

21. Soorat al-Anbiyâ'

(Makki)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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



﴿أَقْرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿١﴾ مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ ذِكْرِ
مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ تُحَدِّثُ إِلَّا أَصْنَعُوهُ وَهُمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٢﴾ لَاهِيَةً قُلُوبُهُمْ وَأَسْرَأَ النَّجْوَى
الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا هَلْ هَذَا إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ أَفَتَأْتُونَ السَّحَرَ وَأَنْتُمْ تَبْصُرُونَ
﴿٣﴾ قَالَ رَبِّي يَعْلَمُ الْقَوْلَ فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٤﴾﴾ (سورة

الأنبياء: ١-٤)

- 21:1. The Day of Reckoning for humankind has drawn near, and yet they turn away in heedlessness.
- 21:2. No fresh revelation comes to them from their Lord, but they listen to it in ridicule,
- 21:3. with hearts distracted. The wrongdoers whisper to one another in secret: Is this man not a human being like yourselves? Will you, then, follow his magic with your eyes wide open?
- 21:4. He said: My Lord knows every word spoken in the heavens and on earth, for He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

This is an expression of amazement at people's attitude, and at the fact that no reminder moves them, and they do not pay any attention to any warner, for their reckoning has drawn near and the requital for their deeds, both good and bad, is at hand, but they are turning away in heedlessness, paying no attention to the purpose for which they were created and ignoring that of which they have been warned, as if they were created for this world and were born merely to enjoy physical pleasures therein. Allah keeps renewing the reminder and exhortation to them, but they persist in their negligence and turning away. Hence He says:

﴿No fresh revelation comes to them from their Lord﴾, reminding them of that which will benefit them and urging them to do it, and reminding them of that which will harm them and warning them against it

﴿but they listen to it﴾ in a manner of listening that establishes proof against them

﴿in ridicule, with hearts distracted﴾ that is, their hearts are heedless and turn away, distracted by worldly concerns and idle pursuits. They are distracted by physical pleasure, striving for false purposes and ridiculing the message, even though what they should do is something other than that; their hearts should be focused on the commands and prohibitions of Allah, and they should listen to the message in such a way that they understand the intended meaning, and they should strive physically to worship their Lord, which is the purpose for which they were created, and they should be mindful of the Resurrection, reckoning and recompense. By doing that, they would attain what they aspire for, their affairs would be put in order and their deeds would become righteous.

There are two scholarly views concerning the meaning of the words: ﴿The Day of Reckoning for humankind has drawn near﴾ (21: 1).

The first view is that the Ummah is the last of nations and its Messenger (ﷺ) is the final Messenger, and the Hour will come upon his Ummah. So the reckoning has drawn near to them in contrast to the nations that came before them, because the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«I and the Hour have been sent like these two.» (Muslim)

-- and he held up two of his fingers together, the forefinger and the one that is next to it.

The second view is that what is meant by the approach of the reckoning is death, because when a person dies, his reckoning has begun and he has entered the realm of requital for deeds. This is an expression of amazement at all those who are negligent and turn away, not knowing when death will strike, morning or evening. This is how all people are, except those on whom Allah has bestowed His grace, so they prepare for death and what comes after it.

Then Allah tells us what the disbelievers and wrongdoers spoke of when they whispered to one another by way of stubbornness, opposing the truth with falsehood. They conversed with one another and reached an agreement among themselves that they would say concerning the Messenger (ﷺ): He is a human being like you, so what makes him better than you and what makes him special? If any of you were to make a claim like his, his word would be equal to his, but he wants to make himself superior to you and establish himself as a leader among you, so do not obey him and do not believe him; he is a magician and what he has brought of the Qur'an is magic, so keep away from him and deter other people from speaking to him, and say: «Will you, then, follow his magic with your eyes wide open?» (21: 3). They plotted this even though they knew that he was indeed the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), based on what they had seen of clear signs, the like of which no one else had ever seen. But what made them do that was the fact that they were doomed, wrongdoers and stubborn. Allah (ﷻ) encompassed with His knowledge all that they said in private, and He would require them for it. Hence He said:

«He said: My Lord knows every word spoken» in private and in public
 «in the heavens and on earth» that is, in all regions thereof
 «for He is All-Hearing» and hears all voices, in all different languages, calling out for all kinds of different needs
 «All-Knowing» and He knows what is in people's hearts and what is yet more hidden.



﴿بَلْ قَالُوا أَضْغَنْتُ أَحْلَمَ بَلْ أَفْتَرْتَهُ بَلْ هُوَ شَاعِرٌ فَلْيَأْتِنَا بِآيَةٍ كَمَا أُرْسِلَ الْأُولُونَ ﴿٥﴾ مَا آمَنَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا أَفَهُمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٦﴾﴾ (سورة

الأنبياء: ٥-٦)

- 21:5. They said: Nay, [these are] jumbled, confusing dreams; nay, he has fabricated it; nay, he is but a poet. So let him bring us a sign, such as the earlier Messengers were sent with.
- 21:6. Not one of the cities whom We destroyed believed [even though We showed them signs]; will these people then believe?

Here Allah (ﷻ) refers to the lies fabricated by those who disbelieved in Muhammad (ﷺ) and what he brought of the Holy Qur'an, telling us that they called him a fool and made other false accusations against him. Sometimes they said «[(these are) jumbled, confusing dreams]», like the words of one who murmurs in his sleep and does not realise what he is saying. Sometimes they said «[he has fabricated it]» and made it up by himself. And sometimes they said that he was a poet and what he brought was poetry.

Anyone who has the slightest knowledge of the reality of the Messenger (ﷺ), and examines this Book that he brought, will be certain, beyond any shadow of a doubt, that it is the best and most

sublime of speech and that it is from Allah, for no human could ever produce anything like even part of it, as Allah challenged His enemies to do and thereby prove that it was not from Him. Even though they had a motive to prove that it was not from Him, and they harboured enmity towards it, they were not able to produce something like it to prove that it was not from Him, and they were well aware of that. Otherwise, what made them strive so hard? What gave them sleepless nights and rendered them speechless, except the truth that nothing can resist? Rather they said these words about the Prophet (ﷺ) – as they did not believe in him – so as to turn people away from him who did not know him. The Qur'an is the greatest of eternal signs that points to the soundness of the message brought by the Messenger (ﷺ) and his truthfulness, and it is sufficient.

Whoever looks for proof other than it, or demands some other sign, is ignorant and is being unfair; he is more like those stubborn people who rejected the Qur'an and demanded other signs of their own, choosing which would be the most harmful thing for them and would bring them no benefits at all, because if their aim was to know the truth on the basis of proof, the proof was already established without what they were demanding of signs. But if their aim was to outwit the Prophet (ﷺ) and find excuses for themselves (for not believing) – if their demand for a particular sign was not met – then in that case, even if they were given what they demanded of signs, they definitely would not believe; even if every sign were to come to them, they would not believe until they saw (for themselves) the painful punishment (*cf.* 10: 97).

Hence Allah tells us that they said: «So let him bring us a sign, such as the earlier Messengers were sent with» that is, like the she-camel of Şâlih and the staff of Moosâ, and so on.

«Not one of the cities whom We destroyed believed» in these signs that they demanded. Allah's way of dealing with people is that if anyone demands a sign and it is granted to him, but he does not

believe, then the punishment will be hastened for him. The earlier generations did not believe in those signs, so will these people believe in them? What makes them better than those earlier generations? What good virtue do they possess that would make them believe when these signs appear?

This appears in the form of a question – ﴿will these people then believe?﴾ – but what is meant is denial or negation; in other words, they will never believe.



﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُوْحِي إِلَيْهِمْ فَسْتَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧﴾ وَمَا جَعَلْنَاهُمْ جَسَدًا لَا يَأْكُلُونَ الطَّعَامَ وَمَا كَانُوا خَالِدِينَ ﴿٨﴾ ثُمَّ صَدَقْنَاهُمُ الْوَعْدَ فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُمْ وَمَنْ نَشَاءُ وَأَهْلَكْنَا الْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿٩﴾﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٧-٩)

(٩-٧)

- 21:7. We did not send before you [O Muhammad] any but men to whom We gave revelation. So [O people] ask those who have knowledge,¹⁷ if you do not know.
- 21:8. We did not give them bodies that needed no food, nor were they immortal.
- 21:9. Then We fulfilled Our promise to them, and We saved them and those whom We willed, and We destroyed those who transgressed all bounds.

This is a response to the specious argument of those who disbelieved in the Messenger (ﷺ) and said: Why is he not an

¹⁷ 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.

angel who does not need food or drink, and does not engage in business in the marketplace? Why is he not immortal? As he was not like that, they thought that this indicated that he was not a Messenger (ﷺ).

This specious argument is still used by those who disbelieve in the Messengers. They are all alike in their disbelief, and they are all alike in their thinking. Allah (ﷻ) responded to this argument from those who disbelieved in the Messenger (Muhammad [ﷺ]), although they accepted Messengers who came before him – even if they believed only in Ibrâheem (ﷺ), whose prophethood was accepted by all groups, including the polytheists who claimed to be following his path and religion – by noting that the Messengers who came before Muhammad (ﷺ) were all human beings who ate food, walked about in the marketplaces and were subject to everything that human beings go through, such as death and the like; Allah sent them to their peoples and nations, and some believed in them whereas others disbelieved, and Allah fulfilled His promise to them of saving and blessing them and their followers, and destroying the transgressors who rejected them.

So why, in the case of Muhammad (ﷺ), do they reject his message on the basis of false arguments, when the same argument could be made with regard to his fellow Messengers in whom those who reject Muhammad believe? This argument is very clear and binding. If they accept a human Messenger, but they will not accept a non-human Messenger, then their argument is flawed, and they themselves have shown it to be flawed when they admitted that it was so, and when they contradicted themselves in their argument. If, based on this argument, they then denied the prophethood of any human being at all, and said that no one could be a Prophet unless he was immortal and did not eat food, then Allah (ﷻ) has answered this specious argument in the verses in which He says:

﴿They say: Why has an angel not been sent down to him? If We did send down an angel, that would be the end of the matter and they would be given no respite. And if We had appointed [as Messenger] an angel, We would have made him appear as a man, and thus We would only have confused them in the same way as they are now confusing themselves.﴾ (al-An'ām 6: 8-9)

Moreover, ordinary human beings are not able to receive revelation directly from the angels:

﴿Say: If there had been angels on earth, walking about and settled therein, We would surely have sent down to them from heaven an angel as a messenger.﴾ (al-Isrā' 17: 95)

If you still have any doubts and do not know about the condition of the earlier Messengers, then ﴿ask those who have knowledge﴾ of the earlier scriptures, such as the people of the Torah and the Gospel, and they will tell you what they know, that the Messengers were all human, like those to whom they were sent.

Although the particular reason for revelation of this verse had to do with asking the People of the Book about the earlier Messengers, as they were people of knowledge, it is general in meaning and applies to other matters of religion, both basic and minor. If a person does not have any knowledge of such an issue, he may ask one who does know it. So it is a command to learn and ask people of knowledge. We are only instructed to ask them because they are obliged to teach and answer questions about what they know.

Because we are specifically instructed to ask those who have knowledge, this implies that it is not allowed to ask questions of one who is known to be ignorant and to have no knowledge, and it is prohibited for one who has no knowledge to give answers. This verse also indicates that there are no Prophets among women, neither Maryam nor anyone else, because Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿any but men to whom We gave revelation﴾.



﴿لَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ كِتَابًا فِيهِ ذِكْرُكُمْ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ١٠)

21:10. We have sent down to you [O people] a Book in which there is honour for you [if you follow its teachings]; will you not then understand?

We have sent down to you – O people to whom Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Abdul-Muṭṭalib (ﷺ) was sent – a noble Book and a clear Qur’an, ﴿in which there is honour for you﴾ that is, renown, pride and a lofty status, if you pay heed to what it contains of true stories, then believe in it, comply with what it enjoins and avoid what it forbids. Then you will rise in status and become significant.

﴿will you not then understand﴾ what will benefit you and what will harm you? How can you not accept it and not strive to adhere to that in which is your renown and honour in this world and in the hereafter? If you had any understanding, you would have followed this path.

But because you did not follow it, and you followed other paths instead that would lead to humiliation and to low status and misery in this world and the hereafter, it is known that you have no sound reasoning or understanding.

This verse is confirmed by what happened in reality: those who believed in the Messenger (ﷺ) and followed the teachings of the Qur’an, namely the *Ṣahâbah* and those who came after them, attained honour, high status and great renown, and were elevated to a higher position than kings, as is well known to everyone. It is also known what happened to those who did not adhere to this Qur’an and were not guided by it and did not purify themselves on the basis thereof: they were brought low, despised, tainted and wretched. There is no way to attain happiness in this world or the hereafter except by adhering to the teachings of this Book.



﴿وَكَمْ قَصَمْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ كَانَتْ ظَالِمَةً وَأَنْشَأْنَا بَعْدَهَا قَوْمًا آخَرِينَ ﴿١١﴾ فَلَمَّا
 أَحْسَبُوا بِأَسْنَانَا إِذَا هُمْ مِنْهَا يَرْكُضُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ لَا تَرْكُضُوا وَارْجِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَا أُتْرِفْتُمْ فِيهِ
 وَمَسْكِنَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُشْتَلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ قَالُوا يَبُولْنَا إِنْ أُنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ ﴿١٤﴾ فَمَا زَالَتْ تِلْكَ
 دَعْوَتُهُمْ حَتَّىٰ جَعَلْنَاهُمْ حَصِيدًا خَمَلِينَ ﴿١٥﴾﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ١١-١٥)

- 21:11. How many cities that were given to wrongdoing have We utterly destroyed, and raised up other people in their stead.
- 21:12. When they sensed Our punishment [approaching], they began to flee from it.
- 21:13. Do not flee. Go back to your comforts and your dwellings, so that you may be sought out [to give help and advice to others].
- 21:14. They said: Woe to us! We were indeed wrongdoers.
- 21:15. And that cry of theirs did not cease until We mowed them down and left them lifeless.

Here Allah warns these wrongdoers who disbelieved in the Messenger (ﷺ) of what happened to previous nations who disbelieved in other Messengers:

﴿How many cities that were given to wrongdoing have We utterly destroyed﴾ that is, eradicated completely ﴿and raised up other people in their stead﴾. When these people who were destroyed realised that the punishment of Allah was imminent and had started to befall them, and that it was not possible for them to go back and there was no way they could flee, they began to stamp their feet in an expression of regret and anguish, lamenting what they had done and trying to escape the punishment.

Therefore it was said to them, by way of mockery (as part of the punishment): ﴿Do not flee. Go back to your comforts and your dwellings, so that you may be sought out [to give help and advice

to others]» that is, stamping your feet and expressing regret will not benefit you, but if you think you can, then go back to your pleasures and desirable things, to your fine dwellings and your world that deceived you and distracted you until the punishment of Allah came to you, so that you may establish yourselves again there and indulge in pleasures, and feel content and respected in your dwellings; perhaps you will be as you were before, and people will come to you seeking help with regard to worldly affairs, as happened before. But there is no way that can happen. How could they go back to that, when that time is now over and the punishment and divine wrath have started to befall them, their worldly honour and glory have vanished and all that is left is regret and lamentation?

Hence «They said: Woe to us! We were indeed wrongdoers. And that cry of theirs did not cease» that is, that cry of woe, doom and regret, admitting their wrongdoing and acknowledging that Allah was just in what He sent upon them, did not cease «until We mowed them down and left them lifeless» that is, like crops that are mown down and brought low. Thus they were felled, all their movements ceased and their voices were silenced. So beware – O you who are addressed here – of persisting in rejection of the noblest of the Messengers (ﷺ), lest there befall you what befell them.



﴿ وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لَعِينٍ ﴿١٦﴾ لَوْ أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نَنْجِدَ لَهُمْ لَوْلَا نَجِدْتَهُ
مِن لَدُنَّا إِنْ كُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ ﴿١٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ١٦-١٧)

21:16. We have not created the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, in vain.

21:17. If We had wanted to take a pastime, We could have done so, if We were to do such a thing.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He did not create the heavens and the earth without purpose or for no reason; rather He created them in truth and for the truth, so that people may find proof in them that He is the Almighty Creator, wise controller, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful to Whom belong all attributes of perfection, to Whom be all praise and glory, Whose word is true and Whose Messengers are truthful in what they tell. The One Who is able to create the heavens and the earth, despite their immense vastness, is also able to recreate bodies after their death, so that He may requite the doer of good for his good deeds and the doer of evil for his evil deeds.

«If We had wanted to take a pastime» – this is said only for argument's sake, because it is impossible

«We could have done so, if We were to do such a thing» and We would not have disclosed to you what it would contain of vanity and frivolity, because that is a shortcoming and a negative reflection on Us, and We would not want to show it to you.

The real purpose behind the heavens and the earth, which are always visible to you, cannot be vain or frivolous. All of this is said by way of argument and addressed to small-minded people and is aimed at convincing them by all possible means. Glory be to the Most Forbearing, Most Merciful, Who is Most Wise and deals with all matters appropriately.



﴿بَلْ نَقْذِفُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلَى الْبَاطِلِ فَيَدْمَغُهُ فَإِذَا هُوَ زَاهِقٌ وَلَكُمْ الْوَيْلُ مِمَّا نَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨﴾
 وَلَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَلَا
 يَسْتَحْسِرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ يُسْحِقُونَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ لَا يَفْتُرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ١٨-٢٠)

21:18. Nay, rather We hurl the truth against falsehood, and it crushes it, whereupon it perishes. Woe to you for what you ascribe [falsely, to Allah].

21:19. To Him belong all those who are in the heavens and on earth, and those who are with Him are not too proud to worship Him, nor do they ever grow weary.

21:20. They glorify Him night and day, without flagging.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He guarantees to show the truth to be true and to show falsehood to be false; any falsehood that is presented or defended by anyone, Allah will send down truth, knowledge and explanations that will destroy it, so that it will diminish and it will become apparent to everyone that it is false.

﴿whereupon it perishes﴾ that is, it diminishes and disappears. This is general in meaning and applies to all religious matters. No supporter of falsehood presents a specious argument, basing it on reason or on a text, supporting falsehood or rejecting truth, but there is definitive evidence from Allah that is based on reason or on texts, that will defeat the false argument and suppress it. Thus the falseness thereof will become clear to everyone. That becomes clear by examining these issues one by one, and you will always find that this is the case.

﴿Woe to you﴾ who ascribed to Allah that which is not befitting to Him, such as saying that He has a child, a wife, rivals or partners. All that you will gain from that is ﴿woe﴾, regret and loss; there is no benefit for you in what you say and you will not get the return for which you hope and strive. All you will get is the opposite of what you are seeking, namely loss and deprivation.

Then Allah tells us that He is the Sovereign of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, therefore all creatures are His slaves and subject to Him, and not one of them has any control or share of dominion, not one of them helps Him in His control, and no one can intercede except by Allah's leave, so how can any of them be taken as gods? How could Allah have begotten any of them as a son?

Glorified and exalted be the Almighty Sovereign to Whom all submit, for Whom nothing is difficult, to Whom the angels who are near Him submit and they all constantly worship Him.

Hence Allah says: ﴿and those who are with Him﴾ namely the angels, ﴿are not too proud to worship Him, nor do they ever grow weary﴾ that is, they never tire of worship, because they are so eager, their love is complete and they are physically strong.

﴿They glorify Him night and day, without flagging﴾ that is, they are immersed in worship and glorification at all times, without ceasing. Despite their great number, all of them are like that, and this is indicative of Allah's greatness, complete sovereignty, and perfect knowledge and wisdom, which dictate that none should be worshipped except He, and no act of worship should be directed to anyone except Him.



﴿أَمْ اتَّخَذُوا آلِهَةً مِنَ الْأَرْضِ هُمْ يُنشِرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ لَوْ كَانَ فِيهَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ لَا يُسْئَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْئَلُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ أَمْ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ هَذَا ذِكْرٌ مِنْ مَعِيَ وَذِكْرٌ مِنْ قَبْلِي بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْحَقَّ فَهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيَ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ ﴿٢٥﴾﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٢١-٢٥)

- 21:21. Or have they taken gods from the earth who can raise [the dead]?
- 21:22. If there had been therein [in the heavens and the earth] any gods besides Allah, both realms would surely have fallen into disorder. Glory be to Allah, Lord of the Throne, and [exalted be He] far above what they ascribe [to Him].
- 21:23. He cannot be questioned about what He does, but they will be questioned.
- 21:24. Or have they taken other gods besides Him? Say: Bring your proof. This is the Book of those who are with me, and the Book

of those who came before me. But most of them do not know the truth, so they turn away.

- 21:25. And We did not send before you [O Muhammad] any Messenger but We revealed to him: There is no god but I, so worship Me [alone].

Having mentioned the perfect nature of His power and greatness, and the submission of all things to Him, here Allah (ﷻ) denounces the polytheists who have, besides Allah, taken others from the earth as gods who are utterly helpless and incapable.

﴿Or have they taken gods from the earth who can raise [the dead]?﴾ This appears in the form of a question, but what is meant is negation; in other words, those [false gods] are not able to raise the dead or resurrect them. This is explained elsewhere, where Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿They have taken other gods besides Him that can create nothing but are themselves created; they have no power either to harm or benefit themselves, and they have no power to cause death, give life or resurrect.﴾ (*al-Furqān* 25: 3)

– and:

﴿Yet they have taken other gods besides Allah, in the hope that they may be helped. They cannot help them; rather their worshippers stand like warriors ready to defend them.﴾ (*Yā Seen* 36: 74-75)

So the polytheist worships something created that cannot benefit or harm, and he does not devote his worship solely to Allah, to Whom all perfect attributes belong and in Whose Hand is control and the power to benefit or harm. That is because the polytheist is not guided and is unfortunate, and because of his ignorance and wrongdoing. The universe cannot maintain well-being unless it is cared for by One God, as it was created and brought into being by only one Lord. Hence Allah says:

﴿If there had been therein﴾ that is in the heavens and the earth,

﴿any gods besides Allah, both realms would surely have fallen into disorder﴾ in and of themselves, and all creatures in them would also have fallen into disorder.

What this means is that the upper and lower realms are visibly in the most perfect shape, sound and in order, with no flaws or defects, no resistance to the divine will and no opposition to the divine decree. This indicates that their Controller is one, their Lord is one and their God is one. If there were two or more controllers or lords, then their system would falter and their pillars would collapse, because they (those two controllers or lords) would oppose one another and strive against one another. If one of them wanted one thing, the other would want the opposite. Therefore it is impossible for two wills to coexist, and if the will of one was done but not the other, this would indicate that the other was helpless and incapable, but it would be impossible for both to agree on one thing in all matters.

Therefore it must be the case that the Controller Whose will alone is done, without any resistance or opposition, is Allah, the One, the Subduer. Hence Allah refers to this argument when He says:

﴿Allah has never begotten a son, nor is there any god besides Him. [In that case,] each god would have taken full control of what he had created, and each would have rushed to gain supremacy over the others. Glory be to Allah and [exalted be He] far above what they ascribe [to Him].﴾ (*al-Mu'minoon* 23: 91)

– and:

﴿Say [O Muhammad]: If there were [other] gods with Him, as they say, they would surely have sought a way to the Lord of the Throne.¹⁸ Glory be to Him, and exalted be He far above what they say!﴾ (*al-Isrā'* 17: 42-43)

¹⁸ What is meant is that they would have sought a way to challenge Him (al-Qurtubi, from Ibn 'Abbās).

Hence Allah says here: «Glory be to Allah» that is, exalted be He above all shortcomings, for He alone is perfect «Lord of the Throne» which is above all creation, and is the vastest and greatest of all created things. If He is Lord of the Throne, it is even more appropriate for Him to be Lord of whatever is beneath it. «and [exalted be He] far above what they ascribe [to Him]» that is, what the disbelievers ascribe to Him, of having begotten offspring or taken a wife, or having a partner in any way whatsoever.

«He cannot be questioned about what He does» because of His greatness, glory and perfect might. No one can resist Him or oppose Him in word or deed, because of His perfect wisdom, for He is precise and wise in all that He does. He has created everything perfectly that may be comprehended by reason, so there can be no question concerning it, because all that He creates is free of faults.

«but they» that is, all created beings «will be questioned» about the deeds and words, because of their helplessness and weakness, and because they are His slaves; their actions and movements are controlled and they have not the slightest control over themselves or anyone else.

Then Allah again criticises and rebukes the polytheists for taking gods besides Him: «Or have they taken other gods besides Him? Say: Bring your proof» that is your evidence for the soundness of your view. But they will never be able to do that; rather definitive evidence has been established of its falseness. Hence Allah says:

«This is the Book of those who are with me, and the Book of those who came before me» that is, all the previous scriptures and religious teachings are agreed on the soundness of what I have said to you regarding the wrongness of ascribing partners to Allah. This is the Book of Allah in which there is mention of all things on the basis of rational and textual evidence, and all of these previous scriptures are proof and evidence for what I said. As it is the case that proof and evidence have been established against them of the falseness

of what they believe, it is known that they have no proof, because definitive proof is that which, when there is certainty, no argument can withstand, otherwise it cannot be definitive. If there is proof and there are arguments that may be raised against it, then they are specious arguments that do not change anything.

