blessings to obey the One Who bestowed them and granted them. Abundance of blessings is one of the causes that lead people to show more gratitude and praise Allah (ﷻ) for them, but the wrongdoers insist on stubbornly rebelling.

Hence Allah says concerning them: ﴿But if they turn away﴾ from Allah and from obedience to Him, after they have been reminded of His blessings and signs

﴿your duty is only to convey the message in the clearest way﴾ that is, it is not your role to guide them; rather you are only expected to

exhort, remind, warn and alarm. Once you have done what is required of you, their reckoning is up to Allah, for they can see His blessings and recognise His favours, but they deny that and show ingratitude. ﴿and most of them are ungrateful﴾ and there is nothing good in them; they do not benefit from the succession of signs because of their corrupt thinking and bad intentions, but they will see how Allah requites every stubborn tyrant who is ungrateful for His blessings and who rebels against Allah and His Messengers.



﴿ وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا ثُمَّ لَا يُؤْذَنُ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَإِذَا رَأَوْا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا الْعَذَابَ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾ وَإِذَا رَأَوْا الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا شَرَكَاءَهُمْ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا هَؤُلَاءِ شُرَكَائُنَا الَّذِينَ كُنَّا نَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِكَ فَأَلْقُوا إِلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلَ إِنَّكُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَالْقَوْمَ إِلَى اللَّهِ يَوْمَئِذٍ السَّاعَةِ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٨٤-٨٧)

- 16:84. On the day when We raise up a witness from every nation, no excuse will be accepted from those who disbelieved, nor will they be allowed to make amends.
- 16:85. When the wrongdoers see the punishment, it will not be alleviated, nor will they be given any respite.
- 16:86. When those who ascribed partners to Allah see their [so-called] 'partners', they will say: Our Lord, these are our [so-called] 'partners' whom we used to call upon besides You. But they will respond: You are surely lying.
- 16:87. On that day they will offer total submission to Allah, and the [false gods] of their own invention will be lost from them.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about those who disbelieve in the Day of Resurrection: no excuse will be accepted from them and the

punishment will not be alleviated for them; their so-called partners will disavow them and they will affirm their own disbelief and fabrication of lies against Allah.

﴿On the day when We raise up a witness from every nation﴾ who will testify against it with regard to its deeds and its response to the one who called them to true guidance. Those witnesses whom Allah will raise up will be the most sincere and most just of witnesses, namely the Messengers; once they have given their testimonies, judgement will be passed and ﴿no excuse will be accepted from those who disbelieved﴾ because any excuse they offer, after it becomes certain that what they followed was false, will be an invalid excuse that will not benefit them in the slightest. If they also ask to be sent back to this world so that they may put things right, they will receive no response and that excuse will not be accepted; rather the severe punishment will be hastened for them, and it will not be alleviated for them, and they will be given no respite from the time they see it. There will be no reckoning for them, because they will have no good deeds to their credit; rather their bad deeds will be checked and counted, and they will be shown to them, and they will be made to confess to them and will be exposed to shame.

﴿When those who ascribed partners to Allah see their [so-called] 'partners'﴾ on the Day of Resurrection, and they realise that they were false and will not be able to deny it
 ﴿they will say: Our Lord, these are our [so-called] 'partners' whom we used to call upon besides You﴾; they have no power to benefit us or intercede for us. They themselves will admit the falseness of those so-called partners, and will disbelieve in them, and there will appear enmity and hostility between them and the so-called partners.

﴿But they will respond﴾ that is, the so-called partners will answer back and say to them: ﴿You are surely lying﴾ because you regarded us as partners to Allah, and you worshipped us besides Him, but we did not instruct you to do that and we did not claim that we deserved to be regarded as divine, so the blame is on you.

At that point they will surrender to Allah and submit to His ruling, and they will realise that they are deserving of punishment.

﴿and the [false gods] of their own invention will be lost from them﴾ so they will enter hell, and their hearts will be filled with hatred of their own selves and praise for their Lord, for they will only be punished in accordance with their deeds.



﴿الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ زِدْنَاهُمْ عَذَابًا فَوْقَ الْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا يُفْسِدُونَ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٨٨)

16:88. For those who disbelieve and bar others from the path of Allah, We will add punishment to their punishment because they used to spread mischief.

That is, they spread mischief when they themselves disbelieved, rejected the revelations of Allah, fought His Messengers, barred people from the path of Allah, and became promoters of misguidance. Thus they deserve a multiple punishment, just as they committed multiple offences and spread mischief on Allah's earth.



﴿وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْنَا هَؤُلَاءِ وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٨٩)

16:89. On the day when We raise up from every nation, a witness against them from amongst themselves, We will bring you [O Muhammad] as a witness against these [your people]. And We

have sent down to you the Book, explaining all things, and as guidance, mercy and glad tidings for the Muslims.

Having mentioned above that He will raise up a witness from every nation (16: 84), Allah mentions the same thing here, and singles out this noble Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ).

﴿We will bring you [O Muhammad] as a witness against these [your people]﴾ that is, to testify concerning your Ummah, good and bad. This is by the perfect justice of Allah (ﷻ): every Messenger will testify concerning his nation, because he is more aware than others of the deeds of his nation, and he will be more just and too compassionate to testify against them except as they deserve.

