

TAFSEER AS-SA'DI

JUZ' 19-21

تفسير السجدي

تيسير التكريم الرحمن في تفسير كلام المنان

'Abdur-Rahmân Nâsir as-Sa'di

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Abdur-Rahmân Nâsir as-Sa'di

Translated by
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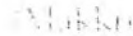
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Pronunciation and Transliteration Chart



Arabic script	Pronunciation	Transliterated form
أ	short 'a', as in <i>cat</i>	a
آ — آى	longer 'a', as in <i>cab</i> (not as in <i>cake</i>)	â
ب	/b/ as in <i>bell</i> , <i>rubber</i> and <i>tab</i>	b
ت	/t/ as in <i>tap</i> , <i>mustard</i> and <i>sit</i>	t
ة	takes the sound of the preceding diacritical mark sometimes ending in h (when in pausal form): ah, ih or ooh; or atu(n), ati(n) or ata(n) when uninterrupted	h or t (when followed by another Arabic word)
ث	/th/ as in <i>thing</i> , <i>maths</i> and <i>wealth</i>	th
ج	/j/ as in <i>jam</i> , <i>ajar</i> and <i>age</i>	j
ح	a 'harsher' sound than the English initial /h/, and may occur medially and in word-final position as well	h
خ	as in <i>Bach</i> (in German); may occur initially and medially as well	kh
د	/d/ as in <i>do</i> , <i>muddy</i> and <i>red</i>	d
ذ	as in <i>this</i> , <i>father</i> and <i>smooth</i>	dh

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Trans-literated form
ر	/r/ as in <i>raw</i> , <i>arid</i> and <i>war</i> ; may also be a rolled 'r', as pronounced in Spanish	r
ز	/z/ as in <i>zoo</i> , <i>easy</i> and <i>gaze</i>	z
س	/s/ as in <i>so</i> , <i>messy</i> and <i>grass</i>	s
ش	as in <i>ship</i> , <i>ashes</i> and <i>rush</i>	sh
ص	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /sw/ or /s/ farther back in the mouth	ʃ
ض	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /d/ farther back in the mouth	ɖ
ط	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /t/ farther back in the mouth	ʈ
ظ	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing 'the' farther back in the mouth	<u>dh</u>
ع	no close equivalent in English: a guttural sound in the back of the throat	ʕ
غ	no close equivalent in English, but may be closely approximated by pronouncing it like the French /r/ in 'rouge'	gh
ف	/f/ as in <i>fill</i> , <i>effort</i> and <i>muff</i>	f

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Transliterated form
ق	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /k/ farther back in the mouth	q
ك	/k/ as in <i>king</i> , <i>buckle</i> and <i>tack</i>	k
ل	/l/ as in <i>lap</i> , <i>halo</i> ; in the word <i>Allah</i> , it becomes velarized as in <i>ball</i>	l
م	/m/ as in <i>men</i> , <i>simple</i> and <i>ram</i>	m
ن	/n/ as in <i>net</i> , <i>ant</i> and <i>can</i>	n
هـ - ه - هـ	/h/ as in <i>hat</i> ; unlike /h/ in English, in Arabic /h/ is pronounced in medial and word-final positions as well	h
و	as in <i>wet</i> and <i>away</i>	w
و	long 'u', as in <i>boot</i> and <i>too</i>	oo
ي	as in <i>yard</i> and <i>mayo</i>	y
ي	long 'e', as in <i>eat</i> , <i>beef</i> and <i>see</i>	ee
ء	glottal stop: may be closely approximated by pronouncing it like 't' in the Cockney English pronunciation of <i>butter</i> : <i>bu'er</i> , or the stop sound in <i>uh-oh!</i>	(omitted in initial position)

Diphthongs

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Trans-literated form
أَوْ، وَو	long 'o', as in <i>owe</i> , <i>boat</i> and <i>go</i>	au, aw
أَيَّ، يَيَّ	long 'a', as in <i>aid</i> , <i>rain</i> and <i>say</i>	ay, ai, ei

Diacritical marks (tashkeel)

Name of mark	Pronunciation	Trans-literated form
فِثَاحَ fathah	very short 'a' or schwa (unstressed vowel)	a
كَسْرَاحَ kasrah	shorter version of ee or schwa (unstressed vowel)	i
دَمَمَاحَ dammah	shorter version of oo	u
شَدَدَاحَ shaddah	a doubled consonant is stressed in the word, and the length of the sound is also doubled	double letter
سُكُونَ sukoon	no vowel sound between consonants or at the end of a word	absence of vowel



Arabic honorific symbols



(ﷲ)	<i>Subhānahu wa Ta'ālā</i>	The Exalted
(ﷺ)	<i>šalla Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallam</i>	Blessings and peace be upon him
(ﷺ)	<i>'alayhi as-salām</i>	May peace be upon him
(ﷺ)	<i>raḍiya Allāhu 'anhu</i>	May Allah be pleased with him
(ﷺ)	<i>raḍiya Allāhu 'anhâ</i>	May Allah be pleased with her
(ﷺ)	<i>raḍiya Allāhu 'anhumâ</i>	May Allah be pleased with both of them
(ﷺ)	<i>raḍiya Allāhu 'anhum</i>	May Allah be pleased with all of them
(ﷺ)	<i>raḍiya Allāhu 'anhunna</i>	May Allah be pleased with all of them (females only)



Hadith grade terms



Sound: *ṣaḥeeḥ*

Reliable: *ḥasan*

Weak: *da'eef*

Odd: *ghareeb*

Authentic: includes sound, reliable, or any grade in between

Acceptable: *sakat 'anhu*; the grader of the hadith did not comment on it, meaning that he found nothing unacceptable in it



25.

Soorat al-Furqân

(continued)



﴿ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ أَوْ نَرَىٰ رَبَّنَا لَقَدِ اسْتَكْبَرُوا فِيٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَعَتَوْا عُتُوًّا كَبِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ لَا بُشْرَىٰ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُجْرِمِينَ وَيَقُولُونَ حَجْرًا مَّحْجُورًا ﴿٢٢﴾ وَقَدِمْنَا إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَّةً مَّنثُورًا ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٢١-٢٣)

- 25:21. Those who do not expect to meet Us say: Why have angels not been sent down to us, or why do we not see our Lord? Indeed they think too highly of themselves and have greatly exceeded all bounds in their arrogance.¹
- 25:22. On the day when they see the angels, on that day there will be no glad tidings for the evildoers. The [angels] will say: That [glad tidings] is absolutely forbidden for you.
- 25:23. We will look at the [good] deeds they did and We will turn them into scattered floating specks of dust.

That is, those who reject the Messenger (*ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* – blessings and peace be upon him) and deny the promise and warning of Allah (*Subhānahu wa Ta‘ālā* – Glorified and Exalted is

¹ The meanings of the verses of the Qur’an in this book (with some minor changes to the punctuation) have been translated by the translator. (Editor)

He), those who have no fear in their hearts of the warning and have no hope of meeting the Creator, say:

«Why have angels not been sent down to us, or why do we not see our Lord?» That is, why have no angels come down to testify to your being the Messenger, and to support you in your mission, or come down as messengers on their own, or why do we not see our Lord so that He may speak to us and tell us: This is My Messenger, so follow him? This is an argument against the Messenger (ﷺ) which is flawed; rather it reflects pride, arrogance and stubbornness.

«Indeed they think too highly of themselves» when they made these audacious suggestions. Who are you, O poor and wretched people, to demand to see Allah and claim that the proof of the message depends on that? What arrogance could be greater than this?

«and have greatly exceeded all bounds in their arrogance» that is, they have grown very hard-hearted and become too stubborn to follow the truth; their hearts are harder than rocks or iron, and they will not soften and open to the truth or pay any heed to sincere advisers. Therefore exhortation and reminders were of no avail to them, and they did not follow the truth when the warning came to them. Rather they responded to the most truthful and sincere of people and to the clear signs and revelations of Allah by turning away, rejecting them and opposing them. What arrogance could be greater than this? Therefore their deeds were rendered invalid and they incurred the greatest loss and the utmost deprivation.

«On the day when they see the angels» whose descent they demanded

«on that day there will be no glad tidings for the evildoers». That is because their seeing them, at the time when they are persisting in sin and stubbornness, can be nothing but the harbinger of punishment. That will first occur at the time of death, when the angels come down to them. Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿...If you [O Muhammad] could but see the evildoers when they are in the throes of death and the angels are stretching out their hands [saying]: Give up your souls! Today you will be recompensed with a humiliating punishment, because you used to tell lies against Allah and you arrogantly rejected His revelations.﴾ (al-An'ām 6: 93)

Then in the grave, (the two angels) Munkar and Nakeer will come to them and ask them about their Lord, their Prophet and their religion, and they will not be able to give any answer that will save them. So the angels will bring the punishment to them and take away mercy from them. Then on the Day of Resurrection, the angels will drive them towards the fire and hand them over to the keepers of hell, who will take charge of their punishment and commence it immediately. This is what they suggested and demanded; if they persist in that transgression, they will inevitably see the punishment and experience it, and at that time they will seek protection from the angels and will try to flee from them, but they will have no place to flee.

﴿We will look at the [good] deeds they did﴾ that is, the deeds which they hoped were good and in which they strove hard ﴿and We will turn them into scattered floating specks of dust﴾ that is, We will render them invalid and worthless, and they will have lost them and be deprived of their reward, and they will be punished for that. That is because those deeds were not based on faith, and they were done by those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers. The good deed that is accepted by Allah is that which is done by a sincere believer who believes in the Messengers and follows them.



﴿أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَيْرٌ مُّسْتَقَرًّا وَأَحْسَنُ مَقِيلًا﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٢٤)

25:24. On that day the inhabitants of paradise will have a better abode and a better place of rest.

That is, on that terrifying day that is filled with turmoil, ﴿the inhabitants of paradise﴾ who believed in Allah, did righteous deeds and feared their Lord ﴿will have a better abode﴾ than the inhabitants of hell ﴿and a better place of rest﴾ namely their abodes in paradise. Theirs will be a comfortable abode and a place of perfect rest, because it is a place of perfect bliss that is unspoiled by any distress. This is in contrast to the inhabitants of hell, for hell is the worst abode and the worst place of rest.



﴿ وَيَوْمَ تَشَقَّقُ السَّمَاءُ بِالْغَنَمِ ۖ وَمِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ نَزِيرًا ﴿٢٥﴾ الْمَلِكُ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ لِلرَّحْمَنِ ۗ وَكَانَ يَوْمًا عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ عَسِيرًا ﴿٢٦﴾ وَيَوْمَ يَعَضُّ الظَّالِمُ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي اتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ الرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا ﴿٢٧﴾ يَا لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أَتَّخِذْ فَلَانًا خَلِيلًا ﴿٢٨﴾ لَقَدْ أَضَلَّنِي عَنِ الذِّكْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَاءَنِي ۗ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِلْإِنْسَانِ خَدُولًا ﴿٢٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة الفرقان:

(٢٩-٢٥)

- 25:25. On the day when the heaven will be rent asunder with clouds and the angels will be sent down in succession,
- 25:26. On that day true dominion will belong to the Most Gracious, and it will be a difficult day for the disbelievers.
- 25:27. On that day, the wrongdoer will bite on his hands and say: Would that I had taken a path with the Messenger.
- 25:28. Alas for me! Would that I had not taken So-and-so as a friend!
- 25:29. He led me astray from the Reminder [the Qur'an] after it had come to me. And Shayṭān is ever treacherous to man.

Here Allah speaks of the great significance of the Day of Resurrection and all that it will entail of hardship, distress and troubles.

﴿On the day when the heaven will be rent asunder with clouds﴾ – those are the clouds in which Allah will descend from above the heavens; the heavens will be rent asunder and will open up, and the angels of each heaven will descend and stand in ranks, either one rank surrounding all of creation, or the angels of each heaven will form one rank, then the angels of the next heaven will form another rank next to it, and so on.

What is meant is that the angels, even though they are so many and so strong – will descend and surround all of creation in submission to the command of their Lord. Not one of them will speak except by Allah’s leave. So what do you think of weak human beings, especially the one who challenged his Sovereign by committing major sins and doing that which incurred His wrath, then he comes to Him with sins from which he never repented, for which the true Sovereign will pass judgement on him, and He will never be unjust and will not wrong him in the slightest. Hence Allah says:

﴿and it will be a difficult day for the disbelievers﴾ because it will be so hard and because of the troubles the disbeliever will go through. This is in contrast to the believer, for it will be easy for him and the burden will be light.

﴿On the day when We gather the pious before the Most Gracious as an honoured delegation, and We drive the evildoers thirsty towards hell.﴾ (Maryam 19: 85-86)

﴿On that day﴾ that is, on the Day of Resurrection, ﴿true dominion will belong to the Most Gracious﴾ and there will not remain for any one even the least resemblance of dominion, as was the case in this world; now all will become equal, kings and subjects, free men and slaves, nobles and others. Something that offers reassurance and comfort to the heart is the fact that Allah connected His dominion to His name ﴿the Most Gracious﴾, Whose grace and mercy encompass all things, by means of which life in this world and the hereafter is maintained, everything that is lacking will be made perfect, and every

shortcoming will be removed. The divine names that refer to Allah's mercy outnumber the names that are indicative of His wrath, and His mercy takes precedence and prevails over His wrath, so mercy takes priority.

Allah created the human being weak, but He honoured him in order to perfect His blessing and shower him with His mercy.

(On the Day of Resurrection) they will be brought to stand before Him in humility and they will be motionless with fear before Him, waiting for judgement to be passed among them and waiting to see what will happen to them. But He is more merciful towards them than their parents or even their own selves, so how do you think he will deal with them? No one will be doomed when He is so merciful but one who is destined to be doomed, and no one will be cast out from His mercy except one who is overtaken by his wretchedness and the punishment becomes inevitable for him.

﴿On that day, the wrongdoer﴾ who ascribed partners to Allah and disbelieved and rejected the Messengers
 ﴿will bite on his hands﴾ in sorrow, regret and anguish
 ﴿and say: Would that I had taken a path with the Messenger﴾ that is, by believing in him and following him.

﴿Alas for me! Would that I had not taken So-and-so﴾ – this refers to devils, be they human or *jinn*
 ﴿as a friend﴾ that is, as a dear and close friend; I took as enemies the most sincere and kindest of people to me and I took as friends the most hostile, from whose friendship I gained nothing but misery, loss, disgrace and doom.

﴿He led me astray from the Reminder [the Qur'an] after it had come to me﴾ when he made fair-seeming to me, by means of tricks and insinuating thoughts, what he was following of misguidance.

﴿And Shayṭān is ever treacherous to man﴾ – he makes falsehood fair-seeming to him and makes the truth appear repulsive; he makes false promises, then he abandons him and disavows him, as he will

say to all of his followers, when judgement is passed and Allah has completed humankind's reckoning:

﴿And Shayṭān will say, when the matter is decided: Verily, Allah gave you a true promise; I also gave you promises, but I betrayed you. I had no power over you, except that I called you and you responded to me. So do not blame me; blame yourselves. I cannot help you, nor can you help me. I disavow your erstwhile association of me with Allah...﴾ (Ibrāheem 14: 22)

So each person should think, whilst it is still possible to change his course and take the opportunity to change, before it is too late, and he should take as friends those whose friendship may lead to his bliss; if regarding someone as an enemy will benefit him, whereas he would be harmed by taking him as a friend, then he should regard such people as his enemies. And Allah is the source of strength.



﴿وَقَالَ الرَّسُولُ يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا ﴿٣٠﴾ وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا مِنَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ وَكَفَى بِرَبِّكَ هَادِيًا وَنَصِيرًا ﴿٣٢﴾﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٣٠-٣١)

(٣١-٣٠)

25:30. The Messenger said: O my Lord, my people have taken this Qur'an as a thing to be shunned.

25:31. And similarly We appointed for every Prophet enemies among the evildoers. But your Lord is sufficient as a guide and helper.

﴿The Messenger said﴾, calling upon his Lord and complaining to Him, expressing his sorrow at his people's turning away from the message he brought:

﴿O my Lord, my people﴾ to whom You sent me to guide them and convey Your message to them

«have taken this Qur'an as a thing to be shunned» that is, they have turned away from it, shunned it and ignored it, even though what they should do is submit to its authority, accept its rulings and comply with it.

Allah said, consoling His Messenger (ﷺ) and telling him that there was a precedent for these people and others who had done the same as they were doing:

«And similarly We appointed for every Prophet enemies among the evildoers» that is, among those who were not fit for good; they opposed the Messengers and rejected them, arguing with them on the basis of falsehood.

One of the benefits that result from that is that the truth will prevail over falsehood and will become very clear, because the opposition of falsehood to the truth increases it in clarity, so that the evidence will be further highlighted. What Allah does to the people of truth by honouring them, and what He does to the people of falsehood by punishing them, will also be highlighted. So do not grieve for them, and do not destroy yourself with grief for them.

«But your Lord is sufficient as a guide», so He will help you to achieve the goal and attain that which is in your best interests, both religious and worldly

«and helper» so He will help you against your enemies and ward off all harm from you in both your religious and worldly affairs, so be content with Him and put your trust in Him.



﴿ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَاحِدَةً كَذَلِكَ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ وَرَتَّلْنَاهُ تَرْتِيلًا ﴿٣٢﴾ وَلَا يَأْتُونَكَ بِمَثَلٍ إِلَّا جِئْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَأَحْسَنَ تَفْسِيرًا ﴿٣٣﴾ ﴾

(سورة الفرقان: ٣٢-٣٣)

- 25:32. Those who disbelieve say: Why was the Qur'an not sent down to him all at once? [It has been revealed] thus so that We may strengthen your heart thereby, and We have imparted it to you by gradual revelation.
- 25:33. Whenever they come to you [O Muhammad] with an argument, We reveal to you the truth and the best explanation.

These were among the suggestions and demands of the disbelievers that they came up with by themselves, so they said:

«Why was the Qur'an not sent down to him all at once?» That is, as the previous scriptures were sent down. But what was the problem with it being sent down in this manner? In fact, its being sent down in this manner is more perfect and is better. Hence Allah says:

«[It has been revealed] thus» that is, piecemeal

«so that We may strengthen your heart thereby» because every time something of the Qur'an comes down to him, it increases him in reassurance and steadfastness, especially when there are reasons to be anxious. If Qur'an comes down when there is cause for concern, that will be very effective and will make him more steadfast, more so than if it were to come down before that time and he was to be reminded of it when the reason for it occurred.

«and We have imparted it to you by gradual revelation» that is, slowly and gradually. All of this is indicative of Allah's care for His Book the Qur'an and His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ), as He caused the revelation of His Book to address the circumstances of the Messenger (ﷺ) and the religious matters he needed to know. Hence He says:

«Whenever they come to you [O Muhammad] with an argument», opposing the truth and trying to refute your message,

«We reveal to you the truth and the best explanation» that is, We send down to you Qur'an covering all that is needed concerning the truth in all aspects, bringing perfect clarity in its words, for all its meanings are truth; it is not contaminated with falsehood and there is no doubt

about it whatsoever. Its words explain things in the clearest manner, giving the best explanation and clarifying the meanings completely.

This verse indicates that the one who speaks of knowledge, whether he is a scholar of Hadith, a teacher or a preacher, should follow the example of his Lord in the way He dealt with His Messengers' affairs. In this manner, the scholar should deal with people's affairs. Every time an incident occurs or there is a special occasion, he should quote what is appropriate of Qur'anic verses and prophetic hadiths, and offer exhortation based on that.

This is also a refutation of those philosopher types who try to make things difficult, such as the Jahamis² and others, who think that many of the Qur'anic texts are to be understood in a manner other than what their apparent meanings would suggest, and they say that they have meanings other than what may be understood from them. Therefore – according to their view – the Qur'an does not offer a better explanation than anything else; rather – according to their view – the best explanation is their own explanation in which they distorted the meanings.



﴿الَّذِينَ يُحْمَرُونَ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ أُولَٰئِكَ سُوءُ مَكَانًا وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا﴾

﴿٣٤﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٣٤)

25:34. Those who will be driven on their faces to hell – they are in a worse position and are further astray from the right path.

Here Allah tells us about the situation of the polytheists who rejected His Messenger (ﷺ), and the wretched fate they will meet, for they ﴿will be driven on their faces﴾, which will be a terrible and

² Jahamis: a group who denied the names and attributes of Allah (ﷻ). They are named after their founder al-Jahm ibn Ṣafwān

dreadful sight, when the angels of punishment drag them and pull them ﴿to hell﴾ which contains all torments and punishments.

﴿they﴾ that is, those who are in this state ﴿are in a worse position﴾ than those who believe in Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) ﴿and are further astray from the right path﴾. This comparison does not mean that the other party are also astray, only less so, for the believers are in a good state and will have a good end; in this world they are guided to the straight path and in the hereafter they will reach the gardens of bliss.



﴿ وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلْنَا مَعَهُ أَخَاهُ هَارُونَ وَزِيْرًا ﴿٣٥﴾ فَقُلْنَا أَذْهَبَا إِلَى الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَدَمْزَلْنَهُمْ نَدْمِيرًا ﴿٣٦﴾ وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ لَمَّا كَذَبُوا الرُّسُلَ أَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ لِلنَّاسِ آيَةً ۗ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿٣٧﴾ وَعَادًا وَثَمُودًا وَأَصْحَابَ الرَّسِّ وَقُرُونًا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٣٨﴾ وَكُلًّا ضَرَبْنَاهُ لِمِثْلٍ ۗ وَكُلًّا تَبَرْنَا تَنْبِيرًا ﴿٣٩﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَى الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي أَمْطَرْنَا مَطَرًا السَّوْءَ ۗ أَفَلَمْ يَكُونُوا يَرْتَضُونَهَا بَلْ كَانُوا لَا يَرْجُونَ نُشُورًا ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٣٥-٤٠)

- 25:35. We gave Moosâ the Book and appointed his brother Hâroon to be with him as a helper.
- 25:36. We said: Go, both of you, to the people who have rejected Our signs. Then We destroyed them utterly.
- 25:37. And [We destroyed] the people of Nooh, when they rejected the Messengers; We drowned them and made them a sign for all people. And We have prepared for the wrongdoers a painful punishment.
- 25:38. And [We destroyed] ‘Âd and Thamood, and the people of the well,³ and many nations between them.

³ They were idol-worshippers to whom Allah sent His Prophet Shu‘ayb, =

- 25:39. To each of them We gave examples [of how We had dealt with previous nations who disbelieved, as a warning] and each of them We obliterated completely.
- 25:40. They [the disbelievers of Makkah] must surely have passed by the city [Sodom] on which an evil rain poured down. Did they not then see it? But they do not expect to be resurrected.

Here Allah refers to these stories, which He has told in detail elsewhere, so as to warn those addressed against persisting in rejection of their Messengers, lest there befall them what befell these nations who are close to them, and whose stories they know, as the stories were widely known and circulated.

They saw the ruins of some of those nations with their own eyes, such as those of the people of Şâliḥ in al-Ḥijr, and the city (Sodom) on which an evil rain poured down (25: 40), a shower of stones of baked clay (15: 74), which they would pass by night and by day during their journeys. Those nations were not worse than they, and the Messengers of those nations were not better than the Messenger (ﷺ) of these people (namely Quraysh).

﴿Are your disbelievers [O Quraysh] better than those, or have you been promised immunity in the [earlier] scriptures?﴾ (al-Qamar 54: 43)

But what prevented these people from believing, despite all that they had seen of signs, was the fact that they did not expect the resurrection to happen, they did not hope to meet their Lord, and they did not fear His punishment. Therefore they persisted in their stubbornness. Otherwise was it not the case that there had come to them signs that would leave no room whatsoever for doubt?

= but they rejected his call. Whilst they were around the well, it collapsed and they and their dwellings were swallowed up by the earth. (an-Nasafî; al-Bayḏâwî)



﴿ وَإِذَا رَأَوْكَ إِذَا يَنْخِذُونَكَ إِلَّا هُزُؤًا أَهْذًا الَّذِي بِعَثَ اللَّهُ رَسُولًا ﴿٤١﴾ إِنْ
 كَادَ لِيُضِلَّنَا عَنْ ءِالِهَتِنَا لَوْلَا أَنَّ صَبَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا وَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ حَيْثُ
 يَرَوْنَ الْعَذَابَ مَنْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾ أَرَأَيْتَ مَنْ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ أَفَأَنْتَ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ
 وَكِيلًا ﴿٤٣﴾ أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَنْعَامِ
 بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٤١-٤٤)

- 25:41. When they see you, they treat you only with ridicule, [saying]:
 Is this the one whom Allah has sent as a Messenger?
- 25:42. He might almost have turned us away from our gods had we
 not been steadfast in our devotion to them. But they will come
 to know, when they see the punishment, who is further astray
 from the right path.
- 25:43. Have you seen the one who takes his own whims and desires
 as his god? Can you be his keeper?
- 25:44. Or do you think that most of them listen or understand? They
 are just like cattle; nay, they are further astray from the right
 path.

That is, when these people who disbelieve in you – O Muhammad
 (ﷺ) – and stubbornly reject the signs of Allah, and behave arrogantly
 in the land see you, they ridicule you and look down on you, and they
 say, by way of scorn and disrespect:

﴿Is this the one whom Allah has sent as a Messenger?﴾ That is, it
 is not appropriate and is not right that Allah should send this man
 as a Messenger. This stems from their extreme wrongdoing and
 stubbornness, and their turning facts on their heads. These words of
 theirs may be understood as meaning that the Messenger (ﷺ) – Allah
 forbid – was insignificant and lowly, and that if the message had come
 to someone other than him, that would have been more appropriate.