﴿But most of them do not know the truth﴾ that is, they persist in their way, imitating their forefathers and arguing without any knowledge or guidance. The fact that they do not have any knowledge of the truth is not because it is hidden or unclear; rather it is because they turn away from it. Otherwise, if they paid the slightest attention to it, they would know truth from falsehood in a very clear way. Hence Allah says: ﴿so they turn away﴾.

When Allah referred to the scriptures of those who came before, and instructed people to refer to them in the context of discussing this issue, He explained it fully by saying: ﴿And We did not send before you [O Muhammad] any Messenger but We revealed to him: There is no god but I, so worship Me [alone]﴾. With regard to all the Messengers who came before you, and their Books, the basic essence of their message is the command to worship Allah alone, with no partner or associate, and the declaration that He alone is the true God Who is deserving of worship, and worship of anything other than Him is false.



﴿وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا سُبْحٰنَهُ ۚ بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ لَا يَسْبِقُونَهُ ۚ بِالْقَوْلِ وَهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ وَهُمْ مِنَ خَشْيَتِهِ مُشْفِقُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾ وَمَنْ يَقُلْ مِنْهُمْ إِنِّي إِلَهٌ مِنْ دُونِهِ ۚ فَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِي جَهَنَّمَ كَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الظّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾﴾ (سورة

- 21:26. They say: The Most Gracious has begotten offspring. Glory be to Him! They [the ones they describe as His offspring] are but honoured slaves.
- 21:27. They do not speak until He has spoken, and they only do as He commands.
- 21:28. He knows what was before them and what will be after them, and they cannot intercede except for those with whom He is pleased, and they are filled with reverent awe of Him.
- 21:29. If any of them were to say: I am a god besides Him, We would requite him with hell. Thus do We requite the wrongdoers.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the foolishness of the polytheists who disbelieved in the Messenger (ﷺ) and claimed that Allah had begotten offspring by saying that the angels were the daughters of Allah. Exalted be Allah far above what they say.

Then He goes on to describe the angels as slaves who are subject to His Lordship and under His control. They have no control over anything at all; rather they are honoured by Allah, Who made them His slaves and bestowed His mercy upon them, and He singled them out for virtues and purified them of all bad attributes. They observe the utmost etiquette with Allah and comply with His commands.

«They do not speak until He has spoken» that is, they do not say anything that has to do with the affairs of His dominion until Allah speaks, because of their perfect etiquette and their awareness of the perfect nature of His wisdom and knowledge.

«and they only do as He commands» that is, no matter what He commands them to do, they comply with His command; no matter what task He gives them, they do it. They do not disobey Him for even an instant, and they do not do anything on the basis of what they themselves desire; rather they do only what Allah commands. Moreover, Allah has encompassed them with His knowledge.

For He knows ﴿what was before them and what will be after them﴾ that is, their past and future affairs, so they cannot escape His knowledge, just as they cannot escape His command and control.

Because they do not speak until He has spoken, they do not intercede for anyone without His permission and consent. If He gives them permission and is pleased with the one for whom they seek to intercede, then they will intercede for him. However, Allah (ﷻ) does not accept any words or deeds except those that were done sincerely for His sake, in accordance with the teachings of His Messenger (ﷺ). This verse is one of the proofs for the concept of intercession, and proves that the angels will intercede.

﴿and they are filled with reverent awe of Him﴾ that is, they fear Him and are in awe of Him. They have submitted to His Majesty and their faces are humbled before His glory and beauty.

Having explained that they have no right to divinity and do not deserve any worship at all, as the description that He gives of them implies that, Allah also states that they have no share in divinity even if they make such a claim, and that if, for argument's sake, any of them were to say, ﴿I am a god besides Him, We would requite him with hell. Thus do We requite the wrongdoers﴾. What wrongdoing could be greater than that of an imperfect creature, who is in need of Allah in all ways, claiming to share with Allah the attributes of divinity and Lordship?



﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَا رَتْقًا فَفَلَقْنَاهُمَا وَجَعَلْنَا
مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيًّا أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٣٠)

21:30. Do the disbelievers not realise that the heavens and the earth were a single mass, then We split them apart? And We have made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?

That is, can these people who disbelieve in their Lord and do not show devotion in worship to Him alone not see that which clearly indicates that He is the Lord Who is Most Praiseworthy, Most Generous, and is deserving of worship? They look at the heavens and the earth, and see them as a solid mass; they see the sky without a single cloud to bring rain, and they see the earth lifeless and dead, with no vegetation in it. Then We split them apart, so that the sky produces rain and the earth produces vegetation. It is He Who creates clouds in the sky, after it had been completely clear, and instils in the clouds abundant water, then sends it down to a dead land, that was covered in dust and utterly parched, and He causes it to rain so that the earth stirs to life and swells, and brings forth beautiful plants of every kind, that are used for many different purposes. Does that not indicate that He is true and all others besides Him are false, and that it is He Who will give life to the dead, and that He is the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful? ﴿Will they not then believe?﴾ This refers to sound faith, with no element of doubt or ascription of partners to Allah.

Then Allah refers to evidence in the universe:



﴿وَجَعَلْنَا فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِهِمْ وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا فِجَاجًا سُبُلًا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٣١﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ سَقْفًا مَحْفُوظًا وَهُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِهَا مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَاللَّيْلَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾﴾ (سورة الأنبياء:

(٣٣-٣١)

- 21:31. And We have set on the earth mountains standing firm, lest it shake with them, and We have made therein broad paths so that they may find their way.
- 21:32. And We have made the heaven a canopy, safe and well-guarded, yet they turn away from its signs.

21:33. It is He Who created the night and the day, and the sun and the moon, each moving swiftly in its orbit.

That is, among the evidence of His might, His perfection, His oneness and His mercy is the fact that, as the earth could not be stable without the mountains, He has made it stable thereby, and has made the mountains like pegs for it, so that it will not shake with the people. People would not be able to remain steady on it or cultivate it or settle on it otherwise.

So Allah has made the earth stable by means of the mountains, which resulted in an abundance of benefits. Because the mountains are connected to one another, and those chains of high peaks run on for a long distance, if they were to remain like that, travelling between countries would be very difficult. But by His wisdom and mercy, Allah has created broad paths between the mountains; this refers to easy routes and gentle terrain through which people can find their way to reach the lands they seek. And perhaps they will be guided to evidence of the oneness of the Bestower.

﴿And We have made the heaven a canopy﴾ for the earth on which you are;

﴿safe and well-guarded﴾ against falling.

﴿Verily, Allah sustains the heavens and the earth, lest they decline...﴾
(*Fâtir* 35: 41)

The heavens are also guarded against the eavesdropping of the devils.

﴿yet they turn away from its signs﴾ that is, they are heedless and distracted. This is general in meaning and refers to all the signs in the heaven: its great height, vastness, greatness, beautiful colour, amazing precision and other things that are visible in it, such as the stars and planets, sun and moon, from which result night and day, and the fact that they are always running in their own courses, and the stars do

likewise. Many benefits for people result from that, such as heat and cold, and the passage of the seasons; they know how to work out the times for their acts of worship and their dealings and transactions; they rest at night, settling down calmly, and they go about their business during the day, earning their livelihood. If the wise person reflects on all these things and thinks deeply about them, he will reach the certain conclusion, with no element of doubt, that Allah has made them for a certain length of time, during which people will gain great benefits from them, then after that they will diminish and cease to be; the One Who created them will extinguish them, and the One Who set them in motion will bring them to a halt.

Then those who are accountable will move to another realm, in which they will find the requital of their deeds in full, and it will be known that the purpose of this realm was to invest for the eternal realm, and that it was a place to pass through, not a place to settle.



﴿وَمَا جَعَلْنَا لِلشَّرِّ مِن قَبْلِكَ الْخُلْدَ أَفَإِن مِّنْ فَهْمٍ الْخَالِدُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَاقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَنَبْلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾﴾ (سورة الأنبياء:

(٣٥-٣٤)

- 21:34. We did not grant everlasting life to any human being before you [O Muhammad]. So if you die, will they [the disbelievers] live forever?
- 21:35. Every soul is bound to taste death; We test you with evil and good by way of trial, and to Us you will be returned.

Because the enemies of the Messenger (ﷺ) were saying: Let us wait for some misfortune to befall him (cf. 52: 30), Allah (ﷻ) said: This path (of misfortune) is well-trodden. ﴿We did not grant everlasting

life) in this world (to any human being before you), O Muhammad (ﷺ), so if you die, it is the same as happened to others like you among the Messengers, Prophets, close friends of Allah, and others.

«So if you die, will they [the disbelievers] live forever?» That is, will they be given eternal life after you are gone? Then let them enjoy that eternal life, if there is such a thing, but that is not the case; rather all who are on earth will perish, hence Allah says here: «Every soul is bound to taste death». This includes all creatures; this is a cup from which all must inevitably drink, even those who live for a long time.

But Allah (ﷻ) has created His slaves in this world, and has issued commands and prohibitions. He tests them with good and bad, wealth and poverty, power and humiliation, life and death; this is a trial from Him and a test to see who among them will be best in deeds, who will fail when tested, and who will be saved.

«and to Us you will be returned» and We will requite you for your deeds; if they were good then you will be rewarded, and if they were evil then you will be punished.

«...And your Lord is never unjust to His slaves.» (Fussilat 41: 46)

This verse highlights the falseness of the view of those who say that al-Khidr is still alive and that he is immortal in this world. This is a view for which there is no proof and it is contrary to the shar'i evidence.



﴿وَإِذَا رَأَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِتَّخَذُوا لَكَ إِلهًا مِمَّا هُمْ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ خُلِقَ الْإِنسَانُ مِنْ عَجَلٍ ۗ سَأُورِيكُمْ آيَاتِي فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُونِ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَى هَذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾ لَوْ يَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا حِينَ لَا يَكْفُرُونَ عَنْ وُجُوهِهِمُ النَّارَ

وَلَا عَنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ بَلْ تَأْتِيهِمْ بَغْتَةً فَتَبْهَتُهُمْ فَلَا
يَسْتَطِيعُونَ رَدَّهَا وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَلَقَدْ آسَفْنَاهُ بِرَسُولٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَحَاقَ
بِالَّذِينَ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ ﴿سورة الأنبياء: ٣٦-٤١﴾

- 21:36. When the disbelievers see you, they treat you only with ridicule, [saying]: Is this the one who speaks ill of your gods? and they reject all mention of the Most Gracious.
- 21:37. Man is a creature of haste. I will show you My signs, so do not ask Me to hasten.
- 21:38. They say: When will this promise come to pass, if you speak the truth?
- 21:39. If only the disbelievers knew of the time when they will not be able to ward off the fire from their faces or their backs, nor will they be helped, [they would not seek to hasten it].
- 21:40. Rather it will come upon them suddenly and confound them, and they will not be able to avert it, nor will they be given any respite.
- 21:41. Indeed Messengers before you were ridiculed, but then those who mocked them were overwhelmed by the very thing [punishment] they used to ridicule.

This is because of the severity of their disbelief. When the polytheists saw the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), they ridiculed him and said: «Is this the one who speaks ill of your gods?» That is, is this insignificant man – as they claimed – the one who reviles your gods, criticises them and attacks them? In other words: pay no attention to him and do not worry about him.

The fact that they ridiculed him and looked down on him is indicative of his perfection, for he was the more perfect and virtuous one; one of his virtues was his devotion to worshipping Allah alone and his criticism of everything that is worshipped besides Him,

pointing out its real status and situation. Rather those who deserved to be despised and ridiculed were these disbelievers, who combined all blameworthy characteristics. Even if there was nothing except their disbelief in the Lord and their rejection of His Messengers, they would still be the most vile and worst of people.

The mention of His name ﴿Most Gracious﴾ here highlights how bad they were. How could they respond to the Most Gracious – Who bestows all blessings and protects against harm, and no one has any blessing but it comes from Him, and no harm is warded off except by Him – by disbelieving in Him and ascribing partners to Him?

﴿Man is a creature of haste﴾ that is, he was created hasty and prone to rushing into things, impatient for them to happen. The believers seek to hasten the punishment of Allah for the disbelievers, and think it slow in coming, whilst the disbelievers turn away and seek to hasten the punishment because they do not believe in it, and out of stubbornness, and they say:

﴿When will this promise come to pass, if you speak the truth?﴾ Allah (ﷻ) gives respite but does not overlook; He shows forbearance and grants them a temporary reprieve, but:

﴿...when their appointed time comes, they will not be able to delay it for a single moment or bring it forward.﴾ (Yoonus 10: 49)

Hence Allah says here (21: 37): ﴿I will show you My signs﴾ that is, in My vengeance upon those who disbelieved in Me and disobeyed Me, ﴿so do not ask Me to hasten﴾ that. Similarly, those who disbelieve say: ﴿When will this promise come to pass, if you speak the truth?﴾. They said this out of arrogance, when the punishment had not yet become due and had not yet befallen them.

﴿If only the disbelievers knew of﴾ the terrible situation they will be in at ﴿the time when they will not be able to ward off the fire from their faces or their backs﴾, when it surrounds them on all sides and overwhelms them from all directions

﴿nor will they be helped﴾ that is, no one will help them; they will not help others and they will not be helped.

﴿Rather it﴾ that is, the fire ﴿will come upon them suddenly and confound them﴾ because of its suddenness and the alarm and great fear it will bring.

﴿and they will not be able to avert it﴾ because they will be too humiliated and weak to do that

﴿nor will they be given any respite﴾ that is, any reprieve, such that the punishment might be delayed for them. If they truly understood this, they would not seek to hasten the punishment, and they would be very afraid. But because they did not have this knowledge, they said what they said.

Having mentioned their ridicule of His Messenger (ﷺ) when they said: ﴿Is this the one who speaks ill of your gods?﴾ (21: 36), Allah consoles him by reminding him that this was the way in which previous nations dealt with their Messengers, as He says:

﴿Indeed Messengers before you were ridiculed, but then those who mocked them were overwhelmed by the very thing [punishment] they used to ridicule﴾ that is, the punishment befell them and they could find no means of escape. So let these people beware, lest there befall them what befell those disbelievers.



﴿ قُلْ مَنْ يَكْفُرْكُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ مِنَ الرَّحْمَنِ ۗ بَلْ هُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ رَبِّهِمْ
 مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ أَمْ لَهُمْ آلِهَةٌ تَمْنَعُهُمْ مِنْ دُونِنَا لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ نَصْرَ
 أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ مِنَّا يُصْحَبُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ بَلْ مَنَعْنَا هَنُوزَهُمْ وَآبَاءَهُمْ حَتَّى طَالَ
 عَلَيْهِمُ الْعُمُرُ ۗ أَفَلَا يَرَوْنَ أَنَّا نَأْتِي الْأَرْضَ نَنْقُصُهَا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا ۗ أَفَهُمُ
 الْغَالِبُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٤٢-٤٤)

- 21:42. Say: Who can protect you by night and by day other than the Most Gracious? Yet they turn away from the admonition of their Lord.
- 21:43. Or do they have gods who can protect them from Our [punishment]? They have no power to help themselves, nor do they enjoy Our support.
- 21:44. But We have allowed these people and their forefathers to enjoy the good things of life for a long time. Do they not see that We gradually reduce the land [under their control] from its outlying borders? Is it they who will prevail?

Here Allah (ﷻ) mentions the helplessness of these people who take others besides Him as gods, and notes that they are in desperate need of their Lord, the Most Gracious, Whose mercy encompasses both righteous and evildoers alike, by night and by day:

«Say: Who can protect you» that is, guard you «by night» when you are sleeping in your beds and your faculties are not functioning «and by day» as you go about your business and are distracted «other than the Most Gracious?» Can anyone protect you other than Him? No one can protect except Him. «Yet they turn away from the admonition of their Lord». Hence they ascribed partners to Him. Otherwise, if they had paid heed to the admonition of their Lord and accepted His instructions, they would have been guided and granted divine help.

«Or do they have gods who can protect them from Our [punishment]?» that is, if We decree ill for them, can any of their gods protect them from that ill and the evil that befalls them?

«They have no power to help themselves, nor do they enjoy Our support» that is, they will receive no help from Us with regard to their affairs, and if they receive no help from Allah, they will fail in all their affairs and will not be able to achieve any benefit or ward off any harm.

The reason why they persisted in their disbelief and ascription of partners to Allah is indicated in the following verse:

«But We have allowed these people and their forefathers to enjoy the good things of life for a long time» that is, We have granted them wealth and sons, and We have given them a long life, so they focused on enjoying it and were distracted from that for which they were created. That went on for a long time, so their hearts grew hardened, and they persisted in their transgression and in their ingratitude. If they had paid attention and looked at the people around them, they would not have seen anything but people dying all around them, and they would not have heard anything but voices of lament, and they would not have been aware of anything but a constant succession of people dying, day after day. Death sets traps on every route to snatch people's souls.

Hence Allah says: «Do they not see that We gradually reduce the land [under their control] from its outlying borders?» That is, by means of the death of its people and their gradual demise, until Allah inherits the earth and all who are on it, and He is the best of inheritors. If they realised this situation, they would not be deceived and would not persist as they are.

«Is it they who will prevail?» That is, is it really possible that they will be able to escape Allah's decree or that they can ward off death? How could they be so deceived and think that they will live forever? Or is it the case that when the Angel of Death comes to take their souls, they will submit and surrender, and will not show any resistance?



﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا أُنذِرُكُمْ بِالْوَحْيِ ۗ وَلَا يَسْمَعُ الصُّمُّ الدُّعَاءَ إِذَا مَا يُنذَرُونَ
﴿٤٥﴾ وَلَئِنْ مَسَّتْهُمُ نَفْحَةٌ مِّنْ عَذَابِ رَبِّكَ لَيَقُولُنَّ يَا نَوِيلُنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ

﴿٤٦﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٤٥-٤٦)

- 21:45. Say: I only warn you on the strength of divine revelation. But the deaf cannot hear the call when they are warned.
- 21:46. If the slightest touch of your Lord's punishment were to reach them, they would surely say: Woe to us! We were indeed wrongdoers.

«Say», O Muhammad (ﷺ), to all the people: «I only warn you on the strength of divine revelation» that is, I am just a Messenger; I do not bring anything of my own accord, I do not possess the treasures of Allah, I have no knowledge of the unseen and I am not an angel; rather I warn you on the basis of what Allah reveals to me. So if you respond, you have responded to Allah and He will reward you for that, but if you turn away and resist, then I have no control over the matter at all; rather the matter rests with Allah and the decree is all His.

«But the deaf cannot hear the call when they are warned» that is, one who is deaf cannot hear any voice, for the faculty of hearing is absent in his case. Hearing is stipulated in addition to the voice, for the means of receiving the sound should be present. Likewise, the revelation causes the heart to spring to life (spiritual life), and makes one understand what Allah wants from us. But if the heart is not receptive to guidance, then with regard to guidance and faith, it will be like the deaf person with regard to sounds and voices. These polytheists are deaf to guidance, so it is no wonder that they are not guided, especially in this situation where the punishment has not yet reached them and they have not yet felt its pain.

«If the slightest touch» that is, even a small part «of your Lord's punishment were to reach them», and nothing of His punishment is easy, «they would surely say: Woe to us! We were indeed wrongdoers» that is, crying out words of woe, doom and regret, acknowledging their wrongdoing and disbelief, and admitting that they deserve the punishment.



﴿وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ حَرْدَلٍ آتَيْنَا بِهَا وَكَفَىٰ بِنَا حَسِيبِينَ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٤٧)

21:47. We will set up scales of justice for the Day of Resurrection, so that no soul will be dealt with unjustly in the least. Even if a deed is the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it forth, and sufficient are We as Reckoners.

Here Allah tells us that He will judge justly and fairly between His slaves when He gathers them on the Day of Resurrection; He will set up the scales of justice which will show even the weight of a tiny particle, to weigh people's good deeds and bad deeds.

﴿so that no soul﴾, Muslim or disbeliever, ﴿will be dealt with unjustly in the least﴾ by anything being detracted from its good deeds or added to its bad deeds.

﴿Even if a deed is the weight of a mustard seed﴾, which is the smallest and most insignificant of things, whether that deed is good or bad ﴿We will bring it forth﴾ so that the doer may be requited for it. This is like the verses in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.﴾ (az-Zalzalah 99: 7-8)

And they will say:

﴿... Woe to us! What sort of record is this, that leaves no deed, small or great, unaccounted for? They will find all they did recorded there, and your Lord will not wrong anyone.﴾ (al-Kahf 18: 49)

﴿and sufficient are We as Reckoners﴾. Here Allah (ﷻ) refers to Himself; sufficient is He as a Reckoner; that is, He knows people's deeds and has a record of that; He knows their quantity and what reward or punishment they deserve in requital, and He will ensure that the requital reaches the doer.



﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ الْفُرْقَانَ وَضِيَاءَ وَذِكْرًا لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ وَهُمْ مِّنَ السَّاعَةِ مُشْفِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَهَذَا ذِكْرٌ مُّبَارَكٌ أَنزَلْنَاهُ أَفَأَنْتُمْ لَهُ مُنْكَرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٤٨-٥٠)

- 21:48. Verily We gave to Moosâ and Hâroon the criterion [between right and wrong – the Torah], and a light, and admonition for the pious,
- 21:49. who fear their Lord unseen, and are apprehensive about the Hour.
- 21:50. And this [the Qur'an] is a blessed reminder that We have sent down. Will you then deny it?

Allah (ﷻ) often mentions these two noble Books together; no Book has ever come to the world that is better than them, of greater renown and blessing, or greater in guidance and clarification. They are the Torah and the Qur'an. Allah tells us that the Torah came principally to Moosâ, but also to Hâroon, as he joined him in his mission.

﴿the criterion﴾, namely the Torah which differentiates between truth and falsehood, guidance and misguidance. It is ﴿light﴾ by which people are guided; those who want to follow the straight path follow its teachings, and from it they learn religious rulings, distinguish what is lawful from what is prohibited, and find light in the darkness of ignorance, innovation and misguidance.

﴿and admonition for the pious﴾, by which they are reminded of what will benefit them and what will harm them, and they are reminded thereby of good and evil. The pious are singled out for mention because they are the ones who benefit from that in terms of both knowledge and deeds.

Then Allah explains who the pious are, namely those ﴿who fear their Lord unseen﴾ that is, they fear Him when they are hiding away

and no one sees them, so it is more apt when they are in the view of others that they refrain from that which is prohibited and they do that which is obligatory.

﴿and are apprehensive about the Hour﴾ that is, they fear it and are in awe of it, because of their perfect knowledge of their Lord. Thus they combine piety with fear of Allah.

﴿And this [the Qur'an] is a blessed reminder that We have sent down﴾. Allah describes two characteristics that it possesses: it is a reminder of all that one needs to be reminded of, such as knowing Allah by His names, attributes and deeds; and the characteristics and stories of the Messengers and close friends of Allah; Islamic rulings having to do with acts of worship, business dealings and other matters; rulings on requital, and paradise and hell. Through the Qur'an people are reminded of issues and proofs both rational and textual. Allah calls it a reminder, because it reminds the individual of what Allah has instilled in his mind and nature of believing in true stories, enjoining what is regarded as good on a rational basis, and forbidding what is regarded as evil on a rational basis. The second characteristic that it possesses, namely that it is blessed, implies that it contains abundant and ever-increasing goodness. There is nothing more blessed than this Qur'an. Every good thing, blessing and increase, whether that is in terms of religious or worldly affairs, or in the hereafter, is because of it and is a result of adhering to it. As it is a blessed reminder, one should accept it with willing submission and give thanks to Allah for this great gift, adhering to its teachings and seeking its blessings by learning its words and meanings. As for responding to it in the opposite manner, by turning away from it, ignoring it, rejecting it and not believing in it, this is one of the worst kinds of disbelief, ignorance and wrongdoing. Hence Allah (ﷻ) denounced the one who rejects it by saying: ﴿Will you then deny it?﴾.



