

Divorce is Thrice

This honorable Ayah abrogated the previous practice in the beginning of Islam, when the man had the right to take back his divorced wife even if he had divorced her a hundred times, as long as she was still in her `Iddah (waiting period). This situation was harmful for the wife, and this is why Allah made the divorce thrice, where the husband is allowed to take back his wife after the first and the second divorce (as long as she is still in her `Iddah). The divorce becomes irrevocable after the third divorce, as Allah said:

(الطَّلُقُ مَرَّتَانِ فَإِمْسَاكَ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌ
بِإِحْسَانٍ)

(The divorce is twice, after that, either you retain her on reasonable terms or release her with kindness.)

In his Sunan, Abu Dawud reported in Chapter: "Taking the Wife back after the third (Divorce) is an abrogated practice," that Ibn `Abbas commented on the Ayah:

(وَالْمُطَلَّاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ وَلَا
يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ)

(And divorced women shall wait (as regards their marriage) for three menstrual periods, and it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs,) (2:228) The man used to have the right to take back his wife even if he had divorced her thrice. Allah abrogated this and said:

(الطَّلُقُ مَرَّتَانِ)

(The divorce is twice.)

This Hadith was also collected by An-Nasa'i. Ibn Abu Hatim reported that `Urwah said that a man said to his wife, "I will neither divorce you nor take you back." She said, "How" He said, "I will divorce you and when your term of `Iddah nears its end, I will take you back." She went to Allah's Messenger and told him what happened, and Allah revealed:

(الطَّلُقُ مَرَّتَانِ)

(The divorce is twice.)

Ibn Jarir (At-Tabari) also reported this Hadith in his Tafsir.

Allah said:

(فَأَمْسَاكُ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحُهُ بِإِحْسَانٍ)

(...after that, either you retain her on reasonable terms or release her with kindness.) meaning, `If you divorce her once or twice, you have the choice to take her back, as long as she is still in her `Iddah, intending to be kind to her and to mend differences. Otherwise, await the end of her term of `Iddah, when the divorce becomes final, and let her go her own way in peace, without committing any harm or injustice against her.' `Ali bin Abu Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "When the man divorces his wife twice, let him fear Allah, regarding the third time. He should either keep her with him and treat her with kindness, or let her go her own way with kindness, without infringing upon any of her rights."

Taking back the Mahr (Dowry)

Allah said:

(وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا)

(And it is not lawful for you (men) to take back (from your wives) any of (the dowry) what you gave them,) meaning, you are not allowed to bother or pressure your wives to end this situation by giving you back the Mahr and any gifts that you have given them (in return for divorce). Similarly, Allah said:

(وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ)

(...and you should not treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of what you have given them, unless they commit open illegal sexual intercourse.) (4:19)

However, if the wife willingly gives back anything with a good heart, then Allah said regarding this situation:

(فَإِنْ طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَّرِيئًا)

(...but if they, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it, and enjoy it without fear of any harm.) (4:4)

Allowing Khul` and the Return of the Mahr in that Case

When the spouses have irreconcilable differences wherein the wife ignores the rights of the husband, dislikes him and becomes unable to live with him any longer, she is allowed to free herself (from married life) by giving him back what he had given her (in gifts and Mahr). There is no sin on her in this case nor on him if he accepts such offer. This is why Allah said:

﴿وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا إِلَّا أَنْ يَخَافَا أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ بِهِ﴾

(And it is not lawful for you (men) to take back (from your wives) any of what you gave them, except when both parties fear that they would be unable to keep the limits ordained by Allah (e.g., to deal with each other on a fair basis). Then if you fear that they would not be able to keep the limits ordained by Allah, then there is no sin on either of them if she gives back.)

Sometimes, the woman has no valid reason and she still asks for her marriage to be ended. In this case, Ibn Jarir reported that Thawban said that Allah's Messenger said:

«أَيُّمَا امْرَأَةٍ سَأَلَتْ زَوْجَهَا طَلَاقًا فِي غَيْرِ مَا بَأْسٍ، فَحَرَامٌ عَلَيْهَا رَائِحَةُ الْجَنَّةِ»

(Any woman who asks her husband for divorce without justification, then the scent of Paradise will be forbidden for her.)

At-Tirmidhi recorded this Hadith and stated that it is Hasan.

Ibn Jarir said that the Ayah (2:229) was revealed about Thabit bin Qays bin Shammas and his wife Habibah bint `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul. In his Muwatta', Imam Malik reported that Habibah bint Sahl Al-Ansariyah was married to Thabit bin Qays bin Shammas and that Allah's Messenger once went to the Fajr (Dawn) prayer and found Habibah bint Sahl by his door in the dark. Allah's Messenger said, "Who is this" She said, "I am Habibah bint Sahl, O Messenger of Allah!" He said, "What is the matter" She said, "I and Thabit bin Qays", meaning, (she can no longer be with) her husband. When her husband Thabit bin Qays came, Allah's Messenger said to him:

«هَذِهِ حَبِيبَةُ بِنْتِ سَهْلٍ قَدْ ذَكَرْتَ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ
تَذَكَّرَ»

(This is Habibah bint Sahl, she said what Allah has permitted her to say.)

Habibah also said, "O Messenger of Allah! I still have everything he gave me." Allah's Messenger said:

«خُذْ مِنْهَا»

(Take it from her.) So, he took it from her and she remained in her family's house."

This was reported by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and An-Nasai.

Al-Bukhari reported that Ibn `Abbas said that the wife of Thabit bin Qays bin Shammās came to the Prophet and said, "O Messenger of Allah! I do not criticize his religion or mannerism. But I hate committing Kufir in Islam (by ignoring his rights on her)." Allah's Messenger said:

«أَتَرُدِّينَ عَلَيْهِ حَدِيقَتَهُ»

(Will you give him back his garden)

She said, "Yes." Allah's Messenger said:

«أَقْبِلِ الْحَدِيقَةَ وَطَلِّقْهَا تَطْلِيقَةً»

(Take back the garden and divorce her once.)

An-Nasa'i also recorded it.

The `Iddah (Waiting Period) for the Khul"

At-Tirmidhi reported that Rubayy` bint Mu`awwidh bin `Afra' got a Khul` during the time of Allah's Messenger and the Prophet ordered her to wait for one menstruation period for `Iddah.

Transgressing the set limits of Allah is an Injustice

Allah said:

(تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ
اللَّهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ)

(These are the limits ordained by Allah, so do not transgress them. And whoever transgresses the limits ordained by Allah, then such are the wrongdoers.)

This means that the laws that Allah has legislated are His set limits, so do not transgress them. An authentic Hadith states:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَدَّ حُدُودًا فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا، وَفَرَضَ
فَرَائِضَ فَلَا تُضَيِّعُوهَا، وَحَرَّمَ مَحَارِمَ فَلَا
تَنْتَهِكُوهَا، وَسَكَتَ عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ رَحْمَةً لَكُمْ مِنْ غَيْرِ
نِسْيَانٍ فَلَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنْهَا»

(Allah has set some limits, so do not transgress them; and commanded some commands, so do not ignore them; and made some things unlawful, so do not commit them. He has also left some matters (without rulings) as a mercy with you, not because He has forgotten them, so do not ask about them.)

Pronouncing Three Divorces at the same Time is Unlawful

The last Ayah we mentioned was used as evidence to prove that it is not allowed to pronounce three divorces at one time. What further proves this ruling is that Mahmud bin Labid has stated - as An-Nasa'i recorded - that Allah's Messenger was told about a man who pronounced three divorces on his wife at one time, so the Prophet stood up while angry and said:

«أُيْلَعَبُ بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَأَنَا بَيْنَ أَظْهُرِكُمْ»

(The Book of Allah is being made the subject of jest while I am still amongst you)

A man then stood up and said, "Should I kill that man, O Messenger of Allah"

The Wife cannot be taken back after the Third Divorce

Allah said:

(فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدُ حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا
غَيْرَهُ)

(And if he has divorced her (the third time), then she is not lawful for him thereafter until she has married another husband.)

This Ayah indicates that if the man divorces his wife for the third time after he divorced her twice, then she will no longer be allowed for marriage to him. Allah said:

(حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ)

(...until she has married another husband.) meaning, until she legally marries another man. For instance, if she has sexual intercourse with any man, even her master (if she was a servant), she would still be ineligible for marriage for her ex-husband (who divorced her thrice), because whomever she had sexual relations with was not her legal husband. If she marries a man without consummating the marriage, she will not be eligible for her ex-husband. Muslim reported that `A'ishah said that Allah's Messenger was asked about a woman who marries a man who thereafter divorces her (thrice). She then marries another man and he divorces her before he has sexual relations with her, would she be allowed for her first husband Allah's Messenger said:

«لَا، حَتَّى يَذُوقَ عُسَيْلَتَهَا»

(No, until he enjoys her `Usaylah (sexual relation).) Al-Bukhari also reported this Hadith.

Imam Ahmad recorded that `A'ishah said, "The wife of Rifa`ah Al-Qurazi came while I and Abu Bakr were with the Prophet and she said, `I was Rifa`ah's wife, but he divorced me and it was an irrevocable divorce. Then I married `Abdur-Rahman bin Az-Zubayr, but his sexual organ is minute like a string.' She then took a small string of her garment (to resemble how small his sexual organ was). Khalid bin Sa`id bin Al-`As, who was next to the door and was not yet allowed in, said, `O Abu Bakr! Why do you not forbid this (woman) from what she is revealing frankly before the Prophet' The Prophet merely smiled. Then, Allah's Messenger asked her: c

«كَأَنَّكَ تُرِيدِينَ أَنْ تَرْجِعِي إِلَى رِفَاعَةَ، لَا، حَتَّى
تَذُوقِي عُسَيْلَتَهُ، وَيَذُوقَ عُسَيْلَتَكَ»

(Do you want to remarry Rifa`ah You cannot unless you experience his `Usaylah and he experiences your `Usaylah (i.e., had a complete sexual relation with your present husband).)"

Al-Bukhari, Muslim, and An-Nasa'i also recorded this Hadith. Muslim's wording is "Rifa`ah divorced his wife for the third and final time."

The word `Usaylah mentioned in the Hadith means sexual intercourse. Imam Ahmad and An-Nasa'i reported that `A'ishah said that Allah's Messenger said:

«أَلَا إِنَّ الْعُسَيْلَةَ الْجِمَاعُ»

(`Usaylah is sexual intercourse.)

The Curse on the Participants of Tahlil/Halalah

The reason for the woman (who was divorced thrice) to marry another man must be that the man desires her and has the intention of having an extended married life with her. These are the legal goals and aims behind marriage. If the reason behind the second marriage was to make the woman eligible for her ex-husband again, then this is the Tahlil that the Hadiths have cursed and criticized. In addition, when the reason behind this marriage (if it was Tahlil) is announced in the contract, it would make the contract invalid according to the majority of the scholars.

Imam Ahmad reported that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said, "Allah's Messenger cursed the one who does Tahlil, the one in whose favor it is done, those who eat Riba (usury) and those who feed it (pay the usury)." At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i reported this Hadith and At-Tirmidhi said, "This Hadith is Hasan." He said, "This is what is acted upon according to people of knowledge among the Companions, among whom are `Umar, `Uthman and Ibn `Umar. It was also the saying of the scholars of Fiqh among the Tabi`in (second generation of Islam). And it has been reported from `Ali, Ibn Mas`ud and Ibn `Abbas".

In his Mustadrak, Al-Hakim reported that Nafi` said: "A man came to Ibn `Umar and asked him about a man who divorced his wife three times. Then, his brother married her to make Tahlil for his brother, without the brother knowing this fact. He then asked, "Is she allowed for the first (husband)" He said, "No, unless it is a marriage that involves desire. We used to consider this an act of adultery during the time of Allah's Messenger ." Al-Hakim said, "This Hadith has a Sahih chain although they (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) did not record it." The wording of this Hadith indicates that the ruling came from the Prophet . Abu Bakr bin Abu Shaybah, Al-Jawzjani, Harb Al-Kirmani and Abu Bakr Al-Athram said that Qabisah bin Jabir said that `Umar said, "If the participants to Tahlil are brought to me, I will have them stoned."

When does a Woman who was divorced Three Times become Eligible for Her First Husband

Allah said:

(فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا)

(And if he has divorced her) meaning, the second husband after he had complete sexual relations with her,

(فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا)

(it is no sin on both of them that they reunite) meaning, the wife and her first husband,

(إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ)

(provided they feel that they can keep the limits ordained by Allah.) meaning, they live together honorably. Mujahid said, "If they are convinced that the aim behind their marriage is honorable." Next, Allah said:

(وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ)

(These are the limits of Allah,) His commandments and legislation,

(يُبَيِّنُهَا)

(He makes plain)

(لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(for the people who have knowledge.)

(وَإِذَا طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ
بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ
ضِرَارًا لَتَعْتَدُوا وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ
وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَةَ اللَّهِ هُزُوعًا وَادْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ
عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ

يَعْظُمُ بِهِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
عَلِيمٌ

(231. And when you have divorced women and they have fulfilled the term of their prescribed period, either take them back on a reasonable basis or set them free on a reasonable basis. But do not take them back to hurt them, and whoever does that, then he has wronged himself. And treat not the verses (Laws) of Allah in jest, but remember Allah's favors on you (i.e., Islam), and that which He has sent down to you of the Book (i.e., the Qur'an) and Al-Hikmah (the Prophet's Sunnah legal ways Islamic jurisprudence) whereby He instructs you. And fear Allah, and know that Allah is All-Aware of everything).

Being Kind to the Divorced Wife

This is a command from Allah to men that when one of them divorces his wife with a reversible divorce, he should treat her kindly. So when her term of `Iddah (waiting period) nears its end, he either takes her back in a way that is better, including having witnesses that he has taken her back, and he lives with her with kindness. Or, he should release her after her `Iddah finishes and then kindly asks her to depart from his house, without disputing, fighting with her or using foul words. Allah then said:

(وَلَا تُمَسِّكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لِّتَعْتَدُوا)

(But do not take them back to hurt them,)

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Masruq, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi` and Muqatil bin Hayyan said that a man used to divorce his wife, and when her `Iddah came near its end, he would take her back to harm her and to stop her from marrying someone else. He then divorced her and she would begin her `Iddah and when her `Iddah term neared its end, he would take her back again, so that the term of `Iddah would be prolonged for her. After that, Allah prohibited this practice. Allah has also threatened those who indulge in such practices, when He said;

(وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ)

(...and whoever does that, then he has wronged himself.) meaning, by defying Allah's commandments. Allah then said:

(وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوًا)

(And treat not the verses (Laws) of Allah in a jest,)

Ibn Jarir said that Abu Musa (Al-Ash`ari) narrated that Allah's Messenger once became angry at the Ash`ari tribe. Abu Musa went to him and said, "O Messenger of Allah! Are you angry with the Ash`ariyyin" The Prophet said:

«يَقُولُ أَحَدُكُمْ: قَدْ طَلَّقْتُ، قَدْ رَاجَعْتُ، لَيْسَ هَذَا
طَلَّاقُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، طَلَّقُوا الْمَرْأَةَ فِي قُبُلِ عِدَّتِهَا»

(One of you says, 'I divorced her' -then says- 'I took her back!' This is not the appropriate way Muslims conduct divorce. Divorce the woman when she has fulfilled the term of the prescribed period.)

Masruq said that the Ayah refers to the man who harms his wife by divorcing her and then taking her back, so that the `Iddah term is prolonged for her. Al-Hasan, Qatadah, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, Ar-Rabi` and Muqatil bin Hayyan said, "He is the man who divorces his wife and says, 'I was joking.' Or he frees a servant or gets married and says, 'I was only joking.' Allah revealed:

(وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوًا)

(And treat not the verses (Laws) of Allah in a jest,)

Then such men were made to bear the consequences of their actions.

Allah then said:

(وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(...but remember Allah's favors on you,) meaning, by His sending His Messenger with the right guidance and clear signs to you:

(وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ)

(...and that which He has sent down to you of the Book (i.e., the Qur'an) and Al-Hikmah) meaning the Sunnah,

(يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ)

(...whereby He instructs you.) meaning, commands you, forbids you and threatens you for transgressing His prohibitions. Allah said:

(وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ)

(And fear Allah) meaning, concerning what you perform and what you avoid,

(وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ)

(and know that Allah is All-Aware of everything.) none of your secret or public affairs ever escapes His knowledge, and He will treat you accordingly.

(وَإِذَا طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ إِذَا تَرَضَوْا بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ذَلِكَ يُوعَظُ بِهِ مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَمْ أَزْكَى لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا
تَعْلَمُونَ)

(232. And when you have divorced women and they have fulfilled the term of their prescribed period, do not prevent them from marrying their (former) husbands, if they mutually agree on reasonable basis. This (instruction) is an admonition for him among you who believes in Allah and the Last Day. That is more virtuous and purer for you. Allah knows and you know not.)

The Wali (Guardian) of the Divorced Woman should not prevent Her from going back to Her Husband

Ali bin Abu Talhah reported that Ibn ` Abbas said, "This Ayah was revealed about the man who divorces his wife once or twice and her `Iddah finishes. He later thinks about taking her back in marriage and the woman also wishes that, yet, her family prevents her from remarrying him. Hence, Allah prohibited her family from preventing her." Masruq, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Az-Zuhri and Ad-Dahhak stated that this is the reason behind revealing the Ayah (2:232). These statements clearly conform to the apparent meaning of the Ayah. **There is no Marriage without a Wali (for the Woman)**

The Ayah (2:232) also indicates that the woman is not permitted to give herself in marriage. Rather, she requires a Wali (guardian such as her father, brother, adult son, and so forth) to give her away in marriage, as Ibn Jarir and At-Tirmidhi have stated when they mentioned this Ayah. Also, a Hadith states that:

«لَا تُزَوِّجُ الْمَرْأَةَ الْمَرْأَةَ، وَلَا تُزَوِّجُ الْمَرْأَةَ
نَفْسَهَا، فَإِنَّ الزَّانِيَةَ هِيَ الَّتِي تُزَوِّجُ نَفْسَهَا»

(The woman does not give another woman away for marriage and the woman does not give herself away in marriage, for only the adulteress gives herself away for marriage.)

Another Hadith states:

«لَا نِكَاحَ إِلَّا بِوَلِيِّ مُرْشِدٍ وَشَاهِدَيْ عَدْلٍ»

(No marriage is valid except with the participation of a mature Wali and two trustworthy witnesses.)

The Reason behind revealing the Ayah (2:232)

It was reported that this Ayah was revealed about Ma`qil bin Yasar Al-Muzani and his sister. Al-Bukhari reported in his Sahih, when he mentioned the Tafsir of this Ayah (2:232), that the husband of the sister of Ma`qil bin Yasar divorced her. He waited until her `Iddah finished and then asked to remarry her, but Ma`qil refused. Then, this Ayah was sent down:

(فَلَا تَعْضَلُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ)

(...do not prevent them from marrying their (former) husbands.)

Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Abu Hatim, Ibn Jarir and Ibn Marduwyah and Al-Bayhaqi reported this Hadith from Al-Hasan from Ma`qil bin Yasar. At-Tirmidhi rendered this Hadith authentic and in his narration, Ma`qil bin Yasar gave his sister in marriage for a Muslim man during the time of Allah's Messenger . She remained with him for a while and he divorced her once and did not take her back until her `Iddah finished. They then wanted to get back with each other and he came to ask her for marriage. Ma`qil said to him, "O ungrateful one! I honored you and married her to you but you divorced her. By Allah! She will never be returned to you." But Allah knew his need for his wife and her need for her husband and He revealed:

(وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ)

(And when you have divorced women and they have fulfilled the term of their prescribed period,) until He said:

(وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(...and you know not.)

When Ma`qil heard the Ayah, he said, "I hear and obey my Lord." He then summoned the man and said, "I will honor you and let you remarry (my sister)." Ibn Marduwyah added (that Ma`qil said), "And will pay (the expiation) for breaking my vow."

Allah said:

ذَلِكَ يُوعَظُ بِهِ مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ)

(This (instruction) is an admonition for him among you who believes in Allah and the Last Day.) meaning, prohibiting you from preventing the women from marrying their ex-husbands, if they both agree to it,

(مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ)

(among you) O people,

(يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ)

(who believes in Allah and the Last Day.) meaning, believes in Allah's commandments and fears His warnings and the torment in the Hereafter. Allah said:

(ذَلِكَمُ أَزْكَى لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ)

(That is more virtuous and purer for you.) meaning, obeying Allah's Law by returning the women to their ex-husbands, and abandoning your displeasure, is purer and cleaner for your hearts,

(وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ)

(Allah knows) the benefits you gain from what He commands and what He forbids.

(وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(and you know not) the benefits in what you do or what you refrain from doing.

(وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنَّ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ
أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ
وَكَسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

لَا تُضَارَّ وِلْدَةٌ بِوَالِدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَّهُ بِوَالِدِهِ وَعَلَى
 الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ
 مِّنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ
 تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ
 مَا آتَيْتُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ
 بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ)

n(233. The mothers should suckle their children for two whole years, (that is) for those (parents) who desire to complete the term of suckling, but the father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother's food and clothing on a reasonable basis. No person shall have a burden laid on him greater than he can bear. No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child, nor father on account of his child. And on the (father's) heir is incumbent the like of that (which was incumbent on the father). If they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent, and after due consultation, there is no sin on them. And if you decide on a foster suckling-mother for your children, there is no sin on you, provided you pay (the mother) what you agreed (to give her) on a reasonable basis. And fear Allah and know that Allah is All-Seer of what you do.)

The Suckling Period is only Two Years

This is a direction from Allah to the mothers to suckle their infants through the complete term of suckling, which is two years. Hence, suckling after two years is not included in this address. Allah said:

(لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ)

(...who desire to complete the term of suckling.)

Therefore, the suckling that establishes Tahrim (prohibition, i.e., one cannot marry his mother or sister from suckling) is what occurs before the two years end. If the infant is suckled only after two years of age, then no Tahrim will be established. At-Tirmidhi under Chapter: `Suckling establishes Tahrim within the first two years,' reported that Umm Salamah narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«لَا يَحْرُمُ مِنَ الرَّضَاعِ إِلَّا مَا فَتَقَ الْأُمْعَاءَ فِي
 النَّذِيِّ وَكَانَ قَبْلَ الْفِطَامِ»

(Suckling establishes Tahrim if it is on the breast and before Fitam (before weaning, i.e., before the end of the first two years).)

At-Tirmidhi said, "This Hadith is Hasan Sahih. The majority of the people of knowledge among the Companions of Allah's Messenger and others acted upon this, that is that suckling establishes Tahrim (prohibition in marriage) before the end of the two years and that whatever occurs after that does not establish Tahrim". At-Tirmidhi is alone in recording this Hadith and the narrators in its chain meet the criteria of the Sahihayn. The Prophet's statement:

«إِلَّا مَا كَانَ فِي النَّدْيِ»

(On the breast) refers to the organ of suckling before the two years. Imam Ahmad reported a Hadith in which Al-Bara' bin `Azib narrated, "When Ibrahim, the Prophet's son, died, the Prophet said:

«إِنَّ ابْنِي مَاتَ فِي النَّدْيِ، إِنَّ لَهُ مُرْضِعًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ»

(My son has died on the breast and he has someone to suckle him in Paradise.)

Furthermore, Ad-Daraqutni related that Ibn `Abbas said that Allah's Messenger said:

«لَا يَحْرُمُ مِنَ الرَّضَاعِ إِلَّا مَا كَانَ فِي الْحَوْلَيْنِ»

(Suckling establishes Tahrim only within the (first) two years.)

Imam Malik reported this Hadith from Thawr bin Zayd who narrated that Ibn `Abbas related it to the Prophet . Ad-Darawardi reported this Hadith from Thawr who narrated it from `Ikrimah who narrated it from Ibn `Abbas. In this narration, which is more authentic, he added:

«وَمَا كَانَ بَعْدَ الْحَوْلَيْنِ فَلَيْسَ بِشَيْءٍ»

(Whatever occurs after the two years is not considered.)

Suckling beyond the Two Years

It is reported in the Sahih that `A'ishah thought that if a woman gives her milk to an older person (meaning beyond the age of two years) then this will establish Tahrim. This is also the opinion of `Ata' bin Abu Rabah and Layth bin Sa`d. Hence, `A'ishah thought that it is permissible to suckle the man whom the woman needs to be allowed in her house. She used as evidence the Hadith of Salim, the freed slave of Abu Hudhayfah, where the Prophet ordered Abu Hudhayfah's wife to give some of her milk to Salim, although he was a man, and ever since

then, he used to enter her house freely. However, the rest of the Prophet's wives did not agree with this opinion and thought that this was only a special case. This is also the opinion of the majority of the scholars.

Suckling for Monetary Compensation

Allah said:

وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ)

(...but the father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother's food and clothing on a reasonable basis.) meaning, the father of the baby is obliged to provide for the expenses of the mother and to buy her clothes, in reasonable amounts usually used by similar women in that area, without extravagance or stinginess. The father spends within his means in this case. Allah said in another Ayah:

(لِيُنْفِقَ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِّن سَعَتِهِ وَمَن قَدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُ
فَلْيُنْفِقْ مِمَّا آتَاهُ اللَّهُ لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَا
آتَاهَا سَيَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْرًا)

(Let the rich man spend according to his means; and the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what Allah has given him. Allah puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him. Allah will grant after hardship, ease.) (65:7)

Ad-Dahhak commented, "If the husband divorces his wife, with whom he had a child, and she suckles that child, he is required to provide for the mother's expenses and clothes within reason."

No Darar (Harm) or Dirar (Revenge)

Allah said:

(لَا تُضَارُّ وَوَالِدَةٌ يَوْلِدُهَا)

(No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child,) meaning, the mother should not decline to rear her child to harm its father. The mother does not have the right to refrain from suckling the child after giving birth, unless she suckles him/ her the milk that is necessary for

his/ her survival. Later on, she is allowed to give up custody of the child as long as she does not do that intending to harm the father. In addition, the father is not allowed to take the child from his mother to harm the mother. This is why Allah said:

(وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ يُولَدِهِ)

(...nor father on account of his child.) meaning, by taking the child from its mother intending to harm the mother. This is the Tafsir of Mujahid, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Az-Zuhri, As-Suddi, Ath-Thawri and Ibn Zayd, and others on this Ayah.

Allah then said:

(وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ)

(And on the (father's) heir is incumbent the like of that (which was incumbent on the father).) meaning, by refraining from harming the relative (of the father, i.e., his infant), as Mujahid, Ash-Sha'bi and Ad-Dahhak stated. It was also reported that (the Ayah requires) the inheritor (of the father) to spend on the mother of the child, just as the father was spending, and to preserve her rights and refrain from harming her, according to the Tafsir of the majority of the scholars. We should state that Ibn Jarir has explained this subject in detail in his Tafsir and that he also stated that suckling the child after the second year might harm the child's body and mind. Sufyan Ath-Thawri narrated that `Alqamah asked a woman who was suckling her child after the second year ended, not to do that.

Fitam (weaning) occurs by Mutual Consent

Allah said:

(فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا)

(If they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent, and after due consultation, there is no sin on them.)

This Ayah indicates that if the father and the mother decide on the Fitam (weaning) before the two years (of suckling) end, and for a benefit that they duly discuss and agree upon, then there is no sin in this case. So, the Ayah indicates that one parent is not allowed to make this kind of decision without duly consulting the other parent, as stated by Ath-Thawri. The method of mutual consultation protects the child's interests. It is also a mercy from Allah to His servants, for He has legislated the best method for parents to rear their children, and His legislation guides and directs the parents and the children to success. Similarly, Allah said in Surat At-Talaq (chapter 65 in the Qur'an):

فَإِنْ أَرْضَعْنَ لَكُمْ فَآوِهْنَ أَجُورَهُنَّ وَأْتَمِرُوا
بَيْنَكُمْ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَإِنْ تَعَاسَرْتُمْ فَسْتَزْعُ لَهُ
أُخْرَى

(Then if they give suck to the children for you, give them their due payment, and let each of you accept the advice of the other in a just way. But if you make difficulties for one another, then some other woman may give suck for him (the father of the child).) (65:6)

Allah then said:

وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ
عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

(And if you decide on a foster suckling-mother for your children, there is no sin on you, provided you pay (the mother) what you agreed (to give her) on a reasonable basis.) meaning, if the mother and the father both agree that the father assumes custody of the child due to a circumstance that compels her or allows him to do so, then there is no sin in this case. Hence, the mother is allowed to give up the child and the father is allowed to assume custody of the child. The father should kindly give the mother her expenses for the previous period (during which she reared and suckled the child), and he should seek other women to suckle his child for monetary compensation. Thereafter, Allah said:

(وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ)

(And fear Allah) meaning, in all of your affairs,

(وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ)

(And know that Allah is All-Seer of what you do.) meaning, none of your affairs or speech escapes His perfect Watch.

(وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَقَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ
بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ

فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيْمَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ)

(234. And those of you who die and leave wives behind them, they (the wives) shall wait (as regards their marriage) for four months and ten days, then when they have fulfilled their term, there is no sin on you if they (the wives) dispose of themselves in a (just and) honorable manner (i.e., they can marry). And Allah is well-acquainted with what you do.)

The `Iddah (Waiting Period) of the Widow

This Ayah contains a command from Allah to the wives whose husbands die, that they should observe a period of `Iddah of four months and ten nights, including the cases where the marriage was consummated or otherwise, according to the consensus (of the scholars).

The proof that this ruling includes the case where the marriage was not consummated is included in the general meaning of the Ayah. In a narration recorded by Imam Ahmad and the compilers of the Sunan, which At-Tirmidhi graded Sahih, Ibn Mas`ud was asked about a man who married a woman, but he died before consummating the marriage. He also did not appoint a Mahr (dowry) for her. They kept asking Ibn Mas`ud about this subject until he said, "I shall give you my own opinion, and if it is correct then it is from Allah, while if it is wrong it is because of my error and because of (the evil efforts of) Satan. In this case, Allah and His Messenger are innocent of my opinion. She has her full Mahr." In another narration, Ibn Mas`ud said, "She has a similar Mahr to that of the women of her status, without stinginess or extravagance." He then continued, "She has to spend the `Iddah and has a right to the inheritance." Ma`qil bin Yasar Ashja`i then stood up and said, "I heard Allah's Messenger issue a similar judgment for the benefit of Barwa` bint Washiq." `Abdullah bin Mas`ud became very delighted upon hearing this statement. In another narration, several men from Ashja` (tribe) stood up and said, "We testify that Allah's Messenger issued a similar ruling for the benefit of Barwa` bint Washiq."

As for the case of the widow whose husband dies while she is pregnant, her term of `Iddah ends when she gives birth, even if it occurs an instant (after her husband dies). This ruling is taken from Allah's statement :

(وَأُولَاتُ الْأَحْمَالِ أَجَلُهُنَّ أَنْ يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ)

(And for those who are pregnant, their `Iddah is until they lay down their burden.) (65:4)

There is also a Hadith from Subay`ah Al-Aslamiyah in the Two Sahihs, through various chains of narration. Her husband, Sa`d bin Khawlah, died while she was pregnant and she gave birth only a few nights after his death. When she finished her Nifas (postnatal period), she beautified herself for those who might seek to engage her (for marriage). Then, Abu Sanabil bin Ba`kak came to her and said, "Why do I see you beautified yourself, do you wish to marry By Allah! You will not marry until the four months and ten nights have passed." Subay`ah said, "When he said that to me, I collected my garments when night fell and went to Allah's Messenger and asked him about this matter. He said that my `Iddah had finished when I gave birth and allowed me to get married if I wished."

The Wisdom behind legislating the `Iddah

Sa`id bin Musayyib and Abu Al-`Aliyah stated that the wisdom behind making the `Iddah of the widow four months and ten nights is that the womb might contain a fetus. When the woman waits for this period, it will become evident if she is pregnant. Similarly, there is a Hadith in the Two Sahih's narrated by Ibn Mas'ud stating:

«إِنَّ خَلْقَ أَحَدِكُمْ يُجْمَعُ فِي بَطْنِ أُمِّهِ أَرْبَعِينَ
يَوْمًا نُطْفَةً، ثُمَّ يَكُونُ عَلَقَةً مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ، ثُمَّ يَكُونُ
مُضْغَةً مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ، ثُمَّ يُبْعَثُ إِلَيْهِ الْمَلَكُ فَيَنْفُخُ فِيهِ
الرُّوحَ»

((The creation of) a human being is put together in the womb of his mother in forty days in the form of a seed, and next he becomes a clot of thick blood for a similar period, and next a morsel of flesh for a similar period. Then, Allah sends an angel who is ordered to breathe life into the fetus.)

So, these are four months and ten more days to be sure, as some months are less (than thirty days), and the fetus will then start to show signs of life after the soul has been breathed into it. Allah knows best.

The `Iddah of the Slave Mother whose Master dies

We should state here that the `Iddah of the slave mother is the same in the case of death, as the `Iddah of the free woman. Imam Ahmad reported that `Amr bin Al-`As said, "Do not confuse the Sunnah of our Prophet for us. The `Iddah of the mother, who is also a servant, when her master dies, is four months and ten nights."

Mourning is required during the `Iddah of Death

Allah said:

(فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيْمَا فَعَلْنَ فِي
أَنْفُسِهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ)

(...then when they have fulfilled their term, there is no sin on you if they (the wives) dispose of themselves in a (just and) honorable manner (i.e., they can marry). And Allah is well-acquainted with what you do.)

This Ayah indicates that mourning for the dead husband is required until the `Iddah is finished. It is also reported in the Two Sahihs that Umm Habibah and Zaynab bint Jahsh narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«لَا يَحِلُّ لِامْرَأَةٍ تُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أَنْ تُحِدَّ عَلَى مَيِّتٍ فَوْقَ ثَلَاثٍ، إِلَّا عَلَى زَوْجِ أَرْبَعَةٍ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا»

(It is not lawful for a woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day to mourn for more than three days for any dead person except her husband, for whom she mourns for four months and ten days.)

It is reported in the Two Sahihs that Umm Salamah said that a woman said, "O Messenger of Allah! My daughter's husband died and she is complaining about her eye, should we administer kohl in her eye" He said, "No," several times upon repeating this question. He then said:

«إِنَّمَا هِيَ أَرْبَعَةٌ أَشْهُرٌ وَعَشْرٌ، وَقَدْ كَانَتْ إِحْدَاكُنَّ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ تَمْكُتُ سَنَةً»

(It is four months and ten (nights)! During the Jahiliyyah, one of you would mourn for an entire year.)

Zaynab the daughter of Umm Salamah said (about the pre-Islamic era of ignorance), "When the woman's husband died, she would go into seclusion and would wear the worst clothes she has. She would refrain from wearing perfume or any adornments until a year passed. She would then come out of seclusion and would be given dung that she would throw. Then an animal would be brought out, a donkey, a sheep, or a bird. Then some blood would be drained from it, usually resulting in its death."

In short, the mourning required from a wife whose husband dies, includes not using beautification aids, such as wearing perfume and the clothes and jewelry that encourage the men to seek marriage from the woman. All widows must observe this period of mourning whether they are young, old, free, servant, Muslim or disbeliever, as the general meaning of the Ayah indicates.

Allah also said:

(فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ)

(...then when they have fulfilled their term) meaning, when the `Iddah finishes, according to Ad-Dahhak and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas.

(فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(there is no sin on you) Az-Zuhri said, "Meaning her Wali (guardian)."

(فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ)

(if they (the wives) dispose) meaning, the women whose `Iddah has finished. Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said, "If the woman is divorced or if her husband dies and then her `Iddah term ends, there is no sin that she beautifies herself, so that she becomes ready for marriage proposals. This is the way `that is just and honorable'." It was reported that Muqatil bin Hayyan gave the same explanation. Ibn Jurayj related that Mujahid said:

(فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ)

(...there is no sin on you if they (the wives) dispose of themselves in a just and honorable manner.) "refers to allowed and pure (honorable) marriage." It was also reported that Al-Hasan, Az-Zuhri and As-Suddi said the same.

(وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا عَرَضْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ
النِّسَاءِ أَوْ أَكْنَنْتُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ
سَتَذَكَّرُونَ هُنَّ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُؤَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا إِلَّا أَنْ
تَقُولُوا قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا وَلَا تَعْزَمُوا عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ
حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجَلَهُ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا

فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ
(

(235. And there is no sin on you if you make a hint of betrothal or conceal it in yourself, Allah knows that you will remember them, but do not make a promise (of contract) with them in secret except that you speak an honorable saying. And do not be determined on the marriage bond until the term prescribed is fulfilled. And know that Allah knows what is in your minds, so fear Him. And know that Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing.)