This is like the verses in which Allah says:

﴿Thus We have made of you an Ummah [nation, community] justly balanced, that you might be witnesses over humankind, and the Messenger might be a witness over you...﴾ (al-Baqarah 2: 143)

– and:

﴿How will it be when We bring a witness from every nation and bring you [O Muhammad] as a witness against them? On that day, those who disbelieved and disobeyed the Messenger will wish that the earth could be levelled over them...﴾ (an-Nisā' 4: 41-42)

﴿And We have sent down to you the Book, explaining all things﴾, both the fundamental and minor issues of religion, rulings in this world and the hereafter, and everything that people need to know. It explains fully, in clear words, to the extent that Allah (ﷻ) repeats in it the most important matters that one needs to be aware of at all times. The Qur'an repeats these ideas and discusses them in different words, and with different approaches and proofs, so that they become well-established in people's hearts and bear good fruit, according to how firmly established they are in the heart. Allah (ﷻ) uses clear, short and comprehensive phrases that include many meanings. Consider,

for example, the verse that follows this one, and what it contains of innumerable commands and prohibitions.

As this Qur'an explains all things, it constitutes the proof of Allah against all people. Therefore it has left no excuse for the wrongdoers, and the Muslims benefitted from it, as it became a source of guidance for them, by which they are guided with regard to all their affairs, both religious and worldly. It is also a mercy for them, through which they attain all good in this world and the hereafter. Guidance is that by means of which they attain beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds, and mercy is what results from that of reward in this world and the hereafter, such as spiritual well-being, a sense of reassurance, perfection of reasoning which cannot be perfected unless it is based on the meanings of the Qur'an, which are the most sublime meanings, good deeds, good manners, abundant provision, victory over enemies in word and deed, and attaining the pleasure of Allah (ﷻ) and His paradise, in which are eternal blessings such as no one knows except the Most Merciful Lord.



﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ
الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴾ (سورة

النحل: ٩٠)

16:90. Verily Allah enjoins justice, kindness and giving kinsfolk [their due], and He forbids obscenity, wickedness and wrongdoing. He admonishes you, so that you may pay heed.

The justice that Allah enjoins includes justice with regard to His dues and those of His slaves. Justice in this sense involves paying those dues in full, by doing what Allah has ordained of financial and physical duties, and those which are a combination of both, whether

that duty is to Him or to other people, as well as treating other people on the basis of complete justice. So anyone who is in a position of authority should fulfil his duties towards those who are under his authority. This applies equally to the ruler, members of the judiciary, deputies of the ruler and deputies of the judiciary. Justice is what Allah has enjoined upon them in His Book and on the lips of His Messenger (ﷺ), and He has commanded them to adhere to it. Justice in interactions includes the area of buying and selling, as well as all other business transactions; that requires fulfilling all obligations and commitments, not falling short with regard to dues, not cheating, deceiving or wrongdoing others.

Justice is obligatory and kindness is a virtue that is encouraged, such as benefitting people by means of wealth, physical actions, knowledge and other ways of benefitting them. That even includes kindness to animals, including those whose flesh it is permissible to eat and others.

Allah singles out giving kinsfolk their due – even though this is included in the general meaning – so as to emphasise the importance of their rights and encourage fulfilment thereof, because it is a must to uphold ties with them and show kindness towards them. This includes all relatives, both close and distant; the more closely related they are, the more deserving they are of kindness.

﴿and He forbids obscenity﴾ – this refers to every major sin that is regarded as abhorrent according to religious teachings and sound human nature, such as ascribing partners to Allah, unlawful killing, fornication and adultery, stealing, self-admiration, arrogance, looking down on people, and other evil deeds.

Wickedness includes all kinds of sins that have to do with the rights of Allah (ﷻ).

Wrongdoing includes all kinds of transgression against people, whether that has to do with their lives, their wealth or their honour.

This verse is concise and includes all that is enjoined and prohibited; there is nothing that is not included. This is a basic principle to which all minor issues are connected. Anything that involves justice, kindness or giving kinsfolk their due comes under the heading of that which Allah has enjoined; anything that involves obscenity, wickedness or wrongdoing comes under the heading of that which Allah has forbidden. Thus we see the goodness and beauty of that which Allah has enjoined, and the evil and ugliness of that which He has prohibited. Everything that people say or do is to be measured by this standard. Blessed be the One Who put in His words guidance, healing, light and the criterion to distinguish between good and evil in all things.

Hence He says:

«He admonishes you» by what He explains to you in His Book, by enjoining on you that which is in your best interests and prohibiting to you that which is detrimental to your interests.

«so that you may pay heed» to what He exhorts, and thus understand it, for if you pay heed to it and understand it, you will act in accordance with it, and thus you will attain blessing after which there is no misery.

Having enjoined what is obligatory according to the basic principles of Islamic teaching, Allah then enjoins fulfilling whatever a person commits himself to (of additional obligations):



﴿وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْقُضُوا الْأَيْمَانَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِي نَقَضَتْ غَزَلَهَا مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ أَنْكَا تَتَّخِذُونَ أَيْمَانَكُمْ دَخَلًا بَيْنَكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونَ أُمَّةٌ هِيَ أَرْبَىٰ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ إِنَّمَا يَبْلُوكُمُ اللَّهُ بِهِ، وَلِيَبَيِّنَنَّ لَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ٩١-٩٢)

- 16:91. Fulfil the covenant of Allah¹⁴ when you have entered into it, and do not break your oaths after you have confirmed them and have made Allah your surety, for verily Allah knows all that you do.
- 16:92. Do not be like the woman who unravels the yarn she has firmly spun, breaking it into strands, by making your oaths a means of deceiving one another, merely because one party may be more numerous than another.¹⁵ Allah is only testing you by means of this, and on the Day of Resurrection He will surely make clear to you the matters concerning which you differed.

