

# TAFSEER AS-SA'DI

JUZ' 22-24

تفسير السعدي

تيسير الكريم الرحمن في تفسير كلام المنان

'Abdur-Rahmân Nâsir as-Sa'di



الدار العالمية للكتاب الإسلامي





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THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL



VOLUME 8

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**TAFSEER AS-SA'DI**

**JUZ' 22-24**

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# TAFSEER AS-SA'DI

## JUZ' 22-24

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**تفسير السعدي**  
(تيسير الكريم الرحمن في تفسير القرآن)  
جزء ٢٢-٢٤

Abdur-Rahmân Nâsir as-Sa'di

Translated by  
Nasiruddin al-Khattab

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Huda Khattab



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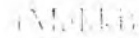
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# Pronunciation and Transliteration Chart



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, rubber</i> and <i>tab</i>	b
ت	/t/ as in <i>tap, 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, maths</i> and <i>wealth</i>	th
ج	/j/ as in <i>jam, 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	ḥ
خ	as in <i>Bach</i> (in German); may occur initially and medially as well	kh
د	/d/ as in <i>do, muddy</i> and <i>red</i>	d
ذ	as in <i>this, 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	ṣ
ض	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /d/ farther back in the mouth	ḍ
ط	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /t/ farther back in the mouth	ṭ
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	ʿ
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 - ح	/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
أَي، يَي	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
 fathah	very short 'a' or schwa (unstressed vowel)	a
 kasrah	shorter version of ee or schwa (unstressed vowel)	i
 dammah	shorter version of oo	u
 shaddah	a doubled consonant is stressed in the word, and the length of the sound is also doubled	double letter
 sukoon	no vowel sound between consonants or at the end of a word	absence of vowel



---

## Arabic honorific symbols

---



- |     |                                       |  |
|-----|---------------------------------------|--|
| (ﷻ) | <i>Subhānahu wa Ta'ālā</i>            | The Exalted  |
| (ﷺ) | <i>ṣalla 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 'anhā</i>            | May Allah be pleased with her                        |
| (ﷺ) | <i>raḍiya Allāhu 'anhumā</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) |



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# Hadith grade terms

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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



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33.

## Soorat al-Aḥzâb

(continued)

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﴿ وَمَنْ يَقْنُتْ لِلَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَتَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا نُؤْتِهَا أَجْرَهَا مَرَّتَيْنِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لَهَا رِزْقًا كَرِيمًا ﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٣١)

33:31. But whoever among you is devoutly obedient to Allah and His Messenger, and does righteous deeds, We will give her a double reward, and We have prepared for her a generous provision.<sup>1</sup>

---

﴿But whoever among you﴾ this is addressed to the wives of the Prophet (*ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* – blessings and peace be upon him)

﴿is devoutly obedient to Allah and His Messenger, and does righteous deeds﴾ whether they are few or many,

﴿We will give her a double reward﴾ that is, twice as much as is given to anyone else,

﴿and We have prepared for her a generous provision﴾ namely paradise. They were devoutly obedient to Allah (*Subḥānahu wa Ta‘ālā* – Glorified and Exalted is He) and His Messenger (ﷺ), and they did righteous deeds, thus the extent of their reward is known.

---

<sup>1</sup> 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)



﴿يُنِسَاءَ النَّبِيِّ لَسْتُنَّ كَأَحَدٍ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ ۚ إِنِ اتَّقَيْتُنَّ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ﴿٣٢﴾ وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَىٰ وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتِينَ الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا ﴿٣٣﴾ وَأَذْكُرَنَّ مَا يُتْلَىٰ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ لَطِيفًا خَبِيرًا ﴿٣٤﴾﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٣٢-٣٤)

- 33:32. O wives of the Prophet, you are not like other women, provided that you fear Allah. So do not speak too softly, lest one in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire; but speak in an appropriate manner.
- 33:33. Stay in your homes and do not flaunt your charms as was done during the former [times of] ignorance;<sup>2</sup> establish prayer and give *zakāh*;<sup>3</sup> and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah only wants to keep all that is loathsome away from you, O members of the [Prophet's] household, and to purify you thoroughly.
- 33:34. And remember what is recited in your homes of the revelations of Allah and wisdom. Verily Allah is Knower of subtleties, All-Aware.

﴿O wives of the Prophet﴾ – this is addressed to all of them

<sup>2</sup> *Jāhiliyah* (the times of ignorance): this refers to the period before Islam.

<sup>3</sup> 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)



﴿you are not like other women, provided that you fear Allah﴾; by doing so, you will surpass all other women and no other woman will be able to catch up with you. So strive to perfect your fear of Allah by all possible means and achieve all the goals thereof.

Hence Allah instructed them to avoid all means that could lead to what is prohibited, as He said:

﴿So do not speak too softly﴾ that is, when addressing men, or, knowing that they can hear you, by making your voice soft or speaking in a gentle manner which may cause ﴿one in whose heart is a disease﴾ – namely the disease of desire for fornication – to be moved with desire, for such a person is always ready and watching out for the slightest move that could stir desire, because his heart is not sound. The sound heart has no desire for that which Allah has prohibited and can hardly be moved or stirred to desire even when there is a reason for that, because it is free of sickness.

This is in contrast to the one who is sick at heart, who cannot cope with that which the sound-hearted person can cope with, and he cannot be patient like him. If there is the slightest reason that calls him to that which is prohibited, he will respond to it and will not refrain from it.

This indicates that the means come under the same rulings as the ends. Speaking softly and gently is basically permissible, but if it is a means that leads to something prohibited, then it is not allowed. Therefore when addressing men, women should not make their voices soft.

Because Allah forbade women to speak softly, it may be thought that they are instructed to make their voices harsh. In order to ward off this notion, Allah says: ﴿but speak in an appropriate manner﴾ that is, one that is not harsh or rough, just as it is not soft and alluring.

Think about how Allah says ﴿do not speak too softly﴾, and He did not say “do not speak softly”, because what is prohibited is soft speech that is alluring to men, in such a manner that anyone who

hears it may be moved with desire. This is different from speaking in a gentle manner in which there is no alluring softness; rather it has the quality of being confident and firm when dealing with an opponent. No one would be moved with desire when hearing this. Hence Allah praised His Messenger (ﷺ) for his gentleness, as He said:

﴿It is by the mercy of Allah that you deal gently with them...﴾ (Āl 'Imrân 3: 159)

And He said to Moosâ ('alayhi as-salâm – peace be upon him) and Hâroon:

﴿Go, both of you, to Pharaoh, for he has indeed transgressed all bounds. But speak to him gently, so that perhaps he may pay heed or fear Allah.﴾ (Tā Hâ 20: 43-44)

The fact that Allah says ﴿lest one in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire﴾ in conjunction with the command to restrain carnal desires, and praise for men and women who do so, as well as the prohibition on approaching or coming near unlawful sex, indicates that if a person sees such an inclination in himself, and realises that he is tempted to commit prohibited deeds when he sees or hears the words of someone to whom he is attracted, and finds himself motivated to do that which is forbidden, he should remember that this is a disease. Therefore he should strive to combat this disease, put an end to evil thoughts that may lead to trouble, strive to overcome this serious malady, and ask Allah to protect him and guide him. This is all included in the command to restrain carnal desires.

﴿Stay in your homes﴾ that is, remain there because that is safer and more protecting for you

﴿and do not flaunt your charms as was done during the former [times of] ignorance﴾ that is, do not go out often, wearing adornment or perfume, as was the custom among the people of the former times of ignorance, who had no knowledge or religious commitment. All of this is aimed at warding off evil and that which leads to it.

Having enjoined them to fear Him in general terms and to fear Him with regard to issues that pertain to women in particular, Allah also enjoins them to obey Him, especially in terms of prayer and zakâh, which are deeds that everyone needs to do, for they are the greatest acts of worship and the noblest acts of obedience. Prayer involves sincerity and devotion to Allah, and zakâh involves kindness to His slaves.

Then Allah enjoins obedience in general terms, as He says: ﴿and obey Allah and His Messenger﴾. Obedience to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) involves everything that is enjoined, whether it is obligatory or recommended.

﴿Allah only wants﴾ by ordaining these commands and prohibitions for you  
 ﴿to keep all that is loathsome﴾ that is, evil and bad  
 ﴿away from you, O members of the [Prophet's] household, and to purify you thoroughly﴾ so that you will be pure and purified.

In other words: praise your Lord and give thanks to Him for these commands and prohibitions of which He has told you, for they are in your best interests and are purely for your benefit. Allah would never want to cause you any hardship or difficulty; rather the aim is to purify your souls and your conduct and attitude, to make your deeds good and to increase your reward thereby.

Having commanded them to strive in His way, by means of the commands and prohibitions, Allah now tells them to seek knowledge and explains to them the way to attain that:

﴿And remember what is recited in your homes of the revelations of Allah and wisdom﴾ what is meant by the revelations of Allah is the Qur'an, and what is meant by wisdom is the subtle meanings thereof, or the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ). Allah commanded them to remember these things, which includes remembering the words, reciting them, remembering the meanings, reflecting upon

them and pondering them, deriving rulings and wisdom from them, acting in accordance with them, and interpreting them correctly.

﴿Verily Allah is Knower of subtleties, All-Aware﴾ – He is aware of the subtleties and hidden meanings of things, what is hidden in people's hearts, what is hidden in the heavens and on earth, and deeds that are done both openly and in secret.

His knowledge and awareness mean that He urges them to be sincere and to keep doing deeds in secret that Allah will reward.

One of the meanings of the divine name *al-Lateef* (translated here as ﴿Knower of subtleties﴾) is that He guides His slave to do good and protects him from evil in very subtle ways of which he is not aware, and He sends to him provision that he does not expect, and guides him to take measures that are difficult but will be the path by which he will attain the highest levels.



﴿إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْقَانِتَاتِ  
وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْخَشِيعِينَ وَالْخَشِيعَاتِ  
وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّائِمِينَ وَالصَّائِمَاتِ وَالْحَافِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ  
وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً  
وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٣٥)

33:35. For Muslim men and Muslim women, believing men and believing women, obedient men and obedient women, truthful men and truthful women, patient men and patient women, humble men and humble women, charitable men and charitable women, men who fast and women who fast, men who restrain their carnal desires and women who do likewise, men who remember Allah much and women who do likewise – for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and an immense reward.

Having mentioned the reward of the wives of the Messenger (ﷺ), and their punishment if they do not comply, and stating that they are not like other women, Allah (ﷻ) now speaks of other women.

Because the rulings on men and women are the same, Allah says: ﴿For Muslim men and Muslim women﴾ that is, with regard to visible actions and rulings, if they comply with them  
 ﴿believing men and believing women﴾ this refers to inward actions, namely beliefs and deeds of the heart  
 ﴿obedient men and obedient women﴾ who are obedient to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ)  
 ﴿truthful men and truthful women﴾ who are true in their words and deeds  
 ﴿patient men and patient women﴾ who are patient in bearing hardship and calamity  
 ﴿humble men and humble women﴾ who are humble in all circumstances, especially in worship, and especially in prayer  
 ﴿charitable men and charitable women﴾ who give in charity, both obligatory and voluntary  
 ﴿men who fast and women who fast﴾ which includes both obligatory and supererogatory fasts  
 ﴿men who restrain their carnal desires and women who do likewise﴾, refraining from *zinā* (unlawful sex) and that which leads to it  
 ﴿men who remember Allah much and women who do likewise﴾ that is, they remember Him at most times, especially at times when specific *dhikr* is to be recited, such as in the morning and afternoon, and following the obligatory prayers.

﴿– for them﴾ that is, for these people who are described in these glowing terms as possessing these noble characteristics, which include beliefs, deeds of the heart, physical deeds, spoken words, and doing acts that may benefit oneself or others, as well as doing good deeds and refraining from evil deeds, for the one who does these things

has established the religion in the fullest sense, both outwardly and inwardly, and has attained Islam, *eemān* (faith) and *ihsān*.<sup>4</sup>

﴿Allah has prepared forgiveness﴾ – Allah will reward them for their deeds with forgiveness of their sins, because good deeds erase bad deeds

﴿and an immense reward﴾ that cannot be estimated except by the One Who gives it, of that which no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever crossed the mind of man. We ask Allah to make us among them.



﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ  
وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُّبِينًا﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٣٦)

<sup>4</sup> *Ihsān* is referred to in the well-known hadith in which it was narrated that 'Umar (*radīya Allāhu 'anhu* – may Allah be pleased with him) 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 zakāh; 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 *ihsān* (right action, goodness, sincerity)? He said: To worship Allah as if you see Him, for even though you cannot see Him, He sees you.» This version was narrated by Ibn Mājah; the hadith was also narrated by Bukhari, Muslim and others.

33:36. It is not fitting for any believing man or believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided concerning a matter, to have any choice in that matter. Whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has clearly gone astray.

That is, it is not appropriate or right for one who is a believer to do anything but hasten to do that which pleases Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), to shun that which angers Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), and to comply with their commands and heed their prohibitions.

It is not befitting for the believing man or the believing woman, «when Allah and His Messenger have decided concerning a matter» and have made it obligatory and binding, «to have any choice in that matter» that is, the choice of whether to comply or not. Rather the believing man and the believing woman know that the Messenger (ﷺ) is closer to them than their own selves, and they do not let some of their own whims and desires prevent them from obeying the command of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ).

«Whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has clearly gone astray» because he has forsaken the straight path that leads to Allah and His paradise, and has chosen instead some other path that leads to the painful punishment. Allah mentions, first of all, the reason why the believer should not object to the command of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), namely faith, then He mentions that which should prevent him from doing that, namely fear of being misguided which is connected to punishment and vengeance.



﴿ وَإِذْ تَقُولُ لِلَّذِي أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ زَوْجَكَ وَاتَّقِ اللَّهَ وَتُخْفَى فِي نَفْسِكَ مَا اللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى النَّاسَ وَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَاهُ فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ

زَيْدٌ مِّنْهَا وَطَرًّا زَوْجَتَكُمَا لِكَيْ لَا يَكُونَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ حَرَجٌ فِي أَزْوَاجِ أَدْعِيَائِهِمْ  
 إِذَا قَضَوْا مِنْهُنَّ وَطَرًا وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا ﴿٣٧﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٣٧)

33:37. And [remember] when you [O Muhammad] said to him on whom Allah had conferred favour [of faith] and you [too] had conferred favour [of manumission]:<sup>5</sup> Keep your wife and fear Allah. You concealed in your heart that which Allah was going to disclose. You feared [the criticism of] the people but it was more fitting that you should fear Allah. When Zayd had completed the necessary formalities of divorce from her [and her 'iddah had ended], We gave her to you in marriage, so that there would not be any restrictions on the believers with regard to marrying the ex-wives of their adopted sons after they have completed the necessary formalities of divorce from them [and their 'iddah has ended]. And the decree of Allah is bound to be fulfilled.

The reason for revelation of these verses was that Allah wanted to prescribe a law that was applicable to all believers, which was that adopted sons do not come under the same rulings as real sons in all ways, and that there was no blame on those who had adopted them if they married their ex-wives.

This was something that was commonly practised and could not be abolished except through a major event. So Allah wanted this law to be demonstrated by His Messenger (ﷺ) in word and deed. When Allah wills something, He ordains a cause for it.

<sup>5</sup> This refers to Zayd ibn Hārithah (رضي الله عنه). He was the adopted son of the Prophet (ﷺ) and had been known as Zayd ibn Muhammad, until revelation came down abolishing the notion of adoption and emphasising the importance of calling people after their real fathers. Allah's decree that the Prophet (ﷺ) should marry the ex-wife of his adopted son put an end to the notion of adoption and what resulted from it of the taboo on marrying the ex-wife of an adopted son.



Zayd ibn Ḥārithah was formerly called Zayd ibn Muhammad, because the Prophet (ﷺ) had adopted him, so he was called after him, until the words:

﴿Call them [adopted sons] after their [real] fathers...﴾ (al-Aḥzāb 33: 5) – were revealed, after which he was called Zayd ibn Ḥārithah.

He was married to Zaynab bint Jaḥsh (*raḍīya Allāhu ‘anhā* – may Allah be pleased with her), the daughter of the paternal aunt of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). It had occurred to the Messenger (ﷺ) that if Zayd divorced her, he would marry her, then Allah decreed that there should be some problem between her and Zayd that caused Zayd ibn Ḥārithah to come to the Prophet (ﷺ) and ask his permission to divorce her.

﴿And [remember] when you [O Muhammad] said to him on whom Allah had conferred favour [of faith]﴾ by guiding him to Islam ﴿and you [too] had conferred favour [of manumission]﴾ by setting him free. When he came to consult you about divorcing her, you said to him – advising him and telling him of that which was in his best interests, even though you wished that you could marry her – ﴿Keep your wife﴾ that is, do not divorce her, and be patient with her attitude towards you, ﴿and fear Allah﴾ with regard to your affairs in general and with regard to your wife in particular, for fearing Allah encourages and enjoins one to be patient.

﴿You concealed in your heart that which Allah was going to disclose﴾ – what he concealed was the fact that if Zayd divorced her, he would marry her.

﴿You feared [the criticism of] the people﴾ and that is why you did not disclose what was in your heart

﴿but it was more fitting that you should fear Allah﴾ and not pay attention to people.

«When Zayd had completed the necessary formalities of divorce from her [and her 'iddah had ended], We gave her to you in marriage» – We only did that to serve a great purpose, which was: «so that there would not be any restrictions on the believers with regard to marrying the ex-wives of their adopted sons» because they would have seen you marry the ex-wife of Zayd ibn Hārithah, who had previously been called your son.

Because the words «so that there would not be any restrictions on the believers with regard to marrying the ex-wives of their adopted sons» are general in meaning and are applicable to all situations, but there may be some cases in which that is not permissible – which is before the necessary formalities of divorce have been completed – these general terms are restricted by the following phrase: «after they have completed the necessary formalities of divorce from them [and their 'iddah has ended]. And the decree of Allah is bound to be fulfilled» that is, it must inevitably come to pass and no one can stand in its way.

We learn a number of things from these verses which mention this story, including the following:

- Allah praised Zayd ibn Hārithah on two counts. Firstly, Allah mentioned him by name in the Qur'an, and He did not mention any other *Ṣaḥābi* by name. Secondly, Allah told him that He had conferred favour upon him, namely the blessing of Islam and faith. This is testimony from Allah that he was a Muslim and a believer, both outwardly and inwardly. Otherwise there is no point in singling him out for favour, were it not that what is meant is a particular favour or blessing.
- The one who is manumitted owes it to the one who manumitted him.
- It is permissible to marry the ex-wife of one's adopted son, as is clearly stated here.

- Practical teaching is more effective than verbal teaching, especially if it is also accompanied by words, for that is light upon light.
- Having love in one's heart for someone other than one's wife or concubine, so long as it is not accompanied by any prohibited action, is not a sin, even if it is accompanied by wishes for the husband to divorce her so that one may marry her, without making any effort to cause separation between them, or being the cause of trouble, because Allah stated that the Messenger (ﷺ) was concealing that in his heart.
- The Messenger (ﷺ) conveyed the message clearly and did not omit anything of that which was revealed to him but he conveyed it, even this matter in which there was a rebuke to him. This indicates that he is indeed the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), who did not say anything but that which was revealed to him, and that his aim was not self-aggrandizement.
- The one whose advice is sought is in a position of trust, and he is obliged – if he is consulted about any matter – to give advice on the basis of what he knows is in the best interests of the person who is asking him for advice, even if it is contrary to his own desires. He should give precedence to the interests of the person seeking advice over his own whims and desires, and even if it is contrary to those whims and desires.
- Good advice to the one who seeks advice with regard to divorcing his wife includes advising him to keep her as much as possible, because that is better than separation.
- It is essential to give precedence to fear of Allah over fear of people, for that is more appropriate and is better.
- We also learn of the virtue of Zaynab (رضي الله عنها), the Mother of the Believers, because Allah ordained her marriage to His Messenger (ﷺ) without any proposal or witnesses. Therefore she used to boast of that to the other wives of the Messenger

of Allah (ﷺ), saying: Your families gave you in marriage, but Allah gave me in marriage from above seven heavens.

- If a woman has a husband, it is not permissible to marry her or to plan or take measures to do so, until her husband has completed divorce proceedings with her. Divorce proceedings are not complete until the 'iddah is over, because before the 'iddah ends, she is still married.



﴿ مَا كَانَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ مِنْ حَرَجٍ فِيمَا فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَهُ سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ قَدَرًا مَقْدُورًا ﴾ (٣٨) الَّذِينَ يُبَلِّغُونَ رِسَالَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَخْشَوْنَهُ وَلَا يَخْشَوْنَ أَحَدًا إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ حَسِيبًا ﴿٣٩﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٣٨-٣٩)

- 33:38. There is no blame on the Prophet with regard to what Allah has made lawful for him. Such was the way of Allah with those [Prophets] who came before. And the command of Allah is a decree determined.
- 33:39. [This is Allah's way] with those who convey the messages of Allah and who fear Him, and they do not fear anyone except Allah. And Allah is sufficient in taking account.

This is warding off criticism of the Messenger (ﷺ) for having numerous wives, and explains that this is criticism that is baseless.

﴿There is no blame﴾ that is, sin  
 ﴿on the Prophet with regard to what Allah has made lawful for him﴾  
 that is, what Allah has allowed him of wives. This is something that Allah had permitted to the Prophets before him, hence He says:  
 ﴿Such was the way of Allah with those [Prophets] who came before. And the command of Allah is a decree determined﴾ that is, it will inevitably come to pass.

Then Allah states who those were who came before him, and that this was their way and practice. They were ﴿those who convey the messages of Allah﴾, so they recite to people the revelations of Allah and His proofs and evidence, and they call them to Allah ﴿and who fear Him﴾ alone, with no partner or associate ﴿and they do not fear anyone except Allah﴾.

If this was the way of the infallible Prophets who fulfilled their role in the most perfect manner, which was to call people to Allah, fearing Him alone, which requires doing everything that is enjoined and refraining from everything that is prohibited, this indicates that there is nothing to criticise the Prophet (ﷺ) about.

﴿And Allah is sufficient in taking account﴾ of His slaves, for He is watching their deeds. From this it is known that marriage is part of the way of the Messengers.



﴿ مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٤٠)

33:40. Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the Prophets. Allah has knowledge of all things.

That is, the Messenger ﴿Muhammad﴾ (ﷺ) ﴿is not the father of any man among you﴾, O Ummah. Annulling the connection of Zayd ibn Ḥârithah with him is included in that.

Because this is general in meaning and applies to all situations, if we take the verse as it appears to be, it would mean that the Prophet (ﷺ) is not the father of any man, whether by blood or by adoption. However, it was previously established that the Messenger (ﷺ) is a

father to all the believers, and his wives (*raḍiya Allāhu 'anhunna* – may Allah be pleased with all of them) are their mothers. Therefore, in order to avoid anyone thinking that there could be some contradiction because of the general meaning of this statement, Allah says: ﴿but he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the Prophets﴾ that is, this is his position, which is the position of one who must be obeyed and followed, one through whose teachings people are guided, one who is believed in, and precedence must be given to love of him over love of anyone else; he is the one who is sincere towards the believers, and because of his sincerity and love towards them, it is as if he were a father to them.

﴿Allah has knowledge of all things﴾ that is, His knowledge encompasses all things and He knows with whom to place His message and who is fit to receive His favour and who is not.



﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيْرًا ﴿٤١﴾ وَسَبِّحُوْهُ بُكْرَةً وَّاٰصِيْلًا ﴿٤٢﴾ هُوَ الَّذِيْ يُصَلِّيْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلَائِكَتُهٗ لِيُخْرِجَكُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمٰتِ اِلَى النُّوْرِ وَكَانَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ رَحِيْمًا ﴿٤٣﴾ تَجِيْئَتُهُمْ يَوْمَ يَلْقَوْنَهٗ سَلٰمٌ وَّاعَدَ لَهُمْ اَجْرًا كَرِيْمًا ﴿٤٤﴾﴾ (سورة

الأحزاب: ٤١-٤٤)

- 33:41. O you who believe, remember Allah with much remembrance,  
 33:42. And glorify Him morning and afternoon.  
 33:43. For it is He Who sends blessings upon you, and His angels [ask Him to bless you and forgive you], so that He may bring you forth from the depths of darkness into the light. And He is Most Merciful to the believers.  
 33:44. Their greeting on the day they meet Him will be: Peace, and He has prepared for them a generous reward.

Here Allah (ﷻ) instructs the believers to remember Him with much remembrance, such as *tahleel*, *tahmeed*, *tasbeeh*, *takbeer*,<sup>6</sup> and other words that bring one closer to Allah. The minimum of that is regularly reciting the dhikr for morning and afternoon, following the five obligatory prayers, and on various occasions when there are reasons to recite dhikr.

One should persist in doing that at all times and in all situations, by virtue of which the doer may advance without much effort, for that will motivate him to love and know Allah, and it will help him to do good and will restrain his tongue from evil speech.

﴿And glorify Him morning and afternoon﴾ that is, at the beginning and end of the day, because these are virtuous times and it is easy to do this at those times.

﴿For it is He Who sends blessings upon you, and His angels [ask Him to bless you and forgive you], so that He may bring you forth from the depths of darkness into the light. And He is Most Merciful to the believers﴾ that is, by His mercy and kindness towards the believers, by means of His blessings and praise for them, and the prayer and supplication of His angels, He brings them forth from the dark depths of sin and ignorance to the light of faith, guidance, knowledge and good deeds. This is the greatest blessing that He bestows upon His obedient slaves, which should make them be grateful and remember Allah a great deal, for He has shown kindness and mercy to them, and He causes the bearers of His Throne, the best of the angels, and those who are around the Throne, to glorify and praise their Lord and pray for forgiveness for those who believe, so they say:

﴿... Our Lord, You encompass all things in Your mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who repent and follow Your path, and protect them

<sup>6</sup> Tahleel: saying “*lâ ilâha illâ Allâh* (There is no god but Allah).”

Tahmeed: saying “*alḥamdulillâh* (praise be to Allah).”

Tasbeeh: saying “*subḥân Allâh* (glory be to Allah).”

Takbeer: saying “*Allâhu akbar* (Allah is Most Great).”

from the punishment of the blazing fire. Our Lord, and admit them to gardens of perpetual abode which You have promised them, and [admit] the righteous among their forebears, their spouses and their offspring. Verily, You are the Almighty, the Most Wise. And protect them from the evil consequences [of their sins], for whomever You protect from evil consequences on that day, You will indeed have bestowed mercy upon him, and that is the supreme triumph. ﴿(Ghāfir 40: 7-9)

This is the mercy and blessing that He bestows upon them in this world.