Mentioning Marriage indirectly during the `Iddah

Allah said:

(وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(And there is no sin on you) meaning, to indirectly mention marriage to the widow during the term of `Iddah for her deceased husband. Ath-Thawri, Shu`bah and Jarir stated that Ibn `Abbas said:

(وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا عَرَّضْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ
النِّسَاءِ)

(And there is no sin on you if you make a hint of betrothal) "means saying, 'I want to marry and I am looking for a woman whose qualities are such and such,' thus talking to her in general terms in a way that is better." In another narration (by Ibn `Abbas), "Saying, 'I wish that Allah endows me with a wife,' but he should not make a direct marriage proposal." Al-Bukhari reported that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah:

(وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا عَرَّضْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ
النِّسَاءِ)

(And there is no sin on you if you make a hint of betrothal) means, "The man could say, 'I wish to marry,' 'I desire a wife,' or, 'I wish I could find a good wife.'" Mujahid, Tawus, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Ash-Sha`bi, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Az-Zuhri, Yazid bin Qusayt, Muqatil bin Hayyan and Al-Qasim bin Muhammad and several others among the Salaf and the Imams said that one is allowed to mention marriage indirectly to the woman whose husband died. It is also allowed to indirectly mention marriage to a woman who had gone through final, irrevocable divorce. The Prophet ordered Fatimah bint Qays to remain in the

house of Ibn Umm Maktum for `Iddah when her husband Abu `Amr bin Hafs divorced her for the third time. He said to her:

«فَإِذَا حَلَّتِ فَآذِنِي»

(Inform me when your `Iddah term ends.)

When she finished the `Iddah, Usamah bin Zayd, the Prophet's freed slave asked to marry her, and the Prophet married her to him. As for the divorced wife (not irrevocably divorced), there is no disagreement that it is not allowed for other than her husband to mention marriage proposals to her directly or indirectly (before the `Iddah finishes). Allah knows best.

Allah said:

(أَوْ أَكْنَنْتُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ)

(...or conceal it in yourself,) meaning, if you hide the intention of seeking marriage with them. Similarly, Allah said:

(وَرَبُّكَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ)

(And your Lord knows what their breasts conceal, and what they reveal) (28:69) and:

(وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ بِمَا أَخْفَيْتُمْ وَمَا أَعْلَنْتُمْ)

(...while I am All-Aware of what you conceal and what you reveal.) (60: 1) So, Allah said here:

(عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ سَتَذْكُرُونَهُنَّ)

(Allah knows that you will remember them) meaning, in your hearts, so He made it easy for you. Allah then said:

(وَلَكِنْ لَا تُوَاْعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا)

(...but do not make a promise (of contract) with them in secret)

`Ali bin Abu Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said that

(وَلَكِنْ لَا تُوَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا)

(but do not make a promise (of contract) with them in secret) means do not say to her, "I am in love (with you)," or, "Promise me you will not marry someone else (after the `Iddah finishes)," and so forth. Sa`id bin Jubayr, Ash-Sha`bi, `Ikrimah, Abu Ad-Duha, Ad-Dahhak, Az-Zuhri, Mujahid and Ath-Thawri said that it (meaning of the Ayah) means taking the woman's promise not to marry someone else.

Afterwards, Allah said:

(إِلَّا أَنْ تَقُولُوا قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا)

(...except that you speak an honorable saying.)

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, As-Suddi, Ath-Thawri and Ibn Zayd said that the Ayah means to indirectly refer to marriage, such as saying, "I desire someone like you." Muhammad bin Srin said: I asked `Ubaydah about the meaning of Allah's statement:

(إِلَّا أَنْ تَقُولُوا قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا)

(...except that you speak an honorable saying.) He said, "He says to her Wali, `Do not give her away (in marriage) until you inform me first.'" This statement was narrated by Ibn Abu Hatim.

Allah then said:

(وَلَا تَعْزِمُوا عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجَلَهُ)

(And do not be determined on the marriage bond until the term prescribed is fulfilled.) meaning, do not make marriage contracts before the `Iddah finishes. Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Ash-Sha`bi, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Abu Malik, Zayd bin Aslam, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Az-Zuhri, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, As-Suddi, Ath-Thawri and Ad-Dahhak said that:

(حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجَلَهُ)

(until the term prescribed is fulfilled.) means, `Do not consummate the marriage before the `Iddah term finishes.' The scholars agree that marriage contracts during the `Iddah are invalid.

Allah then said:

(وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُ)

(And know that Allah knows what is in your minds, so fear Him.) warning the men against the ideas they conceal in their hearts about women, directing them to think good about them rather than the evil, and Allah would not let them despair of His mercy, as He said:

(وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ)

(And know that Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing.)

(لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ
أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً وَمَتَّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى الْمَوْسِعِ
قَدْرُهُ وَعَلَى الْمَقْتَرِ قَدْرُهُ مَتَّعًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا
عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ)

(236. There is no sin on you, if you divorce women while yet you have not touched them, nor appointed for them their due (dowry). But give them a Mut`ah (a suitable gift, the rich according to his means, and the poor according to his means, a gift of reasonable amount is a duty on the doers of good.)

Divorce before consummating the Marriage

Allah allowed divorce after the marriage contract and before consummating the marriage. Ibn `Abbas, Tawus, Ibrahim and Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that `touched' (mentioned in the Ayah) means sexual intercourse. The husband is allowed to divorce his wife before consummating the marriage or giving the dowry if it was deferred.

The Mut` ah (Gift) at the time of Divorce

Allah commands the husband to give the wife (whom he divorces before consummating the marriage) a gift of a reasonable amount, the rich according to his means and the poor according to his means, to compensate her for her loss. Al-Bukhari reported in his Sahih that Sahl bin Sa`d and Abu Usayd said that Allah's Messenger married Umaymah bint Sharahil. When she was brought to the Prophet he extended his hand to her, but she did not like that. The Prophet then ordered Abu Usayd to provide provisions for her along with a gift of two garments.

وَإِنْ طَلَقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمَسُوهُنَّ وَقَدْ
 فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ
 يَعْفُونَ أَوْ يَعْفُوا الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ عُقْدَةُ النِّكَاحِ وَأَنْ
 تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى وَلَا تَنْسُوا الْفَضْلَ
 بَيْنَكُمْ (raster=)p,%30"Rrgjim=)ت ج ح
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(237. And if you divorce them before you have touched (had a sexual relation with) them, and you have appointed for them their due (dowry), then pay half of that, unless they (the women) agree to remit it, or he (the husband), in whose hands is the marriage tie, agrees to remit it. And to remit is nearer to At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness). And do not forget liberality between yourselves. Truly, Allah is All-Seer of what you do.)

The Wife gets half of Her Mahr if She is divorced before the Marriage is consummated

This honorable Ayah is not a continuation of the Mut`ah (gift) that was mentioned in the previous Ayah (i.e., divorce before the marriage is consummated). This Ayah (2:237) requires the husband to relinquish half of the appointed Mahr if he divorces his wife before the marriage is consummated. If it was discussing any other type of gift, then it would have been mentioned that way, especially when this Ayah follows the previous Ayah related to this subject. Allah knows best. Giving away half of the bridal-money in this case is the agreed practice according to the scholars. So, the husband pays half of the appointed Mahr if he divorces his wife before consummating the marriage.

Allah then said:

(إِلَّا أَنْ يَعْفُونَ)

(unless they (the women) agree to remit it,) meaning, the wife forfeits the dowry and relieves the husband from further financial responsibility. As-Suddi said that Abu Salih mentioned that Ibn `Abbas commented on Allah's statement:

(إِلَّا أَنْ يَعْفُونَ)

(unless they (the women) agree to remit it,) "Unless the wife forfeits her right."Furthermore, Imam Abu Muhammad bin Abu Hatim said that it was reported that Shurayh, Sa'id bin

Musayyib, `Ikrimah, Mujahid, Ash-Sha`bi, Al-Hasan, Nafi`, Qatadah, Jabir bin Zayd, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, Ad-Dahhak, Az-Zuhri, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Ibn Srin, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and As-Suddi said similarly.

Allah then said:

(أَوْ يَعْفُوا الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ عُقْدَةُ النِّكَاحِ)

(...or he (the husband), in whose hands is the marriage tie, agrees to remit it.)

Ibn Abu Hatim reported that `Amr bin Shu`ayb said that his grandfather narrated that the Prophet said:

«وَالِيُّ عُقْدَةِ النِّكَاحِ الزَّوْجُ»

(The husband is he who has the marriage tie.)

Ibn Marduwyah also reported this Hadith, and it is the view chosen by Ibn Jarir. The Hadith states that the husband is the person who really holds the marriage tie in his hand, as it is up to him to go on with the marriage or end it. On the other hand, the Wali of the wife is not allowed to give away any of her rightful dues without her permission, especially the dowry.

Allah then stated:

(وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى)

(And to remit it is nearer to At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness).)

Ibn Jarir said, "Some scholars said that this statement is directed at both men and women." Ibn `Abbas said:

(وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى)

(And to remit it is nearer to At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness).) indicates that the one who forgives, is nearer to At-Taqwa (piety)." A similar statement was made by Ash-Sha`bi and several other scholars.

Mujahid, An-Nakha`i, Ad-Dahhak, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Thawri stated that `liberality' mentioned in the Ayah refers to the woman giving away her half Mahr, or the man giving away the full Mahr. This is why Allah said here:

(وَلَا تَنْسَوُا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ)

(And do not forget liberality between yourselves.) meaning, kindness (or generosity), as Sa`id has stated. Allah said:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ﴾

(Truly, Allah is All-Seer of what you do.) meaning, none of your affairs ever escapes His perfect Watch, and He will reward each according to his deeds.

﴿حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ
وَقَوْمُوا لِلَّهِ قَنِينًا﴾

﴿فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرَجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَأَذْكُرُوا
اللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُمْ مَا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

(238. Guard strictly (five obligatory) As-Salawat (the prayers) especially the Middle Salah. And stand before Allah with obedience.) (239. And if you fear (an enemy), (perform Salah) on foot or riding. And when you are in safety, then remember Allah (pray) in the manner He has taught you, which you knew not (before).)

Allah commands that the prayer should be performed properly and on time. It is reported in the Two Sahihs that Ibn Mas`ud said, "I asked the Prophet , `Which deed is the dearest (to Allah)' He replied:

﴿الصَّلَاةُ عَلَى وَقْتِهَا﴾

(To offer the prayers at their fixed times.) I asked, `What is the next (in goodness)' He replied:

﴿الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ﴾

(To participate in Jihad (religious fighting) in Allah's cause.)" I again asked, `What is the next (in goodness)' He replied:

﴿بِرُّ الْوَالِدَيْنِ﴾

(To be good and dutiful to your parents.) `Abdullah then added, "The Prophet told me these words, and had I asked more, the Prophet would have told me more."

The Middle Prayer

Furthermore, Allah has specifically mentioned the Middle prayer, which is the `Asr prayer according to the majority of the scholars among the Companions, as At-Tirmidhi and Al-Baghawi have stated. Al-Qadi Al-Mawardi added that the majority of the scholars of the Tabi`in also held this view. Al-Hafiz Abu `Umar bin `Abdul-Barr said that this is also the opinion of the majority of the scholars of the Athar (i.e., the Hadith and the statements of the Salaf). In addition, Abu Muhammad bin `Atiyah said that this is the Tafsir (of the Middle prayer) of the majority of scholars. Al-Hafiz Abu Muhammad `Abdul-Mu`min bin Khalaf Ad-Dumyati stated in his book on the Middle prayer that it is the `Asr prayer and mentioned that this is the Tafsir of `Umar, `Ali, Ibn Mas`ud, Abu Ayyub, `Abdullah bin `Amr, Samurah bin Jundub, Abu Hurayrah, Abu Sa`id, Hafsa, Umm Habibah, Umm Salamah, Ibn `Abbas and `A`ishah. This is also the Tafsir of `Ubaydah, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Razin, Zirr bin Hubaysh, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Ibn Srin, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Al-Kalbi, Muqatil, `Ubayd bin Abu Maryam, and others.

The Proof that the `Asr Prayer is the Middle Prayer

Imam Ahmad reported that `Ali narrated that Allah's Messenger said during the battle of Al-Ahzab (the Confederates):

«شَغَلُونَا عَنِ الصَّلَاةِ الْوَسْطَى، صَلَاةِ الْعَصْرِ،
مَلَأَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ وَبُيُوتَهُمْ نَارًا»

(They (the disbelievers) busied us from performing the Middle prayer, the `Ar prayer, may Allah fill their hearts and houses with fire.)

He performed the `Asr prayer between Maghrib and `Isha'. Muslim and An-Nasa'i recorded this Hadith. In addition, the Two Shaykhs, Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi An-Nasa'i and several other collectors of the Sunan recorded this Hadith using different chains of narrators to `Ali. The Hadith about the battle of Al-Ahzab, when the Mushriks prevented Allah's Messenger and his Companions from performing the `Asr prayer, has been narrated by several other Companions. We only mentioned the narrations that stated that the Middle prayer is the `Asr prayer. Furthermore, Muslim reported similar wordings for this Hadith from Ibn Mas`ud and Al-Bara' bin `Azib.

In addition, Imam Ahmad reported that Samurah bin Jundub said that Allah's Messenger said:

«صَلَاةُ الْوَسْطَى صَلَاةُ الْعَصْرِ»

(The Middle prayer is the `Asr prayer.)

In another narration, Allah's Messenger mentioned:

(حَفِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى)

(Guard strictly (five obligatory) As-Salawat (the prayers) especially the Middle Salah) and stated that it is the `Asr prayer. In another narration, Allah's Messenger said:

«هِيَ الْعَصْرُ»

(It is the `Asr prayer.) and Ibn Ja`far mentioned that the Prophet was then being asked about the Middle prayer. At-Tirmidhi reported this Hadith and said, "Hasan, Sahih." In addition, Abu Hatim bin Hibban reported in his Sahih that `Abdullah said that Allah's Messenger said:

«صَلَاةُ الْوُسْطَى صَلَاةُ الْعَصْرِ»

(The Middle prayer is the `Asr prayer.)

At-Tirmidhi reported that Ibn Mas`ud narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«صَلَاةُ الْوُسْطَى صَلَاةُ الْعَصْرِ»

(The `Asr prayer is the Middle prayer.)

At-Tirmidhi then stated that this Hadith is of a Hasan, Sahih type. Muslim reported the Hadith in his Sahih and his wordings are:

«شَغَلُونَا عَنِ الصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى صَلَاةِ الْعَصْرِ»

(They (disbelievers) busied us from performing the Middle prayer, the `Asr prayer.)

These texts emphasize the fact (that the `Asr prayer is the Middle prayer). What further proves this fact is that, in an authentic Hadith, Allah's Messenger emphasized the necessity of preserving the `Asr prayer, when he said, as Ibn `Umar narrated:

«مَنْ قَاتَهُ صَلَاةُ الْعَصْرِ فَكَأَنَّمَا وُتِرَ أَهْلُهُ
وَمَالُهُ»

(Whoever misses the `Asr prayer will be like who has lost his family and money.)

It is reported in the Sahih that Buraydah bin Al-Husayb said that the Prophet said:

«بَكَّرُوا بِالصَّلَاةِ فِي يَوْمِ الْغَيْمِ، فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ تَرَكَ
صَلَاةَ الْعَصْرِ، فَقَدْ حَبَطَ عَمَلُهُ»

(On a cloudy day, perform the (ʿAsr) prayer early, for whoever misses the ʿAsr prayer, will have his (good) deeds annulled.)

The Prohibition of speaking during the Prayer

Allah said:

(وَقَوْمُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ)

(And stand before Allah with obedience.) meaning, with humbleness and humility before Him (i.e., during the prayer). This command indicates that it is not allowed to speak during the prayer, as speaking contradicts the nature of the prayer. This is why the Prophet refused to answer Ibn Masʿud when he greeted him while he was praying and said afterwards:

«إِنَّ فِي الصَّلَاةِ لَشُغْلًا»

(The prayer makes one sufficiently busy.) (i.e., by the various actions of the body, tongue and heart involved during the prayer.)

Muslim reported that the Prophet said to Muʿawiyah bin Hakam As-Sulami when he spoke during the prayer:

«إِنَّ هَذِهِ الصَّلَاةَ لَا يَصْلِحُ فِيهَا شَيْءٌ مِنْ كَلَامِ
النَّاسِ، إِنَّمَا هِيَ التَّسْبِيحُ وَالتَّكْبِيرُ وَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ»

(The ordinary speech people indulge in is not appropriate during the prayer. The prayer involves only Tasbih (praising Allah), Takbir (saying Allahu Akbar, i.e., Allah is the Most Great) and remembering Allah.)

Imam Ahmad reported that Zayd bin Arqam said, "One used to address his friend about various affairs during the prayer. Then when this Ayah was revealed:

(وَقَوْمُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ)

(And stand before Allah with obedience.) we were ordered to refrain from speaking." The Group (i. e., the Hadith collections), except Ibn Majah, reported this Hadith.

The Fear Prayer

Allah said:

(فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرَجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَأَذْكُرُوا
اللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُمْ مَا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(And if you fear (an enemy), (perform Salah) on foot or riding. And when you are in safety, then remember Allah (pray) in the manner He has taught you, which you knew not (before).)

After Allah commanded His servants to perform the prayer perfectly and emphasized this commandment, He mentioned the situation where the person might not be able to perform the prayer perfectly, during battle and combat. Allah said:

(فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرَجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا)

(And if you fear (an enemy), perform Salah on foot or riding.) meaning, pray in the appropriate manner under these circumstances, whether on foot or riding and whether facing the Qiblah or otherwise. Imam Malik reported that Nafi` related that Ibn `Umar used to describe the Fear prayer when he was asked about it and would then add, "If there is intense fear, pray on foot, riding, facing the Qiblah and otherwise." Nafi` commented, "I think that he related that to the Prophet ." Al-Bukhari and Muslim reported the Hadith.

Muslim, Abu Dawud, An-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah and Ibn Jarir reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "Allah has ordained the prayer by the words of your Prophet : four (Rak` ah) while residing, two Rak` ah while traveling and one Rak` ah during times of fear." This is also the view of Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, and others.

In addition, Al-Bukhari has entitled a Chapter: `Prayer while confronting the Forts and facing the Enemy'. Al-Awza`i said, "If the victory seems near and the Muslims are unable to perform the prayer (in the normal manner), they should pray by nodding each by himself. If they are unable to nod, they should delay the prayer until fighting is finished. When they feel safe, they should pray two Rak` ah. If they are unable, they should then pray one Rak` ah that includes two prostrations. If they are unable, then Takbir alone does not suffice, so they should delay the prayer until they are safe." This is the same view that Makhul held. Anas bin Malik said, "I participated in the attack on the fort of Tastar, when the light of dawn started to become clear. Suddenly, the fighting raged and the Muslims were unable to pray until the light of day spread. We then prayed (the Dawn prayer) with Abu Musa and we became victorious. I would not have been pleased if I were to gain in the life of this world and whatever is in it instead of that prayer." This is the wording of Al-Bukhari.

Prayer during the Times of Peace is performed normally

Allah said:

(فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَأذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ)

(And when you are in safety, then remember Allah (pray)) meaning, `Perform the prayer as I have commanded you by completing its bowing, prostration, standing, sitting, and with the required attention (in the heart) and supplication.' Allah said:

(كَمَا عَلَّمَكُمْ مَا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(in the manner He has taught you, which you knew not (before).) meaning, just as He has endowed you, guided you and taught you about what benefits you in this life and the Hereafter, so thank and remember Him. Similarly, Allah said after He mentioned the prayer of Fear,

(فَإِذَا اطْمَأَنَّكُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْقُوتًا)

(...but when you are free from danger, perform As-Salah. Verily, As-Salah (the prayer) is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours.) (4:103)

We will mention the Hadiths about the prayer of Fear and its description in Surat An-Nisa' while mentioning Allah's statement:

(وَإِذَا كُنْتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقِمْ لَهُمُ الصَّلَاةَ)

(When you (O Messenger Muhammad) are among them, and lead them in As-Salah (the prayer).) (4:102)

(وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَقَّؤْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَتَّعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَا فِي أَنْفُسِنَا مِنْ مَّعْرُوفٍ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ - وَلِلْمُطَلَّاتِ

مَتَّعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ - كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ
اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ)

(240. And those of you who die and leave behind wives should bequeath for their wives a year's maintenance (and residence) without turning them out, but if they (wives) leave, there is no sin on you for that which they do of themselves, provided it is honorable (e.g., lawful marriage). And Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.) (241. And for divorced women, maintenance (should be provided) on reasonable (scale). This is a duty on Al-Muttaqin (the pious).) (242. Thus Allah makes clear His Ayat (Laws) to you, in order that you may understand.)

Ayah (2:240) was abrogated

The majority of the scholars said that this Ayah (2:240) was abrogated by the Ayah (2:234), what Allah said:

(يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا)

(...they (the wives) shall wait (as regards their marriage) for four months and ten days.) (2:234)

For instance, Al-Bukhari reported that Ibn Az-Zubayr said: I said to `Uthman bin `Affan:

(وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا)

(And those of you who die and leave wives behind them) was abrogated by the other Ayah (2:234). Therefore, why did you collect it (meaning, in the Qur'an)" He said, "O my nephew! I shall not change any part of the Qur'an from its place."

The question that Ibn Az-Zubayr asked `Uthman means: `If the ruling of the Ayah (2:240) was abrogated to four months (the `Iddah of the widow, and refer to 2:234), then what is the wisdom behind including it in the Qur'an, although its ruling has been abrogated If the Ayah (2:240) remains (in the Qur'an) after the Ayah that abrogated it (2:234), this might imply that its ruling is still valid.' `Uthman, the Leader of the faithful, answered him by stating that this is a matter of the revelation, which mentioned these Ayat in this order. `Therefore, I shall leave the Ayah where I found it in the Qur'an.'

Ibn Abu Hatim reported that Ibn `Abbas said about what Allah said:

(وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَقَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً
لأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَتَّعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ)

(And those of you who die and leave behind wives should bequeath for their wives a year's maintenance (and residence) without turning them out,) "The widow used to reside, and have her provisions provided for her for a year, in her deceased husband's house. Later, the Ayah that specified the inheritance (4:12) abrogated this Ayah (2:240), and thus the widow inherits one-fourth or one-eighth of what her (deceased) husband leaves behind."

Ibn Abu Hatim also related that `Ali bin Abu Talhah stated that Ibn `Abbas said, "When a man died and left behind a widow, she used to remain in his house for a year for her `Iddah, all the while receiving her provisions during this time. Thereafter, Allah revealed this Ayah:

(وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَقَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ
بأنفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا)

(And those of you who die and leave wives behind them, they (the wives) shall wait (as regards their marriage) for four months and ten days.) (2:234)

So, this is the `Iddah of the widow, unless she was pregnant, for her `Iddah then ends when she gives birth. Allah also said:

(وَلَهُنَّ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَتُمْ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ
كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ الثُّمُنُ مِمَّا تَرَكَتُمْ)

(In that which you leave, their (your wives') share is a fourth if you leave no child; but if you leave a child, they get an eighth of that which you leave.) (4:12)

So Allah specified the share of the widow in the inheritance and there was no need for the will or the Nafaqah (maintenance) which were mentioned in (2:240)."

Ibn Abu Hatim stated that Mujahid, Al-Hasan, `Ikrimah, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi` and Muqatil bin Hayyan said that the Ayah (2:240) was abrogated by:

(أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا)

(four months and ten days.) (2:234)

Al-Bukhari reported that Mujahid said that:

(وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَقَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا)

(And those of you who die and leave wives behind them) (2:234) used to be the `Iddah, and the widow had to remain with her (deceased) husband's family (during that period, i.e., four months and ten days). Then, Allah revealed:

(وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَقَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً
لأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَتَّعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ فَإِنْ
خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ
مِنْ مَعْرُوفٍ)

(And those of you who die and leave behind wives should bequeath for their wives a year's maintenance (and residence) without turning them out, but if they (wives) leave, there is no sin on you for that which they do of themselves, provided it is honorable (e.g., lawful marriage).)

So, Allah made the rest of the year, which is seven months and twenty days, as a will and testament for her. Consequently, if she wants, she could use her right in this will and remain in the residence (for the rest of the year). Or, if she wants, she could leave the (deceased husband's) house after the four months and ten days have passed. This is the meaning of what Allah said:

(غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(...without turning them out, but if they (wives) leave, there is no sin on you.)

Therefore, the required term of `Iddah is still unchanged (refer to 2:234).

`Ata' quoted Ibn `Abbas, "This Ayah (2:240) has abrogated (the requirement that) the widow spends the `Iddah with his (i.e., her deceased husband's) family. So, she spends her `Iddah wherever she wants. This is the meaning of what Allah said:

(غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ)

(without turning them out,)."

`Ata' also said: "If she wants, she spends the `Iddah with his family and resides there according to the will (meaning the rest of the year). If she wants, she is allowed to leave, for Allah said:

(فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا فَعَلْنَ)

(there is no sin on you for that which they do of themselves)."

`Ata' then said: "Then (the Ayah on) the inheritance (refer to 4:12) came and abrogated the residence. Hence, the widow spends her `Iddah wherever she wants and does not have the right to residence any more."

The statement of `Ata' and those who held the view that the Ayah (2:240) was abrogated by the Ayah on the inheritance (4: 12), is only valid for more than the four months and ten days (required in 2:234). However, if they mean that the four months and ten days are not required from the deceased husband's estate, then this opinion is the subject of disagreement among the scholars. As proof, they said that the widow is required to remain in her (deceased) husband's house (for four months and ten days) according to what Malik reported from Zaynab bint Ka`b bin `Ujrah. She said that Fari`ah bint Malik bin Snan, the sister of Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri, told her that she came to Allah's Messenger asking him to return to her family's residence with Banu Khudrah. Her husband had pursued some of his servants who ran away, but when he reached the area of Al-Qadum, they killed him. She said, "So I asked Allah's Messenger if I should stay with my family in Banu Khudrah, for my (deceased) husband did not leave me a residence that he owns or Nafaqah (maintenance). Allah's Messenger answered in the positive. While I was in the room, Allah's Messenger summoned me or had someone summon me and said:

«كَيْفَ قُلْتَ»

(What did you say) I repeated the story to him about my (deceased) husband. He said:

«امْكُتِي فِي بَيْتِكَ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجْلَهُ»

(Stay at your home until the term reaches its end.) So I remained through the `Iddah term for four months and ten days in my (deceased husband's) house. Thereafter, `Uthman bin `Affan sent for me during his reign and asked me about this matter and I told him what happened. He made a judgment to the same effect." This Hadith was also collected by Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah. At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih".

The Necessity of the Mut`ah (Gift) at the Time of Divorce

Allah said:

(وَالْمُطَلَّاتِ مَتْعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ)

(And for divorced women, maintenance (should be provided) on reasonable (scale). This is a duty on Al-Muttaqin (the pious).)

`Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said that when Allah's statement:

(مَتَّعًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ)

(...a gift of reasonable amount is a duty on the doers of good) (2:236) was revealed, a man said, "If I want, I will be excellent and if I do not, I will not." Thereafter, Allah revealed this Ayah:

(وَالْمُطَلَّاتِ مَتَّعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ)

(And for divorced women, maintenance (should be provided) on reasonable (scale). This is a duty on Al-Muttaqin (the pious).)

The scholars who ruled that the Mut`ah (reasonable gift) at the time of divorce is required for every divorced woman, whether she had a bridal-money appointed for her or not, and whether the marriage was consummated or not, relied on this Ayah (2:241) when they issued their ruling. This is the view taken on this subject by Sa`id bin Jubayr and several others among the Salaf and also Ibn Jarir. Hence, Allah's statement:

(لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ
أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً وَمَتَّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى الْمَوْسِعِ
قَدْرُهُ وَعَلَى الْمُقْتِرِ قَدْرُهُ مَتَّعًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا
عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ)

(There is no sin on you, if you divorce women while yet you have not touched (had sexual relation with) them, nor appointed for them their due (dowry). But bestow on them (a suitable gift), the rich according to his means, and the poor according to his means, a gift of reasonable amount is a duty on the doers of good.) (2:236) only mentions some specifics of this general ruling.

Allah then said:

(كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لِيُتَّقِيَ)

(Thus Allah makes clear His Ayat (Laws) to you,) meaning, what He allows, forbids, requires, His set limits, His commandments and His prohibitions are all explained and made plain and clear for you. He did not leave any matter in general terms if you needed the specifics,

(لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ)

(in order that you may understand.) meaning, understand and comprehend.

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ
حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ فَقَالَ لَهُمُ اللَّهُ مُوتُوا ثُمَّ أَحْيَاهُمْ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ لَدُوٌّ فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا
يَشْكُرُونَ - وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ
اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ - مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا
حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً وَاللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ
وَيَبْسُطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ)

(243. Did you (O Muhammad) not think of those who went forth from their homes in the thousands, fearing death Allah said to them, "Die". And then He restored them to life. Truly, Allah is full of bounty to mankind, but most men thank not.) (244. And fight in the way of Allah and know that Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.) (245. Who is he that will lend to Allah a goodly loan so that He may multiply it to him many times And it is Allah that decreases or increases (your provisions), and unto Him you shall return.)

The Story of the Dead People

Ibn Abu Hatim related that Ibn `Abbas said that these people mentioned herein, were the residents of a village called Dawardan. `Ali bin `Asim said that they were from Dawardan, a village several miles away from Wasit (in Iraq).

In his Tafsir, Waki` bin Jarrah said that Ibn `Abbas commented,

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ
حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ)

(Did you (O Muhammad) not think of those who went forth from their homes in thousands, fearing death) that they were four thousand persons who escaped the plague (that broke out in their land). They said, "We should go to a land that is free of death!" When they reached a certain area, Allah said to them:

(مُوتُوا)

("Die.") and they all died. Afterwards, one of the Prophets passed by them and supplicated to Allah to resurrect them and Allah brought them back to life. So, Allah stated:

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ
حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ)

r(Did you (O Muhammad) not think of those who went forth from their homes in the thousands, fearing death)

Furthermore, several scholars among the Salaf said that these people were the residents of a city during the time of the Children of Israel. The weather in their land did not suit them and an epidemic broke out. They fled their land fearing death and took refuge in the wilderness. They later arrived at a fertile valley and they filled what is between its two sides. Then Allah sent two angels to them, one from the lower side and the other from the upper side of the valley. The angels screamed once and all the people died instantly, just as the death of one man. They were later moved to a different place, where walls and graves were built around them. They all perished, and their bodies rotted and disintegrated. Long afterwards, one of the Prophets of the Children of Israel, whose name was Hizqil (Ezekiel), passed by them and asked Allah to bring them back to life by his hand. Allah accepted his supplication and commanded him to say, "O rotted bones, Allah commands you to come together." The bones of every body were brought together. Allah then commanded him to say, "O bones, Allah commands you to be covered with flesh, nerves and skin." That also happened while Hizqil was watching. Allah then commanded him to say, "O souls, Allah commands you to return, each to the body that it used to inhabit." They all came back to life, looked around and proclaimed, "All praise is due to You (O Allah!) and there is no deity worthy of worship except You." Allah brought them back to life after they had perished long ago.

We should state that bringing these people back to life is a clear proof that physical resurrection shall occur on the Day of Resurrection. This is why Allah said:

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَدُوٌّ فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ)

(Truly, Allah is full of bounty to mankind,) meaning, in that He shows them His great signs, sound proofs and clear evidences. Yet,

(وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ)

(but most men thank not.) as they do not thank Allah for what He has given them with in their worldly life and religious affairs.

The story of the dead people (2:244 above) also indicates that no caution can ever avert destiny and that there is no refuge from Allah, but to Allah Himself. These people departed from their land fleeing the epidemic and seeking to enjoy a long life. What they earned was the opposite of what they sought, as death came quickly and instantaneously and seized them all.

There is an authentic Hadith that Imam Ahmad reported that `Abdullah bin `Abbas said that `Umar bin Al-Khattab once went to Ash-Sham (Syria). When he reached the area of Sargh, he was met by the commanders of the army: Abu `Ubaydah bin Jarrah and his companions. They told him that the plague had broken out in Ash-Sham. The Hadith then mentioned that `Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf, who was away attending to some of his affairs, came and said, "I have knowledge regarding this matter. I heard Allah's Messenger say:

«إِذَا كَانَ بِأَرْضٍ وَأَنْتُمْ بِهَا فَلَا تَخْرُجُوا فِرَارًا مِنْهُ، وَإِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ بِهِ بِأَرْضٍ فَلَا تَقْدَمُوا عَلَيْهِ»

(If it (the plague) breaks out in a land that you are in, do not leave that land to escape from it. If you hear about it in a land, do not enter it.)

`Umar then thanked Allah and went back. This Hadith is also reported in the Sahihayn.

Abandoning Jihad does not alter Destiny

Allah said:

«وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ»

(And fight in the way of Allah and know that Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.)

This Ayah indicates that just as caution does not alter destiny, abandoning Jihad will neither bring the appointed term closer nor delay it. Rather, destiny and the appointed provisions are fixed and shall never be changed or altered, neither by addition nor deletion. Similarly, Allah said:

«الَّذِينَ قَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ وَقَعَدُوا لَوْ أَطَاعُونَا مَا قُتِلُوا قُلْ فَادْرَءُوا عَنْ أَنْفُسِكُمُ الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ»

((They are) the ones who said about their killed brethren while they themselves sat (at home): "If only they had listened to us, they would not have been killed." Say: "Avert death from your own selves, if you speak the truth.") (3:168)

Allah said:

وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا لِمَ كَتَبْتَ عَلَيْنَا الْقِتَالَ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنَا
إِلَى أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ قُلْ مَتَّعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَالْآخِرَةُ
خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ اتَّقَى وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا أَيِنَّمَا تَكُونُوا
يُذْرِكُكُمْ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّشِيدَةٍ

(They say: "Our Lord! Why have you ordained for us fighting Would that you had granted us respite for a short period" Say: "Short is the enjoyment of this world. The Hereafter is (far) better for him who fears Allah, and you shall not be dealt with unjustly even equal to the Fatila (a scaly thread in the long slit of a date stone). Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high!") (4:77, 78)

Abu Sulayman, Khalid bin Al-Walid, the commander of the Muslim armies, the veteran among Muslim soldiers, the protector of Islam and the Sword of Allah that was raised above His enemies, said while dying, "I have participated in so-and-so number of battles. There is not a part of my body, but suffered a shot (of an arrow), a stab (of a spear) or a strike (of a sword). Yet, here I am, I die on my bed just as the camel dies! May the eyes of the cowards never taste sleep." He, may Allah be pleased with him, was sorry and in pain because he did not die as martyr in battle. He was sad that he had to die on his bed!

The Good Loan and its Reward

Allah said:

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ
لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً

(Who is he that will lend to Allah a goodly loan so that He may multiply it to him many times)

In this Ayah, Allah encourages His servants to spend in His cause. Allah mentioned this same Ayah in several other parts of His Glorious Qur'an. The Hadith that mentions that Allah descends (every night down on the nearest heaven to us when the last third of the night remains) states that Allah says:

«مَنْ يُقْرِضُ غَيْرَ عَدِيمٍ وَلَا ظَلُومٍ»

(Who would give a loan to He Who is neither poor nor unjust.)

Allah's statement :

(فِيضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً)

(He may multiply it to him many times), is similar to His statement :

(مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنبُلَةٍ مِائَةٌ حَبَّةٌ وَاللَّهُ يُضَعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ)

(The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah, is as the likeness of a grain (of corn); it grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. Allah gives manifold increase to whom He wills.) (2:261)

We will mention this Ayah later on. Allah then said:

(وَاللَّهُ يَقِضُ وَيَبْسُطُ)

(And it is Allah that decreases or increases (your provisions),) meaning, 'Spend (in Allah's cause) and do not be anxious.' Certainly, Allah is the Sustainer Who increases or decreases the provisions to whomever He wills among His servants. Allah's wisdom is perfect, and,

(وَالِيهِ تُرْجَعُونَ)

(and unto Him you shall return.) on the Day of Resurrection.

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الْمَلَإِ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَى إِذْ قَالُوا لِنَبِيِّهِمْ إِنَّهُمْ ابْعَثْ لَنَا مَلَكًا يُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قَالَ هَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ أَلَّا تُقَاتِلُوا قَالُوا وَمَا لَنَا أَلَّا نُقَاتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَقَدْ أُخْرِجْنَا مِنْ دِيَارِنَا وَأَبْنَائِنَا فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ

الْقِتَالُ تَوَلَّوْا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ
(

(246. Have you not thought about the group of the Children of Israel after (the time of) Musa When they said to a Prophet of theirs, "Appoint for us a king and we will fight in Allah's way." He said, "Would you then refrain from fighting, if fighting was prescribed for you" They said, "Why should we not fight in Allah's way while we have been driven out of our homes and our children (families have been taken as captives)" But when fighting was ordered for them, they turned away, all except a few of them. And Allah is All-Aware of the wrongdoers.)