﴿And they said: Why was this Qur'an not sent down to some prominent man from [either of] the two cities [Makkah or Taif]?﴾
(az-Zukhruf 43: 31)

Such words could only come from the most ignorant and misguided of people, or from the most stubborn, who is acting in an ignorant manner with the aim of propagating the falsehood he follows, by seeking to undermine the truth and the one who brought it. Otherwise, anyone who reflects on the life of Muhammad ibn 'Abdullâh (ﷺ) will find him to be the best of people, the most prominent and the foremost in reason, knowledge, rational thinking, dignity, noble characteristics, good conduct, chastity, courage, generosity, and all good qualities. The one who looks down on him and criticises him has combined foolishness, ignorance, misguidance, contradiction, unfairness and transgression such as no one else has combined. It is sufficient ignorance and misguidance that he should criticise the foremost and most noble Messenger (ﷺ).

The reason for their casting aspersions on him and their mockery of him was their rigid adherence to their falsehood and their desire to deceive the weak-minded. Hence they said:

﴿He﴾ that is, this man (the Prophet [ﷺ]) ﴿might almost have turned us away from our gods﴾ by making the gods into One God ﴿had we not been steadfast in our devotion to them﴾, and he might almost have led us astray. They claimed that *tawhîd*⁴ (affirmation of the oneness of Allah) was misguidance, whereas real misguidance was what they were following of ascribing partners to Him. Therefore they urged one another to be steadfast in adhering to it.

﴿The leaders among them left, saying: Carry on as you are, and hold fast to your gods...﴾ (*Şad 38: 6*)

⁴ Wherever possible, Arabic terms have been translated into English. In cases where we have chosen to retain the Arabic, the transliterated word or phrase is shown in italics the first time it appears in the text. The term is also defined in the glossary found at the end of this book. (Editor)

And here they said: ﴿had we not been steadfast in our devotion to them﴾. Patience and steadfastness are praiseworthy in all circumstances, except in this case, for this was patience and steadfastness in adhering to something that incurs divine wrath and increases the fuel of hell. As for the believers, they are as Allah describes them:

﴿...and exhort one another to hold fast to the truth and exhort one another to hold fast to patience.﴾ (*al-'Asr* 103: 3)

As they deemed themselves to be guided and regarded the Messenger as misguided, and as it became apparent that there was no hope for them, Allah warned them of the punishment and stated that at that time, ﴿when they see the punishment﴾, they will come to know in a very real sense, ﴿who is further astray from the right path﴾. ﴿On that day, the wrongdoer will bite on his hands and say: Would that I had taken a path with the Messenger﴾ (25: 27).

Is there any misguidance worse than that of one who takes his own whims and desires as his god, so whatever he likes he does? Hence Allah says:

﴿Have you seen the one who takes his own whims and desires as his god?﴾ Do you not feel amazed by his situation and see how misguided he is, whilst he believes that he is a man of high status?

﴿Can you be his keeper?﴾ That is, you are not in control of him and you have no power over him; rather you are no more than a warner and you have done what is required of you, and his reckoning will be with Allah.

Then Allah (ﷻ) comments on their extreme misguidance by noting that He has taken away their power of reasoning and hearing, and He likens them, in their misguidance, to grazing cattle that hear nothing except the sound of shouts and cries. Deaf, dumb, and blind, they do not understand (*cf.* 2: 171). Indeed, they are more astray than cattle, because the herdsman guides the cattle, so they are guided and they recognise the path that may lead to their doom, so they avoid it, and their fate is better than the fate of these people. Thus it becomes clear

that the one who accuses the Messenger (ﷺ) of being misguided is more deserving of that description himself, and that any dumb animal is more guided than him.



﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى رَبِّكَ كَيْفَ مَدَّ الظِّلَّ وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَجَعَلَهُ سَاكِنًا ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا الشَّمْسَ عَلَيْهِ دَلِيلًا ﴿٤٥﴾ ثُمَّ قَبَضْنَاهُ إِلَيْنَا قَبْضًا يَسِيرًا ﴿٤٦﴾﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٤٥-٤٦)

- 25:45. Have you not seen how your Lord extends the shadow? If He willed, He could make it still. Then We have made the sun an indication of it.
- 25:46. Then We gradually draw it [the shadow] in towards Us [as the sun climbs up].

That is, have you not seen with your own eyes and intellect the perfect might of your Lord and the vastness of His mercy? For He extends the shadow over people. This refers to the time before sunrise. ﴿Then We have made the sun an indication of it﴾ that is, of the shadow; were it not for the sun, the shadow would not be known, for a thing is known by its opposite.

﴿Then We gradually draw it [the shadow] in towards Us [as the sun climbs up]﴾ the higher the sun rises, the more the shadow shrinks, little by little, until it disappears altogether. So the shadow and the sun come one after another for people who see them with their own eyes. What results from that of the alternation of night and day, the alternation of the seasons and many other benefits, is one of the greatest signs of the perfect might of Allah and of His greatness, perfect mercy and care for His slaves, and it highlights the fact that He alone is deserving of worship, praise, love and veneration, for He is the Owner of majesty and honour.



﴿ وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الَّيْلَ لِيَأْسًا وَالنَّوْمَ سُبَاتًا وَجَعَلَ النَّهَارَ نُشُورًا ﴾ (٤٧)

(سورة الفرقان: ٤٧)

25:47. It is He Who has made the night a covering for you, and sleep for rest; and He has made the day for rising [and going out and about, seeking one's livelihood].

That is, by His mercy and kindness towards you, He has made the night like a garment for you that covers you so that you may settle down, sleep calmly and become still. Were it not for the night, people would not find rest and they would continue moving about, which would be very harmful for them. But if the darkness were to persist, that would also be detrimental to their livelihood and interests, but Allah has made the day for getting up and going about to engage in trade, travel and work, thus achieving that which benefits them and is in their best interests.



﴿ وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ الرِّيحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ ۗ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً طَهُورًا ﴾

﴿ لِنُحْيِيَ بِهِ بَلْدَةً مَيْتًا وَنُسْقِيَهُ مِمَّا خَلَقْنَا أَنْعَمًا وَأَنْاسِيَ كَثِيرًا ﴾ (٤٨) ﴿ وَقَدْ

صَرَفْنَاهُ بَيْنَهُمْ لِيَذْكُرُوا فَآيَةَ أَكْثَرِ النَّاسِ إِلَّا كَفُورًا ﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٤٨-٥٠)

25:48. It is He Who sends the winds as harbingers of His mercy, and We send down pure water from the sky,

25:49. So that We may give life thereby to a dead land, and quench the thirst of countless beasts and men We have created.

25:50. And We have distributed [the rain] among them [in various ways], so that they may pay heed, but most people persist in their ingratitude.

That is, He alone has mercy on His slaves and bestows abundant provision upon them by sending the winds as harbingers of His mercy, namely the rain. With the winds He stirs up the clouds and gathers them together, so that they are formed into pieces, then He fecundates them and makes them ready to give rain by the leave of the One Who is in control of them, so as to give people glad tidings of rain before it comes, so that they can prepare for it before it catches them unawares by coming all at once.

﴿and We send down pure water from the sky﴾ so that they may purify themselves of minor and major impurity, and cleanse themselves of physical dirt. This is one of the blessings of rain, that He sends it down to revive the dead land, so that it brings forth various kinds of plants and trees, from which people and livestock eat.

﴿and quench the thirst of countless beasts and men We have created﴾ that is, We give it to you to drink, you and your livestock. Is not He Who sent the winds as harbingers and caused the winds to perform different tasks, and sent down from the sky pure and blessed water, in which is provision for people and their livestock, the One Who alone is deserving of worship, without associating anything else with Him?

Even though Allah has sent these visible signs and explained them to His slaves, so that they may know Him, give thanks to Him and remember Him, many people still persist in disbelief, because of their corrupt attitude and nature.



﴿وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَبَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ نَذِيرًا ﴿٥١﴾ فَلَا تُطِيعُ الْكَافِرِينَ وَجَاهِدْهُمْ بِهِ جِهَادًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٥٢﴾﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٥١-٥٢)

25:51. If We had so willed, We could have sent a warner to every city.

25:52. So do not obey the disbelievers, but strive mightily against them herewith [with the Qur'an].

Here Allah tells us how His will is inevitably done, and that if He had so willed, He would have sent to every city a warner, that is a Messenger to warn them, for His will is not incapable of that. But His wisdom and His mercy towards you and others – O Muhammad (ﷺ) – dictated that He should send you to all of them, red and black, Arab and non-Arab, human and jinn.

﴿So do not obey the disbelievers﴾ by omitting anything that was sent to you; rather strive your utmost to convey all that was sent to you.

﴿but strive mightily﴾ that is, do not spare any effort to support the truth and suppress falsehood; even if you see them rejecting you and treating you rudely, still do your utmost and do not despair of them being guided; do not stop conveying the message to them just because it does not suit their whims and desires.



﴿ وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ هَذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ وَهَذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخًا
وَحِجْرًا مَحْجُورًا ﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٥٣)

25:53. It is He Who causes the two flowing bodies of water to meet, one fresh and palatable and the other salty and bitter. Yet He has placed a barrier between them, and an impassable boundary.

That is, it is He alone Who causes the two flowing bodies of water to meet, that which is fresh and palatable, namely the rivers that flow on the surface of the earth, and the salty and bitter sea, and He causes each of them to benefit His slaves.

﴿Yet He has placed a barrier between them﴾ that is, a barrier to prevent one of them mixing with the other, which would lead to the loss of the benefits intended by them

﴿and an impassable boundary﴾ that is, a strong barrier.



﴿ وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ مِنَ الْمَاءِ بَشَرًا فَجَعَلَهُ نَسَبًا وَصِهْرًا ۗ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ قَدِيرًا ﴾ (سورة

الفرقان: ٥٤)

25:54. It is He Who has created humans from water, then made them male and female, for your Lord is Omnipotent.

That is, it is Allah alone, with no partner or associate, Who has created the human from insignificant fluid, and from him has produced many offspring, and made them male and female. All of them come from that insignificant fluid. This is indicative of His perfect power and ability, ﴿for your Lord is Omnipotent﴾.

It also indicates that worship of Him is the truth and worship of all others is false, because Allah says:



﴿ وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَلَا يَضُرُّهُمْ ۗ وَكَانَ الْكَافِرُ عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِ ظَهِيرًا ﴾

(سورة الفرقان: ٥٥)

25:55. They worship, besides Allah, that which has no power either to benefit or harm them; the disbeliever always gives support against his Lord.

That is, they worship idols and the dead who cannot cause any harm or bring any benefit, and they make them rivals to the One Who does have the power to bring benefits and cause harm, and to give and withhold, even though what they should do is follow the guidance of their Lord and defend His religion, but they did the opposite.

﴿the disbeliever always gives support against his Lord﴾ – the disbeliever gives help and support to falsehood, namely the idols and

rivals who are enemies of Allah, against their Lord, and he becomes an enemy to his Lord, declaring his enmity and hostility towards Him.

He does this even though his Lord is the One Who created him, grants him provision and blesses him with all kinds of blessings both visible and hidden, and he cannot escape His dominion, authority or control. But Allah never stops bestowing His kindness and generosity, whilst he – in his ignorance – persists in this enmity and rebellion.



﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ﴿٥٦﴾ قُلْ مَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا ﴿٥٧﴾ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَىٰ الْحَيِّ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِهِ بِذُنُوبِ عِبَادِهِ خَبِيرًا ﴿٥٨﴾ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ الرَّحْمَنُ فَسَلِّ بِهِ خَبِيرًا ﴿٥٩﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ اسْجُدُوا لِلرَّحْمَنِ قَالُوا وَمَا الرَّحْمَنُ أَنَسْجُدُ لِمَا تَأْمُرُنَا وَزَادَهُمْ نُفُورًا ﴿٦٠﴾﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٥٦-٦٠)

25:56. And We have not sent you but as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner.

25:57. Say [O Muhammad]: I do not ask you for any recompense for this, except that anyone who so wishes should take a path to his Lord.

25:58. Put your trust in the Ever-Living Who never dies, and glorify and praise Him. Your Lord is sufficiently aware of the sins of His slaves.

25:59. [It is] He Who created the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, in six days, and then rose over the Throne [in a manner that befits His Majesty]. He is the Most Gracious; so ask about Him one who is well informed.

25:60. When it is said to them [the disbelievers]: Prostrate to the Most Gracious, they say: What is the Most Gracious? Are we to prostrate to whatever you command us? and it increases them in aversion.

Here Allah tells us that He did not send His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) to be in control of people, He did not make him an angel, and he does not possess the treasuries of things. Rather He sent him ﴿as a bearer of glad tidings﴾, to give glad tidings to those who obeyed Allah of reward in this world and in the hereafter ﴿and a warner﴾ to warn those who disobeyed Allah of punishment in this world and in the hereafter. This requires him to explain how to attain that reward and how to protect oneself from that punishment, by way of commands and prohibitions. Moreover, you – O Muhammad (ﷺ) – do not ask them for any recompense for conveying to them the Qur'an and guidance, such that this would give them an excuse for not following you and lead to them finding burdensome the fee that you ask of them.

﴿except that anyone who so wishes should take a path to his Lord﴾ that is, except that whoever wishes may spend in ways to please his Lord and for His sake. If that is what you want to do, then I will not force you to do it and it is not a recompense that you owe me; rather it is in your own best interests and will help you to follow the path that leads to your Lord.

Then Allah instructed him to put his trust in Him and seek His help:

﴿Put your trust in the Ever-Living﴾ Whose life is absolute and perfect

﴿Who never dies, and glorify and praise Him﴾ that is, worship Him and put your trust in Him in all matters that have to do with you and that have to do with other people.

﴿Your Lord is sufficiently aware of the sins of His slaves﴾ for He knows them and will requite for them. It is not your task to guide

them at all, or to keep record of their deeds. All of that is in the Hand of Allah alone.

«[It is] He Who created the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, in six days, and then» after that «rose over the Throne», which is the canopy of creation, the highest, most vast and most beautiful of His creation «[in a manner that befits His Majesty]». «He is the Most Gracious» and He rose over His Throne that encompasses the heavens and the earth, Whose mercy encompasses all things. So He rose above the most vast of His creation with the most encompassing of His attributes.

This verse affirms His creation of all created things, and that He is well aware of their outward and inward aspects, that He is above the Throne and is separate from His creation.

«so ask about Him one who is well informed» what is meant here is Allah Himself, for He is the One Who knows His attributes, greatness and majesty, and He has told you of that and explained to you about His greatness that which will make you blessed to know it. Hence some came to know Him and submitted to His majesty.

But the disbelievers were too arrogant to worship Him and they refrained from doing so. Hence Allah says:

«When it is said to them [the disbelievers]: Prostrate to the Most Gracious» that is, the One Who alone bestowed all blessings upon you and warded off all harm from you,

«they say» in denial and disbelief:

«What is the Most Gracious?» They falsely claimed that they do not know the Most Gracious, and this is one of the things that they thought was grounds for their denial and criticism of the Messenger (ﷺ); they said: He forbids us to take other gods alongside Allah, yet he calls upon another god alongside Him and says: O Most Gracious (*Yâ Rahmân*), and so on. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Say [O Muhammad]: Call upon Allah, or call upon the Most Gracious [ar-Rahmân].⁵ No matter which name you call upon Him by, to Him belong the most beautiful names...﴾ (al-Isrâ' 17: 110)

His names are many because His attributes are many and His perfection is multifaceted; each of His names is indicative of an attribute of perfection.

﴿Are we to prostrate to whatever you command us?﴾ That is, just because you tell us to do that. This attitude was based on their rejection of the Messenger (ﷺ) and their being too arrogant to obey him (and it) namely the call to prostrate to the Most Gracious (increases them in aversion), so that they flee from truth to falsehood and increase in disbelief and wretchedness.



﴿نَبَارَكَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ فِي السَّمَاءِ بُرُوجًا وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا سِرَاجًا وَقَمَرًا مُنِيرًا ﴿٦١﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ خِلْفَةً لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَذَّكَّرَ أَوْ أَرَادَ شُكُورًا ﴿٦٢﴾﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٦١-٦٢)

25:61. Blessed be He Who has placed big stars in the heaven, and has placed therein a lamp [the sun] and a luminous moon.

25:62. It is He Who causes the night and the day to succeed one another, for whoever wishes to reflect or give thanks.

In this *soorah*, Allah (ﷻ) repeats three times the phrase ﴿Blessed be He﴾, because its meaning, as mentioned above, is that it is

⁵ The polytheists of Quraysh objected when they heard the Prophet (ﷺ) saying: O Allah, O Most Gracious (*Yâ Allâh, yâ Rahmân*). They said: Muhammad enjoins us to call upon One God at the time when he is calling upon two! So this verse was revealed to clarify that there is only One God, to Whom belong the most beautiful names and sublime attributes.

indicative of the greatness of the Creator, His many attributes and His abundant kindness and generosity. This soorah points to His greatness, the vastness of His domain, the doing of His will, the all-encompassing nature of His knowledge and might, and the perfect nature of His wisdom. It is indicative of the vastness of His mercy, His great generosity, and His many kindnesses, both spiritual and worldly, which dictate that this beautiful phrase be repeated. Hence Allah says:

«Blessed be He Who has placed big stars in the heaven» this refers to the stars in general. They are regarded as being like towers (the word *burooj*, translated here as «big stars», also means towers) and fortresses that guard cities; the big stars are like towers that are set up to guard the heaven, as missiles are hurled from them at the devils. «and has placed therein a lamp» giving light and heat, namely the sun «and a luminous moon» in which there is light, but no heat. This is one of the signs of His greatness and abundant generosity, because what there is in the heaven of dazzling creation, precise order and immense beauty are indicative of the greatness of their Creator in all His attributes, and what there is in the heaven of benefits for people is indicative of His immense generosity.

«It is He Who causes the night and the day to succeed one another» that is, one departs and is replaced by the other, and so on. They never meet and they are never both absent.

«for whoever wishes to reflect or give thanks» that is, for whoever wants to reflect upon them and learn lessons, and to take them as evidence for many divine aims and purposes, and to give thanks to Allah for that; and for whoever wants to remember Allah and give thanks to Him, and who has a portion (*wird*) to recite by night or day, and if he misses reciting his regular portion for one of them, he can catch up in the other. Moreover, people's moods alter and change throughout the hours of the night and day. So they may feel energetic or feel tired, be mindful or be heedless, sometimes under stress and sometimes at ease, sometimes focusing in worship and sometimes

distracted. So Allah has caused night and day to come consecutively to people, over and over again, so as to create in them mindfulness, energy and gratitude towards Allah at some times. Because *dhikr* and acts of worship are to be repeated as night and day are repeated, the more times they are repeated, the more this will renew the individual's energy, after a period of laziness, so he will remember Allah more and show more gratitude. Acts of worship are like irrigation and nourishment for faith; were it not for that, the plant of faith would wither. To Allah be all praise.

Then Allah tells us that part of His great generosity and grace towards His righteous slaves is that He guides them to do righteous deeds by which they attain lofty status in paradise, as He says:



﴿وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا ﴿٦٣﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَامًا ﴿٦٤﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا ﴿٦٥﴾ إِنَّهَا سَاءَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا ﴿٦٦﴾ وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا ﴿٦٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا ﴿٦٨﴾ يُضَاعَفْ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِ مُهَانًا ﴿٦٩﴾ إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٧٠﴾ وَمَنْ تَابَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَإِنَّهُ يَتُوبُ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَتَابًا ﴿٧١﴾ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَشْهَدُونَ الزُّورَ وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوا كِرَامًا ﴿٧٢﴾ وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يُخِرُّوا عَلَيْهَا صُمًّا وَعُمْيَانًا ﴿٧٣﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا لِمُنْقِبِينَ إِمَامًا ﴿٧٤﴾ أُولَئِكَ يُجْزَوْنَ الْغُرْفَةَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا

وَيَلْقَوْنَ فِيهَا حَبْحَبَةً وَسَلَامًا ﴿٧٥﴾ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا حَسَنَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا
 ﴿٧٦﴾ قُلْ مَا يَعْبَأُ بِكُمْ رَبِّي لَوْلَا دُعَاؤُكُمْ فَقَدْ كَذَّبْتُمْ فَسَوْفَ يَكُونُ لِزَامًا
 ﴿سورة الفرقان: ٦٣-٧٧﴾ ﴿٧٧﴾

- 25:63. The true slaves of the Most Gracious are those who walk humbly and with dignity on the earth and, when the ignorant address them, they say words of peace;
- 25:64. those who spend the night prostrating and standing before their Lord;
- 25:65. And who say: Our Lord, avert from us the punishment of hell, for verily its punishment is unrelenting.
- 25:66. Indeed, it is an evil halting-place and an evil abode;⁶
- 25:67. And who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor stingy, but follow a middle path between the [two];
- 25:68. Those who do not call upon any other god besides Allah; and who do not kill, for that is forbidden by Allah, except in the course of justice; and who do not commit fornication or adultery, for whoever does any of these things will receive the punishment.
- 25:69. The punishment will be doubled for them on the Day of Resurrection, and they will abide therein disgraced forever,
- 25:70. Except those who repent and believe, and do righteous deeds; for them Allah will change their evil deeds into good deeds, for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.
- 25:71. Whoever repents to Allah and does righteous deeds has truly turned to Allah.
- 25:72. Those who will not witness falsehood⁷ and, if they pass by [people engaged in] idle talk, they pass by with dignity;

⁶ It is a halting-place for the sinners among the believers; they will be brought forth from it after some time and admitted to paradise. However, for the disbelievers, it will be an eternal abode.

⁷ What is meant is that they do not attend gatherings where lies are uttered and sins are committed.

- 25:73. Those who, when they are reminded of the revelations of their Lord, do not turn a deaf ear and a blind eye to them;
- 25:74. And those who say: Our Lord, let our spouses and children be a source of joy for us, and make us good examples for those who fear You;
- 25:75. Those are the ones who will be rewarded with high places in paradise for their patience and steadfastness; they will be met therein with greetings and salutations of peace.
- 25:76. They will abide therein forever, an excellent halting-place and an excellent abode.
- 25:77. Say [O Muhammad, to the disbelievers]: My Lord would not concern Himself with you, were it not for your supplication. But you have rejected the call, so it [punishment] is inevitable.

Servitude to Allah is of two types: the first of which is being subject to His Lordship and His control and care. This includes all of humankind, both Muslims and disbelievers, righteous and evildoers; all of them are slaves under His care and control.

﴿There is no one in the heavens or on earth but he will come to the Most Gracious as a slave.﴾ (Maryam 19: 93)

The second type is the servitude of those who are His slaves in the sense that they worship Him alone and are subject to His mercy. This is the servitude of His Prophets and close friends, and this is what is meant here. Hence Allah connected it to His name the Most Gracious, so as to indicate that they only attained this state because of His grace and mercy. So He states that their attributes and characteristics are the best and most perfect of attributes and characteristics, and He describes them as ﴿those who walk humbly and with dignity on the earth﴾ that is, they are humble towards Allah and towards His creation. Thus they are described as dignified, tranquil and humble towards Allah and towards His slaves.

﴿and, when the ignorant address them﴾ in an ignorant manner
 ﴿they say words of peace﴾ that is, they respond to them in such a manner that they are safe from sin and avoid responding to ignorance with ignorance. This is praise for their great forbearing, responding to evil with something better, pardoning the one who is ignorant, and thinking in a mature manner that enabled them to achieve that.

﴿those who spend the night prostrating and standing before their Lord﴾ that is, they pray a great deal at night, showing sincere devotion towards their Lord and humbling themselves before Him. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Who forsake their beds,⁸ calling upon their Lord with fear and hope, and spend out of what We have provided for them. No soul knows what is kept hidden in store for them of delight as a reward for what they used to do.﴾ (*as-Sajdah 32: 16-17*)

﴿And who say: Our Lord, avert from us the punishment of hell﴾ that is, ward it off from us by keeping us away from that which leads to it, and forgiving us for what we did of deeds that may incur the punishment

﴿for verily its punishment is unrelenting﴾ that is, ongoing.

﴿Indeed, it is an evil halting-place and an evil abode﴾ this is a supplication from them by way of beseeching their Lord and expressing how great their need for Him is, for it is not in their power to withstand this punishment. That is so that they may remember the blessings of Allah to them, because diverting hardship will have a great impact and cause great joy, commensurate with the degree of the hardship that was diverted.

﴿And who, when they spend﴾, whether that spending is obligatory or recommended

﴿are neither extravagant﴾ by spending more than is necessary, so that they come under the heading of those who spend to excess

⁸ This refers to staying awake to offer voluntary prayers during the night.

﴿nor stingy﴾ so that they come under the heading of miserliness, covetousness and neglecting people's rights and dues ﴿but﴾ in their spending ﴿follow a middle path﴾ between the extremes of extravagance and miserliness, so they spend on that which is obligatory, such as *zakāh*, expiation and other obligations, and they spend on what is appropriate, in an appropriate manner, without causing harm to themselves or others. This is part of their just and moderate character.

﴿Those who do not call upon any other god besides Allah﴾; rather they worship Him alone, devoting their worship solely to Him as true monotheists, turning to Him alone and turning away from all others.

﴿and who do not kill, for that is forbidden by Allah﴾ – this refers to killing Muslims and disbelievers who have covenants with the Muslims

﴿except in the course of justice﴾ such as execution of murderers and previously married adulterers, and disbelievers whom it is permissible to kill (in the case of war)

﴿and who do not commit fornication or adultery﴾; rather they restrain their carnal desires:

﴿Except with their wives or any slave women they may own...﴾
(*al-Mu'minoon* 23: 6)

﴿for whoever does any of these things﴾ that is, ascribing partners to Allah, killing unlawfully any soul that Allah has forbidden, or committing fornication or adultery, ﴿will receive the punishment﴾.

Then Allah explains that further:

﴿The punishment will be doubled for them on the Day of Resurrection, and they will abide therein﴾ that is, in the punishment, ﴿disgraced forever﴾. The warning of eternal punishment is addressed to the one who does all three; that is confirmed and is inevitable; the same also applies to the one who ascribes partners to Allah. The warning of severe punishment is for each of these three sins, because it is either an ascription of partners to Allah or it is a major sin.