This includes everything that a person promises to his Lord, such as acts of worship and any vows he makes or oaths he swears, if fulfilling them is an act of righteousness. It also includes any covenants between himself and someone else, such as a contract between two parties to a deal, or a promise that a person may make to someone else, committing himself to it. In all such cases he is obliged to fulfil it if he is able to do so. Hence Allah forbade breaking such promises, as He says: ﴿and do not break your oaths after you have confirmed them and have made Allah your surety﴾ by mentioning His name in your pledge. So it is not permissible for you not to comply with that for which you have made Allah your surety, for that would be a failure to venerate Allah and would be disrespectful towards Him, after the other party accepted the oath from you and he accepted this confirmation when you made Allah your surety. Just as the other party trusted you and thought well of you, you should fulfil what you said you would do and assured him of.

¹⁴ Covenant of Allah: this refers to the pledge (*bay'ah*) made when entering Islam.

¹⁵ What is meant is: do not let the small numbers of the Muslims and the greater numbers of the polytheists deceive you into breaking the covenant or pledge (*bay'ah*) you made when you entered Islam.

﴿for verily Allah knows all that you do﴾ and He will requite each person for his deeds, according to his intention and aim.

﴿Do not be﴾, by breaking your covenants, like the worst example that is most indicative of the foolishness of the one who breaks his covenant, which is the likeness of ﴿the woman﴾ who spins a strong thread, then when it has become strong as expected, she undoes it and breaks it into ﴿strands﴾, because she got tired of spinning it, then when she undid it she got tired again, so she did not gain anything except frustration, tiredness, foolishness and lack of reasoning. This is like the one who breaks the covenant he made: he is a wrongdoer and a fool who is lacking in religious commitment and dignity.

﴿by making your oaths a means of deceiving one another, merely because one party may be more numerous than another﴾ that is, it is not appropriate in that case for you to make an oath and enter into a covenant, then look for an opportunity to break it, so the one who gives the covenant is inferior in terms of power and will fulfil it because he has no other choice, not because he respects the covenant and oath but because of his weakness. However, if he is in a position of strength and he sees some worldly benefit in breaking his oath, then he will break it and not care about the covenant of Allah and the oath he made in His name.

All of that is going along with whims and desires, and giving precedence to them over what Allah expects of you and the dictates of human dignity and sound character, just because one party may be more numerous and stronger than another.

This is a trial from Allah by means of which He tests you, as He creates circumstances with which to test people and demonstrate who is sincere and faithful to his word, and who is immoral and evil.

﴿and on the Day of Resurrection He will surely make clear to you the matters concerning which you differed﴾ and He will requite each person according to his deeds, and will expose the betrayer to shame.



﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَلَتُسْأَلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٩٣)

16:93. If Allah had so willed, He would have made you a single community, but Allah leaves astray whomever He wills and guides whomever He wills, and you will surely be questioned about what you used to do.

﴿If Allah had so willed﴾ He would have caused all people to be united in following guidance, and He would have made them ﴿a single community﴾. But He is the only One Who has the power to guide people or leave them to stray. His guiding or leaving astray are among His actions that are connected to His knowledge and wisdom. He bestows guidance upon whoever deserves it, by His grace, and he withholds it from whoever does not deserve it, by His justice. ﴿and you will surely be questioned about what you used to do﴾ of good or evil, then He will requite you for it in the most perfect and just manner.



﴿وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ دَخَلًا بَيْنَكُمْ فَزَلَاقُمْ بَعْدَ نُبُوذِهَا وَتَدْفِقُوا السَّوَاءَ يَمَّا صَدَدْتُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَكُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٩٤)

16:94. Do not make your oaths a means of deceiving one another, lest any foot should slip after being firmly planted and you have to taste the evil [consequences] of having barred people from the path of Allah, and yours will be a grievous punishment.

﴿Do not make your oaths﴾ and your covenants and pledges on the basis of your whims and desires, fulfilling them or breaking them

as you wish, for if you do that, your feet will slip after having been firmly planted on the straight path, and you will ﴿have to taste the evil [consequences]﴾ that is, the punishment that will cause you grief and distress

﴿of having barred people from the path of Allah﴾ as you went astray and caused others to go astray

﴿and yours will be a grievous punishment﴾ that will be multiplied.



﴿وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۗ إِنَّمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لِّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾ مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ ۗ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾ مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً ۗ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ٩٥-٩٧)

- 16:95. Do not sell the covenant of Allah for a small price. Surely, that which is with Allah is better for you, if only you knew.
- 16:96. Whatever you have will [inevitably] come to an end, but that which is with Allah is everlasting. And We will surely grant those who are patient their reward according to the best of their deeds.
- 16:97. Whoever does righteous deeds, male or female, and is a believer, We will surely grant him a good life, and We will surely grant them their reward according to the best of their deeds.

Here Allah (ﷻ) warns His slaves against breaking covenants and oaths for the sake of worthless worldly matters.

﴿Do not sell the covenant of Allah for a small price﴾ that you gain by breaking the covenant and not fulfilling it.

«Surely, that which is with Allah» of reward in this world and the hereafter for the one who gives precedence to pleasing Him and fulfils the promise he made to Allah
 «is better for you» than worthless worldly gain
 «if only you knew».