As for His mercy towards them in the hereafter, it is the greatest of mercy and the best reward, namely attaining the pleasure and greeting of their Lord, listening to His noble words, gazing upon His beautiful Countenance, and attaining immense rewards of which no one knows the extent except those to whom He gives them. Hence He says: ﴿Their greeting on the day they meet Him will be: Peace, and He has prepared for them a generous reward﴾.



﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَهِيدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ﴿٤٥﴾ وَدَاعِيًا إِلَى اللَّهِ بِإِذْنِهِ  
وَسِرَاجًا مُنِيرًا ﴿٤٦﴾ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنَّ لَهُمْ مِّنَ اللَّهِ فَضْلًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٤٧﴾ وَلَا نَطْعُ  
الْكَافِرِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَدَعِ أَدْنَاهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٤٨﴾﴾

(سورة الأحزاب: ٤٥-٤٨)

- 33:45. O Prophet, verily We have sent you as a witness, a bearer of glad tidings and a warner,  
33:46. as one who calls people to Allah by His leave, and as a lamp spreading light.  
33:47. And give glad tidings to the believers that they will have great bounty from Allah.



33:48. Do not yield to the disbelievers and hypocrites, and pay no heed to their hurtful talk. Put your trust in Allah, for sufficient is Allah as a disposer of affairs.

These descriptions that Allah gives of His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) reflect the purpose of his mission and its fundamental essence which was unique to that message. There are five points to note:

Firstly, he was sent as «a witness» to testify concerning his Ummah and what they did of good and evil, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

«...that you might be witnesses over humankind, and the Messenger might be a witness over you...» (*al-Baqarah* 2: 143)

– and:

«How will it be when We bring a witness from every nation and bring you [O Muhammad] as a witness against them?» (*an-Nisâ* 4: 41)

Therefore he is a just and acceptable witness.

Secondly and thirdly, he is «a bearer of glad tidings and a warner», which requires a definition of the recipients of those glad tidings and warnings, what those tidings and warnings are about, and the deeds expected of people in that context.

The recipients of the glad tidings are the pious believers who combine faith and righteous deeds with refraining from sin. Glad tidings are for them in the life of this world, of all kinds of reward, both worldly and spiritual. As a result of their faith and piety or fear of Allah, in the hereafter they will enjoy eternal bliss.

All of that requires an explanation of the deeds and piety that are needed in order to attain that reward, and different types of reward.

The recipients of the warning are the evildoers and wrongdoers, people of wickedness and ignorance. They are given the warning in this world of worldly and religious punishments that result from

ignorance and wrongdoing. In the hereafter they will have a severe and lengthy punishment.

The details of all the above are to be found in what the Prophet (ﷺ) brought of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Fourthly, he is «one who calls people to Allah» that is, Allah sent him to call people to their Lord, show them the way to paradise, and enjoin them to worship Him, which is the purpose for which they were created. This requires him to adhere to that to which he is calling them and to describe in detail the message to which he is calling them, by teaching them about their Lord and His divine attributes; declaring Him to be far above that which is not befitting to His majesty; describing all types of servitude to Him; calling people to Allah by the most effective means; giving each one who has a right his due; and being sincere in calling them to Allah alone, not to himself or seeking any kind of self-aggrandizement, as might be the inclination of many people. All of that was by Allah's leave, and by His will and decree.

Fifthly, he is «a lamp spreading light» which implies that all people are in the depths of darkness, without any light and without any knowledge to help them in their ignorance, until Allah sent this noble Prophet (ﷺ), by means of whom He illuminated that darkness, granted knowledge to ignorant people, and guided those who were lost to the straight path.

Thus the way became clear to righteous people, and they marched behind that leader from whom they learned about good and evil, who is blessed and who is doomed, and through the light that they received from him they came to know Who is worthy of worship, learning about Him through His praiseworthy attributes, perfect deeds and wise rulings.

«And give glad tidings to the believers that they will have great bounty from Allah» – here Allah mentions the recipients of the glad

tidings, namely the believers. When faith is mentioned on its own, it also includes righteous deeds.

The subject of the glad tidings is the great bounty, namely immense abundance which is so great that no one would be able to estimate it. That includes victory in this world, guidance, forgiveness of sins, relief of distress, abundant and increasing provision, granting of blessings, and attaining the pleasure and reward of their Lord and being safe from His wrath and punishment.

This motivates people to strive, by telling them of the reward that Allah will bestow upon them for their good deeds, and it helps them to follow the straight path. This is part of the wisdom of Islam; another aspect of its wisdom is that in the context of warning, mention is made of the punishments implied by that warning; this helps one to refrain from that which Allah has forbidden.

Because there are some people who are prepared to oppose the Prophets and their followers who call people to Allah – namely the hypocrites, who make an outward pretence of being believers when inwardly they are disbelievers and evildoers, and the disbelievers who disbelieve both inwardly and outwardly – Allah forbade His Messenger (ﷺ) to obey them and warned him against doing that, as He said:

«Do not yield to the disbelievers and hypocrites» that is, in any matter that is opposed to the way of Allah.

That does not mean actively harming them; rather what is meant is that he should not obey them or yield to them

«and pay no heed to their hurtful talk», for this may soften their hearts and encourage them to accept Islam, and it may put a stop to much of the harm that they do to Islam and to its followers.

«Put your trust in Allah» to grant you the upper hand and cause your enemy to fail

﴿for sufficient is Allah as a disposer of affairs﴾. Important matters are to be delegated to Him, so that He will take care of them and make it easy for His slave to achieve what he wants.



﴿يَتَّيِبُهَا لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا نَكَحْتُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ثُمَّ طَلَقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ  
فَمَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ عِدَّةٍ تَعْتَدُونَهَا فَمَعَهُنَّ وَسَّرَّحُوهُنَّ سَرَاحًا جَمِيلًا﴾ (سورة

الأحزاب: ٤٩)

33:49. O you who believe, if you marry believing women and then divorce them before the marriage is consummated, you have no reason to ask them to observe any waiting period ['iddah] for you. So give them a gift [as compensation], and let them go in an amicable manner.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells the believers that if they marry believing women, then divorce them before consummating the marriage, those women do not have to observe the 'iddah, and the men have no reason to ask them to do so. Allah commands their husbands to give them a gift in this case, so as to console them for leaving them, and so that the separation may be amicable, without any dispute, trading of insults or making demands on one another, and the like.

This verse is quoted as evidence to support the view that divorce can only occur after marriage. If a man divorces a woman before marrying her, or makes divorce conditional upon marrying her, it does not count, because Allah says: ﴿if you marry believing women and then divorce them﴾. So it is ordained that divorce can only come after marriage, which indicates that if it is done before marriage, it does not count.

As divorce is a complete separation, which means that the spouses become completely prohibited to one another, it cannot occur before marriage. Therefore it is more appropriate to say that divorce by means of *dhihâr*,<sup>7</sup> *eelâ*<sup>8</sup> and the like also cannot be done before marriage. This is the correct scholarly view.

This verse also indicates that divorce is permissible, because Allah speaks of when the believers do that, without blaming them or rebuking them for it, even though the verse begins by addressing the believers. It also indicates that it is permissible to issue a divorce before consummating the marriage, as Allah says elsewhere:

﴿There is no blame on you if you divorce women before the marriage is consummated...﴾ (*al-Baqarah 2: 236*)

And it indicates that if a woman is divorced before consummation of the marriage, she is not required to observe ‘iddah; rather as soon as she is divorced, it is permissible for her to marry someone else, because there is no impediment to doing so. But after consummation of the marriage, she is required to observe ‘iddah in the event of divorce.

But does the word translated here as “consummation” refer specifically to intercourse, as is agreed upon? Or is being alone together to be regarded in the same way, even if no intercourse takes place? The latter was stated in fatwas issued by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, and this is the correct view. If the husband has been alone

<sup>7</sup> *Dhihâr* is the unlawful act of saying to one’s spouse: “You are as impermissible for me [to enjoy intimately] as my mother” – and similar statements.

<sup>8</sup> *Eelâ* is an oath of abstinence, as referred to in the verse:

﴿For those who take an oath of abstinence from their wives, there should be a [maximum] waiting period of four months; if they then go back [to their normal relationship], Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴾  
(*al-Baqarah 2: 226*)

with the wife, even if no intercourse took place, she must observe 'iddah in the event of divorce.

Moreover, the woman who is divorced before consummation of the marriage is to be given a gift, from one who is well off according to his means, and from one who is poor according to his means, but this applies if he did not specify a *mahr* (dowry) for her. If he did specify her dowry, then if he divorces her before consummation of the marriage, she is to be given half of the *mahr*, in which case there is no need for a gift.

However, the one who divorces his wife before or after consummation of the marriage must do so amicably, and each partner should speak well of the other and not do otherwise, because that would lead to a great deal of evil, such as each of them reviling the other to a great extent.

Furthermore, the 'iddah is the right of the husband, because Allah says: ﴿you have no reason to ask them to observe any waiting period ['iddah] for you﴾, which indicates that if he divorces her after consummation of the marriage, he has the right to ask her to observe 'iddah. But the woman whose marriage ends with the death of her husband must observe 'iddah in all cases, because Allah says, ﴿and then divorce them...﴾. However, apart from the woman whose marriage was not consummated, those whose marriages end by death or divorce must observe 'iddah.



﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنْ أَحَلَّلْنَا لَكَ أَزْوَاجَكَ الَّتِي ءَاتَيْتَ أَجُورَهُنَّ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ  
مِمَّا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ وَبَنَاتِ عَمِّكَ وَبَنَاتِ عَمَّتِكَ وَبَنَاتِ خَالَكَ وَبَنَاتِ خَالَتِكَ  
الَّتِي هَاجَرْنَ مَعَكَ وَامْرَأَةً مُؤْمِنَةً إِنْ وَهَبَتْ نَفْسَهَا لِلنَّبِيِّ إِنْ أَرَادَ النَّبِيُّ أَنْ يَسْتَنْكِحَهَا  
خَالِصَةً لَكَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا فَرَضْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِي أَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَمَا

مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ لِكَيْلَا يَكُونَ عَلَيْكَ حَرَجٌ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا  
 ﴿٥٠﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٥٠)

33:50. O Prophet, We have made lawful for you your wives whose dowries you have paid; any slave women you may own from among the captives of war whom Allah has bestowed upon you; daughters of your paternal uncles, daughters of your paternal aunts, daughters of your maternal uncles, and daughters of your maternal aunts who migrated [to Madinah] with you; and a believing woman if she offers herself to the Prophet [for marriage, without a dowry], and the Prophet wishes to marry her – that is exclusively for you [O Muhammad], not for the rest of the believers. We know what We have stipulated for them with regard to their marriages [to free women] and with regard to any slave women they may own, so that there may be no constraint upon you. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Here Allah (ﷻ) reminds His Messenger (ﷺ) of His favour with regard to what He has permitted to him, both of things that he has in common with the believers and things that are for him alone:

«O Prophet, We have made lawful for you your wives whose dowries you have paid». This is something that he has in common with the believers, because in like manner Allah has made lawful for them their wives to whom they have given their dowries.

Likewise, We have made lawful for you «any slave women you may own from among the captives of war whom Allah has bestowed upon you» among the booty seized from the disbelievers, such as their slaves and free individuals who were captured, whether they had husbands or did not. This is something else that was common to both him and to the believers.

Another category that was common to both him and to the believers was: «daughters of your paternal uncles, daughters of your

paternal aunts, daughters of your maternal uncles, and daughters of your maternal aunts) the words translated here as «paternal uncles», «paternal aunts», «maternal uncles» and «maternal aunts» also include those that are described in English as great-uncles and great-aunts (so what is meant is that the daughters of great-uncles and great-aunts are also permissible for marriage). These are the only women who are permissible.

From this meaning it is understood that all relatives other than these are not permissible, as was explained in Soorat an-Nisâ'. Therefore no female relatives are permissible in marriage except these four. All others, descendants and ascendants, and descendants of one's mother and father, no matter how far the line of descent reaches, and descendants of one's grandparents, are not permissible.

«who migrated [to Madinah] with you» this limits permissibility to those women who migrated with the Messenger (ﷺ), which is the correct interpretation of this verse.

«and» We have made permissible for you «a believing woman if she offers herself to the Prophet [for marriage, without a dowry]» simply by virtue of her offering herself, if «the Prophet wishes to marry her» that is, it is subject to his choice.

«that is exclusively for you [O Muhammad], not for the rest of the believers» that is, it is permissible for you to marry a woman who offers herself in marriage. As for the believers, it is not permissible for them to marry a woman just because she offers herself to them in marriage.

«We know what We have stipulated for them with regard to their marriages [to free women] and with regard to any slave women they may own» that is, We know what is required of the believers, what is permissible for them and what is not permissible for them of wives and slave women, and We have taught them that and explained the rulings concerning that.



Whatever is mentioned in this verse that appears to be contrary to that is only for you (O Prophet ﷺ), because Allah has made it addressed to the Messenger (ﷺ) only, as He said: ﴿O Prophet, We have made lawful for you...﴾

The phrase ﴿that is exclusively for you [O Muhammad], not for the rest of the believers﴾ means: We have permitted to you, O Prophet (ﷺ), what we have not permitted to them, and We have given you more leeway than We have given to others, ﴿so that there may be no constraint upon you﴾. This is part of the great care that Allah showed to His Messenger (ﷺ).

﴿And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful﴾ that is, He has always been forgiving and merciful, bestowing upon His slaves His forgiveness, mercy, generosity and kindness as dictated by His wisdom, when they take the appropriate measures that lead to forgiveness.



﴿ تَرْجِي مَنْ نَشَاءُ مِنْهُنَّ وَتُؤَيِّرُ إِلَيْكَ مَنْ نَشَاءُ وَمِنْ أَيْنِغَيْتَ يَمَنَ عَزَلْتَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكَ ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَنْ تَقْرَءِ عَيْتُهُنَّ وَلَا يَحْزَنَ وَيَرْضَيْنَ بِمَا آتَيْتَهُنَّ كُلَّهُنَّ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَلِيمًا ﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٥١)

33:51. You [O Muhammad] may defer [the turn of] any of them that you wish, and you may share your time with any of them that you wish, and there is no blame on you if you share your time with one of those whose [turn] you had set aside. That will make it more likely that they will be content and not distressed, and that they will all be satisfied with what you give them.<sup>9</sup> Allah

<sup>9</sup> In this verse Allah tells His Prophet (ﷺ) that he is not obliged to share his time equally among his wives; the fact that he continued to share his time equally among them, even though he was not obliged to do so, =

knows best what is in your hearts, and Allah is All-Knowing, Most Forbearing.

This is one way in which Allah made things easy for His Messenger (ﷺ) and bestowed His mercy upon him, as He permitted him not to divide his time equally among his wives, in the sense that doing so was no longer obligatory for him, and if he did do that, it would be a voluntary act of kindness on his part. Despite that, the Prophet (ﷺ) still tried to treat them equally in all ways, and he said:

«O Allah, this is how I am sharing out that which is under my control (time and spending on their maintenance), so do not blame me for that which is not under my control (love and inclination towards some more than others).» (An acceptable hadith recorded by Abu Dâwood)<sup>10</sup>

Here Allah says: «You [O Muhammad] may defer [the turn of] any of them that you wish» that is, you may postpone the turn of any of your wives that you wish, and not spend time with her or stay overnight with her,

«and you may share your time with any of them that you wish» that is, you may spend the night with her.

«and there is no blame on you if you share your time with one of those whose [turn] you had set aside» – what is meant is: the choice is up to you in all cases.

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= would be appreciated by his wives and they would therefore feel content. (ar-Râzi)

<sup>10</sup> 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, 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)

Many of the commentators said that this applies only to those who offered themselves to him in marriage: he had the option to defer the turn of any of them that he wished, and to share his time with any of them that he wished. In other words, he could accept any woman who offered herself in marriage to him, or he could reject any of them if he wished. And Allah knows best

Then Allah explains the wisdom behind that, as He said:

«That» namely giving you leeway in this matter, leaving it for you to decide, and counting whatever you do with regard to sharing your time among them as voluntary kindness,

«will make it more likely that they will be content and not distressed, and that they will all be satisfied with what you give them», because they will know that you have not omitted something obligatory and you have not neglected the binding dues of others.

«Allah knows best what is in your hearts» that is, He knows what feelings go through people's minds when giving other people their dues, both obligatory and recommended, and when there is a conflict between dues; therefore He has prescribed this leeway for you, O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), so that you may reassure your wives.

«and Allah is All-Knowing, Most Forbearing» that is, His knowledge is abundant and His forbearing is immense. By His knowledge He has prescribed for you what is in your best interests and brings the greatest reward, and by His forbearance He does not punish you for what you do and what your hearts persist in of evil.



﴿لَا يَحِلُّ لَكَ الْنِسَاءُ مِنْ بَعْدُ وَلَا أَنْ تَبَدَّلَ بِهِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَاجٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ حُسْنُهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ رَقِيبًا ﴿٥٢﴾﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٥٢)

33:52. It is not lawful for you to take any [more] wives henceforth, or to replace [your current wives] with others,<sup>11</sup> even though their beauty pleases you, except any slave women you may own. And Allah is always watching over all things.

Here Allah shows His appreciation to the wives of His Messenger (ﷺ), as they had chosen Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) and the final abode. Therefore He had mercy on them and restricted His Messenger (ﷺ) to them (in the sense that he was not permitted to take any more wives). Hence He said:

﴿It is not lawful for you to take any [more] wives henceforth﴾ in addition to your current wives

﴿or to replace [your current wives] with others﴾ that is, by divorcing some of them and taking other wives in their stead.

By means of this verse, they became safe from having more co-wives and from divorce, because Allah decreed that they would be his wives in this world and the hereafter, and there would be no separation between him and them.

﴿even though their beauty pleases you﴾ that is, the beauty of other women, for they are not permissible for you

﴿except any slave women you may own﴾ that is, captives seized in war. That is permissible for you, for the resentment that wives may feel towards concubines is less than that which they may feel towards co-wives.

﴿And Allah is always watching over all things﴾ that is, He is watching all things and knows how things will develop, and He is controlling matters in the best and most precise way.

<sup>11</sup> This is by way of honouring the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ), who had been given the choice between the life of this world, and Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), and the final abode (in 33: 28-29), and had chosen Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ).



﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتَ النَّبِيِّ إِلَّا أَن يُؤْذَنَ لَكُمْ إِلَى طَعَامٍ غَيْرٍ نَظِيرٍ إِنَّهُ وَلَكِنٌ إِذَا دُعِيتُمْ فَادْخُلُوا فَإِذَا طَعِمْتُمْ فَانْتَشِرُوا وَلَا مُسْتَسِينِينَ لِحَدِيثٍ ؕ إِنَّ ذَلِكُمْ كَانَ يُؤْذَى النَّبِيَّ فَيَسْتَجِىءُ مِنْكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَسْتَجِىءُ مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُنَّ مَتَاعًا فَسْأَلُوهُنَّ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ ذَلِكُمْ أَطْهَرُ لِقُلُوبِكُمْ وَقُلُوبِهِنَّ ؕ وَمَا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَنْ تُؤْذُوا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَلَا أَنْ تَنْكِحُوا أَزْوَاجَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَبَدًا ؕ إِنَّ ذَلِكُمْ كَانَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمًا ﴿٥٣﴾ إِنْ تَبَدُّوا شَيْئًا أَوْ خَفَوْهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٥٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٥٣-٥٤)

33:53. O you who believe, do not enter the houses of the Prophet, unless you are given permission [and are invited] to come for a meal; and do not enter in hopes of getting a meal and waiting for it to be prepared.<sup>12</sup> But if you are invited, then enter, and when you have eaten, then disperse, without lingering for conversation. Such [behaviour] causes annoyance to the Prophet; he is too shy to ask you to leave, but Allah is not too shy [to tell you] the truth. And when you ask them [his wives] for anything, ask them from behind a screen; that is more pure for your hearts and for theirs. It is not proper for you to cause annoyance to the Messenger of Allah or to ever marry his wives after he is gone, for that would be a grievous offence before Allah.

33:54. Whether you disclose something or conceal it, verily Allah has knowledge of all things.

Here Allah (ﷻ) instructs His believing slaves to observe proper etiquette with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) when entering his houses:

<sup>12</sup> There were some people who would enter the Prophet's houses at mealtimes, hoping for a meal without being invited.

﴿O you who believe, do not enter the houses of the Prophet, unless you are given permission [and are invited] to come for a meal﴾ that is, do not enter his houses without permission, or enter for the purpose of finding food. Moreover do not enter his houses ﴿in hopes of getting a meal﴾ that is, expecting a meal and waiting until it is cooked.

What is meant is: you should not enter the houses of the Prophet (ﷺ) except under two conditions: that permission is given to you to enter, and that you should stay only as long as is necessary. Hence Allah says:

﴿But if you are invited, then enter, and when you have eaten, then disperse, without lingering for conversation﴾ that is, before and after the meal.

Then Allah explains the wisdom and benefit behind this prohibition: ﴿Such [behaviour]﴾ that is, your lingering for longer than is necessary ﴿causes annoyance to the Prophet﴾ that is, it is imposing on him and making things hard for him when you detain him from going to check on his family and look after them, and it distracts him from doing so. ﴿he is too shy to ask you to leave﴾ as is the usual practice, because people – especially people of dignity – feel too shy to tell people to leave their homes.

﴿but Allah is not too shy [to tell you] the truth﴾.

When there is a clear instruction in Islamic teaching, even though one may think it better to refrain from complying with it out of shyness or to follow prevailing social etiquette, the right thing to do is to have the resolve to comply with the teachings and be certain that whatever is contrary to it is not in fact part of proper etiquette at all. Allah (ﷻ) is not too shy to enjoin what is good for you and what is kindest to His Messenger (ﷺ), no matter what it is.

Thus He taught them the proper manner of entering the Prophet's houses. With regard to the proper etiquette when addressing his wives, then either there is a need to talk to them or there is not. If there is no

need to talk to them, they should not do that and the proper etiquette is to refrain from doing it. If there is a need to do that, such as if they need to ask them for something like household vessels and so on, then they should ask them «from behind a screen», that is, there should be something to screen them from view, because there is no need to see them.

So looking at them was prohibited in all situations, and the ruling on speaking to them depended on whether there was a need to do so or not, as explained above.

Then Allah mentions the wisdom behind that: «that is more pure for your hearts and for theirs» because it is more appropriate, so as to avoid anything that could give rise to suspicion. The more one keeps away from things that could lead to evil, the safer it is and the purer it is for one's heart.

Therefore, among the Islamic guidelines that Allah often explains in detail is the principle that all means that may cause evil or lead to it are prohibited, and it is prescribed to keep away from them by all possible means.

Then comes a comprehensive phrase which reflects a general principle:

«It is not proper for you» O believers; it is not befitting and is not appropriate for you, and in fact it is most abhorrent «for you to cause annoyance to the Messenger of Allah» that is, in word or deed, with regard to anything that is connected to him «or to ever marry his wives after he is gone». This is one of the things that would cause annoyance to him, because he is in a great and honourable position, and marrying his wives after he is gone would undermine that position.

Moreover, they are his wives in this world and the hereafter, and the bond of marriage between them continues after his death. Therefore it is not permissible for anyone of his Ummah to marry his wives after he is gone.

﴿for that would be a grievous offence before Allah﴾. This Ummah complied with this command and avoided that which Allah (ﷻ) had forbidden. Praise and thanks be to Allah.

Then Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿Whether you disclose something﴾ and show it openly  
 ﴿or conceal it, verily Allah has knowledge of all things﴾. He knows what is in your hearts and what you disclose, and He will requite you accordingly.



﴿لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِنَ فِيءِ آبَائِهِنَّ وَلَا أَبْنَائِهِنَّ وَلَا إِخْوَانِهِنَّ وَلَا بَنَاتِهِنَّ وَلَا إِخْوَانَ بَنَاتِهِنَّ وَلَا نِسَائِهِنَّ وَلَا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ وَأَتَّقِينَ اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدًا﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٥٥)

33:55. There is no blame [on the Prophet's wives, if they are seen unveiled] by their fathers, their sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their [fellow Muslim] women, or slaves whom they own. And [O wives of the Prophet] fear Allah, for verily Allah is witness to all things.

Because his wives are not to be asked for anything except from behind a screen, and because the wording is general in meaning and includes everyone, there was a need to state who is exempted from the ruling, namely the *mahrims* who are mentioned here, and that ﴿There is no blame [on the Prophet's wives]﴾ if they do not observe hijab in front of these relatives.

No mention is made here of paternal uncles and maternal uncles, because there is no need for them to observe hijab in front of those of whom they are aunts, namely the sons of their brothers and sisters, even though they are senior to them. Therefore it is more appropriate



that they should not have to observe hijab in front of their paternal uncles and maternal uncles. The wording of the other verse clearly mentions the paternal uncle and maternal uncle, and it is in the light of that that we may understand this verse.

﴿their [fellow Muslim] women﴾ that is, there is no blame on them if they do not observe hijab in front of their fellow Muslim women. This excludes non-Muslim women. It may be that what is meant is women in general, so a woman does not have to observe hijab in front of another woman.

﴿or slaves whom they own﴾ so long as the slave is entirely her property (and ownership is not shared with anyone else).

Having stated that there is no blame on them for not observing hijab in these cases, Allah stipulates that in this situation and others it is necessary to fear Allah, and that there should be no reservations on the basis of Islamic teaching with regard to that matter. Hence Allah says:

﴿And [O wives of the Prophet], fear Allah﴾ in all circumstances  
 ﴿for verily Allah is witness to all things﴾ that is, He witnesses all deeds that people do, both visible and hidden; He hears what they say and sees what they do, then He will requite them for that in full.



﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٥٦)

33:56. Verily Allah and His angels send blessings upon the Prophet. O you who believe, send blessings upon him and salute him with the salutation of peace.

Here Allah (ﷻ) highlights the perfection and high status of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and his lofty renown, before Allah and

before His creation, and tells us that «Verily Allah and His angels send blessings upon the Prophet» that is, Allah praises him before the angels and those on high, because He loves him, and the angels who are close to Allah praise him and pray for him, beseeching Allah.

«O you who believe, send blessings upon him and salute him with the salutation of peace», following the example of Allah and His angels, as a reward to him for some of the rights that he has over them, so as to perfect their faith and show respect, love and honour for him, and as a means of increasing their good deeds and expiating their bad deeds.