With regard to the murderer and the fornicator or adulterer, he will not be subject to eternal punishment, because the texts of the Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah indicate that all the believers will be brought forth from hell, and no believer will abide therein forever, no matter what sins he commits. Allah mentions these three, because these are the worst of major sins. Ascribing partners to Him leads to destruction of religious commitment, murder destroys bodies and adultery destroys honour.

«Except those who repent» from these sins and others, by giving them up immediately, regretting what has been done in the past and firmly resolving not to do that again
 «and believe» in Allah, with sound faith, which requires one to give up sin and do acts of obedience
 «and do righteous deeds» that are enjoined by the Lawgiver, seeking thereby the pleasure of Allah.

«for them Allah will change their evil deeds into good deeds» that is, He will change their words and deeds, that would have been bad, into good words and deeds. So their ascription of partners to Allah is changed into sound faith, and their disobedience into obedience, and what they committed of bad deeds in the past, then repented sincerely from every one of them, in obedience to Allah, will be turned into good deeds, as is the apparent meaning of the verse.

Concerning that there is a hadith that speaks of the man whom Allah brought to account for some of his sins, and He enumerated them to him, then He replaced each bad deed with a good deed, so he said:

«O Lord, I have some bad deeds that I do not see here.» (A sound hadith recorded by at-Tirmidhi)⁹

⁹ All hadiths in this text have been checked and verified by IIPH's researchers. It is rare, but it does happen that a hadith is not verifiable within the timeframe of researching and editing the book. In that case, =

And Allah knows best.

﴿for Allah is Oft-Forgiving﴾ to the one who repents, and He forgives great sins

﴿Most Merciful﴾ towards His slaves, as He calls them to repent after they challenged Him by committing major sins, then He guided them and enabled them to repent, then He accepted it from them.

﴿Whoever repents to Allah and does righteous deeds has truly turned to Allah﴾ that is, he should know that his repentance is the most perfect thing he could do, because it is coming back to the path that leads to Allah, which is the essence of a person's happiness and success. So let him be sincere in his repentance, and let him purify it from any contamination of bad intentions.

The point here is to urge the individual to make his repentance perfect and do it in the best manner, so that when he comes to the One to Whom he repented, Allah will give him a reward in full, commensurate with the perfection of his repentance.

﴿Those who will not witness falsehood﴾ that is, they do not attend when false talk is occurring, namely unlawful words and deeds. So they avoid all gatherings in which there is unlawful talk or unlawful deeds, such as speaking scornfully about the revelations of Allah, arguing on the basis of falsehood, backbiting, spreading malicious gossip, insulting, slander, ridiculing, unlawful music, drinking alcohol, silk furnishings, images and the like. If they do not witness falsehood, it is even more appropriate that they should not say or do anything that constitutes falsehood.

= a decision is made by the editorial board as to whether or not to include the hadith. It is IIPH's policy not to include weak hadiths or fabricated (fake) hadiths in our publications. If a weak hadith is included in any text, it is only because the author of the book discusses it as a weak hadith. (Editor)

If they do not witness falsehood, they will not speak falsehood, which includes giving false testimony.

﴿and, if they pass by [people engaged in] idle talk﴾ this refers to talk in which there is nothing good and no benefit, whether spiritual or worldly, such as the speech of fools and the like

﴿they pass by with dignity﴾ that is, they respect themselves too much to indulge in such things, and they regard indulging in it – even if there is no sin involved – as foolishness and contrary to dignity, so they stay away from it in order to preserve their dignity.

The phrase ﴿and, if they pass by [people engaged in] idle talk﴾ indicates that they did not intend to be present or listen to it; rather that happened by coincidence, without any intention on their part. So they honour themselves by keeping away from it.

﴿Those who, when they are reminded of the revelations of their Lord﴾ that they are instructed to listen to attentively and be guided by ﴿do not turn a deaf ear and a blind eye to them﴾ that is, they do not respond by turning away from them and turning a deaf ear to them, or turning away their eyes and hearts from it, as those who do not believe in it do. Rather their reaction to it, when they hear it, is as Allah (ﷻ) describes elsewhere:

﴿Only those believe in Our revelations who, when they are reminded of them, fall down in prostration, and glorify and praise their Lord, and they are not arrogant.﴾ (as-Sajdah 32: 15)

They respond by accepting it, showing their need for it and submitting to it.

You will find that they listen attentively, contemplate the meanings in their hearts, and increase in faith and certainty thereby; they are energised by it and they rejoice greatly in it.

﴿And those who say: Our Lord, let our spouses﴾ – the word translated here as ﴿spouses﴾ may include friends and companions, as well as spouses

﴿and children be a source of joy for us﴾ that is, a delight to us.

If we examine the situation of such people, we will realise that, as they have high ambitions and high status, they will not settle until they see their spouses and children obeying their Lord, having knowledge and acting on the basis thereof. As they pray for their spouses and children to follow the path of righteousness, they are, in a way, praying for themselves because the benefit of that comes back to them. Hence they regard that as a gift to them, as is reflected in the original Arabic, where the phrase translated as ﴿let our spouses and children be a source of joy for us﴾ carries the connotation of a gift that is given. Indeed their supplication will be of benefit to all the Muslims, for if those mentioned are righteous, many more will be righteous because of their connection to them, and they will benefit from them.

﴿and make us good examples for those who fear You﴾ that is, help us to attain that high status, the status of those who are strong and true in faith, and those of the righteous slaves of Allah who are perfect. This is the status of leadership in terms of religion, so that they will be a good example to those who fear Allah in their words and deeds, and they will be people whose example is followed and whose words people trust, so that good people follow them and thus they are guided and guide others. It is well known that supplication to attain something is also supplication for that means without which it cannot be attained. This status – the status of leadership in religion – can only be attained by means of patience and certain faith, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿We made some of them leaders, guiding people by Our command, because they were patient and steadfast, and they believed with certainty in Our revelations.﴾ (as-Sajdah 32: 24)

This requires a great deal of effort and patience in obeying Allah and in refraining from disobedience to Him, accepting His decree even when it is painful, and acquiring perfect knowledge that will bring one to the level of certain faith.

Therefore – because their ambitions and goals were high – the reward matches the nature of the deeds, so Allah will reward them with lofty and high places, as He says:

﴿Those are the ones who will be rewarded with high places in paradise for their patience and steadfastness﴾ that is, lofty places and beautiful dwellings, containing all that one could desire and that could delight the eye, and they will attain that because of their patience and steadfastness, as Allah says elsewhere:

﴿...Angels will enter unto them from every gate [saying]: Peace be upon you because you patiently persevered. How excellent is the ultimate end!﴾ (ar-Ra'd 13: 23-24)

Hence He says here: ﴿they will be met therein with greetings and salutations of peace﴾ from their Lord, and from His noble angels, and from one another, and they will be safe from all that could spoil their joy.

Thus Allah describes them as being dignified, tranquil, humble towards Him and His slaves, well mannered, forbearing, and easy-going; they overlook the ignorant and turn away from them, responding to their bad treatment with good treatment; they pray *qiyām* (voluntary prayers at night), with complete sincerity; they fear the fire and beseech their Lord to save them from it; they spend what is obligatory and what is encouraged, and are moderate in spending, and if they are moderate in spending – when people usually go to extremes in this matter, either spending too much or too little – then it is more likely that they will be moderate in other matters. They are free of major sins and are described as being sincere in their worship of Allah; they refrain from harming people physically or impugning their honour, and they repent if they do any such thing. They do not attend gatherings in which there are immoral and evil words or deeds, and they do not do such things themselves; they protect themselves from idle talk and bad deeds in which there is no good. This is indicative of their dignity, humanity, perfection and rising above vile words or

deeds. They respond to the revelations of Allah by accepting them, understanding their meanings, acting upon them and striving hard to implement their rulings. They call upon Allah (ﷻ) with the most perfect of supplications, from which they and those who are connected to them benefit, as do the Muslims at large, such as praying that their spouses and offspring will be righteous. This implies that they strive to teach them, exhort them and advise them, because the one who is keen to attain something and prays to Allah for it, should take measures to attain it. They pray to Allah to enable them to reach the highest possible level, which is the level of leadership and being strong and true in faith (*siddeeq*). How sublime are these attributes; how noble are these aims and goals; how pure are these hearts and souls; and how pious are these leaders! Allah bestowed His grace, blessings and mercy upon them so that they were able to attain that status. It is a blessing from Allah to His slaves that He highlighted their attributes, described their manners and ambitions, and mentioned their reward, so that people may long to attain these attributes and strive hard to do so, and ask the One Who blessed and honoured them, Whose grace reaches all times and places, to guide them as He guided these people, and to bestow His special care upon them, as He did for these people.

O Allah, to You be praise, to You we complain, and You are the One Whose help we seek. There is no strength and no power except with You, for we have no power to benefit ourselves or ward off harm from ourselves, and we cannot do even an atom's weight of good unless You make it easy for us; verily we are weak and incapable in all ways.

We bear witness that if you left us to our own devices for even the blink of an eye, You would have left us to our weakness, helplessness and sin. Our Lord, we can only put our trust in Your mercy, by which You created us, granted us provision and bestowed blessings upon us both visible and hidden, and You warded off hardship from us. So have mercy on us, mercy that will suffice us so that we have no need

of the mercy of anyone else, for the one who asks of You and puts his hope in You will never be disappointed.

As Allah (ﷻ) encompasses all of these people in His mercy and singles them out to be His slaves, because of their honour and virtue, perhaps someone may wonder why others are not included as being His slaves? The answer is, as Allah tells us, that He would not care for anyone other than these, for were it not for your calling upon Him, with the supplication of worship and the supplication of asking, He would not care about you or love you, as He says: ﴿Say [O Muhammad, to the disbelievers]: My Lord would not concern Himself with you, were it not for your supplication. But you have rejected the call, so it [punishment] is inevitable﴾ that is, punishment is inevitable, and Allah will judge between you and His believing slaves.

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

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.





بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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



﴿طَسَّرَ ۙ﴾ ١ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ ﴿٢﴾ لَعَلَّكَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ الْأَيُّمِ كُنْتَ تُدْرِكُ الْآيَاتِ الْكُبْرَى ﴿٣﴾
 ١ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ ﴿٢﴾ لَعَلَّكَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ الْأَيُّمِ كُنْتَ تُدْرِكُ الْآيَاتِ الْكُبْرَى ﴿٣﴾
 ٤ وَمَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ ذِكْرِ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا كَانُوا عَنْهَا حَافِيًا ﴿٤﴾ وَمَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ ذِكْرِ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا كَانُوا عَنْهَا حَافِيًا ﴿٤﴾
 ٥ فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوا فَسَيَأْتِيهِمْ أَنْبَاءٌ مِمَّا كَانُوا يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٥﴾
 ٦ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى الْأَرْضِ كَمْ أَنْبَأْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٧﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٩﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١-٩)

26:1. Tâ'. Seen. Meem.¹⁰

26:2. These are verses of the clear Book.

26:3. Are you [O Prophet] going to destroy yourself with grief because they do not believe?

¹⁰ Groups of letters (*al-huroof al-muqatta'ah*) appear at the beginning of several soorahs. The most correct scholarly view states that we are required to believe in them as they appear to be, without delving into their meaning, knowledge of which we should leave to Allah. We believe that they were not revealed in vain, and that there is wisdom behind them of which we are not aware.

- 26:4. If We willed, We could send down to them a sign from heaven, at which their heads would be bowed in submission.
- 26:5. No fresh revelation comes to them from the Most Gracious, but they turn away from it.
- 26:6. Thus they denied [the revelation], but soon they will learn the consequences of their ridicule.
- 26:7. Do they not see the earth, and how much We have caused to grow therein of all kinds of beneficial plants?
- 26:8. Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe.
- 26:9. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

Here the Creator (ﷻ) highlights the greatness of the verses of the clear Book which points to all divine instructions and Islamic teachings, so that there will be no doubt or confusion left for the one who studies it, with regard to what He related of stories or ordained of rulings, because it is so clear and points to the most sublime meanings, and because the rulings are connected to the wisdom behind them and the reasons for them. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) warned the people by means of it, and guided them by means of it to the straight path. Hence the pious slaves of Allah are guided by it and those who are doomed turn away from it. Therefore he was very sad when they did not believe, because he was so keen to do good and was so sincere towards them.

Hence Allah (ﷻ) said to him: ﴿Are you [O Prophet] going to destroy yourself with grief﴾ that is, ruin yourself and put yourself through so much distress ﴿because they do not believe﴾. In other words: do not do that, and do not let yourself waste away out of regret for them (cf. 35: 8), for guidance is in the Hand of Allah, and you have done what you were required to do of conveying the message. There is no sign better than this clear Qur'an that We could send down, for it is sufficient for the one who truly seeks guidance. Hence Allah says:

«If We willed, We could send down to them a sign» that is, one of the signs that they demanded «at which their» namely the disbelievers' «heads would be bowed in submission». But there is no need for that and there is no interest to be served by it, because at that point faith would be of no benefit; rather the faith that is of benefit is belief in the unseen, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

«What are they waiting for, but for the angels to come to them, or for your Lord to come, or for some of the signs of your Lord to come? On the day when some of the signs of your Lord come, no good will it do to a soul to believe then, if it did not believe before or earn some good through its faith...» (*al-An'âm* 6: 158)

«No fresh revelation comes to them from the Most Gracious» with commands and prohibitions, reminding them of that which will benefit them or harm them, «but they turn away from it» completely. As they turned away from fresh revelation, which would usually have a greater impact, it was more likely that they would turn away from any other exhortation. That is because there was nothing good in them, and exhortation was to no avail in their case. Hence Allah says:

«Thus they denied [the revelation]» that is, they denied the truth, and that became second nature to them, never changing «but soon they will learn the consequences of their ridicule» that is, the punishment will befall them and that which they denied will come upon them. For punishment has become inevitable for them.

Allah says, pointing out the type of reflection that may be of benefit:

«Do they not see the earth, and how much We have caused to grow therein of all kinds of beneficial plants?» That is, all kinds of beautiful plants that are of benefit to people

«Verily in that is a sign» that Allah will revive the dead after their death, as He brings to life the earth after it is dead

﴿yet most of them will not believe﴾. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿But most of humankind will not believe, no matter how eagerly you desire it.﴾ (Yoosuf 12: 103)

﴿Verily your Lord is the Almighty﴾ Who has subjugated all creatures, and to Whom the upper and lower realms have submitted ﴿the Most Merciful﴾ Whose mercy encompasses all things, and Whose generosity reaches all living beings; the Almighty Who destroyed the doomed with various punishments, the Most Merciful to the blessed, as He saved them from all evils and calamities.



﴿وإِذْ نَادَى رَبُّكَ مُوسَىٰ أَنِ أَنْتَ الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ قَوْمَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَلَا يَنْقُورُونَ ﴿١١﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يُكَذِّبُونِ ﴿١٢﴾ وَيَضِيقُ صَدْرِي وَلَا يَنْطَلِقُ لِسَانِي فَأَرْسِلْ إِلَىٰ هَارُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَهُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَنْبٍ فَأَخَافُ أَنْ يَقْتُلُونِ ﴿١٤﴾ قَالَ كَلَّا فَادْهَبَا بِآيَاتِنَا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ مُسْتَعِينُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ فَآتَا فِرْعَوْنَ فَقُولَا إِنَّا رَسُولُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ أَنْ أَرْسِلَ مَعَنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ ﴿١٧﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١٠-١٧)

- 26:10. And [remember] when your Lord called Moosâ [saying]: Go to the people who are given to wrongdoing,
- 26:11. The people of Pharaoh; will they not fear [the punishment of Allah]?
- 26:12. Moosâ said: My Lord, I fear that they will reject me
- 26:13. and I will feel distressed, and my speech will not be clear; so send for Hâroon [to help me].
- 26:14. Moreover, they have a charge against me, and I am afraid they will kill me.
- 26:15. Allah said: By no means! Go, both of you, with Our signs; We will be with you, listening.

- 26:16. Go, both of you, to Pharaoh and say: We are Messengers of the Lord of the worlds,
 26:17. [sent with the message]: Let the Children of Israel go with us.

Now Allah (ﷻ) returns to the story of Moosâ ('*alayhi as-salâm* – peace be upon him), which is repeated in the Qur'an in a way that is not done with other stories, because it contains important wisdom and lessons. In this story Allah tells us how Moosâ dealt with the wrongdoers and the believers, and how he was the bringer of a great law, the bringer of the Torah, which is the best of the divinely revealed Books after the Qur'an. Allah says to us: remember the virtuous state of Moosâ at the time when Allah called him, when He spoke to him directly, and appointed him as His Prophet and Messenger, and said: ﴿Go to the people who are given to wrongdoing﴾, who behave arrogantly in the land, looking down on its people, and their leader claims to be divine.

﴿The people of Pharaoh﴾, and say to them, gently and kindly: will they not fear Allah Who created them and granted them provision, and give up what they are following of disbelief?

Moosâ (ﷺ) said apologetically, explaining to his Lord his weaknesses and asking Him for help in bearing this heavy burden: ﴿My Lord, I fear that they will reject me and I will feel distressed, and my speech will not be clear﴾. And he said:

﴿...My Lord, fill my heart with courage and steadfastness, and make my task easy for me; and remove the impediment from my speech, so that they will understand what I say. And appoint for me a helper from my family, Hâroon, my brother.﴾ (*Ṭâ Hâ 20: 25-30*)

﴿so send for Hâroon [to help me]﴾. Allah responded to his request and appointed his brother Hâroon as a Prophet as He had appointed him.

﴿...so send him with me as a helper, to reiterate my words...﴾ (*al-Qaṣaṣ 28: 34*)

– that is, send him with me to help me so that they will believe me.

﴿Moreover, they have a charge against me﴾ that is, with regard to the killing of the Egyptian, ﴿and I am afraid they will kill me﴾.

﴿Allah said: By no means!﴾ that is, they will not be able to kill you, for We will give you both power:

﴿...so that they will not be able to harm you. By virtue of Our signs, you two and those who follow you will be triumphant.﴾ (al-Qaṣas 28: 35)

Hence Pharaoh was not able to kill Moosā, even though Moosā opposed him and stood up to him, and regarded his views as foolish and him and his people as misguided.

﴿Go, both of you, with Our signs﴾ that highlight your truthfulness and the soundness of the message you bring

﴿We will be with you, listening﴾, protecting you and caring for you.

﴿Go, both of you, to Pharaoh and say: We are Messengers of the Lord of the worlds﴾ that is, He has sent us to you so that you may believe in Him and in us, and submit to His worship, and proclaim His oneness.

﴿[sent with the message]: Let the Children of Israel go with us﴾ and stop tormenting them; leave them alone so that they may worship their Lord and practise their religion.



﴿ قَالَ أَلَمْ نُرَبِّكَ فِينَا وَلِيدًا وَلَبِثْتَ فِينَا مِنْ عُمُرِكَ سِنِينَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَفَعَلْتَ فَعَلَتَكَ الَّتِي
فَعَلْتَ وَأَنْتَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ قَالَ فَعَلْنَاهَا إِذَا وَأَنَا مِنَ الضَّالِّينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ فَفَرَرْتُ
مِنْكُمْ لَمَّا خِفْتُمْكُمْ فَرَّهَبَ لِي رَبِّي حُكْمًا وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَتِلْكَ نِعْمَةٌ تَمُنَّهَا عَلَيَّ أَنْ
عَبَدْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١٨-٢٢)

- 26:18. Pharaoh said: Did we not bring you up as a child among us, and did you not spend many years of your life among us?
- 26:19. Yet you did the deed you did [the crime of killing a man]; at that time, you were a disbeliever.
- 26:20. Moosâ said: I did it then, when I was in a state of ignorance.
- 26:21. So I fled from you, as I was afraid of you. But [since then] my Lord has granted me wisdom and made me one of the Messengers.
- 26:22. Is this the favour for which you reproach me, that you have enslaved the Children of Israel?

When they came to Pharaoh and said to him what Allah had instructed them to say, Pharaoh did not believe and he did not relent; rather he began to argue with Moosâ.

﴿Pharaoh said: Did we not bring you up as a child among us﴾ that is, have we not been generous towards you, for we raised you from the time you were an infant in your cradle, and that continued for some time.

﴿and did you not spend many years of your life among us? Yet you did the deed you did﴾ – this refers to Moosâ's killing the Egyptian, when one of his people asked him for help against the one who was his enemy, and:

﴿...Moosâ struck him with his fist and killed him...﴾ (*al-Qaṣaṣ* 28: 15)

﴿at that time, you were a disbeliever﴾ that is, because you were following the same path as us, a path of disbelief. Thus Pharaoh admitted that he was a disbeliever without realising.

Moosâ said: ﴿I did it then, when I was in a state of ignorance﴾ that is, without being a disbeliever; rather that resulted from misguidance and foolishness, but I asked my Lord for forgiveness and He forgave me.

﴿So I fled from you, as I was afraid of you﴾ when you discussed the issue of killing me. So I fled to Madyan and stayed there for several

years, then I came to you, for «[since then] my Lord has granted me wisdom and made me one of the Messengers».

Pharaoh's objection to Moosā was the objection of one who is ignorant or is acting in an ignorant manner, because he thought that he could not be a Messenger on the grounds that he had killed someone. But Moosā explained to him that his killing had been a mistake and that he had not intended to kill, and that the grace of Allah (ﷻ) is not to be withheld from anyone, so why do you want to withhold from me that which Allah bestowed upon me of wisdom and His message? All that is left for you, O Pharaoh, to say is: «Did we not bring you up as a child among us», but when examining the matter it becomes clear that it was not a favour that you did (because it resulted from Pharaoh wanting to slaughter all the male Israelite infants). Therefore Moosā said:

«Is this the favour for which you reproach me, that you have enslaved the Children of Israel?» That is, are you reminding me of this favour because you persecuted the Israelites and enslaved them, but you saved me from your enslavement and persecution, and you regarded that as a favour to me? But once you examine the matter, it will become clear that in fact you wronged these good people, and you persecuted them and subjected them to hard labour, at the time when Allah saved me from your harm, and at the time when you were harming my people. So what is this favour of which you are reminding me?



﴿ قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَا رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ قَالَ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُوقِنِينَ ﴿١٤﴾ قَالَ لِمَنْ حَوْلَهُ أَلَا تَسْمِعُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ آبَائِكُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ قَالَ إِنْ رَسُولُكُمْ الَّذِي أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ لَمَجْنُونٌ ﴿١٧﴾ قَالَ رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ﴾

۱۸ قَالَ لَئِن أَخَذَتِ الْإِلَهَاءُ غَيْرِي لِأَجْعَلَنَّكَ مِنَ الْمَسْجُونِينَ ﴿۱۸﴾ قَالَ
 ۱۹ أُولُو حِجَّتِكَ بِشَيْءٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿۱۹﴾ قَالَ فَأْتِ بِهِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿۲۰﴾ (سورة
 الشعراء: ۲۳-۳۱)

- 26:23. Pharaoh said: And what is the 'Lord of the worlds'?
- 26:24. Moosâ said: The Lord of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, if you would but be convinced!
- 26:25. Pharaoh said to those around him: Did you hear [what he said]?
- 26:26. Moosâ said: He is your Lord, and the Lord of your forefathers.
- 26:27. Pharaoh said: Indeed your Messenger who has been sent to you is surely insane!
- 26:28. Moosâ said: He is Lord of the east and the west and all that is between them, if you would but understand!
- 26:29. Pharaoh said: If you take any god other than me, I will surely throw you into prison.
- 26:30. Moosâ said: Even if I bring you clear proof?
- 26:31. Pharaoh said: Bring it then, if you are telling the truth!

﴿Pharaoh said: And what is the 'Lord of the worlds'?﴾ This was a denial on his part of his Lord, wrongfully and arrogantly, despite the fact that he was certain of the soundness of that to which Moosâ was calling him.

﴿Moosâ said: The Lord of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them﴾ that is, the One Who created the upper and lower realms, and He controls and cares for them in all ways, and that includes you to whom I am speaking; how can you deny the Creator of all creation, the Originator of the earth and the heavens? ﴿if you would but be convinced!﴾

But Pharaoh said, expressing his amazement to his people: ﴿Did you hear [what he said]?﴾

﴿Moosâ said: He is your Lord, and the Lord of your forefathers﴾ whether you find it strange or not, and whether you react with arrogance or submit.

But Pharaoh said, stubbornly rejecting the truth and insulting the one who brought it: ﴿Indeed your Messenger who has been sent to you is surely insane!﴾ as he is saying something other than that which we follow, and he is differing from us with regard to our path, because what is rational to him and to people of rational thinking who claim that they were not created, or that the heavens and the earth have existed from eternity, without anyone having created them, and that they themselves were created without a creator – according to the view of such people, worshipping a created being that is lacking in all aspects is rational, whereas affirmation of the Lord and Creator of the upper and lower realms, Who bestows blessings both visible and hidden, and calls people to worship Him alone, is insanity. He made this notion appear fair-seeming to his people, and they were foolish and lacking in reason:

﴿Thus he made fools of his people and they obeyed him. They were indeed a rebellious and wicked people.﴾ (az-Zukhruf 43: 54)

Moosâ (ﷺ) said, responding to Pharaoh's rejection and denial of the Lord of the worlds: ﴿He is Lord of the east and the west and all that is between them﴾, of all creation, ﴿if you would but understand!﴾ I have explained to you in a manner that anyone with the least power of rational thinking would be able to understand. So what is the matter with you, that you ignore what I tell you? In that there is an implicit indication that what you accused Moosâ of, namely insanity, is in fact present in you, for you accused the smartest, most rational and most knowledgeable person of being insane, when in fact you are the insane ones, because you denied the Being Whose existence is the most obvious, namely the Creator of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them. If you deny Him, then what do you affirm?