﴿ وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ رُشْدَهُ مِن قَبْلُ وَكُنَّا بِهِ عَالِمِينَ ﴿٥١﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا هَذِهِ التَّمَاثِيلُ الَّتِي أَنْتُمْ لَهَا عَاكِفُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ قَالُوا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا لَهَا عَابِدِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾ قَالَ لَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٥٤﴾ قَالُوا أَجِئْتَنَا بِالْحَقِّ أَمْ أَنْتَ مِنَ اللَّاعِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ قَالَ بَلْ رَبُّكُمْ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الَّذِي فَطَرَهُمْ وَأَنَا عَلَىٰ ذَلِكُمْ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾ وَتَاللَّهِ لَأَكِيدَنَّ أَصْنَامَكُمْ بَعْدَ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة

الأنبياء: ٥١-٥٧)

- 21:51. Indeed We bestowed upon Ibrâheem maturity of mind [from an early age] before that, for We knew him well.
- 21:52. [Remember] when he said to his father and his people: What are these images to which you are so devoted?
- 21:53. They said: We found our fathers worshipping them.
- 21:54. He said: Indeed you and your fathers have been clearly misguided.
- 21:55. They said: Are you telling us the truth, or are you joking?
- 21:56. He said: Nay, your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, Who created them, and I am one of those who bear witness to that.
- 21:57. And, by Allah, I have a plan for your idols, after you leave.

Having mentioned Moosâ (ﷺ) and Muhammad (ﷺ) and their Books, Allah (ﷻ) now says:

﴿Indeed We bestowed upon Ibrâheem maturity of mind [from an early age] before that﴾ that is, before the sending of Moosâ and Muhammad (ﷺ), and the sending down of their Books. Allah gave him an insight into (His) mighty dominion over the heavens and the earth (cf. 6: 75), and gave him maturity of mind, by means of which he perfected himself and called people to that, such as was given to no

one else in the world apart from Muhammad (ﷺ). Maturity of mind is attributed to him, because his level of maturity was commensurate with his situation and high level. Otherwise every believer was given maturity of mind commensurate with the level of his faith.

«for We knew him well» that is: We gave him maturity of mind and singled him out to be Our Messenger and close friend, and We chose him in this world and the hereafter, because We knew that he was deserving of that and was qualified for it, due to his purity and intelligence. Hence Allah tells us of how he debated with his people and told them not to ascribe partners to Him, and how he broke their idols and established binding proof against them.

«[Remember] when he said to his father and his people: What are these images» that you make and carve with your own hands in the form of some created beings «to which you are so devoted» and you constantly worship them. What are they? What virtue is proven to be in them? Where has your reasoning gone, so that you ended up devoting your lives to worship of these things, at the time when you are the ones who shaped them and carved them with your own hands? This is something very strange indeed, that you worship something that you yourselves carved.

They responded without giving any proof, in the manner of one who is helpless and does not have even the flimsiest argument to support what he does. They said:

«We found our fathers worshipping them», so we followed the same path and imitated our fathers in worshipping them.

It is well known that the actions of any person, other than the Messengers, do not constitute proof and it is not permissible to follow a person's example blindly, especially with regard to fundamentals of religion and the oneness of the Lord of the worlds. Hence Ibrâheem said to them, describing them all as being misguided:

«Indeed you and your fathers have been clearly misguided» that is, you are obviously misguided, for what misguidance can be greater

than their misguidance that led them to ascribe partners to Allah and ignore His oneness? In other words, what you have said is not fit to be adhered to, and you and they are all clearly misguided, as is quite obvious to everyone.

﴿They said﴾ by way of finding his words strange, and expressing their shock at what he said, for how could he describe them and their fathers as being foolish?

﴿Are you telling us the truth, or are you joking?﴾ That is, what you have said, and the message you have brought to us, is it really true and serious? Or is what you say to us by way of a joke and ridicule on the part of one who does not know what he is saying? They asked whether it was one or the other, because what they meant was that they were certain that his words were the words of someone foolish, who did not understand what he was saying. Therefore Ibrâheem gave them a clear response, highlighting why he thought that they were foolish and lacking in reason:

﴿He said: Nay, your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, Who created them, and I am one of those who bear witness to that﴾. Thus he combined rational evidence with textual evidence.

As for the rational evidence, everyone – even those with whom Ibrâheem argued – knows that Allah alone is the Creator of all created things, including the sons of Adam, the angels, the jinn, the animals, the heavens and the earth; He controls them all, in all ways. Therefore every created being is under His control and domination, including everything that is worshipped besides Allah. So is it befitting, for anyone who possesses the slightest reason and discernment, to worship a created thing that is itself under control, and does not possess any power to bring benefit, cause harm, cause death, give life or resurrect, and fail to worship the Creator and Provider, Who is in control of all things?

As for the textual evidence, such evidence has been transmitted from the Messengers (blessings and peace of Allah be upon them).

Whatever they brought is infallible and cannot be wrong, and it cannot say anything but the truth. Part of this textual evidence is the testimony of any one of the Messengers to that effect. Hence Ibrâheem said: ﴿and I am one of those who bear witness to that﴾ that is, to the fact that Allah alone is deserving of worship, and worship of anything other than Him is false and invalid. What testimony, after the testimony of Allah, can be better than the testimony of the Messengers, especially the Messengers of strong will, and especially the close friend of the Most Gracious?

Having stated that their idols had no control over anything, he wanted to show them in practical terms just how helpless they were and how unable they were to help themselves, by taking action that would force them to admit that. Hence he said:

﴿And, by Allah, I have a plan for your idols﴾ that is, I will break them ﴿after you leave﴾ and head out to attend your festival. When they left, he went to the idols secretly.



﴿فَجَعَلَهُمْ جُودًا إِلَّا كِبْرًا لَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾ قَالُوا مَنْ فَعَلَ هَذَا بِآلِهَتِنَا إِنَّهُ مِنَ الْظَالِمِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا فَتَىٰ يَدُكُرُّهُمْ يُقَالُ لَهُ إِزْرَاهِيمُ ﴿٦٠﴾ قَالُوا يَا بَدِءَ عَلِيِّ أَعْيُنِ النَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْهَدُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ قَالُوا يَا هَذَا بِآلِهَتِنَا يَا إِلَهَ بَرِّيهِمْ ﴿٦٢﴾ قَالَ بَلْ فَعَلَهُ كَبِيرُهُمْ هَذَا فَاسْتَلَوْهُمْ إِنْ كَانُوا يَنْطِقُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ فَرَجَعُوا إِلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ فَقَالُوا إِنَّكُمْ أَنْتُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ ثُمَّ نَكَسُوا عَلَىٰ رُءُوسِهِمْ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَا هَؤُلَاءِ يَنْطِقُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ قَالَ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُكُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَضُرُّكُمْ ﴿٦٦﴾ أَلَمْ يَكُ لَكُمْ وَلِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٥٨-٦٧)

- 21:58. So he broke them to pieces, [all] but the biggest of them, so that they might come back to it [and ask it what happened].
- 21:59. They said: Who has done this to our gods? He must surely be one of the wrongdoers!
- 21:60. They said: We heard a young man speaking ill of them; he is called Ibrâheem.
- 21:61. They said: So bring him out before the people, so that they may be witnesses.
- 21:62. They said: Is it you who has done this to our gods, O Ibrâheem?
- 21:63. He said: Nay, it was this one, the biggest of them, who did it. So ask them, if they can speak!
- 21:64. So they started thinking and said to one another: Surely it is you who are doing wrong.
- 21:65. But then they relapsed into their former obstinacy [and said]: You know full well that these [idols] cannot speak.
- 21:66. Ibrâheem said: Do you then worship, besides Allah, that which cannot benefit or harm you in any way?
- 21:67. Fie on you and on all that you worship besides Allah! Have you then no sense?

«So he broke them to pieces» that is, he smashed them. The idols were all gathered together in one place, so he broke all of them, «[all] but the biggest of them» that is, except the biggest idol, which he left alone for a purpose that would become clear.

When they saw what had happened to their idols of disrespect and humiliation,

«They said: Who has done this to our gods? He must surely be one of the wrongdoers!» They accused Ibrâheem of wrongdoing when they were the ones who were more deserving of being described as such, because they did not realise that his breaking of the idols was one of the best of his virtues, and was an action that was based on his sense of justice and affirmation of the oneness of Allah. Rather

the wrongdoer is the one who took such idols as gods, even though he saw what had happened to them.

«They said: We heard a young man speaking ill of them» that is, criticising and condemning them, and one who is like that must surely be the one who broke them. Or it may mean that some of them had heard him saying that he had a plan for them.

«he is called Ibrâheem». When they realised that it was Ibrâheem who had broken them,

«They said: So bring him» namely Ibrâheem

«out before the people» that is, where they can see and hear

«so that they may be witnesses» that is, so that they may be present in order to see what is to be done with the one who broke their gods. This is what Ibrâheem wanted; he wanted the truth to be manifest before the people so that they could witness the truth, and truth could be established against them, as Moosâ said when he made his appointment to confront Pharaoh:

«... Your appointment will be on the day of the festival; let the people assemble in the forenoon.» (*Tâ Hâ 20: 59*)

When the people had gathered and Ibrâheem was brought out, they said to him:

«Is it you who has done this» that is, breaking them «to our gods, O Ibrâheem?» This was a question that was aimed at affirming that he was the one who did it. In other words: what gave you the audacity and what made you do this thing?

Ibrâheem said, as the people were looking on: «Nay, it was this one, the biggest of them, who did it» that is, it broke them out of resentment towards them, because they were being worshipped alongside it, and it wanted you to worship your biggest idol only.

The aim behind these words was to establish binding proof against his opponents. Hence he said: «So ask them, if they can speak!» He

was referring to the broken idols; ask them why they were broken, and ask the idol that was not broken why it broke them. If they are able to speak they will answer, otherwise you and I, and everyone, will know that they cannot speak and talk, and that they cannot bring benefit or cause harm, indeed they cannot even help themselves against anyone who intends harm towards them.

﴿So they started thinking﴾ that is, it was as if their reason suddenly came back to them and they came back to their senses, and realised that they had gone astray by worshipping those idols; they admitted to themselves that they had done wrong and ascribed partners to Allah. ﴿and said to one another: Surely it is you who are doing wrong﴾. Thus the point was made and proof was established by their admission that what they were doing was false and wrong.

But they did not persist in that; rather they ﴿relapsed into their former obstinacy﴾ that is, suddenly they changed and their thinking took a wrong turn, and they said to Ibrâheem:

﴿You know full well that these [idols] cannot speak﴾ so how could you make fun of us and ridicule us, telling us to ask them questions when you know that they cannot speak?

Ibrâheem said, rebuking them openly in front of the people for ascribing partners to Allah and pointing out that their gods were not deserving of worship:

﴿Do you then worship, besides Allah, that which cannot benefit or harm you in any way?﴾

﴿Fie on you and on all that you worship besides Allah!﴾ That is, how astray you are, what losers you are, and how evil you are, you and all that you worship besides Allah! If you had any sense, you would realise the situation you are in. But because you lack common sense and you are ignorant, going astray with your eyes wide open, animals are better off than you.

Once he had defeated them in argument and proved them wrong, they could not produce any evidence to support their ascription of partners to Allah, so they resorted to physical strength to punish him.



﴿ قَالُوا حَرِّقُوهُ وَانصُرُوا آلِهَتَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾ قُلْنَا إِنَّا نُكُونِي بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا عَلَيَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ﴿٦٩﴾ وَأَرَادُوا بِهِ كَيْدًا فَجَعَلْنَاهُمُ الْأَخْسَرِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَلُوطًا إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٧١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٦٨-٧١)

- 21:68. They said: Burn him and avenge your gods, if you are going to take action!
- 21:69. We said: O fire, be cool and safe for Ibrâheem.
- 21:70. They planned to harm him, but We made them the greatest losers.
- 21:71. And We saved him and Loot [and brought them] to the land which We have blessed for all people.

﴿They said: Burn him and avenge your gods, if you are going to take action!﴾ That is, kill him in the worst manner, by burning him, in anger for the sake of your gods and in support of them. How doomed they were, as they worshipped that which they admitted needed their support, and they took it as a god.

But Allah helped His close friend when they threw him in the fire, as He said to it: ﴿be cool and safe for Ibrâheem﴾. So it became cool and safe for him, no harm reached him and he did not feel any pain.

﴿They planned to harm him﴾ when they decided to burn him ﴿but We made them the greatest losers﴾ in this world and the hereafter, just as Allah made His close friend and his followers the triumphant winners.

﴿And We saved him and Loot﴾ – that was when no one among his people believed except Loot. It was said that he was the son of

his brother. Allah saved him and he migrated ﴿to the land which We have blessed for all people﴾ that is, Greater Syria. So Ibrâheem left his people in Babylon, in Iraq, and said:

﴿...I shall migrate [where I have been commanded to] by my Lord. Verily, He is the Almighty, Most Wise.﴾ (al-'Ankaboot 29: 26)

One of the blessings of Greater Syria is that many of the Prophets went there. Allah chose it as the place of migration for His close friend, and in that land there is one of His three sacred houses, namely Bayt al-Maqdis.



﴿وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ نَافِلَةً ۗ وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا صَالِحِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَيْمَةً يَهْتَدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرَاتِ وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ وَكَانُوا لَنَا عَابِدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٧٢-٧٣)

21:72. And We bestowed upon him Is-hâq and [then] Ya'qoob, a grandson, and We made all of them righteous.

21:73. We made them leaders, guiding people by Our command; and We inspired them to do good deeds, establish prayer and give zakâh; and they worshipped only Us.

﴿And We bestowed upon him﴾ when he withdrew from his people ﴿Is-hâq and [then] Ya'qoob﴾, the son of Is-hâq ﴿a grandson﴾ after he had grown old and his wife was barren, the angels gave him the glad tidings of Is-hâq:

﴿...and, after Is-hâq, of Ya'qoob.﴾ (Hood 11: 71)

Ya'qoob is Isrâ'eel (Israel), from whom stemmed a great nation. Ibrâheem was also the father of Ismâ'eel, from whom stemmed the noble Arab nation, and among his descendants was the leader of the first and the last (namely the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ).

﴿and We made all of them﴾ namely, Ibrâheem, Is-hâq and Ya' qoob ﴿righteous﴾ that is, fulfilling their duties towards Him and towards His slaves. Because of their righteousness, He made them leaders who guided people by His command. This is one of the greatest blessings that Allah may bestow upon His slave, by making him a leader by means of whom people are guided and whom many people follow. That is because they were patient and steadfast, and they had certain faith in the revelations of Allah.

﴿guiding people by Our command﴾ that is, on the basis of the teachings of Our religion. They did not instruct people to do things on the basis of their own whims and desires; rather it was by the command of Allah and in accordance with His religion, and for the purpose of seeking His pleasure. A person cannot be a leader unless he calls people to that which Allah has commanded.

﴿and We inspired them to do good deeds﴾ which they did, calling people to them. This includes all good deeds with regard to duties towards Allah and towards other people.

﴿establish prayer and give zakâh﴾ – this comes under the heading of mentioning specific deeds after speaking in general terms, because of the noble status and virtue of these two acts of worship. Whoever does them properly, his religious commitment will be sound, but whoever neglects them will be more neglectful with regard to other matters. Moreover, prayer is the best of deeds that are due to Allah, and zakâh is the best of deeds that involve kindness towards His creation.

﴿and they worshipped only Us﴾ and no others. In other words, they persisted in acts of worship, both in their hearts (in terms of belief) and in their words and physical actions, most of the time. So they deserved to be described as worshippers, as they adhered to that which Allah enjoined upon humankind and the purpose for which He created them.



﴿وَلُوْطًا ءَايَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَجَعَلْنَاهُ مِنَ الْقَرِيْبَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ تَعْمَلُ الْفَحْشٰى
 اِنَّهُمْ كَانُوْۤا قَوْمًا سُوْۤى فٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَاَدْخَلْنَاهُ فِي رَحْمٰتِنَا اِنَّهٗ مِنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ

(سورة الانبياء: ٧٤-٧٥) ﴿٧٥﴾

- 21:74. To Loot also We gave wisdom and knowledge, and We saved him from the city that practised abominations. Verily, they were a people given to wickedness, and rebellious.
- 21:75. And We admitted him to Our mercy, for he was one of the righteous.

Here Allah praises His Messenger Loot (ﷺ) for having religious knowledge and having the knowledge to judge between people soundly and correctly. Allah sent him to his people, to call them to worship Allah alone and to forbid them to do the shameful deeds they were involved in. He spent some time calling them, but they did not respond to him, so Allah turned their city upside down upon them and punished them all, because they were «a people given to wickedness, and rebellious». They rejected the caller and threatened to punish him, but Allah saved Loot and his family. He commanded him to take them and leave by night, so that they could get far away from the city. So they left at night and thus were saved, by the grace and blessing of Allah towards them.

«And We admitted him to Our mercy» and whoever enters it will be safe from all fears, and will attain all goodness, happiness, joy and praise. That is because he was one of the righteous, whose deeds were righteous, who became of sound character and Allah put right the (formerly) wicked ones among them. Righteousness is the means of being admitted to the mercy of Allah, just as wickedness is the means of being deprived of mercy and goodness. The most righteous of the

people are the Prophets (peace be upon them), hence Allah describes them as righteous. Sulaymān (ﷺ) said:

﴿...and include me, by Your mercy, among Your righteous slaves.﴾

(an-Naml 27: 19)



﴿وَنُوحًا إِذْ نَادَىٰ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ، فَنجَّيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ، مِنَ الْكَرْبِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَنَصَرْنَاهُ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا، إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ فَآغْرَقْنَاهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٧٦-٧٧)

21:76. And [remember] Nooh, when he called upon [Us] before that. We answered him and saved him and his family from great distress.

21:77. And We delivered him from the people who rejected Our signs. They were a people given to wickedness, so We drowned them all.

That is, and remember Our slave and Messenger Nooh (ﷺ), by way of praising and commending him. When Allah sent him to his people, he stayed among them for one thousand years less fifty, calling them to worship Allah alone and forbidding them to ascribe partners to Him, trying repeatedly and never wavering, calling them in private and in public, by night and day.

But when he saw that exhorting them was to no avail, and that rebuking them was of no benefit, he called upon his Lord and said:

﴿...My Lord, do not leave on earth a single living soul from among the disbelievers. For if You leave them, they will mislead Your slaves and will beget none but wicked disbelievers.﴾ (Nooh 71: 26-27)

Allah answered his prayer and drowned them, and not one of them survived, but Allah saved Nooh and his family, along with the

believers who were with him, in the laden ark, and He caused his offspring to be the survivors, and Allah granted him victory over his people who had ridiculed him.



﴿وَدَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ إِذْ يَحْكُمَانِ فِي الْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفَسَتْ فِيهِ غَنَمُ الْقَوْمِ وَكُنَّا لِحُكْمِهِمْ شَاهِدِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾ فَفَهَّمْنَاهَا سُلَيْمَانَ وَكَلَّمْنَا دَاوُدَ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَسَخَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاوُدَ الْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ وَالطَّيْرَ وَكُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ صَنْعَةَ لَبُوسٍ لَكُمْ لِنُحِصِّنَكُمْ مِنْ بَأْسِكُمْ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ شَاكِرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَلِسُلَيْمَانَ الرِّيحَ عَاصِفَةً تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِهِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا وَكُنَّا بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَمِنَ الشَّيَاطِينِ مَنْ يَغُوصُونَ لَهُ وَيَعْمَلُونَ عَمَلًا دُونَ ذَلِكَ وَكُنَّا لَهُمْ

حَكِيمِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٧٨-٨٢)

- 21:78. And [remember] Dāwood and Sulaymān, when they gave judgement in the case of the field into which some people's sheep had strayed at night and eaten the crops. We were witness to their judgement.
- 21:79. We guided Sulaymān to the right verdict, and to each of them We gave wisdom and knowledge. And We compelled the mountains and the birds to glorify Allah with Dāwood, for We are able to do [all things].
- 21:80. And We taught him the art of making coats of mail for your benefit, to protect you in battle. Will you then be grateful?
- 21:81. And for Sulaymān [We subjugated] the raging wind, which blew at his command to the land which We had blessed. And We have full knowledge of all things.
- 21:82. And [We also subjugated for him] some of the devils who dived for him in the sea and performed other tasks. And We were watching over them.

That is, and remember these two noble Prophets, namely Dâwood and Sulaymân, by way of praise and commendation. Allah gave them abundant knowledge and the ability to judge between people, based on the words: ﴿when they gave judgement in the case of the field into which some people's sheep had strayed at night and eaten the crops﴾ that is, when the owner of the field referred to them for judgement, as some people's sheep had strayed into the field at night and grazed there, eating everything that was growing, and had eaten his crops. Dâwood (ﷺ) issued a verdict that the sheep should go to the owner of the field, based on the negligence of their owners, so he punished them in this manner.

But Sulaymân gave the right verdict in this case, as he ruled that the owners of the sheep should let the owners of the field keep the sheep and benefit from their milk and wool, and they should tend the garden of the owner of the field until they had restored it to its original state. Then when it was restored to its original state, each party should return the property of the other. This was due to his perfect understanding and smartness. Hence Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿We guided Sulaymân to the right verdict﴾ that is, We helped him to understand this case and reach the right verdict. This does not mean that Allah did not enable Dâwood to reach the right verdict in other cases. Hence He pointed this out, as He says: ﴿and to each of them﴾ namely Dâwood and Sulaymân ﴿We gave wisdom and knowledge﴾. This indicates that a judge may reach the right conclusion or he may get it wrong; he is not to be blamed if he makes a mistake so long as he tried his hardest.

Then Allah tells us of what was given uniquely to each of them:

﴿And We compelled the mountains and the birds to glorify Allah with Dâwood﴾ that is because he was one of the most devoted of worshippers and one of those who remembered Allah the most, glorifying Him and praising Him. Allah had given him a beautiful, soft and melodious voice, such as He had never given to anyone else.

So when he glorified and praised Allah, the mountains and birds would repeat his words of praise. This was by the grace and great kindness of Allah to him. Hence Allah says: ﴿for We are able to do [all things]﴾.

﴿And We taught him the art of making coats of mail for your benefit﴾ that is, Allah taught Dâwood (ﷺ) how to make coats of mail. He was the first one to make them and learn this craft, and this skill was passed down to those who came after him. Allah made iron soft in his hands and taught him how to make it into rings of chainmail, which was of immense benefit.

﴿to protect you in battle﴾ that is, it is protection for you, to protect you in battle when the fighting grows intense.

﴿Will you then be grateful?﴾ For the blessing that Allah has bestowed upon you, when He caused it to reach you through His slave Dâwood. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...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.﴾ (*an-Nahl 16: 81*)

It may be that when Allah taught Dâwood how to make chainmail and made iron soft for him, this was a miracle by which – as the commentators said – Allah made iron soft for him until he was able to use it like dough or clay, without having to melt it in fire.

Or it may be that Allah taught him how to do it in the ordinary manner, and that iron was made soft for him by way of Allah teaching him the means that is known now, namely melting it. This is what appears to be the case, because Allah is reminding people of His favour and instructing them to give thanks for it. Were it not for the fact that making it is something that Allah has put within the capability of people, He would not have reminded them of this favour and mentioned its benefit, because it is not possible that only the chainmail that was actually made by Dâwood (ﷺ) is what is meant here. Rather the reminder has to do with the knowledge of how to

make it. There is no evidence for the first possibility mentioned by the commentators except the words:

﴿...And We made iron malleable for him.﴾ (*Saba' 34: 10*)

There is nothing to indicate that He made it soft for him without any cause. And Allah knows best about that.

﴿And for Sulaymân [We subjugated] the raging wind﴾ that is, the fast-moving wind

﴿which blew at his command﴾; wherever it was directed, it would obey his command, travelling a month's journey in the morning and again in the afternoon, coming back ﴿to the land which We had blessed﴾, namely Greater Syria, where he resided. He would travel on the wind, east and west, but he would always come back to the blessed land.

﴿And We have full knowledge of all things﴾ that is, Our knowledge encompasses all things; We knew about Dâwood and Sulaymân, and that which made them deserve to be blessed as described.

﴿And [We also subjugated for him] some of the devils who dived for him in the sea and performed other tasks﴾. This was another of the unique characteristics of Sulaymân (ﷺ): Allah subjugated for him devils and ifrits, and gave him the power to subjugate them to do tasks that many others were not able to do. Some of them dived in the sea for him and brought out pearls and other things, and some of them worked for him as he desired, (making) arches, images, basins as large as reservoirs, and (cooking) cauldrons fixed (in their places) (*cf. 34: 13*). He subjugated some of them to build Bayt al-Maqdis (the Temple) for him, and he died whilst they were building it, but they continued for a year after that, until they found out that he had died, as we shall see below, in shâ' Allâh.

﴿And We were watching over them﴾ that is, they could not refuse to do anything he told them to, or disobey him; rather Allah kept watch over them, by His might, power and authority.



﴿ وَأَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ، فَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِ مِنْ ضُرِّهِ، وَأَتَيْنَاهُ أَهْلَهُ، وَمِنْهُمُ مَعَهُمْ رَحْمَةٌ مِنَّا وَعِنْدَنَا ذِكْرَىٰ لِلْعَابِدِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٨٣-٨٤)

- 21:83. And [remember] Ayyoob, when He called upon his Lord: Affliction has indeed befallen me, and You are the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.
- 21:84. So We answered his prayer and relieved his affliction, and We restored his family to him and doubled their number, as a mercy from Us and as a reminder for all who worship Us.