The best wording for sending blessings upon the Prophet (ﷺ) is that which he taught to his Companions:

«O Allah, send prayers upon Muhammad and upon the family of Muhammad, as You sent prayers upon the family of Ibrâheem; You are indeed Worthy of Praise, Full of Glory. And send blessings upon Muhammad and upon the family of Muhammad as You sent blessings upon the family of Ibrâheem; You are indeed Worthy of Praise, Full of Glory.» (Bukhari)

This command to send blessings and salutations upon the Prophet (ﷺ) is prescribed at all times, and many of the scholars regarded it as obligatory in the prayer.



﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا  
وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ بَغَيْرِ مَا كَتَبْنَا فَقَدْ أَحْتَمَلُوا  
بُهْتَانًا وَإِنَّمَا مِثْلُنَا ﴿٥٨﴾﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٥٧-٥٨)

33:57. Those who offend Allah and His Messenger, Allah has cursed them in this world and in the hereafter, and He has prepared for them a humiliating punishment.

33:58. Those who malign believing men and believing women without them having done anything wrong will bear the guilt of slander and manifest sin.

Having commanded people to venerate His Messenger (ﷺ), and send blessings and salutations upon him, Allah (ﷻ) now forbids them to offend him, and warns against doing that:

«Those who offend Allah and His Messenger» – this includes all kinds of offence, in word or in deed, such as reviling, insulting, criticising him or his religion, or doing anything that will cause offence to him. «Allah has cursed them in this world» that is, He has cast them far away from His mercy, and part of the curse on them in this world is capital punishment for the one who reviles the Messenger (ﷺ) or says something offensive about him.

«and in the hereafter, and He has prepared for them a humiliating punishment» namely requital for their offence, by being subjected to the painful punishment. Offending the Messenger (ﷺ) is not like offending anyone else, because no one can truly believe in Allah unless he believes in His Messenger (ﷺ), who is entitled to veneration, which is one of the requirements of faith, and the level of veneration to which he is entitled is unlike any other, although offending the believers is also a grave sin. Hence Allah says concerning that:

«Those who malign believing men and believing women without them having done anything wrong» that is, without any offence on their part that would dictate that they be maligned,

«will bear the guilt of slander» because they have maligned them with no cause

«and manifest sin» because they have transgressed against them and violated the sanctity that Allah commanded should be respected. Hence reviling individual believers is deserving of a disciplinary punishment, according to the situation and the virtue of the believer in question. The disciplinary punishment for one who reviles the

*Ṣaḥâbah* is more severe, and the disciplinary punishment for one who reviles the scholars and people of religious commitment is more severe than that of one who reviles others.



﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لَأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلْبَابِهِنَّ  
ذَلِكَ آدَبٌ أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٥٩﴾ لَئِنْ لَمْ يَنْهَ  
الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ وَالْمُرْجِفُونَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ لَنُغْرِبَنَّكَ بِهِمْ  
ثُمَّ لَا يُجَاوِرُونَكَ فِيهَا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٦٠﴾ مَلْعُونِينَ أَيْنَمَا ثَقِفُوا أَخِذُوا وَقْتِكُمْ  
نَفْتِيلًا ﴿٦١﴾ سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا

(سورة الأحزاب: ٥٩-٦٢) ﴿٦٢﴾

- 33:59. O Prophet, tell your wives and daughters, and the believing women, to put on their *jalâbeeb*<sup>13</sup> [when they go out]; this will make it more likely that they will be recognised [as chaste women] and will not be harassed. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.
- 33:60. If the hypocrites, those in whose hearts is a disease and the rumour-mongers in Madinah do not desist, We will surely instruct you to take action against them. Then they will not remain with you in the city for much longer.
- 33:61. They are cursed; wherever they are found, they should be captured and killed outright.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *Jalâbeeb* (sing. *jilbâb*): the *jilbâb* is an outer garment that covers the entire body from the top of the head. According to the commentators, that includes covering the face, leaving the eyes – or one eye – uncovered so the woman can see where she is going.

<sup>14</sup> This refers to the hypocrites mentioned in the previous verse, and applies so long as they persist in their hypocrisy and in spreading rumours in order to cause turmoil and harm to the Muslims.

33:62. Such was the way of Allah with those who came before. And you will find no change in the way of Allah.

﴿O Prophet, tell your wives and daughters, and the believing women...﴾ This verse is the one that is known as the verse of hijab, in which Allah instructs His Prophet (ﷺ) to instruct women in general to observe hijab, starting with his wives and daughters, because the instruction is more emphatic in their case than that of other women, and because the one who instructs others to do something should start with his family before anyone else, as in the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿O you who believe, guard yourselves and your families against a fire whose fuel is men and stones...﴾ (at-Tahreem 66: 6)

﴿to put on their jalâbeeb [when they go out]﴾ the jilbâb (singular of jalâbeeb) is an outer garment that is worn over the head cover, upper garment and so on; women should cover their faces and chests.

Then Allah mentions the wisdom behind that: ﴿this will make it more likely that they will be recognised [as chaste women] and will not be harassed﴾ – this indicates that they could be harassed if they did not observe hijab, because if they did not observe hijab, it may be thought that they were not chaste, so men in whose hearts is a disease could harass them. Moreover, people might look down on them and assume that they were slave women, and anyone with evil intent might think little of them. Hijab deters those who have evil intentions towards them.

﴿And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful﴾ as He has forgiven you for what you did in the past, and He has bestowed mercy upon you by explaining the rulings to you, clarifying what is lawful and what is prohibited. So these rulings block the means of evil on the part of women.

As for the evildoers (who spread false rumours), Allah threatens them by saying:

﴿If the hypocrites, those in whose hearts is a disease﴾ namely the disease of doubt and desire

﴿and the rumour-mongers in Madinah﴾ that is, those who spread rumours in order to make the Muslims afraid of the enemy, and who speak of the large numbers and strength of the enemy and the weakness of the Muslims

﴿do not desist﴾ – no mention is made of the evil deed from which they should desist; therefore this includes whatever thoughts they had in their minds that were calling to evil, whether that was slandering Islam and its followers, scaring the Muslims, undermining their resolve, speaking ill of the believing women and accusing them of immorality, or other sins that are committed by such people.

﴿We will surely instruct you to take action against them﴾ that is, We will instruct you to punish them and fight them, and We will give you power over them. Then if We do that, they will not have the power to stand up to you, and they will have no strength and no protection. Hence Allah says:

﴿Then they will not remain with you in the city for much longer﴾ that is, they will not remain with you in Madinah for much longer, for you will kill them or banish them.

This indicates that banishing evildoers, who may cause harm by staying among the Muslims, is more effective in putting an end to their evil and protecting the Muslims from it. Moreover, ﴿They are cursed; wherever they are found, they should be captured and killed outright﴾ that is, they should be banished wherever they are found, and they should not feel secure or settled; they should fear that they may be killed, detained or punished.

﴿Such was the way of Allah with those who came before﴾ – those who persist in sin and have the audacity to cause offence, and do not desist, are to be punished severely

﴿And you will find no change in the way of Allah﴾; rather this is the usual way of Allah (ﷻ), which is connected to cause and effect.



﴿يَسْأَلُكَ النَّاسُ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ ۗ قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۖ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّ السَّاعَةَ تَكُونُ قَرِيبًا ۝٦٣﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَنَ الْكٰفِرِينَ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ سَعِيرًا ﴿٦٤﴾ خٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا اَبَدًا لَا يَجِدُوْنَ وَاِيًا وَلَا نَصِيْرًا ﴿٦٥﴾ يَوْمَ تُقَلَّبُ وُجُوْهُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ يَقُوْلُوْنَ يٰلَيْتَنَّا اَطَعْنَا اللَّهَ وَاَطَعْنَا الرَّسُوْلًا ﴿٦٦﴾ وَقَالُوْا رَبَّنَا اِنَّا اَطَعْنَا سَادَتَنَا وَكِبَرٰءَنَا فَاَصْلُوْنَا السَّبِيْلًا ﴿٦٧﴾ رَبَّنَا اٰتِهِمْ ضِعْفَيْنِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ وَالْعَنِّمْ لَعْنًا كَبِيْرًا ﴿٦٨﴾ (سورة الاحزاب: ٦٣-٦٨)

- 33:63. The people ask you about the Hour. Say: The knowledge thereof is with Allah [alone]. How could you know? The Hour may well be near at hand.
- 33:64. Verily Allah has cursed the disbelievers and has prepared for them a raging fire.
- 33:65. They will abide therein forever, and they will not find any protector or helper.
- 33:66. On the day when their faces are turned over in the fire, they will say: Would that we had obeyed Allah and obeyed the Messenger!
- 33:67. They will say: Our Lord, we obeyed our leaders and elders, and they led us astray from the [right] path.
- 33:68. Our Lord, give them a double punishment and curse them with a mighty curse.

That is, people ask you about the Hour because they want to hasten it, and some of them do that because they do not believe that it will occur and they are trying to frustrate the one who is telling them about it.

﴿Say﴾ to them: ﴿The knowledge thereof is with Allah [alone]﴾; no one knows it except Allah, and neither I nor anyone else has any

knowledge of it, yet despite that you should not think that it is slow in coming.

«How could you know? The Hour may well be near at hand». There is no benefit in knowing whether its coming will be sooner or later; what matters is loss and gain, doom or bliss, and whether a person deserves punishment or reward. This is what I can tell you about the Hour, and what I can say about who deserves what.

Then Allah describes the one who deserves punishment and the punishment itself, because the description given is applicable to these people who disbelieve in the Hour:

«Verily Allah has cursed the disbelievers» that is, those for whom disbelief has become second nature and they persist in disbelieving in Allah and His Messengers, and what they brought from Allah. So He has cast them far away from His mercy in this world and the hereafter, and that is sufficient punishment.

«and has prepared for them a raging fire» that is, a fire that will burn their bodies, and the torment will reach their insides. They will abide in that severe punishment forever; they will never emerge from it and it will never be reduced for them even for a short while.

«and they will not find any protector» to ward off the punishment from them

«or helper» to give them what they seek.

Rather the protector and helper will have abandoned them, and they will be encompassed by the punishment of the fire which will be most severe indeed. Hence Allah says:

«On the day when their faces are turned over in the fire» so that they may taste its heat, which will be extremely difficult for them, and they will express regret for what they did in the past,

«they will say: Would that we had obeyed Allah and obeyed the Messenger!» Then we would have been safe from this punishment and – like those who obeyed Allah – we would have deserved a generous



reward. But it will be too late for such wishes and that will not avail them anything except loss, regret, grief, distress and pain.

﴿They will say: Our Lord, we obeyed our leaders and elders﴾ and we imitated them in their misguidance, ﴿and they led us astray from the [right] path﴾. This is like the verse in which Allah says:

﴿On that day, the wrongdoer will bite on his hands and say: Would that I had taken a path with the Messenger. Alas for me! Would that I had not taken So-and-so as a friend! He led me astray from the Reminder [the Qur'an] after it had come to me...﴾ (al-Furqân 25: 27-29)

When they realise that they and their leaders all deserve the punishment, they will want to wreak vengeance on those who misled them, so they will say: ﴿Our Lord, give them a double punishment and curse them with a mighty curse﴾. But Allah will say: Each will have a double punishment, for you all shared in disbelief and sin, so you will share in the punishment. However, the punishment will vary from one to another, according to their degree of sin.



﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ آذَوْا مُوسَىٰ فَبَرَّاهُ اللَّهُ مِمَّا قَالُوا وَكَانَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ

وَجِيهًا ﴿٦٩﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٦٩)

33:69. O you who believe, do not be like those who maligned Moosâ, but Allah showed him to be free of what they said. Indeed he was highly honoured before Allah.

Here Allah (ﷻ) warns His believing slaves against maligning their Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ), the noble, kind and compassionate Prophet (ﷺ), thus responding with the opposite of what they should do, which is to honour and respect him. That is so that they will not resemble those who maligned Moosâ ibn ‘Imrân, the one to whom

the Most Gracious spoke directly, and Allah declared him innocent of the offensive things they said about him and showed them that he was free of that.

Moosâ (ﷺ) was of such high status that there was no reason to accuse him or malign him, for he was honourable before Allah and close to Him, one of the elite among the Messengers and one of His chosen slaves. But they (the evildoers) were not deterred by what he possessed of virtue from maligning him and saying hurtful things about him. So beware, O believers, lest you resemble them in that.

The maligning referred to here is what the Children of Israel said about Moosâ when they saw that he was very modest and was always careful to keep himself covered. They said that nothing was preventing him from uncovering himself except that he had a scrotal hernia; this was something that was commonly said among them, and Allah wanted to demonstrate that he was free of that. One day Moosâ went to bathe; he took off his garment and put it on a rock, and the rock fled with his garment. Moosâ (ﷺ) chased after it, and it took him past a gathering of the Israelites, so they saw that he was the best and healthiest of Allah's creation, and that he was free of what they had accused him of.



﴿رَبَّائِهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧١﴾﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٧٠-٧١)

(٧١)

- 33:70. O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is appropriate,  
33:71. for then He will guide you to do righteous deeds and forgive you your sins. Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger will surely achieve a great triumph.

Here Allah (ﷻ) instructs the believers to fear Him in all situations, in private and in public, and He specifically mentions and encourages saying what is appropriate. That means saying the right thing and that which is as close as possible to that which is right and proper when one is not certain, such as reciting Qur'an or dhikr, or enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, learning and teaching knowledge, and being very keen to find the correct understanding of various issues, following every path and taking all measures that will help one to achieve that.

Part of saying what is appropriate is speaking in a kind and gentle manner when addressing people, being sincere and advising people to do that which is more appropriate and correct.

Then Allah tells us what will result from fearing Him and saying what is appropriate:

﴿for then He will guide you to do righteous deeds﴾ that is, that will be the reason for your deeds becoming righteous and the way for them to be accepted, because by means of fearing Allah, deeds become acceptable. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...Verily, Allah only accepts from those who fear Him.﴾ (*al-Mâ'idah* 5: 27)

Therefore a person will be guided thereby to do righteous deeds, and Allah will also make his deeds good, by protecting them from that which could spoil them, and by granting and multiplying the reward for them. By the same token, not fearing Him properly and not saying what is appropriate is a cause of deeds becoming corrupted and not accepted, and it will not lead to the same results.

﴿and﴾ moreover, He will ﴿forgive you your sins﴾ that are the cause of doom. So fearing Allah will cause all of one's affairs to be rectified and become sound, and will ward off all kinds of harm. Hence Allah says: ﴿Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger will surely achieve a great triumph﴾.



﴿ إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا ﴾ (٧٣) لِيُعَذِّبَ اللَّهُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ وَالْمُشْرِكَاتِ وَيَتُوبَ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٧٣﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٧٢-٧٣)

- 33:72. Verily We offered the Trust<sup>15</sup> to the heavens, the earth, and the mountains, yet they refused to undertake it and were afraid of it. But man undertook it; verily he has proven to be a wrongdoer and ignorant.
- 33:73. [As a result of that] Allah will punish the hypocrite men and the hypocrite women, and the polytheist men and the polytheist women, and He will turn in mercy to the believing men and the believing women, for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Here Allah (ﷻ) emphasises the great importance of the Trust which He has entrusted to those who are accountable. What that means is complying with the commands and heeding the prohibitions, in private and in public. Allah (ﷻ) offered it to mighty creations, namely the heavens and the earth and the mountains, by way of choice, not imposition, saying: If you undertake it and do it properly, you will have the reward, but if you do not do it properly, you will be punished.

«yet they refused to undertake it and were afraid of it» that is, they feared that they would not be able to bear it; that was not out of disobedience towards their Lord or out of a lack of desire for His reward.

Allah offered it to man, according to these conditions, and he accepted it; he took it on despite his wrongdoing and ignorance; he

<sup>15</sup> The Trust (*amānah*): the commitment to obey Allah, carry out obligatory religious duties, and obey all His other commands.

took on this heavy burden. According to the extent to which they fulfil this trust, people are divided into three categories: hypocrites, who pretend to fulfil it and adhere to it outwardly, but do not do so inwardly; polytheists who ignore it both outwardly and inwardly; and believers who fulfil it and adhere to it both outwardly and inwardly.

Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the deeds of these three types of people, and what they will have of reward or punishment, as He says:

«[As a result of that] Allah will punish the hypocrite men and the hypocrite women, and the polytheist men and the polytheist women, and He will turn in mercy to the believing men and the believing women, for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful». To Him be all praise, for He ended this verse with these two divine names which are indicative of the perfect nature of Allah's forgiveness and the abundance of His mercy and grace, even though the verdict for many of them is that they do not deserve forgiveness and mercy, because of their hypocrisy and ascription of partners to Him.

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

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.



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## 34. Soorat Saba'

(Madani)

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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



﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ  
الْخَبِيرُ﴾ ﴿١﴾ يَعْلَمُ مَا يَلِجُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا وَمَا يَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَمَا يَعْرُجُ  
فِيهَا وَهُوَ الرَّحِيمُ الْعَفُورُ ﴿٢﴾ (سورة سبأ: ١-٢)

- 34:1. Praise be to Allah to Whom belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth; to Him be praise in the hereafter, and He is the Most Wise, the All-Aware.
- 34:2. He knows all that goes into the earth and all that comes out of it, and all that descends from heaven and all that ascends to it, and He is the Most Merciful, the Oft-Forgiving.
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﴿Praise be to Allah﴾ – *hamd*, translated here as ﴿praise﴾, refers to extolling Allah for His praiseworthy attributes and sublime deeds. To Allah be all praise, for all His attributes are praiseworthy, because they are attributes of perfection; His deeds are praiseworthy because they are either based on grace, for which He is to be praised and thanked,

or they are based on justice, for which He is to be praised, and the wisdom of which is to be acknowledged and recognised.

Allah praises Himself here, because to Him ﴿belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth﴾; He owns them all and they are subservient to Him; He controls them and disposes of their affairs as He wills.

﴿to Him be praise in the hereafter﴾ because in the hereafter He will be praised and extolled in a manner that He was not praised and extolled in this world.

When Allah judges between all creatures, and people and all creatures see His verdict and recognise the perfect nature of his justice, fairness and wisdom, they will all praise Him for that, even those who are faced with punishment and are doomed to enter hell; their hearts will be filled with praise for Him, and they will acknowledge that the punishment is the outcome of their deeds and that He is just in ruling that they should be punished.

As for His praise in the realm of bliss and reward, this is something that is abundantly reported, and all the evidence – both textual and rational – attests to that. In paradise, they will see the blessings of Allah coming one after another, abundant favours and immense generosity; there will be no wish or desire in the hearts of the people of paradise but they will be given more than they wish for or desire. Indeed they will be given good things that they never thought of or wished for, and that never crossed their minds.

So how much do you think they will praise their Lord when they are in that situation, knowing that in paradise all distractions and obstacles will have vanished that kept people from knowing, loving and praising Allah, and that praising Him will be dearer to its people than all these blessings and will bring greater pleasure than all these delights?

Therefore when they see Allah (ﷻ) and hear His words when He addresses them, that will cause them to forget all blessings; in

paradise, dhikr (remembering Allah) will be like breathing for them, and it will be ongoing, at all times.

In addition to that, for the people of paradise in paradise, that which points to the greatness, majesty, beauty and utter perfection of their Lord will be made manifest to them at all times, which will dictate that they should praise Him and extol Him in the most perfect manner.

﴿and He is the Most Wise﴾ in His dominion and control, Most Wise in His commands and prohibitions  
﴿the All-Aware﴾ Who sees the secret aspects of all things.

Hence He refers to His knowledge in elaborate detail, as He says:  
﴿He knows all that goes into the earth﴾ of rain, seeds and animals  
﴿and all that comes out of it﴾ such as all kinds of plants and animals  
﴿and all that descends from heaven﴾ such as the angels, provision and decrees  
﴿and all that ascends to it﴾ such as the angels, souls and so on.

Having mentioned His creation, His wisdom in controlling them, and His knowledge of their affairs, Allah now mentions His forgiveness and mercy towards them, as He says:  
﴿and He is the Most Merciful, the Oft-Forgiving﴾ that is, the One of Whom mercy and forgiveness are typical, the effects of which continue to come down to His slaves at all times, according to the actions they do that are precursors to both.



﴿ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَأْتِينَا السَّاعَةُ قُلْ بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّي لَتَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يُعْزَبُ عَنْهُ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا أَصْغَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْبَرَ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢﴾ لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ءَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٤﴾ وَالَّذِينَ سَعَوْا فِي ءَايَاتِنَا مُعْجِزِينَ ءَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مِّن رِّجْزٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة سبأ: ٣-٥)



- 34:3. Those who disbelieve say: The Hour will never come upon us. Say [O Muhammad]: Yes indeed, by my Lord, it will surely come upon you. [He is] the Knower of the unseen; not even the weight of a speck of dust, in heaven or on earth, escapes Him, nor is there anything smaller or greater than that, but it is [inscribed] in a clear record,
- 34:4. so that He may reward those who believe and do righteous deeds. They will have forgiveness and a generous provision.
- 34:5. But those who strive against Our revelations, seeking to discredit them, for such there will be a punishment of painful suffering.

Having highlighted His greatness in the way He describes Himself, which makes it imperative to venerate Him and sanctify Him, and to believe in Him, Allah now tells us that among people are some who did not give Him due recognition, and did not venerate Him as He should be venerated; rather they disbelieved in Him and denied His ability to revive the dead and bring about the Hour, and they contradicted the Messengers in that regard.

«Those who disbelieve» in Allah and His Messengers, and what the Messengers brought «say», because of their disbelief «The Hour will never come upon us» that is, there is nothing but the life of this world; we live and we die. So Allah instructed His Messenger (ﷺ) to refute what they said and show it to be false. He swore an oath, attesting that the resurrection will surely come to them, and He presented proof for that; whoever accepts it must inevitably believe in the resurrection. That proof is the vast and all-encompassing knowledge of Allah (ﷻ).

«[He is] the Knower of the unseen» that is, things that are hidden from our sight and from our knowledge, so how about that which is seen?

Then Allah emphasises the extent of His knowledge:

﴿not even the weight of a speck of dust, in heaven or on earth, escapes Him﴾ that is, nothing is beyond His knowledge; all things, whether as separate entities or component parts, even the smallest particles, namely atoms, are known to Him.

﴿nor is there anything smaller or greater than that, but it is [inscribed] in a clear record﴾ that is, His knowledge encompasses it and His pen has written it and it is included in the clear record, namely *al-Lawh al-Mahfoodh*.

The One from Whose knowledge not even an atom or anything smaller than that is hidden, at all times, and He knows what the earth consumes of the dead and what remains of their bodies, is surely able to resurrect them. Resurrecting them is no stranger and is not more amazing than this all-encompassing knowledge.

Then Allah tells us of the purpose of the resurrection, as He says:

﴿so that He may reward those who believe﴾, deep down in their hearts, in Allah and His Messengers, with certain faith  
﴿and do righteous deeds﴾ in confirmation of their faith.

﴿They will have forgiveness﴾ of their sins, because of their faith and good deeds, by means of which all evil and punishments will be warded off from them.

﴿and a generous provision﴾ for their having done good, by means of which they will attain all that they seek and wish for.

﴿But those who strive against Our revelations, seeking to discredit them﴾ that is, they strive against them because they disbelieve in them and seek to undermine the one who brought them and the One Who sent them down, just as they tried to challenge Him with regard to the resurrection after death.

﴿for such there will be a punishment of painful suffering﴾ that is, it will be painful to them both physically and spiritually.



﴿وَبَرَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَيَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ﴾ (سورة سبأ: ٦)

34:6. Those who have been given knowledge can see that what has been revealed to you from your Lord [O Muhammad] is the truth and that it guides to the path of the Almighty, the Praiseworthy.

Having mentioned the denial of those who denied the resurrection, and stated that they thought that what was revealed to His Messenger (ﷺ) was not true, Allah (ﷻ) now describes the situation of those among His slaves who are guided, who are the people of knowledge; they see that what Allah revealed to His Messenger (ﷺ) of the Book, and what it contains of stories of the past and news of the future is true, and whatever is contrary to it or contradicts it is false, because they have attained the level of knowledge that gives them certainty.

﴿and﴾ they also see that in what it enjoins and forbids ﴿it guides to the path of the Almighty, the Praiseworthy﴾. That is because they are certain of the truth of what the Qur'an says, for the following reasons:

- Because they know of the sincerity of the one who brought it.
- Because it is in accordance with what really happened and with the previous Books.
- Because of what they see with their own eyes of things that happened exactly as the Qur'an foretold.
- Because of what they see of great signs on the horizons and in their own selves that confirm the truthfulness of the message.
- Because it is in accordance with what is indicated by the names and attributes of Allah (ﷻ).

In its commands and prohibitions they see that it guides to the straight path, enjoining every practice that purifies the soul, brings reward and benefits the doer and others, such as honesty, sincerity,

honouring parents, upholding ties of kinship, treating all people kindly, and so on; and it forbids all abhorrent characteristics that are spiritually damaging, nullify reward and bring a burden of sin, such as ascription of partners to Allah, fornication and adultery, usury, and wronging people with regard to their physical well-being, wealth and honour.

This is indicative of the virtue of people of knowledge. The more knowledge a person has and the more he believes in what the Messenger (ﷺ) brought, and the greater his knowledge of the rulings, commands and prohibitions, the more he will be one of the people of knowledge whom Allah has made proof, testifying to the soundness of what the Messenger (ﷺ) brought, and through them Allah will establish proof against the stubborn disbelievers, as we see in this verse and elsewhere.



﴿ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَلْ نَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَى رَجُلٍ يُنْبِئُكُمْ إِذَا مُزِقْتُمْ كُلَّ مَزْقٍ إِنْكُمْ لَفِي خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ﴿٧﴾ أَفَتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَمْ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ بَلِ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ فِي الْعَذَابِ وَالضَّلَالِ الْبَعِيدِ ﴿٨﴾ أَفَلْتَرَوْنَ إِلَى مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنْ نَشَأْ نُغَيِّفْ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضَ أَوْ نُسْقِطْ عَلَيْهِمْ كِسْفًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِنْ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةٌ لِكُلِّ عَبْدٍ مُنِيبٍ ﴿٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة سبأ: ٧-٩)

34:7. Those who disbelieve say: Shall we point out to you a man<sup>16</sup> who will tell you that, when you have disintegrated completely and become scattered [like dust], you will be created anew?

34:8. Does he fabricate lies against Allah, or is there madness in him? Nay, it is those who do not believe in the hereafter who

<sup>16</sup> When visitors to Makkah asked about the Prophet (ﷺ), Quraysh would make comments such as this by way of ridicule and trying to put people off approaching him and listening to his message.

will be subjected to punishment and they are straying far into error.