If you are not aware of Him, then of what are you aware? If you do not believe in Him and His signs, then in what – after Allah and His signs – do you believe? By Allah, those who are indeed insane, who are more like animals, are more rational than you, and the grazing animals are more guided than you.

When Moosâ defeated Pharaoh in argument, and he was not able to present a counter argument, he said, threatening Moosâ on the basis of his power: «If you take any god other than me, I will surely throw you into prison». He claimed – may Allah curse him – that he could misguide Moosâ and force him not to take any god other than him. But it was already established that Moosâ and those who were with him had a strong understanding of their beliefs and knew what they were doing.

So Moosâ said to him: «Even if I bring you clear proof?» That is, clear and obvious signs of the truth of the message I have brought, in the form of extraordinary feats.

«Pharaoh said: Bring it then, if you are telling the truth!»



﴿ فَأَلْقَى عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَرَزَقَهُ يَدَهُ، فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَاءُ لِلنَّظِيرِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ قَالَ
لِلْمَلَأِ حَوْلَهُ: إِنَّ هَذَا لَسِحْرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُخْرِجَكُمْ مِنْ أَرْضِكُمْ بِسِحْرِهِ
فَمَاذَا تَأْمُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ قَالُوا أَرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ وَأَتَّبِعْ فِي الدِّينِ حَشِيرِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ يَا قُوتُوكَ
بِكُلِّ سِحْرٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٧﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٣٢-٣٧)

- 26:32. So Moosâ threw down his staff, and suddenly it was a serpent, plain for all to see
- 26:33. And he drew forth his hand, and it appeared shining white to all beholders.
- 26:34. Pharaoh said to the chiefs around him: Verily this is a learned magician!

- 26:35. He wants to drive you out of your land with his magic. What then do you advise?
- 26:36. They said: Let him and his brother wait a while, and send heralds to the cities to gather
- 26:37. and bring to you all the learned magicians.

﴿So Moosā threw down his staff, and suddenly it was a serpent﴾ – the word used in the original Arabic refers to a male snake ﴿plain for all to see﴾ that is, obvious to everyone, not an illusion or something made to look like a snake.

﴿And he drew forth his hand﴾ from his collar ﴿and it appeared shining white to all beholders﴾ that is, it shone brightly, with no defect in it that the onlookers could see.

﴿Pharaoh said to the chiefs around him﴾, objecting to the truth and the one who had brought it:

﴿Verily this is a learned magician! He wants to drive you out of your land with his magic﴾. He tried to confuse them because he knew that they were lacking in intellect, so he told them that this was like what the magicians did, because it was well known among them that magicians could do some amazing feats that ordinary people were unable to do. He scared them by saying that this was his aim: by means of this magic he wanted to be able to expel them from their land, so that they would strive and try hard to expose the one who wanted to expel them from their homes.

﴿What then do you advise?﴾ That is, what should we do?

﴿They said: Let him and his brother wait a while﴾ that is, delay them

﴿and send heralds to the cities to gather and bring to you all the learned magicians﴾ that is, send word to all of your cities that are seats of knowledge and places where magic originates, and send people to gather every skilled magician who is knowledgeable about magic,

for a magician is to be opposed with magic of the same nature as his magic.

It is by His kindness that Allah showed His slaves the false argument of Pharaoh, who was ignorant and misguided, and led others astray. When he said that what Moosâ had brought was magic, Allah decreed that they should bring together all the skilled magicians, then hold a gathering in the presence of a large number of people, so that the truth might prevail and the people of knowledge and those who were highly skilled in magic might affirm the soundness of the message that Moosâ had brought, and confirm that the miracles he brought were not magic. Pharaoh did that on the advice of his chiefs; he sent heralds to the cities to gather the magicians, and he strove hard for that purpose.



﴿ فَجَمَعَ السَّحَرَةَ لِمَقْتِ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَقِيلَ لِلنَّاسِ هَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُجْتَمِعُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ لَعَلَّنَا نَنْبَغِ السَّحَرَةَ إِنْ كَانُوا هُمْ الْعَالِيِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاءَ السَّحَرَةُ قَالُوا لِفِرْعَوْنَ أَإِنَّا لَنَا لِأَجْرٍ إِنْ كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْعَالِيِينَ ﴿٤١﴾ قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ إِذَا لَمِنَ الْمَقْرَبِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ قَالَ لَهُمْ مُوسَى الْقُوا مَا أَنْتُمْ مُلْقُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ فَأَلْقَوْا جِبَاهَهُمْ وَعَصِيَّتَهُمْ وَقَالُوا بَعِزَّةَ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الْعَالِيُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ فَأَلْفَى مُوسَى عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ فَأَلْفَى السَّحَرَةَ سَاجِدِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ قَالُوا أَمَّا رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ رَبِّ مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ قَالَ أَمْسِرْ لَهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ أَدْنَى لَكُمْ إِنَّهُ لَكَبِيرُكُمُ الَّذِي عَلَّمَكُمُ السِّحْرَ فَلَسَوْفَ تَعْمُونَ لَأَفْطِنَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ مِنْ خَلْفٍ وَلَاصِلَتِكُمْ أجمعين ﴿٤٩﴾ قَالُوا لَا ضَيْرَ إِنَّا إِلَى رَبِّنَا مُنْقَلِبُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ إِنَّا نَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لَنَا رَبِّنَا خَطِيئَتَنَا أَنْ كُنَّا أَوَّلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٣٨-٥١)

26:38. So the magicians were gathered at the appointed time, on a certain day.

26:39. And it was said to the people: Will you also gather,

- 26:40. So that we may follow the magicians [in their religion], if they are the victors?
- 26:41. When the magicians came, they said to Pharaoh: Will we have a reward if we are the victors?
- 26:42. He said: Yes, and then you will surely be among those who are close to me.
- 26:43. Moosâ said to them: Throw whatever you wish to throw.
- 26:44. So they threw their ropes and sticks, and said: By the might of Pharaoh, it is surely we who will be the victors!
- 26:45. Then Moosâ threw his staff, and thereupon it swallowed up all their deceptions.
- 26:46. So the magicians fell down in prostration.
- 26:47. They said: We believe in the Lord of the worlds,
- 26:48. The Lord of Moosâ and Hâroon.
- 26:49. Pharaoh said: How dare you believe him before I give you permission! He must be your master, who taught you magic! But indeed you will soon know the consequences. I will certainly cut off your hands and feet on opposite sides, then I will certainly crucify you all.
- 26:50. They said: No harm;¹¹ it is to our Lord that we will surely return.
- 26:51. Verily we hope that our Lord will forgive us our sins, as we are the first of the believers.

﴿So the magicians were gathered at the appointed time, on a certain day﴾ that they had agreed upon with Moosâ; it was the day of the festival when people were free and were not working.

﴿And it was said to the people: Will you also gather﴾ that is, the call went out to all the people, telling them to gather on that appointed day.

¹¹ Ultimately it would do them no harm, as they would be rewarded immensely for bearing it with patience.

«So that we may follow the magicians [in their religion], if they are the victors?» That is, they said to the people: Gather to watch the magicians defeat Moosâ, for they are skilled in their craft, then we will follow them and venerate them, and we will see the virtue of knowledge of magic. If they had been guided to the truth, they would have said: Perhaps we will follow the one who is in the right, and we will know which is the right way to follow. Therefore the contest only served to establish proof against them.

«When the magicians came» to Pharaoh, they said to him:

«Will we have a reward if we are the victors» over Moosâ?

«He said: Yes», you will have a reward

«and then you will surely be among those who are close to me». He promised them a reward and closeness to him so as to encourage them to do all that they could in opposing the message that Moosâ had brought.

When they met at the appointed time, they and Moosâ, and the people of Egypt, Moosâ exhorted and reminded them, saying:

«...Woe to you! Do not fabricate lies against Allah, lest He annihilate you with His punishment. Those who fabricate such lies are surely lost and doomed.» (*Tâ Hâ 20: 61*)

They disputed and argued, then Pharaoh encouraged them, and they encouraged one another.

«Moosâ said to them: Throw whatever you wish to throw» that is, whatever you think you want to throw, and he did not set any limits, because he was certain that what they had brought for the purpose of opposing the truth was false.

«So they threw their ropes and sticks» and they turned into fast-moving snakes, as they bewitched the people's eyes to see that. «and said: By the might of Pharaoh, it is surely we who will be the victors!». They sought help by the might of a weak slave who was incapable in all aspects, but he behaved arrogantly and had the image

of a king who had troops; they were deceived by his pomp, and they could not see the reality of the matter. Or it may be that they were swearing by the might of Pharaoh that they would prevail.

«Then Moosâ threw his staff, and thereupon it swallowed up all their deceptions». It swallowed up all that they had thrown of ropes and sticks, because they were fabrications and lies, and all of that is false and that cannot stand up to the truth or resist it.

When the magicians saw this great sign, they were convinced, because they were aware that this was not magic; rather it was one of the signs of Allah and a great miracle that pointed to the sincerity of Moosâ and the truthfulness of the message he brought.

«So the magicians fell down in prostration» to their Lord, «They said: We believe in the Lord of the worlds, the Lord of Moosâ and Hâroon». Thus falsehood was defeated in that gathering, and the leaders of falsehood acknowledged its invalidity; the truth became apparent and prevailed until all the onlookers saw it with their own eyes. But Pharaoh insisted on stubbornness and misguidance, getting carried away therein, so he said to the magicians:

«How dare you believe him before I give you permission!» – He and his people were astounded by their audacity towards him, and their daring to believe without his permission or instructions.

«He must be your master, who taught you magic!» This was despite the fact that he was the one who had brought the magicians together, and his chiefs were the ones who had advised him to bring them together from all the cities. Pharaoh and his chiefs already knew that the magicians had never met Moosâ or seen him before that, and that they had performed magic that had dazzled the onlookers and filled them with awe. Yet despite that, the chiefs accepted what Pharaoh said, even though they themselves were aware that it was not true. It should come as no surprise that people who think in this manner would not believe in the clear truth and clear signs, because

if Pharaoh told them that a thing was different from what it really was, they would believe him.

Then Pharaoh threatened the magicians and said: «I will certainly cut off your hands and feet on opposite sides» that is, the right hand and the left foot, as is done to those who spread mischief in the land, «then I will certainly crucify you all» so that you will be disgraced and humiliated.

But the magicians said, when they had tasted the sweetness of faith: «No harm» that is, we do not care what you threaten us with, «it is to our Lord that we will surely return. Verily we hope that our Lord will forgive us our sins» namely disbelief, magic and so on «as we are the first of the believers» that is, the first among these people to believe in Moosâ. So Allah made them steadfast and gave them patience.

It may be that Pharaoh carried out his threat against them because he had the power to do so, or it may be that Allah protected them from him.

Then Pharaoh and his people persisted in their disbelief, and Moosâ continued to bring clear signs to them; every time a sign came and had a great impact on them, they made promises to Moosâ, claiming that if Allah granted them relief, they would believe in him and let the Israelites go with him, but when Allah granted relief, they broke their promise. Then when Moosâ despaired of them ever believing and the punishment became due for them, and the time came for Allah to save the Israelites from their captivity and give them power in the land, Allah inspired Moosâ:



﴿ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَسْرِ بِعِبَادِي إِنَّكَ مُتَّبِعُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ فَأَرْسَلَ فِرْعَوْنُ فِي الْمَدَائِنِ حَاشِرِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾ إِنَّ هَذِهِ لَشَرُّ ذَمَّةٍ قَلِيلُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَنَا لَغَائِظُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ وَإِنَّا لَجَمِيعٌ حَادِرُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ ﴾

﴿٥٦﴾ فَأَخْرَجْنَاهُمْ مِنْ جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَكُنُوزٍ وَمَقَارٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٥٨﴾ كَذَلِكَ وَأَوْرَثْنَاهَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ ﴿٥٩﴾ فَاتَّبَعُوهُمْ مُشْرِقِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٥٢-٦٠)

- 26:52. We inspired Moosâ: Travel by night with My slaves; you will surely be pursued.
- 26:53. So Pharaoh sent heralds to the cities [to mobilise troops],
- 26:54. saying: These are but a small band,
- 26:55. and they have enraged us,
- 26:56. but we are all well-prepared.
- 26:57. Thus did We cause them to leave their gardens and springs,
- 26:58. And their treasures and fine dwellings.
- 26:59. And so it was; and We caused the Children of Israel to inherit such things.
- 26:60. Then [the Egyptians] caught up with them at sunrise.

﴿Travel by night with My slaves﴾ that is, set out with the Israelites at the beginning of the night, so that they may take their time when leaving
 ﴿you will surely be pursued﴾ that is, Pharaoh and his troops will come after you.

And it happened as Allah said: when morning came, and all the Israelites had already departed with Moosâ at night,
 ﴿Pharaoh sent heralds to the cities﴾ to rally his people and urge them to capture the Israelites. He said, encouraging his people:

﴿These﴾ namely the Children of Israel ﴿are but a small band, and they have enraged us﴾, and we want to vent our rage on these slaves who have rebelled against us.

﴿but we are all well-prepared﴾ that is, we have all made preparations against them, and they are enemies of us all, and we have a common interest. So Pharaoh and his troops set out with a huge army after

a general mobilisation; not one of them stayed behind except those who had excuses and were prevented from going out because they were incapacitated.

﴿Thus did We cause them to leave their gardens and springs﴾ that is, the superb gardens of Egypt, with their gushing springs and crops that filled their land, that were cultivated by city dwellers and desert dwellers alike.

﴿And their treasures and fine dwellings﴾ that would amaze and dazzle the onlookers. They had enjoyed them for a long time and had spent their lives enjoying these pleasures and desires, despite their disbelief, stubbornness, arrogance towards others and immense pride.

﴿And so it was; and We caused the Children of Israel﴾ who they had made their slaves and subjected them to heavy labour ﴿to inherit such things﴾ namely these gardens, springs, crops and fine residences. Glory be to the One Who gives dominion to whomever He will and takes it away from whomever He will; Who raises high whomever He will by virtue of his obedience to Him, and humiliates whomever He will, by virtue of his disobedience towards Him.

﴿Then [the Egyptians] caught up with them at sunrise﴾ that is, the people of Pharaoh pursued the people of Moosā at the time of sunrise, and they chased after them with eagerness, out of rage and anger, and they had the power to do them harm.



﴿فَلَمَّا تَرَاهُ الْجَمْعَانَ قَالَ أَصْحَابُ مُوسَى إِنَّا لَمُدْرِكُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ قَالَ كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ ﴿٦٢﴾ فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى مُوسَى أَنْ أَضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْبَحْرَ فَانْفَلَقَ فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرْقٍ كَالطَّوْدِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٦٣﴾ وَأَزْلَفْنَا نَمَّ الْآخَرِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾ وَأَجْبَيْنَا مُوسَى وَمَنْ مَعَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾ ثُمَّ

أَغْرَقْنَا الْآخَرِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُو
 الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٦٨﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٦٦-٦٨)

- 26:61. When the two groups came within sight of one another, the companions of Moosâ said: We are sure to be overtaken.
- 26:62. Moosâ said: No indeed! Verily my Lord is with me and He will guide me.
- 26:63. Then We inspired Moosâ: Strike the sea with your staff. So it parted, and every part became like a huge mountain.¹²
- 26:64. We brought the other group closer to that place.
- 26:65. We saved Moosâ and all those who were with him,
- 26:66. Then We drowned the others.
- 26:67. Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe.
- 26:68. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

«When the two groups came within sight of one another» that is, when each group saw the other

«the companions of Moosâ said», complaining to Moosâ and despairing: «We are sure to be overtaken».

«Moosâ said», reassuring them and telling them of the true promise of his Lord:

«No indeed!» That is, the matter is not as you say, that you will be overtaken,

«Verily my Lord is with me and He will guide me» to that which will save me and you.

«Then We inspired Moosâ: Strike the sea with your staff» – so he struck it, and «it parted» into twelve pathways,

¹² The waters parted, opening up twelve dry passages by which the Israelites could cross, and where the parting waters gathered, in each part the water was drawn up and became like a huge mountain.

﴿and every part became like a huge mountain﴾. And Moosâ and his people entered the sea.

﴿We brought the other group﴾ namely Pharaoh and his people; We brought them closer to that place and caused them to enter the pathway that had been taken by Moosâ and his people.

﴿We saved Moosâ and all those who were with him﴾ – they all came out, and not one of them was left behind.

﴿Then We drowned the others﴾ and not one of them was spared.

﴿Verily in that is a sign﴾ that is, a great sign of the truthfulness of the message brought by Moosâ, and the falseness of the path followed by Pharaoh and his people.

﴿yet most of them will not believe﴾ despite these signs that should lead to faith, because of the corruption in their hearts.

﴿Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful﴾; by His might He destroyed the disbelievers who rejected His Messenger, and by His mercy he saved Moosâ and all those who were with him.



﴿وَأَتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ۖ إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ۗ قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ أَصْنَامًا فَنَنْظُرُ لَهَا عَنْكِنَا ۗ قَالَ هَلْ يَسْمَعُونَكُمْ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ ۗ أَوْ يَنْفَعُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَضُرُّونَ ۗ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا كَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٦٩-٧٤)

26:69. Recount to them the story of Ibrâheem.

26:70. When he said to his father and his people: What do you worship?

26:71. They said: We worship idols, and we are constantly devoted to them.

26:72. He said: Do they hear you when you call upon them?

26:73. Or can they benefit you or harm you [in any way]?

26:74. They said: No, but this is what we found our fathers doing.

That is, recount to the people, O Muhammad (ﷺ), the story of Ibrâheem. What is meant here is this particular episode in his life, otherwise there are many stories about him, but one of the most important and significant of them is this story that speaks of his message and his call to his people, and how he argued with them and proved to them that what they were following was false.

«When he said to his father and his people: What do you worship? They said», bragging about their worship: «We worship idols» that we make and carve with our own hands, «and we are constantly devoted to them» that is, we spend much of our time worshipping them. Ibrâheem said to them, explaining why those idols were not deserving of worship:

«Do they hear you when you call upon them» and do they respond to your call, relieve you of distress and remove all that harms you?

«Or can they benefit you or harm you [in any way]?» They admitted that none of that was the case, for they cannot hear any supplication, or bring any benefit, or cause any harm. Hence when Ibrâheem broke the idols, he said:

«...Nay, it was this one, the biggest of them, who did it. So ask them, if they can speak!» (*al-Anbiyâ' 21: 63*)

– and they said to him:

«...You know full well that these [idols] cannot speak.» (*al-Anbiyâ' 21: 65*)

– that is, that is a fact concerning them that is well-established, and there is no room for confusion or doubt.

So they resorted to following their misguided forefathers, and said: «but this is what we found our fathers doing», so we followed them in that; we followed their path and adhered to their customs.



﴿ قَالَ أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ أَنْتُمْ وَأَبَاؤُكُمْ الْأَقْدَمُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِي ﴿٧٧﴾ إِلَّا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾ الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِينِ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ ﴿٨١﴾ وَالَّذِي يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ ﴿٨٢﴾ وَالَّذِي أَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لِي خَطِيئَتِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ﴿٨٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٧٥-٨٢)

- 26:75. He said: Then do you see those which you have been worshipping,
 26:76. you and your forefathers?
 26:77. Verily they are enemies to me, except the Lord of the worlds,
 26:78. Who created me, so He guides me,
 26:79. And it is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink.
 26:80. When I am sick He heals me;
 26:81. and He will cause me to die, and then bring me to life again;
 26:82. and I hope that He will forgive me my sins on the Day of Judgement.

Ibrâheem said to them: You and your fathers are all on the opposing side concerning this matter. ﴿Then do you see those which you have been worshipping, you and your forefathers? Verily they are enemies to me﴾ so let them do me the least harm, and let them scheme against me, for they are not able to do anything. ﴿except the Lord of the worlds, Who created me, so He guides me﴾, for He is the only One Who bestows blessings upon people and guides them to that which is in their best interests in both spiritual and worldly terms; then he singled out for mention some necessities of life, as he said: ﴿And it is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink. When I am sick He heals me; and He will cause me to die, and then bring me to life again; and I hope that He will forgive me my sins on the Day of Judgement﴾.

For He alone is able to do that, so He alone must be singled out for worship and obedience, and these idols should be shunned that do not create, guide, cause sickness, heal, feed, give to drink, cause death, give life, or benefit their worshippers by relieving their distress or forgiving their sins.

This is definitive evidence and clear proof that neither you nor your fathers can refute. This indicates that you are all misguided and have all forsaken the path of right guidance. Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

«His people argued with him. He said: Are you arguing with me about Allah, when He has guided me? I do not fear any partner you may ascribe to Him, unless my Lord wills [that harm should reach me]. My Lord encompasses all things in His knowledge. Will you not then pay heed?» (al-An'ām 6: 80)



﴿ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مَعْرَفًا وَالْحَقِّنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ ﴾ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَأَجْعَلْ لِي لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِي
 الْآخِرِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَأَجْعَلْنِي مِنْ وَرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٨٥﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٨٣-٨٥)

26:83. My Lord, grant me knowledge and wisdom, and join me with the righteous,

26:84. and grant me an honourable renown among the later nations.

26:85. Make me one of the inheritors of the garden of bliss.

Then Ibrâheem (ﷺ) called upon his Lord, saying: «My Lord, grant me knowledge and wisdom» that is, a great deal of knowledge, by means of which I may know rulings and what is lawful and what is prohibited, and I may be able to judge between people.

«and join me with the righteous» – this refers to his fellow Prophets and Messengers.

﴿and grant me an honourable renown among the later nations﴾ that is, grant that I may be truly praised until the end of time. And Allah answered his prayer: He granted him knowledge and wisdom by virtue of which he became one of the best of the Messengers, and He joined him with his fellow Messengers, and He made him beloved, accepted, venerated and praised among the followers of all religions, at all times.

﴿Make me one of the inheritors of the garden of bliss﴾ that is, one of the people of paradise, to whom Allah gives it as an inheritance. Allah answered his prayer and raised him in status in the gardens of bliss.



﴿وَأَغْفِرْ لَأَبِي إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الضَّالِّينَ﴾ (٨٦) ﴿وَلَا تُخْزِنِي يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ﴾ (٨٧) ﴿يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ﴾ (٨٨) ﴿إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ﴾ (٨٩) (سورة الشعراء: ٨٦-٨٩)

26:86. Forgive my father, for he is one of those who have gone astray.

26:87. And do not disgrace me on the day when [all creatures] are resurrected,

26:88. the day when neither wealth nor sons will be of any avail,

26:89. but only he who comes to Allah with a pure heart [will be saved].

﴿Forgive my father, for he is one of those who have gone astray﴾. This supplication was because of a promise that Ibrâheem had made to his father:

﴿...I will pray to my Lord to forgive you, for indeed He has always been very kind to me.﴾ (Maryam 19: 47)

But Allah (ﷻ) said:

﴿Ibrâheem's prayer for his father's forgiveness was only because of a promise he had made to him. But when it became clear to him that

he was an enemy to Allah, he disavowed him. Verily, Ibrâheem was humble in supplication, forbearing.﴾ (at-Tawbah 9: 114)

﴿And do not disgrace me on the day when [all creatures] are resurrected﴾ that is, by rebuking me for some sins, or punishing me or exposing me because of them. Rather bless me on that day, on which ﴿neither wealth nor sons will be of any avail, but only he who comes to Allah with a pure heart [will be saved]﴾. For this is what will benefit him before You, and this is what will save him from punishment and make him deserve the great reward.

What is meant by the pure heart is that which is free of polytheism, doubt, love of evil, and persisting in innovation and sin. What is implied by being free of these things is that it possesses the opposite, namely sincerity to Allah alone, knowledge, certain faith, love of good and the inclination towards good; this means that what he wants and loves is in accordance with what Allah loves, and his whims and desires are in accordance with the teachings of Allah's religion.



﴿ وَأُزْلِفَتِ الْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾ وَبُرِزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِلْغَاوِينَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ إِنَّمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ هَلْ يَنْصُرُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَنْصُرُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾ فَكُفِّرُوا بِنِهَايِهِمْ وَالْغَاوُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾ وَجُنُودُ إِبْلِيسَ أَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٩٠-٩٥)

- 26:90. [On that day] paradise will be brought within sight of the righteous,
- 26:91. And hell will be placed in full view of those who went astray.
- 26:92. It will be said to them: Where are those whom you used to worship
- 26:93. besides Allah? Can they help you or even help themselves?
- 26:94. Then they will be thrown headlong into hell, both they [the false gods] and those who went astray,

26:95. And the followers of Iblees, all together.

Then Allah tells us about the nature of that momentous day, and what will occur on it of reward and punishment:

﴿paradise will be brought within sight of﴾ that is, it will be brought near to ﴿the righteous﴾, those who feared their Lord, complied with His commands, heeded His prohibitions, and feared His wrath and punishment.

﴿And hell will be placed in full view of﴾ that is, it will be brought forth, with all the punishments that have been prepared therein for ﴿those who went astray﴾ that is, those who indulged in acts of disobedience towards Allah, transgressed His sacred limits, and rejected His Messengers and the message of truth that they brought.

﴿It will be said to them: Where are those whom you used to worship besides Allah? Can they help you or even help themselves?﴾ In other words, none of that can happen, and their lies and disgrace will become apparent. Their loss and scandal will become obvious and their regret will become clear, for their efforts will be wasted.

﴿Then they will be thrown headlong into hell, both they [the false gods] and those who went astray﴾ that is, both those that were worshipped and those who worshipped them.