That is, remember Our slave and Messenger Ayyoob, in a context of praise and respect, showing his high status, when Allah tested him with a great trial and found him patient and content with his Lord. The Shayṭān was given power over his body as a test from Allah, so he breathed into his body and he was afflicted with great sores that stayed for a long time. He faced a severe calamity, his family died and he lost his wealth, so he called out to his Lord: O Lord, ﴿Affliction has indeed befallen me, and You are the Most Merciful of those who show mercy﴾.

He beseeched Allah by telling of his situation – and that his affliction had become so severe – and by referring to His abundant mercy. So Allah responded to him and said to him:

﴿...Strike [the ground] with your foot. Here is cool water for you to wash in and drink.﴾ (Ṣād 38: 42)

So he struck the ground with his foot, and as a result of his doing so, a spring of cold water gushed forth. He bathed in it and drank from it, and Allah relieved him of his affliction.

﴿and We restored his family to him﴾ that is, we returned his family and his wealth to him

﴿and doubled their number﴾ because, in addition to healing him, Allah granted him family and wealth in abundance.

﴿as a mercy from Us﴾ to him, because he was patient and was content with his Lord. Therefore Allah rewarded him in this world, before bestowing the reward of the hereafter.

﴿and as a reminder for all who worship Us﴾ that is, We made him a lesson for all who worship Us, those who will benefit from the lesson. When they see what befell him of calamity, then what Allah rewarded him with after it was over, and they look for the reason behind that, they will realise that it is patience and steadfastness. Hence Allah praised him for that when He said:

﴿... Truly We found him to be patient and steadfast, a good and faithful slave who constantly turned [to Us].﴾ (Sād 38: 44)

So they will take him as an example to follow when calamity strikes.



﴿وَلِإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِدْرِيسَ وَذَا الْكِفْلِ كُلٌّ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ﴾ وَأَدْخَلْنَاهُمْ فِي رَحْمَتِنَا إِنَّهُمْ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٨٥-٨٦)

21:85. And remember Ismâ'eel and Idrees and Dhul-Kifl. All of them were men of constancy and patience,

21:86. And We admitted them to Our mercy, for they were among the righteous.

And remember Our chosen slaves and Prophets, mention them in the best manner, and praise them in the most eloquent terms: Ismâ'eel ibn Ibrâheem, and Idrees and Dhul-Kifl, who were two of the Prophets of the Israelites.

﴿All﴾ of those who are mentioned here ﴿were men of constancy and patience﴾. Constancy and patience refers to restraining oneself from

doing that to which one is naturally inclined. This includes all three types of patience: patience in obeying Allah, patience in refraining from disobeying Allah, and patience in accepting the decree of Allah when it is painful. No one deserves to be described as perfectly patient unless he fulfils all three types of patience.

Allah (ﷻ) described these Prophets (peace be upon them) as being patient, which indicates that they attained all three types of patience, and they exercised patience. He also described them as righteous, which includes righteousness of the heart, by knowing and loving Allah, and turning to Him at all times; righteousness of the tongue, by keeping it moist with the remembrance of Allah; and physical righteousness, by keeping the physical faculties busy with acts of obedience to Allah and restraining them from sin. By virtue of their patience and righteousness, Allah admitted them to His mercy and included them alongside their fellow Messengers, and He rewarded them in this world and in the hereafter. If their reward was no more than making their names renowned among humankind and granting them an honourable mention among the later nations, that would be sufficient honour and virtue.



﴿وَذَا التُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغْلِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ مِنَ الْغَمِّ وَكَذَلِكَ نُنْجِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٨٧-٨٨)

21:87. And [remember] Dhun-Noon [Yoonus], when he departed in anger, thinking that We would not punish him. Then he called out in the depths of darkness: There is no god but You. Glory be to You; I have indeed done wrong.

21:88. So We answered his prayer and delivered him from his distress; thus do We deliver the believers.

That is, and remember Our slave and Messenger Dhun-Noon, namely Yoonus, the one who was swallowed by the fish; remember him in the best terms and praise him, for Allah (ﷻ) sent him to his people, and he called them, but they did not believe, so he warned them of the punishment which would befall at a set time of which he informed them.

The punishment came to them, and they saw it with their own eyes, so they turned to Allah, beseeching and repenting, and Allah spared them the punishment, as He says elsewhere:

﴿There was no city that believed [after seeing the punishment] and benefitted from its faith except the people of Yoonus. When they believed, We removed from them the punishment of disgrace in this world, and allowed them to enjoy life for a while.﴾ (Yoonus 10: 98)

And He said:

﴿We sent him as a Messenger to a hundred thousand people or more, and they believed, so We allowed them to enjoy life for a while.﴾ (aṣ-Ṣāffāt 37: 147-148)

This great nation that believed in the call of Yoonus was one of his greatest virtues, but he departed in anger and ran away to the fully laden ship, because of some sin of which Allah has not told us in His Book, and we have no need to know what it was, as Allah tells us:

﴿He ran away to the fully-laden ship, then he drew lots with them and he was one of those who lost. Then the fish swallowed him. He had done an act worthy of blame.﴾ (aṣ-Ṣāffāt 37: 140-142)

What appears to be the case is that this refers to his hastening to leave his people, getting angry with them, and leaving them before Allah (ﷻ) instructed him to do so, and thinking that Allah would not punish him for that and would not put him in a constrained space in the belly of the fish, or he thought that he could escape the punishment of Allah. There is nothing wrong with such a thought crossing the mind of people of perfect character, in a way that does not take root and does

not persist. So he embarked on the ship with some other people, then they cast lots to determine which of them should be thrown into the sea, because they feared that they would drown if they all remained on board. The lot fell to Yoonus, so he was thrown overboard and the fish swallowed him and took him down to the darkest depths of the sea. In the depths of darkness he called out: ﴿There is no god but You. Glory be to You; I have indeed done wrong﴾. Thus he affirmed the perfect divinity of Allah (ﷻ), declaring Him to be above any shortcomings, defects or faults, and he acknowledged his own wrongdoing and transgression. Allah (ﷻ) said:

﴿Were it not for the fact that he was one of those who glorified Allah a great deal, he would have remained in its belly until the Day of Resurrection.﴾ (as-Sāffāt 37: 143-144)

Hence Allah says here: ﴿So We answered his prayer and delivered him from his distress﴾ that is, from the hardship he had fallen into. ﴿thus do We deliver the believers﴾. This is a promise and glad tidings to every believer who falls into hardship and distress, that Allah (ﷻ) will save him from it, and will grant him relief and alleviate his distress, because of his faith, as He did in the case of Yoonus (ﷺ).



﴿رَزَقْنِيآ إِذْ نَادَيْتُ رَبِّيَ رَبِّ لَآ تَذَرْنِي فَرْدًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْوَارِثِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾
فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ، وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ، يَحْيَىٰ وَأَصْلَحْنَا لَهُ، زَوْجَهُ، إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا
يُكْفِرُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَا رَعْبًا وَرَهْبًا ۗ وَكَانُوا لَنَا خٰشِعِينَ﴾

(سورة الأنبياء: ٨٩-٩٠)

- 21:89. And [remember] Zakariyâ, when he called upon his Lord: My Lord, do not leave me childless, although You are the best of inheritors.

21:90. So We answered his prayer and We bestowed upon him Yaḥyâ, and cured his wife [of barrenness]. Verily, they used to hasten to do good deeds, and they used to call on Us in hope and fear, and they were always humble before Us.

That is, and remember Our slave Zakariyâ, by way of praise and holding him in high esteem, mentioning his virtues and good characteristics, among which was this great virtue which is indicative of his sincerity towards people and the mercy of Allah towards him. He «called upon his Lord: My Lord, do not leave me childless». In other words: he said:

«...My Lord, my bones have grown weak and my head glows silver with age, but never, my Lord, has my prayer to You remained unanswered. Verily, I fear [what] my kinsmen [will do] after I am gone, for my wife is barren.¹⁹ Grant unto me by Your grace an heir, who will inherit from me and from the family of Ya'qoob, and make him, my Lord, one with whom You are pleased.» (*Maryam 19: 4-6*)

From these verses, in which we see that he said «My Lord, do not leave me childless», we learn that as death approached, he feared that there would be no one to take his place in calling people to Allah and advising the slaves of Allah, for there was no one at his time who was like him in knowledge, and there would be no one to succeed him and carry on the work that he had been doing.

«although You are the best of inheritors» that is, the best of those who remain, and the best to do good to people after I am gone, for You are more merciful towards Your slaves than I am, but I want to put my mind at rest and be reassured, and to have ongoing reward for that.

¹⁹ His kinsmen did not care about religion, and he was afraid that after he died, religion would be neglected. So he asked for an heir who would uphold religion after he was gone. Therefore he asked for someone who would inherit knowledge and prophethood, not wealth, from him. (al-Qurṭubi)

﴿So We answered his prayer and We bestowed upon him Yaḥyâ﴾ the noble Prophet, whose name Allah had never given to anyone before him.

﴿and cured his wife [of barrenness]﴾ after her womb had been unable to bear children. Allah healed her and made her womb able to bear a child, for the sake of His Prophet Zakariyâ. This is one of the benefits of having good and righteous companions, for those who keep company with them will be blessed. Thus Yaḥyâ was born to his parents.

Having mentioned these Prophets and Messengers, each of them on his own, Allah praises all of them in general terms by saying:

﴿Verily, they used to hasten to do good deeds﴾ that is, they would hasten to do them at the best time and complete them in the appropriate manner, not omitting any virtue that they were able to attain without making the most of any opportunity to do good.

﴿and they used to call on Us in hope and fear﴾ that is, they would ask Us for whatever they needed and hoped for, in this world and the hereafter, and they would seek refuge with Us from that which they feared of harm in both realms, hoping and fearing, never becoming heedless or distracted, or taking things for granted.

﴿and they were always humble before Us﴾ that is, they submitted with humility, beseeching Us, because of their perfect knowledge of their Lord.



﴿وَالَّذِي أَحْسَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ رُوحِنَا وَجَعَلْنَاهَا وَابْنَهَا آيَةً
لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩١﴾ إِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُونِ
﴿٩٢﴾ وَنَقَطُوا أَمْرَهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ كُلُّ إِلْتِنَا رَاجِعُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾ فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ
الصَّالِحَاتِ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَا يَكْفُرْ أَلَسَعِيدٌ وَإِنَّا لَهُ كَنُيُوتٌ ﴿٩٤﴾﴾ (سورة

- 21:91. And [remember] the one who guarded her chastity: We blew into her [garment] through Our angel [Jibreel], and We made her and her son a sign for all people.
- 21:92. Verily this religion of yours is one religion, and I am your Lord, so worship Me alone.
- 21:93. But people have divided themselves into sects; yet to Us they will all return.
- 21:94. Then whoever does righteous deeds and is a believer, his efforts will not go unappreciated, for We are recording it.

That is, and remember Maryam (peace be upon her), praising her, pointing out her high status and making her chastity known to all.

«the one who guarded her chastity» that is, she protected it from that which is prohibited and from approaching such deeds; she also protected it from that which is lawful. She did not marry, because she was focused on worship, and spent all her time serving her Lord.

When Jibreel came to her in the form of a perfect, handsome man: «She said: I seek refuge in the Most Merciful from you; [do not come near me] if you fear Him!» (*Maryam 19: 18*)

Allah granted her a reward that fit the nature of her deed, as He blessed her with a son without a father; rather Jibreel blew into her (garment) and she conceived by Allah's leave.

«and We made her and her son a sign for all people», as she conceived him and gave birth to him without anyone touching her; and he spoke in the cradle, declaring her innocent of that of which people accused her, and he spoke of himself in that situation. Allah caused extraordinary events and miracles to occur at his hands, as is well known. Thus she and her son were a sign for all people, as generation after generation of those who pay heed have spoken of her and learned lessons from her.

Having mentioned the Prophets, Allah (ﷻ) now addresses the humankind and says: ﴿Verily this religion of yours is one religion﴾ that is, this religion is the religion of all the Messengers mentioned. They are your leaders whose example you follow. They all follow one religion and one path, and they all worship one Lord.

Hence Allah says: ﴿and I am your Lord﴾ Who created you and bestowed My blessings upon you, by guiding you to faith and granting other worldly blessings. As the Lord is one, and the Prophet is one, and the religion is one – and it is to worship Allah alone, with no partner or associate, devoting all kinds of worship to Him – your role and duty is to follow that. Hence Allah says: ﴿so worship Me alone﴾.

What should have happened is that people should have agreed on the matter of religion and not been divided on this matter, but transgression and enmity insisted on causing divisions and dissent. Hence Allah says: ﴿But people have divided themselves into sects﴾ that is, they split into factions and parties who claim to follow the Prophets, each claiming to possess the truth and regarding all others as following falsehood.

﴿But people divided into sects, each group rejoicing in what it has.﴾
(*al-Mu'minoon* 23: 53)

It is known that the one who gets it right is the one who follows the true religion and straight path, following in the footsteps of the Prophets. This will become clear when the covers are removed and hidden things are exposed, when Allah gathers all people to pass judgement. At that time it will become clear who is telling the truth and who is lying. Hence Allah says: ﴿yet to Us they will all return﴾ that is, all these various groups, and others, will return to Us and We will requite them in full.

Then Allah explains how He will requite them:

﴿Then whoever does righteous deeds﴾ that is, the deeds that were prescribed by the Messengers and encouraged in the Books

«and is a believer» in Allah and His Messengers, and the message they brought

«his efforts will not go unappreciated» that is, We will not cause his efforts to be wasted or rendered invalid; rather We will greatly multiply the reward for them.

«for We are recording it» that is, We are recording it in al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfoodh, and in pages that are with the recording angels. This implies that whoever does not do righteous deeds, or who does righteous deeds but is not a believer, will be deprived of reward and will be a loser in both religious and worldly terms.



﴿وَحَرَامٌ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا أَنَّهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٩٥)

21:95. It is not possible for any city whom We have destroyed to return [to this world],

That is, it is impossible for any city that was destroyed with the punishment to return to this world in order to make up for what they neglected. There is no way for those who were destroyed and punished to return. So let those who are addressed here beware of continuing to do that which leads to doom, lest it befall them, for then it cannot be lifted; let them give up (their sin) whilst it is still possible for them to do so.



﴿حَقَّ إِذَا فَتِحَتْ يَأْجُوجُ وَمَأْجُوجُ وَهُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ حَدَبٍ يَنْسِلُونَ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٩٦-٩٧)
 ﴿وَأَقْرَبَ الْوَعْدِ الْحَقِّ فَإِذَا هِيَ شَاخِصَةٌ أَبْصَرُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُنْوِلُنَا أَقْدَامَنَا فِي عَقْلِهِمْ مِنْ هَذَا بَلِّغْنَا ظَلِيمِينَ﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٩٧-٩٦)

- 21:96. until, when Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj have been let loose and come rushing from all directions,
- 21:97. and the true promise²⁰ nears its fulfilment; then the eyes of the disbelievers will stare in horror [and they will say]: Woe to us! We were indeed heedless of this; nay, we were wrongdoers.

This is a warning from Allah to the people, lest they persist in disbelief and sin, for the time has drawn near for the emergence of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj. These are two great tribes of the sons of Adam. Dhul-Qarnayn built the barrier to contain them, when a complaint was made to him about their spreading mischief in the land.

At the end of time, the barrier will be breached and they will emerge against people in the manner described by Allah, rushing from all directions. This is indicative of their huge numbers and the speed with which they will travel throughout the earth, either because of their own strength or because of what Allah will create for them of means of crossing large distances and making that which is difficult easy. They will subdue the people and behave arrogantly towards them in this world, and no one will be able to fight them.

﴿and the true promise nears its fulfilment﴾ namely the Day of Resurrection, which Allah has promised will come, and His promise is true. On that day, you will see the eyes of the disbelievers staring in horror because of the intensity of fear, great terror and immense turmoil, and because of what they know of their offences and sins. They will pray against themselves and call for doom, in regret and sorrow for what has passed, and they will say:

﴿Woe to us! We were indeed heedless of this﴾ great day, for we were constantly distracted from it, indulging in worldly pleasures, until that which is certain (death) came to us, and the resurrection came to us. If anyone could die of regret and sorrow, they would die.

²⁰ This refers to the Day of Resurrection.

﴿nay, we were wrongdoers﴾ – they will admit their wrongdoing and will acknowledge that Allah has been just towards them.

At that point, orders will be issued to take them to the fire, they and that which they used to worship. Hence Allah says:



﴿إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ أَنْتُمْ لَهَا وَرَدُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾ لَوْ كَانَتْ هَتُوكَآءَ آلِهَةٍ مَا وَرَدُوهَا وَكُلٌّ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾ لَهُمْ فِيهَا زَفِيرٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِنَّا الْحُسْنَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ حَيْثُ هُمْ وَهُمْ فِي مَا أَشْتَهَتْ أَنفُسُهُمْ خَالِدُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ لَا يَحْزَنُهُمُ الْفَزَعُ الْأَكْبَرُ وَتَتَلَقَّهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ هَٰذَا يَوْمُكُمْ الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ٩٨-١٠٣)

- 21:98. Verily you [O disbelievers] and that which you worship besides Allah are fuel for hell; to it you will [surely] come.
- 21:99. If these [idols] had really been gods, they would not have come to it. But they will all abide therein forever.
- 21:100. Therein they will be wailing, and they will not be able to hear.
- 21:101. But those for whom We have decreed good will surely be kept far away from it.
- 21:102. They will not hear even the slightest sound of it, and they will abide forever in that which their hearts desire.
- 21:103. The greatest terror will not grieve them; and the angels will welcome them [saying]: This is your day, that you were promised.

That is, O you who used to worship other gods alongside Allah, you ﴿are fuel for hell; to it you will [surely] come﴾, you and your idols.

The wisdom behind the admission of the idols to hell, even though they are inanimate and cannot think, and there is no sin on their part, is to highlight the lies of those who took them as gods, and so as to increase their punishment. Hence Allah says:

﴿If these [idols] had really been gods, they would not have come to it﴾. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿[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.﴾ (*an-Nahl* 16: 39)

Both the worshippers and their objects of worship will abide therein forever, and will never emerge from it or depart from it.

﴿Therein they will be wailing﴾ because of the severity of the punishment

﴿and they will not be able to hear﴾. They will be deaf, dumb and blind, unable to hear any sound other than that made by the fire, because of the intensity of its boiling, wailing and raging.

The admission of the gods of the polytheists to hell only refers to the idols or those who were worshipped and approved of that.

However in the case of the Messiah, 'Uzayr, the angels and other close friends of Allah who were worshipped, they will not be punished for that. They are included among ﴿those for whom We have decreed good﴾ that is, according to the prior knowledge of Allah and as is written in *al-Lawḥ al-Mahfūdh*, they are blessed, and in this world they are guided to the path of ease and righteous deeds. They ﴿will surely be kept far away from it﴾ namely hell. They will not enter it or even come near it; rather they will be kept very far away from it, so that they will not hear the slightest sound from it or see it.

﴿and they will abide forever in that which their hearts desire﴾ of food, drink, spouses and scenery, such as no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever entered the mind of man. That will be perpetual and will increase in beauty with the passage of time.

«The greatest terror will not grieve them» that is, it will not worry them when the people panic at the greatest terror. That will be on the Day of Resurrection, when the fire is brought near, raging with anger towards the disbelievers and sinners, and there will be great panic and terror at that point, but these righteous people will not be grieved by that, because they are certain of what lies ahead of them, for Allah has granted them safety against what they fear.

«and the angels will welcome them» when they are resurrected from their graves and come on camels as a delegation. The angels will congratulate them, saying: «This is your day, that you were promised»; we congratulate you for what Allah has promised you. So be of great good cheer, for what lies ahead of you of honour, and rejoice greatly, for Allah has saved you from fear and harm.



﴿يَوْمَ نَطْوِي السَّمَاءَ كَطَيِّ السِّجِلِ لِلْكِتَابِ كَمَا بَدَأْنَا أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ نُعِيدُهُ وَعَدًّا عَلَيْنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ ﴿١٠٤﴾ وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ١٠٤-١٠٥)

- 21:104. On that day We will roll up the heavens like a written scroll. As We originated creation, so We will repeat it, a promise binding upon Us. We will indeed fulfil it.
- 21:105. We wrote in the scripture, after We had done so in the Reminder: My righteous slaves will inherit the land.

Here Allah tells us that on the Day of Resurrection, He will roll up the heavens, despite their vastness, as a written scroll is rolled up. The stars will be scattered, and the sun and moon will be rolled up and moved from their places. «As We originated creation, so We will repeat it» that is, We will create them anew, as We created them the first time. As we created them initially, when they were nothing, so too We will recreate them after they have died.

﴿a promise binding upon Us. We will indeed fulfil it﴾ and do what We have promised. That is because of His perfect might, for nothing is impossible for Him.

﴿We wrote in the scripture﴾ this refers to the divinely revealed Books, such as the Torah and the like

﴿after We had done so in the Reminder﴾ that is, We wrote it in the divinely revealed Books, after We had written it in the previous record, namely al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfoodh. What was written in it is:

﴿My righteous slaves﴾ that is, those who did what was enjoined and avoided what was prohibited ﴿will inherit the land﴾ namely, the land of paradise. It is His righteous slaves whom Allah will cause to inherit paradise, as the people of paradise will say:

﴿...Praise be to Allah Who has fulfilled His promise to us and given us this land as our own, so that we may dwell in paradise wherever we wish...﴾ (az-Zumar 39: 74)

It may be that what is meant is becoming in charge of the land on earth, and that Allah will give the righteous power and authority on earth, and will cause them to be in charge of it, as He says elsewhere:

﴿Allah has promised those among you who believe and do righteous deeds that He will surely make them successors [to power] in the land, as He made those before them successors; that He will surely establish for them their religion that He has chosen for them; and that He will surely cause their [present] state of fear to be replaced by peace and security. [That is because] they worship Me alone and do not associate anything with Me. If any are ungrateful after this, it is they who are the evildoers.﴾ (an-Noor 24: 55)



﴿إِنَّ فِي هَذَا لَبَلَاغًا لِّقَوْمٍ عٰدِيۡنَ ﴿٦٦﴾ وَمَا اَرْسَلْنَاكَ اِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعٰلَمِيۡنَ ﴿٦٧﴾ قُلْ اِنَّمَا يُوحِیۡ اِلَیَّ اَنْمَآءُ اِلٰهِكُمْ اِلَٰهٌ وَّحِدٌ فَهَلْ اَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوۡنَ﴾

﴿١٠٨﴾ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُلْ ءَاذَنْتُكُمْ عَلَىٰ سَوَاءٍ وَإِنْ أَدْرِيٓتُ أَقْرَبُ أَمۡ بَعِيدٌ مَّا تُوعَدُونَ
 ﴿١٠٩﴾ إِنَّهُۥ يَعْلَمُ الْجَهْرَ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾ وَإِنْ أَدْرِيٓ
 لَعَلَّهُۥ فِتْنَةٌ لَّكُمْ وَمَنْعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿١١١﴾ قُلۡ رَبِّ اٰخِزۡ بِالْحَقِّ وَرَبُّنَا الرَّحْمٰنُ الْمُسْتَعٰنُ عَلٰى مَا
 تَصِفُوْنَ ﴿١١٢﴾ (سورة الأنبياء: ١٠٦-١١٢)

- 21:106. Verily this [Qur'an] is sufficient for people who are devoted to worshipping Allah.
- 21:107. And We have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds.
- 21:108. Say: It has been revealed to me that your God is One God. Will you then submit to Him [in Islam]?
- 21:109. But if they turn away, say: I have proclaimed the message to all of you alike; but I do not know whether what you are warned of is imminent or far off.
- 21:110. Verily He knows what is said openly and He knows what you conceal.
- 21:111. For all I know, this may be a test for you and a short reprieve.
- 21:112. He said: O my Lord, judge in truth. Our Lord, the Most Gracious, is the One Whose help is to be sought against what you utter [of falsehood].

Here Allah (ﷻ) praises His noble Book, the Qur'an, and explains that it is completely sufficient and they have no need of anything else; no one can do without it.

«Verily this [Qur'an] is sufficient for people who are devoted to worshipping Allah» that is, it is sufficient to help them reach their Lord and His paradise. It shows them the way to attain the sublime goal and best aim. Those who are devoted to worshipping Allah – who are the noblest of humankind – have no other aim, because this Book will guarantee that they will learn about their Lord and His names, attributes and deeds; and about the true stories of the unseen. It calls them to the fundamentals of faith, highlighting proof and evidence for

that, explaining all the commands and prohibitions, highlighting the faults and weaknesses of the soul, what could undermine deeds, and the ways they should follow in minor and major issues of religion. It warns them against the paths of the Shayṭān and explains how he interferes with man and tries to gain control over him. Whoever does not think that the Qur'an is sufficient, may Allah never make him content.