- 34:9. Do they not see what lies before them and what lies behind them of heaven and earth?<sup>17</sup> If We so willed, We could cause the earth to swallow them up, or cause pieces of the sky to fall upon them.<sup>18</sup> Surely in that there is a sign for every slave who turns to Allah in repentance.

«Those who disbelieve say» by way of disbelief, ridicule and finding it unlikely, stating why they find it unlikely. They say to one another:

«Shall we point out to you a man who will tell you that, when you have disintegrated completely and become scattered [like dust], you will be created anew?» They were referring to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), saying that he was a man who had come up with a very strange idea, such that he had become – according to them – a spectacle to be pointed out to people and something very strange to be mocked, for how could he say “you will be resurrected” after you have disintegrated, and your remains have scattered and disappeared?

In other words, they were saying: does this man who brought this message «fabricate lies against Allah»? Does he have the audacity to do and say a thing, or «is there madness in him»? In which case it

<sup>17</sup> In other words: do these disbelievers not realise that wherever they go, if they look around them they will see Allah’s earth and heaven encompassing them in all directions? So that should deter them from rejecting His signs lest He order the earth to swallow them or the sky to fall on them in pieces. (aṭ-Ṭabari)

<sup>18</sup> This refers to a punishment coming from above, such as that which was sent upon the dwellers of the Wood (mentioned in Soorat ash-Shu‘arā’), to whom Shu‘ayb was sent, when they rejected his message and demanded that he cause pieces of the sky to fall upon them (26: 187), and they were overtaken by the punishment of the day of the overshadowing cloud (26: 189).

is nothing strange, because insanity is of various kinds and anything could be expected of a madman.

All of this attitude and behaviour on their part is indicative of their stubbornness and wrongdoing. They knew for sure that he was the most sincere and truthful of Allah's creation, and the most mature in thinking, and because they knew that, they did their utmost to oppose him, making a great deal of effort and spending a great deal of wealth in order to turn people away from him. If he had been a liar and insane, it would not be appropriate for you – O rational yet evil people – to listen to what he says or to pay attention to his call, because it is not appropriate for a rational person to pay attention to anyone who is insane or to take what he says seriously.

Were it not for your stubbornness and wrongdoing, you would have hastened to respond to him and accept his call,

﴿...But neither signs nor warnings are of any avail to people who will not believe.﴾ (Yoonus 10: 101)

Hence Allah (ﷻ) said:

﴿Nay, it is those who do not believe in the hereafter﴾, including those who say these words, ﴿who will be subjected to punishment and they are straying far into error﴾ that is, into great doom and extreme misguidance, that is not even close to what is right and correct.

What doom and misguidance could be worse than their denial that Allah is able to bring about resurrection, their rejection and ridicule of His Messenger (ﷺ) who brought this message, and their certainty that what they are following is the truth, on the basis of which they see truth as falsehood, and falsehood and misguidance as truth and guidance.

Then Allah draws their attention to the rational evidence which indicates that the resurrection is not unlikely, even if they deem it so, and that if they were to look at what is in front of them and

behind them of the heavens and the earth, they would recognise the might and power of Allah in the creation thereof, which would dazzle their minds, and prominent people of knowledge are astounded by its greatness. The creation of the heavens and the earth, with their greatness and all that they contain of created things, is greater than the resurrection of people from their graves after they die. So what made them reject the idea of the resurrection whilst believing in something greater than it? Indeed that is something that is unseen until now; they have not seen it, and that is why they did not believe in it.

﴿If We so willed, We could cause the earth to swallow them up, or cause pieces of the sky to fall upon them﴾ that is, as a punishment, because the earth and the sky are under Our control, and if We were to command them to do something, they would not disobey. So beware of persisting in your disbelief, lest We punish you severely.

﴿Surely in that﴾ that is, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and all that they contain of created things  
 ﴿there is a sign for every slave who turns to Allah in repentance﴾.

The more a person turns to Allah in repentance, the more he will benefit from the great signs, because the one who repents and turns to his Lord focuses with all his heart and aspirations on his Lord, and turns to Him in all his affairs. Thus he becomes close to his Lord and has no concern or interest except to strive to please Him. So when he looks at created beings, it is in order to reflect and learn, not with heedlessness in a manner that is of no benefit.



﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ مِنَّا فَضْلًا يَنْجِيهِ أُوِّي مَعَهُ وَالطَّيْرَ وَالنَّارَ لَهُ الْحَدِيدَ  
 ١٠ أَنْ أَعْمَلَ سَدِغَتٍ وَقَدَّرَ فِي السَّرْدِ وَأَعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا إِنِّي بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ  
 ١١﴾ (سورة سبأ: ١٠-١١)

34:10. Indeed We bestowed favours upon Dâwood, [saying]: O mountains, echo his [glorification of Allah], and you too, O birds! And We made iron malleable for him,

34:11. [saying]: Make full-length coats of mail, forging links of proper measure.<sup>19</sup> And [O family of Dâwood], do righteous deeds, for verily I see well all that you do.

That is, and We blessed Our slave and Messenger Dâwood (ﷺ), giving Him abundant beneficial knowledge, enabling him to do righteous deeds, and bestowing spiritual and worldly blessings upon him. Among the blessings that Allah bestowed upon him is what He granted him exclusively, such as His issuing commands to inanimate things, such as mountains, as well as animate beings such as birds, to echo his glorification of Allah (and repeat after him his words of glorification and praise). As this was a great blessing that was unique to him, and no one shared it with him, before or since, this motivated him and others to glorify Allah, when they saw those inanimate objects and animate beings reiterating words of glorification of their Lord, praising and magnifying Him.

Another example of the blessings bestowed upon Dâwood (ﷺ), as many of the scholars have stated, was the voice of Dâwood, for Allah (ﷻ) had given him a beautiful voice that surpassed all others. When he recited words of glorification and praise in that melodious and moving voice, everyone who heard it rejoiced in it, both human and *jinn*, and even birds and mountains, and they glorified and praised their Lord.

Perhaps it was so that he could attain the reward of their glorification of Allah, because he was the cause of it and they were following him in glorifying Allah.

<sup>19</sup> That is, striking a balance, when making the links or rings of mail, between offering adequate protection and being sufficiently light so as not to hamper movement in the battlefield.



Another aspect of Allah's bounty towards him was that He made iron malleable for him, so that he could make full-length coats of mail, and He taught him how to make them, by forging links of proper measure; in other words, he made the links of a certain size, according to a particular design, then he put them together so that they were interlinked. Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿And We taught him the art of making coats of mail for your benefit, to protect you in battle. Will you then be grateful?﴾ (al-Anbiyā' 21: 80)

Having mentioned the favours that He bestowed upon him and his family, Allah instructed them to give thanks to Him, and to do righteous deeds and remember that Allah is always watching, by ensuring that those deeds were done in the proper manner and by protecting them from anything that could spoil them, for He sees all that they do and is constantly watching them, and nothing is hidden from Him.



﴿وَلَسَلِّمَنَّ الَّرِيحُ غَدُوَهَا شَهْرًا وَرَوْاحَهَا شَهْرًا وَأَسَلْنَا لَهُ عَيْنَ الْقِطْرِ ۗ وَمِنَ الْجِنِّ مَن يَعْمَلُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِ ۗ وَمَن يَبْزِغْ مِنْهُمْ عَنَ أَمْرِنَا نُدَاقَهُ مِّنَ عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿١٢﴾ يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُ مَا يَشَاءُ مِن مَّحْرِبٍ وَتَمَثِيلٍ وَّحِفَانٍ كَالْجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٍ رَّاسِيَتٍ ۗ أَعْمَلُوا ءَالَ دَاوُدَ شُكْرًا وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ فَلَمَّا قَضَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَوْتَ مَا دَلَّهُمْ عَلَى مَوْتِهِ ۗ إِلَّا دَابَّةٌ مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ تَأْكُلُ مِن سَائِغَتِهِ ۗ فَلَمَّا خَرَّ تَبَيَّنَتِ الْجِنُّ أَن لَّو كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ الْغَيْبَ مَا لَبِثُوا فِي الْعَذَابِ الْمُهِينِ ﴿١٤﴾﴾ (سورة سبأ: ١٢-١٤)

34:12. And for Sulaymān [We subjugated] the wind; it would cover the distance of a month's journey in the morning and a month's journey in the evening. We caused a spring of molten brass to flow for him, and there were some of the jinn who worked for him, by his Lord's leave; whoever among them disobeyed Our

command, We will cause him to taste the punishment of the raging fire.

- 34:13. They made for him whatever he wanted of lofty structures, images, basins as large as reservoirs, and [cooking] cauldrons fixed [in their places].<sup>20</sup> Strive [in doing righteous deeds], O family of Dâwood, in gratitude. But few of My slaves are grateful.
- 34:14. Then, when We decreed Sulaymân's death, nothing made them aware of his death except a creature of the earth that ate away at his staff. When he fell down, the jinn realised that, if they had truly had knowledge of the unseen, they would not have had to continue their demeaning labour.

Having mentioned His bounty to Dâwood (ﷺ), Allah now tells us of His bounty to his son Sulaymân (ﷺ); Allah subjugated the wind and made it of service to him, so that it would blow by his command and carry him and everything he had with him, and would cover huge distances in a short time, so that it was possible to travel a distance of two months' journey in a single day.

﴿it would cover the distance of a month's journey in the morning﴾ that is, from the beginning of the day until midday  
 ﴿and a month's journey in the evening﴾ that is, from midday until the end of the day.

﴿We caused a spring of molten brass to flow for him﴾ that is, We made a spring of molten brass to be of service to him, and We made available to him means of producing vessels and other things from it.

Allah also subjugated the devils and the jinn to him, so that they were not able to disobey his commands; ﴿whoever among them disobeyed Our command, We will cause him to taste the punishment of the raging fire﴾.

<sup>20</sup> The basins and cauldrons were for the preparation and serving of a large amount of food.

They made everything that Sulaymân wanted them to make, ﴿of lofty structures, images﴾ that is, images of animals and inanimate objects, because they were skilled in that and were able to do it. They also made for Sulaymân ﴿basins as large as reservoirs﴾ that is, large pools, in which they made food for Sulaymân, because he needed what others did not

﴿and﴾ they made for him ﴿[cooking] cauldrons fixed [in their places]﴾; they could not be moved from their places because they were so big.

Having mentioned the blessings that He bestowed upon them, Allah commanded them to give thanks to Him:

﴿Strive [in doing righteous deeds], O family of Dâwood﴾ this includes Dâwood, his children and his family, because the blessings were bestowed upon all of them, and many of those blessings benefitted all of them.

﴿in gratitude﴾ to Allah for what He had given them.

﴿But few of My slaves are grateful﴾ that is, most of them do not give thanks to Allah for what He bestows upon them of His blessings and what He wards off from them of harm.

Gratitude means acknowledging in one's heart the blessings of Allah (ﷻ), expressing one's need for them when receiving them, using them in obedience to Allah (ﷻ), and refraining from using them in wrongful ways by disobeying Him.

The devils continued working for Sulaymân (ﷺ), building all kinds of structures. They had deceived people by telling them that they had knowledge of the unseen and could see what was hidden. Hence Allah (ﷻ) wanted to show people that the devils were lying, so they continued working and Allah caused Sulaymân (ﷺ) to die when he was leaning on his stick or staff; so when they passed by him as he was leaning on it, they thought he was alive, and they feared him. They continued working like that for an entire year, according to what was said, until a creature of the earth came to his stick and

kept eating away at it until it broke and fell, then Sulaymân (ﷺ) fell down; the devils scattered and it became clear to the people that if the jinn (had truly had knowledge of the unseen, they would not have had to continue their demeaning labour), which was this work that was difficult for them. If they had had knowledge of the unseen, they would have known of the death of Sulaymân, which was something they were very keen for, so that they could escape their situation.



﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لِسَبَإٍ فِي مَسْكِنِهِمْ آيَةٌ جَنَّتَانِ عَنْ يَمِينٍ وَشِمَالٍ كُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِ رَبِّكُمْ  
وَاشْكُرُوا لَهُ. بَلَدَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ رَبُّ غَفُورٌ ﴿١٥﴾ فَأَعْرَضُوا فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَيْلَ الْعَرِمِ  
وَبَدَّلْنَاهُمْ بِجَنَّتَيْهِمْ جَنَّتَيْنِ ذَوَاتِ أُكُلٍ خَمْطٍ وَأَثَلٍ وَشَيْءٍ مِنْ سِدْرٍ قَلِيلٍ  
﴿١٦﴾ ذَلِكَ جَزَاءُهم بِمَا كَفَرُوا وَهَلْ يُجْزَى إِلَّا الْكُفُورُ ﴿١٧﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ  
الْقُرَى الَّتِي بَرَكْنَا فِيهَا قُرًى ظَهَرَ وَقَدَرْنَا فِيهَا السَّيْرَ سِيْرًا فِيهَا لِيَالِي وَأَيَّامًا  
ءَامِنِينَ ﴿١٨﴾ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا بَعُدْ بَيْنَ أَسْفَارِنَا وَظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَحَادِيثَ  
وَمَزَقْنَاهُمْ كُلَّ مَزْقٍ إِنْ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ﴿١٩﴾ وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَ عَلَيْهِمْ  
إِبْلِيسُ ظَنَّهُ فَاتَّبَعُوهُ إِلَّا فَرِيقًا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَمَا كَانَ لَهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ  
إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَأْتِيهِمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ مِمَّنْ هُوَ مِنْهَا فِي شَكٍّ وَرَبُّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَفِيظٌ

﴿١٦﴾ (سورة سبأ: ١٥-٢١)

- 34:15. There was a sign for [the people of] Saba' in their dwelling place: two gardens, one on the right and one on the left. [It was said to them:] Eat of what your Lord has provided for you, and give thanks to Him; bountiful is your land and oft-forgiving is your Lord.
- 34:16. But they turned away, so We sent against them a severe flood, and replaced their two gardens with two others yielding bitter fruit, and tamarisks, and a few wild lote-trees.

- 34:17. Thus We punished them for their ingratitude; would We punish any but those who are ungrateful?
- 34:18. Between them and the cities which We had blessed, We placed [a chain of] towns, within sight of one another, and We made the distances between them convenient for the travellers: Travel through them by night and day in safety.
- 34:19. But they said: Our Lord, make the stages of our journeys longer,<sup>21</sup> and they wronged themselves thereby. So We made them into cautionary tales and dispersed them in all directions. Surely in that there are signs for every steadfastly patient and deeply thankful person.
- 34:20. Iblees found his expectations<sup>22</sup> concerning them to be correct, for they all followed him, except for a group of believers.
- 34:21. But he had no authority<sup>23</sup> over them, except [what was given to him] for the purpose that We might distinguish those who believe in the hereafter from those who are in doubt about it. For your Lord watches over all things.

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Saba' was a well-known tribe near Yemen; their homeland was a region called Ma'rib.

One of the favours and kindnesses that Allah bestowed upon people in general, and the Arabs in particular, was that in the Qur'an, He

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<sup>21</sup> That was because they grew bored with their life of ease and wanted adventure; this is similar to the attitude of the Israelites, when Allah blessed them with the manna and quails, but they tired of that food and demanded garlic, onions, cucumbers and so on.

<sup>22</sup> That is, he had expected that he would be able to mislead them, as he said:

﴿...By Your might, I will certainly mislead them all, except Your chosen [and sincere] slaves among them.﴾ (Sād 38: 82-83)

<sup>23</sup> Iblees has no power to compel people to follow him, or any sound argument to convince them to do so; all he can do is whisper to them and make falsehood attractive and fair-seeming to them.

told the stories of nations who were doomed and punished who had lived in the vicinity of the Arabs, and whose ruins could be seen, and people were familiar with their stories which they told to one another. That made it easier for people to believe these stories and made them more effective as a reminder. Hence Allah said:

«There was a sign for [the people of] Saba' in their dwelling place» that is, the place where they lived. The sign in this case was what Allah had bestowed upon them of blessings and what He had warded off from them of calamities. That required them to worship Allah alone and give thanks to Him.

Then He explained what the sign was: «two gardens, one on the right and one on the left». They had a great valley that received a lot of rainfall, which resulted in abundant streams, springs and so on, and they had built a strong dam in order to collect the water. So when the rains came, they would gather a huge amount of water, which they would distribute to their gardens, which were on the right and the left of that valley. Those two huge gardens yielded fruits and crops that sufficed them and brought them a great deal of joy. Hence Allah commanded them to give thanks for the many blessings that He had bestowed upon them, including the following:

- Those two gardens that provided most of their food.
- Allah made their land bountiful because of its good climate, which was not unhealthy; and because of the bountiful provision that the land produced, Allah promised them, if they showed gratitude to Him, that He would forgive them and have mercy on them. Hence He said: «bountiful is your land and oft-forgiving is your Lord».
- Because Allah knew that for their trade and livelihood they needed to reach a blessed land – what appears to be the case is that it was the outskirts of Sanaa, which was the view of more than one of the early generation, although it was also suggested that it was ash-Shâm (Greater Syria) – He prepared

for them the means that helped them to reach that land with ease and safely, with no fear. There was a chain of towns between them and that land, so that they did not need to go to the trouble of carrying provisions and supplies with them as they travelled.

Hence Allah says: ﴿Between them and the cities which We had blessed, We placed [a chain of] towns, within sight of one another, and We made the distances between them convenient for the travellers﴾ that is, distances that they knew well and could plan their journeys accordingly, so that they would not lose their way  
 ﴿Travel through them by night and day in safety﴾ that is, safe and secure during those nights and days, not fearing anything. This was part of the perfect blessing that Allah bestowed upon them, which is that He made them safe from fear.

But they turned away from the Bestower of those blessings and from worshipping Him alone, and they took the blessing for granted and got bored of it, to the extent that they wished that the distances between those towns, between which travelling was so easy, would be longer.

﴿and they wronged themselves thereby﴾ by disbelieving in Allah and being ungrateful for His blessings. Hence Allah (ﷻ) punished them by taking away and destroying the blessing that had made them arrogant. He sent against them a severe flood that destroyed their dam and ruined their gardens.

Hence those gardens that had been filled with beautiful plants and fruit-bearing trees were destroyed and replaced with trees in which there was no benefit. Allah says: ﴿and replaced their two gardens with two others yielding bitter fruit﴾ that is, something that produced little food, that was not sufficient to meet their needs

﴿and tamarisks, and a few wild lote-trees﴾ all of these are well-known trees, which matched their misdeeds.

Just as they replaced gratitude with ingratitude, those blessings were replaced with the things mentioned. Hence Allah says:

﴿Thus We punished them for their ingratitude; would We punish any but those who are ungrateful?﴾ That is, would We requite in the sense of punishing any but those who are ungrateful to Allah and take His blessings for granted?

When that punishment befell them, they scattered in all directions after having been all together, and Allah made them a story that was told and a tale to be told at night. They became an example and a proverb, whereby people would say "They scattered like Saba'", and everyone would talk about what happened to them.

But no one learned a lesson from them except those whom Allah referred to when He said: ﴿Surely in that there are signs for every steadfastly patient and deeply thankful person﴾, who bears with patience the hardships and difficulties that he endures for the sake of Allah, and does not show discontent; rather he bears it with patience and gratefully acknowledges the blessings of Allah (ﷻ), praising the One Who bestowed them and uses them in obedience to Him.

If such a person hears their story, how they acted and what happened to them, he realises that this punishment was requital for their ingratitude for Allah's blessings, and that whoever acts like them will meet the same fate. And he will realise that gratitude to Allah (ﷻ) protects the blessing and wards off the punishment; and that the Messengers of Allah told the truth and that the requital is true, as he has seen examples of it in this world.

Then Allah tells us that the people of Saba' were among those concerning whom Iblees found his expectations to be correct, when he said to his Lord:

﴿...By Your might, I will certainly mislead them all, except Your chosen [and sincere] slaves among them.﴾ (Sād 38: 82-83)



This expectation on the part of Iblees was not certain knowledge, because he did not know the unseen and no news had come to him from Allah that he would mislead them all, with some exceptions.

These people, and others like them, were among those concerning whom he found his expectations to be correct, whom he called and tempted, ﴿for they all followed him, except for a group of believers﴾ who were among those who were not ungrateful for the blessings of Allah; they were not included in those expectations of Iblees.

It may be that the story of Saba' ends with the words ﴿Surely in that there are signs for every steadfastly patient and deeply thankful person﴾, then a new idea begins with the words ﴿Iblees found his expectations concerning them to be correct﴾, referring to humanity as a whole, in which case the verse is general in meaning and refers to everyone who followed Iblees.

Then Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿But he﴾ namely Iblees ﴿had no authority over them﴾ that is, he had no control or power over them to force them to do whatever he wanted. But the divine wisdom decreed that he should have some power and influence over the children of Adam.

﴿except [what was given to him] for the purpose that We might distinguish those who believe in the hereafter from those who are in doubt about it﴾ that is, so that there would be a test and it might be known who is sincere and who is lying, whose faith is real and steadfast in the face of trials and tests, and when devilish specious arguments are put forth, and whose faith is not steadfast and will be shaken by the slightest specious argument and will falter at the merest call to the opposite. Allah (ﷻ) has made this a test by means of which He tries his slaves and distinguishes the bad from the good.

﴿For your Lord watches over all things﴾ – He is watching over His slaves and their deeds, and He takes care of the requital thereof, for He will requite them in full for all that they do.



﴿ قُلِ ادْعُوا الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ فِي  
السَّمَوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَهُمْ فِيهِمَا مِنْ شِرْكٍَ وَمَا لَهُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ ظَهِيرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَلَا  
يَنْفَعُ الشَّفَعَةُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا لِمَنْ أِذِنَ لَهُ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فُزِعَ عَنْ قُلُوبِهِمْ قَالُوا مَاذَا قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ  
قَالُوا الْحَقُّ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة سبأ: ٢٢-٢٣)

- 34:22. Say: Call on those whom you claim [to be gods] besides Allah. They do not have even an atom's weight of power in the heavens or on earth, nor have they any share in either of them, nor is any of them a helper to Allah.
- 34:23. No intercession will be of any avail before Him, except for those for whom He permits intercession. [They will wait in fear and trepidation for that permission to be granted] until, when the fear has been lifted from their hearts, they will say: What did your Lord say? They will say: The truth, and He is the Most High, the Most Great.

﴿Say﴾ O Messenger, to those who associate with Allah created beings that cannot bring any benefit or do any harm, giving them compelling proof that those beings are helpless and explaining to them the invalidity of worshipping them:

﴿Call on those whom you claim [to be gods] besides Allah﴾ that is, those whom you claim are partners to Allah, if your calling upon them will be of any benefit, because they are helpless in all aspects and cannot answer your supplication at all.

They do not have the least power, for they ﴿do not have even an atom's weight of power in the heavens or on earth﴾, either independently of Allah or in partnership with Him. Hence He says: ﴿nor have they﴾ namely those so-called gods of yours

﴿any share in either of them﴾ that is, either in the heavens or the earth; they have no share, small or great, and they have no power or share of power.

But there is another argument which says that despite that, they could still be helpers and advisers to the Sovereign, so calling upon them may be of benefit, because – as the Sovereign needs their help – they could meet the needs of those who are connected to them. But Allah (ﷻ) rules out this idea of them being helpers or advisers, as He says:

﴿nor is any of them﴾ that is, these objects of worship

﴿a helper to Allah﴾ (ﷻ), the One, the Subduer; that is, none of them is a supporter or adviser who helps Him in ruling and controlling the affairs of the universe.

So there is nothing left but the idea of intercession, which Allah rules out by saying:

﴿No intercession will be of any avail before Him, except for those for whom He permits intercession﴾. These are the reasons why the polytheists are attached to their rivals and idols, be they humans, trees or anything else. So Allah explained that these reasons are baseless, so as to leave no excuse or argument for believing in the ascription of partners to Him, and so as to rule out this idea completely.

As the polytheist only calls upon and worships something other than Allah because of benefits that he hopes to gain from it, and this hope is what led him to ascribe partners to Allah, if what he calls upon besides Allah has no power to bring benefits or cause harm, and he has no share with the Sovereign, and is not a helper or supporter to the Sovereign, and cannot intercede without the permission of the Sovereign, then this call and this worship constitutes misguidance, according to rational thinking, and it is false and invalid according to religious teaching.

In fact the one who ascribes partners to Allah will get the opposite of what he is seeking, for what he is seeking by this means is benefit.

But Allah highlights the invalidity of his belief and explains that it will be of no benefit. In other verses, He highlights the harm that the object of worship will do to its worshippers, for on the Day of Resurrection they will disavow one another and curse one another, and the destination of all of them will be the fire:

﴿When humankind are gathered [on the Day of Resurrection], they will become their enemies and will reject their worship of them.﴾  
(*al-Ahqâf* 46: 6)

What is truly strange is that the polytheist is too arrogant to submit to the Messengers on the grounds that they are mere humans, yet he accepts to worship and call upon trees and rocks. He is too arrogant to be sincere to the Sovereign, the Most Gracious, the Judge, yet he agrees to worship that which is more likely to do him harm, in obedience to his bitterest enemy, namely the Shayṭān.

﴿[They will wait in fear and trepidation for that permission to be granted] until, when the fear has been lifted from their hearts, they will say: What did your Lord say? [The intercessors] will say: The truth, and He is the Most High, the Most Great.﴾

It may be the case that the pronoun here refers to the polytheists, because the context is speaking of them, and the usual guideline is that the pronoun refers to that which was mentioned most recently.

In that case what is meant is: on the Day of Resurrection, when the fear is removed from the hearts of the polytheists and they are asked, when they regain their senses, about how they were in this world and about their rejection of the truth that was brought by the Messengers, they will affirm that what they followed of disbelief and polytheism was false, and that what Allah said, and what His Messengers said about Him, was the truth. Thus what they used to hide before will become apparent, and they will know that truth (divinity) belongs to Allah alone (*cf.* 28: 75), and they will acknowledge their sins.

«and He is the Most High» in His essence, above all of His creation, and He subdues them; and He is Most High in His status, for to Him belong the most sublime attributes.

«the Most Great» in His essence and attributes. Part of His being the Most High is that His ruling supersedes all, and all souls are subjugated to Him, even the souls of the arrogant and of those who ascribe partners to Him.

This meaning is more likely to be correct, and it is what is indicated by the text.

Or it may be the case that the pronoun refers to the angels, meaning that when Allah (ﷻ) spoke the words of revelation, the angels heard it and swooned, and fell down in prostration to Allah. Then the first one to raise his head was Jibreel, to whom Allah speaks and reveals to him whatever He wants to reveal. Then when the angels recover and the fear in their hearts subsides, they ask one another about the word at which they swooned: What did your Lord say? Then they tell one another: He said the truth – either in general terms, because they know that He does not say anything but the truth, or they say: He said such and such – mentioning the words that they heard from Him, which are true.