﴿And the followers of Iblees, all together﴾ – this refers to the humans and jinn whom he incited to commit sin and gained power over them because of their ascription of partners to Allah and their lack of faith. Thus they became among his promoters who strove to please him; those followers of Iblees are divided among those who call people to obey him, those who respond to the call, and those who imitate them in their ascription of partners to Allah.



﴿ قَالُوا وَهَمَّ فِيهَا يُخَصِّمُونَ ﴾ ﴿٩٦﴾ تَاللَّهِ إِن كُنَّا لِنَعْنِي ضَلَّلِ مُبِينِ ﴿٩٧﴾ إِذْ نُسَوِّبُكُمْ رَبِّ
 الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾ وَمَا أَضَلَّنَا إِلَّا الْأَعْمَجُومُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾ فَمَا لَنَا مِنْ شَافِعِينَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ وَلَا صَدِيقٍ حَمِيمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾
 فَلَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةٌ فَنَكُونُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٣﴾ وَإِنَّ
 رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٠٤﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٩٦-١٠٤)

26:96. And they will say, when they are quarrelling therein:

26:97. By Allah, we were clearly misguided

26:98. when we deemed you equal to the Lord of the worlds.

26:99. No one but the evildoers led us astray.

26:100. Now we have no one to intercede for us

26:101. and no caring friend.

26:102. If only we had one more chance, we would be among the believers.

26:103. Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe.

26:104. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

﴿And they﴾ namely the misguided troops of Iblees
 ﴿will say﴾ to the idols and images that they worshipped:
 ﴿By Allah, we were clearly misguided when we deemed you equal
 to the Lord of the worlds﴾ in terms of worship and love, fear and
 hope, and we called upon you as we called upon Him. At that time
 it will become clear to them that they were misguided, and they
 will acknowledge that Allah is just in punishing them, and that it is
 appropriate, for they did not regard them as equal to the Lord of the
 worlds except in terms of worship; they did not regard them as His
 equals in terms of creation, based on the fact that they will mention
 ﴿the Lord of the worlds﴾; they will affirm that Allah is the Lord of
 all the worlds, including their idols and images.

«No one but the evildoers» namely the leaders who called them to the fire
 «led us astray» from the path of true guidance and called us to the path of misguidance and rebellion.

«Now» – on that day – «we have no one to intercede for us» and save us from Allah's punishment
 «and no caring friend» that is, no sincere friend who can help us in any way, as usually happens in this world.

So they will despair of all good and will lose all hope because of what they did, and they will wish to go back to this world so that they might do righteous deeds: «If only we had one more chance» to go back once more to the previous world,
 «we would be among the believers» so that we would be safe from the punishment and we would deserve reward. But there is no way that this could happen; they will have been prevented from what they desire and they will have no chance to redeem themselves.

«Verily in that» which we have mentioned and described to you «is a sign» for you
 «yet most of them will not believe» despite the sending down of these signs.



﴿كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٠٥﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ نُوحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٠٦﴾ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٠٧﴾ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا ﴿١٠٨﴾ وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا ﴿١١٠﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١٠٥-١١٠)

26:105. The people of Nooh rejected the Messengers.

26:106. When their brother Nooh said to them: Will you not fear Allah?

26:107. Verily I am a faithful Messenger to you.

26:108. So fear Allah, and obey me.

26:109. I do not ask you for any recompense for this; my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds.

26:110. So fear Allah, and obey me.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us the story of how the people of Nooḥ rejected their Messenger Nooḥ, and how he responded to them and they responded to him, and the outcome for all of them.

«The people of Nooḥ rejected the Messengers» that is, they rejected all the Messengers. Rejecting Nooḥ is regarded as being like rejecting all of the Messengers, because they all brought the same message and the same beliefs, so rejecting one of them is like rejecting all that they brought of truth. They rejected him «When their brother» in lineage

«Nooḥ said to them» – Allah sent the Messengers from the same tribe or clan as that to whom He sent them, lest they be reluctant to submit to him, and because they would know his real character, so they would not need to ask and find out about him. Nooḥ said to them – addressing them in the kindest manner – as was the way of all the Messengers, may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon them all: «Will you not fear Allah» and give up what you are persisting in of worshipping idols, and devote your worship to Allah alone?

«Verily I am a faithful Messenger to you». The fact that he had been sent as a Messenger to them in particular should have made them accept the message with which he was sent to them and believe in him, and give thanks to Allah (ﷻ) for bestowing the blessing of this noble Messenger exclusively upon them. The fact that he was faithful and trustworthy implied that he would not fabricate lies against Allah, or add anything to or take anything away from His revelation, and that should have made them believe in what he told them and obey what he instructed them to do.

«So fear Allah, and obey me» in what I instruct you to do and forbid you to do. This is what is implied by his being a Messenger

to them and by his being faithful and trustworthy. Therefore this sentence opens with the particle *fa* (translated here as «so»), which indicates the reason for that. The reason why they should do that is mentioned, then Nooh stated that there was no impediment to them doing so, as he said:

«I do not ask you for any recompense for this» so I am not imposing any burden on you

«my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds» and I hope thereby to draw close to Him and attain a great reward. All I hope for with regard to you is that I may be able to give you sincere advice, and that you will follow the straight path.

«So fear Allah, and obey me». He repeated these words because he repeated the call to his people. Nooh stayed among them for a long time, as Allah tells us elsewhere:

«...and he remained among them for a thousand years less fifty...»
(*al-'Ankaboot* 29: 14)

– and:

«Nooh said: My Lord, I have been calling my people night and day, but my call has only driven them further away.» (*Nooh* 71: 5-6)



﴿ قَالُوا أَنْزِلْ لَنَا آيَةً ۖ وَقَالَ رَبُّنَا اتَّبِعُوا نِجْمَ اللَّيْلِ إِذَا تَرَوْهُ ۚ فَقُمْ لِلْآيَاتِ الْكُبْرَى ۚ ﴿١١٣﴾ قَالُوا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ ﴿١١٤﴾ قَالُوا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ ﴿١١٥﴾ قَالُوا لَنْ نَبْرَحَ فِيكَ كَذِبُونَ ۚ ﴿١١٦﴾ قَالُوا لَنْ نَبْرَحَ فِيكَ كَذِبُونَ ۚ ﴿١١٧﴾ قَالُوا لَنْ نَبْرَحَ فِيكَ كَذِبُونَ ۚ ﴿١١٨﴾ قَالُوا لَنْ نَبْرَحَ فِيكَ كَذِبُونَ ۚ ﴿١١٩﴾ قَالُوا لَنْ نَبْرَحَ فِيكَ كَذِبُونَ ۚ ﴿١٢٠﴾ قَالُوا لَنْ نَبْرَحَ فِيكَ كَذِبُونَ ۚ ﴿١٢١﴾ قَالُوا لَنْ نَبْرَحَ فِيكَ كَذِبُونَ ۚ ﴿١٢٢﴾ ﴾

﴿سورة الشعراء: (١١١-١٢٢)﴾

- 26:111. They said: Should we believe in you when only the lowest people follow you?
- 26:112. Nooh said: What knowledge do I have of their doings?¹³
- 26:113. Their reckoning¹⁴ is only with my Lord, if you could but understand.
- 26:114. I will not drive away those who believe;
- 26:115. I am to you but a clear warner.
- 26:116. They said: If you do not desist, O Nooh, you will surely be stoned.
- 26:117. He said: My Lord, my people have rejected me.
- 26:118. So judge decisively between me and them, and save me and the believers who are with me.
- 26:119. So We saved him and those who were with him, in the fully-laden ark.
- 26:120. Then after that We drowned the others.
- 26:121. Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe.
- 26:122. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

They said, rejecting his call and basing their objections on a flawed argument: «Should we believe in you when only the lowest people follow you?» That is, how can we follow you when we see that your followers are none but the lowest of people, the riffraff? Thus it is clear that they were too arrogant to accept the truth and they were ignorant of the real facts. If their aim had been to find out the truth, they would have said, if they had any confusion or doubt about his

¹³ The people cast aspersions on the sincerity of Nooh's followers, claiming that they merely sought to improve their social standing and make some other worldly gains by following him, but Nooh rejected this accusation and stated that he only judged them according to what he saw of their outward conduct.

¹⁴ That is, Allah will bring them to account for what is really in their hearts.

message: Prove to us the validity of the message that you have brought by means of valid arguments and proofs.

If they had truly reflected upon the matter, they would have realised that his followers were in fact the best of people, the people of mature thinking and virtuous attitudes, and that the one who is truly low is the one who has lost his mature thinking, so that he thought that it was appropriate to worship stones, and was content to prostrate to them and call upon them, and he refused to submit to the call of the perfect Messengers.

As soon as one of the two opponents begins speaking words of falsehood, it becomes clear that he has nothing but flawed arguments, regardless of the soundness of his opponent's claim.

When we hear about the people of Nooh, and how they said, rejecting his message: ﴿Should we believe in you when only the lowest people follow you?﴾, basing their argument on a foundation which everyone knows is flawed, we will realise that they were misguided and wrong, even if we did not see the signs of Nooh or hear his great call, which should make us certain that his call was valid and sound.

So Nooh (ﷺ) said: ﴿What knowledge do I have of their doings? Their reckoning is only with my Lord, if you could but understand﴾ that is, their deeds and their reckoning are only with Allah; all I have to do is convey the message, and you should not worry about them. If what I have brought is the truth, then submit to it, for each one is responsible for his own deeds.

﴿I will not drive away those who believe﴾ – it seems that they demanded that he should drive them away, out of arrogance and tyranny, before they would believe. But he said: ﴿I will not drive away those who believe﴾ because they do not deserve to be driven away and humiliated; rather they deserve to be honoured in word and deed. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿When those who believe in Our revelations come to you, say: Peace be upon you. Your Lord has taken it upon Himself to be merciful...﴾
(*al-An'ām* 6: 54)

﴿I am to you but a clear warner﴾ I am but a warner who conveys the message from Allah, and I am trying my best to give sincere advice to people, but I do not have any control over the matter, for control belongs only to Allah.

Nooḥ (ﷺ) continued to call them by night and by day, in private and in public, but they only increased in aversion, and ﴿They said: If you do not desist, O Nooḥ﴾ from calling us to Allah alone, ﴿you will surely be stoned﴾ that is, we will kill you in the worst manner, by stoning, as dogs are killed.

May they be doomed; how ugly was this response to one who was sincere and honest, who cared more for them than they cared for themselves!

No wonder, when their wrongdoing reached such an extent and their rejection grew so intense, their Prophet prayed against them with a supplication that included all of them, and he said:

﴿...My Lord, do not leave on earth a single living soul from among the disbelievers.﴾ (*Nooḥ* 71: 26)

﴿He said: My Lord, my people have rejected me. So judge decisively between me and them﴾ that is, destroy the transgressors among us. He knew that they were the transgressors and wrongdoers, hence he said: ﴿and save me and the believers who are with me﴾.

﴿So We saved him and those who were with him, in the fully-laden ark﴾ that is, the ship that was filled with people and animals.

﴿Then after that﴾ that is, after Nooḥ and the believers who were with him

﴿We drowned the others﴾ that is, all of his people.

﴿Verily in that﴾ that is, in the saving of Nooḥ and his followers and the destruction of those who disbelieved in him

﴿is a sign﴾ that points to the truthfulness of Our Messengers, and the soundness of the message they brought, and the falseness of that in which their enemies, who rejected them, believed.

﴿Verily your Lord is the Almighty﴾ Who subjugated His enemies by His might, so He drowned them in the flood
 ﴿the Most Merciful﴾ towards His close friends, for He saved Nooh and the believers who were with him.



﴿كَذَّبَ عَادُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمُ أَخُوهُمْ هُودٌ أَلَا نُنْفِقُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾ إِنِّي لَكَرُّرَسُولٍ أَمِينٍ ﴿١٢٥﴾ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا ﴿١٢٦﴾ وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِي إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٢٧﴾ أَتَبْنُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيعٍ آيَةً تَعْبَثُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾ وَتَتَّخِذُونَ مَصَانِعَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾ وَإِذَا بَطِشْتُمْ بَطِشْتُمْ جَبَارِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا ﴿١٣١﴾ وَأَتَّقُوا الَّذِي أَمَدَّكُمْ بِمَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾ أَمَدَّكُمْ بِأَنْعَامٍ وَبَنِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾ وَجَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿١٣٤﴾ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٣٥﴾ قَالُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَوَعظت أَمْ لَمْ تَكُنْ مِنَ الْوَاعِظِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا خُلُقُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَدِّينَ ﴿١٣٨﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَهْلَكَنَّهُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٤٠﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١٢٣-١٤٠)

26:123. The [people of] 'Ād rejected the Messengers.

26:124. When their brother Hood said to them: Will you not fear Allah?

26:125. Verily I am a faithful Messenger to you,

26:126. So fear Allah, and obey me.

26:127. I do not ask you for any recompense for this; my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds.

26:128. Do you build a landmark on every high place for no sound purpose?¹⁵

¹⁵ Their aim in building those landmarks was to set up stations from which they could harass passing travellers and take their belongings. =

- 26:129. And do you construct magnificent works in the hope of living forever?
- 26:130. And when you strike, do you strike ruthlessly?
- 26:131. So fear Allah, and obey me.
- 26:132. And fear Him Who has bestowed upon you what you know:
- 26:133. He has bestowed upon you livestock and sons,
- 26:134. And gardens and springs.
- 26:135. Verily I fear for you the punishment of a momentous day.
- 26:136. They said: It is the same to us whether you admonish us or not.
- 26:137. This is only the custom of those who came before us,
- 26:138. And we are not going to be punished.
- 26:139. Thus they rejected him, so We destroyed them. Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe.
- 26:140. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

«The [people of] 'Ād rejected the Messengers» that is, the tribe called 'Ād, whose Messenger was Hood, rejected him, and their rejection of him was a rejection of all the other Messengers, because the call is one.

«When their brother» in lineage «Hood said to them», kindly and gently: «Will you not fear Allah» and give up ascribing partners to Him and worshipping gods other than Him?

«Verily I am a faithful Messenger to you» that is, Allah has sent me to you as a mercy to you and out of care for you, and I am trustworthy and honest, as you know. Then he followed that by saying:

«So fear Allah, and obey me» that is, fulfil your duty towards Allah (ﷻ), which is fearing Him, and fulfil your duty towards me, by obeying me in what I enjoin and forbid you to do. This implies that

you should follow me and obey me, and there is nothing to prevent you from believing, for I am not asking you for any payment for conveying the message to you and advising you, such that you would find that payment burdensome, for ﴿my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds﴾ Who had been bestowing great favours, bounty and generosity upon them, especially the care that He bestowed upon His close friends and Prophets.

﴿Do you build a landmark on every high place for no sound purpose?﴾ That is, do you do that in vain, for no benefit that is in your spiritual or worldly interests?

﴿And do you construct magnificent works﴾ namely ponds and reservoirs

﴿in the hope of living forever?﴾ When in fact there is no way anyone can live forever.

﴿And when you strike﴾ people ﴿do you strike ruthlessly﴾, taking their wealth? For Allah (ﷻ) had given them great strength, and what they should have done was to use their strength in obedience to Allah. But they were arrogant and proud, and they said:

﴿...Who is more powerful than us?...﴾ (Fussilat 41: 15)

– and they used their strength to disobey Allah and for vain and foolish purposes. Hence their Prophet told them not to do that.

﴿So fear Allah﴾ and give up your ascription of partners to Him and your insolence

﴿and obey me﴾ as you know that I am the Messenger of Allah to you, and I am honest and sincere.

﴿And fear Him Who has bestowed upon you﴾ that is, given you ﴿what you know﴾ that is, He has given you that which cannot be ignored or denied of livestock,

﴿He has bestowed upon you livestock﴾ namely camels, cattle and sheep

﴿and sons﴾ that is, abundant offspring. He has increased your wealth, and increased your children, especially sons, the better of the two genders.

This is a reminder to them of their blessings, then he reminded them of the coming of the punishment of Allah to which they might be exposed, as he said: ﴿Verily I fear for you the punishment of a momentous day﴾ that is, because of my compassion and care for you, I fear that a severe punishment may befall you, and when it comes it cannot be put back, if you persist in your disbelief and transgression.

But they said, stubbornly rejecting the truth and disbelieving in their Prophet: ﴿It is the same to us whether you admonish us or not﴾ that is, it makes no difference to us. This was the utmost arrogance, for people to reach such a state that when it came to the reminders of Allah – that could melt solid mountains and cause the hearts of wise people to crack – it made no difference whether those reminders were there or not, for people whose wrongdoing had reached an extreme degree, who were utterly doomed and there was no hope of them ever being guided. Hence they said:

﴿This is only the custom of those who came before us﴾ that is, this state of affairs and life of ease, and so on, is something that happened to the earlier generations: sometimes they had a life of ease and sometimes they had a life of poverty. This is how life is; it is not a test or a blessing from Allah (ﷻ), or a trial for His slaves.

﴿And we are not going to be punished﴾ – this was a denial on their part of the resurrection, or else they were going along with their Prophet by way of ridiculing him by saying: Even if we assume that we will be resurrected, as we were showered with blessings in this world, that will continue to be the case when we are resurrected.

﴿Thus they rejected him﴾ that is, rejection became second nature to them, and they could not be deterred from it, ﴿so We destroyed them﴾. ﴿And as for 'Ād, they were destroyed by a furious cold wind which He unleashed against them for seven nights and eight days in succession,

so that you would have seen the people lying lifeless as if they were the trunks of fallen palm trees.﴾ (al-Hâqqah 69: 6-7)

﴿Verily in that is a sign﴾ of the truthfulness of Our Prophet Hood (ﷺ) and the soundness of the message he brought, and the falseness of the path of polytheism and tyranny followed by his people.

﴿yet most of them will not believe﴾ despite the signs that should lead to faith.

﴿Verily your Lord is the Almighty﴾, Who destroyed by His might the people of Hood, despite their strength and power

﴿the Most Merciful﴾ towards His Prophet Hood, as He saved him and the believers who were with him.



﴿كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ صَالِحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٤٢﴾ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٤٣﴾ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا ﴿١٤٤﴾ وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾ أَتُرْكُونَ فِي مَا هَاهُنَا آمِنِينَ ﴿١٤٦﴾ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿١٤٧﴾ وَزُرُوعٍ وَنَخْلٍ طَلْعُهَا هَضِيمٌ ﴿١٤٨﴾ وَتَنجُوتُونَ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ يَوْمًا قَرِيبٍ ﴿١٤٩﴾ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا ﴿١٥٠﴾ وَلَا تَطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٥١﴾ الَّذِينَ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٢﴾ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَخَّرِينَ ﴿١٥٣﴾ مَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُنَا فَأْتِ بِآيَةٍ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿١٥٤﴾ قَالَ هَذِهِ نَاقَةٌ لَهَا شِرْبٌ وَلَكُمْ شِرْبُ يَوْمٍ مَعْلُومٍ ﴿١٥٥﴾ وَلَا تَمَسُّوهَا بِسُوءٍ فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٥٦﴾ فَعَقَرُوهَا فَاصْبَحُوا نَدِيمِينَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ فَأَخَذَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ إِنْ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةٌ وَمَا كَانُوا أَكْثَرَهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٥٨﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٥٩﴾﴾

(سورة الشعراء: ١٤١-١٥٩)

26:141. Thamood rejected the Messengers.

26:142. When their brother Şâliḥ said to them: Will you not fear Allah?

26:143. Verily I am a faithful Messenger to you

- 26:144. So fear Allah, and obey me.
- 26:145. I do not ask you for any recompense for this; my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds.
- 26:146. Will you be left secure [from death and punishment] in the midst of what you have here,
- 26:147. Amidst gardens and springs,
- 26:148. And cornfields and palm trees laden with ripe fruit,
- 26:149. Carving out houses in the mountains with great skill?
- 26:150. So fear Allah, and obey me,
- 26:151. And do not obey the bidding of the transgressors,
- 26:152. Those who spread mischief in the land and do no good at all.
- 26:153. They said: You are but one of those who are bewitched!
- 26:154. You are but a human being like ourselves. So bring us a sign, if you are telling the truth.
- 26:155. Ṣāliḥ said: Here is a she-camel; she will have her share of water and you will have your share, each on an appointed day.
- 26:156. Do not harm her in any way, lest the punishment of a momentous day overtake you.
- 26:157. But they hamstrung her, then they came to regret it.
- 26:158. So the punishment overtook them. Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe.
- 26:159. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

﴿Thamood﴾ the well-known tribe in the cities of al-Ḥijr
 ﴿rejected the Messengers﴾. They rejected Ṣāliḥ (ﷺ), who brought
 the message of the oneness of Allah, to which all the Messengers
 called people. Therefore their rejection of him was rejection of all
 the Messengers.

﴿When their brother﴾ in lineage
 ﴿Ṣāliḥ said to them﴾, kindly and gently:
 ﴿Will you not fear Allah﴾ and give up polytheism and sin?

«Verily I am a faithful Messenger to you» from Allah your Lord; He has sent me to you out of kindness and mercy towards you, so accept His mercy and respond to it with submission.

«faithful» – you know my honesty and sincerity, which requires you to believe in me and in the message that I have brought.

«I do not ask you for any recompense for this» so that you might say: What prevents us from following you is the fact that you want to take our wealth

«my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds» that is, I only seek reward from Him.

«Will you be left secure [from death and punishment] in the midst of what you have here, amidst gardens and springs, and cornfields and palm trees laden with ripe fruit» that is, do you think that you will be left with these good things and blessings for no purpose, enjoying delights and physical pleasure like animals, and that you would be left with no purpose, with no commands or prohibitions, using these blessings in acts of disobedience towards Allah?

«Carving out houses in the mountains with great skill» that is, your smartness and skill have reached such a level that you make houses in solid mountains.

«So fear Allah, and obey me, and do not obey the bidding of the transgressors» who overstep the mark,

«Those who spread mischief in the land and do no good at all» that is, those whose characteristic and preoccupation is the spreading of mischief in the land by committing sins and calling people to them, spreading mischief and not doing any good at all. This is the most harmful of all attitudes, because it is pure evil.

It is as if there were some people who had already taken a stance and decided to oppose their Prophet, planning against his call and persisting in the way of misguidance. So Şâlih told the people not to be deceived by them. Perhaps they are the ones of whom Allah said:

«There were in the city nine men who spread mischief in the land and never did anything good.» (*an-Naml* 27: 48)

But this prohibition and admonition was to no avail, for they said to Şâlih: «You are but one of those who are bewitched!». That is, a spell has been put on you, so you are talking nonsense.

«You are but a human being like ourselves»; what makes you better than us so that you call us to follow you?

«So bring us a sign, if you are telling the truth» – this was despite the fact that reflecting on him as an individual and the message that he brought were among the greatest of clear signs that would prove that the message he brought was true. But because of their hardheartedness they demanded specific signs, and in most cases the one who demands signs will not benefit from them, because his demand is based on stubbornness, not on seeking guidance.

So Şâlih said: «Here is a she-camel» that came out of solid, smooth rock (in this regard we are following many commentators, and there is no reason not to do so) – you will all see her.

«she will have her share of water and you will have your share, each on an appointed day» that is, she will drink water from the well on one day, and you will drink her milk, then on the next day she will move away, and you can drink from the well.

«Do not harm her in any way», by hamstringing or otherwise, «lest the punishment of a momentous day overtake you». The she-camel came out, and remained with them under those circumstances, but they did not believe, and they persisted in their transgression.

«But they hamstrung her, then they came to regret it. So the punishment overtook them» – that was the blast that came upon them and destroyed them all.

«Verily in that is a sign» of the truthfulness of the message brought by Our Messengers and the falseness of what their opponents said. «yet most of them will not believe. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful».

﴿كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ لُوطٍ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٦٠﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ لُوطُ أَلَا نُنْفِقُونَ ﴿١٦١﴾ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٦٢﴾ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا أَمْرِي ﴿١٦٣﴾ وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٤﴾ أَنَا تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَأَنَا فِي الْمَعْلَمِينَ ﴿١٦٥﴾ وَتَذَرُونَ مَا خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ عَادُونَ ﴿١٦٦﴾ قَالُوا لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْتَهِ يَا لُوطُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمَخْرُجِينَ ﴿١٦٧﴾ قَالَ إِنِّي لِعَمَلِكُمْ مِنَ الْقَالِينَ ﴿١٦٨﴾ رَبِّ نَجِّنِي وَأَهْلِي مِمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾ فَجَنَّبْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٧٠﴾ إِلَّا عَجُوزًا فِي الْغَدِيرِينَ ﴿١٧١﴾ ثُمَّ دَمَرْنَا الْأَخْرِينَ ﴿١٧٢﴾ وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا فَسَاءَ مَطَرُ الْمُنذَرِينَ ﴿١٧٣﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧٤﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُو الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٧٥﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١٦٠-١٧٥)

- 26:160. The people of Loot rejected the Messengers.
 26:161. When their brother Loot said to them: Will you not fear Allah?
 26:162. Verily I am a faithful Messenger to you,
 26:163. So fear Allah, and obey me.
 26:164. I do not ask you for any recompense for this; my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds.
 26:165. Do you approach with lust the males, of all the people?
 26:166. And ignore that which your Lord has created for you of your wives?¹⁶ You are indeed people who transgress.
 26:167. They said: If you do not desist, O Loot, you will surely be driven away.
 26:168. Loot said: I utterly abhor your deeds.
 26:169. My Lord, save me and my family from [the consequences of] what they do.
 26:170. So We saved him and all his family,

¹⁶ {of your wives}: some commentators suggest that this is a reference to the vagina, in contrast to anal intercourse, which is prohibited even with one's wife.