The Story of the Jews Who sought a King to be appointed over Them

Mujahid said that the Prophet (mentioned in the Ayah 2:246 above) is Shamwil (Samuel). Wahb bin Munabbih said: The Children of Israel remained on the straight path for a period of time after Moses. They then innovated in the religion and some of them even worshipped the idols. Yet, there were always Prophets sent among them who would command them to work righteous deeds, refrain from doing evil and who would rule them according to the commands of the Torah. When they (Israelites) committed the evil that they committed, Allah caused their enemies to overwhelm them, and many fatalities fell among them as a consequence. Their enemies also captured a great number of them, and took over large areas of their land. Earlier, anyone who would fight the Israelites would lose, because they had the Torah and the Tabut, which they inherited generation after generation ever since the time of Moses, who spoke to Allah directly. Yet, the Israelites kept indulging in misguidance until some king took the Tabut from them during a battle. That king also took possession of the Torah, and only a few of the Israelites who memorized it remained. The prophethood halted among their various tribes and only a pregnant woman remained of the offspring of Lavi (Levi), in whom the prophethood still appeared. Her husband had been killed, so the Israelites kept her in a house so that Allah may give her a boy, who would be their Prophet. The woman also kept invoking Allah to grant her a boy. Allah heard her pleas and gave her a boy whom she called `Shamwil' meaning `Allah has heard my pleas.' Some people said that the boy's name was Sham`un (Simeon), which also has a similar meaning.

As that boy grew, Allah raised him to be a righteous person. When he reached the age of prophethood, Allah revealed to him and commanded him to call (his people) to Him and to His Tawhid (Oneness). Shamwil called the Children of Israel (to Allah) and they asked him to appoint a king over them so that they could fight their enemies under his command. The kingship had also ended among them. Their Prophet said to them, "What if Allah appoints a king over you, would you fulfill your vow to fight under his command"

قَالُوا وَمَا لَنَا إِلَّا نُقْتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَقَدْ
أُخْرِجْنَا مِنْ دِيَارِنَا وَأَبْنَائِنَا

(They said, "Why should we not fight in Allah's way while we have been driven out of our homes and our children") meaning, `After our land had been confiscated and our children had been taken from us' Allah said:

(قَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ تَوَلَّوْا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ)

(But when fighting was ordered for them, they turned away, all except a few of them. And Allah is All-Aware of the wrongdoers) meaning, only a few of them kept their promise, but the majority abandoned Jihad and Allah has full knowledge of them.

(وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوتَ
مَلِكًا قَالُوا أَتَىٰ يَكُونُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا وَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ
بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِّنَ الْمَالِ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ
وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مُلْكَهُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ)

(247. And their Prophet said to them, "Indeed Allah has appointed Talut (Saul) as a king over you." They said, "How can he be a king over us when we are fitter than him for the kingdom, and he has not been given enough wealth." He said: "Verily, Allah has chosen him above you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature. And Allah grants His kingdom to whom He wills. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.")

When the Israelites asked their Prophet to appoint a king over them, he appointed Talut (Saul), who was then a soldier. But, Talut was not a descendant of the house of kings among them, which was exclusively in the offspring of Yahudha (Judah). This is why they said:

(أَتَىٰ يَكُونُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا)

(How can he be a king over us) meaning, how can he be the king for us,

(وَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِّنَ
الْمَالِ)

(when we are fitter than him for the kingdom, and he has not been given enough wealth) They said that Talut was also poor and did not have the wealth that justifies him being king. Some people stated that Talut used to bring water to the people, while others stated that his profession was dyeing skins. The Jews, thus, disputed with their Prophet while they were supposed to obey him and to say good words to him.

Their Prophet answered them:

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(Verily, Allah has chosen him above you) meaning, 'Allah chose Talut from amongst you while having better knowledge about him.' Their Prophet stated, "I did not choose Talut to be your king on my own. Rather, Allah has commanded that upon your request." Further:

(وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ)

(...and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature.) meaning, 'Talut is more knowledgeable and honorable than you, and stronger and more patient during combat, and has more knowledge of warfare. In short, he has more knowledge and is stronger than you are. The king should have sufficient knowledge, be fair looking and should have a strong soul and body.' He then said:

(وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مَلَكَهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ)

(And Allah grants His kingdom to whom He wills.) meaning, Allah Alone is the Supreme Authority Who does what He wills and no one can ask Him about His actions, while they will be asked (about their actions by Him). This is because Allah has perfect knowledge, wisdom and kindness with His creation. Allah said:

(وَاللَّهُ وَسِعَ عَلِيمٌ)

(And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.) meaning, His favor is encompassing and He grants His mercy to whom He wills. He also knows those who deserve to be kings and those who do not deserve it.

(وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ آيَةَ مُلْكِهِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ آلُ مُوسَىٰ

وَعَالُ هَارُونَ تَحْمِلُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً
لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ)

b(248. And their Prophet said to them: "Verily! The sign of His kingdom is that there shall come to you At-Tabut, wherein is Sakinah (peace and reassurance) from your Lord and a remnant of that which Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron) left behind, carried by the angels. Verily, in this is a sign for you if you are indeed believers.)

Their Prophet then proclaimed, "The sign of the blessings of Talut's kingship over you is that Allah will give you back the Tabut (wooden box) that has been taken from you." Allah said:

(فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ)

(wherein is Sakinah from your Lord) meaning, peace (or grace) and reassurance. `Abdur-Razzaq stated that Qatadah said:

(فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ)

(wherein is Sakinah) means grace. In addition, Ar-Rabi` said that Sakinah means mercy. This is also the meaning given by Ibn `Abbas, as Al-`Awfi narrated.

Allah then said:

(وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ آلُ مُوسَىٰ وَآلُ هَارُونَ)

(...and a remnant of that which Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron) left behind,)

Ibn Jarir related that Ibn `Abbas said about this Ayah:

(وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ آلُ مُوسَىٰ وَآلُ هَارُونَ)

(...and a remnant of that which Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron) left behind,) Meaning, Moses' staff and the remnants of the Tablets. This is the same Tafsir of Qatadah, As-Suddi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and `Ikrimah, who added, "And also the Torah." `Abdur-Razzaq said that he asked Ath-Thawri about the meaning of,

(وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ آلُ مُوسَىٰ وَآلُ هَارُونَ)

(...and a remnant of that which Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron) left behind,)

Ath-Thawri said, "Some said that it contained a pot of manna and the remnants of the Tablets, while some others said that it contained (Moses') staff and two shoes (and refer to 20:12)."

Allah then said:

(تَحْمِلُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ)

(...carried by the angels.)

Ibn Jurayj stated that Ibn `Abbas said, "The angels came down while carrying the Tabut between the sky and the earth, until they placed it before Talut while the people were watching." As-Suddi said, "The Tabut was brought to Talut's house, so the people believed in the prophethood of Sham`un (Simeon) and obeyed Talut"

The Prophet then said:

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّكُمْ)

(Verily, in this is a sign for you) testifying to my truth in what I was sent with, my prophethood, and my command to you to obey Talut,

(إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ)

(if you are indeed believers.) in Allah and the Hereafter."

(فَلَمَّا فَصَلَ طَالُوتُ بِالْجُنُودِ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيكُمْ بِنَهَرٍ فَمَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي وَمَنْ لَمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي إِلَّا مَنْ اغْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةً بِيَدِهِ فَشَرَبُوا مِنْهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهُ هُوَ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَعَهُ قَالُوا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْيَوْمَ بِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ) (p,%30(raster=Rrgjim=) " ز س

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(249. Then when Talut set out with the army, he said: "Verily, Allah will try you by a river. So whoever drinks thereof, he is not of me; and whoever tastes it not, he is of me, except him who takes (thereof) in the hollow of his hand." Yet, they drank thereof, all, except a few of them. So when he had crossed it (the river), he and those who believed with him, they said: "We have no power this day against Jalut (Goliath) and his hosts." But those who knew with certainty that they were going to meet Allah, said: "How often has a small group overcome a mighty host by Allah's leave" And Allah is with As-Sabirin (the patient).)

Allah states that Talut, the king of the Children of Israel, marched forth with his soldiers and the Israelites who obeyed him. His army was of eighty thousand then, according to As-Suddi, but Allah knows best. Talut said:

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيكُمْ)

(Verily, Allah will try you) meaning, He will test you with a river, which flowed between Jordan and Palestine, i.e. , the Shari` ah river, according to Ibn ` Abbas and others. He continued,

(فَمَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي)

(So whoever drinks thereof, he is not of me;) meaning, shall not accompany me today,

(لَمْ يَطْعَمَهُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي إِلَّا مَنْ اغْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةً بِيَدِهِ)

(and whoever tastes it not, he is of me, except him who takes (thereof) in the hollow of his hand.) meaning, there is no harm in this case. Allah then said:

(فَشَرِبُوا مِنْهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ)

(Yet, they drank thereof, all, except a few of them.)

Ibn Jurayj stated that Ibn ` Abbas commented, "Whoever took some of it (the river's water) in the hollow of his hand, quenched his thirst; as for those who drank freely from it, their thirst was not quenched."

Ibn Jarir reported that Al-Bara' bin ` Azib said, "We used to say that the Companions of Muhammad who accompanied him on the battle of Badr were more than three hundred and ten, just as many as the soldiers who crossed the river with Talut. Only those who believed crossed the river with him." Al-Bukhari also reported this.

This is why Allah said:

(فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهُ هُوَ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَعَهُ قَالُوا لَا
طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْيَوْمَ بِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ)

(So when he had crossed it (the river), he and those who believed with him, they said: "We have no power this day against Jalut (Goliath) and his hosts.")

This Ayah indicates that the Israelites (who remained with Saul) thought that they were few in the face of their enemy who were many then. So, their knowledgeable scholars strengthened their resolve by stating that Allah's promise is true and that triumph comes from Allah Alone, not from the large numbers or the adequacy of the supplies. They said to them:

(كَمْ مِّنْ فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ
مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ)

("How often has a small group overcome a mighty host by Allah's leave" And Allah is with As-Sabirin (the patient).)

(وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ
عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ
الْكَافِرِينَ- فَهَزَمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَقَتَلَ دَاوُودُ
جَالُوتَ وَآتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهُ مِمَّا
يَشَاءُ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ
لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى
الْعَالَمِينَ- تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ
وَإِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ V

(250. And when they advanced to meet Jalut (Goliath) and his forces, they invoked: "Our Lord! Pour forth on us patience, and set firm our feet and make us victorious over the disbelieving

people.") (251. So they routed them by Allah's leave and Dawud (David) killed Jalut (Goliath), and Allah gave him (Dawud) the kingdom after the death of Talut and Samuel and Al-Hikmah (prophethood), and taught him of that which He willed. And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But Allah is full of bounty to the `Alamin (mankind, Jinn and all that exists.) (252. These are the verses of Allah, We recite them to you (O Muhammad) in truth, and surely, you are one of the Messengers (of Allah.)

When the faithful party, who were few under the command of Talut, faced their enemy, who were many under the command of Jalut,

(قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أفرغ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا)

(they invoked: "Our Lord! Pour forth on us patience...") meaning, send down patience on us from You.

(وَتَبَّتْ أقدامَنَا)

(and set firm our feet) meaning, against the enemy and save us from running away and from feebleness,

(وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكافِرِينَ)

(and make us victorious over the disbelieving people.)

Allah said:

(فَهَزَمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ)

(So they routed them by Allah's leave) meaning, they defeated and overwhelmed them by Allah's aid and support. Then,

(وَقَتَلَ دَاوُدُ جَالوتَ)

(and Dawud killed Jalut)

Israelite accounts claimed that (Prophet) David killed Goliath with a slingshot that he had, which he launched at Goliath causing his death.

Talut promised that whoever killed Jalut, would marry his daughter and would share his kingship and authority. He kept his promise. Later, the kingship was transferred to Prophet Dawud in addition to being granted Prophethood by Allah. So, Allah said:

(وَأَتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ)

(...and Allah gave him (Dawud) the kingdom) that Talut had and,

(وَالْحِكْمَةَ)

(and Al-Hikmah) that comes with the prophethood, meaning, after Shamwil. Allah then said:

(وَعَلَّمَهُ مِمَّا يَشَاءُ)

(and taught him of that which He willed.) meaning, what He willed of the knowledge that He bestowed on (Prophet) Dawud.

Next, Allah said:

(وَلَوْلَا دَفَعُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَفَسَدَتِ
الْأَرْضُ)

(And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief.)

This Ayah indicates that if it were not for the fact that Allah checks one set of people with another, such as when Talut and the bravery of Dawud helped the Children of Israel (against Goliath), then people would have perished. Similarly, Allah said:

(وَلَوْلَا دَفَعُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَهْجَمَتِ
صَوْمِعُ وَيَيْعُ وَصَلَوَاتُ وَمَسْجِدُ يُذَكَّرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ
اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا)

(For had it not been that Allah checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and Masjids, wherein the Name of Allah is mentioned much, would surely, have been pulled down.) (22:40)

Allah then said:

(وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ)

(But Allah is full of bounty to the `Alamin (mankind, Jinn and all that exists)) meaning, by His mercy and favor He fixes some of them by some others. Surely, Allah has the wisdom, the supreme authority and the clear proof against His creation in all of His actions and statements.

Allah said:

(تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّكَ لَمِنَ
الْمُرْسَلِينَ)

(These are the verses of Allah, We recite them to you (O Muhammad) in truth, and surely, you are one of the Messengers (of Allah).)

This Ayah states, `These Ayat (verses) of Allah that We have narrated for you in truth conform to the exact manner that these stories have occurred and to the truth that still remain in the (Divine) Books that the scholars of the Children of Israel have and know. Allah said: O Muhammad,

(وَإِنَّكَ)

(you are)

(لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ)

(one of the Messengers (of Allah)) emphatically stating the truth of his prophethood

(تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ مِنْهُمْ
مَنْ كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ وَءَاتَيْنَا
عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ
وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا اقْتَتَلَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ
مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَلَكِنْ اخْتَلَفُوا فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ

ءَامَنَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ كَفَرَ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا اقْتَتَلُوا
وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ)

(253. Those Messengers! We preferred some of them to others; to some of them Allah spoke (directly); others He raised to degrees (of honor); and to `Isa, the son of Maryam, We gave clear proofs and evidences, and supported him with Ruh-il-Qudus Jibril . If Allah had willed, succeeding generations would not have fought against each other, after clear Verses of Allah had come to them, but they differed some of them believed and others disbelieved. If Allah had willed, they would not have fought against one another, but Allah does what He wills.)

Allah Honored Some Prophets Above Others

Allah states that He has honored some Prophets to others. For instance, Allah said,

(وَلَقَدْ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَ النَّبِيِّينَ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَءَاتَيْنَا
دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا)

(And indeed, We have preferred some of the Prophets above others, and to Dawud We gave the Zabur (Psalms)) 17:55 .

In the Ayah above, Allah said,

(تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ مِنْهُمْ
مِّنْ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ)

(Those Messengers! We preferred some of them to others; to some of them Allah spoke (directly)) meaning, Musa and Muhammad , and also Adam according to a Hadith recorded in Sahih Ibn Hibban from Abu Dharr.

(وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ)

(Others He raised to degrees (of honor)) as is evident in the Hadith about the Isra' journey, when the Messenger of Allah saw the Prophets in the various heavens according to their rank with Allah.

If somebody asks about the collective meaning of this Ayah and the Hadith that the Two Sahih collected from Abu Hurayrah which states, "Once, a Muslim man and a Jew had an argument and the Jew said, `No, by Him Who gave Musa superiority over all human beings!' Hearing him,

the Muslim man raised his hand and slapped the Jew on his face and said, `Over Muhammad too, O evil one! The Jew went to the Prophet and complained to him and the Prophet said,

«لَا تُفَضِّلُونِي عَلَى الْأَنْبِيَاءِ، فَإِنَّ النَّاسَ يَصْعَقُونَ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَأَكُونُ أَوَّلَ مَنْ يُفِيقُ، فَأَجِدُ مُوسَى
بَاطِشًا بِقَائِمَةِ الْعَرْشِ، فَلَا أُدْرِي أَفَاقَ قَبْلِي أَمْ
جُوزِي بِصَعْقَةِ الطُّورِ؟ فَلَا تُفَضِّلُونِي عَلَى
الْأَنْبِيَاءِ»

(Don't give me superiority above the Prophets, for the people will become unconscious on the Day of Resurrection, and I will be the first to be resurrected to see Musa holding on to the pillar of Allah's Throne. I will not know whether the unconsciousness Musa suffered on the Day of the Trumpet sufficed for him, or if he got up before me. So, do not give me superiority above the Prophets.) In another narration, the Prophet said, (Do not give superiority to some Prophets above others.)

The answer to this question is that this Hadith prohibits preferring some Prophets above others in cases of dispute and argument, such as the incident mentioned in the Hadith. The Hadith indicates that it is not up to creation to decide which Prophet is better, for this is Allah's decision. The creation is only required to submit to, obey and believe in Allah's decision.

Allah's statement,

(وَأَتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ)

(And We gave `Isa, the son of Maryam, clear signs) refers to the proofs and unequivocal evidences that testify to the truth that `Isa delivered to the Children of Israel, thus testifying that he was Allah's servant and His Messenger to them.

(وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ)

(And supported him with Ruh-il-Qudus) meaning Allah aided `Isa with Jibil, peace be upon him. Allah then said,

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا اقْتَتَلَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ
مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَلَكِنْ اخْتَلَفُوا فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ
ءَامَنَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ كَفَرَ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا اقْتَتَلُوا)

(If Allah had willed, succeeding generations would not have fought against each other, after clear Verses of Allah had come to them, but they differed some of them believed and others disbelieved. If Allah had willed, they would not have fought against one another.) meaning all this happened by Allah's decree, and this is why He said next,

وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ

(But Allah does what He wills.)

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ
أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا بَيْعٌ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلَّةٌ وَلَا شَفَعَةٌ
وَالْكَافِرُونَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

(254. O you who believe! Spend of that with which We have provided for you, before a Day comes when there will be no bargaining, nor friendship, nor intercession. And it is the disbelievers who are the wrongdoers.)

Allah commands His servants to spend for His sake, in the path of righteousness, from what He has granted them, so that they acquire and keep the reward of this righteous deed with their Lord and King. Let them rush to perform this deed in this life,

(مِّن قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ)

(before a Day comes) meaning, the Day of Resurrection,

(لَا بَيْعٌ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلَّةٌ وَلَا شَفَعَةٌ)

(when there will be no bargaining, nor friendship, nor intercession.)

This Ayah indicates that on that Day, no one will be able to bargain on behalf of himself or ransom himself with any amount, even if it was the earth's fill of gold; nor will his friendship or relation to anyone benefit him. Similarly, Allah said,

(فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنْسَبَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ)

(Then, when the Trumpet is blown, there will be no kinship among them that Day, nor will they ask of one another) 23:101 .

(وَلَا شَفَعَةً)

(Nor intercession) meaning, they will not benefit by the intercession of anyone.

Allah's statement,

(وَالْكَافِرُونَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ)

(and it is the disbelievers who are the wrongdoers) indicates that no injustice is worse than meeting Allah on that Day while a disbeliever. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `Ata' bin Dinar said, "All thanks are due to Allah Who said,

(وَالْكَافِرُونَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ)

(and it is the disbelievers who are the wrongdoers) but did not say, "And it is the wrongdoers who are the disbelievers."

(اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا

شَاءَ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا
يَؤُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

(255. Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His permission He knows what happens to them (His creatures) in this world, and what will happen to them in the Hereafter. And they will never compass anything of His Knowledge except that which He wills. His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them. And He is the Most High, the Most Great.)

The Virtue of Ayat Al-Kursi

This is Ayat Al-Kursi and tremendous virtues have been associated with it, for the authentic Hadith describes it as 'the greatest Ayah in the Book of Allah.' Imam Ahmad recorded that 'Ubayy bin Ka'b said that the Prophet asked him about the greatest Ayah in the Book of Allah, and 'Ubayy answered, "Allah and His Messenger know better." When the Prophet repeated his question several times, 'Ubayy said, "Ayat Al-Kursi." The Prophet commented,

«لِيَهْنِكَ الْعِلْمُ أَبَا الْمُنْذِرِ، وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، إِنَّ
لَهَا لِسَانًا وَشَفَتَيْنِ، تُقَدِّسُ الْمَلِكَ عِنْدَ سَاقِ
الْعَرْشِ»

(Congratulations for having knowledge, O Abu Al-Mundhir! By He in Whose Hand is my soul! This Ayah has a tongue and two lips with which she praises the King (Allah) next to the leg of the Throne.)

This Hadith was also collected by Muslim, but he did not include the part that starts with, "By He in Whose Hand..."

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Ayyub said that he had some dates and a Ghoul used to take some, and he complained to the Prophet. The Prophet said to him, "When you see her, say, 'In the Name of Allah, answer to the Messenger of Allah.'" Abu Ayyub said that when she came again, he said these words and he was able to grab her. She begged, "I will not come again," so Abu Ayyub released her. Abu Ayyub went to the Prophet and the Prophet asked him, "What did your prisoner do?" Abu Ayyub said, "I grabbed her and she said twice, 'I will not come again,' and I released her." The Prophet said, "She will come back." Abu Ayyub said, "So I grabbed her twice or three times, yet each time I would release her when she vowed not to come back. I would go to the Prophet who would ask me, 'What is the news of your prisoner?' I would say, 'I grabbed her, then released her when she said that she would not return.' The Prophet would say that she would return. Once, I grabbed her and she said, 'Release me and I will teach you something to recite so that no harm touches you, that is, Ayat Al-Kursi.' Abu Ayyub went to the Prophet and told him, and the Prophet said, "She is liar, but she told the truth." At-Tirmidhi

recorded this Hadith in the chapter of the virtues of the Qur'an and said, "Hasan Gharib." In Arabic, 'Ghoul' refers to the Jinn when they appear at night.

Al-Bukhari recorded a similar story in his Sahih from Abu Hurayrah, in the chapters on the virtues of the Qur'an and the description of Shaytan. In this narration, Abu Hurayrah said,

"Allah's Messenger assigned me to keep watch over the Sadaqah (charity) of Ramadan. A person snuck in and started taking handfuls of foodstuff. I caught him and said, 'By Allah, I will take you to Allah's Messenger.' He said, 'Release me, for I am meek and have many dependents and am in great need.' I released him, and in the morning Allah's Messenger asked me, 'What did your prisoner do yesterday, O Abu Hurayrah?' I said, 'O Allah's Messenger! He complained of being needy and of having many dependents, so I pitied him and let him go.' Allah's Messenger said, 'Indeed, he told you a lie and will be coming again.' I believed that he would show up again, for Allah's Messenger had told me that he would return. So, I watched for him. When he (showed up and) started stealing handfuls of foodstuff, I caught hold of him again and said, 'I will definitely take you to Allah's Messenger.' He said, 'Leave me, for I am very needy and have many dependents. I promise I will not come back again.' I pitied him and let him go. In the morning Allah's Messenger asked me, 'What did your prisoner do last night, O Abu Hurayrah?' I replied, 'O Allah's Messenger! He complained of his great need and of too many dependents, so I took pity on him and set him free.' Allah's Messenger said, 'Verily, he told you a lie; he will return.' I waited for him attentively for the third time, and when he (came and) started stealing handfuls of the foodstuff, I caught hold of him and said, 'I will surely take you to Allah's Messenger as it is the third time you promised not to return, yet you returned.' He said, 'Let me teach you some words which Allah will give you benefit from.' I asked, 'What are they?' He replied, 'Whenever you go to bed, recite Ayat Al-Kursi- Allahu la ilaha illa Huwal-Hayyul-Qayyum, till you finish the whole verse. (If you do so), Allah will appoint a guard for you who will stay with you, and no Shaytan will come near you until morning.' So, I released him. In the morning, Allah's Messenger asked, 'What did your prisoner do yesterday?' I replied, 'O Allah's Messenger! He claimed that he would teach me some words by which Allah will grant me some benefit, so I let him go.' Allah's Messenger asked, 'What are they?' I replied, 'He said to me: Whenever you go to bed, recite Ayat Al-Kursi from the beginning to the end, Allahu la ilaha illa Huwal-Hayyul-Qayyum. He further said to me: (If you do so), Allah will appoint a guard for you who will stay with you, and no Shaytan will come near you until morning.' (One of the narrators) then commented that they (the Companions) were very keen to do good deeds. The Prophet said, 'He spoke the truth, although he is a liar. Do you know whom you were talking to, these three nights, O Abu Hurayrah?' Abu Hurayrah said, 'No.' He said, 'It was Shaytan.'" An-Nasa'i also recorded this Hadith in Al-Yawm wa Al-Laylah.

Allah's Greatest Name is in Ayat Al-Kursi

Imam Ahmad recorded that Asma' bint Yazid bin As-Sakan said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah say about these two Ayat,

(اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ)

(Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists) 2:255 , and,

(الم - ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(Alif-Lam-Mim. Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists) 3:1-2 ,

«إِنَّ فِيهِمَا اسْمَ اللَّهِ الْأَعْظَمِ»

(They contain Allah's Greatest Name.)

This is also the narration collected by Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah, and At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih".

Further, Ibn Marduwyah recorded that Abu Umamah reported that the Prophet said,

«اسْمُ اللَّهِ الْأَعْظَمُ، الَّذِي إِذَا دُعِيَ بِهِ أَجَابَ، فِي ثَلَاثِ سُورَةِ الْبَقَرَةِ وَآلِ عِمْرَانَ وَطِهِ»

(Allah's Greatest Name, if He was supplicated with it, He answers the supplication, is in three Surahs - Al-Baqarah, Al`Imran and Ta-Ha.)

Hisham bin `Ammar, the Khatib (orator) of Damascus (one of the narrators in the above narration), said, "As for Al-Baqarah, it is in,

(اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ)

(Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists) 2:255 ; in Al`Imran, it is in,

(الم - ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(Alif-Lam-Mim. Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists) 3:1-2 , while in Ta-Ha, it is in,

(وَعَنَتِ الْوُجُوهُ لِلْحَيِّ الْقَيُّومِ)

(And (all) faces shall be humbled before (Allah), the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists) 20:111 ."

Ayat Al-Kursi has Ten Complete Arabic Sentences 1. Allah's statement,

(اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ)

(Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He) mentions that Allah is the One and Only Lord of all creation. 2. Allah's statement,

(الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ)

(Al-Hayyul-Qayyum) testifies that Allah is the Ever Living, Who never dies, Who sustains everyone and everything. All creation stands in need of Allah and totally relies on Him, while He is the Most Rich, Who stands in need of nothing created. Similarly, Allah said,

(وَمِنْ ءَايَاتِهِ أَنْ تَقُومَ السَّمَاءُ وَالْأَرْضُ بِأَمْرِهِ)

(And among His signs is that the heaven and the earth stand by His command) 30:25 . 3. Allah's statement,

(لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ)

(Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him) means, no shortcoming, unawareness or ignorance ever touches Allah. Rather, He is aware of, and controls what every soul earns, has perfect watch over everything, nothing escapes His knowledge, and no secret matter is secret to Him. Among His perfect attributes, is the fact that He is never effected by slumber or sleep. Therefore, Allah's statement,

(لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَةٌ)

(Neither slumber overtakes Him) indicates that no unawareness due to slumber ever overtakes Allah. Allah said afterwards,

(وَلَا نَوْمٌ)

(nor sleep), which is stronger than slumber. It is recorded in the Sahih that Abu Musa said, "The Messenger of Allah delivered a speech regarding four words:

«إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَهَلَّا يَنَامُ، وَلَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُ أَنْ يَنَامَ،
يَخْفِضُ الْقِسْطَ وَيَرْفَعُهُ، يُرْفَعُ إِلَيْهِ عَمَلُ النَّهَارِ

قَبْلَ عَمَلِ اللَّيْلِ، وَعَمَلُ اللَّيْلِ قَبْلَ عَمَلِ النَّهَارِ،
حِجَابُهُ النُّورُ أَوْ النَّارُ لَوْ كَشَفَهُ لَأُحْرِقَتْ سُبُحَاتُ
وَجْهِهِ مَا انْتَهَى إِلَيْهِ بَصَرُهُ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ»

(Allah does not sleep, and it does not befit His majesty that He sleeps. He lowers the scales and raises them. The deeds of the day are resurrected in front of Him before the deeds of the night, and the deeds of the night before the deeds of the day. His Veil is light, or fire, and if He removes it, the rays from His Face would burn whatever His sight reaches of His creation.)

4. Allah's statement,

(لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ)

(To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth) indicates that everyone is a servant for Allah, a part of His kingdom and under His power and authority. Similarly, Allah said,

(إِنْ كُلُّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا آتِي
الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدًا - لَقَدْ أَحْصَاهُمْ وَعَدَّهُمْ عَدًّا -
وَكُلُّهُمْ عَائِيهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَرْدًا)

(There is none in the heavens and the earth but comes unto the Most Gracious (Allah) as a servant. Verily, He knows each one of them, and has counted them a full counting. And everyone of them will come to Him alone on the Day of Resurrection (without any helper, or protector or defender)) 19:93-95 . 5. Allah's statement,

(مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ)

(Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His permission) is similar to His statements,

(وَكَمْ مِّن مَّلَكٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ لَا تُعْنِي شَفَعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ يَأْذَنَ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَرْضَى
(

(And there are many angels in the heavens, whose intercession will avail nothing except after Allah has given leave for whom He wills and is pleased with) 53:26 , and,

(وَلَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنْ ارْتَضَى)

(They cannot intercede except for him with whom He is pleased) 21:28 .

These Ayat assert Allah's greatness, pride, and grace, and that no one dares to intercede with Him on behalf of anyone else, except by His permission. Indeed, the Hadith about the intercession, states that the Prophet said,

«أَتِي تَحْتَ الْعَرْشِ فَأَخِرُ سَاجِدًا، فَيَدْعُنِي مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَدْعُنِي. ثُمَّ يُقَالُ: ارْقَعْ رَأْسَكَ، وَقُلْ تُسْمِعْ، وَاشْفَعْ تُشْفَعُ قَالَ: فَيَحُدُّ لِي حِدًّا فَأَدْخِلُهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ»

(I will stand under the Throne and fall in prostration, and Allah will allow me to remain in that position as much as He wills. I will thereafter be told, "Raise your head, speak and you will be heard, intercede and your intercession will be accepted". The Prophet then said, "He will allow me a proportion whom I will enter into Paradise.")

6. Allah's statement ,

(يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ)

(He knows what happens to them (His creatures) in this world, and what will happen to them in the Hereafter) this refers to His perfect knowledge of all creation; its past, present and future. Similarly, Allah said that the angels proclaimed;

(وَمَا نَنْزِلُ إِلَّا بِأَمْرِ رَبِّكَ لَهُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِينَا وَمَا خَلْفَنَا وَمَا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ نَسِيًّا)

(And we (angels) descend not except by the command of your Lord (O Muhammad). To Him belongs what is before us and what is behind us, and what is between those two; and your Lord is never forgetful) 19:64 . 7. Allah's statement,

(وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ)

(And they will never compass anything of His Knowledge except that which He wills), asserts the fact that no one attains any part of Allah's knowledge except what Allah conveys and allows. This part of the Ayah indicates that no one ever acquires knowledge of Allah and in His Attributes, except what He conveys to them. For instance, Allah said,

(وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِهِ عِلْمًا)

(But they will never compass anything of His knowledge) 20: 110 . 8. Allah said,

(وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ)

(His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth.)

Waki` narrated in his Tafsir that Ibn `Abbas said, "Kursi is the footstool, and no one is able to give due consideration to Allah's Throne." Al-Hakim recorded this Hadith in his Mustadrak from Ibn `Abbas, who did not relate it to the Prophet . Al-Hakim said, "It is Sahih according to the criteria of the Two Sahih, and they (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) did not record it." In addition, Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said, "If the seven heavens and the seven earths were flattened and laid side by side, they would add up to the size of a ring in a desert, compared to the Kursi." 9. Allah said,

(وَلَا يَؤُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا)

(And He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them) meaning, it does not burden or cause Him fatigue to protect the heavens and earth and all that is in between them. Rather, this is an easy matter for Him. Further, Allah sustains everything, has perfect watch over everything, nothing ever escapes His knowledge and no matter is ever a secret to Him. All matters are insignificant, modest and humble before Him. He is the Most Rich, worthy of all praise. He does what He wills, and no one can ask Him about what He does, while they will be asked. He has supreme power over all things and perfect alertness concerning everything. He is the Most High, the Greatest, there is no deity worthy of worship except Him, and no Lord other than Him.

10. Allah's statement,

(وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ)

(And He is the Most High, the Most Great) is similar to His statement,

(الْكَبِيرُ الْمُتَعَالَى)

(the Most Great, the Most High) 13:9 .

These and similar Ayat and authentic Hadiths about Allah's Attributes must be treated the way the Salaf (righteous ancestors) treated them by accepting their apparent meanings without equating them with the attributes of the creation or altering their apparent meanings.

(لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ
يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنِ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ
بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَى لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ
(

(256. There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the right path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.)

No Compulsion in Religion

Allah said,

(لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ)

(There is no compulsion in religion), meaning, "Do not force anyone to become Muslim, for Islam is plain and clear, and its proofs and evidence are plain and clear. Therefore, there is no need to force anyone to embrace Islam. Rather, whoever Allah directs to Islam, opens his heart for it and enlightens his mind, will embrace Islam with certainty. Whoever Allah blinds his heart and seals his hearing and sight, then he will not benefit from being forced to embrace Islam."

It was reported that the Ansar were the reason behind revealing this Ayah, although its indication is general in meaning. Ibn Jarir recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that before Islam , "When (an Ansar) woman would not bear children who would live, she would vow that if she gives birth to a child who remains alive, she would raise him as a Jew. When Banu An-Nadir (the Jewish tribe) were evacuated from Al-Madinah , some of the children of the Ansar were being raised among them, and the Ansar said, `We will not abandon our children.' Allah revealed,

(لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ)

(There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the right path has become distinct from the wrong path.)"

Abu Dawud and An-Nasa'i also recorded this Hadith. As for the Hadith that Imam Ahmad recorded, in which Anas said that the Messenger of Allah said to a man,

«أَسْلِمِ»

قال: إني أجدني كارهًا قال

«وإن كنت كارهًا»

("Embrace Islam." The man said, "I dislike it." The Prophet said, "Even if you dislike it.")

First, this is an authentic Hadith, with only three narrators between Imam Ahmad and the Prophet . However, it is not relevant to the subject under discussion, for the Prophet did not force that man to become Muslim. The Prophet merely invited this man to become Muslim, and he replied that he does not find himself eager to become Muslim. The Prophet said to the man that even though he dislikes embracing Islam, he should still embrace it, `for Allah will grant you sincerity and true intent.'

Tawhid is the Most Trustworthy Handhold

Allah's statement,

(فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ
بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ)

(Whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower) is in reference to,

"Whoever shuns the rivals of Allah, the idols, and those that Shaytan calls to be worshipped besides Allah, whoever believes in Allah's Oneness, worships Him alone and testifies that there is no deity worthy of worship except Him, then

(فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَى)

(then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold.)

Therefore, this person will have acquired firmness in the religion and proceeded on the correct way and the straight path. Abu Al-Qasim Al-Baghawi recorded that `Umar said, "Jibt means magic, and Taghut means Shaytan. Verily, courage and cowardice are two instincts that appear in men, the courageous fights for those whom he does not know and the coward runs away from defending his own mother. Man's honor resides with his religion and his status is based upon his character, even if he was Persian or Nabatian." `Umar's statement that Taghut is Shaytan is very sound, for this meaning includes every type of evil that the ignorant people of Jahiliyyah (pre Islamic era of ignorance) fell into, such as worshipping idols, referring to them for judgement, and invoking them for victory.

Allah's statement,

(فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَى لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا)

(then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break) means, "He will have hold of the true religion with the strongest grasp." Allah equated this adherence to the firm handhold that never breaks because it is built solid and because its handle is firmly connected. This is why Allah said here,

(فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَى لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا)

(then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break.)

Mujahid said, "The most trustworthy handhold is Iman (faith)." As-Suddi said that it refers to Islam. Imam Ahmad recorded that Qays bin `Abbad said, "I was in the Masjid when a man whose face showed signs of humbleness came and prayed two Rak`ahs that were modest in length. The people said, `This is a man from among the people of Paradise.' When he left, I followed him until he entered his house, and I entered it after him and spoke with him. When he felt at ease, I said to him, `When you entered the Masjid, the people said such and such things.' He said, `All praise is due to Allah! No one should say what he has no knowledge of. I will tell you why they said that. I saw a vision during the time of the Messenger of Allah, and I narrated it to him. I saw that I was in a green garden, ' and he described the garden's plants and spaciousness, ` and there was an iron pole in the middle of the garden affixed in the earth and its tip reached the sky. On its tip, there was a handle, and I was told to ascend the pole. I said, `I cannot.' Then a helper came and raised my robe from behind and said to me, `Ascend.' I ascended until I grasped the handle and he said to me, `Hold on to the handle.' I awoke from that dream with the handle in my hand. I went to the Messenger of Allah and told him about the vision and he said,

«أَمَّا الرَّوْضَةُ فَرَوْضَةُ الْإِسْلَامِ، وَأَمَّا الْعَمُودُ
فَعَمُودُ الْإِسْلَامِ، وَأَمَّا الْعُرْوَةُ فَهِيَ الْعُرْوَةُ الْوُثْقَى،
أَنْتَ عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ حَتَّى تَمُوتَ»

(As for the garden, it represents Islam; as for the pole, it represents the pillar of Islam; and the handle represents the most trustworthy handhold. You shall remain Muslim until you die.)