In this case, the meaning would be: the polytheists worshipped those gods alongside Allah, whose incapability and imperfection We have described to you, for they cannot offer any benefit whatsoever; how could they turn away from devoting their worship sincerely to the Almighty Lord, the Most High, the Most Great, because of Whose greatness and majesty the humility of the noble angels and those of His creation who are near to Him, reaches such a level that they swoon when they hear His words, and they all affirm that Allah speaks nothing but the truth?

So what is wrong with these polytheists that they are too arrogant to worship the One Who is of such high status, Whose dominion and

power are so great? Exalted be the Most High, the Most Great, above the ascription of partners, fabrications and lies of the polytheists.



﴿ قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ قُلِ اللَّهُ وَإِنَّا أَوْ إِيَّاكُمْ لَعَلَىٰ هُدًى أَوْ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢٤﴾ قُلْ لَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا أَجْرَمْنَا وَلَا تُسْأَلُ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ قُلْ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا رَبَّنَا ثُمَّ يَفْتَحُ بَيْنَنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَهُوَ الْفَتَّاحُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٢٦﴾ قُلْ أَرُونِي الَّذِينَ أَلْحَقْتُمْ بِهِ شُرَكَاءَ ۚ كَلَّا بَلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٧﴾ ﴾

(سورة سبأ: ٢٤-٢٧)

- 34:24. Say: Who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? Say: It is Allah; and verily either we or you are rightly guided or clearly misguided.
- 34:25. Say: You will not be questioned about our misdeeds and we will not be questioned about what you do.
- 34:26. Say: Our Lord will gather us all together, then He will judge between us in truth, for He is the All-Knowing Judge.
- 34:27. Say: Show me those whom you have joined with Him as partners. No indeed [there are no such partners at all]! He is Allah [the only God], the Almighty, the Most Wise.

Here Allah (ﷻ) instructs His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) to say to those who ascribe partners to Allah, asking them about the argument for their ascription of partners to Him:

﴿Who provides for you from the heaven and the earth?﴾ They will inevitably say that it is Allah.

But if they do not affirm it, then ﴿Say: It is Allah﴾, for you will not find anyone who will reject this idea. Once it is clear that it is Allah alone Who provides for you from the heavens and the earth, sending

down to you the rain and bringing forth plants for you, causing rivers to flow and causing trees to bear fruits for you, and He has given you all kinds of animals for your benefit and provision, then why do you worship besides Him those who do not provide anything for you and do not bring you any benefit?

﴿and verily either we or you are rightly guided or clearly misguided﴾ that is, one of the two groups, either us or you, is guided, following true guidance, or is clearly misguided, sinking in misguidance. These words could be said by one to whom the truth is clear and he is certain of the truth that he is following, and of the falsehood of what his opponent is following.

In other words, we have established, on the basis of clear proof, what we have and what you have, by means of which it is known for certain, beyond any doubt, who is in the right and who is at fault, who is guided and who is misguided, to the extent that there is no need to point out who is in the right or otherwise after that.

If you compare the one who calls to the worship of the Creator of all created beings – Who is controlling them and directing them in all ways, the Bestower of all blessings, Who grants them provision, causes all blessings to reach them and wards off all kinds of trouble from them, to Whom belong all praise and dominion, and all the angels and those below them submit to His majesty, humbling themselves before His greatness, and all intercessors fear Him, for none can intercede with Him except by His leave, the Most High, the Most Great in His essence, attributes and deeds, to Whom belong all perfection, majesty and beauty, all praise and glory – and calls people to strive to draw near to One Who is like that, and to strive sincerely for His sake, and tells people not to worship anything other than Him, with the one who seeks to draw near to idols, statues and graves that do not create anything or grant any provision, that have no control over themselves or over those who worship them, and have no power to bring benefit or cause harm, or to cause death, give life or resurrect,

rather they are inanimate, unable to think or hear the supplication of the worshippers, and if they did hear it they would not respond to them, and on the Day of Resurrection they will reject their ascription of them as partners to Allah and will disavow them, and they (the worshippers and their objects of worship) will curse one another, and they have no share in dominion and cannot help them or intercede for them with Allah, so he is calling upon one who is like that, trying to draw as close to him as he can, taking as his enemy and fighting those who devote their worship to Allah alone, rejecting the Messengers of Allah who taught sincerity to Allah alone...

... It will become clear to you which of the two groups is guided and which is misguided, which is blessed and which is doomed, and there will be no need to explain that to you, because describing the situation is clearer than making a statement.

﴿Say﴾ to them: ﴿You will not be questioned about our misdeeds and we will not be questioned about what you do﴾ that is, both we and you have our own deeds. You ﴿will not be questioned﴾ about our misdeeds or sins, if we commit sin, and we ﴿will not be questioned﴾ about your deeds. So let the aim of both us and you be to seek the facts and follow the path of fair-mindedness. Forget about what we used to do, for that should not hinder you from following the truth, for rulings in this world are based on what one sees, and with regard to these rulings, truth should be followed and falsehood should be avoided. As for the deeds, there will be another realm in which the most just of those who judge will judge them and will settle all disputes. Hence Allah says:

﴿Say: Our Lord will gather us all together, then He will judge between us﴾ that is, He will pass judgement between us, by which it will become clear who is sincere and who is lying, who is deserving of reward and who is deserving of punishment, for He is the best of judges.

﴿Say﴾ to them, O Messenger – and whoever follows in his footsteps (in calling people to Allah):



«Show me those whom you have joined with Him as partners» that is, where are they? Where is the way to know them? Are they on earth or in heaven? The Knower of the unseen and the seen has told us that no such partner exists:

«They worship, besides Allah, that which has no power either to harm or benefit them, and they say: These are our intercessors with Allah. Say: Do you presume to tell Allah of something that He does not know in the heavens or on earth? Glorified and exalted be He far above the partners they ascribe to Him!» (*Yoonus 10: 18*)

– and:

«Verily, to Allah belong all those who are in the heavens and on earth. Those who call upon their [so-called] partners besides Allah follow nothing but conjecture and they do nothing but lie.» (*Yoonus 10: 66*)

Similarly, the elite of His creation, namely the Prophets and Messengers, do not know of any partner for Him. So, O polytheists, show me those whom you have falsely associated with Allah «as partners».

They cannot answer this question, hence Allah says: «No indeed» that is, Allah has no partner, no rival, no counterpart; rather «He is Allah [the only God]» and none is deserving of devotion and worship except Him.

«the Almighty» Who subjugates all things, so everything other than Him is subjugated, subdued and under control.

«the Most Wise» Who perfected all that He created, and perfected what He prescribed of rules and regulations. If there was nothing that He prescribed in His wisdom except that He enjoined affirming His oneness and showing devotion to Him alone, and He loves that and has made it the way of salvation, and has forbidden the ascription of partners to Him and taking other gods besides Him, and has made that the path that leads to loss and doom, that would be sufficient proof of His perfect wisdom. So what do you think, when we know that everything that He has enjoined and forbidden is based on wisdom?



﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هٰذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنْتَ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ قُلْ لَكُمْ مِيعَادٌ يَوْمَ لَا تَسْتَعِجِرُونَ عَنْهُ سَاعَةً وَلَا تَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة سبأ: ٢٨-٣٠)

- 34:28. We have not sent you [O Muhammad] but as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner to all humankind, but most people do not realise,
- 34:29. And they say: When will this promise come to pass, if you speak the truth?
- 34:30. Say: There has been appointed for you a day which you will not be able to delay for a single moment or bring forward.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He only sent His Messenger (ﷺ) to bring glad tidings to all people of the reward of Allah, and to tell them of the deeds that earn this reward and to warn them of the punishment of Allah and to tell them of the deeds that incur His punishment. You (O Prophet [ﷺ]) have no control over the matter, and whatever the stubborn disbelievers demand from you of signs, it is not your role to produce it; rather the matter is in the Hand of Allah (ﷻ).

«but most people do not realise» that is, they have no sound knowledge; rather they are either ignorant or stubborn, so they do not act upon their knowledge and hence it is as if they have no knowledge. As a result of not having knowledge, they decided that they should reject his call, because the Messenger (ﷺ) did not respond to what they demanded of signs.

Among the demands they made was their demand that he should hasten for them the punishment of which he warned them. Hence Allah says:

«And they say: When will this promise come to pass, if you speak the truth?» This is unfair on their part, for what connection is there

between him being truthful and his saying when it will happen? Can this be anything but rejection of the truth, foolishness and lack of reason? If one who warns about some imminent worldly danger goes to people who know that he is sincere and honest, and they have an enemy that is waiting for an opportunity to attack them and is preparing to do so, and he tells them: I have seen your enemy marching towards you, aiming to attack you and eradicate you, – if some of them were to say: If you are telling the truth, tell us what time they will reach us and where they are now – would the one who says that be regarded as rational, or would he be deemed foolish and crazy?

That is the case when the one who tells that news may be telling the truth or may be lying; perhaps he saw someone else who was not the enemy, or the enemy may lose their resolve and not attack them, or they may have the power to defend themselves. So how about those who disbelieved the most truthful of people, the one who was infallible in what he said, who did not speak on the basis of his own whims and desires, who spoke of the punishment which was certain and cannot be warded off, and no one can help against it? Is not their rejection of what he told them, on the grounds that the warner could not tell them clearly when it would happen, one of the most foolish things to do?

«Say» to them, telling them of the time when it will happen, concerning which there is no doubt: «There has been appointed for you a day which you will not be able to delay for a single moment or bring forward». So beware of that day, and prepare for it.



﴿ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ بِهَذَا الْقُرْآنِ وَلَا بِالَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَلَوْ نَرَىٰ إِذِ الظَّالِمُونَ مَوْقُوفُونَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يَرْجِعُ بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ الْقَوْلَ يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَضَعُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا لَوْلَا أَنَّمْ لَكُم مَّاؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾ قَالَ الَّذِينَ

اسْتَكْبَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَضَعِفُوا أَن تَنْصُرَهُمْ صَدَدْتُمْ عَنْ الْهُدَىٰ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَاءَكُمْ بِلَ كُتُبٍ  
 مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَضَعِفُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا بَلْ مَكْرُ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ إِذْ  
 تَأْمُرُونَنَا أَنْ نَكْفُرَ بِاللَّهِ وَنَجْعَلَ لَهُمْ أَدْدَاً وَأَسْرُوا النَّدَامَةَ لَمَّا رَأَوُا الْعَذَابَ وَجَعَلْنَا  
 الْأَغْلَلَ فِي آعْنَاقِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَلْ يُحْزَنُونَ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿سورة سبأ:

(٣٣-٣١)

- 34:31. Those who disbelieve say: We will never believe in this Qur'an or in any scripture that came before it. If you could but see the wrongdoers when they will be made to stand before their Lord, hurling reproaches at one another. Those who were regarded as weak will say to those who were arrogant: Had it not been for you, we would have been believers.
- 34:32. Those who were arrogant will say to those who were regarded as weak: Was it we who prevented you from following right guidance after it had come to you? Nay, rather you yourselves were given to evil.
- 34:33. Those who were regarded as weak will say to those who were arrogant: Rather it was your efforts to deceive us, by night and by day, for you commanded us to disbelieve in Allah and set up rivals to Him. They will conceal their remorse, when they see the punishment, and We will place iron collars on the necks of those who disbelieved. Should they be requited for anything other than what they used to do?

Having mentioned the time for the punishment of those who seek to hasten the punishment, which will inevitably come on the day appointed for it, here Allah mentions how they will be on that day: If you could see how they will be when they stand before their Lord, when the leaders and those who followed them in disbelief and misguidance are gathered together, you would see something momentous and terrifying, and you would see how they will argue with one another and hurl reproaches at one another.

«Those who were regarded as weak» namely the followers will say to those who were arrogant» namely the leaders: «Had it not been for you, we would have been believers», but you prevented us from believing and made disbelief fair-seeming to us, so we followed you therein. What they will mean by saying that is that the punishment should be only for the leaders, and not for them.

«Those who were arrogant will say to those who were regarded as weak», expressing amazement and stating that they are all equally guilty:

«Was it we who prevented you from following right guidance after it had come to you?» That is, by virtue of our power and strength, by means of which we compelled you.

«Nay, rather you yourselves were given to evil» that is, you chose to commit evil; you were not compelled to do so. Even though we made it fair-seeming to you, we had no power over you.

«Those who were regarded as weak will say to those who were arrogant: Rather it was your efforts to deceive us, by night and by day, for you commanded us to disbelieve in Allah and set up rivals to Him» that is, the reason why you impacted us and misguided us was your efforts to deceive us by night and by day, for you made disbelief attractive to us and called us to it, telling us that it was the truth, and you criticised the truth, made it look bad and claimed that it was falsehood; you kept up your efforts and your scheming against us until you misled us and deceived us.

But this argument between them will not lead to any good outcome; rather they will disavow one another and feel deep regret. Hence Allah says:

«They will conceal their remorse, when they see the punishment» that is, they will realise that the argument that they tried to use against one another in order to be saved from the punishment is invalid and that they are all wrongdoers who deserve punishment. Hence each one of them will be filled with deep remorse and will wish that he

had followed the truth and rejected the falsehood that brought him to this punishment. But each one will keep this regret to himself, for fear of scandal and shame if he admits that he deserves it.

However, at some stage on the Day of Resurrection, and when they are admitted to hell, they will express that regret and remorse openly:

﴿On that day, the wrongdoer will bite on his hands and say: Would that I had taken a path with the Messenger. Alas for me! Would that I had not taken So-and-so as a friend! He led me astray from the Reminder [the Qur'an] after it had come to me...﴾ (al-Furqān 25: 27-29)

﴿And they will say: If only we had listened or understood, we would not be among the inhabitants of the raging fire. Thus they will acknowledge their sin. So away with the inhabitants of the raging fire!﴾ (al-Mulk 67: 10-11)

﴿and We will place iron collars on the necks of those who disbelieved﴾ that is, they will be chained up like a prisoner who is to be humiliated in the place of his detention. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...But they will come to know [the consequences of their deeds] when, with iron collars and chains around their necks, they are dragged into the scalding water, then they will be burned in the fire.﴾ (Ghāfir 40: 70-72)

﴿Should they be required﴾ with that punishment and those heavy chains ﴿for anything other than what they used to do﴾ of disbelief, evil and sin?



﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾  
 وَقَالُوا نَحْنُ أَكْثَرُ أَمْوَالًا وَأَوْلَادًا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾ قُلْ إِن رَّبِّي يَسْطُرُ الرَّزْقَ  
 لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ بِالَّتِي

تَقْرَبِكُمْ عِنْدَنَا لَنْغَىٰ إِلَّا مَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ جَزَاءُ الْوَعْدِ بِمَا عَمِلُوا  
 وَهُمْ فِي الْعَرْشَاتِ ءَامِنُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يَسْعَوْنَ فِي ءَابَاتِنَا مُعْجِزِينَ ءُولَٰئِكَ فِي الْعَذَابِ  
 مُخْضَرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ قُلْ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ مِن عِبَادِهِ وَيَقْدِرُ لَهُ وَمَا  
 أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِن شَيْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّزُقِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾ (سورة سبأ: ٣٤-٣٩)

- 34:34. We never sent any warner to a city but its affluent ones said: Verily we disbelieve in that with which you have been sent.
- 34:35. They said: We are more abundant in wealth and children, and we are not going to be punished.
- 34:36. Say: Verily my Lord grants abundant provision to whomever He wills, or gives it in scant measure, but most people do not know.
- 34:37. It is not your wealth or your children that bring you nearer to Us; but those who believe and do righteous deeds – it is they who will have a multiple reward for their deeds, and they will dwell secure in the high places in paradise.
- 34:38. But those who strive against Our revelations, seeking to discredit them, it is they who will be delivered up for punishment.
- 34:39. Say: Verily my Lord grants abundant provision to whomever He wills among His slaves, or gives it in scant measure. Whatever you spend, He will compensate for it, for He is the best of providers.

Here Allah (ﷻ) describes the fate of previous nations who disbelieved in the Messengers; it is like the fate that awaits the current audience (namely Quraysh) who disbelieve in their Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ). When Allah sent a Messenger to a city, its affluent inhabitants disbelieved in him and became insolent and arrogant because of their life of ease.

﴿They said: We are more abundant in wealth and children﴾ than those who follow the truth,

﴿and we are not going to be punished﴾ that is: firstly, we will not be resurrected, and even if we are resurrected, then the One Who gave us wealth and children in this world will give us more than that in the hereafter, and we will not be punished.

Allah (ﷻ) responded to them by telling them that abundance of provision or scant measure thereof is not indicative of what they claim, for provision is subject to the will of Allah: if He wills, He gives in abundance to His slave, and if He wills, He gives in scant measure.

It is not wealth and children that bring a person closer to Allah; rather what brings one closer to Him is belief in that which the Messengers brought and righteous deeds which are the outcome of faith. It is they who will have a multiple reward with Allah (ﷻ), for each righteous deed brings a tenfold reward, up to seven hundred fold, up to many times more than that, which no one knows except Allah.

﴿and they will dwell secure in the high places in paradise﴾ that is, in lofty places, where they will dwell, feeling secure and safe from any stresses or troubles that could spoil the pleasures and delights that they are enjoying. They will be safe from having to leave it or feeling any grief whilst they are there.

As for those who strive against Our revelations, seeking to outwit Us and frustrate Our Messengers, and to show Our revelations to be false, ﴿it is they who will be delivered up for punishment﴾.

Then Allah (ﷻ) repeats that He ﴿grants abundant provision to whomever He wills among His slaves, or gives it in scant measure﴾ so that He may follow that by saying: ﴿Whatever you spend﴾ of obligatory or recommended spending, on relatives, neighbours, the poor, orphans and others, ﴿He will compensate for it﴾, so do not think that spending reduces one's provision; rather Allah – Who grants abundant provision to whomever He wills, or gives it in scant measure – has promised to recompense the one who spends,



«for He is the best of providers». So seek provision from Him, and strive and take measures to earn a living as He has enjoined upon you.



﴿وَيَوْمَ يَجْمَعُهُمْ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ يَقُولُ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ أَهَؤُلَاءِ إِنَّا كَرِهْنَا لَكُمْ أَنْ تَعْبُدُوهُمْ قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ أَنْتَ وَلِيِّنَا مِنْ دُونِهِمْ بَلْ كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ الْجِنَّ أَكْثَرُهُمْ بِهِمْ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾ فَالْيَوْمَ لَا يَمْلِكُ بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ نَفَعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا وَنَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ النَّارِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾﴾ (سورة سبأ: ٤٠-٤٢)

- 34:40. On the day when He gathers them all together He will say to the angels: Was it you that these people used to worship?
- 34:41. They will say: Glory be to You! You are our Close Friend, not they. Rather they used to worship the jinn; most of them believed in them.
- 34:42. [And Allah will say:] So today none of you has the power to benefit or harm another. And We will say to the wrongdoers: Taste the punishment of the fire which you used to deny!

«On the day when He gathers them all together» that is, those who worshipped anything other than Allah and their objects of worship among the angels. Then Allah «will say to the angels», by way of rebuking those who worshipped them:

«Was it you that these people used to worship?» The angels will disavow their worship, and will say:

«Glory be to You!» that is, we declare You to be holy and far above having any partner or rival

«You are our Close Friend, not they» and we are in desperate need of Your protection, so how could we call others to worship us? How could we be fit to be taken as allies and partners besides You?

Rather these polytheists «used to worship the jinn» that is, the devils who instructed them to worship us or to worship others, and they obeyed them in that.

Their obedience to them was their worship of them, because worship is obedience, as Allah (ﷻ) says, addressing all those who take others as gods besides Him:

«Did I not instruct you, O children of Adam, that you should not worship the Shayṭān, for he is to you an avowed enemy, and that you should worship Me, for that is a straight path?» (Yâ Seen 36: 60-61)

«most of them believed in them» that is, they believed in the jinn and submitted to them, because faith is that belief which leads to submitting and following.

When the angels disavow the polytheists, Allah will say to the latter: «So today none of you has the power to benefit or harm another», for the relationship between you is severed and you have nothing to do with one another.

«And We will say to the wrongdoers» who did wrong by disbelieving and committing sin, after We admit them to hell:

«Taste the punishment of the fire which you used to deny!» Today you are seeing it with your own eyes and entering it as a result of your disbelief, and as a punishment for the consequences of that disbelief, as you did not keep away from that which could lead to it.



﴿ وَإِذَا نُنزِلُ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِنَا يَتَّبِعُونَ مَا هَدَيْنَاهُمْ وَإِن يُبَدِّلْنَا بَدَلًا جَاحِقًا لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُوهَا أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴾ ﴿٤٣﴾ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ الْقُرْآنَ بِاللُّغَةِ الْعَرَبِيَّةِ وَمَا عَلَّمْنَاهُمُ الْقُرْآنَ بِاللُّغَةِ الْعَرَبِيَّةِ وَلَكِن لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴿ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَمَا بَلَّغُوا وَعْثَارَ مَا آتَيْنَاهُمْ فَكَذَّبُوا رُسُلِي فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴾ ﴿٤٥﴾ (سورة سبأ: ٤٣-٤٥)

- 34:43. When Our clear revelations are recited to them, they say: This is nothing but a man who wants to turn you away from that which your forefathers used to worship. And they say: This is nothing but a fabricated lie. And those who disbelieve say of the truth when it comes to them: This is obviously nothing but magic!
- 34:44. although We did not give them any scripture that they could study, nor did We send to them any warner before you.
- 34:45. Those who came before them also rejected [the truth]. These people [Quraysh] have not been given even one tenth of what We gave to those [earlier nations], yet when they rejected My Messengers, how great was the change I wrought!<sup>24</sup>

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the reaction of the polytheists when the clear verses of Allah are recited to them and clear explanations and definitive proofs are presented to them that point to everything that is good and forbid everything that is evil. This is the greatest blessing that has come to them, and it requires them to respond by believing in it, accepting it and submitting to it, but they responded with the opposite of what was required of them, and they rejected the one who brought it to them, saying: ﴿This is nothing but a man who wants to turn you away from that which your forefathers used to worship﴾ that is, this is his aim, when he tells you to be devoted to Allah alone and to give up the customs of your forefathers whom you venerate and in whose footsteps you walk. So they rejected the truth on the basis of the view of misguided people, but they did not bring any proof or even any specious argument to support what they said.

What kind of argument is that, when the Messengers instruct some misguided people to follow the truth, but they claim that their co-religionists who follow the same path are still persisting in that?

<sup>24</sup> As Allah changed the way He had been dealing with them, changing abundance to scarcity and well-being to destruction. (aṭ-Ṭabari)

This is foolishness and rejection of the truth on the basis of the opinions of misguided people. If you think about every case in which truth is rejected, you will see that it is rejected in a similar manner, for it is not rejected except on the basis of the views of misguided people, whether they be polytheists, those who do not believe in the Day of Resurrection, philosophers, Sabians, and heretics who have passed out of the religion of Allah. This is the pattern of everyone who rejects the truth until the Day of Resurrection.

Having cited the deeds of their forefathers as evidence and regarded that as justification for rejecting what the Messengers brought, they then cast aspersions upon the truth by saying: «This is nothing but a fabricated lie» that is, it was fabricated by this man who has brought this message.

«And those who disbelieve say of the truth when it comes to them: This is obviously nothing but magic» and it is obvious to everyone that it is magic. They said that by way of rejecting the truth and so as to deceive the foolish.

Having described the argument by means of which they rejected the truth, and stated that these arguments are flawed and cannot provide any proof, Allah now states that even if anyone wanted to bring proof for their arguments, they do not have any source for such proof: «although We did not give them any scripture that they could study» so that it could serve as a reference book for them «nor did We send to them any warner before you» so that they would have a record of his words and teachings on the basis of which they could reject what you have brought to them. Therefore they have no knowledge and no trace of knowledge.

Then Allah warns them by telling them of what happened to the disbelieving nations who came before them: «Those who came before them also rejected [the truth]. These people [Quraysh]» to whom the message is now addressed

﴿have not been given even one tenth of what We gave to those [earlier nations], yet when they﴾ that is, the earlier nations  
 ﴿rejected My Messengers, how great was the change I wrought!﴾  
 That is, by way of punishing them.

We know what happened to them of punishment, and that some of them He drowned, and some He destroyed with the devastating wind, the blast, the earthquake, by causing the earth to swallow them up, and by sending against them a violent squall of pebbles from the sky. So beware, O disbelievers, if you persist in disbelief, lest you be overtaken by that which overtook those who came before you, and there befall you what befall them.



﴿ قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَعْظَمُكُمْ بِوَحْدَةٍ أَنْ تَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ مَشْنَىٰ وَفَرَادَىٰ ثُمَّ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ مَا بِصَاحِبِكُمْ مِنْ جِنَّةٍ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ لَّكُمْ بَيْنَ يَدَيْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ ﴿٤٧﴾ قُلْ مَا سَأَلْتُكُمْ مِنْ أَجْرٍ فَهُوَ لَكُمْ إِنْ أَجْرِي إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٤٨﴾ قُلْ إِنْ رَبِّي يَقْذِفُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلَٰمِ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿٤٩﴾ قُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَمَا يُبَدِّلُ مَا بَعِيدٌ ﴿٥٠﴾ قُلْ إِنْ ضَلَلْتُ فَإِنَّمَا أَضِلُّ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِي وَإِنِ اهْتَدَيْتُ فِيمَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ قَرِيبٌ ﴾

(سورة سبأ: ٤٦-٥٠)

- 34:46. Say [O Muhammad]: I advise you to do one thing only: take this matter seriously and reflect upon it, in pairs or singly, sincerely seeking the pleasure of Allah. There is no madness in your companion; he is but a warner to you ahead of a severe punishment.
- 34:47. Say: Whatever recompense I might have asked of you is yours; my reward is with Allah alone, and He is Witness over all things.
- 34:48. Say: Verily my Lord hurls the truth [against falsehood], and He is the Knower of the unseen.

- 34:49. Say: The truth has come and falsehood can neither initiate anything, nor restore anything.
- 34:50. Say: If I go astray, it is only to my own detriment, but if I am guided, it is because of what my Lord reveals to me. Verily, He is All-Hearing, Ever Near.