Then Allah praises His Messenger (ﷺ) who brought the Qur'an: ﴿And We have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds﴾ for he is Allah's mercy, given to His slaves. So those who believe in him accept this mercy, give thanks for it and adhere to it, but others reject it, respond with ingratitude for the blessing of Allah, and refuse the mercy and grace of Allah.

﴿Say﴾, O Muhammad (ﷺ): ﴿It has been revealed to me that your God is One God﴾ and none is deserving of worship except Him. Hence He says: ﴿Will you then submit to Him [in Islam]?﴾ That is, submit in servitude to Him and surrender to His divinity. If they do that, then let them praise their Lord for this blessing that He has bestowed upon them that surpasses all other blessings.

﴿But if they turn away﴾ and do not submit in servitude to their Lord, then warn them of the punishment, and ﴿say: I have proclaimed the message﴾ that is, I have given notice of the punishment ﴿to all of you alike﴾ that is, all of us, you and I, are now equally aware of it, so do not say, when the punishment befalls you:

﴿...No bearer of glad tidings and no warner ever came to us...﴾
(*al-Mā'idah* 5: 19)

Rather now everyone knows about it, because I have warned you and have told you the consequences of disbelief, and I have not withheld or concealed anything from you.

﴿but I do not know whether what you are warned of﴾ namely the punishment ﴿is imminent or far off﴾, because knowledge of that is

with Allah, and it is under His control; I have no say in the matter at all.

«For all I know, this may be a test for you and a short reprieve» that is, perhaps the delay of the punishment that you seek to hasten is bad for you, so that you may enjoy life in this world for a little while, then your punishment will be greater.

«He said: O my Lord, judge in truth» that is, between me and the disbelieving people. Allah answered this supplication and judged between them in this world, before the hereafter, as He punished the disbelievers at the Battle of Badr and otherwise.

«Our Lord, the Most Gracious, is the One Whose help is to be sought against what you utter [of falsehood]» that is, we ask our Lord, the Most Gracious, and we seek His help against what you say; we will prevail over you and your religion will diminish. This is not self-admiration on our part, and we are not putting our trust in our power or strength; rather we are seeking the help of the Most Gracious, in Whose Hand is the forelock of every creature, and we hope that He will continue to bestow His mercy upon us. And He did indeed do that. Praise be to Allah.

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat al-Anbiyâ'.

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.



22.

Soorat al-Hajj

(It was said that it is
Makki or Madani)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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



﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ آتِفُوا رَبِّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾
﴿يَوْمَ تَرُؤْنَهَا تَذهَبُ كُلُّ مَرُضِعَةٍ عَمَّا أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمْلٍ
حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى النَّاسَ سُكَرَىٰ وَمَا هُمْ بِسُكَرَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ﴾
(سورة الحج: ١-٢)

- 22:1. O humankind, fear your Lord, for verily the convulsion of the Hour will be a terrible thing.
- 22:2. On the day you see it, every nursing mother will be distracted from the infant she is nursing and every pregnant woman will miscarry. You will see people as though they are drunk, although they are not drunk, but the punishment of Allah will be severe indeed.

Here Allah addresses all people, telling them to fear their Lord Who has bestowed upon them all sorts of blessings, both visible and

hidden. Therefore they should fear Him and refrain from ascription of partners to Him, evildoing and sin; and they should comply with His commands as much as possible.

Then He tells them that He will help them to fear Him, and He warns them against not doing that, by telling them of the horrors of the Day of Resurrection.

﴿for verily the convulsion of the Hour will be a terrible thing﴾ and no one can estimate how terrible it will be and what its nature will be. When the Hour begins, the earth will shake and convulse, and there will be earthquakes. The mountains will begin to collapse and crumble, and will become like heaps of shifting sand, then like scattered dust. Then humankind will be divided into three groups.

The heaven will be rent asunder, the sun and the moon will be rolled up, and the stars will be scattered. There will be such turmoil and upheaval that hearts will crack, children will turn grey and the solid mountains will melt. Hence Allah says:

﴿On the day you see it, every nursing mother will be distracted from the infant she is nursing﴾, even though the nursing mother naturally has a deep love for her child, especially at this stage, at which the infant cannot survive without her.

﴿and every pregnant woman will miscarry﴾ because of the intensity of terror and horror.

﴿You will see people as though they are drunk, although they are not drunk﴾ that is, you would think – if you saw them – that they were drunk from imbibing alcohol, but they will not be drunk.

﴿but the punishment of Allah will be severe indeed﴾ and as a result they will lose their minds, and their hearts will be filled with fear and panic; their hearts will reach their throats and they will stare fixedly in horror. On that day, no father will avail his child and no child will avail his father anything. On that day:

﴿...a man will flee from his own brother, and from his mother and his father, and from his wife and his children. Every one of them, on that day, will have too many concerns of his own to care about anyone else.﴾ (*'Abasa* 80: 34-37)

On that day:

﴿...the wrongdoer will bite on his hands and say: Would that I had taken a path with the Messenger. Alas for me! Would that I had not taken So-and-so as a friend!﴾ (*al-Furqân* 25: 27-28)

On that day, some faces will turn dark and others will turn bright. The Balance will be set up which will weigh the smallest particle of good or evil. The records of deeds will be spread out, with all that they contain of deeds, words and intentions, small or great. The *ṣirâṭ* (the path leading to paradise that passes over hellfire) will be set up over hell, paradise will be brought near to the pious, and hell will be placed in full view of those who went astray.

﴿When it sees them from afar, they will hear its raging and roaring. When they are cast into a narrow place therein, bound together in shackles, they will call out [wishing] for death.﴾ (*al-Furqân* 25: 12-13)

But it will be said to them:

﴿...Do not call out once [wishing] for death today; rather call out many times.﴾ (*al-Furqân* 25: 14)

But when they call upon their Lord, asking Him to bring them out of it, He will say:

﴿...Away with you! Be humiliated therein and do not speak to Me.﴾ (*al-Mu'minoon* 23: 108)

The Most Merciful Lord will be angry with them; the painful punishment will befall them, and they will despair of all good. They will find all their deeds recorded, with nothing omitted, not even the tiniest detail.

On the other hand, the pious will be in a garden, rejoicing (30: 15), enjoying all kinds of pleasures, abiding forever in that which their hearts desire (21: 102).

The wise person who knows that all of this lies ahead of him is expected to prepare the means that will enable him to reach it, and he should not hope to live long (in this world) and give up striving. He should fear Allah, and love and remembrance of Allah should be the essence of all his deeds.



﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُجَادِلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَيَتَّبِعُ كُلَّ شَيْطَانٍ مَّرِيدٍ ﴿٣﴾ كَذِبَ عَلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ مَن تَوَلَّاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يُضِلُّهُ وَيَهْدِيهِ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿٤﴾﴾ (سورة الحج: ٣-٤)

22:3. Among people there are some who dispute about Allah without knowledge, and they follow every rebellious devil,

22:4. about whom it is decreed that whoever takes him as an ally, he will lead him astray and guide him to the punishment of the raging fire.

That is, among people there are some who followed the path of misguidance, and began to argue on the basis of falsehood against the truth, wanting to prove and support falsehood and invalidate the truth. But in fact they are extremely ignorant and do not have any knowledge. All they have is blind imitation of the leaders of misguidance, and of every rebellious devil who stubbornly rebelled against Allah and His Messengers, opposing them and going against what they said, thus becoming leaders of those who called people to hell.

﴿about whom it is decreed﴾ that is, it is decreed against this rebellious devil

﴿that whoever takes him as an ally﴾ that is, follows him

﴿he will lead him astray﴾ from the truth, and will keep him away from the straight path
 ﴿and guide him to the punishment of the raging fire﴾.

The person who disputes about Allah has combined his own misguidance with attempts to misguide other people. He is a follower and imitator of every rebellious devil. This is darkness upon darkness, and it includes the majority of the disbelievers and innovators, for most of them are mere imitators who argue without knowledge.



﴿يَتَّأَنَّهُ النَّاسُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّنَ الْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِّن نَّبَاتٍ ثُمَّ مِّن نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِّن عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِّن مُّضْغَةٍ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ لِّنَبِّئَنَّ لَكُمْ وَنَقَرُ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوا أَشَدَّكُمْ وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يَبُوءُ أَنَّهُ لَنَدْرِئَنَّكُمْ عَذَابَ سَاءٍ لَّئِن لَّمْ يَكْفُرُوا لَبَدَّلْنَا لَكَ الْوَالِدَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ إِنَّكَ لَن لَّيْسَ بِكَ بِمُؤْمِنٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يَتَّبِعُ الْأُمَّةَ حَرِيمَةً آمَنَ بِهَا وَإِن كُنْتُمْ إِلَّا قَوْمٌ مُّشْرِكِينَ ﴿٥﴾ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّهُ يُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ وَأَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٦﴾ وَإِنَّ السَّاعَةَ آتِيَةٌ لَّارْتَبَ فِيهَا وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْعَثُ مَن فِي الْقُبُورِ ﴿٧﴾﴾ (سورة الحج:

(٧-٥)

22:5. O humankind, if you are in doubt about the resurrection, then consider that We created you from dust, then from a drop of semen, then from a clinging clot, then from a lump of flesh, shaped and unshaped,²¹ so that We may make clear to you [Our power]. And We cause to remain in the wombs whomever We

²¹ ﴿shaped and unshaped﴾: the developing embryo is initially unshaped, then its features start to appear until it is fully shaped. This is what is seen in the event of miscarriage; the embryo is either undeveloped (unshaped) or has distinct features (shaped).

will for an appointed term. Then We bring you forth as infants, then [We cause you to grow] so that you may reach your age of full strength. Then some of you die and some are sent back to a feeble age, so that, after having had knowledge, they then know nothing at all. You see the earth dry and barren, but when We send down rain upon it, it stirs and swells, and brings forth beautiful plants of every kind.

22:6. That is because Allah alone is the Truth; He alone brings the dead to life, and He has power over all things.

22:7. For verily the Hour is coming; there can be no doubt about it. And verily Allah will raise up those who are in the graves.

«O humankind, if you are in doubt about the resurrection» and you do not know when it will happen, even though all that is required of you is to believe your Lord and believe His Messengers with regard to this matter. But if you must doubt it, then here are two rational proofs that you can see, either one of which definitively points to that which you doubt, and will dispel the doubts from your heart.

Firstly, Allah gives as evidence the beginning of man's creation, for the One Who initiated his creation will repeat it.

«then consider that We created you from dust» – this refers to the creation of the father of humankind, Adam (ﷺ)

«then from a drop of semen» – this is the beginning of the creation process

«then from a clinging clot» that is, the drop of semen turns into red blood, by Allah's leave

«then from a lump of flesh» that is, the blood turns into a lump of flesh the size of a morsel of food. That lump of flesh is sometimes «shaped» that is, it has human features; or sometimes it is «unshaped», when the womb miscarries it before it is shaped.

«so that We may make clear to you» how you are created and the stages of your development. Even though He is able to complete

creation in a single moment, He highlights to us the perfect nature of His wisdom, the greatness of His might and the vastness of His mercy.

﴿And We cause to remain in the wombs whomever We will for an appointed term﴾ that is, We cause to become established in the womb and not expelled thereby whatever We will, for an appointed term, which is the duration of pregnancy.

﴿Then We bring you forth﴾ from your mothers' wombs ﴿as infants﴾, not knowing anything and having no power. We cause your mothers to look after you and We grant you provision at their breast, then you move through one stage after another until you reach your age of full strength, which is the peak of your physical and mental faculties.

﴿Then some of you die﴾ before reaching the age of full strength, and some pass that stage and are sent back to a feeble age, which is the worst stage. That is senile old age and dementia, in which the individual's mental capacity diminishes and is lost, as are all his other strengths, and he becomes weak.

﴿so that, after having had knowledge, they then know nothing at all﴾ that is, so that this elderly person will know nothing that he knew before, because his mind has grown weak. Human strength begins and ends with weakness: the weakness of childhood and the weakness of old age, as Allah says:

﴿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)

Secondly, Allah gives as evidence the revival of the earth after it was dead, concerning which He says:

﴿You see the earth dry and barren﴾ that is, lifeless and dusty, with no vegetation or greenery.

﴿but when We send down rain upon it, it stirs﴾ with the movement of plants beginning to grow
 ﴿and swells﴾ that is, it rises up after it was subdued, due to increased growth
 ﴿and brings forth beautiful plants of every kind﴾ that is, all kinds of plants, the beauty of which brings delight to the beholder and brings joy to those who reflect. These two definitive proofs highlight the following points:

﴿That is because Allah﴾ is the One Who created man from that which He described to you, and gave life to an earth that was dead, and He ﴿alone is the Truth﴾ that is, He alone is the Lord Who is deserving of worship, and none should be worshipped except Him. Worship of Him is the truth and worship of anything other than Him is false. ﴿He alone brings the dead to life﴾ – as He initiated creation and as He gave life to an earth that was dead
 ﴿and He has power over all things﴾ – as He has made you see the brilliance of His power and creation.

﴿For verily the Hour is coming﴾ so there is no reason to think that it is not possible
 ﴿And verily Allah will raise up those who are in the graves﴾, then He will requite them for their deeds, both good and bad.



﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُجَادِلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَلَا هُدًى وَلَا كِتَابٍ مُّنِيرٍ ﴿٨﴾ تَأْتِي عَطْفِيهِ
 لِيُضِلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَنَذِيقُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ ﴿٩﴾ ذَلِكَ
 بِمَا قَدَّمْتَ يَدَاكَ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ يَظْلِمُ لِلْعِبَادِ ﴿١٠﴾﴾ (سورة الحج: ٨-١٠)

22:8. Among people there are some who dispute about Allah without knowledge, without guidance and without any clear revealed text.

22:9. They turn their faces away in scorn, so as to lead people astray from the path of Allah. For them there is disgrace in this world, and on the Day of Resurrection We will cause them to taste the punishment of the scorching fire.

22:10. [It will be said to them:] This is because of what your hands sent on ahead. For Allah is never unjust to [His] slaves.

The «dispute» mentioned above [vv. 3-4] refers to the argument of one who argues on the basis of imitation (and has no knowledge of his own). Here the «dispute» refers to the argument of the rebellious devil who calls people to innovation. Allah tells us that he «dispute[s] about Allah» that is, he disputes with the Messengers of Allah and their followers on the basis of falsehood in an attempt to refute the truth «without knowledge» that is, without sound knowledge «without guidance» that is, without following in his argument anyone who could guide him, and without being guided by rational thinking, or following someone who is guided «and without any clear revealed text» that is, without any rational or textual proof. It is nothing but specious arguments with which the Shayṭān inspires him.

«...But the devils whisper to their friends [among humankind] to argue with you...» (*al-An'ām* 6: 121)

Despite that, «They turn their faces away in scorn». This refers to their being too arrogant to follow the truth and their scorn for people. They rejoice in what they have of knowledge that is not beneficial and they look down upon the people of truth and the truth that they follow. «so as to lead people astray from the path of Allah» that is, so that they may be promoters of misguidance. This includes all the leaders of disbelief and misguidance.

Then Allah mentions their punishment in this world and the hereafter:

﴿For them there is disgrace in this world﴾ that is, they will be exposed to shame in this world, before the hereafter. This is one of the wondrous signs of Allah, for you will not find anyone who calls to disbelief and misguidance but he will be resented, cursed, hated and blamed by people and he will have what he deserves, each according to his situation.

﴿and on the Day of Resurrection We will cause them to taste the punishment of the scorching fire﴾ that is, We will cause him to taste its intense scorching heat. That is because of what their hands sent on ahead. ﴿For Allah is never unjust to [His] slaves﴾.



﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ عَلَى حَرْفٍ فَإِن أَصَابَهُ خَيْرٌ اطْمَأَنَّ بِهِ وَإِن أَصَابَهُ فِتْنَةٌ أُنْقَلَبَ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ خَيْرَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الخُسْرَانُ الْمُمِينُ ﴿١١﴾ يَدْعُوا مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَمَا لَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الضَّلَالُ الْبَعِيدُ ﴿١٢﴾ يَدْعُوا لَمَن ضَرُّهُ أَقْرَبُ مِن نَّفْعِهِ لَيْسَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَلَيْسَ الْعَشِيرُ ﴿١٣﴾﴾ (سورة الحج: ١١-١٣)

- 22:11. Among people there are some who worship Allah on the edge [of faith]. If something good comes to them, they are content with it, but if a trial befalls them, they make an about-face, thus forfeiting both this world and the hereafter. That is indeed manifest loss.
- 22:12. They call, besides Allah, upon that which can neither harm them nor benefit them. That is straying far into error.
- 22:13. They call upon that which is more likely to harm them than benefit them. What a wretched protector and what a wretched associate!

That is, among people there are some who are weak in faith; faith has not truly entered their hearts and they have never felt the joy of

faith. Rather they entered the religion either out of fear or by way of following a custom, and they cannot be steadfast when faced with trials and tribulations.

﴿If something good comes to them, they are content with it﴾ if provision continues to come easily, and they are not faced with any hardship, they are content with that life of ease, not with their faith. Allah may give them well-being and not put them through trials which could cause them to give up their religion.

﴿but if a trial befalls them﴾ such as being faced with hardship or the loss of someone or something dear to them

﴿they make an about-face﴾ that is, they apostatise and give up their religion.

﴿thus forfeiting both this world and the hereafter﴾. With regard to this world, this means that they do not get what they hope for by apostatising. The one who made his apostasy his capital, giving up his faith in return for something that he thought he would achieve, will find that his efforts were to no avail and he will not get anything but what is decreed for him. With regard to the hereafter, it is obvious. They will be deprived of paradise which is as vast as the heavens and the earth, and they will deserve hell.

﴿That is indeed manifest loss﴾ that is, clear and obvious loss.

﴿They﴾ that is, those who do an about-face

﴿call, besides Allah, upon that which can neither harm them nor benefit them﴾. This description is applicable to everything that is called upon and worshipped instead of Allah: it has no power to bring benefit or cause harm to itself or to anyone else.

﴿That is straying far into error﴾ which has reached the ultimate level, when people turn away from worshipping the One Who can bring benefit and cause harm, the One Who is Self-Sufficient and can suffice others, and they focus instead on worshipping a created being that is like them or lower in status, that has no power or control at all; rather they are more likely to find the opposite of what they seek to attain. Hence Allah says:

«They call upon that which is more likely to harm them than benefit them» because the harm it causes, that will affect them in both mind and body, in this world and the hereafter, is well known. «What a wretched protector» – this refers to that object of worship «and what a wretched associate» that is, the companion who was always there. The purpose of a protector and associate is to attain benefit and ward off harm, but in this case none of that was achieved, so this protector and associate is indeed deserving of blame.



﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَدْخُلُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ﴾ (سورة الحج: ١٤)

22:14. Verily Allah will admit those who believe and do righteous deeds to gardens through which rivers flow; verily Allah does whatever He wills.

Having mentioned those who argue on the basis of falsehood, and explained that they are of two types: those who imitate others and those who are leaders of the call to falsehood, Allah (ﷻ) now tells us that those who claim to have faith are also of two types: those for whom faith has not truly entered their hearts, as mentioned above, and a second category, namely those who are truly believers and who confirm their faith by doing righteous deeds. Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He will admit them to gardens through which rivers flow.

Paradise is described as *jannah* because it contains dwellings, palaces, trees and plants that cover (*tujinnu*) those who are in them, and they are concealed by them because they are so abundant and plentiful.

«verily Allah does whatever He wills». Whatever He wills, He does without any resistance or opposition. That includes causing the

people of paradise to reach it; may Allah make us among them by His grace and generosity.



﴿مَنْ كَانَتْ يَطْنُ أَنْ لَنْ يَنْصُرَهُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ بِسَبَبٍ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ ثُمَّ لِيَقْطَعْ فَلْيَنْظُرْ هَلْ يُذْهِبَنَّ كَيْدَهُ مَا يَغِيظُ﴾ (سورة الحج: ١٥)

22:15. Whoever thinks [and hopes] that Allah will not grant victory to him [His Messenger] in this world and in the hereafter, let him tie a rope to heaven [and climb up], so as to stop the victory [from coming down from Allah to the Prophet], then let him see whether his action will do away with that which has enraged him.²²

That is, whoever thinks that Allah will not grant victory to His Messenger (ﷺ), and that the religion of Islam will diminish, then he should understand that victory is from Allah and He sends it down from heaven.

«let him tie a rope to heaven [and climb up], so as to stop the victory» that is coming down from heaven.

«then let him see whether his action will do away with that which has enraged him» that is, let him see whether the plot he is hatching against the Prophet (ﷺ), the effort he is putting into fighting him and his eagerness to destroy his religion will do away with that which has enraged him of the religion of Islam prevailing.

This verse confirms that this can never happen, and that he will never be able to do away with that which has enraged him, no matter what measures he takes.

²² What is meant is that the hopes and wishes of those enemies will not change anything, and the Prophet's victory is inevitable, so they may as well give up and kill themselves.

What this verse means is: O you who oppose the Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) and are striving to extinguish his religion, thinking on the basis of ignorance that your efforts will benefit you, you should understand that no matter what measures you take and no matter what efforts you make to oppose and harm the Messenger (ﷺ), that will not take away your rage and will not give you any satisfaction. You have no power to do that, but We will point out something that could take away your rage and help you to stop the victory from reaching the Messenger (ﷺ), if that was possible: take a rope and tie it to heaven, then climb up until you reach the gates of heaven from which victory comes; then block those gates and put an end to them. Thus you will do away with that which has enraged you. This is the right plan; you should never think that any other plan could help you to do away with that which has enraged you, no matter how many people help you.

This verse contains a promise and glad tidings that Allah will grant victory to His religion, His Messenger (ﷺ), and His believing slaves, as is quite clear, and He will cause the disbelievers who seek to extinguish the light of Allah with their mouths to lose hope, for Allah will perfect His light even though the disbelievers hate that and no matter how hard they strive.



﴿وَكَذَلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ آيَاتٍ يُبَيِّنَاتٍ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِيَ مَن يُرِيدُ﴾ (سورة الحج: ١٦)

22:16. Thus We have sent down to you clear revelations; verily Allah guides whomever He wills.

That is, as We have explained issues clearly in this Qur'an, We have made it of clear verses that explain all that is needed of beneficial issues. But guidance is in the Hand of Allah; whomever Allah wishes to guide, he will be guided by this Qur'an, and he will adhere to it and

follow its teachings, and he will benefit from its light. But whomever Allah does not wish to guide, even if all signs come to him he will not believe, and the Qur'an will not benefit him in the slightest; rather it will be proof against him.



﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِئِينَ وَالنَّصَارَى وَالْمَجُوسَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿١٧﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَسْجُدُ لَهُ، مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ وَالنُّجُومُ وَالْجِبَالُ وَالشَّجَرُ وَالْدَّوَابُّ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنَ النَّاسِ وَكَثِيرٌ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِ الْعَذَابُ وَمَنْ يُنِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِن مُّكْرِمٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ ﴿١٨﴾ هَذَانِ حَصَمَانِ أَخْصَمُوا فِي رَيْبِهِمْ فَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا قُطِعَتْ لَهُمْ نِيَابٌ مِّن نَّارٍ يُصَبُّ مِنْ فَوْقِ رُءُوسِهِمُ الْحَمِيمُ ﴿١٩﴾ يُصْهَرُ بِهِ، مَا فِي بُطُونِهِمْ وَالْجُلُودُ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَلَهُمْ مَقْلَعٌ مِّن حديدٍ ﴿٢١﴾ كُلَّمَا أَرَادُوا أَن يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ غَمٍّ أُعِيدُوا فِيهَا وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِن فَاكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ وَهُمْ فِيهَا فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَهُدُوا إِلَى الطَّيِّبِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَهُدُوا إِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْحَمِيدِ ﴿٢٤﴾﴾ (سورة الحج: ١٧-٢٤)

22:17. Verily those who believe, those who are Jews, the Sabians, the Christians, the Magians and those who ascribe partners to Allah – Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection. Verily Allah is Witness over all things.

22:18. Do you not see that to Allah prostrate all those who are in the heavens and on earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, the animals, and many people? But there are also many for whom punishment is inevitable. Whomever Allah disgraces, none can honour him. Verily Allah does whatever He wills.

- 22:19. These are two opposing groups who are disputing about their Lord. As for those who disbelieve, garments of fire will be cut out for them, and scalding water will be poured over their heads,
- 22:20. which will cause their insides and their skins to melt.
- 22:21. They will be lashed with rods of iron.
- 22:22. Every time they want to escape from it, in their anguish, they will be driven back into it and [it will be said to them]: Taste the punishment of the scorching fire!
- 22:23. Verily Allah will admit those who believe and do righteous deeds to gardens through which rivers flow. They will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and of pearls, and their garments therein will be of silk.
- 22:24. For they were guided to the best of words and they were guided to the path of Him Who is Worthy of all praise.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the groups among the people of earth, those who were given the scriptures, the believers, the Jews, the Christians, the Sabians, the Magians and the polytheists. He will gather them all together on the Day of Resurrection, will pass judgement between them on the basis of His just rule, and requite them for their deeds that He recorded, wrote down and witnessed. Hence He says: ﴿Verily Allah is Witness over all things﴾.