This Companion was `Abdullah bin Salam."

This Hadith was also collected in the Two Sahih; and Al-Bukhari also recorded it with another chain of narration.

(اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ
إِلَى النُّورِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْلِيَائُهُمُ الطَّاغُوتُ
يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ أُولَئِكَ
أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ)

(257. Allah is the Wali (Protector or Guardian) of those who believe. He brings them out from darknesses into light. But as for those who disbelieve, their Awliya' (supporters and helpers) are Taghut (false deities and false leaders), they bring them out from light into darknesses. Those are the dwellers of the Fire, and they will abide therein forever.)

Allah stated that whoever follows what pleases Him, He will guide him to the paths of peace, that is Islam, or Paradise. Verily, Allah delivers His believing servants from the darkness of disbelief, doubt and hesitation, to the light of the plain, clear, explained, easy and unequivocal truth. He also stated that Shaytan is the supporter of the disbelievers who beautifies the paths of ignorance and misguidance that they follow, thus causing them to deviate from the true path into disbelief and wickedness.

(أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ)

(Those are the dwellers of the Fire, and they will abide therein forever.)

This is why Allah mentioned the light in the singular while mentioned the darkness in the plural, because truth is one, while disbelief comes as several types, all of which are false. Similarly, Allah said,

وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا
السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَن سَبِيلِهِ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُمْ بِهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ)

(And verily, this is my straight path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His path. This He has ordained for you that you may have Taqwa) 6:153 ,

(وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمَاتِ وَالنُّورَ)

(And originated the darknesses and the light) 6:1 , and,

(ظِلُّهُ عَنِ الِيمِينِ)

(to the right and to the lefts) 16: 48 .

There are many other Ayat on the subject that mention the truth in the singular and falsehood in the plural, because of falsehood's many divisions and branches.

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ أَنْ آتَاهُ
اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ
قَالَ أَنَا أَحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي
بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ
فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ)

(258. Have you not looked at him who disputed with Ibrahim about his Lord (Allah), because Allah had given him the kingdom When Ibrahim said (to him): "My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death." He said, "I give life and cause death." Ibrahim said, "Verily, Allah brings the sun from the east; then bring it you from the west." So the disbeliever was utterly defeated. And Allah guides not the people, who are wrongdoers.)

The Debate Between Ibrahim Al-Khalil and King Nimrod

The king who disputed with Ibrahim was King Nimrod, son of Canaan, son of Kush, son of Sam, son of Noah, as Mujahid stated. It was also said that he was Nimrod, son of Falikh, son of `Abir, son of Shalikh, son of Arfakhshand, son of Sam, son of Noah. Mujahid said, "The kings who ruled the eastern and western parts of the world are four, two believers and two disbelievers. As for the two believing kings, they were Sulayman bin Dawud and Dhul-Qarnayn. As for the two disbelieving kings, they were Nimrod and Nebuchadnezzar." Allah knows best.

Allah said,

(أَلَمْ تَرَ)

(Have you not looked) meaning, "With your heart, O Muhammad!"

(إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ)

(at him who disputed with Ibrahim about his Lord) meaning, about the existence of Allah. Nimrod denied the existence of a god other than himself, as he claimed, just as Fir`awn said later to his people,

(مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِي)

(I know not that you have a god other than me) 28:38 .

What made Nimrod commit this transgression, utter disbelief and arrant rebellion was his tyranny and the fact that he ruled for a long time. This is why the Ayah continued,

(أَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ)

(Because Allah had given him the kingdom.)

It appears that Nimrod asked Ibrahim to produce proof that Allah exists. Ibrahim replied,

(رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ)

(My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death) meaning, "The proof of Allah's existence is the creations that exist after they were nothing and perish after they had existed. This only proves the existence of the Creator, Who does what He wills, for these things could not have occurred on their own without a Creator who created them, and He is the Lord that I call to for worship, Alone without a partner."

This is when Nimrod said,

(أَنَا أَحْيَى وَأُمِيتُ)

(I give life and cause death.)

Qatadah, Muhammad bin Ishaq and As-Suddi said that he meant, "Two men who deserved execution were to be brought before me, and I would command that one of them be killed, and he would be killed. I would command that the second man be pardoned, and he would be pardoned. This is how I bring life and death." However, it appears that since Nimrod did not deny the existence of a Creator, his statement did not mean what Qatadah said it meant. This explanation does not provide an answer to what Ibrahim said. Nimrod arrogantly and defiantly claimed that he was the creator and pretended that it was he who brings life and death. Later on, Fir`awn imitated him and announced,

(مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِي)

(I know not that you have a god other than me) 28: 38 .

This is why Ibrahim said to Nimrod,

(فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ)

(Verily, Allah brings the sun from the east; then bring it you from the west.)

This Ayah means, "You claim that it is you who brings life and death. He who brings life and death controls the existence and creates whatever is in it, including controlling its planets and their movements. For instance, the sun rises everyday from the east. Therefore, if you were god, as you claimed, bringing life and death, then bring the sun from the west." Since the king was aware of his weakness, inadequacy and that he was not able to reply to Ibrahim's request, he was idle, silent and unable to comment. Therefore, the proof was established against him. Allah said,

(وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ)

(And Allah guides not the people, who are wrongdoers) meaning, Allah deprives the unjust people of any valid proof or argument. Furthermore, their false proof and arguments are annulled by their Lord, and they have earned His anger and will suffer severe torment.

The meaning that we provided is better than the meaning that some philosophers offered, claiming that Ibrahim used the second argument because it was clearer than the first one. Rather, our explanation asserts that Ibrahim refuted both claims of Nimrod, all praise is due to Allah.

As-Suddi stated that the debate between Ibrahim and Nimrod occurred after Ibrahim was thrown in the fire, for Ibrahim did not meet the king before that day.

(أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَى قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا قَالَ أَنَّى يُحْيِي هَذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ قَالَ لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالَ بَلْ لَبِثْتَ مِائَةَ عَامٍ فَانظُرْ إِلَى طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ وَانظُرْ إِلَى حِمَارِكَ وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَانظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)

(259. Or like the one who passed by a town in ruin up to its roofs. He said: "How will Allah ever bring it to life after its death" So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised him up (again). He said: "How long did you remain (dead)" He (the man) said: "(Perhaps) I remained (dead) a day or part of a day." He said: "Nay, you have remained (dead) for a hundred years, look at your food and your drink, they show no change; and look at your donkey! And thus We have made of you a sign for the people. Look at the bones, how We bring them together and clothe them with flesh." When this was clearly shown to him, he said, "I know (now) that Allah is able to do all things.")

The Story of ` Uzayr

Allah's statement ,

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ)

(Have you not looked at him who disputed with Ibrahim about his Lord) means, "Have you seen anyone like the person who disputed with Ibrahim about his Lord" Then, Allah connected the Ayah,

(أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَى قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا)

(Or like the one who passed by a town in ruin up to its roofs) to the Ayah above by using `or'.

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `Ali bin Abi Talib said that the Ayah 2:259 meant `Uzayr. Ibn Jarir also reported it, and this explanation was also reported by Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abi Hatim from Ibn `Abbas, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, As-Suddi and Sulayman bin Buraydah.

Mujahid bin Jabr said that the Ayah refers to a man from the Children of Israel, and the village was Jerusalem, after Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it and killed its people.

(وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ)

(in ruin) means, it became empty of people. Allah's statement,

(عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا)

(up to its roofs) indicates that the roofs and walls (of the village) fell to the ground. `Uzayr stood contemplating about what had happened to that city, after a great civilization used to inhabit it. He said,

(أَتَى يُحْيى هَذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا)

(Oh! How will Allah ever bring it to life after its death) because of the utter destruction he saw and the implausibility of its returning to what it used to be. Allah said,

(فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ)

(So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised him up (again).)

The city was rebuilt seventy years after the man (`Uzayr) died, and its inhabitants increased and the Children of Israel moved back to it. When Allah resurrected `Uzayr after he died, the first organ that He resurrected were his eyes, so that he could witness what Allah does with him, how He brings life back to his body. When his resurrection was complete, Allah said to him, meaning through the angel,

(كَمْ لَبِثْتَ قَالَ لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ)

("How long did you remain (dead)" He (the man) said: "(Perhaps) I remained (dead) a day or part of a day.")

The scholars said that since the man died in the early part of the day and Allah resurrected him in the latter part of the day, when he saw that the sun was still apparent, he thought that it was the sun of that very day. He said,

(أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالَ بَلْ لَبِثْتُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ فَانظُرْ إِلَى
طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ)

("Or part of a day. " He said: "Nay, you have remained (dead) for a hundred years, look at your food and your drink, they show no change.")

He had grapes, figs and juice, and he found them as he left them; neither did the juice spoil nor the figs become bitter nor the grapes rot.

(وَانظُرْ إِلَى حِمَارِكَ)

(And look at your donkey!), "How Allah brings it back to life while you are watching."

(وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ)

(And thus We have made of you a sign for the people) that Resurrection occurs.

(وَانظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا)

(Look at the bones, how We Nunshizuha) meaning, collect them and put them back together. In his Mustadrak, Al-Hakim, recorded that Kharijah bin Zayd bin Thabit said that his father said that the Messenger of Allah read this Ayah,

(كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا)

(how We Nunshizuha.) Al-Hakim said; "Its chain is Sahih and they (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) did not record it." The Ayah was also read,

()

"Nunshiruha" meaning, bring them back to life, as Mujahid stated.

(ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا)

(And clothe them with flesh.)

As-Suddi said, " Uzayr observed the bones of his donkey, which were scattered all around him to his right and left, and Allah sent a wind that collected the bones from all over the area. Allah then brought every bone to its place, until they formed a full donkey made of fleshless bones. Allah then covered these bones with flesh, nerves, veins and skin. Allah sent an angel who blew life in the donkeys' nostrils, and the donkey started to bray by Allah's leave." All this occurred while Uzayr was watching, and this is when he proclaimed,

(قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)

(He said, "I know (now) that Allah is able to do all things,") meaning, "I know that, and I did witness it with my own eyes. Therefore, I am the most knowledgeable in this matter among the people of my time."

(وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ
قَالَ أَوْلَمْ تُؤْمِنِ قَالَ بَلَىٰ وَلَكِن لِّيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي قَالَ
فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنَ الطَّيْرِ فَصُرْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ اجْعَلْ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ جَبَلٍ مِّنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا ثُمَّ ادْعُهُنَّ يَأْتِينَكَ
سَعْيًا وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ)

(260. And (remember) when Ibrahim said, "My Lord! Show me how You give life to the dead." He (Allah) said: "Do you not believe" He (Ibrahim) said: "Yes (I believe), but to be stronger in faith." He said: "Take four birds, then cause them to incline towards you (then slaughter them, cut them into pieces), and then put a portion of them on every hill, and call them, they will come to you in haste. And know that Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.")

The Khalil Supplicates to Allah to Show Him How He Resurrects the Dead

The scholars said that there are reasons behind this request by Ibrahim. For instance, when Ibrahim said to Nimrod,

(رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ)

(My Lord (Allah) is He Who gives life and causes death,) he wanted to solidify his knowledge about resurrection by actually witnessing it with his eyes. Prophet Ibrahim said,

(رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى قَالَ أَوْلَمْ تُؤْمِنِ
قَالَ بَلَىٰ وَلَكِن لِّيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي)

("My Lord! Show me how You give life to the dead." He (Allah) said: "Do you not believe" He (Ibrahim) said: "Yes (I believe), but to be stronger in faith.")

Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«نَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِالشَّكِّ مِنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِذْ قَالَ
(رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى قَالَ أَوْلَمْ تُؤْمِنِ
قَالَ بَلَىٰ وَلَكِن لِّيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي)

(We are more liable to be in doubt than Ibrahim when he said, "My Lord! Show me how You give life to the dead." Allah said, "Don't you believe" Ibrahim said, "Yes (I believe), but (I ask) in order to be stronger in faith.")

The Prophet's statement in the Hadith means, "We are more liable to seek certainty."

The Answer to Al-Khalil's Request

Allah said,

(قَالَ فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنَ الطَّيْرِ فَصُرْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ)

(He said: "Take four birds, then cause them to incline towards you.")

Scholars of Tafsir disagreed over the type of birds mentioned here, although this matter is not relevant due to the fact that the Qur'an did not mention it. Allah's statement,

(فَصُرْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ)

(cause them to incline towards you) means, cut them to pieces. This is the explanation of Ibn `Abbas, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Abu Malik, Abu Al-Aswad Ad-Dili, Wahb bin Munabbih, Al-Hasan and As-Suddi. Therefore, Ibrahim caught four birds, slaughtered them, removed the

feathers, tore the birds to pieces and mixed the pieces together. He then placed parts of these mixed pieces on four or seven hills. Ibn ` Abbas said, "Ibrahim kept the heads of these birds in his hand. Next, Allah commanded Ibrahim to call the birds to him, and he did as Allah commanded him. Ibrahim witnessed the feathers, blood and flesh of these birds fly to each other, and the parts flew each to their bodies, until every bird came back to life and came walking at a fast pace towards Ibrahim, so that the example that Ibrahim was witnessing would become more impressive. Each bird came to collect its head from Ibrahim's hand, and if he gave the bird another head the bird refused to accept it. When Ibrahim gave each bird its own head, the head was placed on its body by Allah's leave and power. " This is why Allah said,

(وَاعْلَمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ)

(And know that Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise) and no one can overwhelm or resist Him. Whatever Allah wills, occurs without hindrance, because He is the All-Mighty, Supreme above all things, and He is Wise in His statements, actions, legislation and decrees.

` Abdur-Razzaq recorded that Ma` mar said that Ayyub said that Ibn ` Abbas commented on what Ibrahim said,

(وَلَكِنْ لِيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي)

(but to be stronger in Faith), "To me, there is no Ayah in the Qur'an that brings more hope than this Ayah." Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Muhammad bin Al-Munkadir said that ` Abdullah bin ` Abbas met ` Abdullah bin ` Amr bin Al-` As and said to him, "Which Ayah in the Qur'an carries more hope for you" Ibn ` Amr said,

(قُلْ يَاعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا)

(Say: "O ` Ibadi (My servants) who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not.) 39:53 .

Ibn ` Abbas said, "But I say that it is Allah's statement,

(وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ قَالَ أُولَٰئِكَ ثَوَمِنَ قَالَ بَلَىٰ)

(And (remember) when Ibrahim said, "My Lord! Show me how You give life to the dead." He (Allah) said: "Do you not believe" He (Ibrahim) said: "Yes (I believe)...)

Allah accepted Ibrahim's affirmation when he merely said, 'Yes.' This Ayah refers to the doubts that attack the heart and the thoughts that Shaytan inspires." Al-Hakim also recorded this in Al-Mustadrak and said; "Its chain is Sahih but they did not record it."

(مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنبُلَةٍ مِائَةٌ حَبَّةٌ وَاللَّهُ يُضَعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَسِعَ عَلِيمٌ)

(261. The parable of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah, is that of a grain (of corn); it grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. Allah gives manifold increase to whom He wills. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.)

Rewards of Spending in Allah's Cause

This is a parable that Allah made of the multiplication of rewards for those who spend in His cause, seeking His pleasure. Allah multiplies the good deed ten to seven hundred times. Allah said,

(مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ)

(The parable of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah...)

Sa`id bin Jubayr commented, "Meaning spending in Allah's obedience." Makhul said that the Ayah means, "Spending on Jihad, on horse stalls, weapons and so forth." The parable in the Ayah is more impressive on the heart than merely mentioning the number seven hundred. This Ayah indicates that Allah 'grows' the good deeds for its doers, just as He grows the plant for whoever sows it in fertile land. The Sunnah also mentions that the deeds are multiplied up to seven hundred folds. For instance, Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Mas`ud said that a man once gave away a camel, with its bridle on, in the cause of Allah and the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَتَأْتِينَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِسَبْعِمِائَةِ نَاقَةٍ مَخْطُومَةٍ»

(On the Day of Resurrection, you will have seven hundred camels with their bridles.)

Muslim and An-Nasa'i also recorded this Hadith, and Muslim's narration reads, "A man brought a camel with its bridle on and said, 'O Messenger of Allah! This is in the sake of Allah.' The Messenger said,

«لَكَ بِهَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ سَبْعِمِائَةِ نَاقَةٍ»

(You will earn seven hundred camels as reward for it on the Day of Resurrection.)

Another Hadith: Ahmad recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«كُلُّ عَمَلٍ ابْنِ آدَمَ يُضَاعَفُ، الْحَسَنَةُ بِعَشْرِ أَمْثَالِهَا، إِلَى سَبْعِمِائَةٍ ضِعْفٍ، إِلَى مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ، يَقُولُ اللَّهُ: إِلَّا الصَّوْمَ فَإِنَّهُ لِي، وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ، يَدَعُ طَعَامَهُ وَشَهْوَتَهُ مِنْ أَجْلِي، وَاللصَّائِمِ فَرْحَتَانِ: فَرْحَةٌ عِنْدَ فِطْرِهِ وَفَرْحَةٌ عِنْدَ لِقَاءِ رَبِّهِ، وَلِخَلُوفٍ فَمِ الصَّائِمِ أَطْيَبُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ رِيحِ الْمِسْكِ، الصَّوْمُ جُنَّةٌ، الصَّوْمُ جُنَّةٌ»

(Every good deed that the son of Adam performs will be multiplied ten folds, to seven hundred folds, to many other folds, to as much as Allah wills. Allah said, "Except the fast, for it is for Me and I will reward for it. One abandons his food and desire in My sake." The fasting person has two times of happiness: when he breaks his fast and when he meets his Lord. Verily, the odor that comes from the mouth of whoever fasts is more pure to Allah than the scent of musk. Fasting is a shield (against sinning), fasting is a shield.) Muslim recorded this Hadith.

Allah's statement,

(وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ)

(Allah gives manifold increase to whom He wills) is according to the person's sincerity in his deeds.

(وَاللَّهُ وَسِعَ عَلِيمٌ)

(And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower) meaning, His Favor is so wide that it encompasses much more than His creation, and He has full knowledge in whoever deserves it, or does not deserve it. All the praise and thanks are due to Allah.

(الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا يُتَّبِعُونَ
مَا أَنْفَقُوا مَنًّا وَلَا أَدَىٰ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا
خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ
وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتَّبِعَهَا أَدَىٰ وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ
حَلِيمٌ يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تُبْطِلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ
بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَدَىٰ كَالَّذِي يُنْفِقُ مَالَهُ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا
يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ
عَلَيْهِ تُرَابٌ فَأَصَابَهُ وَابِلٌ فَتَرَكَهُ صَلْدًا لَا
يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي
الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ)

(262. Those who spend their wealth in the cause of Allah, and do not follow up their gifts with reminders of their generosity or with injury, their reward is with their Lord. On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.) (263. Kind words and forgiving of faults are better than Sadaqah (charity) followed by injury. And Allah is Rich (free of all needs) and He is Most Forbearing.) (264. O you who believe! Do not render in vain your Sadaqah (charity) by reminders of your generosity or by injury, like him who spends his wealth to be seen of men, and he does not believe in Allah, nor in the Last Day. His likeness is the likeness of a smooth rock on which is a little dust; on it falls heavy rain which leaves it bare. They are not able to do anything with what they have earned. And Allah does not guide the disbelieving people.)

To Remind About Charity Given is Forbidden

Allah praises those who spend from their money in His cause, and then refrain from reminding those who received the charity of that fact, whether these hints take the form of words or actions.

Allah's statement,

(وَلَا أَدَىٰ)

(or with injury), indicates that they do not cause harm to those whom they gave the charity to, for this harm will only annul the charity. Allah next promised them the best rewards for this good deed,

(لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ)

(their reward is with their Lord), indicating that Allah Himself will reward them for these righteous actions. Further,

(وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ)

(On them shall be no fear) regarding the horrors of the Day of Resurrection,

(وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ)

(nor shall they grieve) regarding the offspring that they leave behind and the adornment and delights of this world. They will not feel sorry for this, because they will acquire what is far better for them.

Allah then said,

(قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ)

(Kind words) meaning, compassionate words and a supplication for Muslims,

(وَمَغْفِرَةٌ)

(and forgiving) meaning, forgiving an injustice that took the form of actions or words,

(خَيْرٌ مِّنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَا أَذَى)

(are better than Sadaqah (charity) followed by injury.)

(وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ)

(And Allah is Rich) not needing His creation,

(حَلِيمٌ)

(Most Forbearing) forgives, releases and pardons them.

There are several Hadiths that prohibit reminding people of acts of charity. For instance, Muslim recorded that Abu Dharr said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَلَا يَنْظُرُ
إِلَيْهِمْ، وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ، وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ: الْمَنَانُ بِمَا
أَعْطَى، وَالْمُسْبِلُ إِزَارَهُ، وَالْمُنْفِقُ سِلْعَتَهُ بِالْحَلْفِ
الْكَاذِبِ»

(Three persons whom Allah shall neither speak to on the Day of Resurrection nor look at nor purify, and they shall receive a painful torment: he who reminds (the people) of what he gives away, he who lengthens his clothes below the ankles and he who swears an oath while lying, to sell his merchandise.)

This is why Allah said,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تُبْطِلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ
وَالْأَذَى)

(O you who believe! Do not render in vain your Sadaqah (charity) by reminders of your generosity or by injury) stating that the charity will be rendered in vain if it is followed by harm or reminders. In this case, the reward of giving away charity is not sufficient enough to nullify the harm and reminders. Allah then said,

(كَالَّذِي يُنْفِقُ مَالَهُ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ)

(like him who spends his wealth to be seen of men) meaning, "Do not nullify your acts of charity by following them with reminders and harm, just like the charity of those who give it to show off to people." The boasting person pretends to give away charity for Allah's sake, but in reality seeks to gain people's praise and the reputation of being kind or generous, or other material gains of this life. All the while, he does not think about Allah or gaining His pleasure and generous rewards, and this is why Allah said,

(وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ)

(and he does not believe in Allah, nor in the Last Day.)

Allah next set the example of whoever gives charity to show off. Ad-Dahhak commented that the example fits one who follows his acts of charity with reminders or harm. Allah said,

(فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانَ)

(His likeness is the likeness of Safwan) where Safwan, from is Safwanah, meaning 'the smooth rocks,'

(عَلَيْهِ تُرَابٌ فَاَصَابَهُ وَاَيْلٌ)

(on which is little dust; on it falls a Wabil) meaning, heavy rain,

(فَتَرَكَهُ صَلْدًا)

(which leaves it bare.) This Ayah means that heavy rain left the Safwan completely barren of dust. Such is the case with Allah's action regarding the work of those who show off, as their deeds are bound to vanish and disappear, even though people think that these deeds are as plentiful as specks of dust. So Allah said,

(لَا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ)

(They are not able to do anything with what they have earned. And Allah does not guide the disbelieving people.)

(وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ
وَتَنْبِيئًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ أَصَابَهَا
وَاَيْلٌ فَأَتَتْ أَخْلَهَا ضِعْفَيْنِ فَإِن لَّمْ يُصِبْهَا وَاَيْلٌ
فَطُلٌّ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ)

(265. And the parable of those who spend their wealth seeking Allah's pleasure while they in their own selves are sure and certain that Allah will reward them (for their spending in His cause), is that of a garden on a height; heavy rain falls on it and it doubles its yield of harvest. And if it does not receive heavy rain, light rain suffices it. And Allah is All-Seer (knows well) of what you do.) This is the example of the believers who give away charity seeking only Allah's pleasure,

(وَتَثْبِيئًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ)

(while they in their own selves are sure and certain) meaning, they are certain that Allah shall reward them for these righteous acts with the best rewards. Similarly, in a Hadith collected by Al-Bukhari and Muslim, the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا»

(Whoever fasts Ramadan with faith and expectation...) meaning, believing that Allah commanded the fast, all the while awaiting His reward for fasting it.

Allah's statement,

(كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ)

(is that of a garden on a Rabwah) means, the example of a garden on 'a height above the ground', as the majority of scholars have stated. Ibn `Abbas and Ad-Dahhak added that it also has flowing rivers.

Allah's statement,

(أَصَابَهَا وَايُّ)

(Wabil falls on it) means, heavy rain as we stated, So it produces its,

(أَكْلَهَا)

(yield of harvest) meaning, fruits or produce,

(ضِعْفَيْنِ)

(doubles), as compared to other gardens.

(فَإِنْ لَمْ يُصِْبْهَا وَابِلٌ فَطَلٌّ)

(And if it does not receive Wabil, a Tall suffices it.)

Ad-Dahhak said that the `Tall' is light rain. The Ayah indicates that the garden on the Rabwah is always fertile, for if heavy rain does not fall on it, light rain will suffice for it. Such is the case regarding the believer's good deeds, for they never become barren. Rather, Allah accepts the believer's righteous deeds and increases them, each according to his deeds. This is why Allah said next,

(وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ)

(And Allah is All-Seer of what you do) meaning, none of His servants' deeds ever escapes His perfect watch.

(أَيُّوَدُّ أَحَدَكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونَ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ مِّنْ نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ لَهُ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ
وَأَصَابَهُ الْكِبَرُ وَلَهُ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضِعْفًا فَأَصَابَهَا
إِعْصَارٌ فِيهِ نَارٌ فَاحْتَرَقَتْ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ
الآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ)

(266. Would any of you wish to have a garden with date palms and vines, with rivers flowing underneath, and all kinds of fruits for him therein, while he is stricken with old age, and his children are weak (not able to look after themselves), then it is struck with a fiery whirlwind, so that it is burnt Thus does Allah make clear His Ayat to you that you may give thought.)

The Example of Evil Deeds Nullifying Good Deeds

Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn `Abbas and `Ubayd bin `Umayr said that `Umar bin Al-Khattab asked the Companions of the Messenger of Allah, "According to your opinion, about whom was this Ayah revealed,

(أَيُّوَدُّ أَحَدَكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونَ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ مِّنْ نَّخِيلٍ
وَأَعْنَابٍ)

(Would any of you wish to have a garden with date palms and vines...).

They said, "Allah knows best." `Umar became angry and said, "Say we know or we do not know." Ibn `Abbas said, "O Leader of the Faithful! I have an opinion about it." `Umar said, "O my nephew! Say your opinion and do not belittle yourself." Ibn `Abbas said, "This is an example set for a deed." `Umar said, "What type of deed" Ibn `Abbas said, "For a wealthy man who works in Allah's pleasure and then Allah sends Shaytan to him, and he works in disobedience, until he annuls his good works."

This Hadith suffices as an explanation for the Ayah, for it explains the example it sets by a person who does good first and then follows it with evil, may Allah save us from this end. So, this man annulled his previous good works with his latter evil works. When he desperately needed the deeds of the former type, there were none. This is why Allah said,

وَأَصَابَهُ الْكِبَرُ وَلَهُ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَاءُ فَأَصَابَهَا
إِعْصَارٌ

(while he is stricken with old age, and his children are weak (not able to look after themselves), then it is struck with a whirlwind) with heavy wind,

(فِيهِ نَارٌ فَاحْتَرَقَتْ)

(that is fiery, so that it is burnt) meaning, its fruits were burnt and its trees were destroyed. Therefore, what will his condition be like

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said, "Allah has set a good parable, and all His parables are good. He said,

(أَيُّودٌ أَحَدَكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونَ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ مِّنْ نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ لَهُ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ
الثَّمَرَاتِ)

(Would any of you wish to have a garden with date palms and vines, with rivers flowing underneath, and all kinds of fruits for him therein.)

But he lost all this in his old age,

(وَأَصَابَهُ الْكِبَرُ)

(while he is stricken with old age) while his offspring and children are weak just before the end of his life. Then a lightning storm came and destroyed his garden. Then he did not have the strength to grow another garden, nor did his offspring offer enough help. This is the condition of the disbeliever on the Day of Resurrection when he returns to Allah, for he will not have any good deeds to provide an excuse - or refuge - for him, just as the man in the parable had no strength to replant the garden. The disbeliever will not find anything to resort to for help, just as the offspring of the man in the parable did not provide him with help. So he will be deprived of his reward when he most needs it, just as the man in the parable was deprived of Allah's garden when he most needed it, when he became old and his offspring weak."

In his Mustadrak, Al-Hakim recorded that the Messenger of Allah used to say in his supplication,

«اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ أَوْسَعَ رِزْقِكَ عَلَيَّ عِنْدَ كِبَرِ سِنِّي
وَإِنْقِضَاءِ عُمْرِي»

(O Allah! Make Your biggest provision for me when I am old in age and at the time my life ends.)

This is why Allah said,

كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ

(Thus Allah makes clear to you His Laws in order that you may give thought) meaning, comprehend and understand the parables and their intended implications. Similarly, Allah said,

وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا
الْعَالِمُونَ

(And these similitudes We put forward for mankind; but none will understand them except those who have knowledge (of Allah and His signs)) 29:43 .

يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنفِقُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ
وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا
الْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُمْ بِأَخْذِيهِ إِلَّا أَنْ
تُعْمِضُوا فِيهِ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ

الشَّيْطَانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِالْفَحْشَاءِ وَاللَّهُ
يَعِدُكُم مَّغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلًا وَاللَّهُ وَسِعَ عَلِيمٌ

(يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ
أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ)

(267. O you who believe! Spend of the good things which you have (legally) earned, and of that which We have produced from the earth for you, and do not aim at that which is bad to spend from it, (though) you would not accept it save if you close your eyes and tolerate therein. And know that Allah is Rich (free of all needs), and worthy of all praise.) (268. Shaytan threatens you with poverty and orders you to commit Fahsha' (evil deeds) whereas Allah promises you forgiveness from Himself and bounty, and Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.) (269. He grants Hikmah to whom He wills, and he, to whom Hikmah is granted, is indeed granted abundant good. But none remember (will receive admonition) except men of understanding.)

The Encouragement to Spend Honest Money for Allah's Sake

Allah commands His believing servants to spend in charity, as Ibn ` Abbas stated, from the pure, honest money that they earned and from the fruits and vegetables that He has grown for them in the land. Ibn ` Abbas said, "Allah commanded them to spend from the purest, finest and best types of their money and prohibited spending from evil and dishonest money, because Allah is pure and good and only accepts that which is pure and good." This is why Allah said,

(وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا الْخَبِيثَ)

(and do not aim at that which is bad) meaning, filthy (impure) money,

(مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُمْ بِأَخْذِيهِ)

(to spend from it, (though) you would not accept it) meaning, "If you were given this type, you would not take it, except if you tolerate the deficiency in it. Verily, Allah is far Richer than you, He is in no need of this money, so do not give, for His sake, what you would dislike for yourselves." It was reported that,

(وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا الْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ)

(and do not aim at that which is bad to spend from it) means, "Do not spend from the dishonest, impure money instead of the honest, pure money."

Ibn Jarir recorded that Al-Bara' bin `Azib commented on Allah's statement,

(يَأْيَهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنْفِقُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ
وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا
الْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ)

(O you who believe! Spend of the good things which you have (legally) earned, and of that which We have produced from the earth for you, and do not aim at that which is bad to spend from it,) that it was revealed about the Ansar. When the season for harvesting date-trees would start, the Ansar would collect ripe-date branches from their gardens and hang them on a rope erected between two pillars in the Masjid of the Messenger of Allah. The poor emigrant Companions would eat from these dates. However, some of them (Ansar) would also add lesser type of dates in between ripe-date branches, thinking they are allowed to do so. Allah revealed this Ayah about those who did this,

(وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا الْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ)

(and do not aim at that which is bad to spend from it.)

`Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas commented on the Ayah,

(وَلَسْتُمْ بِأَخْذِيهِ إِلَّا أَنْ تُغْمِضُوا فِيهِ)

(you would not accept it save if you close your eyes and tolerate therein) means, "If you had a right on someone who would pay you less than what you gave them, you would not agree until you require more from them to make up the difference. This is why Allah said,

(إِلَّا أَنْ تُغْمِضُوا فِيهِ)

(save if you close your eyes and tolerate therein) meaning, `How do you agree for Me what you do not agree for yourselves, while I have a right to the best and most precious of your possessions" Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Jarir recorded this Hadith and Ibn Jarir added, "And this is the meaning of Allah's statement,

(لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ)

(By no means shall you attain Al-Birr, unless you spend of that which you love)" 4:92

Allah said next,

(وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ)

(And know that Allah is Rich (free of all needs), and worthy of all praise) meaning, "Although Allah commanded you to give away the purest of your money in charity, He is far Richer from needing your charity, but the purpose is that the distance between the rich and the poor becomes less." Similarly, Allah said,

(لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَاؤُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ
التَّقْوَىٰ مِنْكُمْ)

(It is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah, but it is piety from you that reaches Him) 22:37 .

Allah is Rich and free of needing anything from any of His creatures, while all of His creatures stand in need of Him. Allah's bounty encompassing, and what He has never ends. Therefore, whoever gives away good and pure things in charity, let him know that Allah is the Most Rich, His favor is enormous and He is Most Generous, Most Compassionate; and He shall reward him for his charity and multiply it many times. So who would lend to He Who is neither poor nor unjust, Who is worthy of all praise in all His actions, statements, and decisions, of Whom there is neither a deity worthy of worship except Him, nor a Lord other than Him

Shaytan's Doubts Concerning Spending in Charity

Allah said,

(الشَّيْطَانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ وَاللَّهُ
يَعِدُكُمْ مَغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلًا وَاللَّهُ وَسِعَ عَلِيمٌ)

(Shaytan threatens you with poverty and orders you to commit Fahsha'; whereas Allah promises you forgiveness from Himself and bounty, and Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.)

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ لِلشَّيْطَانِ لَمَّةً بِابْنِ آدَمَ، وَلِلْمَلَكِ لَمَّةً، فَأَمَّا لَمَّةُ الشَّيْطَانِ فَايْعَادُ بِالشَّرِّ، وَتَكْذِيبُ بِالحَقِّ، وَ أَمَّا لَمَّةُ الْمَلَكِ فَايْعَادُ بِالخَيْرِ، وَتَصْدِيقُ بِالحَقِّ، فَمَنْ وَجَدَ ذَلِكَ فَلْيَعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ، فَلْيَحْمَدِ اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ وَجَدَ الأُخْرَى فَلْيَتَعَوَّذْ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ»

(Shaytan has an effect on the son of Adam, and the angel also has an effect. As for the effect of Shaytan, it is by his threatening with evil repercussions and rejecting the truth. As for the effect of the angel, it is by his promise of a good end and believing in the truth. Whoever finds the latter, let him know that it is coming from Allah and let him thank Allah for it. Whoever finds the former, let him seek refuge - with Allah - from Shaytan.)

The Prophet then recited,

(الشَّيْطَانُ يَعْذُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالفَحْشَاءِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْذُكُم مَّغْفِرَةً مِنْهُ وَفَضْلاً)

(Shaytan threatens you with poverty and orders you to commit Fahsha'; whereas Allah promises you forgiveness from Himself and bounty)

This is the narration that At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i collected in the book of Tafsir in their Sunan collections. Allah said,

(الشَّيْطَانُ يَعْذُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ)

(Shaytan threatens you with poverty), so that you hold on to whatever you have and refrain from spending it in Allah's pleasure.

(وَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالفَحْشَاءِ)

(And orders you to commit Fahsha'), meaning, "Shaytan forbids you from spending in charity because of the false fear of becoming poor, and he encourages evil deeds, sins, indulging in what is prohibited, and immoral conduct." Allah said,

(وَاللَّهُ يَعِدُكُمْ مَغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ)

(Whereas Allah promises you forgiveness from Himself) instead of the evil that Shaytan enjoins on you,

(وَفَضْلًا)

(And Bounty) as opposed to the poverty that Shaytan frightens you with,

(وَاللَّهُ وَسِعَ عَلِيمٌ)

(And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.)

The Meaning of Al-Hikmah

Allah said,

(يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ)

(He grants Hikmah to whom He wills.)

`Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "That is knowledge of the Qur'an. For instance, the abrogating and the abrogated, what is plain and clear and what is not as plain and clear, what it allows, and what it does not allow, and its parables." Imam Ahmad recorded that Ibn Mas`ud said that he heard the Messenger of Allah saying,

«لَا حَسَدَ إِلَّا فِي اثْنَتَيْنِ: رَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا
فَسَلَّطَهُ عَلَىٰ هَلَكَاتِهِ فِي الْحَقِّ، وَرَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ
حِكْمَةً فَهُوَ يَقْضِي بِهَا وَيُعَلِّمُهَا»

(There is no envy except in two instances: a person whom Allah has endowed with wealth and he spends it righteously, and a person whom Allah has given Hikmah and he judges by it and teaches it to others.)

This was also collected by Al-Bukhari, Muslim, An-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah.

Allah's statement,

(وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ)

(But none remember (will receive admonition) except men of understanding.) means, "Those who will benefit from the advice are those who have sound minds and good comprehension with which they understand the words (of advice and reminder) and their implications."

(وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ نَفَقَةٍ أَوْ نَذَرْتُمْ مِنْ نَذْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهَا وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ - إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنْكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ)

(270. And whatever you spend for spendings (e.g., in Sadaqah) or whatever vow you make, be sure Allah knows it all. And for the wrongdoers there are no helpers.) (271. If you disclose your Sadaqat (almsgiving), it is well; but if you conceal them and give them to the poor, that is better for you. (Allah) will expiate you some of your sins. And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do.)

Allah states that He has perfect knowledge of the good deeds performed by all of His creation, such as charity and various vows, and He rewards tremendously for these deeds, provided they are performed seeking His Face and His promise. Allah also warns those who do not work in his obedience, but instead disobey His command, reject His revelation and worship others besides Him:

(وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ)

(And for the wrongdoers there are no helpers.) meaning, who will save them from Allah's anger and torment on the Day of Resurrection.

The Virtue of Disclosing or Concealing Charity

Allah said,

(إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ)

(If you disclose your Sadaqat, it is well) meaning, "It is well if you make known the charity that you give away."

Allah's statement,

(وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ)

(But if you conceal them and give them to the poor, that is better for you.) this indicates that concealing charity is better than disclosing it, because it protects one from showing off and boasting. However, if there is an apparent wisdom behind disclosing the charity, such as the people imitating this righteous act, then disclosing it becomes better than concealing it. The Messenger of Allah said,

«الْجَاهِرُ بِالْقُرْآنِ كَالْجَاهِرِ بِالصَّدَقَةِ، وَالْمُسِرُّ بِالْقُرْآنِ كَالْمُسِرِّ بِالصَّدَقَةِ»

(He who utters aloud Qur'anic recitation is just like he who discloses charity acts. He who conceals Qur'anic recitation is just like he who conceals charity acts.)

The Ayah indicates that it is better that acts of charity be concealed, as reiterated by the Hadith that the Two Sahih recorded from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah said,

«سَبْعَةٌ يُظِلُّهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظِلِّهِ يَوْمَ لَا ظِلَّ إِلَّا ظِلُّهُ: إِمَامٌ عَادِلٌ، وَشَابٌّ نَشَأَ فِي عِبَادَةِ اللَّهِ، وَرَجُلَانِ تَحَابَّا فِي اللَّهِ، اجْتَمَعَا عَلَيْهِ وَتَفَرَّقَا عَلَيْهِ، وَرَجُلٌ قَلْبُهُ مُعَلَّقٌ بِالْمَسْجِدِ، إِذَا خَرَجَ مِنْهُ حَتَّى يَرْجِعَ إِلَيْهِ، وَرَجُلٌ ذَكَرَ اللَّهَ خَالِيًا فَفَاضَتْ عَيْنَاهُ، وَرَجُلٌ دَعَتْهُ امْرَأَةٌ ذَاتُ مَنْصِبٍ وَجَمَالٍ، فَقَالَ: إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَرَجُلٌ تَصَدَّقَ

بِصَدَقَةٍ فَأَخْفَاهَا، حَتَّىٰ لَا تَعْلَمَ شِمَالُهُ مَا تُنْفِقُ
يَمِينُهُ»

(Allah will give shade to seven on the Day when there will be no shade but His. (They are:) a just ruler, a youth who has been brought up in the worship of Allah, two persons who love each other only for Allah's sake who meet and part in Allah's cause only, a man whose heart is attached to the Masjid from the time he departs the Masjid until he returns to it, a person who remembers Allah in seclusion and his eyes are then flooded with tears, a man who refuses the call of a charming woman of noble birth for illicit intercourse with her and says, 'I fear Allah, Lord of the worlds', and a man who gives charitable gifts so secretly that his left hand does not know what his right hand has given.)

Allah's statement,

(وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنْكُمْ مِّنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ)

((Allah) will expiate you some of your sins) means, in return for giving away charity, especially if it was concealed. Therefore, you will gain goodness by your rank being raised, and your sins being forgiven.

Allah's statement,

(وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ)

(And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do) means, "No good deed that you perform escapes His knowledge, and He shall reward for it."

(لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَاهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَأَنفُسِكُمْ وَمَا تُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا
ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللَّهِ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُؤَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ
وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظَلَمُونَ - لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَحْصَرُوا فِي
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ضَرْبًا فِي الْأَرْضِ
يَحْسِبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ تَعْرِفُهُمْ

بِسِيمِهِمْ لَا يَسْأَلُونَ النَّاسَ إِحْقَاقًا وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ
خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ - الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ
بِالْأَيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ
رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ)

(272. Not upon you (Muhammad) is their guidance, but Allah guides whom He wills. And whatever you spend in good, it is for yourselves, when you spend not except seeking Allah's Face. And whatever you spend in good, it will be repaid to you in full, and you shall not be wronged.) (273. (Charity is) for Fuqara' (the poor), who in Allah's cause are restricted (from travel), and cannot move about in the land (for trade or work). The one who knows them not, thinks that they are rich because of their modesty. You may know them by their mark, they do not beg of people at all. And whatever you spend in good, surely Allah knows it well.) (274. Those who spend their wealth (in Allah's cause) by night and day, in secret and in public, they shall have their reward with their Lord. On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.)

Giving Charity to Polytheists

Abu `Abdur-Rahman An-Nasa'i recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that they, "Disliked giving charity to their polytheist relatives, but were later on allowed to give it to them when they inquired about this matter, and this Ayah was revealed,

(لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَاهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَمَا تُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا
ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللَّهِ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُوفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ
وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ)

(Not upon you (Muhammad) is their guidance, but Allah guides whom He wills. And whatever you spend in good, it is for yourselves, when you spend not except seeking Allah's Face. And whatever you spend in good, it will be repaid to you in full, and you shall not be wronged.)

Allah's statement,

(وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَأَنْفُسِكُمْ)

(And whatever you spend in good, it is for yourselves) is similar to His other statement,

(مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ)

(Whosoever does righteous good deed, it is for (the benefit of) his ownself.)

There are many other similar Ayat in the Qur'an.

Allah said next,

(وَمَا تُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللَّهِ)

(When you spend not except seeking Allah's Face.)

Al-Hasan Al-Basri commented, "Whenever the believer spends, including what he spends on himself, he seeks Allah's Face with it." `Ata' Al-Khurasani said that the Ayah means, "You give away charity for the sake of Allah. Therefore, you will not be asked about the deeds or wickedness of those who receive it." This is a sound meaning indicating that when one spends in charity for Allah's sake, then his reward will be with Allah. He will not be asked if the charity unintentionally reached righteous, evil, deserving or undeserving persons, for he will be rewarded for his good intention. The proof to this statement is the Ayah,

(وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُوفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ)

(And whatever you spend in good, it will be repaid to you in full, and you shall not be wronged.)

The Two Sahihs recorded a Hadith by Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah said,

«قَالَ رَجُلٌ: لَأَتَصَدَّقَنَّ اللَّيْلَةَ بِصَدَقَةٍ، فَخَرَجَ بِصَدَقَتِهِ فَوَضَعَهَا فِي يَدِ زَانِيَةٍ، فَأَصْبَحَ النَّاسُ يُتَحَدَّثُونَ: نُصَدِّقَ عَلَى زَانِيَةٍ، فَقَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ عَلَى زَانِيَةٍ، لَأَتَصَدَّقَنَّ اللَّيْلَةَ بِصَدَقَةٍ، فَخَرَجَ بِصَدَقَتِهِ فَوَضَعَهَا فِي يَدِ غَنِيٍّ، فَأَصْبَحُوا

يَتَحَدَّثُونَ: نُصَدِّقَ اللَّيْلَةَ عَلَى غَنِيِّ، قَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ
لَكَ الْحَمْدُ عَلَى غَنِيِّ، لَأَتَصَدَّقَنَّ اللَّيْلَةَ بِصَدَقَةٍ،
فَخَرَجَ بِصَدَقَتِهِ فَوَضَعَهَا فِي يَدِ سَارِقٍ،
فَأَصْبَحُوا يَتَحَدَّثُونَ: نُصَدِّقَ اللَّيْلَةَ عَلَى سَارِقٍ،
فَقَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ عَلَى زَانِيَةٍ، وَعَلَى غَنِيِّ،
وَعَلَى سَارِقٍ. فَأْتِيَ فَقِيلَ لَهُ: أَمَا صَدَقْتُكَ فَقَدْ
قُبِلَتْ، وَأَمَا الزَّانِيَةُ فَلَعَلَّهَا أَنْ تَسْتَعِفَّ بِهَا عَنْ
زَنَاهَا، وَلَعَلَّ الْغَنِيَّ يَعْتَبِرُ فَيُنْفِقُ مِمَّا أَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ،
وَلَعَلَّ السَّارِقَ أَنْ يَسْتَعِفَّ بِهَا عَنْ سَرَاقَتِهِ»

(A man said, "Tonight, I shall give charity." He went out with his charity and (unknowingly) gave it to an adulteress. The next morning the people said that alms were given to an adulteress. The man said, "O Allah! All the praises are for You. (I gave my alms) to an adulteress. Tonight, I shall give alms again." He went out with his charity and (unknowingly) gave it to a rich person. The next morning (the people) said, "Last night, a wealthy person was given alms." He said, "O Allah! All the praises are for You. (I gave alms) to a wealthy man. Tonight, I shall again give charity." So he went out with his charity and (unknowingly) gave it to a thief. The next morning (the people) said, "Last night, a thief was given alms." He said, "O Allah! All the praises are for You. (I have given alms) to an adulteress, a wealthy man and a thief." Then, someone came to him and said, "The alms that you gave away were accepted. As for the adulteress, the alms might make her abstain from adultery. As for the wealthy man, it might make him take a lesson and spend his wealth that Allah has given him. As for the thief, it might make him abstain from stealing.")

Who Deserves Charity

Allah said,

(لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَحْصِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ)

((Charity is) for the poor, who in Allah's cause are restricted (from travel)) meaning, the migrants who migrated to Allah and His Messenger, resided in Al-Madinah and did not have resources that sufficiently provided them with their needs,

(لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ضَرْبًا فِي الْأَرْضِ)

(And cannot Darban (move about) in the land) meaning, "They cannot travel in the land to seek means of livelihood." Allah said in other instances using a variation of the word Darban

(وَإِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ)

(And when you (Muslims) travel in the land, there is no sin on you if you shorten the Salah (the prayer)) 4:101 , and,

(أَنْ سَيَكُونُ مِنْكُمْ مَرْضَىٰ وَعَاخِرُونَ يَضْرِبُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَبْتَغُونَ مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَعَاخِرُونَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَاقْرَأُوا)

(He knows that there will be some among you sick, others traveling through the land, seeking of Allah's bounty, yet others fighting in Allah's cause) 73:20 .

Allah then said,

(يَحْسِبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ)

(The one who knows them not, thinks that they are rich because of their modesty) meaning, those who do not know their situation think that they are well-off, because they are modest in their clothes and speech. There is a Hadith with this meaning that the Two Sahih recorded from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَيْسَ الْمِسْكِينُ بِهَذَا الطَّوَّافِ الَّذِي تَرُدُّهُ التَّمْرَةُ
وَالنَّمْرَتَانِ، وَاللُّقْمَةُ وَاللُّقْمَتَانِ، وَالْأَكْلَةُ
وَالْأَكْلَتَانِ، وَلَكِنَّ الْمِسْكِينُ الَّذِي لَا يَجِدُ غِنَىٰ

يُغْنِيهِ، وَلَا يُقْطَنُ لَهُ فَيُتَصَدَّقَ عَلَيْهِ، وَلَا يَسْأَلُ
النَّاسَ شَيْئًا»

(The Miskin (needy) is not he who wanders about and whose need is sufficed by a date or two, a bite or two or a meal or two. Rather, the Miskin is he who neither has enough resources to sustain him, all the while people are unaware of his need so they do not give to him, nor does he ask people for anything.)

Imam Ahmad also recorded this Hadith from Ibn Mas'ud.

Allah's statement,

(تَعْرِفُهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ)

(You may know them by their mark) means, "Those who have good minds discover their situation," just as Allah said in other instances,

(سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ)

(The mark of them (i.e. of their faith) is on their faces) 48:29 , and,

(وَلَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ فِي لَحْنِ الْقَوْلِ)

(But surely, you will know them by the tone of their speech!) 47:30 . Allah's statement,

(لَا يَسْأَلُونَ النَّاسَ إِحْقَاقًا)

(they do not beg of people at all) means, they do not beg and, thus, do not require people to provide them with more than what they actually need. Indeed, those who ask people for help, while having what suffices for their needs, have begged.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Sa' id said, "My mother sent me to the Messenger of Allah to ask him for help, but when I came by him I sat down. The Prophet faced me and said to me,

«مَنْ اسْتَعْنَىٰ أَغْنَاهُ اللَّهُ، وَمَنْ اسْتَعَفَّ أَعَقَّهُ اللَّهُ،
وَمَنْ اسْتَكْفَىٰ كَفَّاهُ اللَّهُ، وَمَنْ سَأَلَ وَلَهُ قِيَمَةٌ أَوْ قِيَّةٍ
فَقَدْ أَحْفَ»

(Whoever felt satisfied, then Allah will enrich him. Whoever is modest, Allah will make him decent. Whoever is content, then Allah will suffice for him. Whoever asks people, while having a small amount, he will have begged the people.)

Abu Sa`id said, "I said to myself, 'I have a camel, Al-Yaqutah, and indeed, it is worth more than a small amount.' And I went back without asking the Prophet for anything." This is the same wording for this Hadith collected by Abu Dawud and An-Nasa'i.

Allah's statement,

(وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ)

(And whatever you spend in good, surely Allah knows it well) indicates that no charity escapes Him, and He will reward it fully and perfectly on the Day of Resurrection, when it is most desperately needed.

Praise for those who Spend in Charity

Allah said,

(الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ سِرًّا
وَعَلَانِيَةً قَلَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ)

(Those who spend their wealth (in Allah's cause) by night and day, in secret and in public, they shall have their reward with their Lord. On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.)

This Ayah praises those who spend in charity for Allah's sake, seeking His pleasure, day and night, publicly and in secret, including what one spends on his family. The Two Sahihs recorded that the Messenger of Allah said to Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas:

«وَإِنَّكَ لَنْ تُنْفِقَ نَفَقَةً تَبْتَغِي بِهَا وَجْهَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا
ازْدَدْتَ بِهَا دَرَجَةً وَرَفَعَةً، حَتَّىٰ مَا تَجْعَلُ فِي فِي
امْرَأَتِكَ»

(You will not spend charity with which you seek Allah's Face, but you will ascend a higher degree and status because of it, including what you put in your wife's mouth.)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Mas'ud said that the Prophet said,

«إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمَ إِذَا أَنْفَقَ عَلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ نَفَقَةً يَحْتَسِبُهَا،
كَانَتْ لَهُ صَدَقَةً»

(When the Muslim spends on his family while awaiting the reward for it from Allah, it will be written as charity for him.)

Al-Bukhari and Muslim also recorded this Hadith.

Allah said,

(قَلْبُهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ)

(shall have their reward with their Lord), on the Day of Resurrection, as reward for what they spent in acts of obedience. We previously explained the Ayah,

(فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ)

(there shall be no fear on them nor shall they grieve.)

(الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ
الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا
إِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبَا وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ

الرِّبَّوْا فَمَنْ جَاءَهُ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِ فَانْتَهَى فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ)

(275. Those who eat Riba will not stand (on the Day of Resurrection) except like the standing of a person beaten by Shaytan leading him to insanity. That is because they say: "Trading is only like Riba," whereas Allah has permitted trading and forbidden Riba. So whosoever receives an admonition from his Lord and stops eating Riba, shall not be punished for the past; his case is for Allah (to judge); but whoever returns (to Riba), such are the dwellers of the Fire they will Abide therein.)

The Punishment for Dealing with Riba (Interest and Usury)

After Allah mentioned the righteous believers who give charity, pay Zakah and spend on their relatives and families at various times and conditions, He then mentioned those who deal in usury and illegally acquire people's money, using various evil methods and wicked ways. Allah describes the condition of these people when they are resurrected from their graves and brought back to life on the Day of Resurrection:

(الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ
الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ)

(Those who eat Riba will not stand (on the Day of Resurrection) except like the standing of a person beaten by Shaytan leading him to insanity.)

This Ayah means, on the Day of Resurrection, these people will get up from their graves just as the person afflicted by insanity or possessed by a demon would. Ibn `Abbas said, "On the Day of Resurrection, those who consume Riba will be resurrected while insane and suffering from seizures." Ibn Abi Hatim also recorded this and then commented, "This Tafsir was reported from `Awf bin Malik, Sa`id bin Jubayr, As-Suddi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Qatadah and Muqatil bin Hayyan." Al-Bukhari recorded that Samurah bin Jundub said in the long Hadith about the dream that the Prophet had,

«فَأْتَيْنَا عَلَى نَهْرٍ حَسِبْتُ أَنَّهُ كَانَ يَقُولُ: أَحْمَرٌ
مِثْلَ الدَّمِّ، وَإِذَا فِي النَّهْرِ رَجُلٌ سَابِحٌ يَسْبَحُ، وَإِذَا
عَلَى شَطِّ النَّهْرِ رَجُلٌ قَدْ جَمَعَ عِنْدَهُ حِجَارَةً

كَثِيرَةً، وَإِذَا ذَلِكَ السَّايِحُ يَسْبَحُ مَا يَسْبَحُ، ثُمَّ يَأْتِي
ذَلِكَ الَّذِي قَدْ جَمَعَ الْحِجَارَةَ عِنْدَهُ، فَيَقْرَأُ لَهُ فَاهُ
فَيُلْقِمُهُ حَجْرًا»

(We reached a river -the narrator said, "I thought he said that the river was as red as blood"- and found that a man was swimming in the river, and on its bank there was another man standing with a large collection of stones next to him. The man in the river would swim, then come to the man who had collected the stones and open his mouth, and the other man would throw a stone in his mouth.)

The explanation of this dream was that the person in the river was one who consumed Riba.

Allah's statement,

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبَا وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ
الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا

(That is because they say: "Trading is only like Riba," whereas Allah has permitted trading and forbidden Riba) indicates that the disbelievers claimed that Riba was allowed due to the fact that they rejected Allah's commandments, not that they equated Riba with regular trade. The disbelievers did not recognize that Allah allowed trade in the Qur'an, for if they did, they would have said, "Riba is trade." Rather, they said,

إِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبَا

(Trading is only like Riba) meaning, they are similar, so why did Allah allow this, but did not allow that, they asked in defiance of Allah's commandments.

Allah's statement,

وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا

(Whereas Allah has permitted trading and forbidden Riba) might be a continuation of the answer to the disbelievers' claim, who uttered it, although they knew that Allah decided that ruling on trade is different from that of Riba. Indeed, Allah is the Most Knowledgeable, Most Wise, Whose decision is never resisted. Allah is never asked about what He does, while they will be asked. He is knowledgeable of the true reality of all things and the benefits they carry. He knows what benefits His servants, so He allows it for them, and what harms them, so He forbids them from it. He is more merciful with them than the mother with her own infant.

Thereafter, Allah said,

(فَمَنْ جَاءَهُ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّنْ رَبِّهِ فَانْتَهَىٰ فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ
وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ)

(So whosoever receives an admonition from his Lord and stops eating Riba, shall not be punished for the past; his case is for Allah (to judge),) meaning, those who have knowledge that Allah made usury unlawful, and refrain from indulging in it as soon as they acquire this knowledge, then Allah will forgive their previous dealings in Riba,

(عَفَا اللَّهُ عَمَّا سَلَفَ)

(Allah has forgiven what is past.)

On the day Makkah was conquered the Prophet said,

«وَكُلُّ رِبَا فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ مَوْضُوعٌ تَحْتَ قَدَمِي
هَاتَيْنِ، وَأَوَّلُ رِبَا أُضْعُ، رَبَا الْعَبَّاسِ»

(All cases of Riba during the time of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic period of ignorance) is annulled and under my feet, and the first Riba I annul is the Riba of Al-'Abbas (the Prophet's uncle).)

We should mention that the Prophet did not require the return of the interest that they gained on their Riba during the time of Jahiliyyah. Rather, he pardoned the cases of Riba that occurred in the past, just as Allah said,

(فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ)

(shall not be punished for the past; his case is for Allah (to judge).)

Sa`id bin Jubayr and As-Suddi said that,

(فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ)

(shall not be punished for the past) refers to the Riba one consumed before it was prohibited. Allah then said,

(وَمَنْ عَادَ)

(But whoever returns) meaning, deals in Riba after gaining knowledge that Allah prohibited it, then that warrants punishment, and in this case, the proof will have been established against such person. This is why Allah said,

(قَأُولِيكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ)

(such are the dwellers of the Fire they will abide therein forever.)

Abu Dawud recorded that Jabir said, "When

(الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ
الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ)

(Those who eat Riba will not stand (on the Day of Resurrection) except like a person beaten by Shaytan leading him to insanity) was revealed, the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ لَمْ يَدْرِ الْمُخَابَرَةَ فَلْيُؤْذِنْ بِحَرْبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِ»

(Whoever does not refrain from Mukhabarah, then let him receive a notice of war from Allah and His Messenger.)"

Al-Hakim also recorded this in his Mustadrak, and he said, "It is Sahih according to the criteria of Muslim, and he did not record it." Mukhabarah (sharecropping), farming land in return for some of its produce, was prohibited. Muzabanah, trading fresh dates still on trees with dried dates already on the ground, was prohibited. Muhaqalah, which refers to trading produce not yet harvested, with crops already harvested, was also prohibited. These were prohibited to eradicate the possibility that Riba might be involved, for the quality and equity of such items are only known after they become dry.

The subject of Riba is a difficult subject for many scholars. We should mention that the Leader of the Faithful, `Umar bin Al-Khattab, said, "I wished that the Messenger of Allah had made three matters clearer for us, so that we could refer to his decision: the grandfather (regarding inheriting from his grandchildren), the Kalalah (those who leave neither descendants nor ascendants as heirs) and some types of Riba." `Umar was referring to the types of transactions where it is not clear whether they involve Riba or not. The Shari`ah supports the rule that for any matter that is unlawful, then the means to it are also unlawful, because whatever results in the unlawful is unlawful, in the same way that whenever an obligation will not be complete except with something, then that something is itself an obligation.

The Two Sahihs recorded that An-Nu`man bin Bashir said that he heard the Messenger of Allah say,

«إِنَّ الْحَلَالَ بَيِّنٌ وَإِنَّ الْحَرَامَ بَيِّنٌ، وَبَيْنَ ذَلِكَ
أُمُورٌ مُشْتَبِهَاتٌ، فَمَنْ اتَّقَى الشُّبُهَاتِ اسْتَبْرَأَ
لِدِينِهِ وَعَرْضِهِ، وَمَنْ وَقَعَ فِي الشُّبُهَاتِ وَقَعَ فِي
الْحَرَامِ، كَالرَّاعِي يَرْعَى حَوْلَ الْحِمَى يُوشِكُ أَنْ
يَرْتَعَ فِيهِ»

(Both lawful and unlawful things are evident, but in between them there are matters that are not clear. So whoever saves himself from these unclear matters, he saves his religion and his honor. And whoever indulges in these unclear matters, he will have fallen into the prohibitions, just like a shepherd who grazes (his animals) near a private pasture, at any moment he is liable to enter it.)

The Sunan records that Al-Hasan bin `Ali said that he heard the Messenger of Allah say,

«دَعْ مَا يَرِيْبُكَ إِلَى مَا لَا يَرِيْبُكَ»

(Leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make you doubt.)

Ahmad recorded that Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib said that `Umar said, "The Ayah about Riba was one of the last Ayat to be revealed, and the Messenger of Allah died before he explained it to us. So leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make you doubt."

Ibn Majah recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«الرِّبَا سَبْعُونَ حُوبًا، أَيْسَرُهَا أَنْ يَنْكِحَ الرَّجُلُ
أُمَّهُ»

(Riba is seventy types, the least of which is equal to one having sexual intercourse with his mother.)

Continuing on the subject of prohibiting the means that lead to the unlawful, there is a Hadith that Ahmad recorded in which `Aishah said, "When the Ayat in Surat Al-Baqarah about Riba were revealed, the Messenger of Allah went out to the Masjid and recited them and also

prohibited trading in alcohol." The Six collections recorded this Hadith, with the exception of At-Tirmidhi. The Two Sahihis recorded that the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَعَنَ اللَّهُ الْيَهُودَ، حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الشُّحُومُ
فَجَمَلُوهَا فَبَاعُوهَا، وَأَكَلُوا أَثْمَانَهَا»

(May Allah curse the Jews! Allah forbade them to eat animal fat, but they melted it and sold it, eating its price.)

Ali and Ibn Mas'ud narrated that the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَعَنَ اللَّهُ آكِلَ الرَّبَا وَمُوكِلَهُ وَشَاهِدَيْهِ وَكَاتِبَهُ»

(May Allah curse whoever consumes Riba, whoever pays Riba, the two who are witnesses to it, and the scribe who records it.)

They say they only have witnesses and a scribe to write the Riba contract when they want it to appear to be a legitimate agreement, but it is still invalid because the ruling is applied to the agreement itself, not the form that it appears in. Verily, deeds are judged by their intentions.

(يَمْحَقُ اللَّهُ الرِّبَا وَيُرْبِي الصَّدَقَاتِ وَاللَّهُ لَا
يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ - إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ لَهُمْ
أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يَحْزَنُونَ)

(276. Allah will destroy Riba and will give increase for Sadaqat. And Allah likes not the disbelievers, sinners.) (277. Truly, those who believe, and do deeds of righteousness, and perform the Salah and give Zakah, they will have their reward with their Lord. On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.)

Allah Does Not Bless Riba

Allah states that He destroys Riba, either by removing this money from those who eat it, or by depriving them of the blessing, and thus the benefit of their money. Because of their Riba,

Allah will torment them in this life and punish them for it on the Day of Resurrection. Allah said,

(قُلْ لَا يَسْتَوِي الْخَبِيثُ وَالطَّيِّبُ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ
كَثْرَةُ الْخَبِيثِ)

(Say: "Not equal are Al-Khabith (evil things) and At-Tayyib (good things), even though the abundance of Al-Khabith may please you") 5:100

(وَيَجْعَلُ الْخَبِيثَ بَعْضَهُ عَلَى بَعْضٍ فَيَرْكُمُهُ
جَمِيعًا فَيَجْعَلُهُ فِي جَهَنَّمَ)

(And put the wicked (disbelievers and doers of evil deeds) one over another, heap them together and cast them into Hell) 8:37 , and,

(وَمَا ءَاتَيْتُمْ مِّن رَّبًّا لِّيَرْبُوًّا فِي أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ فَلَا
يَرْبُوًّا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ)

(And that which you give in gift (to others), in order that it may increase (your wealth by expecting to get a better one in return) from other people's property, has no increase with Allah) 30:39 .

Ibn Jarir said that Allah's statement,

(يَمْحَقُ اللَّهُ الرِّبَا)

(Allah will destroy Riba) is similar to the statement reported of `Abdullah bin Mas`ud, "Riba will end up with less, even if it was substantial." Imam Ahmad recorded a similar statement in Al-Musnad.

Allah Increases Charity, Just as One Raises His Animal

Allah's statement,

(وَيُرِي الصَّدَقَاتِ)

(And will give increase for Sadaqat) means, Allah makes charity grow, or He increases it. Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ تَصَدَّقَ بِعَدْلِ تَمْرَةٍ مِنْ كَسْبٍ طَيِّبٍ، وَلَا يَقْبَلُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا الطَّيِّبَ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَتَقَبَّلُهَا بِيَمِينِهِ، ثُمَّ يُرَبِّيهَا لِصَاحِبِهِ، كَمَا يُرَبِّي أَحَدُكُمْ فَلُوَّهُ حَتَّى تَكُونَ مِثْلَ الْجَبَلِ»

(Whoever gives in charity what equals a date from honest resources, and Allah only accepts that which is good and pure, then Allah accepts it with His right (Hand) and raises it for its giver, just as one of you raises his animal, until it becomes as big as a mountain.)

This was recorded in the book of Zakah.

Allah Does not Like the Disbelieving Sinners

Allah's statement,

(وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ)

(And Allah likes not the disbelievers, sinners) indicates that Allah does not like he who has a disbelieving heart, who is a sinner in tongue and action. There is a connection between the beginning of the Ayah on Riba and what Allah ended it with. Those who consume Riba are not satisfied with the permissible and pure resources that Allah provided them. Instead, they try to illegally acquire people's money by relying on evil methods. This demonstrates their lack of appreciation for the bounty that Allah provides.

Praising Those Who Thank Allah

Allah praised those who believe in His Lordship, obey His commands, thank Him and appreciate Him. They are those who are kind to His creation, establish prayer and give charity due on their money. Allah informed them of the honor that He has prepared for them and that they will be safe from the repercussions of the Day of Resurrection. Allah said,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ)

(Truly, those who believe, and do deeds of righteousness, and perform the Salah and give Zakah, they will have their reward with their Lord. On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.)

(يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَذَرُوا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ
الرِّبَا إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ)

(فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَإِن تَابْتُمْ فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ لَا تَظْلِمُونَ وَلَا
تُظْلَمُونَ - وَإِن كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَى
مَيْسَرَةٍ وَأَن تَصَدَّقُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ)

وَآتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ
نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ-)

(278. O you who believe! Have Taqwa of Allah and give up what remains from Riba, if you are (really) believers.) (279. And if you do not do it, then take a notice of war from Allah and His Messenger but if you repent, you shall have your capital sums. Deal not unjustly, and you shall not be dealt with unjustly.) (280. And if the debtor is having a hard time, then grant him time till it is easy for him to repay; but if you remit it by way of charity, that is better for you if you did but know.) (281. And have Taqwa the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah. Then every person shall be paid what he earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.)

The Necessity of Taqwa and Avoiding Riba

Allah commands His believing servants to fear Him and warns them against what would bring them closer to His anger and drive them away from His pleasure. Allah said,

(يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ)

(O you who believe! Have Taqwa of Allah) meaning, fear Him and remember that He is watching all that you do.

(وَدَّرُوا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبَا)

(And give up what remains of Riba) meaning, abandon the Riba that people still owe you upon hearing this warning,

(إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ)

(if you indeed have been believers) believing in the trade that He allowed you and the prohibition of Riba. Zayd bin Aslam, Ibn Jurayj, Muqatil bin Hayyan and As-Suddi said that this Ayah was revealed about Bani `Amr bin `Umayr, a sub-tribe of Thaqif, and Bani Al-Mughirah, from the tribe of Bani Makhzum, between whom were outstanding transactions of Riba leftover from time of Jahiliyyah. When Islam came and both tribes became Muslims, Thaqif required Bani Al-Mughirah to pay the Riba of that transaction, but Bani Al-Mughirah said, "We do not pay Riba in Islam." `Attab bin Usayd, the Prophet's deputy on Makkah, wrote to the Messenger of Allah about this matter. This Ayah was then revealed and the Messenger of Allah conveyed it to `Attab,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَدَّرُوا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ
الرِّبَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ)

(فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ)

(O you who believe! Be afraid of Allah and give up what remains (due to you) from Riba (from now onward), if you are (really) believers. And if you do not do it, then take a notice of war from Allah and His Messenger.)

They said, "We repent to Allah and abandon whatever is left of our Riba", and they all abandoned it This Ayah serves as a stern threat to those who continue to deal in Riba after Allah revealed this warning.

Riba Constitutes War Against Allah and His Messenger

Ibn Jurayj said that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ)

(then take a notice of war) means, "Be sure of a war from Allah and His Messenger." He also said, "On the Day of Resurrection, those who eat Riba will be told, `take up arms for war.'" He then recited,

(فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ)

(And if you do not do it, then take a notice of war from Allah and His Messenger.)

`Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas said about,

(فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ)

(And if you do not do it, then take a notice of war from Allah and His Messenger,) "Whoever kept dealing with Riba and did not refrain from it, then the Muslim Leader should require him to repent. If he still did not refrain from Riba, the Muslim Leader should cut off his head."

Allah then said,

(وَإِنْ تُبْتُمْ فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ لَا تَظْلِمُونَ)

(But if you repent, you shall have your capital sums. Deal not unjustly) by taking the Riba,

(وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ)

(And you shall not be dealt with unjustly) meaning, your original capital will not diminish. Rather, you will receive only what you lent without increase or decrease. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `Amr bin Al-Ahwas said, "The Messenger of Allah gave a speech during the Farewell Hajj saying;

«أَلَا إِنَّ كُلَّ رَبًّا كَانَ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ، مَوْضُوعٌ
عَنْكُمْ كُلُّهُ، لَكُمْ رُءُوسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ لَا تَظْلِمُونَ
وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ، وَأَوَّلُ رَبًّا مَوْضُوعٌ، رَبًّا الْعَبَّاسِ
بْنِ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ مَوْضُوعٌ كُلُّهُ»

(Verily, every case of Riba from the Jahiliyyah is completely annulled. You will only take back your capital, without increase or decrease. The first Riba that I annul is the Riba of Al-`Abbas bin `Abdul-Muttalib, all of it is annulled.)

Being Kind to Debtors Who Face Financial Difficulties

Allah said,

(وَإِنْ كَانَ دُوْ عُسْرَةً فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ مَيْسَرَةٍ وَأَنْ تَصَدَّقُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ)

(And if the debtor is having a hard time, then grant him time till it is easy for him to repay; but if you remit it by way of charity, that is better for you if you did but know.) Allah commands creditors to be patient with debtors who are having a hard time financially,

(وَإِنْ كَانَ دُوْ عُسْرَةً فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ مَيْسَرَةٍ)

(And if the debtor is having a hard time (has no money), then grant him time till it is easy for him to repay.)

During the time of Jahiliyyah, when the debt came to term, the creditor would say to the debtor, "Either pay now or interest will be added to the debt."

Allah encouraged creditors to give debtors respite regarding their debts and promised all that is good, and a great reward from Him for this righteous deed,

(وَأَنْ تَصَدَّقُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ)

(But if you remit it by way of charity, that is better for you if you did but know) meaning, if you forfeit your debts and cancel them completely.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Sulayman bin Buraydah said that his father said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah say,

«مَنْ أَنْظَرَ مُعْسِرًا، فَلَهُ بِكُلِّ يَوْمٍ مِثْلُهُ صَدَقَةٌ»

(Whoever gives time to a debtor facing hard times, will gain charity of equal proportions for each day he gives.)

I also heard the Prophet say,

«مَنْ أَنْظَرَ مُعْسِرًا، فَلَهُ بِكُلِّ يَوْمٍ مِثْلُهُ صَدَقَةٌ»

(Whoever gives time to a debtor facing hard times, will earn charity multiplied two times for each day he gives.) I said, `O Messenger of Allah! I heard you say, `Whoever gives time to a debtor facing hard times, will gain charity of equal proportions for each day he gives.' I also heard you say, `Whoever gives time to a debtor facing hard times, will earn charity multiplied by two times for each day he gives.' He said,

«لَهُ بِكُلِّ يَوْمٍ مِثْلُهُ صَدَقَةٌ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَحِلَّ الدَّيْنُ،
فَإِذَا حَلَّ الدَّيْنُ فَأَنْظَرَهُ، فَلَهُ بِكُلِّ يَوْمٍ مِثْلَاهُ
صَدَقَةٌ»

(He will earn charity of equal proportions for each day (he gives time) before the term of the debt comes to an end, and when the term comes to an end, he will again acquire charity multiplied by two times for each day if he gives more time.)"

Ahmad recorded that Muhammad bin Ka`b Al-Qurazi said that Abu Qatadah had a debt on a man, who used to hide from Abu Qatadah when he looked for him to pay what he owed him. One day, Abu Qatadah came looking for the debtor and a young boy came out, and he asked him about the debtor and found out that he was in the house eating. Abu Qatadah said in a loud voice, "O Fellow! Come out, for I was told that you are in the house." The man came out and Abu Qatadah asked him, "Why are you hiding from me" The man said, "I am having a hard time financially, and I do not have any money." Abu Qatadah said, "By Allah, are you truly facing a hard time" He said, "Yes." Abu Qatadah cried and said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah say,

«مَنْ نَقَّسَ عَنْ غَرِيمِهِ أَوْ مَحَا عَنْهُ، كَانَ فِي ظِلِّ
الْعَرْشِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ»

(Whoever gives time to his debtor, or forgives the debt, will be in the shade of the Throne (of Allah) on the Day of Resurrection.)"

Muslim also recorded this Hadith in his Sahih.

Al-Hafiz Abu Ya`la Al-Mawsili recorded that Hudhayfah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«أَتَى اللَّهَ بِعَبْدِمِنْ عَيْدِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ قَالَ: مَاذَا
عَمِلْتَ لِي فِي الدُّنْيَا؟ فَقَالَ: مَا عَمِلْتُ لَكَ يَا رَبِّ
مِنْقَالَ دُرَّةٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا أَرْجُوكَ بِهَا قَالَهَا ثَلَاثَ
مَرَّاتٍ قَالَ الْعَبْدُ عِنْدَ آخِرِهَا: يَا رَبِّ إِنَّكَ كُنْتَ
أَعْطَيْتَنِي فَضْلَ مَالٍ، وَكُنْتُ رَجُلًا أَبَايَعُ النَّاسَ،

وَكَانَ مِنْ خُلُقِي الْجَوَازُ، فَكُنْتُ أَيْسَرُ عَلَى
الْمُوسِرِ وَأَنْظِرُ الْمُعْسِرَ، قَالَ: فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ
عَزَّوَجَلَّ: أَنَا أَحَقُّ مَنْ يُيسَّرُ، ادْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ»

(On the Day of Resurrection, one of Allah's servants will be summoned before Him and He will ask him, "What deeds did you perform for Me in your life" He will say, "O Lord! In my life, I have not performed a deed for Your sake that equals an atom," three times. The third time, the servant will add, "O Lord! You granted me wealth and I used to be a merchant. I used to be lenient, giving easy terms to those well-off and giving time to the debtors who faced hard times." Allah will say, "I Am the Most Worthy of giving easy terms. Therefore, enter Paradise.")