That is, «Say», O Messenger (ﷺ), to these stubborn disbelievers who have taken it upon themselves to oppose the truth and reject it, and to criticise the one who brought it:

«I advise you to do one thing only» that is, one thing which I am pointing out to you and advising you to follow, for it is a fair path. I am not calling you to follow my opinion or to reject your own without any justification for doing so. That thing to which I am calling you is: «take this matter seriously and reflect upon it, in pairs or singly, sincerely seeking the pleasure of Allah» that is, take this matter seriously and put some energy into it, with the aim of following what is right and being sincere towards Allah, as a group, discussing and debating the matter, or individually, each person thinking to himself.

If you were to reflect upon the matter, in pairs or singly, seeking the pleasure of Allah, then you would think rationally and things would become clear to you, and you would reflect on the character of your Messenger (ﷺ): is he really insane, with the characteristics of one who is insane in the way he speaks, in the way he looks and in the way he behaves? Or is he a true Prophet (ﷺ), who is warning you against that which will cause you harm and what lies ahead of you of severe punishment?

If they accept this exhortation and put it into practice, then it will become clear to them, more than others, that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) is not insane, because his attitude is not that of insane people with their choking, trembling and staring; rather his attitude is the best of all attitudes, and he is the most dignified in the way he carries

himself, the most perfect in attitude, manners, tranquillity, humility and dignity. He can only be the most mature and wise of men.

Moreover, if they ponder his eloquent words and beautiful speech that fill the heart with reassurance and faith, purify souls, cleanse hearts, make one aspire to sublime attributes, encourage good manners, and deter one from bad manners and attitudes, they will see that when he speaks, people look at him with awe and respect. Could this in any way resemble the mumbo-jumbo of the insane and their errant behaviour?

Anyone who reflects on the Prophet's character and what he was calling people to, for the purpose of finding out whether he was the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) or not, will – whether he thinks by himself or with others – become certain that he was indeed the Messenger of Allah and was truly His Prophet (ﷺ). This is especially true in the case of those to whom these words were initially addressed, namely his contemporaries who knew everything about him from his childhood onwards.

There is also another matter that discourages people from following the one who calls them to the truth, which is the fear that he may take the wealth of those who respond to him and take it as payment for his call. Hence Allah (ﷻ) explained that His Messenger (ﷺ) was far above doing such a thing, as He said:

«Say: Whatever recompense I might have asked of you» for your following the truth

«is yours» that is, I testify in your favour that that reward is yours

«my reward is with Allah alone, and He is Witness over all things»

that is, His knowledge encompasses what I call people to, so if I were lying, He would seize me with His punishment. And He is also witness over your deeds, and He is recording them against you, then He will requite you for them.

Having highlighted the proof which is indicative of the soundness of the truth and the invalidity of falsehood, Allah (ﷻ) now states that this is His way and that He «hurls the truth [against falsehood]» and it crushes it, whereupon it perishes (*cf. 21: 18*), because in the preceding verses He highlighted the truth and refuted thereby the views of the disbelievers, which is a lesson for those who are willing to learn and a sign for those who reflect.

As you can see, the views of the disbelievers were defeated and their lies and stubbornness were clearly exposed; the truth prevailed and shone brightly, and falsehood was proven invalid and suppressed. That was because of the proof presented by «the Knower of the unseen» Who knows what is in their hearts of whispers and specious arguments, and He knows what may oppose that and counter it of proof and evidence.

Thus He announces it to people and explains it to them, hence He says:

«Say: The truth has come» that is, it has appeared and become as clear as day, and its authority has been made manifest  
«and falsehood can neither initiate anything, nor restore anything» that is, falsehood has diminished and has been proven to be invalid; its power has vanished, so it neither initiates anything nor restores anything.

When the truth became clear by virtue of the call of the Messenger (ﷺ), and the disbelievers accused him of being misguided, Allah told them of the truth and explained it to them, highlighting their inability to resist it, and informing them that their accusations against him of being misguided could not harm the truth in any way and could not ward off what the Prophet (ﷺ) brought; if he did go astray – which is not possible, but is mentioned for the sake of argument – he would only go astray to his own detriment. In other words, the harm resulting from his being misguided would be limited to himself and would not affect others.



«but if I am guided», that is not from me or by my own strength and power; rather my guidance is «because of what my Lord reveals to me» – that is the cause of my guidance, just as it is the cause of the guidance of others, for my Lord is «All-Hearing» and hears all words and voices

«Ever Near» to the one who calls upon Him, asks of Him and worships Him.



﴿لَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ فَرَعُوا فَلَا قَوَّةَ وَاخَذُوا مِنْ مَّكَانٍ قَرِيبٍ ﴿٥١﴾ وَقَالُوا ءَأَمَّنَّا بِهِ ءِ وَأَنَّىٰ لَهُمُ التَّنَاقُوسُ مِنْ مَّكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَقَدْ كَفَرُوا بِهِ ءِ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَيَقْدِفُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ مِنْ مَّكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٥٣﴾ وَجِيلَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَا يَشْتَهُونَ كَمَا فُعِلَ بِأَشْيَاعِهِمْ مِّن قَبْلُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا فِي شَكٍّ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٥٤﴾﴾ (سورة سبأ: ٥١-٥٤)

- 34:51. If only you could see them when they are stricken with terror, but there will be no escape, and they will be seized from near at hand.
- 34:52. They will say: Now we believe in [the message]. But how can they reach out for it [faith] from such a distant place,<sup>25</sup>
- 34:53. seeing that they disbelieved in it before, and they made far-fetched conjectures about the unseen?
- 34:54. They will be prevented from attaining what they desire, as was done before with others of their ilk, for they were indeed in grave doubt.

«If only you» O Messenger (ﷺ), and those who follow you, «could see» the state of these disbelievers

<sup>25</sup> This refers to what the disbelievers will say in the hereafter, but the time and place for believing is in this world, which at that point will be far away from them, so it will be too late for them to say, “We believe”.

﴿when they are stricken with terror﴾ upon seeing the punishment and what the Messengers told them about, but they disbelieved in it. Then you would see something momentous, a terrifying scene and a horrible sight of intense distress. That will be when the punishment becomes due upon them and they have nowhere to flee and no escape. ﴿and they will be seized from near at hand﴾ that is, not far from the place of punishment; rather they will be seized then thrown into the fire.

﴿They will say﴾ at that point: ﴿Now we believe﴾ in Allah and we believe in that in which we disbelieved.

﴿But how can they reach out for it [faith] from such a distant place﴾ now that they have been prevented from it and it has become something impossible in this situation? If they had believed at the time when it was possible to do so, their faith would have been accepted.

But ﴿they disbelieved in it before, and they made far-fetched conjectures about the unseen﴾, so as to refute the truth. But there was no way they could achieve that, just as there is no way for one who throws something from a great distance to hit his target. By the same token, it is impossible for falsehood to overwhelm the truth or defeat it. Rather falsehood may have the upper hand for a short while, when the followers of the truth are in a state of negligence, but when the people of truth pay attention and resist falsehood, it will be suppressed.

﴿They will be prevented from attaining what they desire﴾ namely physical pleasures, children, wealth, servants and troops, and they will come only with their deeds. They will come singly, as they were created, and they will leave behind all that they had been given of worldly luxuries.

﴿as was done before with others of their ilk﴾ of the earlier nations, when their doom came to them and they were prevented from attaining what they desired.

«for they were indeed in grave doubt» that would lead to uncertainty and anxiety; therefore they did not believe, and if they seek to make amends, they will not be allowed to do so (cf. 41: 24).

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat Saba'.

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.



35.

## Soorat Fâṭir

(Makki)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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



﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَاطِرِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَاعِلِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُولَى أَجْنَحَةٍ مَثْنَى وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبْعَ زَيْدٍ فِي الْخَلْقِ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١﴾ مَا يَفْتَحُ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ رَحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا وَمَا يُمْسِكُ فَلَا مُرْسِلَ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢﴾﴾ (سورة فاطر:

(٢-١)

- 35:1. Praise be to Allah, the Originator of the heavens and the earth, Who made the angels messengers with wings, two or three or four. He adds to creation whatever He wills. Verily Allah has power over all things.
- 35:2. Whatever Allah opens up for people of His mercy, none can withhold it, and whatever He withholds, none can grant it thereafter. And He is the Almighty, the Most Wise.

Here Allah (ﷻ) praises Himself for His creation of the heavens and the earth and all that they contain of created things, because that is indicative of the perfect nature of His might, the vastness of His

dominion, the broadness of His mercy, the brilliance of His wisdom and the all-encompassing nature of His knowledge.

Having mentioned creation, Allah now tells us about the angels, that He ﴿made the angels messengers﴾ who execute His decrees and act as go-betweens in conveying His commands to His creation.

The fact that He says that He has made the angels messengers, with no exception, is indicative of the perfect nature of their obedience to their Lord and their compliance with His commands, as Allah (ﷻ) tells us elsewhere that they:

﴿...who do not disobey Allah in whatever He commands them, and they do whatever they are commanded to do.﴾ (at-Tahreem 66: 6)

Because the angels are the ones who have control – by Allah’s leave – over that with which He has entrusted them, He mentions their power to do that, and the speed with which they travel, as He has made them ﴿with wings﴾ by means of which they fly as they rush to carry out what they are commanded to do.

﴿two or three or four﴾ that is, some of them have two wings, and some have three or four, according to what Allah’s wisdom dictates.

﴿He adds to creation whatever He wills﴾ that is, He causes some to have more than others, with regard to their shape, strength, beauty, additional faculties, and quality of voice.

﴿Verily Allah has power over all things﴾ and by His power, He does whatever He wills, and nothing is beyond His power; that includes His causing some of His creation to surpass others.

Then Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He alone has control and gives and withholds as He wills:

﴿Whatever Allah opens up for people of His mercy, none can withhold it, and whatever He withholds﴾ from them of His mercy

﴿none can grant it thereafter﴾ this leads to putting one’s trust in Allah (ﷻ) and feeling one’s need for Him in all ways, so that one does not call upon anyone but Him and does not fear or put hope in anyone but Him.

﴿And He is the Almighty﴾ Who has subdued all things  
 ﴿the Most Wise﴾ Who does what is appropriate.



﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ أَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ هَلْ مِنْ خَالِقٍ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ  
 وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَأَنْتُمْ تُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٣﴾ وَإِنْ يُكَذِّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَتْ رُسُلٌ مِنْ  
 قَبْلِكَ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ ﴿٤﴾﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٣-٤)

- 35:3. O people, remember the favour that Allah bestowed upon you. Is there any creator other than Allah who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? There is no god but He; then how could you have gone so far astray?
- 35:4. If they reject you [O Muhammad], Messengers before you were also rejected; and it is to Allah that all things will return.

Here Allah (ﷻ) instructs people to remember the blessings that He has bestowed upon them. This includes acknowledging them in the heart, praising Him verbally and taking physical action to comply with His commands. Remembering His blessings prompts one to give thanks to Him. Then He draws their attention to the basic foundation of the blessing, which is creation and provision, as He says:  
 ﴿Is there any creator other than Allah who provides for you from the heaven and the earth?﴾

Because it is well known that no one can create and grant provision except Allah, this offers evidence for His divinity and that He alone is to be worshipped. Hence Allah says:  
 ﴿There is no god but He; then how could you have gone so far astray?﴾ that is, how can you be diverted from worship of the Creator and Provider, and instead worship those who are created and are provided for?

﴿If they reject you﴾, O Messenger (ﷺ), then you have an example in the Messengers who came before you, for ﴿Messengers before you were also rejected﴾, but the disbelievers who rejected them were destroyed, and Allah saved the Messengers and their followers. ﴿and it is to Allah that all things will return﴾.



﴿يَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّكُمْ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّتْكُمْ بِاللَّهِ الْغُرُورُ ۝ إِنَّا الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا إِنَّمَا يَدْعُوا حِزْبَهُ لِيَكُونُوا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ۝ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٥-٧)

- 35:5. O people, verily the promise of Allah is true, so do not let the life of this world deceive you, or let any deceiver deceive you concerning Allah.
- 35:6. Verily the Shayṭān is an enemy to you, so take him as an enemy. He only calls his followers so that they may become inhabitants of the raging fire.
- 35:7. Those who disbelieve will have a severe punishment, but those who believe and do righteous deeds will have forgiveness and a great reward.

﴿O people, verily the promise of Allah﴾ of the resurrection and requital of deeds

﴿is true﴾ that is, there can be no doubt about it. That is supported by textual evidence and rational proof. As His promise is true, you should prepare for it and hasten to fill your precious time with righteous deeds, and do not let anything prevent you from doing so.

﴿so do not let the life of this world deceive you﴾ with its pleasures, desires and other aspirations and goals, for it will distract you from the purpose for which you were created

﴿or let any deceiver deceive you concerning Allah﴾.

The deceiver is ﴿the Shayṭān﴾, who is your true enemy, ﴿so take him as an enemy﴾ and do not neglect to fight him at any moment, for he sees you although you do not see him, and he is always lying in wait for you.

﴿He only calls his followers so that they may become inhabitants of the raging fire﴾ this is his ultimate aim and goal with regard to those who follow him; he seeks to humiliate them utterly by bringing upon them this severe punishment.

Then Allah tells us that people are divided into two categories according to whether they obey the Shayṭān or not, and He mentions the requital of each category:

﴿Those who disbelieve﴾ that is, they reject what the Messengers brought and what the Books indicate

﴿will have a severe punishment﴾ in the fire of hell, where they will abide forever.

﴿but those who believe﴾ with all their hearts in that which Allah calls them to believe in and, on the basis of that faith, ﴿do righteous deeds﴾ by taking physical action

﴿will have forgiveness﴾ of their sins, and as a result troubles and problems will be removed from them,

﴿and a great reward﴾ by means of which they will attain what they seek.



﴿أَفَمَنْ زُيِّنَ لَهُ سُوءُ عَمَلِهِ فَرَآهُ حَسَنًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ فَلَا تَذْهَبْ نَفْسُكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٨)

- 35:8. Is one whose evil deeds are made fair-seeming to him, so that he regards them as good, [like one who is rightly guided]? Verily Allah leaves astray whomever He wills and guides whomever



He wills. So do not let yourself waste away in sorrow for them. Verily Allah knows well all that they do.

«Is one whose evil deeds are made fair-seeming to him» by the Shayṭān

«so that he regards them as good» that is, is he like one who is rightly guided by Allah to the straight path and right religion? Can these two be equal? For the former does bad deeds and regards truth as falsehood and falsehood as truth, whereas the latter does good deeds and regards the truth as true and falsehood as false.

But guidance and misguidance are in the Hand of Allah (ﷻ): «Verily Allah leaves astray whomever He wills and guides whomever He wills. So do not let yourself waste away in sorrow for them» that is, for the misguided whose bad deeds have been made fair-seeming to them, and the Shayṭān barred them from following the truth, for your role is only to convey the message; and their guidance has nothing to do with you at all; it is Allah Who will requite them for their deeds, for «Verily Allah knows well all that they do».



﴿ وَاللَّهُ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ الرِّيحَ فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابًا فَمُسْقِنَهُ إِلَىٰ بَلَدٍ مَّيِّتٍ فَأَحْيَيْنَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ النُّشُورُ ﴿٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٩)

35:9. It is Allah Who sends forth the winds to stir up clouds, then We drive them to a land that is dead, and He gives life thereby to the earth after its death. Such will be the resurrection.

Here Allah (ﷻ) speaks of His perfect power and immense generosity and tells us that He «sends forth the winds to stir up clouds, then We drive them to a land that is dead», then Allah sends down rain upon it,

﴿and He gives life thereby to the earth after its death﴾. Thus life is restored to the land and to people, and the animals are able to attain their provision and graze on all of these blessings.

﴿Such will be the resurrection﴾, for the One Who gives life to the earth after its death will resurrect the dead from their graves, after they had turned to dust. He will send rain to them, as He sends it to the dead land. He will send it down upon them, and they will come back to life, body and soul, and will emerge from their graves and come to stand before Allah, so that He may judge between them on the basis of divine justice.



﴿مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ وَالَّذِينَ يَمْكُرُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَكْرُ أُولَئِكَ هُوَ يُبْزَوُ ۝﴾

(سورة فاطر: ١٠)

35:10. Whoever seeks honour, then all honour belongs to Allah. To Him ascend all good words, and righteous deeds exalt them.<sup>26</sup> And those who plan evil deeds will have a severe punishment, and the plans of such people will come to naught.

That is, O you who seek honour, seek it from the One in Whose Hand it is, for honour is in the Hand of Allah and can only be attained by obeying Him. Allah mentions it in the words: ﴿To Him ascend all good words﴾ such as recitation of Qur'an, and words of glorification and praise, proclaiming Allah's oneness, and all good words. Those good words ascend to Allah and are presented to Him, and Allah praises the one who says them before those on high.

<sup>26</sup> Good words will not be accepted and will not ascend to heaven unless they are accompanied by righteous deeds that confirm them.

﴿and righteous deeds﴾ of both the heart and the physical faculties ﴿exalt them﴾.

The righteous deeds lift up the good words, so the lifting up of the good words is commensurate with the level of the individual's good deeds, for it is those deeds that lift up his good words. If a person has no good deeds to his credit, then no words of his will be lifted up to Allah (ﷻ). These are the deeds that will be lifted up to Allah (ﷻ), and Allah will raise the doer of those deeds in status and will honour him.

With regard to bad deeds, they are the opposite: the one who does them wants to attain high status by doing them, and he schemes and plans, but that will backfire on him and will only increase him in humiliation and degradation. Hence Allah says: ﴿And those who plan evil deeds will have a severe punishment﴾ in which he will be greatly humiliated.

﴿and the plans of such people will come to naught﴾ that is, they will diminish and fail, and will not benefit them in the slightest, because they are plans that are based on falsehood and are made for the sake of falsehood.



﴿وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَمَا تَحْمِلُ مِنْ أُنْثَىٰ وَلَا تَضَعُ إِلَّا بِعِلْمِهِ وَمَا يُعَمَّرُ مِنْ مُعَمَّرٍ وَلَا يُنْقَصُ مِنْ عُمُرِهِ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾﴾ (سورة فاطر: ١١)

- 35:11. Allah created you from dust, then from a drop of semen, then He made you pairs [male and female]. No female conceives, or delivers, except with His knowledge. No man lives long or has his life cut short but it is [inscribed] in a record; verily that is easy for Allah.

Here Allah (ﷻ) mentions His human creation and how he passes through these stages, from dust to a drop of semen and the stages that come after that.

﴿then He made you pairs [male and female]﴾ that is He carries on causing you to move from one stage to another, until He causes you to reach a state where you form pairs, males marrying females. The purpose of marriage is to produce offspring and children; although getting married is one of the means of having children, it is still subject to the will and decree of Allah, and His knowledge.

﴿No female conceives, or delivers, except with His knowledge﴾ – the same is true of all the stages of human life, which occur by His knowledge and decree.

﴿No man lives long or has his life cut short﴾ that is, no one lives a long life except with Allah's knowledge, and no man's life is cut short from its potential except that is the result of following the path that cut it short, such as committing zinâ (unlawful sex), disobeying parents, severing ties of kinship and doing other deeds that we have been told are causes of life being cut short.

What is meant is that living a long or short life, whether that was because of a cause or there was no cause, all occurs by Allah's knowledge, and that is affirmed ﴿in a record﴾ that contains all that will happen to a person at every moment of his life, throughout his life.

﴿verily that is easy for Allah﴾ that is, His knowledge encompasses all of this information, and His record encompasses all of it.

These three points of evidence which offer proof of the resurrection are all rational, and Allah draws our attention to them in these verses. They are: the revival of the earth after its death, the fact that the One Who gives it life will also give life to the dead, and the fact that the human being goes through these stages.

So the One Who created man and caused him to go through stage after stage, situation after situation, until he reaches the stage that

was decreed for him, is more able to recreate him and bring him back again (after death), and that is easier for Him. The One Whose knowledge encompasses all parts of the upper and lower realms, and all their affairs, both subtle and manifest, what is in people's hearts, the foetuses in the wombs, and who will live a long life and who will not, and has written it all in a record, is the One for Whom all of that is easy, so bringing the dead back to life is even easier for Him. Blessed be the One Who bestows blessings in abundance and draws the attention of His slaves to that which is in their best interests in this world and in the hereafter.



﴿وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْبَحْرَانِ هَذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ سَائِغٌ شَرَابُهُ، وَهَذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ وَمِن كُلِّ تَاكُلُونَ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا وَتَسْتَخْرِجُونَ حِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا وَتَرَى الْفَلَكَ فِيهِ مَوَازِيرَ لِيَتَنَفَّوْا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ، وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ يُوَلِّجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُوَلِّجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ذَٰلِكُمْ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْ قِطْمِيرٍ ﴿١٣﴾ إِنْ تَدْعُوهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوا دُعَاءَكُمْ وَلَوْ سَمِعُوا مَا اسْتَجَابُوا لَكُمْ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكْفُرُونَ بِشِرْكِكُمْ وَلَا يُنَبِّئُكَ مِثْلُ خَبِيرٍ ﴿١٤﴾﴾ (سورة فاطر: ١٢-١٤)

35:12. The two bodies of flowing water are not alike; one is fresh and palatable, pleasant to drink, and the other is salty and bitter. From both you eat succulent meat [fish] and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear. And you see the ships ploughing through the waves so that you may seek the bounty of Allah and so that you may give thanks.

35:13. He causes the night to encroach upon the day, and the day to encroach upon the night, and He has made the sun and moon to be of service, each running its course for an appointed time.

Such is Allah your Lord; His is the dominion, whereas those on whom you call besides Him do not own so much as the thin membrane of a date stone.

- 35:14. If you call upon them, they do not hear your call, and even if they heard, they would not respond to you. On the Day of Resurrection they will disavow your having associated them with Allah. And none can inform you like [the One Who is] all-aware.

Here Allah tells us about His might, wisdom and mercy, for He created two bodies of flowing water to serve the interests of all people on earth, but He did not make them the same, because the interests of people dictated that there should be rivers of fresh and palatable water that is pleasant to drink, for the benefit of those who drink it, and those who plant and grow crops, and there should also be seas of water that is salty and bitter, so that it does not corrupt the atmosphere with the stench of animals that die in the sea; moreover it does not flow like rivers, as its saltiness prevents it from changing, and thus its creatures are better and more delicious. Hence Allah says:

﴿From both﴾ that is, from the salty water and the fresh water, ﴿you eat succulent meat﴾ namely the fish that can be caught from the water

﴿and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear﴾ such as pearls, coral and other things that are found in the sea. These serve great interests for people.

Another benefit of the water is that Allah (ﷻ) has made it to be of service in that it carries vessels such as ships and boats. So you see them ploughing through the water and travelling from one region to another, from one place to another, carrying passengers with their luggage and trade goods. Thus a great deal of the bounty and kindness of Allah is attained. Hence He says: ﴿so that you may seek the bounty of Allah and so that you may give thanks﴾.

Another of these blessings is that Allah causes the night to encroach upon the day, and the day upon the night. The more the one comes, the more the other goes; one of them grows longer and the other grows shorter, then they become equal. That serves people's interests with regard to their health and physical well-being, and it also serves the interests of their animals and crops.

Similarly, Allah has caused the sun and moon to be of service with their light and movements, so that people may go about, seeking of His bounty; the effects of the sun and moon cause crops to ripen, and the sun dries up what needs to be dried up, and they bring about other necessities, the absence of which would cause people harm.

﴿each running its course for an appointed time﴾ that is, the sun and moon are each running in its course for as long as Allah wills, then when the time comes and the end of the world approaches, they will stop running, lose their positions and cease to have any effect. The moon will become dark, the sun will be folded up and the stars will be scattered.

Having spoken of these mighty creations and explained the lessons they contain that point to His perfection and kindness, Allah (ﷻ) now says:

﴿Such is Allah your Lord; His is the dominion﴾ that is, the One Who alone created the things mentioned here and made them to be of service is the Lord Who alone is deserving of devotion and worship, to Whom belongs all dominion.

﴿whereas those on whom you call besides Him﴾ of images and idols

﴿do not own so much as the thin membrane of a date stone﴾ that is, they do not own anything, small or great, not even the thin membrane of a date stone, which is the most insignificant of things. Describing specifically something that they do not own indicates a general meaning, which is that they do not own anything else either, so how

can they be called upon when they do not own anything in heaven or on earth?

Moreover, ﴿If you call upon them﴾ they do not hear you, because they are either inanimate or are dead or are angels who are preoccupied with obeying their Lord

﴿and even if they heard﴾ – assuming that is the case for argument's sake –

﴿they would not respond to you﴾ because they do not own anything and most of them are not pleased with the worship of those who worship them. Hence Allah says:

﴿On the Day of Resurrection they will disavow your having associated them with Allah﴾ that is: they will disavow you, and will say:

﴿...Glory be to You! You are our Close Friend, not they...﴾ (Saba' 34: 41)

﴿And none can inform you like [the One Who is] all-aware﴾ that is, no one will inform you more truthfully than Allah, the All-Knowing, All-Aware. So you may be certain that with regard to this matter of which He has told you, it is as if you could see it with your own eyes, so do not have any doubt about it.

These verses contain definitive proof and evidence that Allah (ﷻ) is the only One Who is deserving of devotion and worship, and none but He is deserving of any kind of worship. The worship of anything besides Him is false and is based on falsehood, and will not benefit the worshipper in any way.



﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمْ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ﴿٥﴾ إِنْ بَشَأْ  
يُدْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ﴿٦﴾ وَمَا ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ بِعَزِيزٍ ﴿٧﴾ وَلَا تَنْزُرُوا زِينَةً وَزُرَّ  
أُخْرَىٰ وَإِنْ تَدْعُ مُثْقَلَةٌ إِلَىٰ جَمَلِهَا لَا يُحْمَلُ مِنْهُ شَيْءٌ وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ إِنَّمَا تُنذِرُ



الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَمَنْ تَزَكَّى فَإِنَّمَا يَتَزَكَّى لِنَفْسِهِ ۗ  
 وَإِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٨﴾ (سورة فاطر: ١٥-١٨)

- 35:15. O people, it is you who are in need of Allah, whereas Allah is Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise.
- 35:16. If He so willed, He could destroy you and bring a new creation [in your stead].
- 35:17. And that is not difficult for Allah.
- 35:18. No bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another. If a heavily-laden soul calls another for help to bear its load, nothing of it will be carried, even if he is a close relative. You [O Muhammad] can only warn those who fear their Lord unseen and establish prayer, for whoever purifies himself only does so for his own benefit. And unto Allah is the return [of all].

Here Allah (ﷻ) addresses all people and tells them about their real situation and that they are in need of Allah in all ways.

They are in need of His bringing them into existence; were it not for His bringing them into existence, they would not exist.

They are in need of His giving them physical strength, faculties and senses; were it not for His giving them these things, they would not be able to do any deeds.