So give precedence to that which will abide over that which will cease to be, for whatever you have, even if you have a great deal, «will [inevitably] come to an end» and will perish
 «but that which is with Allah is everlasting» as He is, so it will never cease to be or perish. Therefore he is not wise who gives precedence to that which is transient and insignificant over that which will abide and is precious. This is like the verses in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

«But you [O humankind] prefer the life of this world even though the hereafter is better and more lasting.» (*al-A'la* 87: 16-17)

– and:

«...that which is with Allah is best for the righteous.» (*Āl 'Imrān* 3: 198)

This offers encouragement to be uninterested in worldly matters, especially that lack of interest which one must develop; this means showing no interest in that which is harmful and distracts one from that which Allah has enjoined and giving it precedence over the rights of Allah. This kind of disinterest in worldly matters is obligatory.

What helps a person to lose interest in worldly matters is comparing in his mind the pleasures and desires of this world with the good things of the hereafter, for he will find such differences that he will be prompted to give precedence to that which is more sublime. The kind of disinterest in worldly matters that is regarded as praiseworthy does not mean devoting all one's time to acts of worship that are limited to rituals such as prayer, fasting, dhikr and so on; rather a person is not truly disinterested in worldly matters until he does whatever he is

able to do of acts both visible and hidden that are enjoined in Islamic teaching and whatever he is able to do of calling people to Allah and to His religion in word and deed. True lack of interest in worldly matters is lack of interest in anything that does not bring benefit in religious or worldly terms, and desiring and striving for everything that is of benefit.

﴿And We will surely grant those who are patient﴾ in obeying Allah and in refraining from disobedience to Him, and who wean themselves from worldly desires that are detrimental to their religious commitment

﴿their reward according to the best of their deeds﴾. Each good deed brings a tenfold reward, up to seven hundredfold, and many times more than that, for Allah will not cause the reward of those who do good to be lost. Hence He mentions the reward of those who do good in this world and the hereafter, as He says:

﴿Whoever does righteous deeds, male or female, and is a believer﴾ therefore faith is a condition of the validity and acceptance of righteous deeds. In fact a deed cannot be called righteous unless it is done on the basis of faith, and the faith which inspires one to do good deeds is certain faith that leads to physical actions, both obligatory and recommended. Whoever combines faith and righteous deeds, ﴿We will surely grant him a good life﴾ by instilling reassurance and tranquillity in his heart, so that he will not pay attention to anything that could cause him any disturbance, and Allah will grant him provision that is lawful and good from where he does not expect.

﴿and We will surely grant them﴾ in the hereafter ﴿their reward according to the best of their deeds﴾, a reward of all types of pleasures such as no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever crossed the mind of man. So Allah will give him good in this world and good in the hereafter.



﴿ فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ﴿٩٨﴾ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾ إِنَّمَا سُلْطَانُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَتَوَلَّوْنَهُ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِهِ مُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ٩٨-١٠٠)

- 16:98. When you recite the Qur'an, seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Shaytān.
- 16:99. Verily he has no power over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord,
- 16:100. He has power only over those who take him as an ally and, under his influence, ascribe partners to Allah.

That is, when you want to recite the Book of Allah, which is the noblest and most sublime of books, in which there is a prescription for spiritual well-being and a great deal of knowledge, then the Shaytān shows a great deal of interest (in harming a person) when he starts to do righteous deeds. and he tries to divert him from the purpose and goal for which he does those deeds. The way to keep oneself safe from his evil is to turn to Allah and seek refuge in Him from his evil. So the reciter should say: *A'oodhu billāhi min ash-Shaytān ir-rajeem* (I seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Shaytān), pondering the meaning thereof and relying in his heart upon Allah to divert the Shaytān from him, striving hard to resist his insinuating whispers and bad thoughts, and seeking the strongest means of warding him off, which is resorting to faith and depending on Allah.

For the Shaytān «has no power» or control «over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord» alone, with no partner or associate. Allah wards off from the believers who put their trust in Him the evil of the Shaytān, so he has no power or control over them.

Rather he «has power» and control «only over those who take him as an ally» that is, they take him as an ally by turning away from

Allah and starting to obey the Shayṭān and joining his party. Therefore they are the ones who make him their ally, then he goads them into committing sin and leads them to the fire.



﴿ وَإِذَا بَدَلْنَا آيَةً مَكَانَ آيَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُرْسَلُ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُفْتَرٍ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾ قُلْ نَزَّلَهُ رُوحُ الْقُدُسِ مِنْ رَبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيُثَبِّتَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل:

(١٠٢-١٠١)

- 16:101. When We replace one verse with another¹⁶ – and Allah knows best what He reveals – they say: You are just making it up! But most of them have no knowledge.
- 16:102. Say: The Pure Spirit has brought it [the Qur'an] down from your Lord in truth, to make firm those who believe, and as guidance and glad tidings for the Muslims.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that those who disbelieve in this Qur'an try to seek out what they think is an argument to support their claim that the Qur'an is fabricated, which is the idea that Allah (ﷻ) is the Most Wise Who issues rulings and replaces one ruling with another, by His wisdom and mercy. When they saw that, they criticised the Messenger (ﷺ) and what he brought, and said: ﴿You are just making it up!﴾ Allah (ﷻ) said: ﴿But most of them have no knowledge﴾, so they are ignorant and have no knowledge of their Lord or of His laws.

It is well known that criticism from an ignorant person that is not based on knowledge carries no weight, for criticism of a thing stems from knowledge of it and what it may contain that dictates praise or criticism.

¹⁶ This refers to the abrogation of one verse of the Qur'an by another.