- 26:171. Except an old woman who stayed behind.
 26:172. Then We destroyed the others
 26:173. and We let loose upon them a shower [of stones]. And evil was the shower that fell upon those who had been warned [but did not pay heed].
 26:174. Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe.
 26:175. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

Looṭ spoke to his people, and they said the same as others had said before them; they had a similar mentality that was based on disbelief, so their words were similar. In addition to their polytheism, they also committed an unprecedented type of immorality, as they preferred intimacy with men, which was a dirty and abominable action, and they ignored what Allah had created for them of their wives, because of their lust and transgression. Looṭ kept on telling them not to do that until they said to him:

﴿If you do not desist, O Looṭ, you will surely be driven away﴾ that is, from the city. When he saw that they were persisting in the sin, he said: ﴿I utterly abhor your deeds﴾ that is, I hate them, I forbid them and I warn against them.

﴿My Lord, save me and my family from [the consequences of] what they do﴾ that is, from the deed and its punishment. Allah answered his prayer. ﴿So We saved him and all his family, except an old woman who stayed behind﴾ that is, she was one of those who remained and was punished; she was his wife.

﴿Then We destroyed the others and We let loose upon them a shower [of stones]﴾ that is, stones of baked clay.

﴿And evil was the shower that fell upon those who had been warned [but did not pay heed]﴾ for it destroyed every last one of them.

﴿Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful﴾.



﴿ كَذَّبَ أَصْحَابُ لَيْكَةِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٧٦﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ شُعَيْبٌ أَلَا تُنْقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ
 أَمِينٌ ﴿١٧٨﴾ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا أَمْرًا ﴿١٧٩﴾ وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ
 الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٨٠﴾ أَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُخْسِرِينَ ﴿١٨١﴾ وَزِنُوا بِالْقِسْطِ أَسْتَقِيمَ ﴿١٨٢﴾
 وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ وَلَا تَعْتُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿١٨٣﴾ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي
 خَلَقَكُمْ وَالْجِيلَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٨٤﴾ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسْحَرِينَ ﴿١٨٥﴾ وَمَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ
 مِثْلُنَا وَإِنْ نَظُنُّكَ لَمِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿١٨٦﴾ فَاسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ
 الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿١٨٧﴾ قَالَ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمِ الظُّلَّةِ
 إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابٌ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٨٩﴾ إِنْ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾ وَإِنَّ
 رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٩١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١٧٦-١٩١)

- 26:176. The dwellers of the Wood rejected the Messengers.
- 26:177. When Shu'ayb said to them: Will you not fear Allah?
- 26:178. Verily I am a faithful Messenger to you,
- 26:179. So fear Allah, and obey me.
- 26:180. I do not ask you for any recompense for this; my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds.
- 26:181. Give full measure and do not be among those who defraud others;
- 26:182. and weigh with accurate scales;
- 26:183. and do not undermine people's rights and dues, and do not strive to spread mischief in the land.
- 26:184. And fear Him Who created you and those who came before you.
- 26:185. They said: You are but one of those who are bewitched!
- 26:186. You are but a human being like ourselves. We think you are nothing but a liar.

- 26:187. Then cause pieces of the sky to fall upon us,¹⁷ if you are telling the truth.
- 26:188. Shu'ayb said: My Lord knows best what you do.
- 26:189. Thus they rejected him, so they were overtaken by the punishment of the day of the overshadowing cloud,¹⁸ and that was the punishment of a momentous day.
- 26:190. Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe.
- 26:191. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

The word translated here as «the Wood» refers to gardens in which the branches of the trees are twisted together. The dwellers of the Wood were the people of Madyan, who rejected their Prophet Shu'ayb, who brought the same message as all the other Messengers.

«When Shu'ayb said to them: Will you not fear Allah» and give up that which angers Him and which He hates, namely disbelief and sin?

«Verily I am a faithful Messenger to you» which dictates that you should fear Allah and obey me. In addition to their polytheism, they used to give short weight and measure, so he said to them:

«Give full measure» that is, give the complete amount,

«and do not be among those who defraud others» that is, those who detract from people's wealth and steal it by giving short weight and measure.

¹⁷ Shu'ayb (ﷺ) had warned them of Allah's punishment, and they audaciously challenged him to bring a specific punishment upon them, one that came from above. This indeed was their punishment, as Allah tells us in a subsequent verse: «Thus they rejected him, so they were overtaken by the punishment of the day of the overshadowing cloud» (26: 189).

¹⁸ This cloud came at a time of intense heat, so the people rushed to seek shade beneath it, then Allah caused many blasts of thunder to come from it, one after another, and the thunderbolts destroyed the evildoers. (at-Ṭabari; al-Qurṭubi)

﴿and weigh with accurate scales﴾ that is, use scales that give a correct weight.

﴿And fear Him Who created you and those who came before you﴾ that is, the early generations of humankind. As He is the only One Who created you and created those who came before you, without anyone else playing any role in that, so you should worship Him alone and affirm His oneness. Just as He blessed you by bringing you into being and bestowing His blessings upon you, so you should respond by giving thanks to Him.

But they said to him, rejecting him and his message: ﴿You are but one of those who are bewitched﴾; you are talking nonsense like one who has been bewitched, and the best way to react is not to blame him.

﴿You are but a human being like ourselves﴾ and there is nothing special about you to make you superior to us, so that you could call us to follow you. This is like what was said by those who came before them and those who came after them, who objected to the Messengers on the basis of their specious arguments that they are still repeating and basing their rejection on. They are agreed on that because they are agreed on disbelief and they have a similar mentality. The Messengers responded to them by saying:

﴿...Indeed, we are but human beings like yourselves, but Allah bestows His favour upon whomever He wills of His slaves...﴾ (Ibrāheem 14: 11)

﴿We think you are nothing but a liar﴾ – this was audacity and unfairness on their part, and a false statement that they knew was not right. There was not one of the Messengers who came to his people and called them, arguing with them and they with him, but Allah showed at his hands signs by means of which they could become certain of his sincerity and honesty, especially Shu'ayb (ﷺ), who was called the “orator of the Prophets” because of his eloquent discussion with his people and his arguing with them in the best manner. His people were certain of his sincerity and that the message that he

brought was true, but what they said about thinking that he was a liar was in fact a lie on their part.

﴿Then cause pieces of the sky to fall upon us﴾ that is, pieces of punishment to eradicate us ﴿if you are telling the truth﴾. This is like what their fellow disbelievers said:

﴿And [remember] when they said: O Allah, if this is indeed the truth from You, then rain down upon us stones from the sky or send us a painful punishment.﴾ (*al-Anfal* 8: 32)

They demanded some specific signs that would not satisfy the one who demanded them.

﴿Shu'ayb said: My Lord knows best what you do﴾ that is, with regard to sending down punishment or producing the signs you demand, it is not me who brings them down or produces them. All I am required to do is convey the message to you and advise you, and I have done that. Rather the one who brings them is my Lord, Who knows your deeds and your situation, and He will requite you and bring you to account.

﴿Thus they rejected him﴾ that is, rejection and disbelief became second nature to them in such a way that the signs did not benefit them and nothing could work with them except the coming down of the punishment.

﴿so they were overtaken by the punishment of the day of the overshadowing cloud﴾ – a cloud overshadowed them and they gathered beneath it, enjoying its shade that was not really shade. Then the punishment burnt them and they remained beneath it, lifeless, having left behind their dwellings and settling in the abode of misery and punishment.

﴿and that was the punishment of a momentous day﴾. They will have no chance to go back to this world and start anew, and the punishment will not be alleviated even for a short while, and they will be given no respite.

﴿Verily in that is a sign﴾ that points to the truthfulness of Shu'ayb and the soundness of that to which he called people, and of the falseness of his people's rejection of him.

﴿yet most of them will not believe﴾ despite seeing the signs, because there is nothing good in them.

﴿But most of humankind will not believe, no matter how eagerly you desire it.﴾ (Yoosuf 12: 103)

﴿Verily your Lord is the Almighty﴾ Who subjugates all creatures ﴿the Most Merciful﴾; mercy is typical of Him and all goodness in this world and the hereafter is the effect of His mercy, from the moment Allah created the universe until it ends. By His might, He destroyed His enemies when they rejected His Messengers, and by His mercy, He saved His close friends and the believers who followed them.



﴿وَإِنَّهُ لَنَزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٩٢﴾ نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ ﴿١٩٣﴾ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾ بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ ﴿١٩٥﴾ وَإِنَّهُ لَفِي زُجُرِ الْأُولِينَ ﴿١٩٦﴾ أُولَئِكَ يَكُنْ لَهُمْ آيَةٌ أَنْ يَعْلَمَهُ عُلَمَتُؤَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ ﴿١٩٧﴾ وَلَوْ نَزَّلْنَاهُ عَلَى بَعْضِ الْأَعْجَمِينَ ﴿١٩٨﴾ فَقَرَأَهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٩٩﴾ كَذَلِكَ سَلَكْنَاهُ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٢٠٠﴾ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ حَتَّى يَرَوُا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ ﴿٢٠١﴾ فَيَأْتِيهِمْ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢٠٢﴾ فَيَقُولُوا هَلْ نَحْنُ مُنظَرُونَ ﴿٢٠٣﴾﴾

(سورة الشعراء: ١٩٢-٢٠٣)

26:192. Verily this [Qur'an] is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds;

26:193. The faithful Spirit has brought it down

26:194. to your heart so that you may be one of the warners,

26:195. in clear Arabic speech.

26:196. Verily it was mentioned in the scriptures of the previous nations.

26:197. Is it not a sign for them that the scholars of the Children of Israel recognise it [to be true]?

- 26:198. If We had sent it down to any of the non-Arabs,
 26:199. and he had recited it to them, they still would not have believed
 in it.
 26:200. Thus We let it [disbelief] enter the hearts of the evildoers.
 26:201. They will not believe in it until they see the painful punishment.
 26:202. It will come upon them suddenly, when they least expect it.
 26:203. Then they will say: Can we be granted some respite?

Having mentioned the stories of the Prophets with their nations, how they called them and how the people responded to them, and how Allah destroyed their enemies and they ultimately prevailed, here Allah mentions this noble Messenger and great chosen Prophet (ﷺ), and what he brought of the Book in which there is guidance for people of intellect.

«Verily this [Qur'an] is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds»; the One Who sent it down is the Originator of the heavens and the earth, who sustains the entire universe, both the upper and lower realms. As He cared for them by guiding them to that which is in their best interests in worldly terms and their physical well-being, He also cares for them by guiding them to that which leads to well-being in religious terms and in the hereafter. One of the greatest signs of His care for them is the sending down of this noble Book that contains much goodness and abundant blessings. In it there is guidance to what is in people's best interests in this world and the hereafter, and righteous manners and attitudes, that is not found in any other book.

In the words «Verily this [Qur'an] is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds» there is an indication of its greatness and great care for this Book, in that it has come down from Allah and not from anyone else, and it is intended to benefit you and guide you.

«The faithful Spirit has brought it down» – the faithful Spirit is Jibreel (جبرئيل), who is the best and strongest of the angels. The word

translated here as «faithful» refers to one who has been trusted not to add or subtract anything in it.

«to your heart», O Muhammad (ﷺ), «so that you may be one of the warners», guiding people thereby to the path of right guidance and warning against the path of misguidance.

«in clear Arabic speech» which is the best of languages, the language of those to whom it was sent and who were the original recipients of the call in clear Arabic language.

Think about how these sublime virtues were combined in this noble Book. For it is the best of books, brought down by the best of the angels, to the best of humankind, to the best part of him – namely his heart – to the best nation brought forth for humankind, in the best, most eloquent and richest of languages, namely clear Arabic speech.

«Verily it was mentioned in the scriptures of the previous nations» that is, it was foretold and confirmed in the previous scriptures, and when it was revealed in accordance with what was foretold, that confirmed what was mentioned in the previous Books.

«Rather he has brought the truth and confirmed the [message of the earlier] Messengers.» (*as-Sāffāt* 37: 37)

«Is it not a sign for them» of its soundness, and that it is from Allah «(that the scholars of the Children of Israel recognise it [to be true])» – knowledge ended up with them and they were the most knowledgeable of people. With regard to anything about which there is confusion, the matter should be referred to people of experience and knowledge, so that their word may be proof against others, just as the magicians who were highly skilled in the area of magic confirmed that the miracles of Moosā were true and were not magic. After that, no attention is to be paid to the words of the ignorant.

«If We had sent it down to any of the non-Arabs» who did not understand Arabic and could not express themselves properly «(and he had recited it to them, they still would not have believed in it)» for they would have said: We do not understand what he is saying,

and we do not know what he is calling us to. So let them praise their Lord that it came to them in the language of the most eloquent of humankind, the most able to express what is meant in the clearest words, and let them hasten to believe in it and respond by submitting and accepting it. But to reject it without any reason to doubt is pure disbelief and stubbornness, and it is something that they inherited from the disbelieving nations. Hence Allah says:

«Thus We let it [disbelief] enter the hearts of the evildoers» that is, We instilled rejection and denial in the hearts of the evildoers, as the thread is introduced into the needle, and it became well entrenched and became second nature to them. That was because of their wrongdoing and evil deeds. Hence Allah says:

«They will not believe in it until they see the painful punishment» for their disbelief.

«It will come upon them suddenly, when they least expect it» that is, it will catch them unawares, when they are not anticipating it and do not realise that it is coming, so that the punishment will be more effective in wreaking vengeance upon them.

«Then» at that moment, «they will say: Can we be granted some respite?» That is, they will ask to be given more time, but in fact it will be too late, and the punishment will come upon them that cannot be lifted or reduced for even a short while.



﴿ أَفِعْدَابِنَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ﴿٢٠٤﴾ أَفَرَأَيْتَ إِن مَّتَّعْنَاهُمْ سِنِينَ ﴿٢٠٥﴾ ثُمَّ جَاءَهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٢٠٦﴾ مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَمْتَعُونَ ﴿٢٠٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٢٠٤-٢٠٧)

26:204. Do they really seek to hasten Our punishment?

26:205. But consider this: if We grant them a life of ease for years,

26:206. Then there comes to them that which they are warned of,

26:207. All the life of ease that they were granted will be of no avail to them.

﴿Do they really seek to hasten Our punishment﴾ which is the immense and painful punishment that cannot be taken lightly or thought of as insignificant. What has deceived them? Do they have the strength to bear it with patience? Or do they have the strength to ward it off or lift it once it befalls them? Or can they escape Us, and do they think that We are not able to punish them?

﴿But consider this: if We grant them a life of ease for years﴾ that is, what you think, if We do not hasten to send down the punishment upon them, and we give them respite for a number of years, during which they enjoy a life of ease in this world,

﴿Then there comes to them that which they are warned of﴾ of punishment

﴿All the life of ease﴾ and the pleasures and desires ﴿that they were granted will be of no avail to them﴾.

In other words, what could help them or benefit them, when those pleasures have ceased and vanished, and the consequences of that have come, and the punishment is doubled and the time is long? The point here is to warn against incurring the punishment and becoming deserving of it. The issue is not whether it is to be hastened or delayed, for that is not important (what matters is avoiding punishment in the first place).



﴿وَمَا أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَرِيْبَةٍ إِلَّا هُمْ يُنذِرُونَ ﴿٢٠٨﴾ ذِكْرِيْ وَمَا كُنَّا ظَالِمِيْنَ ﴿٢٠٩﴾ وَمَا نَنْزَلَتْ
بِهِ الشَّيْطَانُ ﴿٢١٠﴾ وَمَا يَنْبَغِيْ لَهُمْ وَمَا يَسْتَطِيعُوْنَ ﴿٢١١﴾ إِنَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّمْعِ لَمَعْرُوْلُونَ

﴿سورة الشعراء: ٢٠٨-٢١٢﴾

- 26:208. We never destroyed any city without first sending Messengers to warn it
- 26:209. by way of reminder, for We are never unjust.
- 26:210. It was not the devils who brought this [Qur'an] down;
- 26:211. It is not appropriate for them to do that, nor is it within their capability.
- 26:212. Indeed they are excluded from hearing it [the Qur'an].

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of His perfect justice in destroying the disbelievers, and that He never sent destruction and punishment upon any city until after He had left them with no excuse, and he had sent warners bringing clear signs and calling them to right guidance, warning them against doom and reminding them of the signs and revelations of Allah, and how He blessed them and how previous nations were destroyed and all these blessings were taken away from them.

﴿by way of reminder﴾ to them, and so as to establish proof against them

﴿for We are never unjust﴾; We do not destroy cities before warning them, or punish them when they are unaware of the warning. This is like the verses in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...Nor do We punish until We have sent a Messenger [to give warning],﴾ (*al-Isrā' 17: 15*)

– and:

﴿Messengers sent as bearers of glad tidings and as warners, so that humankind would have no excuse before Allah, after the [coming of the] Messengers...﴾ (*an-Nisā' 4: 165*)

Having highlighted the perfect and majestic nature of the Qur'an, and declaring it to be above all shortcomings, and having told us that He protected it – at the time of its revelation and after its revelation – from the devils among the jinn and humankind, Allah (ﷻ) says

here: «It was not the devils who brought this [Qur'an] down; it is not appropriate» that is, befitting «for them to do that, nor is it within their capability» to do so.

«Indeed they are excluded from hearing it [the Qur'an]» – they were kept away from it and the shooting stars were prepared for them to protect it, and it was brought down by Jibreel, the strongest of the angels, whom no devil can approach or come anywhere near his territory. This is like the verse in which Allah says:

«Verily, it is We Who have sent down the Reminder [the Qur'an], and verily it is We Who will preserve it.» (*al-Hijr* 15: 9)



﴿فَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُعَذَّبِينَ﴾ (٢١٣) وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ ﴿٢١٤﴾ وَأَخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ أَنْبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢١٥﴾ فَإِنْ عَصَوْكَ فَقُلْ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢١٦﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٢١٣-٢١٦)

- 26:213. Do not call upon any other god alongside Allah, lest you be among those who will be punished.
- 26:214. And [O Muhammad] warn your nearest kinsfolk,
- 26:215. And lower your wing [in humility and gentleness] to the believers who follow you.
- 26:216. Then if they [your kinsfolk] disobey you, say: I am not accountable for what you do.

Here Allah (ﷻ) forbids His Messenger (ﷺ) first of all, and his Ummah by implication, as they follow him, to call upon anyone other than Allah, of all created beings, for that incurs eternal punishment because it is ascribing partners to Him.

«...Whoever ascribes partners to Allah, then Allah has forbidden paradise for him, and the fire will be his abode...» (*al-Ma'idah* 5: 72)

Prohibition of a thing is a command to do its opposite, so the prohibition on ascribing partners to Allah is a command to devote worship to Allah alone, without any partner or associate, out of love, fear, hope and humility, turning towards Him at all times.

Having enjoined him (the Prophet [ﷺ]) to do that by means of which he will attain perfection for himself, Allah now instructs him to guide others to the path that leads to perfection:

﴿And [O Muhammad] warn your nearest kinsfolk﴾ who are the closest of people to you and are the most deserving of your kindness in both spiritual and worldly terms. This does not cancel out the command to warn all people, because if a person is instructed to be kind to all people, then it is said to him: Be kind to your relatives, this is emphasising the importance of kindness to relatives and highlighting the fact that they have a particular right to that.

The Prophet (ﷺ) complied with this divine command, and he called the clans of Quraysh, addressing them in different ways, reminding them and admonishing them. He left no advice or guidance that he was able to offer but he said it; some of them were guided and some turned away.

﴿And lower your wing [in humility and gentleness] to the believers who follow you﴾ by treating them gently, speaking gentle words to them, being friendly and showing love, a good attitude and perfect kindness towards them. And he indeed did that. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿It is by the mercy of Allah that you deal gently with them. If you had been harsh or hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you. So pardon them, and ask for [Allah's] forgiveness for them; and consult them in matters of importance...﴾ (Âl 'Imrân 3: 159)

This attitude on the part of the Prophet (ﷺ) was the most perfect attitude, by means of which great interests may be served and great harm may be warded off, as anyone can see.

So is it befitting for one who believes in Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), and claims to be following him, to be a burden on the Muslims, ill-

mannered, harsh towards them, hard-hearted, rough and foulmouthed, and if he sees any sin or bad manners on their part, he shuns them, resents them and hates them? There is no gentleness in such a person, and no manners or etiquette. Many evils result from the way he deals with people, and many interests are blocked, yet despite that you find him looking down on those who possess attributes like those of the noble Messenger (ﷺ). He accuses them of hypocrisy and compromise, and he thinks of himself as perfect, regarding himself as being of high status and admiring his deeds. Does this result from anything but ignorance and the deceit of the Shayṭān who makes his attitude fair-seeming to him? Hence Allah says to His Messenger (ﷺ):

﴿Then if they [your kinsfolk] disobey you﴾ with regard to any matter, do not disown them and do not stop dealing with them on the basis of humility and gentleness. Rather what you should disavow is their deeds, so admonish them for that and advise them, and do your utmost to prevent them doing such deeds and urge them to repent.

This is in order to avoid giving the wrong impression to one who may misunderstand and think that the words ﴿And lower your wing [in humility and gentleness] to the believers﴾ implies approving of everything that they do, so long as they are believers. This notion is warded off by this verse. And Allah knows best.



﴿وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْعَزِيزِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٢١٧﴾ الَّذِي يَرْنُكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ ﴿٢١٨﴾ وَتَقَلُّبِكَ فِي السَّجْدِ ﴿٢١٩﴾ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٢٢٠﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٢١٧-٢٢٠)

26:217. And put your trust in the Almighty, the Most Merciful,

26:218. Who sees you when you stand up [to pray],

26:219. And sees your movements among those who prostrate [along with you, in the prayer]

26:220. for verily He is the All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

The greatest help to a person in doing what he is commanded to do is relying on his Lord and seeking His help to enable him to do what is enjoined. Hence Allah (ﷻ) instructs us to put our trust in Him, as He says:

«And put your trust in the Almighty, the Most Merciful» putting one's trust in Him refers to the reliance of the heart on Allah (ﷻ) to bring benefit and ward off harm, whilst trusting in Him and thinking positively of Him, and believing that He will help you to attain what you seek. For He is Almighty, Most Merciful; by His might He is able to bring good and ward off evil from His slave, and by His mercy He does that. Then He points out the importance of seeking divine help and bearing in mind how close Allah is, and attaining the level of *ihsân*,¹⁹ as He says:

¹⁹ *Ihsân* is referred to in the well-known hadith in which it was narrated that 'Umar said:

«We were sitting with the Prophet (ﷺ) when a man came to him whose clothes were intensely white and whose hair was intensely black; no signs of travel could be seen upon him, and none of us knew him. He sat down facing the Prophet (ﷺ), with his knees touching his, and he put his hands on his thighs, and said: O Muhammad, what is Islam? He said: To testify that there is no god except Allah, and that I am the Messenger of Allah; to establish regular prayer; to pay zakâh; to fast in Ramadan; and to perform pilgrimage to the House (the Kaaba). He said: You have spoken the truth. We were amazed by him: he asked a question then told him that he had spoken the truth. Then he said: O Muhammad, what is faith? He said: To believe in Allah, His angels, His Messengers, His Books, the Last Day, and the divine decree (al-qadr), both good and bad. He said: You have spoken the truth. We were amazed by him: he asked a question then told him that he had spoken the truth. Then he said: O Muhammad, what is *ihsân* (right action, goodness, sincerity)? He said: To worship Allah as if you see Him, for even though you cannot see Him, =

﴿Who sees you when you stand up [to pray], and sees your movements among those who prostrate [along with you, in the prayer]﴾ that is, He sees you when you perform this great act of worship, namely the prayer, at the time when you stand and move, bowing and prostrating.

Prayer is singled out for mention because of its virtue and honourable status, because the one who bears in mind, as he is praying, the closeness of his Lord will focus with proper humility and will perform the prayer properly and completely, and will do all of the deeds properly, because prayer will become a source of help for him in all his affairs.

﴿for verily He is the All-Hearing﴾ and hears all voices, of all types ﴿All-Knowing﴾ and His knowledge encompasses all things, outward and inward, unseen and visible.

If a person bears in mind that Allah can see him in all circumstances and hear all that he utters, and He knows what is in his heart of worries, resolve and intentions, this will help him to attain the status of ihsân.



﴿ هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ عَلَىٰ مَن تَنَزَّلُ الشَّيَاطِينُ ﴿٢٢١﴾ تَنَزَّلُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿٢٢٢﴾ يُنْقُونَ السَّمْعَ
وَأَكْثُرُهُمْ كَاذِبُونَ ﴿٢٢٣﴾ وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ ﴿٢٢٤﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي كُلِّ
وَادٍ يَهِيمُونَ ﴿٢٢٥﴾ وَأَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ مَا لَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢٢٦﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ وَذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَانْتَصَرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُوا وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ
مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ ﴿٢٢٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٢٢١-٢٢٧)

26:221. Shall I tell you upon whom the devils descend?

26:222. They descend upon every evil liar,

= He sees you.» This version was narrated by Ibn Mājah; the hadith was also narrated by Bukhari, Muslim and others.

- 26:223. Who listens eagerly [to what the devils say], but most of them are liars.
- 26:224. As for poets, those who are misguided follow them.
- 26:225. Do you not see that they wander aimlessly from one idle pursuit to another,²⁰
- 26:226. and that they say that which they do not do,
- 26:227. except those who believe, do righteous deeds, remember Allah much and defend themselves after having been wronged?²¹ And those who do wrong will come to know what fate awaits them.

This is a response to those who rejected the Messenger (ﷺ) and said that a devil came to him, and those who said that he was a poet.

«Shall I tell you upon whom the devils descend?» That is, shall I tell you the true fact concerning which there is no doubt or confusion about those upon whom the devils descend? In other words, this is a description of those people upon whom the devils descend.

«They descend upon every evil liar» that is, one who speaks much falsehood and fabricates lies.

«evil» that is, in his deeds; he commits a lot of sin. This is the one upon whom the devils descend, for his character matches theirs and they are compatible.