Al-Bukhari, Muslim and Ibn Majah also recorded this Hadith from Hudhayfah, and Muslim recorded a similar wording from `Uqbah bin `Amir and Abu Mas`ud Al-Badri. Allah further advised His servants, by reminding them that this life will soon end and all the wealth in it will vanish. He also reminded them that the Hereafter will surely come, when the Return to Him will occur, and that He will hold His creation accountable for what they did, rewarding them or punishing them accordingly. Allah also warned them against His torment,

(وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ
نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ)

(And have Taqwa for the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah. Then every person shall be paid what he earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.)

It was reported that this was the last Ayah revealed from the Glorious Qur'an. An-Nasa'i recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "The last Ayah to be revealed from the Qur'an was,

(وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ
نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ)

(And have Taqwa for the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah. Then every person shall be paid what he earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.")

This is the same narration reported by Ad-Dahhak and Al-`Awfi from Ibn `Abbas.

(يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ بِدَيْنٍ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ
 مُّسَمًّى فَاكْتُبُوهُ وَلْيَكْتُب بَيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌ بِالْعَدْلِ وَلَا
 يَأْبَ كَاتِبٌ أَنْ يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ فَلْيَكْتُبْ
 وَلْيُمْلِلِ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ وَلَا
 يَبْخَسْ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا فَإِن كَانَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ سَفِيهًا
 أَوْ ضَعِيفًا أَوْ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يُمِلَّ هُوَ فَلْيُمْلِلْ وَلِيُّهُ
 بِالْعَدْلِ وَاسْتَشْهِدُوا شَهِيدَيْنِ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ فَإِن لَّمْ
 يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَامْرَأَتَانِ مِمَّن تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ
 الشُّهَدَاءِ أَن تَضِلَّ إِحْدَاهُمَا فَتُذَكَّرَ إِحْدَاهُمَا
 الْأُخْرَىٰ وَلَا يَأْبَ الشُّهَدَاءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا وَلَا
 تَسْمُوا أَنْ تَكْتُبُوهُ صَغِيرًا أَوْ كَبِيرًا إِلَىٰ أَجَلِهِ
 ذَلِكُمْ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَادَةِ وَأَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا
 تَرْتَابُوا إِلَّا أَن تَكُونَ تِجْرَةً حَاضِرَةً يُدِيرُونَهَا
 بَيْنَكُمْ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَلَّا تَكْتُبُوهَا وَأَشْهِدُوا إِذَا
 تَبَايَعْتُمْ وَلَا يُضَارَّ كَاتِبٌ وَلَا شَهِيدٌ وَإِن تَفَعَّلُوا
 فَإِنَّهُ فُسُوقٌ بِكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ
 بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ)

(282. O you who believe! When you contract a debt for a fixed period, write it down. Let a scribe write it down in justice between you. Let not the scribe refuse to write, as Allah has taught him, so let him write. Let him (the debtor) who incurs the liability dictate, and he must have Taqwa of Allah, his Lord, and diminish not anything of what he owes. But if the debtor is

of poor understanding, or weak, or is unable to dictate for himself, then let his guardian dictate in justice. And get two witnesses out of your own men. And if there are not two men (available), then a man and two women, such as you agree for witnesses, so that if one of them (two women) errs, the other can remind her. And the witnesses should not refuse when they are called (for evidence). You should not become weary to write it (your contract), whether it be small or big, for its fixed term, that is more just with Allah; more solid as evidence, and more convenient to prevent doubts among yourselves, save when it is a present trade which you carry out on the spot among yourselves, then there is no sin on you if you do not write it down. But take witnesses whenever you make a commercial contract. Let neither scribe nor witness suffer any harm, but if you do (such harm), it would be wickedness in you. So have Taqwa of Allah; and Allah teaches you. And Allah is the All-Knower of everything.)

The Necessity of Writing Transactions That Take Effect Later on

This Ayah is the longest in the Glorious Qur'an. Imam Abu Ja`far bin Jarir recorded that Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib said that he was told that the Ayah most recently revealed from above the Throne -- the last Ayah to be revealed in the Qur'an -- was the Ayah about debts.

Allah's statement,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ بِدَيْنٍ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاكْتُبُوهُ

(O you who believe! When you contract a debt for a fixed period, write it down) directs Allah's believing servants to record their business transactions when their term is delayed, to preserve the terms and timing of these transactions, and the memory of witnesses, as mentioned at the end of the Ayah,

ذَٰلِكُمْ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَادَةِ وَأَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَرْتَابُوا

(that is more just with Allah; more solid as evidence, and more convenient to prevent doubts among yourselves.)

The Two Sahihs recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Allah's Messenger came to Al-Madinah, while the people were in the habit of paying in advance for fruits to be delivered within one or two years. The Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ أَسْلَفَ، فَلْيُسَلِّفْ فِي كَيْلٍ مَّعْلُومٍ، وَوَزْنٍ مَّعْلُومٍ، إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مَّعْلُومٍ»

(Whoever pays money in advance (for dates to be delivered later) should pay it for known specified measure and weight (of the dates) for a specified date.)

Allah's statement,

(فَاكْتُبُوهُ)

(write it down) is a command from Him to record such transactions to endorse and preserve their terms. Ibn Jurayj said, "Whoever borrowed should write the terms, and whoever bought should have witnesses." Abu Sa`id, Ash-Sha`bi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Al-Hasan, Ibn Jurayj and Ibn Zayd said that recording such transactions was necessary before, but was then abrogated by Allah's statement,

(فَإِنْ أَمِنَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا فليؤدِّ الَّذِي أُوْتِمِنَ
أَمَنَّتَهُ)

(Then if one of you entrusts the other, let the one who is entrusted discharge his trust (faithfully).)

Allah's statement,

(وَلْيَكْتُبْ بَيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌ بِالْعَدْلِ)

(Let a scribe write it down in justice between you) and in truth. Therefore, the scribe is not allowed to cheat any party of the contract and is to only record what the parties of the contract agreed to, without addition or deletion. Allah's statement,

(وَلَا يَأْبَ كَاتِبٌ أَنْ يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ فَلْيَكْتُبْ)

(Let not the scribe refuse to write, as Allah has taught him, so let him write) means, "Those who know how to write should not refrain from writing transaction contracts when asked to do so." Further, let writing such contracts be a type of charity from the scribe for those who are not lettered, just as Allah taught him what he knew not. Therefore, let him write, just as the Hadith stated,

«إِنَّ مِنْ الصَّدَقَةِ أَنْ تُعِينَ صَانِعًا، أَوْ تَصْنَعَ
لِأَخْرَقٍ»

(It is a type of charity to help a worker and to do something for a feeble person.)

In another Hadith, the Prophet said,

«مَنْ كَتَمَ عِلْمًا يَعْلَمُهُ، أَلْجِمَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِلِجَامٍ مِنْ نَارٍ»

(Whoever kept knowledge to himself will be restrained by a bridle made of fire on the Day of Resurrection.) Mujahid and `Ata' said that if asked to do so, "The scribe is required to record."

Allah's statement,

(وَلْيُمْلِلِ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ)

(Let him (the debtor) who incurs the liability dictate, and he must have Taqwa of Allah, his Lord) indicates that the debtor should dictate to the scribe what he owes, so let him fear Allah,

(وَلَا يَخْسُ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا)

(And diminish not anything of what he owes,) meaning, not hide any portion of what he owes.

(فَإِنْ كَانَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ سَفِيهًا)

(But if the debtor is of poor understanding) and is not allowed to decide on such matters, because he used to waste money, for instance,

(أَوْ ضَعِيفًا)

(Or weak), such as being too young or insane,

(أَوْ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يُمْلَأَ هُوَ)

(Or is unable to dictate for himself) because of a disease, or ignorance about such matters,

(فَلْيُمْلِلْ وَلِيُّهُ بِالْعَدْلِ)

(then let his guardian dictate in justice.)

Witnesses Should Attend the Dictation of Contracts

Allah said,

(وَاسْتَشْهِدُوا شَهِيدَيْنِ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ)

(And get two witnesses out of your own men) requiring witnesses to attend the dictation of contracts to further preserve the contents,

(فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَامْرَأَتَانِ)

(And if there are not two men (available), then a man and two women) this requirement is only for contracts that directly or indirectly involve money. Allah requires that two women take the place of one man as witness, because of the woman's shortcomings, as the Prophet described. Muslim recorded in his Sahih that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«يَا مَعْشَرَ النِّسَاءِ تَصَدَّقْنَ وَأَكْثِرْنَ الِاسْتِعْفَارَ،
فَإِنِّي رَأَيْتُكُنَّ أَكْثَرَ أَهْلِ النَّارِ»

(O women! Give away charity and ask for forgiveness, for I saw that you comprise the majority of the people of the Fire.)

One eloquent woman said, "O Messenger of Allah! Why do we comprise the majority of the people of the Fire" He said,

«تُكْفِرُنَّ اللَّعْنَ، وَتَكْفُرُنَّ الْعَشِيرَ، وَمَا رَأَيْتُ مِنْ
نَاقِصَاتِ عَقْلِ وَدِينٍ، أَغْلَبَ لِيذِي لُبٍ مِنْكُنَّ»

(You curse a lot and you do not appreciate your mate. I have never seen those who have shortcoming in mind and religion controlling those who have sound minds, other than you.) She said, "O Messenger of Allah! What is this shortcoming in mind and religion" He said,

«أَمَّا نُقْصَانُ عَقْلِهَا، فَشَهَادَةُ امْرَأَتَيْنِ تَعْدِلُ
شَهَادَةَ رَجُلٍ، فَهَذَا نُقْصَانُ الْعَقْلِ، وَتَمَكُّتُ اللَّيَالِي

لَا تُصَلِّيْ وَتُقَطِّرُ فِي رَمَضَانَ، فَهَذَا نُقْصَانُ
الدِّينِ»

(As for the shortcoming in her mind, the testimony of two women equals the testimony of one man, and this is the shortcoming in the mind. As for the shortcoming in the religion, woman remains for nights at a time when she does not pray and breaks the fast in Ramadan)

Allah's statement,

(مِمَّنْ تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشُّهَدَاءِ)

(such as you agree for witnesses) requires competency in the witnesses. Further, Allah's statement,

(أَنْ تَضِلَّ إِحْدَاهُمَا)

(so that if one of them errs) refers to the two women witnesses; whenever one of them forgets a part of the testimony,

(فَتَذَكَّرَ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَى)

(the other can remind her) meaning, the other woman's testimony mends the shortcoming of forgetfulness in the first woman.

Allah's statement,

(وَلَا يَأْبَ الشُّهَدَاءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا)

(And the witnesses should not refuse when they are called) means, when people are called to be witnesses, they should agree, as Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas stated. Similarly, Allah said,

(وَلَا يَأْبَ كَاتِبٌ أَنْ يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ فَلْيَكْتُبْ)

(Let not the scribe refuse to write as Allah has taught him,

«أَمَّا نُقْصَانُ عَقْلِهَا، فَشَهَادَةُ امْرَأَتَيْنِ تَعْدِلُ
شَهَادَةَ رَجُلٍ، فَهَذَا نُقْصَانُ الْعَقْلِ، وَتَمَكَّتُ اللَّيَالِي
لَا تُصَلِّي وَتُفْطِرُ فِي رَمَضَانَ، فَهَذَا نُقْصَانُ
الدِّينِ»

(As for the shortcoming in her mind, the testimony of two women equals the testimony of one man, and this is the shortcoming in the mind. As for the shortcoming in the religion, woman remains for nights at a time when she does not pray and breaks the fast in Ramadan)

Allah's statement,

(مِمَّن تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشُّهَدَاءِ)

(such as you agree for witnesses) requires competency in the witnesses. Further, Allah's statement,

(أَنْ تَضِلَّ إِحْدَاهُمَا)

(so that if one of them errs) refers to the two women witnesses; whenever one of them forgets a part of the testimony,

(فَتُذَكَّرَ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَى)

(the other can remind her) meaning, the other woman's testimony mends the shortcoming of forgetfulness in the first woman.

Allah's statement,

(وَلَا يَأْبَ الشُّهَدَاءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا)

(And the witnesses should not refuse when they are called) means, when people are called to be witnesses, they should agree, as Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas stated. Similarly, Allah said,

(وَلَا يَأْبَ كَاتِبٌ أَنْ يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ فَلْيَكْتُبْ)

(Let not the scribe refuse to write as Allah has taught him, so let him write.)

Some say that this Ayah indicates that agreeing to become a witness is Fard Kifayah (required on at least a part of the Muslim Ummah). However, the majority of the scholars say that the Ayah,

(وَلَا يَأْبَ الشُّهَدَاءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا)

(And the witnesses should not refuse when they are called) is referring to testifying to what the witnesses actually witnessed, thus befitting their description of being `witnesses'. Therefore, when the witness is called to testify to what he witnessed, he is required to give testimony, unless this obligation was already fulfilled, in which case such testimony becomes Fard Kifayah. Mujahid and Abu Mijlaz said, "If you are called to be a witness, then you have the choice to agree. If you witnessed and were called to testify, then come forward." It was reported that Ibn `Abbas and Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that the obligation includes both cases, agreeing to be a witness and testifying to what one witnessed.

Allah's statement,

(وَلَا تَسْمُوا أَنْ تَكْتُبُوهُ صَغِيرًا أَوْ كَبِيرًا إِلَىٰ أَجَلِهِ)

(You should not become weary to write it (your contract), whether it be small or large, for its fixed term) perfects this direction from Allah by commanding that the debt be written, whether the amount is large or small. Allah said,

(وَلَا تَسْمُوا)

(You should not become weary) meaning, do not be discouraged against writing transactions and their terms, whether the amount involved is large or small. Allah's statement,

(ذَلِكُمْ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَادَةِ وَأَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَرْتَابُوا)

(that is more just with Allah; more solid as evidence, and more convenient to prevent doubts among yourselves) means, writing transactions that will be fulfilled at a later date is more just with Allah meaning better and more convenient in order to preserve the terms of the contract. Therefore, recording such agreements helps the witnesses, when they see their handwriting - or signatures - later on and thus remember what they witnessed, for it is possible that the witnesses might forget what they witnessed.

(وَأَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَرْتَابُوا)

(And more convenient to prevent doubts among yourselves) meaning, this helps repel any doubt. Since if you need to refer to the contract that you wrote and the doubt will end.

Allah's statement,

(إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً حَاضِرَةً تُدِيرُونَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ
فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَلَّا تَكْتُبُوهَا)

(save when it is a present trade which you carry out on the spot among yourselves, then there is no sin on you if you do not write it down) indicates that if the transaction will be fulfilled immediately, then there is no harm if it is not recorded.

As for requiring witnesses to be present in trading transactions, Allah said,

(وَأَشْهِدُوا إِذَا تَبَايَعْتُمْ)

(But take witnesses whenever you make a commercial contract.)

However, this command was abrogated by,

(فَإِنْ أَمِنَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا فَلْيُؤَدِّ الَّذِي أُؤْتِمِنَ
أَمْنَهُ)

(Then if one of you entrusts the other, let the one who is entrusted discharge his trust (faithfully).)

Or, it could be that having witnesses in such cases is only recommended and not obligatory, as evident from the Hadith that Khuzaymah bin Thabit Al-Ansari narrated which Imam Ahmad collected. ` Umarah bin Khuzaymah Al-Ansari said that his uncle, who was among the Prophet's Companions, told him that the Prophet was making a deal for a horse with a bedouin man. The Prophet asked the bedouin to follow him so that he could pay him the price of the horse. The Prophet went ahead of the bedouin. The bedouin met several men who tried to buy his horse, not knowing if the Prophet was actually determined to buy it. Some people offered more money for the horse than the Prophet had. The bedouin man said to the Prophet , "If you want to buy this horse, then buy it or I will sell it to someone else." When he heard the bedouin man's words, the Prophet stood up and said, "Have I not bought that horse from you" The bedouin said, "By Allah! I have not sold it to you." The Prophet said, "Rather, I did buy it from you." The people gathered around the Prophet and the Bedouin while they were disputing, and the bedouin said, "Bring forth a witness who testifies that I sold you the horse." Meanwhile, the

Muslims who came said to the bedouin, "Woe to you! The Prophet only says the truth." When Khuzaymah bin Thabit came and heard the dispute between the Prophet and the bedouin who was saying, "Bring forth a witness who testifies that I sold you the horse," Khuzaymah said, "I bear witness that you sold him the horse." The Prophet said to Khuzaymah, "What is the basis of your testimony" Khuzaymah said, "That I entrusted you, O Messenger of Allah!" Therefore, the Messenger made Khuzaymah's testimony equal to the testimony of two men. This was also recorded by Abu Dawud and An-Nasa @299 . Allah's statement,

(وَلَا يُضَارَّ كَاتِبٌ وَلَا شَهِيدٌ)

(Let neither scribe nor witness suffer (or cause) any harm) also indicates that the scribe and the witness must not cause any harm, such as, when the scribe writes other than what he is being dictated, or the witness testifies to other than what he heard or conceals his testimony. This is the explanation of Al-Hasan and Qatadah."

Allah's statement,

(وَإِنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَإِنَّهُ فُسُوقٌ بِكُمْ)

(But if you do (such harm), it would be wickedness in you) means, "If you defy what you were commanded and commit what you were prohibited, then it is because of the sin that resides and remains with you; sin that you never release or rid yourselves from."

Allah's statement,

(وَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ)

(So have Taqwa of Allah) means, fear Him, remember His watch over you, implement His command and avoid what He prohibited,

(وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ اللَّهَ)

(And Allah teaches you.) Similarly, Allah said,

(يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّكُمْ
فُرْقَانًا)

(O you who believe! If you have Taqwa of Allah, He will grant you Furqan (a criterion to judge between right and wrong)) 8:29 , and,

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَءَامِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ
يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِن رَّحْمَتِهِ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ نُورًا
تَمْشُونَ بِهِ)

(O you who believe! Have Taqwa of Allah, and believe in His Messenger, He will give you a double portion of His mercy, and He will give you a light by which you shall walk (straight))
57:28 .

Allah said;

(وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ)

(And Allah is the All-Knower of everything) stating that Allah has perfect knowledge in all matters and in their benefits or repercussions, and nothing escapes His perfect watch, for His knowledge encompasses everything in existence.

(وَإِن كُنْتُمْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ وَلَمْ تَجِدُوا كَاتِبًا فَرِهْنَ
مَقْبُوضَةً فَإِنِ مِن بَعْضِكُمْ بَعْضًا فليؤدِّ الَّذِي
أُوْتِمِنَ أَمْنَتَهُ وَلِيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ
وَمَن يَكْتُمهَا فَإِنَّهُ ءَاتِمٌ قَلْبُهُ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
عَلِيمٌ)

(283. And if you are on a journey and cannot find a scribe, then let there be a pledge taken (mortgaging), then if one of you entrusts the other, let the one who is entrusted discharge his trust, and let him have Taqwa of Allah, his Lord. And conceal not the evidence, for he who hides it, surely, his heart is sinful. And Allah is All-Knower of what you do.)

What is the `Mortgaging' Mentioned in the Ayah

Allah said,

(وَإِن كُنْتُمْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ)

(And if you are on a journey) meaning, traveling and some of you borrowed some money to be paid at a later date,

(وَلَمْ تَجِدُوا كَاتِبًا)

(and cannot find a scribe) who would record the debt for you. Ibn `Abbas said, "And even if they find a scribe, but did not find paper, ink or pen." Then,

(فَرَهْنٌ مَّقْبُوضَةٌ)

(let there be a pledge taken (mortgaging)) given to the creditor in lieu of writing the transaction. The Two Sahihs recorded that Anas said that the Messenger of Allah died while his shield was mortgaged with a Jew in return for thirty Wasq (approximately 180 kg) of barley, which the Prophet bought on credit as provisions for his household. In another narration, the Hadith stated that this Jew was among the Jews of Al-Madinah.

Allah said,

(فَإِنْ أَمِنَ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا فَلْيُؤَدِّ الَّذِي أُؤْتِمِنَ
أَمَنَّتَهُ)

(then if one of you entrusts the other, let the one who is entrusted discharge his trust (faithfully).)

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded, with a sound chain of narration, that Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri said, "This Ayah abrogated what came before it (i.e. that which required recording the transaction and having witnesses present)." Ash-Sha`bi said, "If you trust each other, then there is no harm if you do not write the loan or have witnesses present." Allah's statement,

(وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ)

(And let him have Taqwa of Allah) means, the debtor.

Imam Ahmad and the Sunan recorded that Qatadah said that Al-Hasan said that Samurah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«عَلَى الْيَدِ مَا أَخَذْتُ، حَتَّى تُؤَدِّيَهُ»

(The hand (of the debtor) will carry the burden of what it took until it gives it back.)

Allah's statement,

(وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ)

(And conceal not the evidence) means, do not hide it or refuse to announce it. Ibn `Abbas and other scholars said, "False testimony is one of the worst of the major sins, and such is the case with hiding the true testimony. This is why Allah said,

(وَمَنْ يَكْتُمْهَا فَإِنَّهُ ءَاتِمٌ قَلْبُهُ)

(For he who hides it, surely, his heart is sinful).

As-Suddi commented, "Meaning he is a sinner in his heart."

This is similar to Allah's statement,

(وَلَا نَكْتُمُ شَهَادَةَ اللَّهِ إِنَّا إِذًا لَمِنَ الْآثِمِينَ)

(We shall not hide testimony of Allah, for then indeed we should be of the sinful) 5:106 .

Allah said,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ
شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ
وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا
فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَن تَعْدِلُوا وَإِن تَلَوُوا أَوْ
تُعْرَضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا)

(O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, be he rich or poor, Allah is a better Protector to both (than you). So follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest you avoid justice; and if you distort your witness or refuse to give it, verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do) 4:135 and in this Ayah 2:283 He said,

وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ وَمَنْ يَكْتُمْهَا فَإِنَّهُ آتِمٌ قَلْبُهُ
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ

(And conceal not the evidence, for he who hides it, surely, his heart is sinful. And Allah is All-Knower of what you do.)

اللَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِنْ تُبْدُوا
مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ يُحَاسِبِكُمْ بِهِ اللَّهُ فَيَغْفِرُ
لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
قَدِيرٌ

(284. To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth, and whether you disclose what is in yourselves or conceal it, Allah will call you to account for it. Then He forgives whom He wills and punishes whom He wills. And Allah is able to do all things.)

Would the Servants be Accountable for What They Conceal in Their Hearts

Allah states that His is the kingship of the heavens and earth and of what and whoever is on or between them, that He has perfect watch over them. No apparent matter or secret that the heart conceals is ever a secret to Him, however minor it is. Allah also states that He will hold His servants accountable for what they do and what they conceal in their hearts. In similar statements, Allah said,

قُلْ إِنْ تُخْفُوا مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ أَوْ تُبْدُوهُ يَعْلَمُهُ
اللَّهُ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

(Say (O Muhammad): "Whether you hide what is in your breasts or reveal it, Allah knows it, and He knows what is in the heavens and what is in the earth. And Allah is able to do all things) 3:29 , and,

(يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ وَأَخْفَى)

(He knows the secret and that which is yet more hidden.)

There are many other Ayat on this subject. In this Ayah 2:284 , Allah states that He has knowledge of what the hearts conceal, and consequently, He will hold the creation accountable for whatever is in their hearts. This is why when this Ayah was revealed, it was hard on the Companions, since out of their strong faith and conviction, they were afraid that such reckoning would diminish their good deeds.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Hurayrah said, "When

لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِنْ تُبْدُوا
مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ يُحَاسِبِكُمْ بِهِ اللَّهُ فَيَغْفِرُ
لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
قَدِيرٌ)

(To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth, and whether you disclose what is in yourselves or conceal it, Allah will call you to account for it. Then He forgives whom He wills and punishes whom He wills. And Allah is able to do all things)

was revealed to the Messenger of Allah , it was very hard for the Companions of the Messenger . The Companions came to the Messenger and fell to their knees saying, `O Messenger of Allah! We were asked to perform what we can bear of deeds: the prayer, the fast, Jihad and charity. However, this Ayah was revealed to you, and we cannot bear it.' The Messenger of Allah said,

«أَتُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَقُولُوا كَمَا قَالَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابَيْنِ مِنْ
قَبْلِكُمْ: سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا؟ بَلْ قُولُوا: سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا
غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ»

(Do you want to repeat what the People of the Two Scriptures before you said, that is, `We hear and we disobey' Father, say, `We hear and we obey, and we seek Your forgiveness, O our Lord, and the Return is to You.)

When the people accepted this statement and their tongues recited it, Allah sent down afterwards,

ءَامَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ
وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلُّ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ
وَرُسُلِهِ لَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّن رُّسُلِهِ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا
وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ)

(The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. (They say,) "We make no distinction between one another of His Messengers and they say, "We hear, and we obey. (We seek) Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the return (of all).")

When they did that, Allah abrogated the Ayah 2:284 and sent down the Ayah,

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ
وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ
أَخْطَأْنَا)

(Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope. He gets reward for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned. "Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into error.") until the end."

Muslim recorded it with the wording; "When they did that, Allah abrogated it 2:284 and sent down,

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ
وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ
أَخْطَأْنَا)

(Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope. He gets reward for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned. "Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into error".)

Allah said, `I shall (accept your supplication),'

(رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إَصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى
الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا)

("Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which You did lay on those before us (Jews and Christians)")

Allah said, `I shall (accept your supplication),'

(رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ)

("Our Lord! Put not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. ")

Allah said, `I shall (accept your supplication),'

(وَأَعْفُ عَنَّا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا
فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ)

("Pardon us and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. You are our Mawla (Supporter and Protector) and give us victory over the disbelieving people.")

Allah said, `I shall.'"

Imam Ahmad recorded that Mujahid said, "I saw Ibn `Abbas and said to him, `O Abu Abbas! I was with Ibn `Umar, and he read this Ayah and cried.' He asked, `Which Ayah' I said,

(وَإِنْ تُبْدُوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ)

`(And whether you disclose what is in yourselves or conceal it.)'

Ibn `Abbas said, `When this Ayah was revealed, it was very hard on the Companions of the Messenger of Allah and worried them tremendously. They said: O Messenger of Allah! We know that we would be punished according to our statements and our actions, but as for what occurs in our hearts, we do not control what is in them.' The Messenger of Allah said,

«قُولُوا: سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا»

(Say, `We hear and we obey.') They said, `We hear and we obey.' Thereafter, this Ayah abrogated the previous Ayah,

ءَامَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ
وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ ءَامِنٌ بِاللَّهِ

(The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allah), until,

لَا يُكْفِ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ
وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ

(Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope. He gets reward for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned.)

Therefore, they were pardoned what happens in their hearts, and were held accountable only for their actions."

The Group recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَجَاوَزَ لِي عَنْ أُمَّتِي مَا حَدَّثَتْ بِهِ
أَنْفُسَهَا مَا لَمْ تَكَلِّمْ أَوْ تَعْمَلْ»

(Allah has pardoned my Ummah for what they say to themselves, as long as they do not utter it or act on it.)

The Two Sahihs recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«قَالَ اللَّهُ: إِذَا هَمَّ عَبْدِي بِسَيِّئَةٍ فَلَا تَكْتُبُوهَا عَلَيْهِ،
فَإِنْ عَمِلَهَا فَارْتَبُوهَا سَيِّئَةً، وَإِذَا هَمَّ بِحَسَنَةٍ فَلَمْ
يَعْمَلَهَا فَارْتَبُوهَا حَسَنَةً، فَإِنْ عَمِلَهَا فَارْتَبُوهَا
عَشْرًا»

(Allah said (to His angels), "If My servant intends to commit an evil deed, do not record it as such for him, and if he commits it, write it for him as one evil deed. If he intends to perform a good deed, but did not perform it, then write it for him as one good deed, and if he performs it, write it for him as ten good deeds.")

ءَامَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ
وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ
وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّن رُّسُلِهِ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا
وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ)

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ
وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ
أَخْطَأْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ
عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ
لَنَا بِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا
فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ-

1(285. The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. (They say,) "We make no distinction between one another of His Messengers and they say, "We hear, and we obey. (We seek) Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the return (of all).") (286. Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope. He gets reward for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned. "Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into error, our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which You did lay on those before us (Jews and Christians); our Lord! Put not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Pardon us and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. You are our Mawla (Patron, Supporter and Protector) and give us victory over the disbelieving people.") The Hadiths on the Virtue of These Two Ayat, May Allah Benefit Us by Them Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Mas`ud said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ قَرَأَ بِالْآيَتَيْنِ مِنْ آخِرِ سُورَةِ الْبَقَرَةِ فِي لَيْلَةٍ،
كَفَّتَاهُ»

(Whoever recites the last two Ayat in Surat Al-Baqarah at night, they will suffice for him.)

The rest of the six also recorded similar wording for this Hadith. The Two Sahihs recorded this Hadith using various chains of narration, and Imam Ahmad also recorded it.

Muslim recorded that `Abdullah said, "When the Messenger of Allah went on the Isra journey, he ascended to the Sdrat Al-Muntaha in the sixth heaven, where whatever ascends from the earth ends at, and whatever descends from above it ends at.

(إِذْ يَعْشَى السِّدْرَةَ مَا يَعْشَى)

(When that covered the lote tree which did cover it!) 53:16 meaning, a mat made of gold.

The Messenger of Allah was then given three things: the five prayers, the last Ayat in Surat Al-Baqarah and forgiveness for whoever did not associate anything or anyone with Allah from his Ummah."

Earlier we mentioned the Hadith regarding the virtues of Surat Al-Fatihah from Ibn `Abbas which stated, "While the Messenger of Allah was with Jibil, he heard a noise from above. Jibil lifted his sight to the sky and said, `This is a door that was opened just now in heaven, and it was never opened before.' An angel came down through the door to the Prophet and said, `Receive the good news of two lights that you have been given and which no Prophet before you was given: the Opener of the Book (Al-Fatihah) and the last Ayat in Surat Al-Baqarah. You will not read a letter of them, but you will be granted its benefit.'" This Hadith was collected by Muslim and An-Nasa'i, and this is the wording collected by An-Nasa'i.

The Tafsir of the Last Two Ayat of Surat Al-Baqarah

Allah said,

(كُلُّ ءَامَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلٰئِكَتِهٖ وَكُتُبِهٖ وَرُسُلِهٖ لَا نُفَرِّقُ
بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ مِّنْ رُّسُلِهٖ)

(Each one believes in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. (They say,) "We make no distinction between one another of His Messengers.")

Therefore, each of the believers believes that Allah is the One and Only and the Sustainer, there is no deity worthy of worship except Him and there is no Lord except Him. The believers also believe in all Allah's Prophets and Messengers, in the Books that were revealed from heaven to the Messengers and Prophets, who are indeed the servants of Allah. Further, the believers do not differentiate between any of the Prophets, such as, believing in some of them and rejecting others. Rather, all of Allah's Prophets and Messengers are, to the believers, truthful, righteous, and they were each guided to the path of righteousness, even when some of them bring what abrogates the Law of some others by Allah's leave. Later on, the Law of Muhammad, the Final Prophet and Messenger from Allah, abrogated all the laws of the Prophets before him. So the Last Hour will commence while Muhammad's Law remains the only valid Law, and all the while a group of his Ummah will always be on the path of truth, apparent and dominant. Allah's statement,

(وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا)

(And they say, "We hear, and we obey") means, we heard Your statement, O our Lord, comprehended and implemented it, and adhered to its implications.

(عُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا)

((We seek) Your forgiveness, our Lord) contains a plea and supplication for Allah's forgiveness, mercy and kindness.

Allah's statement,

(لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا)

(Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope) means, Allah does not ask a soul what is beyond its ability. This only demonstrates Allah's kindness, compassion and generosity towards His creation. This Ayah is the Ayah that abrogated the Ayah that worried the Companions, that is, Allah's statement,

(وَإِنْ تُبْدُوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ يُحَاسِبِكُمْ بِهِ
اللَّهُ)

(And whether you disclose what is in yourselves or conceal it, Allah will call you to account for it.)

This indicates that although Allah will question His servants and judge them, He will only punish for what one is able to protect himself from. As for what one cannot protect himself from, such as what one says to himself - or passing thoughts - they will not be punished for that. We should state here that to dislike the evil thoughts that cross one's mind is a part of faith. Allah said next,

(لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ)

(He gets reward for that which he has earned) of good,

(وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ)

(And he is punished for that which he has earned) of evil, that is, concerning the acts that one is responsible for.

Allah then said, mentioning what the believers said while directing His servants to supplicate to Him, all the while promising them that He will answer their supplication:

(رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا)

("Our Lord! Push us not if we forget or fall into error,") meaning, "If we forgot an obligation or fell into a prohibition, or made an error while ignorant of its ruling." We mentioned the Hadith by Abu Hurayrah, that Muslim collected, wherein Allah said, "I shall (accept your supplication)." There is also the Hadith by Ibn ` Abbas that Allah said, "I did (accept your supplication)."

(رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إِمْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى
الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا)

(Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which You did lay on those before us (Jews and Christians),) means, "Even if we were able to perform them, do not require us to perform the difficult deeds as You required the previous nations before us, such as the burdens that were placed on them. You sent Your Prophet Muhammad , the Prophet of mercy, to abrogate these burdens through the Law that You revealed to him, the Hanifi (Islamic Monotheism), easy religion." Muslim recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said that Allah said, "I shall (accept your supplication)." Ibn ` Abbas narrated that the Messenger of Allah said that Allah said, "I did (accept your supplication)." There is the Hadith recorded through various chains of narration that the Messenger of Allah said,

«بُعِثْتُ بِالْحَنِيفِيَّةِ السَّمْحَةِ»

(I was sent with the easy Hanifiyyah way.)

(رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ)

(Our Lord! Put not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear) of obligations, hardships and afflictions, do not make us bear what we cannot bear of this.

(رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ)

(Our Lord! Put not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear.)

We mentioned that Allah said, "I shall (accept your supplication)" in one narration, and, "I did (accept your supplication)," in another narration.

(وَاعْفُ عَنَّا)

(Pardon us) meaning, between us and You regarding what You know of our shortcomings and errors.

(وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا)

(And grant us forgiveness) concerning what is between us and Your servants. So do not expose our errors and evil deeds to them.

(وَارْحَمْنَا)

(Have mercy on us) in what will come thereafter. Therefore, do not allow us to fall into another error. They say that those who commit error need three things: Allah's forgiveness for what is between Him and them, that He conceals these errors from His other servants, and thus does not expose them before the servants, and that He grants them immunity from further error." We mentioned before that Allah answered these pleas, "I shall," in one narration and, "I did," in another narration.

(أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا)

(You are our Mawla) meaning, You are our supporter and helper, our trust is in You, You are sought for each and every type of help and our total reliance is on You. There is no power or strength except from You.

(فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ)

(And give us victory over the disbelieving people) those who rejected Your religion, denied Your Oneness, refused the Message of Your Prophet , worshipped other than You and associated others in Your worship. Give us victory and make us prevail above them in this and the Hereafter. Allah said, "I shall," in one narration, and, "I did," in the Hadith that Muslim collected from Ibn ` Abbas.

Further, Ibn Jarir recorded that Abu Ishaq said that whenever Mu` adh would finish reciting this Surah,

(فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ)

(And give us victory over the disbelieving people), he would say "Amin."

The Tafsir of Surah Al ` Imran

(Chapter 3)

Surah Al ` Imran was revealed in Al-Madinah, as evident by the fact that the first eighty-three Ayat in it relate to the delegation from Najran that arrived in Al-Madinah on the ninth year of Hijrah (632 CE). We will elaborate on this subject when we explain the Ayah about the Mubalahah 3:61 in this Surah, Allah willing. We should also state that we mentioned the virtues of Surah Al ` Imran along with the virtues of Surat Al-Baqarah in the beginning of the Tafsir of Surat Al-Baqarah.

(بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ)

(الم - ذٰلِكَ الْكِتٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ فِیْهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِیْنَ -
الَّذِیْنَ یُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَیْبِ وَیُقِیْمُونَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَمِمَّا
رَزَقْنٰهُمْ یُنْفِقُونَ - وَالَّذِیْنَ یُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا اُنزِلَ اِلَیْكَ
وَمَا اُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ یُوقِنُونَ)

(In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful) (1. Alif-Lam-Mim.) (2. Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists.) (3. It is He Who has sent down the Book to you with truth, confirming what came before it. And He sent down the Tawrah and the Injil,) (4. Aforetime, as a guidance to mankind. And He sent down the criterion. Truly, those who disbelieve in the Ayat of Allah, for them there is a severe torment; and Allah is All-Mighty, All-Able of Retribution.)