Then He explains this judgement between them: ﴿These are two opposing groups who are disputing about their Lord﴾, each group claiming that it is following the right path.

﴿As for those who disbelieve﴾ – this includes all disbelievers, such as the Jews, Christians, Magians, Sabians and polytheists. ﴿garments of fire will be cut out for them﴾ that is, garments of pitch will be made for them, then they will be set on fire, so that the punishment will envelop them from all directions.

﴿and scalding water﴾ that is, extremely hot water ﴿will be poured over their heads﴾; it will cause whatever is inside them of flesh, fat and intestines to melt, due to the severity of its heat.

﴿They will be lashed with rods of iron﴾ in the hands of stern angels who will strike them with those rods and subdue them.

﴿Every time they want to escape from it, in their anguish, they will be driven back into it﴾. The punishment will never be reduced for them and they will never be given any respite. It will be said to them, by way of rebuke: ﴿Taste the punishment of the scorching fire!﴾ That is, the fire that burns hearts and bodies.

﴿Verily Allah will admit those who believe and do righteous deeds to gardens through which rivers flow﴾. It is well known that this description does not apply to anyone other than the Muslims, who believe in all the Books and all the Messengers.

﴿They will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and of pearls﴾ which will adorn their arms; both their men and their women will wear bracelets of gold

﴿and their garments therein will be of silk﴾. Allah completes the description of their joy by referring to different kinds of delicious food, which may be implied by the word gardens; by referring to rivers going in all directions, which are rivers of water, milk, honey and wine; by referring to different kinds of clothing and splendid jewellery. That is because ﴿they were guided to the best of words﴾, the best and most virtuous of which is the word of sincere faith (*lā ilāha illā Allāh*), then all good words, including remembrance of Allah and kind words to the slaves of Allah.

﴿and they were guided to the path of Him Who is Worthy of all praise﴾ that is, they were guided to the path of Allah, the Most Praiseworthy, for Allah often ascribes the path to Himself, because it leads the one who follows it to Allah. Moreover, the path itself may be described as praiseworthy, because all its teachings are based on wisdom and praise, for everything that is enjoined in Islam is good and everything

that is forbidden is bad. This is the religion of the middle path between two extremes, a religion that encourages the pursuit of beneficial knowledge and doing righteous deeds.

The fact that Allah is mentioned here as He «Who is Worthy of all praise» indicates that they attained guidance by virtue of their praising their Lord and by virtue of His blessings upon them. Hence they will say in paradise:

«...Praise be to Allah Who has guided us to this, for we would never have been guided if Allah had not guided us...» (al-A'raf 7: 43)

In the midst of this passage (in 22: 18), Allah mentions the prostration of all creatures to Him, all those who are in the heavens and on earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, the animals and many people, namely the believers.

«But there are also many for whom punishment is inevitable» that is, it has been decreed, because of their disbelief and failure to believe. Allah did not guide them to faith, because He has disgraced them, and «Whomever Allah disgraces, none can honour him» and none can resist His will or object to His will.

As all creatures prostrate to their Lord and submit to His greatness and power, this indicates that He alone is the Lord Who is deserving of worship, the Sovereign Who is deserving of all praise. Whoever turns away from Him to worship something other than Him has gone far astray and is clearly a loser.



﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ الَّذِي جَعَلْنَاهُ لِلنَّاسِ سَوَاءً الْعَنكِفُ فِيهِ وَالْبَادِ وَمَن يُرِدْ فِيهِ بِالْحُكْمِ يُظَلَمِ نُذُوقُهُ مِن عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ﴾ (سورة الحج: ٢٥)

22:25. As for those who disbelieve and bar [people] from the path of Allah and from the Sacred Mosque – which We have made for all people, residents and visitors alike – and any who intend to profane it by deliberate evil-doing, We will cause them to taste a painful penalty.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the abhorrent ways of the polytheists who disbelieved in their Lord: they combined disbelief in Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) with barring people from the path of Allah and preventing them from believing, and also barring them from the Sacred Mosque, which did not belong to them or their forefathers; rather all people have equal rights to it, both residents and visitors. Indeed, they barred from it the best of humankind, namely Muhammad (ﷺ) and his Companions. In fact, because the Sacred Mosque is a holy and venerated place, whoever intends to profane it by deliberate evil-doing, We will cause them to taste a painful penalty.

Merely intending to do wrong or commit profane acts in the sanctuary makes punishment inevitable, although in other cases a person will not be punished unless he actually does the wrong deed. So how about those who actually committed the worst of wrongdoing, such as disbelieving, ascribing partners to Allah, barring people from His path and preventing those who wanted to visit the Sacred Mosque? What do you think Allah will do to them?

This verse highlights the obligation to respect and venerate the sanctuary, and warns against wanting to commit sin therein and actually doing that.



﴿وَإِذْ بَوَّأْنَا لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ مَكَانَ الْبَيْتِ أَنْ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِي شَيْئًا وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِيَ
لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ

رَبِّكَ لَا وَعَلَىٰ كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَكَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَيْحٍ عَمِيْقٍ ﴿٢٧﴾ لِشَهَادُوا مَنْفَعَ لَهُمْ
 وَيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَاتٍ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِنْ بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ
 فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطْعِمُوا الْبَائِسَ الْفَقِيرَ ﴿٢٨﴾ ثُمَّ لِيَقْضُوا تَفَثَهُمْ وَلِيُوفُوا
 نُذُورَهُمْ وَلِيَطَّوَّفُوا بِالْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ ﴿٢٩﴾ (سورة الحج: ٢٦-٢٩)

- 22:26. And [remember] when We showed to Ibrâheem the site of the [Sacred] House, [saying]: Do not associate anything in worship with Me, and purify My House for those who circumambulate it, those who stand to pray, and those who bow and prostrate.
- 22:27. And proclaim to all people the duty of pilgrimage. They will come to you on foot and on every lean camel, coming from every distant land,
- 22:28. so that they may avail themselves of benefits and mention the name of Allah [at the time of sacrifice], during the appointed days, over the livestock that He has provided for them; then eat thereof and feed the wretched poor.
- 22:29. Then let them complete their rites, fulfil their vows, and [again] circumambulate the Ancient House.

Here Allah mentions the greatness and majestic nature of the Sacred House, and the greatness of the one who built it, namely the close friend of the Most Gracious:

﴿And [remember] when We showed to Ibrâheem the site of the [Sacred] House﴾ and We caused him to stay there, and We caused some of his progeny to reside permanently in that place. Allah instructed him to build it, so he built it on the basis of piety and obedience to Allah. He built it along with his son Ismâ'eel, instructing him not to associate anything with Allah, to make his deed sincerely for the sake of Allah alone, and to build it in the name of Allah.

﴿and purify My House﴾ that is, purify it from polytheism and sin, and cleanse it of impurity and dirt. The Most Gracious called it His

House in order to highlight its great status and virtue, and so that people would have great love for it, their hearts would long to come to it from all directions, and people would be motivated to purify it and venerate it, because it is the House of the Lord, purifying it for those who circumambulate it and those who worship at that place, and those who stay there to perform some acts of worship such as remembering Allah, reading Qur'an, acquiring knowledge and teaching it, and other acts by means of which one may draw closer to Allah.

﴿and those who bow and prostrate﴾ that is, people who come and pray there. In other words, purify it for those good people whose main aim is to worship and serve their Lord, and to draw near to Him at His House. These people have the right and deserve to be honoured and welcomed. Part of honouring them is to purify the House for their sake. Purifying it includes purifying it of loud voices talking of idle things that disturb those worshippers who come to pray and circumambulate the Kaaba. Circumambulation is mentioned before standing to pray, because it is unique to this House; then prayer is mentioned, because it is something that is common to every mosque.

﴿And proclaim to all people the duty of pilgrimage﴾ that is, tell them about it, summon them to it, and convey to near and far how obligatory and virtuous it is. If you call them, they will come to you to perform Hajj and 'umrah. They will come on foot, walking with longing (to visit the sacred places) ﴿and on every lean camel﴾, crossing wildernesses and deserts, travelling great distances, until they reach the holiest of places, ﴿coming from every distant land﴾ that is, from every faraway land.

Ibrâheem (ﷺ) did that, as did his descendant Muhammad (ﷺ); he called people to come on pilgrimage to this House, and they both did that repeatedly. And what Allah promised came to pass: people came to it on foot and riding, from east and west. Then Allah mentions the benefits of visiting the sacred House of Allah, so as to encourage people to do that:

﴿so that they may avail themselves of benefits﴾ that is, so that they may avail themselves at the House of Allah of spiritual benefits such as acts of worship, including acts of worship that can only be done at that place, and worldly benefits such as earning income and making some worldly gains. All of this happens, as everyone knows. ﴿and mention the name of Allah [at the time of sacrifice], during the appointed days, over the livestock that He has provided for them﴾ – this refers to another of the spiritual and worldly benefits. In other words: mention the name of Allah at the time of slaughtering the sacrificial animals, in gratitude to Allah for what He has bestowed thereof and made easy for the pilgrims. When you have slaughtered them, ﴿then eat thereof and feed the wretched poor﴾ that is, those who are very poor.

﴿Then let them complete their rites﴾ that is, let them complete their pilgrimage rituals, which includes removing dirt that has got onto them during the state of *ihrâm*.

﴿fulfil their vows﴾ that they took upon themselves, to perform Hajj and ‘umrah, and offer the sacrifice.

﴿and [again] circumambulate the Ancient House﴾, the best of all mosques. This command to circumambulate the Kaaba is a specific instruction that comes after the command to perform the rituals in general, to highlight its special virtue, and because it is the ultimate act; everything that comes before it is a means to get to this point.

Perhaps – and Allah knows best – it is also for another reason, which is that circumambulation is prescribed at all times, whether it is connected to a pilgrimage or is done separately.



﴿ذَلِكَ وَمَنْ يُعْظِمِ حُرْمَتِ اللَّهِ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ. عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ. وَأَجَلْتَ لَكُمْ
الْأَنْعَامُ إِلَّا مَا يَمْتَلِكُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ وَاجْتَنِبُوا

قَوْلِكَ الزُّورِ ﴿٣٠﴾ حُنَفَاءَ لِلَّهِ غَيْرَ مُشْرِكِينَ بِهِ، وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنْ
السَّمَاءِ فَتَخَطَفَهُ الطَّيْرُ أَوْ تَهْوَى بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي مَكَانٍ سَحِيحٍ ﴿٣١﴾ (سورة الحج: ٣٠-٣١)

(٣١)

22:30. Such [is the pilgrimage]; whoever honours the sacred rites of Allah, that is better for him with his Lord. All livestock has been made lawful for you except that mentioned to you [as unlawful]. So shun the abomination of idols and shun all words of falsehood,

22:31. being true in faith to Allah alone, not ascribing any partner to Him. Whoever ascribes partners to Him, it is as if he has fallen from heaven and been snatched up by birds or carried away by the wind to a far-off place.

﴿Such [is the pilgrimage]﴾ That is, what We have mentioned to you of those rulings that have to do with the pilgrimage and what they involve of venerating, showing respect to and honouring the sacred rites of Allah; venerating the sacred rites of Allah is something that is beloved to Him and is a means of drawing closer to Him for the one who venerates and honours those rites. Allah will reward him greatly for that, and it will be good for him in his spiritual and worldly affairs, and in the hereafter with his Lord.

The sacred rites of Allah include everything that is sacred and that we are instructed to respect, such as acts of worship and other matters, including all the rituals, the Hāram zone, iḥrām, the sacrificial animals, and all the acts of worship that Allah has instructed His slaves to adhere to and perform.

Venerating them means respecting them in one's heart, loving them and showing complete servitude when doing them, without taking the matter lightly, feeling lazy or showing reluctance.

Then Allah mentions His blessing and kindness, as He has made permissible to His slaves the livestock animals such as camels, cattle

and sheep, and has made them part of the rituals through which one draws closer to Him. Thus His blessing is shown to be great on two counts (namely making their meat permissible and making them part of the rituals).

﴿All livestock has been made lawful for you except that mentioned to you [as unlawful]﴾ in the Qur'an, in the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Forbidden to you [for food] are: the meat of animals found dead, blood, the flesh of swine...﴾ (*al-Mā'idah 5: 3*)

But what He forbade to them was because of His mercy towards His slaves; He forbade it to them for the purpose of purifying them and cleansing them from the sin of polytheism and speaking falsehood. Hence He says:

﴿So shun the abomination﴾ that is, the filth and evil ﴿of idols﴾ that they regarded as gods besides Allah, for they are the worst kind of innovation.

﴿and shun all words of falsehood﴾ that is, all forbidden kinds of speech, for they come under the heading of words of falsehood. This includes lying and bearing false witness.

Having forbidden them to ascribe partners to Him, worship idols and speak words of falsehood, Allah now enjoins them to be ﴿true in faith to Allah alone﴾ that is, turning to Him and focusing on His worship, turning away from all besides Him, ﴿not ascribing any partner to Him﴾.

﴿Whoever ascribes partners to Him, it is as if he has fallen from heaven and been snatched up﴾ quickly ﴿by birds or carried away by the wind to a far-off place﴾ that is, a distant place. Such is the polytheist, for faith is like the heavens: it is protected and elevated. But whoever shuns faith is like the one who has fallen from heaven and is exposed to troubles and problems. He may be snatched up by the birds, who will tear him limb from limb. This is like the polytheist:

when he shuns the protection of faith, the devils snatch him from all directions and tear him apart, spoiling his spiritual and worldly well-being.



﴿ذَلِكَ وَمَنْ يُعْظِمَ شَعْبَةَ اللَّهِ فِإِنَّهَا مِنْ تَقْوَى الْقُلُوبِ ﴿٣٣﴾ لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَافِعُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ مَحِلُّهَا إِلَى الْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ ﴿٣٤﴾﴾ (سورة الحج: ٣٢-٣٣)

22:32. That [is the command]. And whoever honours the rites of Allah, verily that stems from piety of the hearts.

22:33. You may derive benefit [from the sacrificial animals] for an appointed term, then their place of sacrifice is near the Sacred House.

That is, what we have mentioned to you about venerating the sacred rites and symbols of Allah. What is meant by symbols is the visible symbols of Islam, including all the rituals, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿Verily, Şafā and Marwah are among the symbols of Allah...﴾
(*al-Baqarah* 2: 158)

It also includes offering the sacrifice in Makkah.

We stated above that what is meant by honouring them is venerating them and doing them in the most perfect manner possible. That includes the sacrificial animals: they are to be respected and the animals chosen for the sacrifice should be of high quality and healthy, perfect in all ways. Honouring the sacred rites of Allah stems from piety of the hearts. The one who honours them is proving his piety and the soundness of his faith, because honouring them results from honouring and venerating Allah.

﴿You may derive benefit [from the sacrificial animals] for an appointed term﴾ this refers to the sacrificial animals that are brought

to Makkah, camels and others. The owner may derive benefits from them by riding them, milking them, and so on, so long as that does not cause any harm to them

﴿for an appointed term﴾ that is, for a limited time, which is until they are slaughtered. When the animals reach their place of sacrifice, which is the Ancient House – this refers to the entire Haram zone, Mina and elsewhere – then when they are slaughtered, eat from their meat, give some as a gift, and feed the desperate poor.



﴿وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا لِيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِنْ بَهِيمَةِ
الْأَنْعَامِ ۖ فَإِنَّهُمْ كَافِرُونَ﴾ وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلَّذِينَ أُسْلِمُوا وَيَسِّرِ الْمُخْلِصِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذَكَرَ اللَّهُ
وَجِلَّتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَهُم وَالْمُقِيمِي الصَّلَاةِ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ
(سورة الحج: ٣٤-٣٥) ﴿٣٥﴾

- 22:34. For every nation We ordained rites of sacrifice, so that they might mention the name of Allah [at the time of sacrifice] over the livestock that He provided for them. But your God is One God, so submit to Him alone. And give glad tidings [O Muhammad] to the humble,
- 22:35. those whose hearts are filled with awe when Allah is mentioned, who endure with patience whatever befalls them, establish prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them.

That is, for each of the previous nations, We ordained rites of sacrifice. Therefore hasten to do good deeds so that We may see which of you is best in deeds. The wisdom behind Allah's ordaining rites of sacrifice for each nation was so as to establish remembrance of Him and focus on giving thanks to Him. Hence He says:

﴿so that they might mention the name of Allah [at the time of sacrifice] over the livestock that He provided for them. But your God

is One God». Even though the types of rituals differed, they were all agreed on this principle, namely the divinity of Allah and the fact that He alone is to be worshipped, and no partners are to be ascribed to Him. Hence He says:

«so submit to Him alone» that is, submit and surrender to Him and no other, for submission to Him is the path that leads to paradise.

«And give glad tidings» in this world and the hereafter «to the humble» that is, those who humble themselves before their Lord and submit to His command, and are humble towards His slaves.

Then Allah describes the characteristics of the humble:

«those whose hearts are filled with awe when Allah is mentioned» that is, their hearts are filled with fear and veneration, and for that reason they refrain from that which is forbidden, because of their fear and awe of Allah alone.

«who endure with patience whatever befalls them» of hardship, sickness or other kinds of harm. They do not become discontent with any of that; rather they bear it with patience for the sake of their Lord, seeking His reward and hoping for it.

«establish prayer» that is, those who establish it properly and perfectly, by doing that which is obligatory and that which is recommended, with complete submission and servitude, both outward and inward.

«and spend out of what We have provided for them» this includes all kinds of obligatory expenditure, such as zakâh, expiation, spending on wives, dependents and relatives, as well as recommended kinds of spending such as charity of all kinds.

It says «out of what» so as to highlight that it is only some of it, so as to indicate how easy the commands of Allah are, and to encourage people to do that, because it is only a small part of that which Allah has provided. The individual could not have obtained it, were it not that Allah made it easy for him and provided it to him. This command is addressed to one who has received provision from the bounty of Allah: spend out of what Allah has provided for you, and Allah will spend on you and give you more.



﴿ وَالْبُدْنَ جَعَلْنَاهَا لَكُمْ مِنْ شَعْتِيرِ اللَّهِ لَكُمْ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ فَأَذْكُرُوا أَسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا صَوَافٍ فَإِذَا وَجِيتُ جُنُوبَهَا فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطْعِمُوا الْقَانِعَ وَالْمُعْتَرَّ كَذَلِكَ سَخَّرْنَاهَا لَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهُ لُحُومَهَا وَلَا دِمَآؤُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوَىٰ مِنْكُمْ كَذَلِكَ سَخَّرَهَا لَكُمْ لِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَىٰكُمْ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحج: ٣٦-٣٧)

- 22:36. We have ordained the sacrificial camels for you as one of the rites of Allah. There is much good for you in them. So mention the name of Allah over them [at the time of sacrifice] as they are standing, then after they have fallen lifeless to the ground, eat thereof and feed [the poor] who do not ask as well as those who do. Thus We have made these animals subservient to your needs, so that you may give thanks.
- 22:37. It is not their flesh or their blood that reaches Allah; rather it is your piety that reaches Him. Thus He has subjected them to you, so that you may glorify Allah for having guided you. And give glad tidings to those who do good.

This indicates that the rites of Allah include all visible symbols of Islam. We noted above that Allah tells us that if a person respects His rites, that stems from the piety of the hearts. Here He tells us that one of His rites is the sacrificial camels – and cows according to one of the two scholarly views. They are to be respected, and healthy and good specimens are to be chosen for the sacrifice.

«There is much good for you in them» that is, for the one who offers the sacrifice and others, as their meat may be eaten and given in charity, bringing benefit and reward.

«So mention the name of Allah over them» that is, at the time of slaughter, say: “*bismillâh* (in the name of Allah)” and slaughter them.

﴿as they are standing﴾. The camel is to be made to stand on all four legs, then the left foreleg is to be tied up, then it is to be slaughtered.

﴿then after they have fallen lifeless to the ground﴾ on their sides, then the carcass is skinned and cut into pieces by the butcher, and the pieces fall to the ground, at that point it is ready to be eaten from. ﴿eat thereof﴾. This is addressed to the one who offers the sacrifice; it is permissible for him to eat from his sacrifice.

﴿and feed [the poor] who do not ask as well as those who do﴾ that is, the poor person who does not ask out of dignity, and the poor person who does ask. Both of them have a right to a share of it.

﴿Thus We have made these animals﴾ namely the sacrificial camels ﴿subservient to your needs, so that you may give thanks﴾ to Allah for making them subservient to your needs, for if He had not made them subservient to your needs, you would not be able to control them (and benefit from them). But He has subjugated them to you out of mercy and kindness towards you, so praise Him.

﴿It is not their flesh or their blood that reaches Allah﴾ that is, the aim of the sacrifice is not merely to slaughter the animals, for nothing of their flesh or blood reaches Allah, because He is the Self-Sufficient, Most Praiseworthy. Rather what reaches Him is sincerity in the deed, seeking of His reward, and good intention. Hence He says: ﴿rather it is your piety that reaches Him﴾.

This encourages and urges the believer to be sincere to Him when offering the sacrifice. The aim should be to seek the pleasure of Allah alone, not pride, showing off, seeking to enhance one's reputation or merely following custom. The same applies to all acts of worship: if they are not accompanied by sincerity and fear of Allah, then they are merely empty shells, like a body without a soul.

﴿Thus He has subjected them to you, so that you may glorify Allah﴾ that is, venerate and honour Him ﴿for having guided you﴾ that is, in return for His having guided you, for He is deserving of the most perfect praise and highest veneration.

﴿And give glad tidings to those who do good﴾ by worshipping Allah, in that they worship Allah as if they see Him. If they have not reached that level, then let them worship Him believing at the time of their worship that He is watching them and sees them. This also refers to those who do good to other people in all ways, whether by offering financial help, teaching knowledge, using their position to help, offering sincere advice, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, saying a kind word, and so on.

Those who do good have glad tidings from Allah of happiness in this world and the hereafter; Allah will show them kindness as they did good by worshipping Him and they did good to His slaves.

﴿Is the reward of goodness anything but goodness?﴾ (*ar-Rahmān* 55: 60)

﴿For those who do good there will be the best reward and more besides...﴾ (*Yoonus* 10: 26)



﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَدْفَعُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ خَوَّانٍ كَفُورٍ ﴾

(سورة الحج: ٣٨)

22:38. Verily, Allah will defend those who believe; verily Allah does not love the treacherous and the ungrateful.

This is a promise and glad tidings from Allah to those who believe, that Allah will ward off from them all hardships and will ward off from them all evil – because of their faith – and He will protect them from the evil of the disbelievers, the evil of the whispers of the Shayṭān, the evil of their own selves and their bad deeds. He will help them when hardship comes and they are faced with something beyond that which they can bear, and He will reduce it greatly. Every believer has a share of this defence and the virtue of being defended, commensurate with his faith; some will have a little and some will have a great deal.

﴿verily Allah does not love the treacherous﴾ that is, the one who betrays his trust that Allah made obligatory upon him, so he does not carry out his duties towards Allah and he betrays that trust, and he betrays people too.

﴿and the ungrateful﴾ that is, those who are ungrateful for the blessings of Allah that He persistently bestows, and in return he persists in disbelief and disobedience. Allah does not love such a person; rather He hates him and despises him, and He will requite him for his disbelief and treachery. What this verse means is that Allah loves every trustworthy person who fulfils his trust and gives thanks to his Lord.



﴿أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقْتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلَمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَفَدَمَتِ صَوْمِعُ وَيَبْعُ وَصَلَوَاتُ وَمَسْجِدُ يُذَكَّرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤٠﴾ الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَاللَّهُ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ ﴿٤١﴾﴾ (سورة الحج: ٣٩-٤١)

22:39. Permission [to fight] is given to those who are attacked, because they have been wronged. Verily Allah is able to grant them victory,

22:40. those who have been driven from their homes unjustly, only because they say: Our Lord is Allah. Were it not for Allah restraining the people, some by means of others, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of Allah is mentioned much, would surely have been destroyed. Allah will surely help those who help His cause. Verily Allah is Strong, Almighty.

22:41. [They are] those who, if We establish them in the land, will establish regular prayer and give zakâh, and will enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. Allah decides the outcome of all matters.

In the beginning, the Muslims were forbidden to fight the disbelievers and were enjoined to show patience with them, as dictated by divine wisdom. But when they migrated to Madinah and gained some strength and power, permission was given to them to fight. Allah (ﷻ) said:

«Permission [to fight] is given to those who are attacked». From this it is understood that prior to that they had been forbidden to fight, then Allah gave them permission to fight those who attacked them. Such permission was given to them only because they had been wronged by being prevented from following their religion; they had been persecuted for that and had been expelled from their homes.