They are in need of His providing them with nourishment, provision and blessings, both visible and hidden; were it not for His bestowing His bounty and kindness, and making things easy for them, they would not have attained any provisions or blessings.

They are in need of His warding off harm from them, averting troubles and relieving them of stress and hardship; were it not for His warding off these things from them, relieving them of distress and removing hardship from them, their hardships and calamities would have been ongoing.

They are in need of His taking care of them in all ways.

They need to turn to Him, love Him, worship Him and devote their worship to Him alone. If He does not help them and guide them to do that, they will be doomed and they will become corrupt spiritually, psychologically and in all their affairs.

They are in need of His teaching them what they do not know and guiding them to that which is in their best interests. Were it not for His teaching them, they would not have learned; were it not for His guiding them, their situation would not have been rectified.

They are inherently in need of Him in all ways, whether they realise some of those ways or not.

But the one among them who is guided is the one who constantly realises and is aware of his need for Allah in all his religious and worldly affairs, and he beseeches Him and asks Him not to leave him to his own devices for even the blink of an eye, and asks Him to help him in all his affairs, bearing this in mind at all times. Such a one is more deserving of complete help from his Lord and God, Who is more compassionate towards him than a mother towards her child.

﴿whereas Allah is Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise﴾ that is, He is the One Who is completely self-sufficient in all ways, so He has no need of what His creation needs. That is because of the perfect nature of His attributes, all of which are attributes of perfection and majesty.

One aspect of His being self-sufficient is that He meets all the needs of creation in this world and the hereafter.

﴿Worthy of all praise﴾ in His essence, in His names because they are most beautiful, in His attributes because they are most sublime, and in His deeds because they are based on generosity, kindness, justice, wisdom and mercy, and He is praiseworthy in His commands and prohibitions. So He is praiseworthy for what He is and what He does, and He is praiseworthy for being self-sufficient.

«If He so willed, He could destroy you and bring a new creation [in your stead]». It may be that what is meant is that if He so willed, He could destroy you, O people, and bring other people in your stead who would be more obedient to Allah (ﷻ) than you. This is a threat to them of destruction and annihilation, and is telling them that His will is not incapable of that. Or it may be that what is meant is an affirmation of the resurrection, and that the will of Allah is always done in all cases, including bringing you back after your death, as a new creation, but there is an appointed time for that that has been decreed by Allah, and it cannot be brought forward or put back.

«And that is not difficult for Allah» that is, it is not impossible for Him and is not beyond Him.

The latter meaning is supported by what is mentioned in the following verse:

«No bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another» that is, on the Day of Resurrection, each person will be requited for his own deeds, and no one will bear the sin of another

«If a heavily-laden soul calls another for help to bear its load» that is, if a soul that is burdened with sin seeks the help of another to carry some of its burden,

«nothing of it will be carried, even if he is a close relative». No one will carry the burden of a relative, for the hereafter is not like this world in which a person may help his close friend. Rather on the Day of Resurrection, a person will wish that he had some outstanding dues owed by others, even his parents and relatives, (so that he could take some of their good deeds and add them to his own).

«You [O Muhammad] can only warn those who fear their Lord unseen and establish prayer» that is, these are the ones who will accept the warning and benefit from it, people who fear Allah unseen, who are the ones who fear Him in private and in public, when with people and when alone. And those who establish prayer are the ones who fulfil all its preconditions, essential parts and obligatory acts

in the prescribed manner, with proper focus, because fearing Allah requires a person to comply with the commands for which he fears punishment if he does not do so, and to flee from that for which he fears punishment if he does it. Prayer calls to good and keeps (one) away from obscenity and wickedness (cf. 29: 45).

﴿for whoever purifies himself only does so for his own benefit﴾ that is, whoever purifies himself by ridding himself of faults such as showing off, arrogance, deceit, cheating, trickery, hypocrisy and other bad characteristics, and strives to attain good characteristics such as truthfulness, honesty, humility, gentleness, sincerity towards people, being free of ill feelings such as resentment, envy and other bad characteristics, his purification of himself will benefit him, and none of his efforts will go to waste.

﴿And unto Allah is the return [of all]﴾ and He will requite all people for what they sent on ahead and will bring them to account for all that they did; nothing, small or great, is omitted, but it is kept in a record.



﴿وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ ﴿١٩﴾ وَلَا الظُّلُمَاتُ وَلَا النُّورُ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَلَا الظُّلُمَاتُ وَلَا الْحُرُورُ ﴿٢١﴾ وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْأَحْيَاءُ وَلَا الْأَمْوَاتُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسْمِعُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَمَا أَنتَ بِمُسْمِعٍ مِّنَ الْقُبُورِ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِنَّ أَنتَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَإِن مِّنْ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٤﴾﴾ (سورة فاطر: ١٩-٢٤)

35:19. The blind and the seeing are not alike,

35:20. nor are the depths of darkness and the light,

35:21. nor the shade and the sun's heat.

35:22. The living and the dead are not alike. Verily Allah causes to hear whomever He wills, but you cannot cause to hear those who are in the graves.

35:23. You [O Muhammad] are but a warner.

35:24. Verily We have sent you with the truth as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner. There has never been any nation but a warner came to it.

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Here Allah tells us that opposites are not equal, as Allah's wisdom dictates that this should be so, and people's natural disposition is also inclined to that view.

«The blind» who have lost their vision «and the seeing are not alike, nor are the depths of darkness and the light, nor the shade and the sun's heat. The living and the dead are not alike». As is well established among you, and you have no doubt at all that the things mentioned above are not equal, by the same token you should understand that it is more appropriate that intangible opposites are not equal either.

Therefore the believer and the disbeliever, the one who is guided and the one who has gone astray, the one who has knowledge and the one who is ignorant, the inhabitants of paradise and the inhabitants of hell, those whose hearts are alive and those who are dead at heart, are not equal. The differences between these pairs are great indeed, and only Allah knows how great they are. If you understand the differences, are able to distinguish between things, and it has become clear to you what you should compete to attain and what is the opposite of that, then the man of resolve should choose for himself that which is more appropriate for him and is more deserving of being given precedence.

«Verily Allah causes to hear whomever He wills» – “hearing” here refers to hearing in such a way that one understands and accepts, because Allah (ﷻ) is the One Who guides «but you cannot cause to hear those who are in the graves» namely those who are dead at heart; just as your call cannot benefit those who are in their graves, it cannot benefit those who stubbornly turn away.

Rather your job is to warn and to convey the message with which you were sent, whether it is accepted or not.

Hence Allah says: «You [O Muhammad] are but a warner. Verily We have sent you with the truth» that is, We are only sending you with the truth, because Allah sent you some time after the previous Messengers, after people had lost the path of guidance and knowledge had disappeared, and there was a great need to send you. So Allah sent you as a mercy to the worlds.

Moreover, what we have sent you with of the true religion and the straight path is true and is not false, and what we have sent you with of this great Qur'an, and what it contains of wise exhortation, is sound and true.

«(as a bearer of glad tidings)» to those who obey you, of reward from Allah in this world and in the hereafter  
 «(and a warner)» to those who disobey you, of punishment from Allah in this world and in the hereafter. You are not the first Messenger; you have precedents among the earlier Messengers.  
 «(There has never been any nation)» among the past nations  
 «(but a warner came to it)» establishing against them the proof of Allah,  
 «(...so that those who chose to perish [by choosing disbelief] might do so after seeing clear evidence, and those who chose to live [by choosing faith] might do so after seeing clear evidence...» (al-Anfāl 8: 42)



﴿ وَإِنْ يُكَذِّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَبِالزُّبُرِ  
 وَبِالْكِتَابِ الْمُنِيرِ ﴿٢٥﴾ ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿٢٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة فاطر:

- 35:25. If they reject you [O Muhammad], those who came before them did likewise. Their Messengers came to them with clear signs, the scriptures, and the Book of Enlightenment,
- 35:26. then I punished those who disbelieved, and how great was the change I wrought!<sup>27</sup>

That is, if these polytheists reject you, O Messenger (ﷺ), you are not the first Messenger to be rejected, for «those who came before them did likewise. Their Messengers came to them with clear signs» that pointed to the truth and the soundness of the message they brought,

«the scriptures» that is, written books that contained many rulings, «and the Book of Enlightenment» that is, enlightenment with regard to what it told of true stories and information about the future, and just rulings. So their rejection was not the result of doubts that they had or some flaws in what the Messengers brought; rather it was because of their wrongdoing and stubbornness.

«then I punished those who disbelieved» with different kinds of punishment, «and how great was the change I wrought» upon them, for it was the worst kind of change and the worst kind of punishment. So beware of rejecting this noble Messenger (ﷺ), lest there befall you what befall them of painful punishment and utter disgrace.



﴿الَّذِينَ تَرَىٰ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ نَمْرَاتٍ مُّخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهَا وَمِنَ الْجِبَالِ جُدَدٌ بَيضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهَا وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَمِمَّا يَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِثْرًا مِّثْرًا مَّوْءٍ رَّطِبٍ فَسُوقًا فِي أَرْضٍ ذَرِيئًا ۚ﴾

<sup>27</sup> As Allah changed the way He had been dealing with them, changing abundance to scarcity and well-being to destruction. (aṭ-Ṭabari)

وَالذَّوَابِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ كَذَلِكَ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ  
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٢٨﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٢٧-٢٨)

- 35:27. Do you not see that Allah sends down water from the sky, then We bring forth thereby fruits of various colours? And in the mountains there are tracts of red and white, of various colours, and black intense in hue.
- 35:28. Likewise, people, animals and livestock are of various colours. Among His slaves, only those who have knowledge truly fear Allah. Verily Allah is Almighty, Oft-Forgiving.

Here Allah (ﷻ) mentions His creation of things and their opposites – of which the origin and substance is one, yet there are variations and differences that are visible and well known – so as to demonstrate to people His perfect might and sublime wisdom.

Among these examples are the following:

- Allah (ﷻ) sends down water from the sky, and brings forth thereby various fruits and plants, which is something visible to the onlookers, although the water is one and the land is one.
- With regard to the mountains which Allah has created as pegs for the earth, you will see in a series of mountains, or even in one mountain, various colours; hence you will see tracts of white, tracts of yellow, and tracts of black intense in hue.
- Among the people, animals and livestock there is a variety of colours, types, voices and looks. This is something that is visible to everyone and is witnessed by onlookers. Yet all of them come from one source and one substance.

These variations offer rational evidence for the divine will, which singles out each one to have a particular colour and description; for the might of Allah, as He has created them like that; and for the divine



wisdom and mercy, because these variations serve people's interests and bring them benefits, help people to find their way (through the mountains), and enable people to recognise one another, as is well known.

This is also indicative of the vastness of Allah's knowledge, and proves that He will resurrect those who are in their graves. But the heedless one looks at these things and others in a careless manner that does not make him reflect; rather the one who benefits from them is the one who fears Allah (ﷻ) and realises, on the basis of sound thinking, the wisdom behind them.

Hence Allah says: ﴿Among His slaves, only those who have knowledge truly fear Allah﴾. The more a person knows about Allah, the more he will fear Him, and this fear of Allah will make him refrain from sin and prepare to meet the One Whom he fears. This is indicative of the virtue of knowledge, because it prompts one to fear Allah, and those who fear Him are the ones who will be honoured by Him, as He says elsewhere:

﴿...Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. That is for those who fear their Lord.﴾ (al-Bayyinah 98: 8)

﴿Verily Allah is Almighty﴾, perfect in might, and by His might He created these opposites  
 ﴿Oft-Forgiving﴾ to those who repent from their sins.



﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً يَرْجُونَ تِجَارَةً لَّن تَبُورَ ﴿٣٥﴾ لِيُؤْتِيَهُمُ آجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدَهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ ۗ إِنَّهُ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٣٦﴾﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٢٩-٣٠)

35:29. Verily those who recite the Book of Allah, establish prayer, and spend from that which We have provided for them, secretly and openly, hope for a deal in which there will never be any loss.

35:30. For He will give them their reward in full, and will give them yet more out of His bounty. Verily He is Oft-Forgiving, Appreciative.

﴿Verily those who recite the Book of Allah﴾ that is, follow its commands by complying with them and follow its prohibitions by paying heed to them, and believe in what it tells them about the past and the future, and do not give precedence over it to any opinion that contradicts it, and recite its words by studying its meanings. Then after speaking of recitation of the Qur'an in general terms, Allah now mentions prayer in which there is recitation in this specific situation; prayer is the foundation of the religion, the light of the Muslims, the measure of a person's faith and a visible sign of sincerity in adherence to Islam. And Allah mentions spending on relatives, the poor, orphans and others, by giving zakâh, offering expiations, spending in fulfilment of vows, and giving charity in general. ﴿secretly and openly﴾ at all times.

Those who do that ﴿hope﴾ thereby ﴿for a deal in which there will never be any loss﴾ that is, a deal that will never stagnate or be spoiled; rather it is the best, greatest and highest of deals, namely attaining the pleasure of their Lord and His great reward, and salvation from His wrath and punishment. This proves that they are sincere in their deeds and that there are no bad intentions or evil aims behind it.

And Allah tells us that they will attain what they hope for, as He says: ﴿For He will give them their reward in full﴾ that is, the reward for their deeds, according to how much or how little they did, and how good or otherwise their deeds were.

﴿and will give them yet more out of His bounty﴾ in addition to their reward ﴿Verily He is Oft-Forgiving, Appreciative﴾. He will forgive their bad deeds and will accept from them a little of good deeds.



﴿وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ هُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِعِبَادِهِ لَخَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣١﴾ ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ أَحْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مُقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ يُذِنُ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿٣٢﴾ جَنَّاتٌ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا يُحَلِّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرٍ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الْحَزْنَ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ الَّذِي أَلْهَنَّا دَارَ الْمَقَامَةِ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ لَآ يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَلَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا

لُغُوبٌ ﴿٣٥﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٣١-٣٥)

- 35:31. That which We have revealed to you of the Book [the Qur'an] is the truth, confirming that which came before it. Verily Allah is well aware of His slaves and sees all.
- 35:32. Then We have caused to inherit the Book<sup>28</sup> those whom We chose from among Our slaves. But among them are some who wrong themselves, some who follow a middle course, and some who are, by Allah's leave, foremost in good deeds. That is the great bounty.
- 35:33. Gardens of perpetual abode, which they will enter; they will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and of pearls, and their garments therein will be of silk.
- 35:34. And they will say: Praise be to Allah Who has taken away all sorrow from us. Verily our Lord is indeed Oft-Forgiving, Appreciative;
- 35:35. Who has, by His grace, caused us to settle in the eternal home, in which no toil or weariness will touch us.

<sup>28</sup> This refers to the Qur'an being inherited by the followers of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) until the Day of Resurrection.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that the Book that He revealed to His Messenger (ﷺ) «is the truth» because it contains a great deal of truth, as the truth is limited to it, so there should not be any reservations concerning it; you should not find it too much or think little of it, for if it is the truth, then everything that it mentions of the divine, matters of the unseen, and other things reflects what is really the case. So it is not possible that what is intended by its verses could be different from what it appears to mean.

«confirming that which came before it» of previous Books and Messengers, because they foretold it. When it appeared, this confirmed that what the previous Books said about it was true, for they foretold it and it confirmed what they foretold. Therefore no one can believe in the previous scriptures yet disbelieve in the Qur'an, because his disbelief in the Qur'an contradicts and undermines his belief in the previous scriptures, for one of the things they spoke of was foretelling this Qur'an, and what they said about the past and the future is identical to what the Qur'an says.

«Verily Allah is well aware of His slaves and sees all», and He gives to each nation and each individual what is appropriate to the situation. One aspect of that is the fact that previous laws and regulations were only appropriate for their own times. Therefore Allah kept sending Messengers, one after another, until He brought the series of Messengers to an end with Muhammad (ﷺ). He brought this law which is good and appropriate for all people until the Day of Resurrection, and it leads to all that is good at all times.

As this Ummah is the most mature of nations in terms of thinking and reasoning, the gentlest at heart, and the most refined in character, Allah (ﷻ) chose them and He chose for them the religion of Islam, and He caused them to inherit this Book which confirms the scripture that came before it and supersedes it (*cf.* 5: 48). Hence He says here: «Then We have caused to inherit the Book those whom We chose from among Our slaves», namely this Ummah.

«But among them are some who wrong themselves» by committing sin that is less serious than disbelief  
 «some who follow a middle course» by limiting themselves to what is obligatory upon them and staying away from what is prohibited  
 «and some who are, by Allah’s leave, foremost in good deeds» that is, they hasten to do good and strive hard, and thus they surpass others. This refers to those who do what is obligatory, do a lot of supererogatory good deeds, and stay away from that which is prohibited and disliked.

Allah (ﷻ) has chosen all of them to inherit this Book, although they vary in status and are of different types. Hence each of them has a share of this inheritance, even those who wrong themselves, because what they possess of basic faith, knowledge of faith and deeds based on faith is part of that inheritance of the Book.

What is meant by inheritance of the Book is inheritance of knowledge thereof, actions that are based on it, study of its words and understanding of its meanings.

The phrase «by Allah’s leave» refers to those who are foremost in good deeds, lest they become arrogant because of their deeds. It is a reminder that they only became foremost in good deeds by the help of Allah (ﷻ), so they should focus on giving thanks to Allah for the blessings that He has bestowed upon them.

«That is the great bounty» that is, inheritance of the holy Book, for those whom Allah (ﷻ) chose from among His slaves, is the great bounty, compared to which all other blessings pale into insignificance. The greatest blessing and bounty of all is inheritance of this Book.

Then Allah mentions the reward of those whom He caused to inherit the Book:

«Gardens of perpetual abode, which they will enter» that is, gardens containing trees, shade, beautiful gardens, flowing rivers, lofty palaces, adorned abodes, in which they will live forever and ever.

﴿they will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold﴾ this refers to jewellery that is worn on the wrists, according to whatever they like and think is most beautiful. Both men and women will wear such adornment in paradise.

And they will also be adorned with ﴿pearls﴾ on their clothes and bodies,  
 ﴿and their garments therein will be of silk﴾, green garments of fine silk and heavy brocade (*cf. 18: 31*).

﴿And﴾, after they see all this perfect delight and complete pleasure, ﴿they will say: Praise be to Allah Who has taken away all sorrow from us﴾ – that includes every type of sorrow; they will not be exposed to any sorrow because of a lack in their beauty, food, drink, pleasures, or physical well-being, or because of not staying there forever.

They will be enjoying bliss and will not be able to see how it could be increased or improved in any way, but it will continue to increase with the passage of time, for ever and ever.

﴿Verily our Lord is indeed Oft-Forgiving﴾ as He has forgiven us for our mistakes

﴿Appreciative﴾ as He has accepted from us our good deeds and has multiplied the reward for them, and He has given us of His bounty what our deeds did not deserve and what we could not even wish for. By His forgiveness they will be saved from everything that one may fear or dread, and by His appreciation and grace they will attain everything that one could want and love.

﴿Who has, by His grace﴾ and generosity towards us, and not by virtue of our deeds; were it not for His grace we would not have attained what we have attained.

﴿caused us to settle﴾ that is, He has caused us to settle and take up residence; it is not in the manner of one who is merely passing through

﴿in the eternal home﴾ that is, in which they will abide forever by His grace, in the place where they will want to remain because

of its abundant goodness and never ending bliss, with nothing to spoil it.

﴿in which no toil or weariness will touch us﴾ that is, there will be no physical or psychological tiredness due to too much pleasure. This indicates that Allah will give their bodies perfect creation and will prepare for them all that is required in order to have comfort and ease at all times, so that they will always be like that and no toil or weariness, worry or distress, will ever affect them.

This also indicates that they will not sleep in paradise, because the benefit of sleep is to rest and recover from tiredness, but the people of paradise will not need that; furthermore, sleep is a minor death, and the people of paradise will not die. May Allah make us among them by His grace.



﴿وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يُقْضَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ فَيَمُوتُوا وَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِهَا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي كُلَّ كَافِرٍ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَهُمْ يَصْطَرِّحُونَ فِيهَا رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ أَوَلَمْ نَعْمَرْكُمْ مَا يُتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مِنْ تَذَكُّرٍ وَجَاءَكُمْ النَّذِيرُ فَذُوقُوا فَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ نَصِيرٍ ﴿٣٧﴾﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٣٦-٣٧)

- 35:36. As for those who disbelieve, for them will be the fire of hell. Death will not be decreed for them, so that they might die, nor will its punishment be alleviated for them. Thus do We requite every disbeliever.
- 35:37. There they will cry out loud: Our Lord, bring us out; we will do righteous deeds, different from what we used to do. [Allah will say to them:] Did We not make your lives long enough for anyone who might reflect and pay heed to do so? And, moreover, the warner did come to you. So taste [the punishment]. For the wrongdoers there will be no helpers.

Having mentioned how the people of paradise will be and the bliss that they will enjoy, Allah (ﷻ) now mentions how the people of hell will be, and the torment they will suffer:

﴿As for those who disbelieve﴾ that is, those who rejected the signs that the Messengers brought to them, and denied the meeting with their Lord

﴿for them will be the fire of hell﴾ in which they will be punished most severely and suffer the worst of torments

﴿Death will not be decreed for them, so that they might die﴾ and thus find relief

﴿nor will its punishment be alleviated for them﴾. The severity and intensity of the punishments will be ongoing, at all times.

﴿Thus do We requite every disbeliever. There they will cry out loud﴾ that is, they will scream, shout and call for help, saying:

﴿Our Lord, bring us out; we will do righteous deeds, different from what we used to do﴾ – they will acknowledge their sin and admit that Allah has treated them justly, but they will ask to go back at the wrong time.

Therefore it will be said to them: ﴿Did We not make your lives long enough for anyone who might reflect and pay heed to do so?﴾ That is, during that time, anyone who wanted to pay heed would have been able to do some righteous deeds, for We gave you a life of ease in the former world, We showered you with blessings and provided you with all the means of comfort, and We granted you a long enough life, sent you signs one after another and sent warnings to you, and We tested you with ease and hardship so that you might turn back to Us.

But no warning was to any avail and no exhortation was of any benefit; We delayed your punishment until, when your appointed time came to an end and your lives were over, and you moved to this realm, which is the realm of requital for deeds, you asked to go back!

That will never happen, for now it is too late; the Most Gracious, Most Merciful is angry with you, and the punishment of fire will be



intense for you, and the people of paradise have forgotten you. So stay in hell for ever and ever, subject to humiliating punishment. Hence Allah says: ﴿So taste [the punishment]. For the wrongdoers there will be no helpers﴾ to help them and bring them out of it, or to reduce the torment for them.



﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ غَيْبِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٣٨)

(سورة فاطر: ٣٨)

35:38. Verily Allah knows all that is unseen in the heavens and on earth; verily He knows well what is in [people's] hearts.

Having mentioned the requital of the inhabitants of both realms, and the deeds of both groups, He now tells us of the vastness of His knowledge and that He sees what is unseen in the heavens and on earth, that which is hidden from the sight and knowledge of people; He is the Knower of all secrets, Who knows what is in people's hearts of good and evil, purity or otherwise. Hence He will give each person what he deserves and a position commensurate with that.



﴿هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَائِفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَعَلَيْهِ كُفْرُهُ، وَلَا يَزِيدُ الْكَافِرِينَ كُفْرَهُمْ إِلَّا مَقْتًا وَلَا يَزِيدُ الْكَافِرِينَ كُفْرَهُمْ إِلَّا خَسَارًا﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٣٩)

35:39. And it is He Who has made you the successors of others on the earth. Whoever disbelieves will suffer the consequences of his disbelief. Their disbelief only increases the disbelievers in loathsomeness before their Lord; their disbelief only increases the disbelievers in loss.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the perfect nature of His wisdom and mercy towards His slaves; He ordained in His prior decree that some of them would be made the successors of others on earth and He would send warnings to each nation, to see what they will do. So whoever disbelieves in Allah and in that which His Messengers bring will suffer the consequences of his disbelief and will bear the burden of sin and the punishment thereof. No one can carry that burden for him, and his disbelief will only increase the wrath and anger of Allah towards the disbeliever. What punishment could be greater than the wrath of the most generous Lord?

«their disbelief only increases the disbelievers in loss» that is, they will lose themselves, their families, their good deeds, and their places in paradise. The disbeliever will continue to increase in doom, loss and disgrace before Allah and before His creation, and in deprivation.



﴿ قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ شُرَكَاءَكُمُ الَّذِينَ نَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقُوا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ أَمْ لَهُمْ شِرْكٌ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ أَمْ آتَيْنَهُمْ كِتَابًا فَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْهُ بَلْ إِنَّ يَعِدُ الظَّالِمُونَ بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا الْإِغْرَارَ ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٤٠)

35:40. Say: Tell me about your [so-called] 'partners' on whom you call besides Allah. Show me what part of the earth they have created. Or do they have any share in the heavens? Or have We given them a book in which they have clear proof [for ascribing partners to Allah]? Nay, the wrongdoers promise<sup>29</sup> one another nothing but delusions.

<sup>29</sup> The leaders promised their followers that the so-called 'partners' would intercede for them with Allah.

Here Allah highlights the helplessness and shortcomings of the gods of the polytheists, and the flawed argument on which their ascription of partners to Allah is based.

﴿Say﴾ to them O Messenger:

﴿Tell me about your [so-called] ‘partners’ on whom you call besides Allah﴾ – do they deserve to be called upon and worshipped?

﴿Show me what part of the earth they have created﴾ – have they created a sea, or have they created a mountain, or have they created an animal, or have they created any inanimate thing? They will affirm that the Creator of all things is Allah (ﷻ). Or do their so-called partners have any share ﴿in the heavens﴾, in the creation and control thereof? They will say that they have no share in that.

If they did not create anything and they do not have any share with the Creator in His creation, then why do you worship them and call upon them, even though you admit that they are incapable? As there is no rational argument to show the soundness of their worship, this indicates that their worship is invalid and not right.

Then Allah discusses whether there is any textual evidence for that, and states that there is no such thing either. Hence He says:

﴿Or have We given them a book﴾ which speaks of that which they ascribe as partners to Allah and enjoins them to ascribe them as partners to Him and to worship idols,

﴿in which they have clear proof [for ascribing partners to Allah﴾ in that book that was sent down to them, proving the validity of their ascription of partners to Him?