We mentioned the Hadith in the Tafsir of Ayat Al-Kursi 2:255 that mentions that Allah's Greatest Name is contained in these two Ayat,

(اللّٰهُ لَا اِلهَ اِلاَّ هُوَ الْحَیُّ الْقَیُّوْمُ)

(Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists) and,

(الم - ذٰلِكَ الْكِتٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ فِیْهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِیْنَ)

(Alif-Lam-Mim. Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists.)

We also explained the Tafsir of,

(الم)

(Alif-Lam-Mim) in the beginning of Surat Al-Baqarah, and the meaning of,

(اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ)

(Allah! La ilaha illa Huwa, Al-Hayyul-Qayyum) in the Tafsir of Ayat Al-Kursi. Allah's statement,

(نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ)

(It is He Who has sent down the Book to you with truth,) means, revealed the Qur'an to you, O Muhammad, in truth, meaning there is no doubt or suspicion that it is revealed from Allah. Verily, Allah revealed the Qur'an with His knowledge, and the angels testify to this fact, Allah is sufficient as a Witness. Allah's statement,

(مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ)

(Confirming what came before it) means, from the previous divinely revealed Books, sent to the servants and Prophets of Allah. These Books testify to the truth of the Qur'an, and the Qur'an also testifies to the truth these Books contained, including the news and glad tidings of Muhammad's prophethood and the revelation of the Glorious Qur'an.

Allah said,

(وَأَنْزَلَ التَّوْرَةَ)

(And He sent down the Tawrah) to Musa (Musa) son of `Imran,

(وَالْإِنْجِيلَ)

(And the Injil), to `Isa, son of Mary,

(مِنْ قَبْلُ)

(Aforetime) meaning, before the Qur'an was revealed,

(هُدًى لِلنَّاسِ)

(As a guidance to mankind) in their time.

(وَأَنْزَلَ الْفُرْقَانَ)

(And He sent down the criterion) which is the distinction between misguidance, falsehood and deviation on one hand, and guidance, truth and piety on the other hand. This is because of the indications, signs, plain evidences and clear proofs that it contains, and because of its explanations, clarifications, etc.

Allah's statement,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ)

(Truly, those who disbelieve in the Ayat of Allah) means they denied, refused and unjustly rejected them,

(لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ)

(For them there is a severe torment) on the Day of Resurrection,

(وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ)

(And Allah is All-Mighty) meaning, His grandeur is invincible and His sovereignty is infinite,

(دُوَّانِقًا)

(All-Able of Retribution.) from those who reject His Ayat and defy His honorable Messengers and great Prophets.

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَخْفَى عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ - هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ)

(5. Truly, nothing is hidden from Allah, in the earth or in the heaven.) (6. He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He wills. None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Almighty, the All-Wise.)

Allah states that He has perfect knowledge in the heavens and earth and that nothing in them is hidden from His watch.

(هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ)

(He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He wills.) meaning, He creates you in the wombs as He wills, whether male or female, handsome or otherwise, happy or miserable.

(لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ)

(La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Almighty, the All-Wise.) meaning, He is the Creator and thus is the only deity worthy of worship, without partners, and His is the perfect might, wisdom and decision. This Ayah refers to the fact that `Isa, son of Mary, is a created servant, just as Allah created the rest of mankind. Allah created `Isa in the womb (of his mother) and shaped him as He willed. Therefore, how could `Isa be divine, as the Christians, may Allah's curses descend on them, claim `Isa was created in the womb and his creation changed from stage to stage, just as Allah said,

(يَخْلُقُكُمْ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ خَلْقًا مِّنْ بَعْدِ خَلْقٍ
فِي ظِلْمَاتٍ ثَلَاثٍ)

(He creates you in the wombs of your mothers, creation after creation in three veils of darkness.) 39:6 .

(هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ
هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخْرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي
قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَبَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ
وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ ءَأَمَّنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِّنْ
عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ - رَبَّنَا لَا

نُزِعَ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ
رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ - رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ جَامِعُ النَّاسِ
لِيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ)

(7. It is He Who has sent down to you the Book. In it are verses that are entirely clear, they are the foundations of the Book; and others not entirely clear. So as for those in whose hearts there is a deviation (from the truth) they follow (only) that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking Al-Fitnah, and seeking its Ta'wil, but none knows its Ta'wil except Allah. And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: "We believe in it; all of it is from our Lord." And none receive admonition except men of understanding.) (8. (They say): "Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate (from the truth) after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from You. Truly, You are the Bestower.") (9. "Our Lord! Verily, it is You Who will gather mankind together on the Day about which there is no doubt. Verily, Allah never breaks His Promise.")

The Mutashabihat and Muhkamat Ayat

Allah states that in the Qur'an, there are Ayat that are Muhkamat, entirely clear and plain, and these are the foundations of the Book which are plain for everyone. And there are Ayat in the Qur'an that are Mutashabihat not entirely clear for many, or some people. So those who refer to the Muhkam Ayat to understand the Mutashabih Ayat, will have acquired the correct guidance, and vice versa. This is why Allah said,

(هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ)

(They are the foundations of the Book), meaning, they are the basis of the Qur'an, and should be referred to for clarification, when warranted,

(وَأُخْرٌ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ)

(And others not entirely clear) as they have several meanings, some that agree with the Muhkam and some that carry other literal indications, although these meaning might not be desired.

The Muhkamat are the Ayat that explain the abrogating rulings, the allowed, prohibited, laws, limits, obligations and rulings that should be believed in and implemented. As for the Mutashabihat Ayat, they include the abrogated Ayat, parables, oaths, and what should be believed in, but not implemented.

Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar commented on,

(مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُّحْكَمَاتٌ)

(In it are verses that are entirely clear) as "Containing proof of the Lord, immunity for the servants and a refutation of opponents and of falsehood. They cannot be changed or altered from what they were meant for." He also said, "As for the unclear Ayat, they can (but must not) be altered and changed, and this is a test from Allah to the servants, just as He tested them with the allowed and prohibited things. So these Ayat must not be altered to imply a false meaning or be distorted from the truth."

Therefore, Allah said,

(فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ)

(So as for those in whose hearts there is a deviation) meaning, those who are misguided and deviate from truth to falsehood,

(فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَبَهَ مِنْهُ)

(they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof) meaning, they refer to the Mutashabih, because they are able to alter its meanings to conform with their false interpretation since the wordings of the Mutashabihat encompass such a wide area of meanings. As for the Muhkam Ayat, they cannot be altered because they are clear and, thus, constitute unequivocal proof against the misguided people. This is why Allah said,

(ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ)

(seeking Al-Fitnah) meaning, they seek to misguide their following by pretending to prove their innovation by relying on the Qur'an -- the Mutashabih of it -- but, this is proof against and not for them. For instance, Christians might claim that `Isa is divine because the Qur'an states that he is Ruhullah and His Word, which He gave to Mary, all the while ignoring Allah's statements,

(إِنَّ هُوَ إِلَّا عَبْدٌ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَيْهِ)

(He `Isa was not more than a servant. We granted Our favor to him.) 43:59 , and,

(إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ
تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ)

(Verily, the likeness of `Isa before Allah is the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, then (He) said to him: "Be!" and he was.) 3:59 .

There are other Ayat that clearly assert that `Isa is but one of Allah's creatures and that he is the servant and Messenger of Allah, among other Messengers.

Allah's statement,

(وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ)

(And seeking for its Ta'wil,) to alter them as they desire. Imam Ahmad recorded that `A'ishah said, "The Messenger of Allah recited,

(هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ
هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ)

(It is He Who has sent down to you the Book. In it are verses that are entirely clear, they are the foundations of the Book; and others not entirely clear,) until,

(أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ)

(Men of understanding) and he said,

«فَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمُ الَّذِينَ يُجَادِلُونَ فِيهِ، فَهُمْ الَّذِينَ عَنَى
اللَّهُ، فَاحْذَرُواهُمْ»

(When you see those who argue in it (using the Mutashabihat), then they are those whom Allah meant. Therefore, beware of them.)"

Al-Bukhari recorded a similar Hadith in the Tafsir of this Ayah 3:7 , as did Muslim in the book of Qadar (the Divine Will) in his Sahih, and Abu Dawud in the Sunnah section of his Sunan, from `A'ishah; "The Messenger of Allah recited this Ayah,

(هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ
مُحْكَمَاتٌ)

(It is He Who has sent down to you the Book. In it are verses that are entirely clear,) until,

(وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ)

(And none receive admonition except men of understanding.)

He then said,

«فَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ؛ فَأُولَئِكَ
الَّذِينَ سَمَّى اللَّهُ، فَاحْذَرُوهُمْ»

(When you see those who follow what is not so clear of the Qur'an, then they are those whom Allah described, so beware of them.)"

This is the wording recorded by Al-Bukhari.

Only Allah Knows the True Ta'wil (Interpretation) of the Mutashabihat

Allah said,

(وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ)

(But none knows its Ta'wil except Allah.)

Similarly, as preceded in what has been reported from Ibn `Abbas, "Tafsir is of four types: Tafsir that the Arabs know in their language; Tafsir that no one is excused of being ignorant of; Tafsir that the scholars know; and Tafsir that only Allah knows." Scholars of Qur'an recitation have different opinions about pausing at Allah's Name in this Ayah. This stop was reported from `A'ishah, `Urwah, Abu Ash-Sha`tha' and Abu Nahik.

Some pause after reciting,

(وَالرَّسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ)

(And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge) saying that the Qur'an does not address the people with what they cannot understand. Ibn Abi Najih said that Mujahid said that Ibn `Abbas said, "I am among those who are firmly grounded in its Ta'wil interpretation." The Messenger of Allah supplicated for the benefit of Ibn `Abbas,

«اللَّهُمَّ فَفِّهْ فِي الدِّينِ وَعَلِّمَهُ التَّأْوِيلَ»

(O Allah! Bestow on him knowledge in the religion and teach him the Ta'wil (interpretation).)

Ta'wil has two meanings in the Qur'an, the true reality of things, and what they will turn out to be. For instance, Allah said,

(وَقَالَ يَا أَبَتِ هَذَا تَأْوِيلُ رُؤْيَايَ مِنْ قَبْلُ)

(And he said: "O my father! This is the Ta'wil of my dream aforesaid!".) 12:100 , and,

(هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا تَأْوِيلَهُ يَوْمَ يَأْتِي تَأْوِيلَهُ)

(Await they just for it's Ta'wil On the Day (Day of Resurrection) it's Ta'wil is finally fulfilled.)(7:53) refers to the true reality of Resurrection that they were told about. If this is the meaning desired in the Ayah above 3:7 , then pausing after reciting Allah's Name is warranted, because only Allah knows the true reality of things. In this case, Allah's statement,

(وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ)

(And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge) is connected to His statement,

(يَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِهِ)

(say: "We believe in it") If the word Ta'wil means the second meaning, that is, explaining and describing, such as what Allah said,

(نَبِّئْنَا بِتَأْوِيلِهِ)

((They said): "Inform us of the Ta'wil of this") meaning its explanation, then pausing after reciting,

(وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ)

(And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge) is warranted. This is because the scholars have general knowledge in, and understand what they were addressed with, even though they do not have knowledge of the true reality of things. Therefore, Allah's statement,

(يَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِهِ)

(say: "We believe in it") describes the conduct of the scholars. Similarly, Allah said,

(وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا)

(And your Lord comes, and the angels, in rows.) 89:22 means, your Lord will come, and the angels will come in rows.

Allah's statement that the knowledgeable people proclaim,

(يَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِهِ)

(We believe in it) means, they believe in the Mutashabih.

(كُلُّ مَنْ عِنْدَ رَبِّنَا)

(all of it is from our Lord) meaning, both the Muhkam and the Mutashabih are true and authentic, and each one of them testifies to the truth of the other. This is because they both are from Allah and nothing that comes from Allah is ever met by contradiction or discrepancy. Allah said,

(أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْءَانَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ
اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا)

(Do they not then consider the Qur'an carefully Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein many a contradiction.) 4:82 .

Allah said in his Ayah 3:7 ,

(وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ)

(And none receive admonition except men of understanding.) meaning, those who have good minds and sound comprehension, understand, contemplate and comprehend the meaning in the correct manner. Further, Ibn Al-Mundhir recorded in his Tafsir that Nafi` bin Yazid said, "Those firmly grounded in knowledge are those who are modest for Allah's sake, humbly seek His pleasure, and do not exaggerate regarding those above them, or belittle those below them."

Allah said that they supplicate to their Lord,

(رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا)

(Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate (from the truth) after You have guided us.) meaning, "Do not deviate our hearts from the guidance after You allowed them to acquire it. Do not make us like those who have wickedness in their hearts, those who follow the Mutashabih in the Qur'an. Rather, make us remain firmly on Your straight path and true religion."

(وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ)

(And grant us from Ladunka) meaning, from You,

(رَحْمَةً)

(Mercy) with which You make our hearts firm, and increase in our Faith and certainty,

(إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ)

(Truly, You are the Bestower)

Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Jarir recorded that Umm Salamah said that the Prophet used to supplicate,

«يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ»

(O You Who changes the hearts, make my heart firm on Your religion.)

He then recited,

(رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ)

("Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate (from the truth) after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from You. Truly, You are the Bestower.") The Ayah continues,

(رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ جَامِعُ النَّاسِ لِيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ)

("Our Lord! Verily, it is You Who will gather mankind together on the Day about which there is no doubt") meaning, they say in their supplication: O our Lord! You will gather Your creation on the Day of Return, judge between them and decide over what they disputed about. Thereafter, You will reward or punish each according to the deeds they did in this life.

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا
أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمْ وَقُودُ النَّارِ -
كَذَّابِ ءَالَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَالَّذِينَ مِنَ قَبْلِهِمْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ)

n(10. Verily, those who disbelieve, neither their properties nor their offspring will avail them whatsoever against Allah; and it is they who will be fuel of the Fire.) (11. Like the behavior of the people of Fir`awn and those before them; they belied Our Ayat. So Allah punished them for their sins. And Allah is severe in punishment.)

On the Day of ResurAllah states that the disbelievers shall be fuel for the Fire,

(يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ الظَّالِمِينَ مَعَذِرَتُهُمْ وَلَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ
سُوءُ الدَّارِ)

(The Day when their excuses will be of no profit to wrongdoers. Theirs will be the curse, and theirs will be the evil abode (i.e. painful torment in Hell-fire).) 40:52 .

Further, what they were granted in this life of wealth and offspring shall not avail them with Allah, or save them from His punishment and severe torment. Similarly, Allah said,

(فَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ
لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ
كَافِرُونَ)

(So let not their wealth nor their children amaze you; in reality Allah's plan is to punish them with these things in the life of this world, and that their souls shall depart (die) while they are disbelievers.) 9:55 , and,

(لَا يَغُرَّتْكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ - مَتَّعٌ
قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَيَسَّ الْمِهَادُ)

(Let not the free disposal (and affluence) of the disbelievers throughout the land deceive you. A brief enjoyment; then, their ultimate abode is Hell; and worst indeed is that place for rest.)
3:196, 197 .

Allah said in this Ayah 3:10 ,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا)

(Verily, those who disbelieve) meaning, disbelieved in Allah's Ayat, denied His Messengers, defied His Books and did not benefit from His revelation to His Prophets,

(لَنْ نُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمْ وَقُودُ النَّارِ)

(Neither their properties nor their offspring will avail them whatsoever against Allah; and it is they who will be fuel of the Fire.) meaning, they will be the wood with which the Fire is kindled and fed. Similarly, Allah said,

(إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ)

(Certainly you (disbelievers) and that which you are worshipping now besides Allah, are (but) fuel for Hell!) 21:98 .

Allah said next,

(كَذَّابٍ ءَالٍ فِرْعَوْنَ)

(Like the Da'b of the people of Fir`awn.) Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah means, "Like the behavior of the people of Fir`awn." This is the same Tafsir of `Ikrimah, Mujahid, Abu Malik, Ad-Dahhak, and others. Other scholars said that the Ayah means, "Like the practice, conduct, likeness of the people of Fir`awn." These meanings are all plausible, for the Da'b means practice, behavior, tradition and habit. The Ayah indicates that the disbelievers will not benefit from their wealth or offspring. Rather, they will perish and be punished. This is the same end the people of Fir`awn and the previous nations met, those who rejected the Messengers, the Ayat, and proofs of Allah that they were sent with.

(وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ)

(And Allah is severe in punishment.) meaning, His punishment is severe and His torment is painful. None can escape Allah's grasp, nor does anything escape His knowledge. Allah does

what He wills and prevails over all things, it is He to Whom everything is humbled and there is no deity worthy of worship, nor any Lord except Him.

(قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سُنُوعُونَ وَتُحْشَرُونَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ
وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ - قَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ آيَةٌ فِي فِئَتَيْنِ التَّاتِيَاتِ
فِئَةٌ تَقَاتِلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأُخْرَىٰ كَافِرَةٌ يَرَوْنَهُمْ
مِّثْلِهِمْ رَأَىٰ الْعَيْنُ وَاللَّهُ يُؤَيِّدُ بِنَصْرِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ
إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ)

(12. Say to those who disbelieve: "You will be defeated and gathered together to Hell, and worst indeed is that place of rest.") (13. There has already been a sign for you in the two armies that met. One was fighting in the cause of Allah, and as for the other, in disbelief. They saw them with their own eyes twice their number. And Allah supports with His aid whom He wills. Verily, in this is a lesson for those who understand.)

On the Day of Resurrection, No Wealth or Offspring Shall Avail

Allah states that the disbelievers shall be fuel for the Fire,

(يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ الظَّالِمِينَ مَعذِرَتُهُمْ وَلَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ
سُوءُ الدَّارِ)

(The Day when their excuses will be of no profit to wrongdoers. Theirs will be the curse, and theirs will be the evil abode (i.e. painful torment in Hell-fire).) 40:52 .

Further, what they were granted in this life of wealth and offspring shall not avail them with Allah, or save them from His punishment and severe torment. Similarly, Allah said,

(فَلَا تُعْجِبُكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ
لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ
كَافِرُونَ)

(So let not their wealth nor their children amaze you; in reality Allah's plan is to punish them with these things in the life of this world, and that their souls shall depart (die) while they are disbelievers.) 9:55 , and,

(لَا يَغُرَّتْكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ - مَتَّعٌ
قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَيُسَّ الْمِهَادُ)

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(لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمْ وَقُودُ النَّارِ)

(Neither their properties nor their offspring will avail them whatsoever against Allah; and it is they who will be fuel of the Fire.) meaning, they will be the wood with which the Fire is kindled and fed. Similarly, Allah said,

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(Certainly you (disbelievers) and that which you are worshipping now besides Allah, are (but) fuel for Hell!) 21:98 .

Allah said next,

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(Like the Da'b of the people of Fir`awn.) Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah means, "Like the behavior of the people of Fir`awn." This is the same Tafsir of `Ikrimah, Mujahid, Abu Malik, Ad-Dahhak, and others. Other scholars said that the Ayah means, "Like the practice, conduct, likeness of the people of Fir`awn." These meanings are all plausible, for the Da'b means practice, behavior, tradition and habit. The Ayah indicates that the disbelievers

will not benefit from their wealth or offspring. Rather, they will perish and be punished. This is the same end the people of Fir`awn and the previous nations met, those who rejected the Messengers, the Ayat, and proofs of Allah that they were sent with.

(وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ)

(And Allah is severe in punishment.) meaning, His punishment is severe and His torment is painful. None can escape Allah's grasp, nor does anything escape His knowledge. Allah does what He wills and prevails over all things, it is He to Whom everything is humbled and there is no deity worthy of worship, nor any Lord except Him.

(قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سُنُوعْلُبُونَ وَتُحْشَرُونَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ
وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ - قَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ آيَةٌ فِي فِئَتَيْنِ الْتَقَتَا
فِئَةٌ تَقَاتِلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأُخْرَىٰ كَافِرَةٌ يَرَوْنَهُمْ
مِّثْلِهِمْ رَأَىٰ الْعَيْنُ وَاللَّهُ يُؤَيِّدُ بِنَصْرِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ)

(12. Say to those who disbelieve: "You will be defeated and gathered together to Hell, and worst indeed is that place of rest.") (13. There has already been a sign for you in the two armies that met. One was fighting in the cause of Allah, and as for the other, in disbelief. They saw them with their own eyes twice their number. And Allah supports with His aid whom He wills. Verily, in this is a lesson for those who understand.)

Threatening the Jews With Defeat and Encouraging Them to Learn a Lesson From the Battle of Badr

Allah commanded the Prophet Muhammad to proclaim to the disbelievers,

(سُنُوعْلُبُونَ)

(You will be defeated) in this life,

(وَتُحْشَرُونَ)

(And gathered together) on the Day of Resurrection,

(إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ وَيُسَّ الْمِهَادُ)

(to Hell, and worst indeed is that place of rest)

Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar recorded that `Asim bin `Umar bin Qatadah said that when the Messenger of Allah gained victory in the battle of Badr and went back to Al-Madinah, he gathered the Jews in the marketplace of Bani Qaynuqa`.

Therefore, Allah said,

(قَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ آيَةٌ)

(There has already been a sign for you) meaning, O Jews, who said what you said! You have an Ayah, meaning proof, that Allah will make His religion prevail, award victory to His Messenger, make His Word apparent and His religion the highest.

(فِي فِئَتَيْنِ)

(In the two armies) meaning, two camps,

(التَّقَاتِ)

(that met) in combat (in Badr),

(فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ)

(One was fighting in the Cause of Allah) the Muslims,

(وَأُخْرَىٰ كَافِرَةٌ)

(And as for the other, in disbelief) meaning, the idolators of Quraysh at Badr. Allah's statement,

(يَرَوْنَهُمْ مِّثْلَيْهِمْ رَأَى الْعَيْنِ)

(They saw them with their own eyes twice their number) means, the idolators thought that the Muslims were twice as many as they were, for Allah made this illusion a factor in the victory that Islam had over them.

It was said that the meaning of Allah's statement,

(يَرَوْنَهُمْ مِّثْلَيْهِمْ رَأَى الْعَيْنِ)

(They saw them with their own eyes twice their number) is that the Muslims saw twice as many idolators as they were, yet Allah gave them victory over the disbelievers. `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said, "When we looked at the disbelievers' forces, we found that they were twice as many as we were. When we looked at them again, we thought they did not have one man more than we had. So Allah's statement,

(وَإِذْ يُرِيكُمُوهُمْ إِذِ التَّفَاقُتِمْ فِي أَعْيُنِكُمْ قَلِيلًا وَيُقَلِّلُكُمْ فِي أَعْيُنِهِمْ)

(And (remember) when you met, He showed them to you as few in your eyes and He made you appear as few in their eyes.) 8:44 "

When the two camps saw each other, the Muslims thought that the idolators were twice as many as they were, so that they would trust in Allah and seek His help. The idolators thought that the believers were twice as many as they were, so that they would feel fear, horror, fright and despair. When the two camps stood in lines and met in battle, Allah made each camp look smaller in the eyes of the other camp, so that they would be encouraged to fight each other,

(لِيَقْضِيَ اللَّهُ أَمْرًا كَانَ مَفْعُولًا)

(so that Allah might accomplish a matter already ordained.) 8:42 meaning, so that the truth and falsehood are distinguishable, and thus the word of faith prevails over disbelief and deviation, so that the believers prevail and the disbelievers are humiliated. In a similar statement, Allah said;

(وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنْتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ)

(And Allah has already made you victorious at Badr, when you were a weak little force) 3:123 . In this Ayah 3:13 Allah said,

(وَاللَّهُ يُؤَيِّدُ بِنَصَرِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ)

(And Allah supports with His victory whom He wills. Verily, in this is a lesson for those who understand.) meaning, this should be an example for those who have intelligence and sound

comprehension. They should contemplate about Allah's wisdom, decisions and decree, that He gives victory to His believing servants in this life and on the Day the witnesses stand up to testify.

زَيْنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَالْبَنِينَ
وَالْقَنْطِيرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ
الْمُسَوَّمَةِ وَالْأَنْعَمِ وَالْحَرثِ ذَلِكَ مَتَعُ الْحَيَاةِ
الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَآبِ- قُلْ أُوْنَبِّئُكُمْ بِخَيْرِ
مِّنْ ذَلِكَمُ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَأَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ
وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ V

(14. Beautified for men is the love of things they covet; women, children, Qanatir Al-Muqantarah of gold and silver, branded beautiful horses (Musawwamah), cattle and fertile land. This is the pleasure of the present world's life; but Allah has the excellent return with Him.) (15. Say: "Shall I inform you of things far better than those For those who have Taqwa there are Gardens (Paradise) with their Lord, underneath which rivers flow. Therein (is their) eternal (home) and Azwajun Mutahharatun (purified mates or wives). And Allah will be pleased with them. And Allah is All-Seer of the servants.")

The True Value of This Earthly Life

Allah mentions the delights that He put in this life for people, such as women and children, and He started with women, because the test with them is more tempting. For instance, the Sahih recorded that the Messenger said,

«مَا تَرَكْتُ بَعْدِي فِتْنَةٌ أَضْرَّ عَلَى الرَّجَالِ مِنَ
النِّسَاءِ»

(I did not leave behind me a test more tempting to men than women.)

When one enjoys women for the purpose of having children and preserving his chastity, then he is encouraged to do so. There are many Hadiths that encourage getting married, such as,

«وَأِنَّ خَيْرَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ مَنْ كَانَ أَكْثَرَ نِسَاءً»

(Verily, the best members of this Ummah are those who have the most wives) He also said,

«الدُّنْيَا مَتَاعٌ، وَخَيْرُ مَتَاعِهَا الْمَرْأَةُ الصَّالِحَةُ»

(This life is a delight, and the best of its delight is a righteous wife)

The Prophet said in another Hadith,

«حُبِّبَ إِلَيَّ النِّسَاءُ وَالطَّيِّبُ، وَجُعِلَتْ قُرَّةُ عَيْنِي
فِي الصَّلَاةِ»

(I was made to like women and perfume, and the comfort of my eye is the prayer.)

`A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, said, "Nothing was more beloved to the Messenger of Allah than women, except horses," and in another narration, "...than horses except women."

The desire to have children is sometimes for the purpose of pride and boasting, and as such, is a temptation. When the purpose for having children is to reproduce and increase the Ummah of Muhammad with those who worship Allah alone without partners, then it is encouraged and praised. A Hadith states,

«تَزَوَّجُوا الْوَدُودَ الْوَلُودَ، فَإِنِّي مَكَاثِرٌ بِكُمْ الْأُمَّمَ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ»

(Marry the Wadud (kind) and Walud (fertile) woman, for I will compare your numbers to the rest of the nations on the Day of Resurrection.)

The desire of wealth sometimes results out of arrogance, and the desire to dominate the weak and control the poor, and this conduct is prohibited. Sometimes, the want for more money is for the purpose of spending it on acts of worship, being kind to the family, the relatives, and spending on various acts of righteousness and obedience; this behavior is praised and encouraged in the religion.

Scholars of Tafsir have conflicting opinions about the amount of the Qintar, all of which indicate that the Qintar is a large amount of money, as Ad-Dahhak and other scholars said. Abu Hurayrah said "The Qintar is twelve thousand Uwqiyah, each Uwqiyah is better than what is between the heavens and earth." This was recorded by Ibn Jarir .

The desire to have horses can be one of three types. Sometimes, owners of horses collect them to be used in the cause of Allah, and when warranted, they use their horses in battle. This type of owner shall be rewarded for this good action. Another type collects horses to boast, and out of enmity to the people of Islam, and this type earns a burden for his behavior. Another type collects horses to fulfill their needs and to collect their offspring, and they do not forget Allah's right due on their horses. This is why in this case, these horses provide a shield of sufficiency for their owner, as evident by a Hadith that we will mention, Allah willing, when we explain Allah's statement,

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ
الْخَيْلِ

(And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war.) 8:60 .

As for the Musawwamah horses, Ibn `Abbas said that they are the branded, beautiful horses. This is the same explanation of Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Abdur-Rahman bin `Abdullah bin Abza, As-Suddi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Abu Snan and others. Makhul said the Musawwamah refers to the horse with a white spotted faced, and the horse with white feet. Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Dharr said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَيْسَ مِنْ فَرَسٍ عَرَبِيٍّ إِلَّا يُؤَدِّنُ لَهُ مَعَ كُلِّ فَجْرٍ
يَدْعُو بِدَعْوَتَيْنِ يَقُولُ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ خَوَّلْتَنِي مِنْ بَنِي
آدَمَ، فَاجْعَلْنِي مِنْ أَحَبِّ مَالِهِ وَأَهْلِهِ إِلَيْهِ أَوْ أَحَبِّ
أَهْلِهِ وَمَالِهِ إِلَيْهِ»

(Every Arabian horse is allowed to have two supplications every dawn, and the horse supplicates, `O Allah! You made me subservient to the son of Adam. Therefore, make me among the dearest of his wealth and household to him, or, ...make me the dearest of his household and wealth to him.)

Allah's statement,

(وَالْأَنْعَامُ)

(Cattle) means, camels, cows and sheep.

(وَالْحَرَثِ)

(And fertile land) meaning, the land that is used to farm and grow plants.

Allah then said,

(ذَلِكَ مَتَعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا)

(This is the pleasure of the present world's life) Ymeaning, these are the delights of this life and its short lived joys,

(وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَآبِ)

(But Allah has the excellent return with Him) meaning, the best destination and reward.

The Reward of the Those Who Have Taqwa is Better Than All Joys of This World

This is why Allah said,

(قُلْ أَوْ نَبِّئُكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْ ذَلِكَم)

(Say: "Shall I inform you of things far better than those")

This Ayah means, "Say, O Muhammad, to the people, `Should I tell you about what is better than the delights and joys of this life that will soon perish" Allah informed them of what is better when He said,

(لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ)

(For those who have Taqwa there are Gardens (Paradise) with their Lord, underneath which rivers flow) meaning, rivers run throughout it. These rivers carry various types of drinks: honey, milk, wine and water such that no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard, and no heart has ever imagined,

(خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا)

(Therein (is their) eternal (home)) meaning, they shall remain in it forever and ever and will not want to be removed from it.

(وَأَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ)

(And Azwajun Mutahharatun (purified mates or wives)) meaning, from filth, dirt, harm, menstruation, post birth bleeding, and other things that affect women in this world.

(وَرَضُونَ مِنْ اللَّهِ)

(And Allah will be pleased with them) meaning, Allah's pleasure will descend on them and He shall never be angry with them after that. This is why Allah said in in Surah Bara`ah,

(وَرَضُونَ مِنْ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ)

(But the pleasure of Allah is greater) 9:72 , meaning, greater than the eternal delight that He has granted them. Allah then said,

(وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ)

(And Allah is All-Seer of the (His) servants) and, He gives each provisions according to what they deserve.

(الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا ءَامِنَّا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا
وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ - الصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّادِقِينَ
وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْمُنْفِقِينَ وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ)

(16. Those who say: "Our Lord! We have indeed believed, so forgive us our sins and save us from the punishment of the Fire.") (17. (They are) the patient, the true believers, and obedient with sincere devotion in worship to Allah. Those who spend in good and those who pray and beg Allah's pardon in the last hours of the night.)

The Supplication and Description of Al-Muttaqin

Allah describes the Muttaqin, His pious servants, whom He promised tremendous rewards,

(الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا ءَامِنَّا)

(Those who say: "Our Lord! We have indeed believed") in You, Your Book and Your Messenger.

(فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا)

(so forgive us our sins) because of our faith in You and in what You legislated for us. Therefore, forgive us our errors and shortcomings, with Your bounty and mercy,

(وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ)

(and save us from the punishment of the Fire.)

Allah then said,

(الصَّابِرِينَ)

((They are) those who are patient) while performing acts of obedience and abandoning the prohibitions.

(وَالصَّادِقِينَ)

(those who are true) concerning their proclamation of faith, by performing the difficult deeds.

(وَالْقَانِتِينَ)

(and obedient) meaning, they submit and obey Allah,

(وَالْمُنْفِقِينَ)

(those who spend) from their wealth on all the acts of obedience they were commanded, being kind to kith and kin, helping the needy, and comforting the destitute.

(وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ)

(and those who pray and beg Allah's pardon in the last hours of the night) and this testifies to the virtue of seeking Allah's forgiveness in the latter part of the night. It was reported that when Ya`qub said to his children,

(سَوْفَ أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ رَبِّي)

(I will ask my Lord for forgiveness for you) 12:98 he waited until the latter part of the night to say his supplication.

Furthermore, the Two Sahihs, the Musnad and Sunan collections recorded through several Companions that the Messenger of Allah said,

«يَنْزِلُ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى فِي كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ إِلَى سَمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا حِينَ يَبْقَى ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ الْآخِرِ، فَيَقُولُ: هَلْ مِنْ سَائِلٍ فَأَعْطِيَهُ؟ هَلْ مِنْ دَاعٍ فَأَسْتَجِيبَ لَهُ؟ هَلْ مِنْ مُسْتَغْفِرٍ فَأَغْفِرَ لَهُ؟»

(Every night, when the last third of it remains, our Lord, the Blessed, the Superior, descends to the lowest heaven saying, "Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant him his request Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to his invocation Is there anyone seeking My forgiveness, so that I may forgive him")

The Two Sahihs recorded that `A'ishah said, "The Messenger of Allah performed Witr during the first part, the middle and latter parts of the night. Then, later (in his life), he would perform it (only) during the latter part." `Abdullah bin `Umar used to pray during the night and would ask, "O Nafi`! Is it the latter part of the night yet" and if Nafi` said, "Yes," Ibn `Umar would start supplicating to Allah and seeking His forgiveness until dawn. This Hadith was collected by Ibn Abi Hatim.

(شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلِكَةُ وَأَوْلُوا الْعِلْمَ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ - إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَعِيًّا بَيْنَهُمْ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ - فَإِنْ حَاجُّوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنَ وَقُلْ لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْأُمِّيِّينَ

ءَأَسْلَمْتُمْ فَإِنِ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا وَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا
عَلَيْكَ الْبَلْغُ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ)

(18. Allah bears witness that none has the right to be worshipped but He, and the angels, and those having knowledge (also bear witness to this); (He always) maintains His creation in justice. None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Almighty, the All-Wise.) (19. Truly, the religion with Allah is Islam. Those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) did not differ except out of rivalry, after knowledge had come to them. And whoever disbelieves in the Ayat of Allah, then surely, Allah is Swift in reckoning.) (20. So if they dispute with you say: "I have submitted myself to Allah, and (so have) those who follow me." And say to those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) and to those who are illiterate (Arab pagans): "Do you (also) submit yourselves" If they do, they are rightly guided; but if they turn away, your duty is only to convey the Message; and Allah sees the servants.)

The Testimony of Tawhid

Allah bears witness, and verily, Allah is sufficient as a Witness, and He is the Most Truthful and Just Witness there is; His statement is the absolute truth,

(أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ)

(that La ilaha illa Huwa) meaning, He Alone is the Lord and God of all creation; everyone and everything are His servants, creation and in need of Him. Allah is the Most Rich, Free from needing anyone or anything. Allah said in another Ayah,

(لَكِنِ اللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ)

(But Allah bears witness to that which He has sent down (the Qur'an) unto you (O Muhammad))
4:166 .

Allah then mentioned the testimony of His angels and those who have knowledge after he mentioned His own testimony,

(شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُو
الْعِلْمِ)

(Allah bears witness that none has the right to be worshipped but He), and the angels, and those having knowledge (also bear witness to this)). This Ayah emphasizes the great virtue of those who have knowledge.

(قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ)

((He) maintains His creation in justice) in all that He does,

(لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ)

(None has the right to be worshipped but He) thus emphasizing this fact,

(الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ)

(the Almighty, the All-Wise.) the Mighty that does not submit to weakness due to His might and greatness, the Wise in all His statements, actions, legislation and decrees.

The Religion with Allah is Islam

Allah said,

(إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ)

(Truly, the religion with Allah is Islam.) Allah states that there is no religion accepted with Him from any person, except Islam. Islam includes obeying all of the Messengers until Muhammad who finalized their commission, thus closing all paths to Allah except through Muhammad . Therefore, after Allah sent Muhammad , whoever meets Allah following a path other than Muhammad's, it will not be accepted of him. In another Ayah, Allah said,

(وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ)

(And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him) 3:85 .

In this Ayah 3:19 , Allah said, asserting that the only religion accepted with Him is Islam,

(إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ)

(Truly, the religion with Allah is Islam.)

Allah then states that those who were given the Scripture beforehand divided in the religion after Allah sent the Messengers and revealed the Books to them providing them the necessary proofs to not do so. Allah said,

وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا
جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ)

(Those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) did not differ except out of rivalry, after knowledge had come to them.) meaning, some of them wronged others. Therefore, they differed over the truth, out of envy, hatred and enmity for each other. This hatred made some of them defy those whom they hated even if they were correct. Allah then said,

(وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ)

(And whoever disbelieves in the Ayat of Allah) meaning, whoever rejects what Allah sent down in His Book,

(فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ)

(then surely, Allah is Swift in reckoning.) Allah will punish him for his rejection, reckon him for his denial, and torment him for defying His Book. Thereafter, Allah said.