«Verily Allah is able to grant them victory» so let them seek His help and support. Then Allah mentions the nature of the wrong that was done to them:

«those who have been driven from their homes» they were forced to leave, because of the harm and persecution that were done to them «unjustly» that is, their “fault” for which their enemies resented them was «only because they say: Our Lord is Allah». In other words, it was only because they affirmed the oneness of Allah and devoted their worship solely to Him. If this is a fault, then that was their fault. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

«Their only grievance against them was that they believed in Allah, the Almighty, the Praiseworthy.» (*al-Burooj* 85: 8)

This is indicative of the wisdom behind jihad, the purpose of which is to establish the religion of Allah and stand up to those disbelievers who are persecuting the believers and who are the ones who started

the aggression, so as to ward off their wrongdoing and persecution in order that the believers will be able to worship Allah and establish the visible symbols and rituals of Islam. Hence Allah says:

﴿Were it not for Allah restraining the people, some by means of others﴾ for Allah wards off the harm of the disbelievers by means of those who strive in jihad in His cause

﴿monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of Allah is mentioned much, would surely have been destroyed﴾ that is, these main places of worship for various groups of the People of the Book – the places of worship of the Jews and Christians, and the mosques of the Muslims – would have been destroyed.

﴿in which the name of Allah is mentioned much﴾ that is, in these places of worship prayers are held, the Books of Allah are recited and the name of Allah is mentioned in different ways. Were it not for Allah restraining the people, some by means of others, the disbelievers would gain control over the Muslims, and they would destroy their places of worship and force them to give up their religion. This indicates that jihad is prescribed for the purpose of warding off the aggressor and the one who causes harm. And there are also other aims of jihad.

This indicates that the countries in which people feel safe to worship Allah, the mosques are maintained and all the rituals of Islam are established, are part of the virtue resulting from the efforts of those who strive in jihad, for by virtue of their blessed efforts Allah warded off the disbelievers from that country. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...Were it not for Allah restraining the people, some by means of others, the earth would indeed be filled with mischief. But Allah is most gracious to all the worlds.﴾ (*al-Baqarah 2: 251*)

If you were to say: nowadays we see the mosques of the Muslims being maintained and frequented, and they are not destroyed, even though many are in small Muslim countries with governments that are not powerful, and they have no power to fight in neighbouring

non-Muslim countries; in fact we even see mosques in countries under the control of non-Muslims that are maintained and frequented, and their people are safe and secure, even though the non-Muslim rulers are able to destroy them, but Allah has told us that were it not for Allah restraining the people, some by means of others, these places of worship would be destroyed. But we do not see the application of this concept of some people being restrained by others.

The response to that is that this question is included in the general meaning of this verse. The one who knows about how countries are run nowadays is aware that according to their system every community under its authority and subject to its rule is regarded as part of the society that plays a role in its government, even if that community has power because of its numbers or what it possesses of equipment or wealth, or the work it does and the services it offers. Governments pay attention to both the religious and worldly interests of that community, because they fear that if they do not do that it will lead to trouble or loss of some of their support. For that reason, they pay attention to some aspects of the religion, especially mosques which, praise be to Allah, are well established even in the capitals of the superpowers.

Those independent states and governments pay attention to the feelings of their Muslim subjects. Moreover there is mutual envy and enmity among some Christian nations, which Allah has told us will continue until the Day of Resurrection. So you will find that the Muslim government, even though it may not be able to defend itself, is safe from much of their harm because of that enmity that exists among them. So not one of them can cause harm to the Muslim state, lest the Muslim state seek the protection of another Christian state. Moreover, Allah (ﷻ) will show His slaves support for Islam and the Muslims, as He has promised in His Book.

The signs of divine support began to appear – praise be to Allah – when the Muslims realised the necessity of turning back to their

religion and of striving hard. We praise Him and we ask Him to complete His blessing.

Hence Allah says in a true promise, the fulfilment of which can be seen in real life: ﴿Allah will surely help those who help His cause﴾ that is, those who support His religion with sincerity to Him alone, fighting for His sake so that the word of Allah will be supreme.

﴿Verily Allah is Strong, Almighty﴾ that is, He is perfect in His might and strength, and none can resist Him. He has subjected all creatures and has control over them. So be of good cheer, O Muslims, for even though you are weak in numbers and in weapons and equipment, and the numbers and weapons of your enemy are greater, your support is Allah, the Strong, the Almighty, and you are relying on the One Who created you and created all that you do. So take the measures that are enjoined upon you, then seek His support, and He will inevitably grant you victory.

﴿O you who believe, if you help Allah's cause, He will help you and steady your footsteps.﴾ (Muhammad 47: 7)

So fulfil your duties, O Muslims, as dictated by your faith, and do righteous deeds, for:

﴿Allah has promised those among you who believe and do righteous deeds that He will surely make them successors [to power] in the land, as He made those before them successors; that He will surely establish for them their religion that He has chosen for them; and that He will surely cause their [present] state of fear to be replaced by peace and security. [That is because] they worship Me alone and do not associate anything with Me...﴾ (an-Noor 24: 55)

Then Allah mentions the sign of the one who supports and helps His cause and the means by which it is known who supports Allah's cause and His religion, and whoever does not fit this description is lying. Allah says: ﴿[They are] those who, if We establish them in the land﴾ that is, if We give them control in it and give them power

over it, without anyone disputing their authority or opposing them, they ﴿will establish regular prayer﴾, offering their prayers on time, performing them properly, doing all the obligatory parts of the prayer and fulfilling the necessary conditions, in *Jumu'ah* (Friday) prayer and prayers in congregation.

﴿and give zakāh﴾ which is obligatory upon them in particular and upon their subjects in general; they give it to those who are entitled to it.

﴿and will enjoin what is right﴾ that includes everything that is right and good according to Islamic teaching and common sense, with regard to the rights of Allah and the rights of other people.

﴿and forbid what is wrong﴾ everything that is wrong according to Islamic teaching and common sense is known to be reprehensible. The command to do a thing or the prohibition on doing it includes that without which it cannot be done. If the commands and prohibitions are dependent upon learning and teaching, then it is to be made mandatory for people to learn and teach; if they are dependent upon discipline and punishment, whether that is specified by Islamic laws or otherwise, such as certain kinds of disciplinary punishments, then that must be done. If it depends on appointing people to carry out this task, then that must be done, and so on; this applies to everything without which enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong cannot be done.

﴿Allah decides the outcome of all matters﴾ that is, all matters are decided by Allah, and He has told us that the best outcome results from piety or fear of Him. Whoever is given authority and power over people by Allah, and he complies with the commands of Allah, he will have a good end and his well-being will be sound. But whoever behaves as a tyrant, ruling over them according to his whims and desires, even if he has power for a while, his outcome will not be good; his reign will bode ill for people and his end will be bad.



﴿ وَإِن يُكَذِّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَعَادٌ وَثَمُودٌ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَقَوْمُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَقَوْمُ لُوطٍ ﴿٤٣﴾ وَأَصْحَابُ مَدْيَنَ ۗ وَكَذَّبَ مُوسَىٰ فَأَمَلَيْتُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُهُمْ ۗ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿٤٤﴾ فَكَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا وَهِيَ ظَالِمَةٌ فَهِيَ خَاوِبَةٌ عَلَىٰ غُرُوبِهَا وَيَثِرٌ مَّعَطَلَةٌ وَقَصْرٌ مَّشِيدٌ ﴿٤٥﴾ أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَتَكُون لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ بِهَا أَوْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا فَأِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَكِن تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبَ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ ﴿٤٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحج: ٤٢-٤٦)

- 22:42. If they reject you [O Muhammad], the people of Nooh, 'Ad and Thamood before them also rejected [their Prophets],
- 22:43. as did the people of Ibrâheem and the people of Loot,
- 22:44. and the people of Madyan. And Moosâ was also rejected. But I granted respite to the disbelievers, then I punished them, and how [severe] was My punishment of them!²³
- 22:45. How many cities that were given to wrongdoing have We destroyed! They lie in ruins, their wells abandoned and their lofty palaces [deserted].
- 22:46. Have they not travelled in the land so that their hearts might understand and their ears might hear?²⁴ Verily it is not the eyes that are blind, but the hearts in their chests.

Here Allah tells His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ): If these polytheists reject you, you are not the first Messenger to be rejected, and they

²³ As Allah changed the way He had been dealing with them, changing abundance to scarcity and well-being to destruction. (at-Ṭabari)

²⁴ This verse urges the disbelievers to travel to the lands of past nations like them who disbelieved and rejected their Messengers, and see how Allah punished them, so that they may take heed and begin to understand the signs of Allah and listen to the truth. (at-Ṭabari)

are not the first nation to reject its Messenger. ﴿the people of Nooh, 'Ad and Thamood before them also rejected [their Prophets], as did the people of Ibraheem and the people of Loot, and the people of Madyan﴾ that is, the people of Shu'ayb.

﴿And Moosâ was also rejected. But I granted respite to the disbelievers﴾ who rejected their Messengers. I did not hasten the punishment for them; rather I gave them respite until they persisted in wandering blindly in their transgression, increasing in their disbelief and evil.

﴿then I punished them﴾ with the punishment of One Who is Almighty, Omnipotent

﴿and how [severe] was My punishment of them﴾ that is, My punishment of them because of their disbelief and their rejection of the Messengers was the most severe and terrible of punishments. Some of them were drowned, some of them were overcome by the blast, some of them were destroyed by the devastating wind, some of them were swallowed up by the earth, some of them were overtaken by the punishment of the day of the overshadowing cloud (26: 189). So let these disbelievers learn from them, lest there befall them what befell those earlier peoples, for they are no better than them, and they have not been given any exemption in the scriptures that were revealed by Allah. How many disbelievers were punished and destroyed who were just like these people. Hence Allah says:

﴿How many cities that were given to wrongdoing have We destroyed﴾ with severe punishment and disgrace in this world because of their disbelief in Allah and their rejection of His Messengers. Our punishment of them was not wrongdoing on Our part.

﴿They lie in ruins﴾ that is, their houses, palaces and walls are destroyed; they have fallen down and have been abandoned after having been populated, desolate after having been filled with life and people.

«their wells abandoned and their lofty palaces [deserted]» that is, how many wells there are, around which people used to crowd to get water for themselves and for their flocks, but now they are deserted; no one comes and goes around them. And how many palaces that are, which people worked hard to build, fortify and adorn, but when the decree of Allah came to pass, nothing availed those people; those palaces are also now deserted and have become a lesson for those who will learn and an example for those who reflect and ponder.

Hence Allah calls upon His slaves to travel in the land, in order to see and learn. He says: «Have they not travelled in the land so that their hearts might understand» the signs of Allah, and reflect upon them and learn lessons

«and their ears might hear» the stories of past nations who were subject to punishment. However, merely looking, listening and travelling without reflecting and learning lessons is of no benefit and does not serve the purpose.

Hence Allah (ﷻ) says: «Verily it is not the eyes that are blind, but the hearts in their chests» that is, the kind of blindness that is detrimental to one's religious commitment is blindness of the heart to the truth, so that it does not see it, just as the blind man does not see things that are visible to others. As for physical blindness, it is limited only to worldly issues.



﴿وَسْتَعِجِلُونَكَ بِالْعَذَابِ وَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ وَإِنَّ يَوْمًا عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ كَأَلْفِ سَنَةٍ مِمَّا تَعُدُّونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَكَأَنِّ مِنْ قَرِيْبَةٍ أَمَلَيْتُ لَهَا وَهِيَ ظَالِمَةٌ لَنَا أَخَذْتَهَا وَإِلَى الْمَصِيْرِ ﴿٤٨﴾﴾ (سورة الحج: ٤٧-٤٨)

22:47. They ask you to hasten on the punishment, but Allah will not fail in His promise, for verily a day with your Lord is like a thousand years by your reckoning.

22:48. To how many cities that were given to wrongdoing have I granted respite, then I punished them. And unto Me is the return [of all].

That is, these disbelievers ask you to hasten the punishment due to their ignorance, wrongfully and stubbornly, thinking that they can outwit Allah, to express their rejection of His Messengers. But Allah will never break His promise: what He has promised them of punishment will inevitably come to them, and nothing can prevent it reaching them. As for seeking to hasten it and bring it upon them quickly, that is not up to you, O Muhammad (ﷺ), and you cannot respond to their demands for haste. Ahead of them lies the Day of Resurrection, on which the first of them and the last of them will be gathered together and they will be requited for their deeds, and the eternal, everlasting punishment will befall them. Hence Allah says:

«for verily a day with your Lord is like a thousand years by your reckoning», because it will be so long and difficult, and filled with terrors. It is all the same whether punishment befalls them in this world or is delayed, for this day will inevitably come.

It may be that what is meant is that Allah is forbearing; even if they seek to hasten the punishment, one day with Him is like a thousand years by your reckoning, so even if you think that the period of waiting is long and is passing slowly, and that the punishment will not come, you should know that Allah may give respite for a long time but He never forgets, and when He seizes the wrongdoers with His punishment, He will not let them escape.

«To how many cities that were given to wrongdoing have I granted respite» that is, a lengthy period of respite, even though they were doing wrong. The fact that they hastened to do wrong does not mean that We should hasten to punish them.

«then I punished them. And unto Me is the return [of all]» that is, in addition to their punishment in this world, they will be brought

back to Allah, and He will punish them for their sins. So let these evildoers beware of the punishment of Allah, and let them not be deceived by the respite.



﴿ قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّمَا أَنَا لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٥٠﴾ وَالَّذِينَ سَعَوْا فِي ءَايَاتِنَا مُعْجِزِينَ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٥١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الحج: ٤٩-٥١)

- 22:49. Say [O Muhammad]: O people, verily I am to you but a clear warner.
- 22:50. Those who believe and do righteous deeds will have forgiveness and a generous provision.
- 22:51. But those who strive against Our revelations, seeking to discredit them, will be inhabitants of the blazing fire.

Here Allah (ﷻ) instructs His slave and Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) to call people, telling them that he is indeed the Messenger of Allah, who brings glad tidings to the believers of the reward of Allah, and warns the disbelievers and wrongdoers of His punishment.

﴿a clear warner﴾ that is, bringing a warning that is clear, which is a warning that explains that of which they are warned, because he has established clear proof of the truth of what he has warned them of.

Then Allah mentions details of the warning and glad tidings:

﴿Those who believe﴾ in their hearts, with sincere and sound faith ﴿and do righteous deeds﴾ in terms of physical actions ﴿will be in gardens of delight﴾ (22: 56) that is, gardens in which they will enjoy all manner of delightful food, drink, spouses, images and sounds, and they will have the joy of beholding the Most Generous Lord and hearing His words.

﴿And for those who disbelieve﴾ (22: 57) that is, those who deny the blessings of their Lord and reject His Messengers and His signs, will be the inhabitants of hell: they will abide therein and remain there at all times; its torment will never be reduced or its punishment halted even for a moment.



﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا إِذَا تَمَنَّى أَلْقَى الشَّيْطَانُ فِي أُمْنِيَّتِهِ فَيَنْسَخُ اللَّهُ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطَانُ ثُمَّ يُحْكِمُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥٢﴾ لِيَجْعَلَ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطَانُ فِتْنَةً لِلَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ وَالْقَاسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَفِي شِقَاقٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٥٣﴾ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَيُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ فَتُخْبِتَ لَهُ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهَادِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٤﴾ وَلَا يَزَالُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي مِرْيَةٍ مِنْهُ حَتَّى تَأْتِيَهُمُ السَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً أَوْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمٍ عَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٥﴾ الْمَلَكُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلَّهِ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ فَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٥٦﴾ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ﴿٥٧﴾﴾ (سورة الحج: ٥٢-٥٧)

22:52. We did not send any Messenger or Prophet before you but, when he recited [the revelations], the Shayṭān threw [some falsehood] into his recitation. But Allah cancels out anything [false] that the Shayṭān throws in, then Allah confirms His revelations, for Allah is All-Knowing, Most Wise.

22:53. [That is] so that He may make what the Shayṭān throws in [of falsehood] a trial for those in whose hearts is a disease and those whose hearts are hardened, for verily the wrongdoers go much too far in opposition:

22:54. And so that those who were given knowledge may know that it [the Qur'an] is the truth from your Lord, so they may believe

therein and their hearts may be certain of it. Verily Allah guides those who believe to a straight path.

22:55. Those who disbelieve will not cease to be in doubt concerning it [the Qur'an] until the Hour comes upon them suddenly or there comes upon them the punishment of a day devoid of all hope.

22:56. On that day all dominion will belong to Allah. He will judge between them, then those who believed and did righteous deeds will be in gardens of delight.

22:57. And for those who disbelieve and reject Our revelations, there will be a humiliating punishment.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of His great wisdom in testing His slaves, for before Muhammad (ﷺ) He never sent any Messenger or Prophet... but, when he recited [the revelations] by means of which he reminded people, enjoining that which is right and forbidding that which is wrong,

«the Shayṭān threw [some falsehood] into his recitation», as part of his plots and schemes, that was contrary to that recitation. Although Allah protected the Messengers from error with regard to what they conveyed from Him, and He protected His revelation from being tampered with or mixed with something else, this introduction or throwing in of falsehood by the Shayṭān did not remain in the text; rather it was something temporary that might happen then be removed. Hence Allah says:

«But Allah cancels out anything [false] that the Shayṭān throws in» that is, He removes it and takes it away, and clearly shows that it is not part of His revelation

«then Allah confirms His revelations» that is, He keeps them precise, frees them from error and preserves them as they originally were; thus they remain free of that material that was thrown in by the Shayṭān.

«for Allah is All-Knowing, Most Wise» and does what is appropriate. By His perfect wisdom, He allowed the devils to throw

in falsehood as mentioned, so that the purpose referred to in the following verse would be achieved:

«[That is] so that He may make what the Shayṭān throws in [of falsehood] a trial» for two groups of people about whom Allah does not care. They are:

«those in whose hearts is a disease» that is, weakness or lack of perfect faith and firm belief, hence the slightest doubt that occurs to them may shake their faith. When they hear that which the Shayṭān throws in, they begin to doubt and it becomes a test for them;

«and those whose hearts are hardened» and they are not influenced by rebukes or reminders, and they do not understand what Allah and His Messengers say, because of their hardheartedness. When they hear that which the Shayṭān throws in, they use it to support their arguments and opposition to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). Hence Allah says:

«for verily the wrongdoers go much too far in opposition» that is, in opposition to Allah and in stubborn rejection of the truth, going against it and straying far from the right path. So what the Shayṭān throws in becomes a trial to these two groups, thus exposing what is in their hearts of concealed evil. As for the third group, it is a mercy in their case. They are the ones who are mentioned in the following verse:

«And so that those who were given knowledge may know that it [the Qur'an] is the truth from your Lord» because Allah has blessed them with knowledge through which they recognise the truth as distinct from falsehood, and guidance as distinct from misguidance. So they distinguish between the two matters – established truth that Allah confirms and makes precise, and falsehood of a temporary nature that Allah cancels out – on the basis of indications that are available for both, so that they may know that Allah is Most Wise; He decrees some types of tests so as to show what is hidden in people's hearts of good and evil.

«so they may believe therein» because of that, and increase in faith, when they ward off passing doubts and confusion

﴿and their hearts may be certain of it﴾ that is, so that their hearts may be humbled and submit to His wisdom. This is part of His guidance to them; ﴿Verily Allah guides those who believe﴾, because of their faith, ﴿to a straight path﴾ that is, knowledge of the truth and acting accordingly. Allah will make steadfast those who believe, with the word that stands firm, in this world and in the hereafter (cf. 14: 27).

These verses highlight the fact that the Messenger (ﷺ) had the example of his fellow Messengers with regard to what happened to him when he recited Soorat an-Najm. When he reached the words: ﴿Have you thought about al-Lât and al-'Uzzâ, and Manât, the third and last?﴾ (an-Najm 53: 19-20)

– the Shayṭân threw into his recitation the words “These are the exalted *gharâneeq* (cranes), whose intercession is hoped for”, which caused great sorrow and distress for the Messenger (ﷺ) and confusion for the people, as Allah stated. So Allah revealed these verses: ﴿Those who disbelieve will not cease to be in doubt concerning it [the Qur'an] until the Hour comes upon them suddenly or there comes upon them the punishment of a day devoid of all hope. On that day all dominion will belong to Allah. He will judge between them, then those who believed and did righteous deeds will be in gardens of delight. And for those who disbelieve and reject Our revelations, there will be a humiliating punishment.﴾ (22: 55-57)

Here Allah tells us of the state of the disbelievers, and that they will continue to doubt that which you have brought to them, O Muhammad (ﷺ), because of their stubbornness and aversion, and that they will persist in this attitude, ﴿until the Hour comes upon them suddenly﴾ and catches them unawares, ﴿or there comes upon them the punishment of a day devoid of all hope﴾ that is, in which there is nothing good, namely the Day of Resurrection.

When the Hour comes upon them, or that day comes, those who disbelieve will realise that they were lying, and they will be filled

with regret at a time when regret will not avail them anything. They will give up all hope and despair of all good, and they will wish that they had believed in the Messenger (ﷺ) and followed his path. In this there is a warning against persisting in suspicion and fabrication.

«On that day» namely the Day of Resurrection,
«all dominion will belong to Allah» may He be exalted, and to no other.

«He will judge between them» with justice, and His judgement will be decisive.

«then those who believed» in Allah and His Messengers, and what they brought

«and did righteous deeds» that confirmed their faith

«will be in gardens of delight» that will bring to their hearts, souls and bodies delights that can barely be described or comprehended.

«And for those who disbelieve» in Allah and His Messengers, and reject His revelations that guide to the truth and what is right, so they stubbornly turn away from them,

«there will be a humiliating punishment» that will be severe and painful for them, and will reach their hearts. As they tried to humiliate His Messengers and ridicule His revelations, Allah will humiliate them with the punishment.



﴿وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ قَاتَلُوا أَوْ مَاتُوا لَيَرْزُقَنَّهُمُ اللَّهُ رِزْقًا
حَسَنًا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّزُقِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾ لَيُنزِلَنَّهُمْ مَدْخَلًا
يَرْضَوْنَهُ، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٩﴾﴾ (سورة الحج: ٥٨-٥٩)

22:58. As for those who migrate in the cause of Allah and are slain or die, Allah will surely bestow upon them a goodly provision. Verily Allah is the best of providers.

22:59. He will surely admit them to a place with which they will be well pleased, for verily Allah is All-Knowing, Most Forbearing.

This is great glad tidings for those who migrated in Allah's cause, leaving behind their homes, native lands, children and wealth, seeking the pleasure of Allah and in support of His religion. The reward of such a person has become incumbent upon Allah, whether he dies in his bed or is killed fighting in jihad in Allah's cause.

﴿Allah will surely bestow upon them a goodly provision﴾ in al-barzakh, and on the Day of Resurrection, by admitting them to paradise, where they will find peace and tranquillity, beauty and delight, and spiritual and physical bliss.

It may be that what is meant is that for the one who migrates for the sake of Allah, his provision is guaranteed in this world, goodly and abundant provision, whether Allah knows that he will die in his bed or he will be killed as a martyr. All of them are guaranteed provision, so no one should ever think that if he migrates and leaves behind his property and wealth, that he will become poor and needy, for his Provider is the best of providers. And it happened as He said: the earlier migrants left behind their property, children and wealth in support of the religion of Allah, but it was not long before Allah enabled them to conquer various lands and gave them power over people. Thus they accumulated wealth by means of which they became the richest of people. Based on this view, what is meant by the words ﴿He will surely admit them to a place with which they will be well pleased﴾ is that either Allah would enable them to conquer various lands, especially the conquest of Makkah, for they entered it in a state of joy and happiness, or it refers to provision in the hereafter, and this refers to admission to paradise. Thus this verse combines two types of provision: provision in this world and provision in the hereafter. The wording is appropriate for both interpretations and both meanings are sound; therefore there is no reason why it should not refer to both.

﴿for verily Allah is All-Knowing﴾ of all affairs, both apparent and hidden, what comes earlier and what comes later

﴿Most Forbearing﴾ – people disobey Him and defiantly commit grievous sins, yet He does not hasten the punishment for them, although He is perfectly able to do so; rather He continues to grant them His provision and bestow His bounty upon them.



﴿ذَلِكَ وَمَنْ عَاقَبَ بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبَ بِهِ ثُمَّ بُغِيَ عَلَيْهِ لِيَنْصُرَهُ اللَّهُ﴾
 ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُوفٌ غَفُورٌ﴾ (سورة الحج: ٦٠)

22:60. That is so. Whoever retaliates only to the extent of the wrong that was done to him, and then is wronged again, Allah will surely help him. Verily Allah is Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving.