Hence Allah mentioned His wisdom in doing that, as He said: ﴿Say: The Pure Spirit﴾ namely Jibreel (جبرئيل), the angelic messenger who is to be declared above any fault, betrayal or ills ﴿has brought it [the Qur'an] down from your Lord in truth﴾ that is, he has brought it down in truth, and it contains truth in its stories, commands and prohibitions. So there is no way that anyone can criticise it on a sound basis, because once it is known that it is truth, it is known that all that contradicts it is false.

﴿to make firm those who believe﴾ when its verses came down in succession, time after time, and the truth continued to reach their hearts little by little, until their faith became firmer than solid mountains. Moreover, they know that it is true, and when Allah prescribes a ruling, then abrogates it, they know that He has replaced it with something like it or something that is better for them than it, and when He abrogates something, He abrogates it in accordance with divine wisdom and in accordance with reason.

﴿and as guidance and glad tidings for the Muslims﴾ that is, it guides them to the reality of things, distinguishing truth from falsehood, guidance from misguidance, and it gives them glad tidings of a goodly reward in which they will abide forever. The fact that it was revealed piecemeal is more effective in bringing guidance and glad tidings, and has a greater impact than if it were to be revealed all at once, because if it came all at once people would not be able to focus on all of it. Rather Allah would send down a ruling and glad tidings, then when they had understood it, reflected upon it, come to know its meaning and fully grasped it, He would reveal more like it, and so on.

Hence the Companions (صحابه) reached the optimum level thereby, and their attitudes and manners changed; they attained manners, habits and deeds that surpassed the first and the last. Hence it is more appropriate and more expected that those who come after them should be shaped by the knowledge contained in it, adopt the manners promoted in it, seek its light in the depths of darkness that results from

wrongdoing and ignorance, and make it their guide in all their affairs. Thus their affairs, both spiritual and worldly, will be put in order.



﴿وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ
 أَعْجَبِي ۗ وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٠٣﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ
 لَا يَهْدِيهِمُ اللَّهُ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٤﴾ إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِي الْكَذِبَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
 بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٠٣-١٠٥)

- 16:103. We know full well that they say: It is but a man who teaches him. But the one to whom they point speaks a foreign tongue, whereas this is eloquent Arabic speech.
- 16:104. As for those who do not believe in the signs of Allah, Allah will not guide them, and theirs will be a painful punishment.
- 16:105. It is those who do not believe in Allah's signs who fabricate falsehood; it is they who are the liars.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about what the polytheists who disbelieved in His Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«they say: It is but a man who teaches him» this Book that he has brought. The man they were referring to was one who spoke a foreign tongue, «whereas this» namely the Qur'an, «is eloquent Arabic speech». Could what they said possibly be true? But the liar tells lies and does not think about what his lies will lead to, so what he says is filled with such utter contradictions and flaws that one would reject it as soon as one thinks about it.

«As for those who do not believe in the signs of Allah» that clearly point to the manifest truth, they reject it and do not accept it «Allah will not guide them» when guidance comes to them, so they will reject it and they are punished by being deprived of it and by being forsaken by Allah

﴿and﴾ in the hereafter, ﴿theirs will be a painful punishment﴾.

﴿It is those who do not believe in Allah's signs﴾ such as those who harbour resentment against His Messenger (ﷺ) after clear proof has come to them

﴿who fabricate falsehood﴾ that is, fabrications and lies come from them

﴿it is they who are the liars﴾ that is, they are the real liars, and this description is more appropriate for them than for anyone else. As for Muhammad (ﷺ), who believes in the signs of Allah and humbles himself before his Lord, it is impossible for him to tell lies about Allah and attribute to Him words that He did not say. His enemies accused him of lying, but what they attributed to him is more fitting for them, so Allah exposed them and highlighted their shameful deeds; to Him be praise.



﴿مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾
 ﴿١٠٦﴾ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى الْآخِرَةِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٠٧﴾ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَسَمِعَهُمْ وَأَبْصَرَهُمْ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفٰئِقُونَ ﴿١٠٨﴾ لَا جْرَمَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ
 الْخٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٠٩﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٠٦-١٠٩)

16:106. Whoever disbelieves in Allah after having believed – except one who is compelled while his heart remains steadfast in faith – but for those who open their hearts to disbelief, upon them will be the wrath of Allah, and theirs will be a grievous punishment.

16:107. That is because they prefer the life of this world to the hereafter, and because Allah does not guide the disbelieving people.

16:108. These are the ones whose hearts, hearing and sight Allah has sealed up; it is they who are heedless.

16:109. Without a doubt, in the hereafter, it is they who will be the greatest losers.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the abhorrent state of those who disbelieve in Allah after having believed, and thus become blind after having seen, and go back to misguidance after having been guided, opening their hearts to disbelief, happy and content with it: they incur great wrath from the Most Merciful Lord Whose wrath, once it is incurred, cannot be resisted and all creatures will be angry with those who incur it.

﴿and theirs will be a grievous punishment﴾ that is, it will be of the utmost severity, in addition to the fact that it will be eternal and everlasting.

﴿That is because they prefer the life of this world to the hereafter﴾ as they have turned their backs on the hereafter, seeking and pursuing trivial worldly gain, and showing no interest in the good of the hereafter. When they chose disbelief over faith, Allah deprived them of guidance, so He did not guide them, because disbelief had become an established part of their character. Therefore He placed a seal on their hearts so that no goodness would enter them, and He placed seals on their hearing and sight, so that nothing beneficial could reach their hearts thereby. Heedlessness enveloped them and they met with failure at every turn; they were deprived of the mercy of Allah which encompasses all things, and that is because it had come to them but they rejected it, and it was presented to them but they did not accept it.