That is not the case; no book was sent down to them before the Qur’an, and no warner came to them before the Messenger of Allah Muhammad (ﷺ). Even if we assume that a book came down to them and a Messenger was sent to them, and they claimed that he commanded them to ascribe partners to Allah, we can be certain that they are lying, because Allah (ﷻ) says:

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

So the Messengers and the Books unanimously enjoin devoting worship to Allah (ﷻ) alone,

﴿Although they were enjoined only to worship Allah with sincere devotion to Him, being true in faith to Him alone...﴾ (*al-Bayyinah* 98: 5)

If it is asked: if the rational and textual evidence proves that ascription of partners to Allah is invalid, then what made the polytheists do that, when there were among them people of sound reasoning who were smart and intelligent? Allah (ﷻ) answers this question by saying: ﴿Nay, the wrongdoers promise one another nothing but delusions﴾ that is, they have no proof for the path that they follow; rather they encouraged one another to follow it by making it fair-seeming to one another, and the later ones followed in the misguided footsteps of the earlier generations; moreover the Shayṭān made false promises to them and made their evil deeds fair-seeming to them. Thus ascription of partners to Allah took root in their hearts and became second nature to them, so it is difficult to remove it and get rid of it, with the result that people persisted in disbelief and invalid ascription of partners to Allah (ﷻ).



﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُمَسِّكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ أَنْ تَزُولَا وَلَئِنْ زَالَتَا إِنْ أَمْسَكَهُمَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٤١)

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

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the perfect nature of His power and mercy, and the vastness of His forbearance and forgiveness; He sustains the heavens and the earth lest they decline, for if they were to decline no one could sustain them, because the strength and power of any creature would be unable to sustain them.

But He has decreed that they are to be sustained as they are and remain stable so that people may settle, and so that they may be of benefit and a source of lessons, so that people may learn about the great power and might of the Sovereign, which will fill their hearts with respect, awe, love and veneration for Him, and so that they may know the perfect nature of His forbearance and forgiveness, because He gives respite to the sinners and does not hasten to punish them, even though if He commanded the sky to do so, it would pelt them with stones, and if he gave permission to the earth to do so, it would swallow them up. But His forgiveness, forbearance and kindness encompass them, ﴿Verily He is Forbearing, Oft-Forgiving﴾.



﴿وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَئِن جَاءَهُمْ نَذِيرٌ لَّيَكُونُنَّ أَهْدَىٰ مِن إِحْدَى الْأُمَمِ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ نَذِيرٌ مَّا زَادَهُمْ إِلَّا نُفُورًا ﴿٤٢﴾ أَسْتَكْبَارًا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَكْرَ السَّيِّئِ وَلَا يَحِيقُ الْمَكْرُ السَّيِّئِ إِلَّا بِأَهْلِهِ ۚ فَهَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا سُنَّتَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ۗ فَلَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا ۗ وَلَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ اللَّهِ تَحْوِيلًا ﴿٤٣﴾﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٤٢-٤٣)

- 35:42. They swore their most solemn oaths by Allah that if a warner came to them, they would be more guided than any other nation. But when a warner did come to them, it only increased them in aversion,
- 35:43. behaving arrogantly in the land and plotting evil, but the plotting of evil affects none but its authors. Are they waiting for anything other than the fate of the earlier peoples? No change will you

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find in the way of Allah, and no alteration will you find in the way of Allah.<sup>30</sup>

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That is, these people who disbelieve in you, O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), swear their most solemn oaths ﴿that if a warner came to them, they would be more guided than any other nation﴾ that is, they would be more guided than the Jews and the Christians, the People of the Scriptures; but they did not fulfil this oath and pledge.

﴿But when a warner did come to them﴾ they were not guided, and they did not become more guided than any other nation. They did not persist in the misguidance they had been following; rather ﴿it only increased them in aversion﴾ and in misguidance, transgression and stubbornness.

The oath mentioned was not made for a good purpose or seeking the truth, otherwise they would have been helped to attain that. Rather it stemmed from arrogance in the land towards other people, and towards the truth, and they used elaborate words when they spoke of that with the aim of deceiving and cheating. They also wanted to give the impression that they were people of truth who were keen to seek it, so that some people would be deceived by them and others would follow in their footsteps.

﴿but the plotting of evil﴾ the aim of which is evil and the intention behind which is invalid ﴿affects none but its authors﴾, so their plot backfires on them. In these words and this description of their oath, Allah highlights to His slaves that they were lying and fabricating when they said that. Thus their disgrace became clear and they were exposed to shame, and their evil aims became apparent. Thus their plot backfired on them and Allah thwarted their plans.

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<sup>30</sup> The way of Allah in punishing evildoers was already established among the previous nations, and will not change.

Hence nothing was left for them except to wait and see what would befall them of punishment, which was Allah's way with regard to earlier generations, and this way does not change. Anyone who follows the path of wrongdoing, stubbornness and arrogance towards other people will meet a similar fate, for Allah will exact retribution and take away the blessings that He had bestowed. So let them watch and wait for a punishment like that which befell the earlier nations.



﴿أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَكَانُوا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً  
وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعْجِزَهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَلِيمًا قَدِيرًا  
﴿٤٤﴾ وَلَوْ يُوَاقِحُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِمَا كَسَبُوا مَا تَرَكَ عَلَى ظَهْرِهَا مِنْ  
دَابَّةٍ وَلَا يَكُن يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ  
بِعِبَادِهِ بَصِيرًا ﴿٤٥﴾﴾ (سورة فاطر: ٤٤-٤٥)

- 35:44. Have they not travelled in the land and seen what was the fate of those who came before them? They were more powerful than them. Allah is not such that anything can escape Him in the heavens or on earth, for verily He is All-Knowing, Omnipotent.
- 35:45. If Allah were to take humankind to task for what they have earned, He would not leave on the face of [the earth] a single living creature, but He gives them respite for an appointed term. Then when their appointed time comes, then verily Allah is well aware of His slaves [and knows who is deserving of punishment or reward].

Here Allah urges people to travel through the land, either physically or by means of contemplation, in order to learn lessons and not merely to look heedlessly. They should think of the fate that befell those who came before them, those who rejected the Messengers; they were

wealthier than them, had more children and were more powerful, and they built upon it more than these (people of Makkah) had built (cf. 30: 9). When the punishment overtook them, their power did not benefit them and their wealth and children were of no avail to them before Allah, and what Allah decreed for them came to pass.

﴿Allah is not such that anything can escape Him in the heavens or on earth﴾ because of the perfect nature of His knowledge and power, ﴿for verily He is All-Knowing, Omnipotent﴾.

Then Allah (ﷻ) mentions His perfect forbearance and the lengthy respite He gives to leading sinners and great offenders:

﴿If Allah were to take humankind to task for what they have earned﴾ of sins,

﴿He would not leave on the face of [the earth] a single living creature﴾ that is, the punishment would have reached everywhere and even affected animals, who are not accountable.

﴿but﴾ He gives respite, although He does not forget about them, ﴿He gives them respite for an appointed term. Then when their appointed time comes, then verily Allah is well aware of His slaves [and knows who is deserving of punishment or reward]﴾, then He will requite them according to what he knows about them of good or evil.

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat Fāṭir.

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.





36.

## Soorat Yâ Seen

(Makki)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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



يَس ۝١ وَالْقُرْآنِ الْحَكِيمِ ۝٢ إِنَّكَ لَئِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ۝٣ عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ  
١ نَزِيلَ الْعَزِيزِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝٥ لِنُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّا أُنذِرَ آبَاءَهُمْ فَهُمْ غٰفِلُونَ ۝٦ لَقَدْ  
حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ عَلَىٰ أَكْثَرِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝٧ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا فِي أَنْعَامِهِمْ آخِلًا فَهِىَ إِلَى  
الْأَذْقَانِ فَهُمْ مُقْمَحُونَ ۝٨ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ سَدًّا وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ سَدًّا  
فَأَغْشَيْنَاهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ۝٩ وَسَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنْذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ  
١٠ إِنَّمَا تُنذِرُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ الذِّكْرَ وَخَشِيَ الرَّحْمَنَ الْغَيْبَ فَبَشِّرْهُ بِمَغْفِرَةٍ وَأَجْرٍ  
كَرِيمٍ ۝١١ إِنَّا نَحْنُ الْمُوقِفُونَ وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَءَاتَاهُمْ وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ  
أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ ۝١٢ ﴿سورة يس: ١-١٢﴾

36:1. Yâ Seen.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> 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

- 36:2. By the Qur'an, full of wisdom,  
 36:3. verily you [O Muhammad] are indeed one of the Messengers,  
 36:4. [and you are] on a straight path.  
 36:5. [This Qur'an is] a revelation sent down by the Almighty, the Most Merciful,  
 36:6. So that you may warn a people whose forefathers were not warned, hence they are unaware.  
 36:7. The decree [of punishment] is inevitable for most of them, for they will never believe.<sup>32</sup>  
 36:8. Verily [it is as if] We have placed iron collars around their necks, right up to their chins, so that their heads are forced up.<sup>33</sup>  
 36:9. We have placed a barrier in front of them and a barrier behind them, blocking their vision so that they cannot see.  
 36:10. It is the same to them whether you warn them or do not warn them; they will not believe.  
 36:11. You can only warn those who follow the Reminder [the Qur'an] and fear the Most Gracious unseen. So give them the glad tidings of forgiveness and a generous reward.  
 36:12. Verily it is We Who will give life to the dead. We record what they send forth and what they leave behind,<sup>34</sup> and We keep an account of all things in a clear Book.

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they were not revealed in vain, and that there is wisdom behind them of which we are not aware.

<sup>32</sup> The punishment is inevitable for those people, as Allah knows that they will die in a state of disbelief. (al-Qurtubi; at-Ṭabari)

<sup>33</sup> The description of their heads being forced up by the collar indicates that their attitude is one that may be described as stiff-necked: they will not yield and submit to guidance.

<sup>34</sup> What they leave behind: this refers to things that people leave behind that may benefit others, such as a book of knowledge, a *waqf* (Islamic endowment) or a good precedent; or what they leave behind that may have a negative impact on others, such as books promoting misguidance =

Here Allah swears an oath by the Qur'an, full of wisdom, meaning that it puts everything in its right place, and gives commands and prohibitions for clear reasons in an appropriate context, and it describes the requital for good or evil as is appropriate, in the right context. So its commands and prohibitions, and its criminal code, which dictates requital and punishment, are based on utmost wisdom.

One way in which the wisdom of this Qur'an is manifested is that it mentions together the ruling and the wisdom behind it, thus drawing the attention of rational people to the context and the circumstances that led to the determination of that ruling concerning the matter.

﴿verily you [O Muhammad] are indeed one of the Messengers﴾. This is the fact concerning which the oath is sworn, namely the message of Muhammad (ﷺ). In other words, you (O Muhammad [ﷺ]) are one of the Messengers, so you are not without precedent among the Messengers. Moreover, you have brought the same message as the other Messengers brought, in terms of basic religious principles.

Furthermore, anyone who reflects upon the character and description of the Messengers, and understands the difference between them and others, will realise that you are one of the best of the Messengers, because of the perfect qualities and virtuous characteristics that you possess.

The connection between the object by which the oath is sworn, namely the Qur'an full of wisdom, and the thing that is confirmed by the oath, namely the message of the Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ), is not hidden. If there was nothing to confirm his message and no witness to testify to it except this Qur'an full of wisdom, that would have been sufficient evidence and testimony to the validity of the message of Muhammad (ﷺ). Indeed the holy Qur'an is the strongest evidence that has remained down throughout the ages, of the truth of

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= and innovation, setting a bad precedent, or devising unjust rules and regulations that continue to be carried out on people.

the message of the Messenger (ﷺ). All the evidence of the Qur'an is evidence that supports the message of Muhammad (ﷺ).

Then Allah tells us of the greatest characteristic of the Messenger (ﷺ), which supports his message, namely the fact that he is ﴿on a straight path﴾, a moderate path that leads to Allah and to His paradise. That straight path includes deeds, which are righteous deeds that rectify one's condition both spiritually and physically, and lead to the best outcome in this world and the hereafter, and virtuous characteristics that purify one's soul and bring reward. This is the straight path which is the description of the Messenger (ﷺ) and of the religion that he brought. So reflect upon the majestic nature of this noble Qur'an, and how it combines swearing by the most honourable of things to confirm the most honourable thing to which one may swear (namely the truth of the Prophet's message). Allah's words alone are sufficient, but He established clear proof and definitive evidence in this context in order to prove the soundness of the thing He swore this oath to confirm, namely the truth of the message of His Messenger (ﷺ).

This straight path is ﴿a revelation sent down by the Almighty, the Most Merciful﴾. The Book was revealed to describe and call people to the straight path, and was revealed to show the way by which His slaves may reach Him. So He protected it by His might from change and alteration, and by means of it He granted mercy to His slaves that would stay with them until it brings them to the realm of His mercy (namely paradise).

Hence the verse ends with these two divine names, the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

Having sworn to the truth of His message and established proof for it, Allah (ﷻ) now speaks of the great need for it and the necessity thereof.

﴿So that you may warn a people whose forefathers were not warned, hence they are unaware﴾; they had remained without any scriptures

and had received no Messengers. They had been overwhelmed by ignorance and were submerged in misguidance, and they had become a laughing stock to all other people because of their foolishness. So Allah sent to them a Messenger from among themselves, to purify them, and to teach them the Book and wisdom, although before that they had been clearly misguided (*cf.* 3: 164). He came to warn the unlettered Arabs, and all other unlettered nations, and to remind the People of the Book of what they had of previous scriptures. It is a blessing that Allah bestowed upon the Arabs in particular, and upon others in general.

But after you (O Muhammad [ﷺ]) warned these people among whom you were sent, they divided into two categories, the first of which rejected the message he brought and did not pay heed to the warning. They are the ones of whom Allah says:

«The decree [of punishment] is inevitable for most of them, for they will never believe» that is, the divine decree, which is inevitable, dictates that they will persist in their disbelief and ascription of partners to Allah; the decree only became inevitable concerning them after the truth was presented to them but they rejected it. Then they were punished by the sealing of their hearts.

Then Allah mentions the impediments that prevented faith from reaching their hearts:

«Verily [it is as if] We have placed iron collars around their necks» and these iron collars that are around their necks are immense, reaching up to their chins and pushing their heads upwards  
«so that their heads are forced up» and they cannot lower them.

«We have placed a barrier in front of them and a barrier behind them» that is, a barrier that prevents them from believing  
«blocking their vision so that they cannot see» because they have been overwhelmed by ignorance and doom on all sides, so the warning is of no avail for them.

«It is the same to them whether you warn them or do not warn them; they will not believe» – how can a person believe when his heart has been sealed up and he sees truth as false and falsehood as true?

The second category of people are those who pay heed to the warning, whom Allah mentions in the following verse:

«You can only warn» that is, the only ones who will benefit from your warning and pay heed to your advice are «those who follow the Reminder [the Qur'an]» that is, those whose aim is to follow the truth and what they are reminded of in the Qur'an

«and fear the Most Gracious unseen» that is, it is those who have these two characteristics – good intentions in seeking the truth, and fear of Allah (ﷻ) – who will benefit from your message and will be purified by following your teachings. Whoever attains these two things, «give them the glad tidings of forgiveness» of their sins «and a generous reward» for their righteous deeds and good intentions.

«Verily it is We Who will give life to the dead» that is, We will resurrect them after their death in order to requite them for their deeds «We record what they send forth» of good or evil. This refers to the deeds that they do during their lifetimes

«and what they leave behind» this refers to their legacy of good or evil, of which they were the cause during their lifetimes and after their deaths, the deeds that resulted from their words, actions and conduct. Every good deed that anyone does because of a person's knowledge, teaching and advice, or because of his enjoining what is right or forbidding what is wrong, or because of knowledge that he taught to seekers of knowledge, or knowledge that he left behind in books from which people benefited during his life and after his death; or any good deed that he did, such as prayer, zakâh, charity or acts of kindness, in which others followed his example; or any mosque that he built or any facilities that he set up from which people benefit, and so on, is among the legacy that he leaves behind, that is recorded for him. The same applies in the case of evil deeds. Hence:

«Whoever sets a good precedent will have the reward thereof and a reward (equal to that of) those who act upon it until the Day of Resurrection; and whoever sets a bad precedent will have the burden of sin thereof and a burden of sin (equal to that of) those who act upon it until the Day of Resurrection.» (Muslim)

This highlights the high status of one who calls people to Allah and guides them to His path by all possible means, and the low status of one who calls people to evil and leads others therein; the latter is one of the worst of people, who is guilty of the worst crime and gravest sin.

«and We keep an account of all things», deeds, intentions and so on,  
«in a clear Book» that is, a book that is the mother of all books, on which all other books that are in the hands of the angels are based, namely al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfoodh.



﴿وَأَضْرَبَ لَهُمْ مَثَلًا أَصْحَابَ الْقَرْيَةِ إِذْ جَاءَهَا الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ اثْنَيْنِ فَكَذَّبُوهُمَا فَعَزَّزْنَا بِشَالِكٍ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا إِلَيْكُمْ مُّرْسَلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ قَالُوا مَا أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُنَا وَمَا أَنْزَلَ الرَّحْمَنُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا تَكْذِبُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا يَعْلَمُ إِنَّا إِلَيْكُمْ لَمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَمَا عَلَيْنَا إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿١٧﴾ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَطَّيَّرْنَا بِكُمْ لَئِن لَّمْ تَنْتَهُوا لَنَرْجُمَنَّكُمْ وَلَيَمَسَّنَّكُم مِّنَّا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٨﴾ قَالُوا طَائِفُكُمْ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ ذُكِّرْتُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَجَاءَ مِنْ أَقْصَا الْمَدِينَةِ رَجُلٌ يَسْعَى قَالَ يَنْفِقُونَ أَنْتُمْ يَا مُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ اتَّبِعُوا مِن لَّا يَسْتَلْكُمْ أَجْرًا وَهُمْ مُّهِتَدُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَمَا لِي لَا أَعْبُدُ الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ أَأَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً إِنِّي إِذًا إِن يُرِدِنَ الرَّحْمَنُ يُضْرِبْ لَآ تَغْنِ عَنِّي شَفَاعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُنْقِدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ إِنِّي إِذًا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢٤﴾ إِنِّي ءَأَمِنْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ فَاسْمِعُونِ ﴿٢٥﴾ قِيلَ ادْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ

قَالَ يَلَيْتَ قَوْمِي يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ بِمَا غَفَرَ لِي رَبِّي وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾ ﴿سورة

يس: ١٣-٢٧)

- 36:13. Present to them the example of the people of the city when the Messengers came to it.
- 36:14. When We sent two Messengers to them, they rejected them, so We supported them with a third. They said: Verily we have been sent to you as Messengers.
- 36:15. The people said: You are but human beings like ourselves, and the Most Gracious has not sent down any revelation; you are simply lying.
- 36:16. They said: Our Lord knows that we have been sent to you as Messengers,
- 36:17. and our duty is only to convey the message in the clearest way.
- 36:18. The people said: We regard you as an evil omen. If you do not desist, we will surely stone you, and we will inflict a painful punishment on you.
- 36:19. They said: Your evil omen is with you [because of your disbelief]. [Are you saying this] because you have been admonished? You are indeed a people transgressing beyond all bounds.
- 36:20. A man came rushing from the farthest part of the city, and said: O my people, follow the Messengers.
- 36:21. Follow those who ask no recompense of you and who are rightly guided.
- 36:22. Why should I not worship Him Who created me and to Whom you will be brought back?
- 36:23. Should I take other gods besides Him? If the Most Gracious wills that some adversity should befall me, their intercession will not avail me at all, nor can they deliver me.
- 36:24. In that case I would indeed be clearly misguided.
- 36:25. Verily I believe in your Lord, so hear me.



36:26. It was said [to him]:<sup>35</sup> Enter paradise. He said: Would that my people knew

36:27. how my Lord has forgiven me and placed me among the honoured ones.

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«Present to them the example of the people of the city when the Messengers came to it» that is, give an example to these people who reject your message and your call, from which they may learn a lesson, and which may be an exhortation from which they may benefit if Allah so wills. That example is the people of the city and what happened to them of punishment when they rejected the Messengers of Allah. If there was any benefit in identifying the city in question, Allah would have identified it. Discussing that and similar issues comes under the heading of wasting time and effort, and speaking without knowledge. Hence if anyone speaks of such matters, you will find him speculating and saying confusing and contradictory things that do not lead to any conclusion. If you see anyone doing that, you should realise that the path to sound knowledge is to be content with the facts and turn away from discussing that which is of no benefit. Thus the seeker of knowledge will maintain purity of heart and his knowledge will increase. This is in contrast to the ignorant person who thinks that his knowledge will increase by referring to views and ideas that have no basis or proof and are of no benefit, and in fact they only lead to confusion and distraction, and leave one open to accepting doubtful matters.

The point is that Allah mentions this city by way of example to those addressed here (namely Quraysh), «when the Messengers came to it» from Allah, to command them to worship Allah alone and devote their worship solely to Him, and to forbid them to ascribe partners to Him and commit sin,

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<sup>35</sup> His people killed him and he was admitted to paradise. (ash-Shawkâni)

«When We sent two Messengers to them, they rejected them, so We supported them with a third» that is, We strengthened them with a third, so they became three Messengers, as a sign of Allah's care for the people of that city, and so as to establish clear proof by the coming of Messengers one after another.

«They said» to the people: «Verily we have been sent to you as Messengers».

But the people responded in a manner that is still well known among those who reject the call of the Messengers:

«The people said: You are but human beings like ourselves» that is, what makes you better than us, and why were you chosen to be Messengers instead of us?

The Messengers said to their nations:

«...Indeed, we are but human beings like yourselves, but Allah bestows His favour upon whomever He wills of His slaves...» (*Ibrâheem 14: 11*)

«and the Most Gracious has not sent down any revelation». In other words, they denied the concept of a message from Allah, then they rejected the ones to whom they were speaking and said: «you are simply lying».

These three Messengers said: «Our Lord knows that we have been sent to you as Messengers»; if we were lying, Allah would have caused us disgrace and would have hastened the punishment to us.

«and our duty is only to convey the message in the clearest way» that is, in the way that will explain the matters that need to be explained; everything apart from that, such as the signs that you demand and swift punishment, is not up to us. Rather what is required of us – which is to convey the message clearly – we have done, and we have explained it to you. If you are guided, then that is your good fortune, but if you are misguided, then it is nothing to do with us.

The people of that city said to their Messengers: «We regard you as an evil omen» that is, we do not think that your coming to us and

your contacting us forebodes anything but evil. This is something very strange, to regard those who came to them with the greatest blessing that Allah could bestow upon His slaves, and the greatest honour that He could give them, their need for which surpassed all other needs, as something evil which would exacerbate the bad situation they were already in, and to view it through a lens of superstition. But this is the sign of failure and misguidance that harms a person more than his enemies could.

Then they issued a threat to them by saying: «If you do not desist, we will surely stone you» that is, we will kill you by stoning, which is the worst kind of killing, «and we will inflict a painful punishment on you».

Their Messengers said to them: «Your evil omen is with you» and it was what they had of polytheism and evil that would lead to calamity and punishment befalling them, and blessings and favours being taken away from them

«[Are you saying this] because you have been admonished?» That is, is it because we reminded you of that which is in your best interests and will bring you good fortune that you said to us what you said? «You are indeed a people transgressing beyond all bounds» and overstepping the mark in what you say. But their call to them only increased them in aversion and arrogance.

«A man came rushing from the farthest part of the city», keen to advise his people when he heard what the Messengers called them to, and he believed in it and realised what his people's response to them was. Hence he said to them:

«O my people, follow the Messengers». He instructed them and advised them to follow them, and testified that they were indeed Messengers.

«Follow those who ask no recompense of you» that is, follow those who give you advice that will bring you good, and who do not want

your wealth or any recompense for advising you and guiding you, for this makes it incumbent upon you to follow those who are like that.

There is only one argument left, which is the idea that perhaps a Messenger may call people and not ask any recompense for that, but he is not calling to the truth. So he warded off this notion by saying: ﴿and who are rightly guided﴾, because they were only calling to something of which sound reason testifies to its beauty and goodness, and they were not forbidding anything of which sound reason does not testify to its ugliness and badness.

It is as if his people did not accept his advice; rather they began to criticise him for following the Messengers and worshipping Allah alone. Therefore he said: ﴿Why should I not worship Him Who created me and to Whom you will be brought back?﴾ That is, what is there to prevent me from worshipping the One Who is truly deserving of worship, because He is the One Who originated me, created me, grants me provision, and to Him is the return of all creatures, then He will requite them for their deeds? He is the One in Whose Hand are creation and provision, and judgement between people in this world and the hereafter; therefore He is the only One Who deserves to be worshipped, praised and glorified, to the exclusion of those who possess no power to benefit or harm, give or withhold, give life, cause death or resurrect. Hence he said:

﴿Should I take other gods besides Him? If the Most Gracious wills that some adversity should befall me, their intercession will not avail me at all﴾ because no one can intercede with Allah except by His leave, so their intercession will not avail me at all, and they cannot save me from harm if Allah wills it for me.

﴿In that case﴾, if I worship gods that are like that, ﴿I would indeed be clearly misguided﴾. In these words, this man combined advice, testimony to the truth of the Messengers and the path of guidance, the statement that it is essential to worship Allah alone and that worship of all others is false, mentioning the proof for

both, the statement that those who worship (false gods) are misguided, and open declaration of his faith, even though he was very afraid that they could kill him. Hence he said:

﴿Verily I believe in your Lord, so hear me﴾. But they killed him when they heard what he said to them.

﴿It was said [to him]﴾ straight away  
﴿Enter paradise﴾. He said something that was indicative of the level of honour he attained for his affirmation of the oneness of Allah, his devotion, and his sincerity towards his people after his death, as he had been sincere towards them when he was still alive:

﴿Would that my people knew how my Lord has forgiven me﴾ and has saved me from all kinds of punishment

﴿and placed me among the honoured ones﴾, with all kinds of reward and pleasures. In other words, if knowledge of that reached their hearts, they would not persist in their ascription of partners to Allah.



﴿ وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ مِن بَعْدِهِ مِن جُنْدٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَمَا كُنَّا مُنْزِلِينَ ﴾ (٢٨) إِنَّ  
كَانَتْ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ خَمِيدُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ يَحْسِرَةَ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِّن  
رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ (سورة يس: ٢٨-٣٠)

36:28. After his death,<sup>36</sup> We did not send down any troops from heaven against his people, nor did We need to do so;

36:29. It was but a single blast, and immediately they were extinguished.

36:30. Alas for humanity! No Messenger came to them but they ridiculed him.

<sup>36</sup> The person referred to here is the believing man mentioned in Yâ Seen (36: 20) who came rushing from the farthest part of the city to urge his people to respond to the call of the Messengers, but they killed him.