«Who listens eagerly [to what the devils say]» that is, what they snatch from heaven

«(but most of them are liars)» that is, most of what they say to him is lies. They may say one thing that is true, and add a hundred lies to it,

²⁰ That is because they follow no moral and ethical guidelines and do not control what they say, and may switch loyalties easily, praising a person one day and condemning him the next; they may also praise or condemn someone who does not deserve that, or speak too highly of themselves.

²¹ This refers to responding in verse to poetry composed by the disbelievers against Islam and the Muslims.

so that the truth becomes mixed with falsehood, and what is true will vanish because it is so little, and because the one who receives it has no knowledge. This is the description of the people upon whom the devils descend, and this is the description of what the devils inspire them with.

But with regard to Muhammad (ﷺ), his character is very different, because he is truthful, honest, righteous and wise, the one in whom are combined sincerity of the heart, honest speech and deeds that are free of anything unlawful.

The revelation that comes down to him is from Allah, and it is sent down guarded and protected, and it contains great truth concerning which there can be no doubt at all. So – O people of reason – are he and those people equal? Could anyone confuse them except one who is ignorant and cannot distinguish matters or see the difference between different things?

Having declared him innocent of receiving anything from the devils, Allah also declared him to be innocent of being a poet, as He says:

«As for poets» that is, shall I also tell you about the character and usual description of the poets? For «those who are misguided» away from the path of truth, and who follow the path of misguidance and doom, «follow them». So they themselves have gone astray and you will find that they are followed by everyone who has gone astray and is corrupt.

«Do you not see that» because of their error and extreme misguidance «they wander aimlessly from one idle pursuit to another» – sometimes they praise people and sometimes they impugn them; sometimes they tell the truth and sometimes they lie; sometimes they compose love poetry and sometimes they lampoon others; sometimes they express joy and sometimes they express sorrow. They are not stable and they switch moods easily.

﴿and that they say that which they do not do﴾ that is, this is how the poets are: their words and deeds do not match. If you hear the poet composing gentle love poems, you will say that he is lovesick, but his heart is devoid of love. If you hear him praising or condemning someone, you will say: He is speaking the truth, but he is lying. Sometimes they boast of deeds that they never did, or they boast about refraining from things from which they never refrained, or they boast of generosity from which they are far removed, or of courage in which they surpass the boldest warriors, when they are the most cowardly of people. This is how they are, so look and see: does what is mentioned above match the character of the Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ), the wise and righteous one, who is followed by everyone who is wise and rightly guided, who adhered to right guidance and kept away from the path of doom, whose deeds did not contradict one another and whose words did not contradict his deeds? He only enjoined good, and he only forbade evil; he never spoke of anything but he told the truth; he never enjoined anything but he was the first to do it; he never forbade anything but he was the first to refrain from it.

Is his character matched by that of the poets, or do they even come close? Or is he different from them in all aspects? Blessings and peace of Allah be upon this most perfect Messenger (ﷺ), forever and ever. He was not a poet, magician, or madman; nothing befits him but utter perfection.

Having described the poets in such terms, Allah made an exception for those among them who believed in Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), did righteous deeds, remembered Allah much and defended themselves against their polytheist enemies after they wronged them.

In such cases their poetry was counted among their righteous deeds and the effects of their faith, because it contained praise for the believers, defence against the polytheists and disbelievers, striving in defence of the religion of Allah, propagating useful knowledge and encouraging all virtuous characteristics. Hence Allah says:

﴿except those who believe, do righteous deeds, remember Allah much and defend themselves after having been wronged? And those who do wrong will come to know what fate awaits them﴾ when they move to the place of standing and reckoning, when there will be no minor or major deed but it will be listed, and there will be no dues but they will be paid in full. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat ash-Shu'arā'.
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.



Soorat an-Naml

(Makki)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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



طَسَّ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْقُرْآنِ وَكِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿١﴾ هُدًى وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢﴾ الَّذِينَ
يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِالْآخِرَةِ رَبَّنَا لَهُمْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَهُمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿٤﴾ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ الْعَذَابِ وَهُمْ فِي
الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ الْآخْسَرُونَ ﴿٥﴾ وَإِنَّكَ لَنُلْقِي الْقُرْآنَ مِنْ لَدُنِّ حَكِيمٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿٦﴾ (سورة

النمل: (١-٦)

- 27:1. Ṭā'. Seen.²² These are verses of the Qur'an and the clear Book,
27:2. guidance and glad tidings for the believers,
27:3. those who establish prayer and give zakāh, and who believe
with certainty in the hereafter.

²² Groups of letters (al-ḥuroof al-muqatta'ah) appear at the beginning of several soorahs. The most correct scholarly view states that we are required to believe in them as they appear to be, without delving into their meaning, knowledge of which we should leave to Allah. We believe that they were not revealed in vain, and that there is wisdom behind them of which we are not aware.

- 27:4. As for those who do not believe in the hereafter, We have made their deeds fair-seeming to them, so they wander blindly [in their misguidance].
- 27:5. Such are the ones who will have a grievous punishment, and in the hereafter, it is they who will be the greatest losers.
- 27:6. Verily you [O Muhammad] are receiving the Qur'an from One Who is Most Wise, All-Knowing.

Here Allah (ﷻ) draws the attention of His slaves to the greatness of the Qur'an:

﴿These are verses of the Qur'an and the clear Book﴾ that is, the most sublime and clear verses, which give the clearest explanation that is indicative of the most sublime aims, best goals, best deeds and purest characteristics. They are verses that speak of truthful stories, beautiful commands, and prohibition of all bad deeds and blameworthy characteristics. They are verses that are as clear as the light of day for people of insight. They are verses that call to faith and call for reaching the level of certainty. They speak of matters of the unseen, past and future, exactly as they happened or will happen. They are verses that call us to know the Almighty Lord by His beautiful names, sublime attributes and perfect deeds. They are verses that tell us of His Messengers and close friends, and describe them so that it is as if we can see them with our own eyes. Yet despite that, many people did not benefit from it and none of the stubborn were guided, so as to protect these verses from those in whom there is nothing good and in whose hearts there is no purity. Rather the only ones who are guided by them are those whom Allah singled out for faith and whose hearts were illuminated and purified by these verses.

Hence He says:

﴿guidance and glad tidings for the believers﴾ that is, it (the Qur'an) guides them to follow the straight path and shows them what they should follow and what they should shun, and it gives them glad tidings of the reward of Allah that results from guidance to this path.

Perhaps it may be said that there are many who claim to believe, so should this be accepted from everyone who claims to be a believer? Or is it essential that there should be evidence? This is true (that there should be evidence), therefore Allah (ﷻ) describes the characteristics of the believers:

﴿those who establish prayer﴾ both obligatory and supererogatory; they perform the prayer with all its outward actions, essential parts, conditions and obligatory parts, and even those that are recommended. They also fulfil all the inward aspects of the prayer, which means performing prayer with humility – which is its very essence – bearing in mind that Allah is near and reflecting upon the words and actions of the prayer.

﴿and give zakâh﴾ as is obligatory, to those who are entitled to it. ﴿and who believe with certainty in the hereafter﴾ that is, their faith has reached the level of certainty, which refers to complete knowledge that has entered the heart and prompts one to act. Their certainty of the hereafter dictates that they should strive fully for it and warns them against the causes that lead to punishment. This is the basis of all good.

﴿As for those who do not believe in the hereafter﴾ and they deny it and reject the one who was sent to confirm it to them, ﴿We have made their deeds fair-seeming to them, so they wander blindly [in their misguidance]﴾. They are confused and give precedence to that which incurs the wrath of Allah over that which earns His pleasure. They have turned facts on their heads, so they see falsehood as truth and truth as falsehood.

﴿Such are the ones who will have a grievous punishment﴾ that is, the most severe and dreadful punishment ﴿and in the hereafter, it is they who will be the greatest losers﴾ – the loss will be theirs alone, because they will have lost themselves and their families on the Day of Resurrection, and they will have lost the faith to which the Messengers called them.

﴿Verily you [O Muhammad] are receiving the Qur'an from One Who is Most Wise, All-Knowing﴾ that is, verily this Qur'an, that is coming down to you and you are receiving it and learning it, is coming down from ﴿One Who is Most Wise﴾ and does what is appropriate, ﴿All-Knowing﴾ – He knows all secrets, and for Him the hidden aspects of things are like the visible aspects. As it is from ﴿One Who is Most Wise, All-Knowing﴾, it is known that all of it is wisdom and is in people's best interests, for who knows better than He what is in their best interests?



﴿إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِأَهْلِهِ إِنِّي آنستُ نارا سأتيكم منها بخبرٍ أو آتاكم يشهابٍ قيسٍ لعلكم تصطلون ﴿٧﴾ فلما جاءها نودي أن بورك من في النار ومن حولها وسبحن الله رب العالمين ﴿٨﴾ يمشى إنه أنا الله العزيز الحكيم ﴿٩﴾ وألق عصاك فلما رآها تهتز كأنها جانٌ ولَّى مدبراً ولم يعقب يمشى لا تخف إني لا يخاف لدى المرسلون ﴿١٠﴾ إلا من ظلم ثم بدل حسناً بعد سوءٍ فإني عفورٌ رحيمٌ ﴿١١﴾ وأدخل يدك في جيبك تخرج بيضاء من غير سوءٍ في يسع آيتي إلى فرعون وقومه إنهم كانوا قوماً فاسقين ﴿١٢﴾ فلما جاءتهم آيتنا مبصرةً قالوا هذا سحرٌ مبينٌ ﴿١٣﴾ وحذوا بها وأسيقنتها أنفسهم ظلماً وعلواً فانظروا كيف كان عقبة المفسدين ﴿١٤﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٧-١٤)

27:7. [Remember] when Moosâ said to his family: I see a fire. I will bring you some news from there, or I will bring you a burning brand so that you may warm yourselves.

27:8. But when he came to it, he was called: Blessed is the one who is at the fire and blessed are those who are around it,²³ and glory be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

²³ Moosâ was beside the fire, which was the burning bush, and the angels were surrounding him.

- 27:9. O Moosâ, verily I am Allah, the Almighty, the Most Wise.
- 27:10. Throw down your staff. But when he saw it moving as if it was a snake, he turned and fled without a backward glance. [It was said:] O Moosâ, do not be afraid; the Messengers need have no fear in My presence.
- 27:11. But whoever has done wrong, then after that substitutes good for evil, verily I am Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.
- 27:12. Put your hand into your garment; it will come forth shining white, without harm, as one of nine signs to Pharaoh and his people, for they are indeed a rebellious and wicked people.
- 27:13. But when Our clear signs came to them, they said: This is obviously magic.
- 27:14. They rejected the signs, although in their hearts they were certain that they were true, out of wickedness and arrogance. So see what was the fate of those who spread mischief.

That is, remember this beautiful and noble story that speaks of Moosâ ibn 'Imrân, and the beginning of revelation to him, when Allah chose him for His message and spoke to him directly. When he had stayed in Madyan for a number of years, he set out with his family from Madyan, heading towards Egypt, but when he was partway there, he lost his way on a cold, dark night. So he said to his family: ﴿I see a fire﴾ that is, I have spotted a fire from afar ﴿I will bring you some news from there﴾ of the road ﴿or I will bring you a burning brand so that you may warm yourselves﴾. This indicates that he and his family were lost and very cold.

﴿But when he came to it, he was called: Blessed is the one who is at the fire and blessed are those who are around it﴾ that is, Allah (ﷻ) called him and told him that this was a sacred and blessed place, and part of its blessed nature was that Allah made it the location in which he spoke directly to Moosâ, called him, and appointed him as His Messenger.

«and glory be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds» and exalted be He far above being thought to have any shortcoming; rather He is perfect in His attributes and deeds.

«O Moosâ, verily I am Allah, the Almighty, the Most Wise» that is, Allah told him that He is Allah Who alone is deserving of worship, with no partner or associate, as He said elsewhere:

«Verily, I am Allah; there is no God but Me. So worship Me [alone] and establish prayer to remember Me.» (*Tâ Hâ 20: 14*)

«(the Almighty)» Who has subjugated all things and to Whom all created beings submit

«(the Most Wise)» in His command and creation. By His wisdom He sent His slave Moosâ ibn 'Imrân, who Allah knew was qualified to convey His message, receive His revelation and be spoken to directly by Him. Because He is so mighty, you should rely on Him and not feel vulnerable because you are alone and you have many enemies, who are strong, for their forelocks are in the Hand of Allah, and all their movements are under His control.

«Throw down your staff» so he threw it down

«But when he saw it moving as if it was a snake» – the word translated here as «snake» refers to a male snake that moves quickly

«he turned and fled without a backward glance» out of fear of the snake that he saw, which was a normal human reaction. But Allah said to him:

«O Moosâ, do not be afraid». Elsewhere, Allah tells us that He said: «...come back, and do not be afraid, for you are quite safe.» (*al-Qaşas 28: 31*)

«(the Messengers need have no fear in My presence)» because all that may cause fear is subject to His will and decree, and is under His control and command. Those whom Allah chooses for His message and revelation should not fear anyone but Allah, especially when they are very close to Him and have been chosen to speak to Him.

﴿But whoever has done wrong, then after that substitutes good for evil﴾ that is, this is the one who may be subject to fear and vulnerability, because of what he has committed of wrongdoing and what he has done of sin. As for the Messengers, what did they have to do with vulnerability and fear? Nevertheless, if a person wrongs himself by disobeying Allah, then he repents and turns to Him, and substitutes good deeds for his bad deeds, and acts of obedience for his acts of disobedience, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. So no one should despair of His mercy and forgiveness, for He forgives all sins and He is more merciful towards His slave than a mother to her child.

﴿Put your hand into your garment; it will come forth shining white, without harm﴾ that is, with no leprosy or disease; rather its gleaming whiteness will dazzle the onlookers.

﴿as one of nine signs to Pharaoh and his people﴾ that is, these two signs – the turning of the staff into a moving snake, and the hand coming out of the garment gleaming white – are among nine signs. Go with them and call Pharaoh and his people,

﴿for they are indeed a rebellious and wicked people﴾, who have committed evil by ascribing partners to Allah, rebelling and looking down on the slaves of Allah, and by their arrogant behaviour in the land.

So Moosâ (ﷺ) went to Pharaoh and his chiefs, and he called them to Allah and showed them the signs.

﴿But when Our clear signs came to them﴾ which evidently pointed to the truth and could be seen as clearly as the light of day, ﴿they said: This is obviously magic﴾ but they did not stop at merely saying that it was magic; rather they said that it was obviously magic, that was clear to anyone. This is something very strange, when clear signs and bright light are regarded as being the most obvious charlatanry and magic! Can this be anything but the utmost arrogance and most audacious waffle?

﴿They rejected the signs﴾ and disbelieved and denied the signs of Allah
 ﴿although in their hearts they were certain that they were true﴾ that is, their rejection was not based on doubt or uncertainty; rather they rejected them despite their certain knowledge that they were true ﴿out of wickedness﴾ and unfairness towards the truth of their Lord and towards themselves
 ﴿and arrogance﴾ towards the truth and towards other people, and they were too arrogant to submit to the Messengers.
 ﴿So see what was the fate of those who spread mischief﴾ for it was the worst fate. Allah destroyed them and drowned them in the sea; He disgraced them and caused the weak and oppressed among His slaves to inherit their dwellings.



﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عِلْمًا وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ ﴿١٥﴾ وَوَرِثَ سُلَيْمَانُ دَاوُدَ وَقَالَ يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ عَلِمْنَا مِنْطِقَ الطَّيْرِ وَأَوْتَيْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿١٦﴾ وَخَيْرَ لِّسَلِيمَانَ جُنُودَهُ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ وَالطَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ (سورة النمل: ١٥-١٧)

- 27:15. We bestowed knowledge upon Dâwood and Sulaymân, and they both said: Praise be to Allah, Who has favoured us above many of His believing slaves.
- 27:16. Sulaymân succeeded Dâwood. He said: O people, we have been taught the speech of birds and we have been given abundantly; this is indeed a manifest favour.
- 27:17. His armies of jinn, men and birds were assembled before Sulaymân, and marched forth in orderly ranks.

In this Qur'an Allah mentions and highlights His blessings towards Dâwood and his son Sulaymân, whom He blessed with abundant knowledge, as He tells us elsewhere:

﴿And [remember] Dâwood and Sulaymân, 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. We guided Sulaymân to the right verdict, and to each of them We gave wisdom and knowledge...﴾ (*al-Anbiyâ' 21: 78-79*)

﴿and they both said﴾, in gratitude to their Lord for His great blessings and bestowing knowledge upon them:

﴿Praise be to Allah, Who has favoured us above many of His believing slaves﴾. So they both praised Allah for making them believers and people who were blessed, for they were among the elite.

Undoubtedly the believers are of four degrees: the righteous, above whom are the martyrs, above whom are the strong and true in faith [*siddeeqeen*], above whom are the Prophets.

Dâwood and Sulaymân were among the elite of the Messengers. Even though they are below the ranks of the five Messengers of strong resolve, they are among the noble and virtuous Messengers whom Allah mentions by way of praise and commendation in His Book. So they praised Allah for having attained this status. This is a sign of a person being blessed: that he is grateful to Allah for His bounty, both spiritual and worldly, and he sees all blessings from his Lord, but he does not boast about them and he is not filled with self-admiration because of them. Rather he sees that this requires him to give a great deal of thanks.

Having praised both of them together, Allah then singles out Sulaymân by mentioning some of the exclusive blessings that were bestowed upon him, because Allah had given him great power and dominion, and he was blessed with things that his father did not have. May the blessings and peace of Allah be upon both of them.

﴿Sulaymân succeeded Dâwood﴾ that is, he inherited his knowledge and prophethood, and he added knowledge of his own to his father's knowledge. Perhaps he learned from his father what he had of knowledge, in addition to what he already had of knowledge at the time of his father, as we have seen above that Allah says:

﴿We guided Sulaymân to the right verdict...﴾ (*al-Anbiyâ' 21: 79*)

Sulaymân said – in gratitude to Allah and speaking of His favours: ﴿O people, we have been taught the speech of birds﴾. He could understand what the birds said, as when he had a conversation with the hoopoe and the bird spoke back to him, and as he understood the words of the ant to its fellow ants, as we shall see below. This was not granted to anyone except Sulaymân (ﷺ).

﴿and we have been given abundantly﴾ that is, Allah has bestowed upon us many blessings and means of power, authority and might that He did not bestow upon any other human. Hence he called upon his Lord and said:

﴿...and grant me a dominion, the like of which will never be granted to anyone after me...﴾ (*Sâd 38: 35*)

So Allah subjugated the devils to him, and they did whatever he wanted of works that others were unable to do. And He subjugated the wind for him; it would cover the distance of a month's journey in the morning and a month's journey in the evening (*cf. 34: 12*).

﴿this﴾ that Allah bestowed upon us, with which He has favoured us and for which He has singled us out, ﴿is indeed a manifest favour﴾ that is, a clear favour. Thus he fully acknowledged the blessings of Allah (ﷺ).

﴿His armies of jinn, men and birds were assembled before Sulaymân, and marched forth in orderly ranks﴾ that is, his huge and varied troops gathered before him, from among the jinn and devils, and from among the birds. They formed orderly ranks and behaved in a very orderly fashion when they marched and halted, and when they

moved on. He had made preparations for that and was well equipped. All of these troops were under his control and could not disobey him or rebel against him. Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿...This is Our gift, so give freely or withhold, without [having to render] account.﴾ (Sād 38: 39)

– that is, give without measure. So he set out with this huge army on one of his journeys.



﴿حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَتَوْا عَلَىٰ وَادِ النَّمْلِ قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّعْمُ ادْخُلُوا مَسْكِنَكُمْ لَا يَحْطِمَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمَانُ وَجُنُودُهُ، وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ فَنَبَسَهُ ضَاحِكًا مِّن قَوْلِهَا وَقَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَدْخِلْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِي عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١٩﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ١٨-١٩)

27:18. And when they came to the valley of the ants, one ant said: O ants, enter your dwellings lest Sulaymān and his armies crush you unwittingly.

27:19. Sulaymān smiled, amused at the ant's words, and he said: O my Lord, inspire me to be constantly grateful for Your blessings that You have bestowed upon me and my parents, and to do righteous deeds with which You will be pleased, and include me, by Your mercy, among Your righteous slaves.

﴿And when they came to the valley of the ants, one ant said﴾, alerting its fellow ants:

﴿O ants, enter your dwellings lest Sulaymān and his armies crush you unwittingly﴾. This ant advised the other ants and made them hear, either by itself, in which case Allah gave the other ants extraordinary powers of hearing, because the alarm that was addressed to all the ants that filled the valley was raised by only one ant – and this would be

something most amazing; or that ant told the others around it, and the news was transmitted from one to another until it had reached them all, telling them to be careful and how to take precautions, which was by entering their dwellings.

That ant told them who Sulaymân and his troops were and how great his authority was, and apologised to them on behalf of Sulaymân and his troops, saying: If they crush you, it is not deliberate on their part and they would not realise what happened. Sulaymân (ﷺ) heard what the ant said, so he ﴿smiled, amused at the ant's words﴾. He was amazed by its eloquence and advice, and how well-spoken it was. This is how the Prophets (peace be upon them all) were: they had perfect etiquette and showed amazement when appropriate, but they did not go beyond smiling. In the case of the Messenger (ﷺ), all his laughter was smiling. Laughing out loud is indicative of a lack of dignity and bad manners, but not smiling and not being amazed by what is amazing is indicative of a rough manner and hardheartedness. The Messengers were far above such attitudes.

Sulaymân said, in gratitude to Allah Who had caused him to attain this level of honour:

﴿O my Lord, inspire me﴾ and enable me ﴿to be constantly grateful for Your blessings that You have bestowed upon me and my parents﴾ for the blessing to the parents is a blessing to the child. So he asked his Lord to enable him to be constantly grateful for His blessings both spiritual and worldly, to him and to his parents.

﴿and to do righteous deeds with which You will be pleased﴾ that is, and enable me to do righteous deeds with which You will be pleased because they are in accordance with Your commands and are done sincerely, free from anything that may undermine them or spoil them. ﴿and include me, by Your mercy among Your righteous slaves﴾ and admit me to paradise, for paradise is the lot of the righteous of all levels. This is a story that Allah tells us of how Sulaymân reacted when he heard what the ant said.

Then He mentions another story, describing how Sulaymān talked to the birds:



﴿وَتَقَدَّ الطَّيْرَ فَقَالَ مَا لِيَ لَا أَرَى الْهُدْهُدَ أَمْ كَانَ مِنَ الْغَائِبِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾
لَأُعَذِّبَنَّهُ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا أَوْ لَأَذْبَحَنَّهُ أَوْ لِيَأْتِنِي بِسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢١﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٢٠-٢١)

27:20. He checked on the birds and said: Why do I not see the hoopoe?
Or is he among the absent?

27:21. I will surely punish him severely, or slaughter him, unless he
brings me a valid excuse.

﴿He checked on the birds﴾ – this is indicative of his perfect resolve and control, and his good way of managing his troops, and shows how he managed affairs both small and great, by himself, to the extent that he did not neglect this matter, which was checking on the birds and making sure whether they were all present or any of them were missing. This is what is highlighted by this verse. There is nothing valid in the claim of those who say that he checked on the birds to find out where the hoopoe was so that he could tell him whether water was near or far, because it was claimed that the hoopoe could see water beneath a thick layer of earth. There is no evidence to support this view; rather the rational and textual evidence indicates that this notion is false.

With regard to rational evidence, it is known on the basis of custom and experience that these animals were all present and none of them had that extraordinary vision that would enable it to see water beneath a thick layer of earth. If that had been the case, Allah would have mentioned it, because it would have been one of the greatest signs.

As for the textual evidence, if this is what had been meant, the text would have said: "He looked for the hoopoe so that he could search for water, then when he did not find him, he said what he said" or, "He looked for the hoopoe" or, "He searched for him" or similar phrases. Rather he checked on the birds to see which were present and which were absent, and whether they were staying in the positions he had appointed for them. Moreover, Sulaymân (ﷺ) was not in desperate need of water, such that he needed the skill of the hoopoe, because he had the devils and strong jinn at his disposal, who could have dug up water for him, no matter how deep it was. And Allah had subjugated the wind to him; it would cover the distance of a month's journey in the morning and a month's journey in the evening (cf. 34: 12). So why would he need the hoopoe?

These interpretations that are found in some commentaries and are widely narrated and widely known, were transmitted verbatim from the views of the Children of Israel, but those who narrated them did not realise that they are contrary to the sound meanings. They continued to be passed down from earlier narrators to later ones, to the point that they were thought to be true, and thus these corrupt views were included in some *tafāseer* (commentaries on Qur'an).

But those who are smart and intelligent realise that this clear Arabic Qur'an, in which Allah addresses all of humankind, knowledgeable and ignorant alike, instructs them to reflect upon its meanings and understand them according to the Arabic language which is well understood, of which true Arabs are not ignorant. So if there are views narrated from anyone other than the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), they are to be understood in light of that principle; if they are in harmony with it, then they may be accepted, because the wording of the text indicates that. But if both the wording and the meaning – or one of them – differ from that, then it is to be rejected and deemed false, because we have the well-known original reference text which says something to the contrary, and this is a conclusion that may be reached based on the meaning and indication of the text.

In conclusion, the fact that Sulaymān (ﷺ) checked on the birds and noticed that the hoopoe was absent indicates that he was in full control and was skilled in managing his dominion himself, and he was very smart and alert, as he noticed that this small bird was absent.

﴿and said: Why do I not see the hoopoe? Or is he among the absent?﴾ that is, is the fact that I cannot see him because he is not visible, as he is hidden among these many communities, or is it because he is absent without permission and not on my instructions?

Then he got angry with him and threatened him, saying: ﴿I will surely punish him severely﴾, but not to the point of killing, ﴿or slaughter him, unless he brings me a valid excuse﴾ that is, a clear reason for his absence. This is indicative of his perfect piety and fairness; he did not simply swear to punish or kill him, because that could only be in the case of his having committed a sin or wrongdoing. But there could have been a clear excuse for his absence. Therefore he made this exception, because of his piety and smartness.