﴿Without a doubt, in the hereafter, it is they who will be the greatest losers﴾ for they will be the ones who lose their own souls, their wealth and their families on the Day of Resurrection; they will miss out on eternal bliss and incur a painful punishment.

This does not apply to those who are forced and compelled to disbelieve when their hearts remain steadfast in faith and they want to believe, for there is no blame and no sin on them. In the case of one who is compelled and forced to do so, it is permissible for him to speak words of disbelief.

This indicates that the words of one who is compelled to issue a divorce, manumit a slave, enter into a transaction of sale or purchase and so on, does not count, and no shar'ī rulings can be based on that, because if there is no punishment for uttering the word of disbelief in the case of compulsion, it is more appropriate to apply that ruling to other, less serious issues.



﴿ ثُمَّ إِنَّكَ رَبَّنَا لِلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا مِنَّا مِن بَعْدِ مَا قَاتَلْنَاكُمْ جَاهِدُوا
وَصَبَرُوا إِنَّكَ رَبُّنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١١٠﴾ ﴿١١١﴾ يَوْمَ تَأْتِي كُلُّ نَفْسٍ
بِمُجَدِّلٍ عَنِ نَفْسِهَا وَتُوفَّىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١١١﴾ ﴾ (سورة

النحل: ١١٠-١١١)

- 16:110. But verily your Lord – to those who migrated after persecution, then strove [in jihad] in Allah's cause and patiently persevered – verily your Lord, after all that, will be Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful,
- 16:111. on the day when each soul will come, pleading for itself, and each soul will be paid in full for what it has earned, and no one will be wronged.

That is, verily your Lord Who cares for His sincere slaves by showing kindness to them and blessing them, is also Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful to those who migrated in His cause, leaving behind their homes and wealth, seeking the pleasure of Allah, and were

persecuted to make them return to disbelief, but they persisted in their faith and maintained their certain belief, then strove against the enemies of Allah, striving to bring them into the religion of Allah, in word and deed, and they patiently persevered in these acts of worship which are difficult for most people.

These are the greatest means by which the highest reward and greatest gift may be attained, namely: Allah's forgiveness of sins, both minor and major, which also implies deliverance from every disliked thing; and His vast mercy, by means of which they will attain well-being, and their religious and worldly affairs will be put in order. They will have mercy from Allah on the Day of Resurrection, when ﴿each soul will come, pleading for itself﴾, each one saying: Myself myself – not caring for anyone else. On that day, each person will be desperate for the smallest atom of good.

﴿and each soul will be paid in full for what it has earned﴾, of good or evil

﴿and no one will be wronged﴾, so nothing will be added to their bad deeds and nothing will be detracted from their good deeds.

﴿This day, no soul will be wronged in the least, and you will not be requited for anything other than what you used to do.﴾ (Yâ Seen 36: 54)



﴿وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا قَرْيَةً كَانَتْ ءَامِنَةً مُطْمَئِنَّةً يَأْتِيهَا رِزْقُهَا رَغَدًا مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ فَكَفَرَتْ بِأَنْعُمِ اللَّهِ فَأَذَاقَهَا اللَّهُ لِبَاسَ الْجُوعِ وَالْخَوْفِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِنْهُمْ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾﴾ (سورة النحل: ١١٢-١١٣)

16:112. Allah presents an example: that of a city which was safe and peaceful, with its provision coming to it in abundance from all directions. Yet it was ungrateful for the blessings of Allah, so

Allah caused it to taste extreme hunger and fear, because of what they used to do.

16:113. There came to them a Messenger from among themselves, but they rejected him, so the punishment overtook them in the midst of their evildoing.

This city is Makkah, which is safe and peaceful; and no one therein is to be disturbed. The people of the jāhiliyah venerated it to such an extent that one of them might find the murderer of his father and his brother there, but he would not disturb him despite the intense tribal feelings that existed among them and the Arab sense of pride. Thus it attained complete security in a way that was never achieved by any other city. It was also granted abundant provision. Although it was a land in which there were no cornfields and no trees, Allah sent to it provision that came to it from everywhere. Then a Messenger from among them came to them, whose honesty and sincerity they knew well, and he called them to the most perfect of attitudes and manners, and forbade to them all evil things. But they rejected him and were ungrateful for the blessing that Allah had bestowed upon them, so Allah caused them to taste the opposite of what they had been enjoying; He caused them to experience extreme hunger, which is the opposite of abundance, and fear which is the opposite of security. That was because of their actions and disbelief, and their lack of gratitude. ﴿It is not Allah Who wronged them, but it was they who wronged themselves.﴾ (16: 33)



﴿ فَكُلُوا مِن مَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَاشْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالْدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ لِبَغْيِهِ اللَّهُ بِهِ ۖ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١١٥﴾ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ﴾

لِمَا تَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُكُمْ الْكُذِبَ هَذَا حَلَلٌ وَهَذَا حَرَامٌ لِنَفْسِكُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكُذِبُ
 إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكُذِبَ لَا يُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾ مَتَّعَ قَلِيلٌ لَهُمْ وَعَذَابُ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١١٧﴾ وَعَلَى
 الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَمًا مَا قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمَا ظَلَمْنَاهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ

﴿١١٨﴾ (سورة النحل: ١١٤-١١٨)

- 16:114. So eat of that which Allah has provided for you, lawful and good, and be grateful for the blessings of Allah, if it is Him you worship.
- 16:115. He has only forbidden you the meat of animals found dead, and blood, and the flesh of swine, and that on which any name has been invoked other than that of Allah. But if one is forced by necessity, without wilful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits, then verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.
- 16:116. And do not utter falsehood by letting your tongues declare: This is lawful and this is prohibited, thus fabricating lies against Allah. Verily those who fabricate lies against Allah will never prosper.
- 16:117. It is only a brief enjoyment, and theirs will be a painful punishment.
- 16:118. To the Jews We prohibited that which We recounted to you before. We did not wrong them; rather they wronged themselves.