If a person is wronged and injustice is committed against him, it is permissible for him to retaliate and do a similar wrong to the one who wronged him. If he does that, there is no blame on him and he is not to be criticised, and if he is wronged after that, Allah will help him, because he has been wronged. So it is not permissible for anyone to wrong him again because he settled the score. If the one who settled the score in return for a wrong done to him is wronged again, Allah will help him. In the case of the one who did not settle the score and is wronged again, divine help is even closer to him.

﴿Verily Allah is Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving﴾ that is, He pardons sinners and does not hasten to punish them; He forgives their sins and removes them, and removes the effects and consequences thereof.

This is how Allah always is, and this is how He deals with His slaves at all times, offering pardon and forgiveness. So you who have been wronged and mistreated should pardon, overlook and forgive, so that Allah may treat you as you treated His slaves.

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



ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يُؤَلِّجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُؤَلِّجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٦١﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ هُوَ الْبَاطِلُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿٦٢﴾ (سورة الحج: ٦١-٦٢)

- 22:61. That is because Allah causes the night to encroach upon the day, and the day to encroach upon the night. And verily Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.
- 22:62. That is because Allah is the Truth, and those they call upon besides Him are sheer falsehood. Verily Allah is the Most High, the Most Great.

Such is the One Who has prescribed for you these good and just rulings. He is good in His control and planning, the One Who causes the night to encroach upon the day, so He brings the night after the day, and the day after the night, and He causes the one to increase by as much as the other decreases, then vice versa, which results in the passage of the seasons and causes the alternation of night and day, sun and moon, which is one of His greatest blessings and is something that is essential for people.

﴿And verily Allah is All-Hearing﴾; He hears the sound of all voices, in all languages, expressing various needs
 ﴿All-Seeing﴾; He sees a black ant walking on a solid rock in the darkness of night.

﴿It is the same [to Him] whether any of you conceals his speech or declares it openly, and whether he hides under the cover of the night or walks openly in the light of day.﴾ (ar-Ra'd 13: 10)

«That is because Allah is the Truth» and is eternal; He always was and always will be. He is the First, before Whom there was nothing, and the Last, after Whom there will be nothing, and He is the most perfect in His names and attributes. He fulfils His promise, and His promise is true, the meeting with Him is true, His religion is true, worship of Him is true and brings benefits that will last forever.

«and those they call upon besides Him» of idols and rivals, both animate and inanimate, «are sheer falsehood»; they are false in and of themselves and worship of them is false because it is connected to something transient that will inevitably perish and therefore is false and invalid.

«Verily Allah is the Most High, the Most Great» in and of Himself, for He is high above all created things. He is also Most High and Most Great in His decree, for He is perfect in all His attributes and in His subduing of all creatures. And He is Most Great in and of Himself, and in His names and attributes. One sign of His greatness and pride is that on the Day of Resurrection He will hold the entire earth in His grasp and fold up the heavens in His Right Hand (cf. 39: 67). As a sign of His pride, His Footstool encompasses the heavens and the earth. As a sign of His greatness and pride, the forelocks of all people are in His Hand, so they do not do anything at all except by His will.

No one knows the true nature of His pride except He, not any angel who is close to Him or any Prophet who was sent. The real nature thereof is that every attribute of perfection, majesty, pride and greatness is confirmed and affirmed for Him, and of each of these attributes He is possessed of the most sublime and perfect degree thereof. As a sign of His pride, the purpose of all acts of worship done by the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth is to magnify Him, glorify Him, venerate Him and honour Him. Hence the *takbeer* (saying *Allāhu akbar* – Allah is most great) is the slogan of major acts of worship such as the prayer and others.



﴿الَّذِينَ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مَاءً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَتُصْبِحُ الْأَرْضُ مُخْضَرَةً إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٦٣﴾ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ الْغَفِيُّرُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٦٤﴾﴾ (سورة الحج: ٦٣-٦٤)

- 22:63. Do you not see that Allah sends down water from the sky, whereupon the earth becomes green? Verily Allah is the Knower of subtleties, the All-Aware.
- 22:64. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth. And verily Allah is Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise.

Here Allah (ﷻ) encourages us to look at the signs which point to His oneness and perfect nature.

﴿Do you not see﴾ that is, have you not seen with your eyes and reflected with your intellect

﴿that Allah sends down water from the sky﴾, which is the rain; it comes down to an earth that is barren, desolate and dusty, its trees and plants dry, then it becomes green, covered with all kinds of vegetation, a delight to behold. The One Who brought it back to life after it was dead and lifeless will revive the dead after they have turned to dust.

﴿Verily Allah is the Knower of subtleties, the All-Aware﴾. He is the Knower of subtleties, Who knows the hidden part of things and their secrets. He brings good things to His slave and wards off evil from him in very subtle ways that are hidden from people. By His knowledge of subtleties, He shows His slaves His might and perfect power when He wreaks vengeance, then He shows His kindness after a person was about to die. By His knowledge of subtleties, He knows where the raindrops fall on earth, and where the seeds are in the earth, so He sends that rain to those seeds that are hidden and unknown to people, and brings forth all kinds of plants from them.

«the All-Aware» of all secrets, what is hidden in people's hearts, and all hidden things.

«To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth» because He created them and they are all His slaves; He controls them as He is the Sovereign, Most Wise, Almighty; no one else has any control at all.

«And verily Allah is Self-Sufficient» in and of Himself; He is completely independent of means in all aspects. One aspect thereof is that He does not need any of His creation and does not take them as friends because of any need for help and support. Because He is Self-Sufficient, He has never taken a spouse or begotten a child. He is entirely Self-Sufficient; He does not eat or drink, and He does not need what people need in any way. He feeds but is not fed. Because He is Self-Sufficient, all people need Him to bring them into existence, to make them adaptable to their environment and to provide for them, and to guide them with regard to their religious and worldly affairs. Because He is Self-Sufficient, if all those who are in the heavens and on earth were to come together, both the living and the dead, in a single plain, and each of them were to ask Him for what he wishes for, and He were to give them more than they wished for, that would not detract from His sovereignty in the slightest. Because He is Self-Sufficient, His Hand is outstretched to bestow goodness and blessings by night and by day; His bounty keeps coming down at every moment. Because He is Self-Sufficient and Most Generous, what He has stored up in paradise is such that no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever crossed the mind of man.

«Worthy of all praise» that is, He is praiseworthy in and of Himself; in His names, for they are beautiful; in His attributes, because they are all attributes of perfection; in His deeds, because they are all based on justice, kindness, mercy and wisdom; in His laws, for He does not enjoin anything but that which is completely of benefit or its benefits outweigh its harms, and He does not forbid

anything but that which is completely bad or its harms outweigh any benefits. To Him be praise that fills everything in the heavens and on earth and in between, and whatever He wills after that, for people cannot praise Him enough; rather He is as He has praised Himself, far above the praise that His slaves give. He is worthy of praise for helping whomever He helps and forsaking whomever He forsakes. He is Self-Sufficient in His praise, and Most Praiseworthy in His self-sufficiency.



﴿الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَالْفَلَكَ تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِ وَيُمْسِكُ السَّمَاءَ أَنْ تَقَعَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٦٥﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَكَفُورٌ ﴿٦٦﴾﴾ (سورة الحج:

(٦٦-٦٥)

- 22:65. Do you not see that Allah has made all that is on earth to be of service to you, and the ships that sail on the sea by His command? And He holds back the sky so that it cannot fall on the earth except by His leave. Verily Allah is Most Compassionate, Most Merciful to humankind.
- 22:66. It is He Who gave you life, then will cause you to die, then He will bring you back to life. Verily man is indeed ungrateful.

That is, have you not seen with your own eyes and intellect the comprehensive blessings and favours of your Lord?

﴿Allah has made all that is on earth to be of service to you﴾ including animals, plants and inanimate objects. Everything that is on earth has been made to be of service to the sons of Adam: animals which they use for riding, carrying loads and other purposes, as well as food and other kinds of benefits; trees and fruits that they eat, for man has been

given the ability to plant them and make use of them; and minerals that man extracts from the earth and makes use of them.

﴿and the ships﴾ have also been made to be of service to you, as they ﴿sail on the sea by His command﴾, carrying you and your trade goods, and they take you from one place to another. And you extract from the sea ornaments that you wear. By His mercy towards you, Allah ﴿holds back the sky so that it cannot fall on the earth﴾. Were it not for His mercy and might, the sky would have fallen onto the earth, destroying all that is on it and killing everyone on it.

﴿Verily, Allah sustains the heavens and the earth, lest they decline, and if they were to decline, there is no one who could sustain them other than Him. Verily, He is Forbearing, Oft-Forgiving.﴾ (Fâtir 35: 41)

﴿Verily Allah is Most Compassionate, Most Merciful to humankind﴾ – He is more merciful to them than their parents and than their own selves. Hence He wants what is good for them, whereas they want that which is evil and harmful for themselves. By His mercy, He has caused all these things to be of service to them.

﴿It is He Who gave you life﴾ when He created you from nothing ﴿then will cause you to die﴾ after giving you life ﴿then He will bring you back to life﴾ after your death, in order to requite the doer of good for his good deeds and the doer of evil for his evil deeds. ﴿Verily man﴾ in general, except those whom Allah blesses ﴿is indeed ungrateful﴾ for the blessings of Allah; he is ungrateful to Allah and does not acknowledge His kindness; rather he may disbelieve in the resurrection and the might of his Lord.



﴿لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا هُمْ نَاسِكُوهُ فَلَا يُنْزِعْنَكَ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَأَدْعُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ
إِنَّكَ لَعَلَّ هُدًى مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٦٧﴾ وَإِنْ جَدَلْتَهُمْ فَقُلْ أَفَلَا أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾ اللَّهُ

يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ
 يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ فِي كِتَابٍ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٦٧﴾
 (سورة الحج: ٦٧-٧٠)

- 22:67. For every nation We decreed ways of worship which they follow, so do not let them dispute with you concerning this matter. But call them to your Lord, for you are indeed rightly guided.
- 22:68. And if they do dispute with you, then say: Allah knows best what you are doing.
- 22:69. Allah will judge between you on the Day of Resurrection concerning that wherein you differ.
- 22:70. Do you not know that Allah knows all that is in the heavens and on earth? Verily that is [inscribed] in a record; verily that is easy for Allah.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He decreed for every nation its «ways of worship», which may differ in some aspects, but they are all based on justice and wisdom, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

«... To each [community] among you, We have prescribed a law and a clear way. If Allah had so willed, He would have made you a single community, but [He willed it otherwise] in order to test you in what He has given you. So hasten to do good deeds. To Allah you will all return, then He will inform you about the matters concerning which you differed.» (al-Mā'idah 5: 48)

«which they follow» that is, they act in accordance with that, according to their situations. So there should not be any objection to any set of divine laws, especially from the illiterate polytheists who are clearly ignorant. Once the message of the Messenger (ﷺ) is proven with evidence, it becomes obligatory to respond to everything he brought by accepting it and submitting, and not raising objections. Hence Allah says:

﴿so do not let them dispute with you concerning this matter﴾ that is, do not let those who reject you dispute with you and object to some of what you have brought to them, on the basis of their corrupt thinking, such as when they disputed the issue of meat found dead, on the basis of their false analogy, saying: “You eat what you kill, but you do not eat what Allah kills”, and when they said “Selling is like usury”, and similar objections, concerning which there is no need to answer these particular objections when they are denying the message, and there is no point in arguing about these issues in isolation from the main issue (which is the message itself), because issues should be discussed within the right framework and context.

If the one who raises these objections whilst denying the message of the Messenger (ﷺ) claims that he is arguing in order to learn and find the right answer, it should be said to him: What we discuss with you is whether the message is sound or not, otherwise his limiting the discussion to this issue is indicative of his stubbornness and attempts to frustrate you. Hence Allah instructed His Messenger (ﷺ) to call people to his Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching, and to focus on that, regardless of whether anyone objects or not. Nothing should deter you from calling people to Allah, because you are ﴿indeed rightly guided﴾, for the path you are following is moderate and will bring you to your goal, as it includes knowledge of the truth and acting upon it. So you are sure of the matter that you are following, and you are certain of your religion, which requires you to adhere strongly to what your Lord has enjoined upon you. You are not following a matter that is doubtful or something that is fabricated, such that you would go along with people and follow their whims and desires, and be hindered by their objections. This is similar to the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿So put your trust in Allah, for you are on the path of clear truth.﴾

(an-Naml 27: 79)

Moreover, the words «for you are indeed rightly guided» are a response, based on sound rational thought, to the objections of those who object to minor issues of Islamic teaching, because the Messenger (ﷺ) is following guidance, and all that the Messenger (ﷺ) brought, whether minor or major issues, is part of that guidance. The beauty, justice, fairness and wisdom of these issues may be known by means of reasoning and sound thinking, and may be reached by reflecting on the details of what is enjoined and what is prohibited.

Hence Allah instructed him to refrain from disputing with them in this situation, as He said: «And if they do dispute with you, then say: Allah knows best what you are doing» that is, He knows your aims and intentions, and He will requite you for that on the Day of Resurrection, on which Allah will judge between you concerning that wherein you differed. So whoever follows the straight path will be among the people of paradise, and whoever deviates from it will be one of the people of hell.

One aspect of the perfect nature of His judgement is that it is based on knowledge; therefore Allah tells us that His knowledge and His record are all-encompassing.

«Do you not know that Allah knows all that is in the heavens and on earth?» Nothing is hidden from Him of either visible or hidden matters, what has already happened and what is yet to come. Allah has inscribed in a record that knowledge which encompasses all that is in heaven and on earth; that record is al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfooḍh, and that knowledge was inscribed when Allah created the Pen and:

«He said to it: Write. It said: What should I write? He said: Write what will happen until the Day of Resurrection.» (A sound hadith recorded by Abu Dâwood)

«verily that is easy for Allah»; it is easy for Him even if your imagination cannot grasp it, for it is easy for Allah (ﷻ) to encompass all things with His knowledge and to inscribe that in a record in such a way that events will unfold exactly as written in that record.



﴿وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يَنْزَلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا وَمَا لَيْسَ لَهُم بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ
 مِن نَّصِيرٍ ﴿٧١﴾ وَإِذَا نُتِلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمُ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ تَعْرِفُ فِي وُجُوهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
 الْمُنْكَرَ يَكَادُونَ يَسْطُونَ بِالَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ عَلَيْهِمُ آيَاتِنَا قُلْ أَفَأُنثِيكُمْ
 بِشَرِّ مِمَّن ذُكِّرُوا النَّارَ وَعَدَّهَا اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَيَسَّ الْمَاصِرِ ﴿٧٢﴾﴾ (سورة الحج:

(٧٢-٧١)

- 22:71. Yet they worship, besides Allah, that for which no authority has been sent down to them and that of which they have no knowledge. For the wrongdoers there will be no helpers.
- 22:72. When Our clear revelations are recited to them, you will notice repugnance in the faces of those who disbelieve. They can barely restrain themselves from assaulting those who recite Our revelations to them. Say [O Muhammad]: Shall I tell you of something worse than what you feel at present? It is the fire, which Allah has promised to those who disbelieve – a hapless journey's end.

Here Allah describes the true nature of the polytheists who regard others as equal to Him, and tells us that they are in the worst condition, for they have no basis for what they do (of equating others to Him). They have no knowledge to support that; rather it is blind imitation of what they learned from their misguided forefathers.

A person may have no knowledge of what he does although, at the same time, there is proof for what he does, of which he has no knowledge. But in this case, Allah tells us that He has not sent down any authority for that. In other words, there is no proof to support it or permit it; rather what has been sent down is definitive proof that it is invalid and false.

Then Allah warns the wrongdoers among them who stubbornly reject the truth:

﴿For the wrongdoers there will be no helpers﴾ to protect them from the punishment of Allah when it befalls them. Do these people – who have no knowledge of what they are following – have any intention of following the signs and guidance that have come to them? Or are they content with what they are following of falsehood?

Allah refers to that when He says:

﴿When Our clear revelations﴾ that are the great revelations of Allah that make truth distinct from falsehood ﴿are recited to them﴾, they pay no attention to them and make no effort to understand them. Rather ﴿you will notice repugnance in the faces of those who disbelieve﴾. Because of their hatred and resentment, you see their faces frowning and displeased.

﴿They can barely restrain themselves from assaulting those who recite Our revelations to them﴾ that is, they can barely restrain themselves from attacking them in order to kill them or beat them severely, because of the severity of their resentment and animosity towards them and towards the truth. This attitude of the disbelievers is the worst of attitudes, and its evil is the greatest of evils, but there is something that is even worse than that, namely the state which they will ultimately reach. Hence Allah says:

﴿Say [O Muhammad]: Shall I tell you of something worse than what you feel at present? It is the fire, which Allah has promised to those who disbelieve – a hapless journey's end﴾. Its evil is immense and its hardship and pain will constantly increase.



﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ ضُرْبَ مَثَلٍ فَاذْتَمِعُوا لَهُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَنْ يَخْلُقُوا ذُبَابًا وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعُوا لَهُ وَإِنْ يَسْلُبْهُمُ الذُّبَابُ شَيْئًا لَا يَسْتَفِيدُوا مِنْهُ

ضَعُفَ الطَّالِبِ وَالْمَطْلُوبِ ﴿٧٣﴾ مَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ
عَزِيزٌ ﴿٧٤﴾ (سورة الحج: ٧٣-٧٤)

22:73. O people, an example is being presented, so listen to it: those on whom you call besides Allah can never create even a fly, even if they all came together to do that. And if the fly snatches something away from them, they cannot recover it from it. How weak are both the pursuer and the pursued!

22:74. They have not given due recognition to Allah. Verily Allah is indeed Strong, Almighty.

This is an example that Allah gives of the abhorrent nature of idol worship, highlighting the fact that those who worship them have no sense, for all the idols are weak. He says:

«O people» – this is addressed to both believers and disbelievers; the believers increase in knowledge and insight, whilst proof is established against the disbelievers.

«an example is being presented» that is, listen attentively and understand what it implies. You should not receive it heedlessly or listen inattentively; rather you should listen properly and pay attention. This is the example given:

«those on whom you call besides Allah» that is, everything that is called upon besides Allah

«can never create even a fly» which is the most insignificant and ignoble of created beings. They are not able to create even this feeble creature, so it is more unlikely that they could create anything greater than that.

«even if they all came together to do that» and, what is more, «if the fly snatches something away from them, they cannot recover it from it» – this is the utmost helplessness.

«How weak are both the pursuer» namely the one that is worshipped besides Allah

﴿and the pursued﴾ namely the fly. Both of them are weak, and even weaker than both of them is the one who gets attached to this weak entity and gives it the same status as the Lord of the worlds.

Such a one has not given ﴿due recognition to Allah﴾, as he has regarded that which is lacking and incapable in all aspects as equal to the One Who is self-sufficient and most strong in all aspects. He has regarded that which has no power to bring benefit or ward off harm from itself or from anyone else, and has no power to cause death, give life or resurrect, as equal to the One Who brings benefits and wards off harm, Who gives and withholds, the ultimate Sovereign Who controls him in all ways.

﴿Verily Allah is indeed Strong, Almighty﴾ that is, He is perfect in strength and perfect in might, and because of the perfect nature of His strength and might, the forelocks of all creatures are in His Hand and nothing moves or halts except by His will. Whatever Allah wills happens, and whatever He does not will does not happen. By His perfect strength, He keeps a firm hold on the heavens and the earth, lest they fall apart. By His perfect strength, He will resurrect all people, the first and the last of them, with a single trumpet blast. By His perfect strength, He destroyed the tyrants and stubborn nations with something that is very easy for Him, and some of His punishment.



﴿اللَّهُ يَصْطَفِي مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا وَمِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٧٥﴾ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ ﴿٧٦﴾﴾ (سورة الحج:

(٧٦-٧٥)

22:75. Allah chooses messengers from among the angels and from among humankind. Verily Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.

22:76. He knows what was before them and what will be after them, and it is to Allah that all things will return.

Having explained His perfect nature and the weakness of the idols, and that He alone is deserving of worship, Allah (ﷻ) now speaks of the Messengers, and how they differ from other people, because of their distinct virtues.

﴿Allah chooses messengers from among the angels and from among humankind﴾ that is, He selects messengers from among the angels and messengers from among humankind, to be the best of their type, as they combine all noble characteristics and are the most deserving of being chosen. The Messengers can only be from among the very best of humankind, for the One Who chose and selected them is not unaware of the reality of things, and it is not the case that He knows some things and not others. Rather the One Who chooses them is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing, Whose knowledge, hearing and vision encompass all things. His choice of them is based on His knowledge that they are qualified for that and that they are fit to receive revelation, as He says elsewhere:

﴿...Allah knows best where to place His message...﴾ (al-An'âm 6: 124)

﴿and it is to Allah that all things will return﴾ that is, He sends the Messengers, who call people to Allah, then some of the people respond and some reject the call. This is the role of the Messengers. As for the requital for those deeds, it is up to Allah, and He will judge on the basis of His grace and justice.



﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَاعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ وَافْعَلُوا الْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا

جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ مِّمَّةً أَيْبِكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ هُوَ سَمَّكُمْ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ
 وَفِي هَذَا لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ
 وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَى وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ ﴿٧٨﴾ (سورة

الحج: ٧٧-٧٨)

- 22:77. O you who believe, bow and prostrate, and worship your Lord, and do good, so that you may prosper.
- 22:78. Strive in the cause of Allah as you ought to strive. He has chosen you and has not imposed any hardship on you in religion, the religion of your father Ibrâheem. It is He [Allah] Who named you Muslims, both before and in this [Qur'an], so that the Messenger might be a witness over you and you might be witnesses over humankind. So establish prayer, give zakâh, and hold fast to Allah, for He is your Protector, an excellent Protector and an excellent Helper!

Here Allah (ﷻ) enjoins His believing slaves to pray, and mentions in particular bowing and prostration, because of the virtue of these deeds and because they are an essential part of the prayer and of worshipping Him which brings comfort and consolation to one who is grieved. His Lordship and generosity towards His slaves require them to devote their worship to Him alone and make it incumbent upon them to do good deeds in general.

Allah (ﷻ) has made prosperity and success dependent upon these things, as He says: ﴿so that you may prosper﴾ that is, so that you may attain what you seek and be saved from what you fear. There is no way to prosper and succeed except by being sincere in worship of the Creator alone and striving to be of benefit to His slaves. Whoever is enabled to do that will attain a high level of happiness, success and prosperity.

﴿Strive in the cause of Allah as you ought to strive﴾ – striving means doing one’s utmost to attain the desired goal. Striving in the cause of Allah as one ought to strive means complying in full with the commands of Allah, and calling people to His path by all possible means, such as offering sincere advice, teaching, fighting, disciplining, rebuking, exhorting, and so on.

﴿He has chosen you﴾ that is, He has selected you, O Muslims, from among humankind, and has chosen and approved of Islam for you, and He has chosen for you the best of Books and the best of Messengers. So respond to this immense blessing by striving as you should.

Because some people may imagine that the phrase ﴿Strive in the cause of Allah as you ought to strive﴾ may imply imposition of a duty that is beyond their ability to fulfil, or is too difficult to carry out, Allah dispels this notion by saying:

﴿and has not imposed any hardship on you in religion﴾ that is, He has not imposed any difficulty; rather He has made it very easy and straightforward. Firstly, He never enjoins or makes binding anything but that which is easy to carry out and is not burdensome or too hard. If there is some reason to reduce the burden, He reduces some of what He has enjoined, waiving it in full or in part.

An important principle is based on this verse, which is that if a command becomes too difficult, it becomes a cause for the scholars to review the matter and issue a fatwa to make it easier, and necessity makes prohibited things permissible. Based on that, there are many minor rulings that are well known in the books of the scholars.

﴿the religion of your father Ibrâheem﴾ that is, the religion and commands mentioned are the religion of your father Ibrâheem, in which he persisted, so adhere to it and cling to it.

﴿It is He [Allah] Who named you Muslims, both before﴾ that is, in the previous Books, which are well known.

«and in this [Qur'an]» so this name of yours is well known, past and present.

«so that the Messenger might be a witness over you», to your deeds, both good and bad

«and you might be witnesses over humankind», because you are the best community ever brought forth for (the benefit of) humankind (3: 110), a moderate, fair and exemplary community; you testify that the Messengers indeed conveyed the message to their nations, and you testify that the nations did indeed receive the message conveyed by their Messengers, as Allah has told you in His Book.

«So establish prayer», with all its essential parts, fulfilling its conditions and performing it properly.

«give zakâh» as you are obliged to, giving it to those who are entitled to it, out of gratitude to Allah for what He has bestowed upon you.

«and hold fast to Allah» that is, seek His help and put your trust in Him, and do not trust in your own power and strength

«for He is your Protector» Who is taking care of your affairs and managing them well, disposing of your affairs in your best interests.

«an excellent Protector» that is, the best protector for the one who takes Him as an ally, so He helps him to attain what he is seeking

«and an excellent Helper» to the one who seeks His help, so He wards off from him what he fears.

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat al-Hajj.

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.