﴿فَمَكَتْ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحَطْتُ بِمَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ، وَجِئْتُكَ مِنْ سَبَإٍ بِنَبَأٍ يَقِينٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِنِّي وَجَدْتُ أَمْرًا تَنَالِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيتُ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَمَا عَرِشٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَجَدْتُهَا وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّمْسِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَزَيْنُ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَهَدَاهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ أَلَا يَسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ الَّذِي يُخْرِجُ الْخَبْءَ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُخْفُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٦﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٢٢-٢٦)

27:22. Before long the hoopoe came and said: I have learned about something of which you have no knowledge; I bring you reliable news from Saba'.²⁴

²⁴ Saba': the land of Sheba in Yemen.

- 27:23. I found a woman reigning over them, who has been granted everything [that a ruler is expected to have], and she has a splendid throne.
- 27:24. I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allah. The Shaytân has made their deeds fair-seeming to them and has barred them from the right path, so they are not guided.
- 27:25. Rather they should worship Allah, Who brings forth what is hidden in the heavens and the earth,²⁵ and Who knows what you conceal and what you disclose.
- 27:26. Allah: there is no god but He, Lord of the magnificent Throne.

«Before long the hoopoe came» this is indicative of the awe in which Sulaymân was held by his troops, and how great his control over them was. Even though this hoopoe who had failed to attend had a good excuse, he could not stay away for long.

«and said» to Sulaymân: «I have learned about something of which you have no knowledge» that is, I have knowledge that you do not have, despite your vast knowledge and high level therein. «I bring you reliable news» that is, certain news «from Saba'» this is the name of a well-known tribe in Yemen.

Then he explained what that news was, and said:

«I found a woman reigning over them» namely reigning over the tribe of Saba', and she is a woman «who has been granted everything [that a ruler is expected to have]» that is, everything that kings or rulers usually have of wealth, weapons, troops, fortresses, citadels and so on «and she has a splendid throne» on which she sits; it is huge and magnificent. The size of the throne is indicative of great dominion and power, and of the ruler having a large number of advisers.

«I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allah» that is, they were polytheists who worshipped the sun

²⁵ «What is hidden in the heavens and the earth» for example, rain in the heavens and the seeds that produce vegetation in the earth.

«The Shayṭān has made their deeds fair-seeming to them» so they thought that what they were following was the truth «so they are not guided» because if a person thinks that what he is following is the truth, there is not much hope of him being guided until he changes his beliefs.

Then he said: «Rather they should worship Allah, Who brings forth what is hidden in the heavens and the earth» that is, He knows what is hidden and secret in all regions of the heavens and of the earth, including the tiniest creatures, seeds, and what is hidden in people's hearts. He brings forth what is hidden on earth and in heaven by sending the rain and causing plants to grow, and He will bring forth what is hidden in the earth when the Trumpet is blown and the dead emerge from the earth so that He may requite them for their deeds. And He «knows what you conceal and what you disclose».

«Allah: there is no god but He» that is, no one should worship, turn to, humble himself before or love any but Him, for He is the only one to whom devotion should be shown, because of what He has of perfect attributes and because of the blessings He bestows, which make that pure devotion a must.

«Lord of the magnificent Throne» which is the roof of creation, as vast as the earth and the heavens. The Sovereign, Who is possessed of great authority and might, is the One to Whom we should humble ourselves, prostrate and bow. The hoopoe was spared punishment when he delivered this important news, and Sulaymān was amazed at how it had been hidden from him.

Because of his wisdom and mature thinking, he wanted to verify the news:



﴿ قَالَ سَنَنْظُرُ أَصَدَقْتَ أَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ أَذْهَبَ بِكَتَابِي هَذَا قَالَ لَهُ
إِلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ فَانظُرْ مَاذَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة النمل: ٢٧-٢٨)

- 27:27. Sulaymân said: We shall see whether you are telling the truth or you are a liar.
- 27:28. Take this letter of mine and deliver it to them. Then withdraw from them and observe how they respond.

«Sulaymân said: We shall see whether you are telling the truth or you are a liar. Take this letter of mine» – the text of which we shall see below

«and deliver it to them. Then withdraw from them» that is, move away from them, but not too far
 «and observe how they respond» to you.



﴿قَالَتْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُوٓءَا إِلَىٰ إِلَيَّ كِتَابٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٢٩﴾ إِنَّهُ مِن سُلَيْمَانَ وَإِنَّهُ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٣٠﴾ أَلَا تَعْلَمُونَ أَنِّي مُسْلِمٌ ﴿٣١﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٢٩-٣١)

- 27:29. She said: O chiefs, an honourable letter has been delivered to me.
- 27:30. It is from Sulaymân, and it starts: In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.
- 27:31. Do not be arrogant towards me, but come to me in submission.

So the hoopoe took the letter and delivered it to them, and she said to her people:

«an honourable letter has been delivered to me» that is, a letter of great importance, from one of the greatest kings of the earth.

Then she highlighted the content of the letter, saying:

«It is from Sulaymân, and it starts: In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Do not be arrogant towards me, but come to me in submission» that is, do not try to prove your superiority

over me; rather submit to my authority and obey my commands, and come to me in submission.

This is very concise, but at the same time it is perfectly clear, because it includes forbidding them to show arrogance towards him or remain as they are, as well as instructions to submit to his authority, obey him, come to him and accept his call to submit. This shows that it is encouraged to begin one's letters by quoting the *Basmalah* ("In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful") in full and to include the name of the sender in the first line of the letter.



﴿قَالَتْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ أفتوني في أمري ما كنت قاطعة أمرًا حتى تشهدون﴾ (٣٢) ﴿قَالُوا نَحْنُ
أُولُوا قُوَّةٍ وَأُولُوا بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ وَالْأَمْرُ إِلَيْكِ فَانظري ماذا تأمرين﴾ (٣٣) ﴿قَالَتْ إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا
دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوا أَهْلَهَا أَذِلَّةً وَكَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ﴾ (٣٤) ﴿وَإِنِّي مُرْسِلَةٌ
إِلَيْهِمْ بِمَهْدِيَةٍ فَناظرةٌ بِمَ رَجْعِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ﴾ (٣٥) (سورة النمل: ٣٢-٣٥)

- 27:32. She said: O chiefs, advise me regarding this matter with which I am now faced, for I make no decision without your consent.
- 27:33. They said: We are powerful and great warriors, but you are in command. Consider, then, what orders you will give.
- 27:34. She said: Kings, when they invade a city, ravage it and humiliate its prominent leaders. That is what they always do.
- 27:35. But I shall send him a gift, then see with what response the envoys will return.

As a sign of her resolve and wisdom, she gathered together the senior and prominent figures of her kingdom and said:

﴿O chiefs, advise me regarding this matter with which I am now faced﴾ that is, tell me how we should respond. Should we obey him and submit, or what should we do?

﴿for I make no decision without your consent﴾ that is, I do not make any decision without consulting you.

﴿They said: We are powerful and great warriors﴾ that is, if you reject his call and do not obey him, we are strong and able to fight. It seems that they were inclined towards this view which, if they had followed it, would have led to their destruction. But they did not settle on that; rather they said:

﴿but you are in command﴾ that is, it is your decision, because they were aware of her mature thinking and resolve, and her sincerity towards them

﴿Consider, then﴾ that is, think the matter over and decide ﴿what orders you will give﴾.

She said to them, convinced by what they said and explaining the bad consequences of fighting:

﴿Kings, when they invade a city, ravage it﴾ killing, taking prisoners, plundering its wealth and destroying its buildings

﴿and humiliate its prominent leaders﴾ that is, they make the leaders and noblest people among the lowest. In other words, fighting is not a good idea. Moreover, I am not going to submit before finding out more and sending someone to learn about his situation, and then we will base our decision on that information.

Then she said: ﴿But I shall send him a gift, then see with what response the envoys will return﴾ from him: will he persist in what he says, or will he be swayed by the gift and change his mind? And how is his situation and that of his troops?



﴿فَلَمَّا جَاءَ سُلَيْمَانَ قَالَ أَتُمِدُّونَنِ بِمَالٍ فَمَا آتَانِيَ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا آتَاكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ بِهَدْيِكُمْ
تَفْرَحُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ أَرْجِعْ إِلَيْهِمْ فَلَنَأَيِسَهُمْ بِجُنُودٍ لَا قِبَلَ لَهُمْ بِهَا وَلَنُخْرِجَنَّهُمْ مِنْهَا أَدْلَةً وَهُمْ صَغِيرُونَ

﴿٣٧﴾ (سورة النمل: ٣٦-٣٧)

- 27:36. When [the envoy] came to Sulaymān, he said: Do you seek to appease me with gifts? What Allah has given me is better than what He has given you. Rather it is you who take pleasure in gifts.
- 27:37. Go back to them [with your gift]. We will surely come to them with forces that they cannot resist. We will surely expel them therefrom, abased and humiliated.

So she sent a gift to him with envoys from among the wise men of her people.

«When [the envoy] came to Sulaymān» that is, when the envoys came to him with the gift, he said, denouncing them and expressing anger for their failing to respond and submit to him:

«Do you seek to appease me with gifts? What Allah has given me is better than what He has given you». Your gift does not mean much to me, and I do not take pleasure in it, for Allah has sufficed me and bestowed many blessings upon me.

«Rather it is you who take pleasure in gifts» because of your love for this world and because you have little in your possession compared to what Allah has given me.

Then he gave instructions to the envoy without putting it in writing, because of his mature thinking and because he was sure that he would transmit his words exactly. He said:

«Go back to them [with your gift]. We will surely come to them with forces that they cannot resist. We will surely expel them therefrom, abased and humiliated». So the envoy went back to them and conveyed to them what Sulaymān had said, and they made preparations to go to Sulaymān.



﴿قَالَ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُوْاْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَا بَنِي بَعْرَشٍ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتُوْكَ مُسْلِمِيْنَ ﴿٣٦﴾ قَالَ عِفْرِيتٌ مِّنَ الْجِيْنِ أَنَا ءَانِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقُوْمَ مِنْ مَّقَامِكَ وَإِنِّي عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِيْٓ أَمِيْنٌ ﴿٣٧﴾ قَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِّنَ

الْكِنَابِ أَنَا إِلَيْكَ بِهِ. قَبْلَ أَنْ يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ فَلَمَّا رَآهُ مُسْتَقِرًّا عِنْدَهُ، قَالَ هَذَا مِنْ فَضْلِ رَبِّي لِيَبْلُوَنِي ءَأَشْكُرُكُمْ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ وَمَنْ شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ ۗ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّي غَنِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾ قَالَ نَكُرُوا هَٰذَا عَرْشَنَا نُنْزِلُهُ أَيُّ أَمْرٍ تَكُونُونَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ (سورة النمل:

(٤١-٣٨)

- 27:38. He said [to his own court]: O chiefs, which of you can bring me her throne before they come to me in submission?
- 27:39. A strong jinni said: I will bring it to you before you rise from your seat. I am surely strong enough and may be trusted.
- 27:40. One who had knowledge of the scripture said: I will bring it to you in the twinkling of an eye. Then when he saw it set before him, Sulaymân said: This is a favour from my Lord, to test whether I will be grateful or ungrateful. Whoever is grateful, his gratitude is to his own benefit, and whoever is ungrateful, then surely Allah is self-sufficient, most generous.
- 27:41. He said: Disguise her throne for her; let us see whether she will discover the truth or she will not recognise it.

Sulaymân knew that they would inevitably come to him, so he said to the jinn and humans who were present with him:

«(which of you can bring me her throne before they come to me in submission?)» That is, so that it will be permissible for me to dispose of it before they become Muslim, after which their wealth will not be lawful for me.

«A strong jinni said» – the word translated here as «strong jinni» refers to one who is strong and very active and energetic.

«I will bring it to you before you rise from your seat. I am surely strong enough and may be trusted». What appears to be the case is that at that time Sulaymân was in ash-Shâm (Greater Syria), so between him and Saba' there was a distance of four months' travel, two months outward bound and two months on the return journey. But

despite that, this strong jinni said: I commit myself to bring it, despite its great size and heavy weight, and despite the distance, before you can rise from your seat. Usually lengthy meetings take up most of the morning, approximately one third of the day; this is the maximum length, although they may be shorter or longer than that.

One of the subjects of this great king had all this power, but there was another who was able to surpass him.

«One who had knowledge of the scripture said»: he was a righteous and knowledgeable man who was with Sulaymân; his name was Âsîf ibn Barkhiya. He knew the greatest name of Allah which, if He is called upon by it He will respond, and if He is asked by it, He will give. «I will bring it to you in the twinkling of an eye» by calling upon Allah by that name to bring it instantly. He called upon Allah and it was brought. And Allah knows best whether this is what is meant (that he knew the greatest name of Allah) or if he had some knowledge of the Book by means of which he was able to bring something from afar and achieve something that is difficult to achieve.

«Then when he» namely Sulaymân «saw it set before him», he praised Allah (ﷻ) for granting him this power and making things easy for him, and he said: «This is a favour from my Lord, to test whether I will be grateful or ungrateful» that is, it is a test or trial for me. He was not deceived by his dominion, authority and power, as usually happens with ignorant kings; rather he knew that this was a test from his Lord, and he was afraid that he would not thank Him for this blessing.

Then he explained that gratitude does not benefit Allah; rather it benefits the one who shows gratitude, as he said:

«Whoever is grateful, his gratitude is to his own benefit, and whoever is ungrateful, then surely Allah is self-sufficient, most generous» – He is self-sufficient and has no need of that person's deeds, and He is generous and bountiful, bestowing blessings upon both the grateful and the ungrateful, but gratitude for blessings will bring more blessings, whereas ingratitude will lead to a decrease in blessings.

Then Sulaymān said to those who were with him: ﴿Disguise her throne for her﴾ that is, change it by adding to it or taking away from it, and so on

﴿let us see﴾ and test her smartness

﴿whether she will discover the truth﴾ and thus prove that she is intelligent and alert, and deserves to be a queen

﴿or she will not recognise it﴾.



﴿فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ قِيلَ أَهَكَذَا عَرْشُكَ ۗ قَالَتْ كَأَنَّهُ هُوَ ۗ وَأُوتِينَا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَتْ تَعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٤٢-٤٣)

(٤٣)

27:42. So when she arrived, she was asked: Is your throne like this? She said: It is as if it were the same. We had come to know the truth before this [miracle] and we have already submitted [to Allah, in Islam].

27:43. That which she used to worship besides Allah had hindered her [from declaring her faith openly], for she came from a disbelieving people.

﴿So when she arrived﴾ and came to Sulaymān, he showed her her throne; to the best of her knowledge, she had last seen it in her homeland.

﴿she was asked: Is your throne like this?﴾. That is, we know that you have a splendid throne; is it like this throne that we have brought to show you?

﴿She said: It is as if it were the same﴾. This highlights her intelligence and smartness, because she did not say “it is the same”, because there were some changes and alterations to it, but she did not deny it either, because she recognised it. So she uttered some vague words that

could mean either thing and would be true in either case. Sulaymân was impressed at how she figured out the reality and how mature her thinking was.

What was meant by her words is: We were given knowledge about the dominion and authority of Sulaymân, and his great power, before this incident (the bringing of her throne), in which we have seen his ability to bring the throne from a great distance. So we submit to him and we have come submitting to his authority.

«That which she used to worship besides Allah had hindered her [from declaring her faith openly]» that is, from becoming Muslim, otherwise she had the smartness and intelligence to recognise the truth and distinguish it from falsehood. But false beliefs take away insight from the heart.

«for she came from a disbelieving people» so she continued to follow their religion, because for one person to have a different religion when he can see that those around him are misguided and wrong, is something very rare. Therefore it is not strange that she had remained a disbeliever until that point.

Later on, Sulaymân wanted to show her his dazzling power and might, so he told her to enter the palace, which was in a high and vast place, and was made of glass, under which rivers flowed.



﴿قِيلَ لَهَا ادْخُلِي الصَّرْحَ فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً وَكَشَفَتْ عَنْ سَاقِهَا قَالَ إِنَّهُ صَرْحٌ مُّمَرَّدٌ مِنْ قَوَارِيرَ ۗ قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

(سورة النمل: ٤٤)

27:44. It was said to her: Enter the palace.²⁶ But when she saw it, she thought that its [floor] was a pool of water, and she [lifted her

²⁶ The entire palace was made of glass, with water flowing beneath its floors.

hem], baring her legs. He said: This is a palace made of smooth glass. She said: O my Lord, verily I have wronged myself [by previously worshipping the sun] and I submit [in Islam] with Sulaymân to the Lord of the worlds.

﴿It was said to her: Enter the palace. But when she saw it, she thought that its [floor] was a pool of water﴾ because the glass was transparent, and the water could be seen beneath it, as if it was flowing by itself with nothing in between.

﴿and she [lifted her hem], baring her legs﴾ in order to wade into the water. This was a further example of her smartness and etiquette, for she did not refrain from entering the place that she had been instructed to enter, because she knew that she had only been invited by way of honour, and that Sulaymân's dominion, and the system thereof, was built on the basis of wisdom. She did not have the slightest suspicion in her heart of any harm that could result from stepping into it, after all that she had seen.

When she was about to wade into it, it was said to her: ﴿This is a palace made of smooth glass﴾, so there is no need for you to bare your legs. At that point, having come to Sulaymân and seen what she had seen, she realised that he was indeed a Prophet and Messenger, so she repented and gave up her disbelief.

﴿She said: O my Lord, verily I have wronged myself [by previously worshipping the sun] and I submit [in Islam] with Sulaymân to the Lord of the worlds﴾.

This is what Allah has told us about the story of the Queen of Saba' and what happened between her and Sulaymân. All other details that are connected to this story, and the stories from Jewish sources, have nothing to do with the interpretation of the word of Allah; they come under the heading of things that one cannot be certain of, because there is no proof that it is narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ). Most, if not all, of the reports of this nature are not narrated from him, so we should

be diligent and turn away from these reports, and not introduce them into commentaries on the Qur'an. And Allah knows best.



﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَالِحًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ فَإِذَا هُمْ فَرِيقَانِ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ قَالَ يَتَّبِعُونَ آلَ سَيْثٍ بِقَبْلِ الْحَسَنَةِ لَوْلَا نَسْتَعْفِرُونَ اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ قَالُوا أَطِئْنَا بِكَ وَبِئْسَ مَا كُنَّا نَعْبُدُ قَالَ أَتَدْرِكُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٤٥-٤٧)

- 27:45. We sent to Thamood their brother Şâliḥ, saying: Worship Allah. Then they divided into two parties [believers and disbelievers] disputing with each other.
- 27:46. He said: O my people, why do you seek to hasten on the evil [divine punishment] rather than the good [divine mercy]? Why do you not seek forgiveness from Allah, so that you may be shown mercy?
- 27:47. They said: We regard you and those who are with you as an evil omen. He said: Your ill fortune is only from Allah [because of your disbelief]; rather you are people who are being tested.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He sent to Thamood, the well-known tribe, their brother in lineage Şâliḥ, and he instructed them to worship Allah alone and to give up worshipping the idols and rivals.

﴿Then they divided into two parties [believers and disbelievers] disputing with each other﴾ some of them were believers and some were disbelievers, and the latter were the majority.

﴿He said: O my people, why do you seek to hasten on the evil [divine punishment] rather than the good [divine mercy]?﴾ That is, why do you hasten to do evil deeds and why are you so keen to do them, rather than doing good deeds by means of which your affairs,

both spiritual and worldly, will be put right? In fact there is no reason at all for you to commit evil deeds.

﴿Why do you not seek forgiveness from Allah﴾ by repenting from your polytheism and sins, and praying to Him to forgive you ﴿so that you may be shown mercy﴾ for the mercy of Allah (ﷻ) is close to the doers of good, and the one who repents from sin is one of those who do good.

﴿They said﴾ to their Prophet Şâliḥ, rejecting and objecting to the message:

﴿We regard you and those who are with you as an evil omen﴾ – they claimed that they did not see any sign of good in Şâliḥ's face and that he and the believers with him had become a cause of some harm that befell their worldly interests. So Şâliḥ said to them:

﴿Your ill fortune is only from Allah [because of your disbelief]﴾ that is, it only befell you because of your sins

﴿rather you are people who are being tested﴾ with ease and hardship, good and bad, to see whether you will give up sin and repent, or not. Thus they persisted in rejecting their Prophet and this is how they responded to him.



﴿وَكَانَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ تِسْعَةُ رَهْطٍ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾﴾ قَالُوا
تَقَاسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ لَنُبَيِّتَنَّهُ وَأَهْلَهُ ثُمَّ لَنَقُولَنَّ لِوَلِيِّهِ مَا شَهِدْنَا مَهْلِكَ أَهْلِهِ
وَإِنَّا لَصَادِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَمَكَرُوا مَكْرًا وَمَكَرْنَا مَكْرًا وَهُمْ لَا يُشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾
فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَتْ عَاقِبَةُ مَكْرِهِمْ أَنَا دَمَرْنَاهُمْ وَقَوْمَهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٥١﴾
فَتِلْكَ بُيُوتُهُمْ خَاوِبَةٌ بِمَا ظَلَمُوا إِن فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾
وَإِنجَيْنَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٤٨-٥٣)

- 27:48. There were in the city nine men who spread mischief in the land and never did anything good.
- 27:49. They said: Let us swear to one another by Allah that we will surely attack him and his family at night, then we will say to his next of kin that we did not witness the slaughter of his people, and we are indeed telling the truth.
- 27:50. They plotted and planned, and We also planned, but they were not aware of it.
- 27:51. So see what was the outcome of their plot: We destroyed them and their entire nation.
- 27:52. Now their houses lie desolate, because of their wrongdoing. Verily in that is a sign for people who have knowledge.
- 27:53. And We saved those who believed and feared Allah.

«There were in the city» in which Şâliḥ and most of his people lived

«nine men who spread mischief in the land and never did anything good» that is, their aim and goal was to spread mischief in the land, and they had no aim of doing good; rather they took a hostile stance against Şâliḥ, reviling his religion and calling their people to do likewise, as Allah (ﷻ) tells us elsewhere that Şâliḥ said:

«So fear Allah, and obey me, and do not obey the bidding of the transgressors, those who spread mischief in the land and do no good at all.» (*ash-Shu'arâ' 26: 150-152*)

This terrible state of affairs continued until, in their enmity, they swore amongst themselves, each one swearing to the other, «we will surely attack him and his family at night» that is, we will come to him and his family at night, and we will surely kill them.

«then we will say to his next of kin» if they come after us and claim that we killed him, we will deny it and will say that we did not do it, and we will swear an oath to the effect that «we are indeed telling the truth», and they unanimously agreed to that.

﴿They plotted and planned﴾ and they resolved to kill Ṣāliḥ and his family, keeping the plot secret even from their own people, for fear of his next of kin

﴿and We also planned﴾ to support Our Prophet Ṣāliḥ (ﷺ), make things easy for him and destroy his people who disbelieved

﴿but they were not aware of it﴾.

﴿So see what was the outcome of their plot﴾ – did they achieve their goal by means of that plot, or did they fail to do so? Hence Allah says:

﴿We destroyed them and their entire nation﴾. We destroyed them and eradicated them utterly. The blast came upon them as a punishment, and every last one of them was destroyed.

﴿Now their houses lie desolate﴾ – their roofs fell in on their walls, and they are devoid of their inhabitants

﴿because of their wrongdoing﴾ that is, these are the consequences of their wrongdoing, ascription of partners to Allah and transgression in the land.

﴿Verily in that is a sign for people who have knowledge﴾ of the facts and they reflect upon how Allah dealt with His close friends and His enemies, thus they learn lessons from that and know that the outcome of wrongdoing is destruction and doom, whereas the outcome of faith and justice is salvation and triumph.

Hence Allah says: ﴿And We saved those who believed and feared Allah﴾ that is, We saved those who believed in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and the divine decree, both good and bad, and they avoided ascribing partners to Allah and committing sin, and they obeyed Allah and His Messenger.



﴿وَلَوْ طَا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ وَأَنْتُمْ تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ أَيْنَكُمْ ﴿٥٠﴾ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِّنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ يَّجْهَلُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٥٤-٥٥)

27:54. And [remember] when Loot said to his people: Do you commit this shameful deed, knowing [that it is shameful]?

27:55. Do you approach men with lust instead of women? Verily you are ignorant people!

«And [remember] when Loot said to his people: Do you commit this shameful deed, knowing [that it is shameful]?» That is, remember Our slave and Messenger Loot and the story of his virtue, when he said to his people, calling them to Allah and advising them:

«Do you commit this shameful deed» that is, this repulsive deed that is abhorrent to sound minds and sound human nature, and it is regarded as abhorrent according to the teachings of all religions «knowing [that it is shameful]», yet you stubbornly persist in that, wrongfully on your part and out of audacity towards Allah.

Then he explained what this shameful deed was: «Do you approach men with lust instead of women?» That is, how has it come to this, that your desire is for men and their rear ends which are places of excrement and dirt, and you forsake that which Allah has created for you of wives and the proper place for intimacy, for which people are created with a natural inclination. But you have turned things upside down, and you think of evil as good and good as evil.

«Verily you are ignorant people» who overstep the limits set by Allah and dare to transgress His sacred limits.



﴿فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوا آلَ لُوطٍ مِّنْ قَرْيَتِكُمْ إِنَّهُمْ أَنَاسٌ يَّنطَهُرُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾ فَأَنجَيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلَّا أُمَّرَأَتَهُ قَدَرْنَا مِنَ الْغَافِرِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا فَسَاءَ مَطَرُ الْمُنذِرِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٥٦-٥٨)