Here Allah (ﷻ) instructs His slaves to eat what He has provided them with of animals, grains, fruits and other things, «lawful and good» that is, so long as it has these two characteristics, so that it is not something that Allah has prohibited and it has not been obtained in any unlawful manner, and the like. So enjoy what Allah has created for you, without being extravagant and without transgressing due limits.

«and be grateful for the blessings of Allah» by acknowledging them in your hearts, praising Allah for them and using them to obey Allah

«if it is Him you worship» that is, if you are sincere to Him in worship. So do not give thanks except to Him and do not forget the Bestower of blessings.

«He has only forbidden you» things that are harmful, so as to protect you from harm. That includes things such as the following:

- «the meat of animals found dead», which includes everything that died without being slaughtered in the prescribed manner; exempted from that are locusts and fish.
- «and blood» – this refers to blood that has been poured forth (at the time of slaughter); as for that which remains in the veins and flesh, it does not matter.
- «and the flesh of swine» because it is filthy and impure. That includes the flesh, fat and all parts of the pig.
- «and that on which any name has been invoked other than that of Allah» such as that which is slaughtered for idols, graves and the like, because the intention behind it is the ascription of partners to Allah (*shirk*).

«But if one is forced by necessity» to eat one of the things that have been prohibited – because of urgent necessity and the fear of dying if one does not eat it – then there is no blame on the individual for that, so long as there is no wilful disobedience or transgression; in other words, so long as he does not want to eat that prohibited thing at a time when there is no need to do so, and he is not going beyond that which is lawful to seek that which is prohibited, and he does not transgress by eating more than is essential. Then these things are permissible, subject to the conditions mentioned above.

«And do not utter falsehood by letting your tongues declare: This is lawful and this is prohibited» that is, do not declare things to be prohibited or lawful of your own accord, fabricating lies against Allah and attributing to Him words that He never said.

«thus fabricating lies against Allah. Verily those who fabricate lies against Allah will never prosper» either in this world or the

hereafter, for Allah will inevitably humiliate them; even if they have some enjoyment in this world ﴿It is only a brief enjoyment﴾, and their ultimate destiny will be the fire, ﴿and theirs will be a painful punishment﴾.

Allah (ﷻ) has only forbidden impure things to us by His grace, to protect us from everything that is repellent.

But in the case of the Jews, Allah prohibited to them good things that had previously been permitted to them, because of their wrongdoing and as a punishment to them, as in the story in Soorat al-An'âm, where He says:

﴿To the Jews We forbade every [animal] with undivided hoof, and We forbade to them the fat of cattle and sheep, except that which adheres to their backs or entrails, or is attached to their bones. Thus We requited them for their wilful disobedience; verily We state the truth.﴾ (al-An'âm 6: 146)



﴿ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا الشُّوْءَ بِجَهْلَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا
إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنْ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ (سورة النحل: ١١٩)

16:119. Then verily your Lord, to those who do evil in ignorance then repent and mend their ways – verily your Lord, after that, is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Here Allah encourages His slaves to repent and calls them to turn to Him. He tells us that if anyone does evil in ignorance, there are consequences that result from that. If he commits that sin deliberately, then whatever knowledge he has in his heart will inevitably decrease at the time when he is committing the sin, but if he repents and mends his ways, by giving up the sin, regretting it and doing righteous deeds,

then Allah will forgive him and have mercy on him; He will accept his repentance and restore him to his previous condition, or make him even better.



﴿ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِلَّهِ حَنِيفًا وَّلَا يَكُ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾ شَاكِرًا
لِلْأَنْعَامِ أَجْتَبَهُ وَهَدَاهُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿١٢١﴾ وَءَاتَيْنَاهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَإِنَّهُ فِي
الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١٢٢﴾ ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ أَنْ اتَّبِعِ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ
مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٢٠-١٢٣)

- 16:120. Ibrâheem was indeed an exemplary leader, devoutly obedient to Allah, a monotheist, and he was not one of those who ascribed partners to Allah.
- 16:121. He was ever grateful for His blessings; Allah chose him and guided him to a straight path.
- 16:122. We gave him good in this world, and in the hereafter he will surely be among the righteous.
- 16:123. Then We revealed to you [O Muhammad]: Follow the religion of Ibrâheem, the monotheist, and he was not one of those who ascribe partners to Allah.

Here Allah tells us of the blessings that He bestowed upon His close friend Ibrâheem (ﷺ) and how He singled him out for sublime virtues and perfect characteristics.

﴿Ibrâheem was indeed an exemplary leader﴾ that is, a leader who attained all good characteristics; he was a guide and was himself guided
 ﴿devoutly obedient to Allah﴾ that is, he constantly obeyed his Lord and was sincerely devoted to Him

«a monotheist» who turned to Allah in love, repentance and true servitude, turning away from all others besides Him
 «and he was not one of those who ascribed partners to Allah» in word or deed, or in any circumstances, because he was the leader of the monotheists.

«He was ever grateful for His blessings» that is, Allah gave him good in this world and bestowed upon him blessings both visible and hidden, and he gave thanks for them.

The outcome of these sublime characteristics was that «Allah chose him» and singled him out to be His close friend, and made him one of the elite of His creation and one of His slaves who are close to Him.

«and guided him to a straight path» in terms of his knowledge and deeds, so he recognised the truth and gave it precedence over all other things.

«We gave him good in this world» namely abundant provision, a beautiful wife, righteous offspring and good characteristics
 «and in the hereafter he will surely be among the righteous» who will be of high status and very close to Allah (ﷻ).

One of the greatest of his virtues is that Allah revealed to the leader of humankind and the most perfect of them that he and his Ummah should follow the religion of Ibrâheem and take him as an example.



﴿ إِنَّمَا جُعِلَ السَّبْتُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَيَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٢٤)

16:124. The Sabbath was only ordained for those who differed concerning it. Verily your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that wherein they differed.

«The Sabbath was only ordained» that is, made obligatory «for those who differed concerning it» when they went astray from Friday. This refers to the Jews, and their differing was the reason why it was made obligatory upon them to respect and venerate the Sabbath. Otherwise, the real virtue is in Friday, to which Allah guided this Ummah.

«Verily your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that wherein they differed» and He will make clear to them who was in the right and who was in the wrong, who deserves reward and who deserves punishment.



﴿ ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجِدِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ۚ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴾ (سورة النحل: ١٢٥)

(١٢٥)

16:125. Invite to the way of your Lord on the basis of wisdom and goodly exhortation, and reason with them in the most courteous manner. Verily your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His path, and He knows best who is rightly guided.

That is, let your call to all people, Muslims and disbelievers, inviting them to the straight path of your Lord, which includes beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds, be «on the basis of wisdom», addressing each according to his situation and ability to understand, and the level of his acceptance and submission.

Therefore the call to Islam should be based on knowledge, not ignorance, starting with the most important matters, then the next most important, issues that are clearer in the mind and easier to understand, and are more likely to be fully accepted, presenting the call with kindness and gentleness.

If the person called responds to that approach which is based on wisdom, all well and good; otherwise the caller may use godly exhortation, which is enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, accompanied by encouragement and warnings, pointing out and listing what interests one may attain by adhering to the commands, and what harms one may incur by indulging in that which is prohibited. It may also involve pointing out the honour of the one who adheres to the religion of Allah and the disgrace of the one who does not do so, or describing what Allah has prepared of reward in this world and the hereafter for those who are obedient to Him and what He has prepared of punishment in this world and the hereafter for those who are disobedient to Him. If the person to whom the call is addressed thinks that what he is following is truth or if he is a promoter of falsehood, then the caller to Islam should reason with him in the most courteous manner. These are the ways which are more likely to bring a response, according to both reason and the texts.

One way of doing that is to use evidence that he believes is sound, because this is more likely to achieve the goal and not lead to argument or trading of insults, which will defeat the purpose and is of no benefit. Rather the aim is to guide people to the truth, not to prove them wrong and the like.

﴿Verily your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His path﴾ for He knows the reason that led to misguidance, and He knows the deeds that result from misguidance and will requite him for them. ﴿and He knows best who is rightly guided﴾ for He knows that they are fit for guidance, so He guided them then He blessed them and chose them.



﴿وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُمْ بِهِ ۗ وَلَئِنْ صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ
لِّلصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَأَصْبِرْ وَمَا صَبْرُكَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ ۗ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُ فِي

صَبِّحْ بِمَا يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ
 ﴿سورة النحل: ١٢٦-١٢٨﴾ ﴿١٢٨﴾

- 16:126. If you retaliate, let your retaliation be commensurate with the wrong that has been done to you. But if you endure patiently, it is indeed better for those who are patient in adversity.
- 16:127. And be patient and steadfast, for your patience can only be by the help of Allah; do not grieve over them, and do not be distressed because of their plots.
- 16:128. Verily Allah is with those who fear Him and those who do good.

Here Allah (ﷻ) says – allowing justice yet recommending generosity and kindness:

﴿If you retaliate﴾ against one who mistreated you in word or deed ﴿let your retaliation be commensurate with the wrong that has been done to you﴾ without going beyond that and doing more than was done to you.

﴿But if you endure patiently﴾ and refrain from retaliating, and you forgive their offence

﴿it is indeed better for those who are patient in adversity﴾ than settling scores, for that which is with Allah is ultimately better for you and better in outcome, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿...but whoever forgives and reconciles, his reward is with Allah...﴾
 (ash-Shoorā 42: 40)

Then Allah instructs His Messenger (ﷺ) to be patient in calling people to Allah, and to seek the help of Allah in doing that, and not to rely on himself.

﴿And be patient and steadfast, for your patience can only be by the help of Allah﴾ for it is He Who helps you to do that makes you steadfast.

﴿do not grieve over them﴾ if you call them and you see that they do not accept your call, for such grief will not benefit you in the slightest. ﴿and do not be distressed﴾ that is, do not be upset and troubled ﴿because of their plots﴾ because their plot will backfire on them, whereas you are among those who fear Him and those who do good.

And Allah is with those who fear Him and do good, giving them His help, guidance and support, for they are the ones who keep away from disbelief and sin, and they do well in worshipping Allah, as they worship Him as if they can see Him, and if they do not see Him, He sees them; and they show kindness to people by striving to benefit them in all ways. We ask Allah to make us among those who fear Him and do good.

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat an-Nahl.

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