(فَإِنْ حَاجُّوكَ)

(So if they dispute with you (Muhammad)) so if they argue with you about Tawhid,

(فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِ)

(Say: "I have submitted myself to Allah (in Islam), and (so have) those who follow me") meaning, Say, `I have made my worship sincere for Allah Alone without partners, rivals, offspring or companion,

(وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِ)

(and those who follow me) who followed my religion and embraced my creed.' In another Ayah, Allah said,

(قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا
وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي)

(Say (O Muhammad): "This is my way; I invite unto Allah with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me...") 12:108 .

Islam is the Religion of Mankind and the Prophet Was Sent to all Mankind

Allah commanded His servant and Messenger, Muhammad , to call the People of the Two Scriptures and the unlettered idolators to his religion, way, Law and all that Allah sent him with. Allah said,

وَقُلْ لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْأُمِّيِّينَ ءَأَسْلَمْتُمْ فَإِنْ
أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلْغُ

(And say to those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) and to those who are illiterates (Arab pagans): "Do you (also) submit yourselves" If they do, they are rightly guided; but if they turn away, your duty is only to convey the Message.) meaning, their reckoning is with Allah and their return and final destination is to Him. It is He Who guides whom He wills and allows whom He wills to stray, and He has the perfect wisdom and the unequivocal proof for all of this. This is why Allah said,

وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

(And Allah sees the servants.) for He has perfect knowledge of who deserves to be guided and who does not deserve to be guided. Verily,

لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ

(He cannot be questioned for what He does, while they will be questioned.) 21:23 because of His perfect wisdom and mercy. This and similar Ayat are clear proofs that the Message of Muhammad is universal to all creation, as it is well established in the religion, according to the various texts of the Book and Sunnah. For instance, Allah said,

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا

(Say (O Muhammad): "O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah.") 7:158 , and,

(تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ
لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا)

(Blessed be He Who sent down the criterion to His servant that he may be a warner to the
`Alamin (mankind and Jinn).) 25:1 .

The Two Sahihs and other collections of Hadith recorded that the Prophet sent letters to the kings of the earth during his time and to different peoples, Arabs and non-Arabs, People of the Book and the unlettered, just as Allah had commanded him. `Abdur-Razzaq recorded that Ma` mar said, that Hammam said that Abu Hurayrah said that the Prophet said,

«وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، لَأَسْمَعُ بِي أَحَدٌ مِنْ هَذِهِ
الْأُمَّةِ: يَهُودِيٌّ وَلَا نَصْرَانِيٌّ، وَمَاتَ وَلَمْ يُؤْمِنْ
بِالَّذِي أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِ، إِلَّا كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ»

(By He in Whose Hand is my soul! No member of this Ummah, no Jew or Christian, hears of me but dies without believing in what I was sent with, but will be among the people of the Fire.) Muslim recorded this Hadith.

The Prophet said,

«بُعِثْتُ إِلَى الْأَحْمَرِ وَالْأَسْوَدِ»

(I was sent to the red and black.) and,

«كَانَ النَّبِيُّ يُبْعَثُ إِلَى قَوْمِهِ خَاصَّةً، وَبُعِثْتُ إِلَى
النَّاسِ عَامَّةً»

(A Prophet used to be sent to his people, but I was sent to all mankind.)

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّينَ
بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَيَقْتُلُونَ الَّذِينَ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْقِسْطِ مِنَ

النَّاسَ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ - أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ
حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ
نَّصِيرِينَ)

(21. Verily, those who disbelieve in the Ayat of Allah and kill the Prophets without right, and kill those men who order just dealings, then announce to them a painful torment.) (22. They are those whose works will be lost in this world and in the Hereafter, and they will have no helpers.)

Chastising the Jews for Their Disbelief and for Killing the Prophets and Righteous People

This Ayah chastises the People of the Book for the transgression and prohibitions they committed by their denials in the past and more recent times, of Allah's Ayat and the Messengers. They did this due to their defiance and rejection of the Messengers, denial of the truth and refusal to follow it. They also killed many Prophets when they conveyed to them what Allah legislated for them, without cause or criminal behavior committed by these Prophets, for they only called them to the truth,

(وَيَقْتُلُونَ الَّذِينَ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْقِسْطِ مِنَ النَّاسِ)

(And kill those men who order just dealings) thus, demonstrating the worst type of arrogance. Indeed, the Prophet said,

«الْكِبْرُ بَطْرُ الْحَقِّ وَغَمَطُ النَّاسِ»

(Kibr (arrogance) is refusing the truth and degrading people)

This is why when they rejected the truth and acted arrogantly towards the creation, Allah punished them with humiliation and disgrace in this life, and humiliating torment in the Hereafter. Allah said,

(فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ)

(then announce to them a painful torment) meaning, painful and humiliating,

(أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ
وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّن نَّاصِرِينَ)

(They are those whose works will be lost in this world and in the Hereafter, and they will have no helpers.).

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ
يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ لِيَحْكَمَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ يُتَوَلَّى
فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ وَهُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ - ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَن
تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ وَغَرَّهُمْ فِي دِينِهِمْ
مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ - فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جَمَعْنَهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ لَّا
رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَوُقِّيتَ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَّا
يُظْلَمُونَ)

(23. Have you not seen those who have been given a portion of the Scripture They are being invited to the Book of Allah to settle their dispute, then a party of them turned away, and they are averse.) (24. This is because they say: "The Fire shall not touch us but for a number of days." And that which they used to invent in their religion has deceived them.) (25. How (will it be) when We gather them together on the Day about which there is no doubt (i.e. the Day of Resurrection). And each person will be paid in full what he has earned And they will not be dealt with unjustly.)

Chastising the People of the Book for Not Referring to the Book of Allah for Judgment

Allah criticizes the Jews and Christians who claim to follow their Books, the Tawrah and the Injil, because when they are called to refer to these Books where Allah commanded them to follow Muhammad , they turn away with aversion. This censure and criticism from Allah was all because of their defiance and rejection. Allah said next,

(ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَن تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا
مَّعْدُودَاتٍ)

(This is because they say: "The Fire shall not touch us but for a number of days.") meaning, what made them dare to challenge and defy the truth is their false claim that Allah will only punish them for seven days in the Fire, a day for every one thousand years in this life. We mentioned this subject in the Tafsir of Surat Al-Baqarah.

Allah then said,

(وَعَرَّهْمُ فِي دِينِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ)

(And that which they used to invent regarding their religion has deceived them.) meaning, what caused them to remain on their false creed is that they deceived themselves, believing that the Fire will only touch them for a few days for their errors. However, it is they who have invented this notion, and Allah did not grant them authority to support this claim. Allah said, while threatening and warning them,

(فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جَمَعْنَهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ)

(How (will it be) when We gather them together on the Day about which there is no doubt (i. e. the Day of Resurrection).) meaning, what will their condition be like after they have uttered this lie about Allah, rejected His Messengers and killed His Prophets and their scholars who enjoined righteousness and forbade evil Allah will ask them about all this and punish them for what they have done. This is why Allah said,

(فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جَمَعْنَهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ)

(How (will it be) when We gather them together on the Day about which there is no doubt.) meaning, there is no doubt that this Day will come,

(وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ)

(And each person will be paid in full what he has earned And they will not be dealt with unjustly.)

(قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكَ الْمَلِكِ نُؤْتِي الْمَلِكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ
وَتَنْزِعُ الْمَلِكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُنْزِلُ
مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ -
تُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَتُولِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ

وَأُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَأُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ
الْحَيِّ وَتَرْزُقُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ)

(26. Say: "O Allah! Possessor of the power, You give power to whom You will, and You take power from whom You will, and You endue with honor whom You will, and You humiliate whom You will. In Your Hand is the good. Verily, You are able to do all things.) (27. You make the night to enter into the day, and You make the day to enter into the night, You bring the living out of the dead, and You bring the dead out of the living. And You give wealth and sustenance to whom You will, without limit.)

Encouraging Gratitude

Allah said,

(قُلْ)

(Say) O Muhammad , while praising your Lord, thanking Him, relying in all matters upon Him and trusting in Him.

(اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكِ الْمُلْكِ)

(O Allah! Possessor of the power) meaning, all sovereignty is Yours,

(أُوتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ
وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ)

(You give power to whom You will, and You take power from whom You will, and You endue with honor whom You will, and You humiliate whom You will.) meaning, You are the Giver, You are the Taker, it is Your will that occurs and whatever You do not will, does not occur. This Ayah encourages thanking Allah for the favors He granted His Messenger and his Ummah. Allah transferred the prophethood from the Children of Israel to the Arab, Qurashi, Makkan, unlettered Prophet, the Final and Last of all Prophets and the Messenger of Allah to all mankind and Jinn. Allah endowed the Prophet with the best of qualities from the prophets before him. Allah also granted him extra qualities that no other Prophet or Messenger before him was endowed with, such as granting him (more) knowledge of Allah and His Law, knowledge of more of the matters of the past and the future, such as what will occur in the Hereafter. Allah allowed Muhammad's Ummah to reach the eastern and western parts of the world and gave dominance to his religion and Law over all other religions and laws. May Allah's

peace and blessings be on the Prophet until the Day of Judgment, and as long as the day and night succeed each other. This is why Allah said,

(قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكُ الْمَلِكِ)

(Say: "O Allah! Possessor of the power,") meaning, You decide what You will concerning Your creation and You do what you will. Allah refutes those who thought that they could decide for Allah,

(وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ)

(And they say: "Why is not this Qur'an sent down to some great man of the two towns (Makkah and Ta'if)") 43:31 .

Allah refuted them by saying,

(أَهُمْ يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَةَ رَبِّكَ)

(Is it they who would portion out the Mercy of your Lord) 43:32 , meaning, "We decide for Our creation what We will, without resistance or hindrance by anyone. We have the perfect wisdom and the unequivocal proof in all of this, and We give the prophethood to whom We will." Similarly, Allah said,

(اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ)

(Allah knows best with whom to place His Message) and,

(انظُرْ كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ)

(See how We prefer one above another (in this world)) 17: 21

Allah said,

(تُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَتُولِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ)

(You make the night enter into the day, and You make the day enter into the night) meaning, You take from the length of one of them and add it to the shortness of the other, so that they become equal, and take from the length of one of them and add it to the other so that they

are not equal. This occurs throughout the seasons of the year: spring, summer, fall and winter. Allah's statement,

وَتُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَتُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ
(الْحَيُّ)

(You bring the living out of the dead, and You bring the dead out of the living.) means, You bring out the seed from the plant and the plant from the seed; the date from its seed and the date's seed from the date; the faithful from the disbeliever and the disbeliever from the faithful; the chicken from the egg and the egg from the chicken, etc.

وَتَرزُقُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

(And You give wealth and sustenance to whom You will, without limit.) meaning, You give whomever You will innumerable amounts of wealth while depriving others from it, out of wisdom, and justice.

لَا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِي شَيْءٍ
إِلَّا أَنْ تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ تُقَةً وَيُحَدِّثْكُمْ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ وَإِلَى
اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ

(28. Let not the believers take the disbelievers as friends instead of the believers, and whoever does that, will never be helped by Allah in any way, unless you indeed fear a danger from them. And Allah warns you against Himself, and to Allah is the final return.)

The Prohibition of Supporting the Disbelievers

Allah prohibited His believing servants from becoming supporters of the disbelievers, or to take them as comrades with whom they develop friendships, rather than the believers. Allah warned against such behavior when He said,

وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِي شَيْءٍ

(And whoever does that, will never be helped by Allah in any way) meaning, whoever commits this act that Allah has prohibited, then Allah will discard him. Similarly, Allah said,

يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عَدُوِّي وَعَدُوَّكُمْ
أَوْلِيَاءَ تُلْقُونَ إِلَيْهِم بِالْمَوَدَّةِ)

(O you who believe! Take not My enemies and your enemies as friends, showing affection towards them), until,

وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْهُ مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ)

(And whosoever of you does that, then indeed he has gone astray from the straight path.)
60:1 . Allah said,

يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكٰفِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ
مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَتُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَجْعَلُوا لِلّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
سُلْطٰنًا مُّبِينًا)

(O you who believe! Take not for friends disbelievers instead of believers. Do you wish to offer Allah a manifest proof against yourselves) 4:144 , and,

يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ
وَالنَّصْرٰى أَوْلِيَاءَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ وَمَنْ
يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِنْكُمْ فَاِنَّهُ مِنْهُمْ)

(O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians as friends, they are but friends of each other. And whoever befriends them, then surely, he is one of them.) 5:51 .

Allah said, after mentioning the fact that the faithful believers gave their support to the faithful believers among the Muhajirin, Ansar and Bedouins,

(وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ إِلَّا تَفْعَلُوهُ
تَكُنْ فِتْنَةٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَفَسَادٌ كَبِيرٌ)

(And those who disbelieve are allies of one another, (and) if you do not behave the same, there will be Fitnah and oppression on the earth, and a great mischief and corruption.) 8:73 .

Allah said next,

(إِلَّا أَنْ تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ تُقَاةً)

(unless you indeed fear a danger from them) meaning, except those believers who in some areas or times fear for their safety from the disbelievers. In this case, such believers are allowed to show friendship to the disbelievers outwardly, but never inwardly. For instance, Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Ad-Darda' said, "We smile in the face of some people although our hearts curse them." Al-Bukhari said that Al-Hasan said, "The Tuqyah is allowed until the Day of Resurrection." Allah said,

(وَيَحذِّرُكُمْ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ)

(And Allah warns you against Himself.) meaning, He warns you against His anger and the severe torment He prepared for those who give their support to His enemies, and those who have enmity with His friends,

(وَالِإِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ)

(And to Allah is the final return) meaning, the return is to Him and He will reward or punish each person according to their deeds.

(قُلْ إِنْ تُخَفُوا مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ أَوْ يُبْدُوهُ يَعْلَمُهُ
اللَّهُ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ - يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا
عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُحْضَرًا وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ

تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ
نَفْسَهُ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ)

(29. Say: "Whether you hide what is in your breasts or reveal it, Allah knows it, and He knows what is in the heavens and what is in the earth. And Allah is able to do all things.") (30. On the Day when every person will be confronted with the good he has done, and all the evil he has done, he will wish that there were a great distance between him and his evil. And Allah warns you against Himself and Allah is full of kindness with the servants.)

Allah Knows What the Hearts Conceal

Allah tells His servants that He knows the secrets and apparent matters and that nothing concerning them escapes His observation. Rather, His knowledge encompasses them in all conditions, time frames, days and instances. His knowledge encompasses all that is in heaven and earth, and nothing not even the weight of an atom, or what is smaller than that in the earth, seas and mountains, escapes His observation. Indeed,

(وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)

(And Allah is able to do all things.) and His ability encompasses everything. This Ayah alerts Allah's servants that they should fear Him enough to not commit what He prohibits and dislikes, for He has perfect knowledge in all they do and is able to punish them promptly. And He gives respite to some of them, then He punishes them, and He is Swift and Mighty in taking account. This is why Allah said afterwards,

(يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُّحْضَرًا)

(On the Day when every person will be confronted with all the good he has done,) meaning, on the Day of Resurrection, Allah brings the good and evil deeds before the servant, just as He said,

(يُنَبِّئُ الْإِنْسَانَ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَمَا قَدَّمَ وَأَخَّرَ)

(On that Day man will be informed of what he sent forward, and what he left behind.) 75:13 .

When the servant sees his good deeds, he becomes happy and delighted. When he sees the evil deeds he committed, he becomes sad and angry. Then he will wish that he could disown his evil work and that a long distance separated it from him. He will also say to the devil who used to accompany him in this life, and who used to encourage him to do evil;

(يَلَيْتَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ بُعْدَ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ فَيُبْسَ الْقَرِينُ)

("Would that between me and you were the distance of the two easts a horrible companion (indeed)!) 43:38 .

Allah then said, while threatening and warning,

(وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ)

(And Allah warns you against Himself) meaning, He warns you against His punishment. Allah then said, while bringing hope to His servants, so that they do not despair from His mercy or feel hopeless of His kindness,

(وَاللَّهُ رَعُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ)

(And Allah is full of kindness with the servants)

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, "Allah is so kind with them that He warns them against Himself." Others commented, "He is merciful with His creation and likes for them to remain on His straight path and chosen religion, and to follow His honorable Messenger."

(قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ - قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكَافِرِينَ)

(31. Say (O Muhammad to mankind): "If you (really) love Allah, then follow me (i.e. Muhammad), Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.") (32. Say: "Obey Allah and the Messenger." But if they turn away, then Allah does not like the disbelievers.)

Allah's Love is Attained by Following the Messenger

This honorable Ayah judges against those who claim to love Allah, yet do not follow the way of Muhammad . Such people are not true in their claim until they follow the Shari` ah (Law) of Muhammad and his religion in all his statements, actions and conditions. It is recorded in the Sahih that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ عَمِلَ عَمَلًا لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُنَا فَهُوَ رَدٌّ»

(Whoever commits an act that does not conform with our matter (religion), then it will be rejected of him.)

This is why Allah said here,

(قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ)

(Say (O Muhammad to mankind): "If you (really) love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you..." meaning, what you will earn is much more than what you sought in loving Him, for Allah will love you. Al-Hasan Al-Basri and several scholars among the Salaf commented, "Some people claimed that they love Allah. So Allah tested them with this Ayah;

(قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ)

(Say (O Muhammad to mankind): "If you (really) love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you...""). "

Allah then said,

(وَيَعْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ)

("And forgive you your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.") meaning, by your following the Messenger , you will earn all this with the blessing of his mission. Allah next commands everyone,

(قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا)

(Say: "Obey Allah and the Messenger." But if they turn away) by defying the Prophet ,

(فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكَافِرِينَ)

(then Allah does not like the disbelievers.) thus, testifying that defiance of the Messenger's way constitutes Kufr. Indeed, Allah does not like whoever does this, even if he claims that he loves Allah and seeks a means of approach to Him, unless, and until, he follows the unlettered Prophet, the Final Messenger from Allah to the two creations: mankind and the Jinn. This is the Prophet who, if the previous Prophets and mighty Messengers were to have been alive during his time, they would have no choice but to follow, obey him, and to abide by his Law. We will mention this fact when we explain the Ayah,

(وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ)

(And (remember) when Allah took the Covenant of the Prophets) 3:81 , Allah willing.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَعَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَآلَ
عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ - ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِن بَعْضٍ
وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ)

(33. Allah chose Adam, Nuh (Noah), the family of Ibrahim and the family of `Imran above the nations.) (34. Offspring, one of the other, and Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.)

The Chosen Ones Among the People of the Earth

Allah states that He has chosen these households over the people of the earth. For instance, Allah chose Adam, created him with His Hand and blew life into him. Allah commanded the angels to prostrate before Adam, taught him the names of everything and allowed him to dwell in Paradise, but then sent him down from it out of His wisdom. Allah chose Nuh and made him the first Messenger to the people of the earth, when the people worshipped idols and associated others with Allah in worship. Allah avenged the way Nuh was treated, for he kept calling his people day and night, in public and in secret, for a very long time. However, his calling them only made them shun him more, and this is when Nuh supplicated against them. So Allah caused them to drown, and none among them was saved, except those who followed the religion that Allah sent to Nuh. Allah also chose the household of Ibrahim, including the master of all mankind, and the Final Prophet, Muhammad, peace be upon him. Allah also chose the household of `Imran, the father of Maryam bint `Imran, the mother of `Isa, peace be upon them. So `Isa is from the offspring of Ibrahim, as we will mention in the Tafsir of Surat Al-An`am, Allah willing, and our trust is in Him.

إِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا
فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ
الْعَلِيمُ - فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا
أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ
كَالْأُنْثَىٰ وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّي أُعِيدُهَا بِنكِ
وَدُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ)

(35. (Remember) when the wife of `Imran said: "O my Lord! I have vowed to You what is in my womb to be dedicated for Your services, so accept this from me. Verily, You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knowing.") (36. Then when she gave birth to her, she said: "O my Lord! I have given birth to a female child, and Allah knew better what she bore, "And the male is not like the female, and I have named her Maryam, and I seek refuge with You for her and for her offspring from Shaytan, the outcast.")

The Story of Maryam's Birth

The wife of `Imran mentioned here is the mother of Maryam, and her name is Hannah bint Faqudh. Muhammad bin Ishaq mentioned that Hannah could not have children and that one day, she saw a bird feeding its chick. She wished she could have children and supplicated to Allah to grant her offspring. Allah accepted her supplication, and when her husband slept with her, she became pregnant. She vowed to make her child concentrate on worship and serving Bayt Al-Maqdis (the Masjid in Jerusalem), when she became aware that she was pregnant. She said,

(رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ)

(O my Lord! I have vowed to You what is in my womb to be dedicated for Your services, so accept this from me. Verily, You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knowing.) meaning, You hear my supplication and You know my intention. She did not know then what she would give birth to, a male or a female.

(فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ)

(Then when she gave birth to her, she said: "O my Lord! I have given birth to a female child, and Allah knew better what she bore.)

(وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَىٰ)

(And the male is not like the female,) in strength and the commitment to worship Allah and serve the Masjid in Jerusalem.

(وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ)

(And I have named her Maryam,) thus, testifying to the fact that it is allowed to give a name to the newly born the day it is born, as is apparent from the Ayah, which is also a part of the law of those who were before us. Further, the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah mentioned that the Prophet said,

«وُلِدَ لِي اللَّيْلَةَ وَوَلَدٌ، سَمَّيْتُهُ بِاسْمِ أَبِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ»

(This night, a son was born for me and I called him by my father's name, Ibrahim.) Al-Bukhari and Muslim collected this Hadith.

They also recorded that Anas bin Malik brought his newborn brother to the Messenger of Allah who chewed a piece of date and put it in the child's mouth and called him `Abdullah. Other new born infants were also given names on the day they were born.

Qatadah narrated that Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, that Samurah bin Jundub said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«كُلُّ غُلَامٍ رَهِينٌ بِعَقِيْقَتِهِ، يُذْبَحُ عَنْهُ يَوْمَ سَابِعِهِ،
وَيُسَمَّى وَيُحْلَقُ رَأْسُهُ»

(Every new born boy held in security by his `Aqiqah, until his seventh day, a sacrifice is offered on his behalf, he is given a name, and the hair on his head is shaved.)

This Hadith was collected by Ahmad and the collectors of the Sunan, and was graded Sahih by At-Tirmidhi. We should mention that another narration for this Hadith contained the wording, "and blood is offered on his behalf," which is more famous and established than the former narration, and Allah knows best.

Allah's statement that Maryam's mother said,

«وَإِنِّي أَعِيْذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيْمِ»

("...And I seek refuge with You for her and for her offspring from Shaytan, the outcast.") means, that she sought refuge with Allah from the evil of Shaytan, for her and her offspring, i.e., `Isa, peace be upon him. Allah accepted her supplication, for `Abdur-Razzaq recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَا مِنْ مَوْوَدٍ يُوْلَدُ إِلَّا مَسَّهُ الشَّيْطَانُ حِيْنَ يُوْلَدُ،
فَيَسْتَهْلُ صَارِحًا مِنْ مَسِّهِ إِيَّاهُ، إِلَّا مَرِيْمَ وَابْنَهَا»

(Every newly born baby is touched by Shaytan when it is born, and the baby starts crying because of this touch, except Maryam and her son.)

Abu Hurayrah then said, "Read if you will,

(وَإِنِّي أَعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَدُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ)

(And I seek refuge with You for her and for her offspring from Shaytan, the outcast)." The Two Sahihs recorded this Hadith.

(فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا
وَوَكَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ
وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَمْرَيْمُ أَنَّى لَكَ هَذَا قَالَتْ
هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ
حِسَابٍ)

(37. So her Lord (Allah) accepted her with goodly acceptance. He made her grow in a good manner and put her under the care of Zakariyya. Every time he entered the Mhrab to (visit) her, he found her supplied with sustenance. He said: "O Maryam! From where have you gotten this" She said, "This is from Allah." Verily, Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills, without limit.)

Maryam Grows Up; Her Honor is with Allah

Allah states that He has accepted Maryam as a result of her mother's vow and that He,

(وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا)

(made her grow in a good manner) meaning, made her conduct becoming, her mannerism delightful and He made her well liked among people. He also made her accompany the righteous people, so that she learned righteousness, knowledge and religion.

(وَوَكَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا)

(And put her under the care of Zakariyya) meaning, Allah made Zakariyya her sponsor. Allah made Zakariyya Maryam's guardian for her benefit, so that she would learn from his

tremendous knowledge and righteous conduct. He was the husband of her maternal aunt, as Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Jarir stated, or her brother-in-law, as mentioned in the Sahih,

«فَإِذَا بِيَحْيَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ، وَهُمَا ابْنَا الْخَالَةِ»

(I saw John and `Isa, who are maternal cousins.)

We should state that in general terms, what Ibn Ishaq said is plausible, and in this case, Maryam was under the care of her maternal aunt. The Two Sahih recorded that the Messenger of Allah decided that `Amarah, the daughter of Hamzah, be raised by her maternal aunt, the wife of Ja`far bin Abi Talib, saying,

«الْخَالَةُ بِمَنْزِلَةِ الْأُمِّ»

(The maternal aunt is just like the mother.)

Allah then emphasizes Maryam's honor and virtue at the place of worship she attended,

كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا
رِزْقًا

(Every time he entered the Mihrab to (visit) her, he found her supplied with sustenance.)

Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Abu Ash-Sha`tha, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Ad-Dahhak, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, `Atiyah Al-`Awfi and As-Suddi said, "He would find with her the fruits of the summer during winter, and the fruits of the winter during summer." When Zakariyya would see this; d

قَالَ يَمْرِيْمُ أَيُّ لَكَ هَذَا

(He said: "O Maryam! From where have you gotten this") meaning, where did you get these fruits from

قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

(She said, "This is from Allah." Verily, Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills, without limit.)

(هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ
لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ - فَنادتهُ
المَلِيكَةُ وَهُوَ قائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي المِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللّٰهَ
يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَى مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَسَيِّدًا
وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ - قَالَ رَبِّ اُنِّي
يَكُوْنُ لِي عُلْمٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي الكِبَرُ وَاْمْرَاتِي عَاقِرٌ
قَالَ كَذٰلِكَ اللّٰهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَآءُ - قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ
لِي ءَايَةً قَالَ ءَايٰتُكَ اِلَّا تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ ثَلٰثَةَ اَيَّامٍ اِلَّا
رَمْزًا وَاذْكُر رَّبَّكَ كَثِيْرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِالعَشِيِّ وَاَلْبَكْرِ
(

(38. At that time Zakariyya invoked his Lord, saying: "O my Lord! Grant me from You, a good offspring. You are indeed the All-Hearer of invocation.") (39. Then the angels called him, while he was standing in prayer in the Mihrab, (saying): "Allah gives you glad tidings of Yahya, believing in the Word from Allah, and Sayyidan, and Hasuran, a Prophet, from among the righteous.") (40. He said: "O my Lord! How can I have a son when I am very old, and my wife is barren" (Allah) said: "Thus Allah does what He wills.") (41. He said: "O my Lord! Make a sign for me." (Allah) said: "Your sign is that you shall not speak to the people for three days except by signals. And remember your Lord much, and glorify (Him) in the afternoon and in the morning.")

The Supplication of Zakariyya, and the Good News of Yahya's Birth

When Zakariyya saw that Allah provided sustenance for Maryam by giving her the fruits of winter in summer and the fruits of summer in winter, he was eager to have a child of his own. By then, Zakariyya had become an old man, his bones feeble and his head full of gray hair. His wife was an old women who was barren. Yet, he still supplicated to Allah and called Him in secret,

(رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ)

(O my Lord! Grant me from Ladunka,) from You,

(ذُرِّيَّةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ)

(A good offspring) meaning, a righteous offspring,

(إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ)

(You are indeed the All-Hearer of invocation.) Allah said,

(فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ)

(Then the angels called him, while he was standing in prayer in the Mhrab,) meaning, the angels spoke to him directly while he was secluded, standing in prayer at his place of worship. Allah told us about the good news that the angels delivered to Zakariyya,

(أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيحْيَى)

(Allah gives you glad tidings of Yahya,) of a child from your offspring, his name is Yahya. Qatadah and other scholars said that he was called Yahya (literally, `he lives') because Allah filled his life with faith.

Allah said next,

(مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ)

(believing in the Word from Allah) Al-`Awfi reported that Ibn `Abbas said, and also Al-Hasan, Qatadah, `Ikrimah, Mujahid, Abu Ash-Sha`tha, As-Suddi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Ad-Dahhak, and several others said that the Ayah,

(مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ)

(believing in the Word from Allah) means, "Believing in `Isa, son of Maryam."

Abu Al-`Aliyah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Qatadah and Sa`id bin Jubayr said that Allah's statement,

(وَسَيِّدًا)

(And Sayyidan) means, a wise man. Ibn `Abbas, Ath-Thawri and Ad-Dahhak said that Sayyidan means, "The noble, wise and pious man." Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib said that Sayyid is the scholar

and Faqih. `Atiyah said that Sayyid is the man noble in behavior and piety. `Ikrimah said that it refers to a person who is not overcome by anger, while Ibn Zayd said that it refers to the noble man. Mujahid said that Sayyidan means, honored by Allah.

Allah's statement,

(وَحَصُورًا)

(And Hasuran) does not mean he refrains from sexual relations with women, but that he is immune from illegal sexual relations. This does not mean that he does not marry women and have legal sexual relations with them, for Zakariyya said in his supplication for the benefit of Yahya,

(هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً)

(Grant me from You, a good offspring), meaning, grant me a son who will have offspring, and Allah knows best.

Allah's statement,

(وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ)

(A Prophet, from among the righteous) delivers more good news of sending Yahya as Prophet after the good news that he will be born. This good news was even better than the news of Yahya's birth. In a similar statement, Allah said to the mother of Musa,

(إِنَّا رَأَدُّوهُ إِلَيْكَ وَجَعَلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ)

(Verily, We shall bring him back to you, and shall make him one of the Messengers.) 28:7

When Zakariyya heard the good news, he started contemplating about having children at his age. He said,

(قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلْمٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي الْكِبَرُ
وَأَمْرَاتِي عَاقِرٌ قَالَ)

("O my Lord! How can I have a son when I am very old, and my wife is barren" (He) said...)
meaning the angel said,

(كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ)

("Thus Allah does what He wills.") meaning, this is Allah's matter, He is so Mighty that nothing escapes His power, nor is anything beyond His ability.

(قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً)

(He said: "O my Lord! Make a sign for me") meaning make a sign that alerts me that the child will come,

(قَالَ آيَاتُكَ إِلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمْزًا)

((Allah) said: "Your sign is that you shall not speak to the people for three days except by signals.") meaning, you will not be able to speak except with signals, although you are not mute. In another Ayah, Allah said,

(ثَلَاثَ لَيَالٍ سَوِيًّا)

(For three nights, though having no bodily defect.) 19:10

Allah then commanded Zakariyya to supplicate, thank and praise Him often in that condition,

(وَادْكُرْ رَبَّكَ كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَرِ)

(And remember your Lord much and glorify (Him) in the afternoon and in the morning.)

We will elaborate more on this subject in the beginning of Surah Maryam (chapter 19), Allah willing.

(وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلِكَةُ يَمْرَيْمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ
وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ - يَمْرَيْمُ
اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ -
ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ

إِذْ يُلقُونَ أَقْلَمَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ
إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ)

(42. And (remember) when the angels said: "O Maryam! Verily, Allah has chosen you, purified you, and chosen you above the women of the nations.") (43. "O Maryam! Submit yourself with obedience (Aqnuti) to your Lord and prostrate yourself, and bow down along with Ar-Raki` in.") (44. This is a part of the news of the Ghayb (Unseen) which We reveal to you. You were not with them, when they cast lots with their pens as to which of them should be charged with the care of Maryam; nor were you with them when they disputed.)

The Virtue of Maryam Over the Women of Her Time

Allah states that the angels spoke to Maryam by His command and told her that He chose her because of her service to Him, because of her modesty, honor, innocence, and conviction. Allah also chose her because of her virtue over the women of the world. At-Tirmidhi recorded that `Ali bin Abi Talib said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah say,

«خَيْرُ نِسَائِهَا مَرْيَمُ بِنْتُ عِمْرَانَ، وَخَيْرُ نِسَائِهَا
خَدِيجَةُ بِنْتُ خُوَيْلِدٍ»

(The best woman (in her time) was Maryam, daughter of `Imran, and the best woman (of the Prophet's time) is Khadijah (his wife), daughter of Khuwaylid.)"

The Two Sahihs recorded this Hadith. Ibn Jarir recorded that Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«كَمُلَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ كَثِيرٌ، وَلَمْ يَكْمُلْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ
إِلَّا مَرْيَمُ بِنْتُ عِمْرَانَ وَآسِيَةُ امْرَأَةَ فِرْعَوْنَ»

(Many men achieved perfection, but among women, only Maryam the daughter of `Imran and Asiah, the wife of Fir`awn, achieved perfection.)

The Six -- with the exception of Abu Dawud - recorded it. Al-Bukhari's wording for it reads,

«كَمُلَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ كَثِيرٌ، وَلَمْ يَكْمُلْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ
إِلَّا أَسِيَّةُ امْرَأَةِ فِرْعَوْنَ، وَمَرْيَمُ بِنْتُ عِمْرَانَ،
وَإِنَّ فَضْلَ عَائِشَةَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ كَفَضْلِ الثَّرِيدِ
عَلَى سَائِرِ الطَّعَامِ»

(Many men reached the level of perfection, but no woman reached such a level except Asiah, the wife of Fir`awn, and Maryam, the daughter of `Imran. The superiority of `Aishah (his wife) to other women, is like the superiority of Tharid (meat and bread dish) to other meals.)

We mentioned the various chains of narration and wordings for this Hadith in the story of `Isa, son of Maryam, in our book, Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah, all the thanks are due to Allah.

Allah states that the angels commanded Maryam to increase acts of worship, humbleness, submission, prostration, bowing, and so forth, so that she would acquire what Allah had decreed for her, as a test for her. Yet, this test also earned her a higher grade in this life and the Hereafter, for Allah demonstrated His might by creating a son inside her without male intervention. Allah said,

(يَمْرِيْمُ اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ
الرَّكَعِيْنَ)

("O Maryam! Submit yourself with obedience (Aqnuti) and prostrate yourself, and bow down along with Ar-Raki`in.")

As for Qunut (Aqnuti in the Ayah), it means to submit with humbleness. In another Ayah, Allah said,

(بَلْ لَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ كُلُّ لَّهُ قَانُونَ)

(Nay, to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth, and all surrender with obedience (Qanitun) to Him.) 2:116

Allah next said to His Messenger after He mentioned Maryam's story,

(ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ)

(This is a part of the news of the Ghayb which We reveal.) "and narrate to you (O Muhammad),

(وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يُلْقُونَ أَقْلَمَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ
مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ)

(You were not with them, when they cast lots with their pens as to which of them should be charged with the care of Maryam; nor were you with them when they disputed.) meaning, "You were not present, O Muhammad, when this occurred, so you cannot narrate what happened to the people as an eye witness. Rather, Allah disclosed these facts to you as if you were a witness, when they conducted a lottery to choose the custodian of Maryam, seeking the reward of this good deed."

Ibn Jarir recorded that `Ikrimah said, "Maryam's mother left with Maryam, carrying her in her infant cloth, and took her to the rabbis from the offspring of Aaron, the brother of Musa. They were responsible for taking care of Bayt Al-Maqdis (the Masjid) at that time, just as there were those who took care of the Ka'bah. Maryam's mother said to them, `Take this child whom I vowed to serve the Masjid, I have set her free, since she is my daughter, for no menstruating woman should enter the Masjid, and I shall not take her back home.' They said, `She is the daughter of our Imam,' as `Imran used to lead them in prayer, `who took care of our sacrificial rituals.' Zakariyya said, `Give her to me, for her maternal aunt is my wife.' They said, `Our hearts cannot bear that you take her, for she is the daughter of our Imam.' So they conducted a lottery with the pens with which they wrote the Tawrah, and Zakariyya won the lottery and took Maryam into his care." `Ikrimah, As-Suddi, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, and several others said that the rabbis went into the Jordan river and conducted a lottery there, deciding to throw their pens into the river. The pen that remained afloat and idle would indicate that its owner would take care of Maryam. When they threw their pens into the river, the water took all the pens under, except Zakariyya's pen, which remained afloat in its place. Zakariyya was also their master, chief, scholar, Imam and Prophet, may Allah's peace and blessings be on him and the rest of the Prophets.

(إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلِكَةُ يَمْرِيْمُ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ
مِّنْهُ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيْحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِي
الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ - وَيُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي
الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَمِنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ - قَالَتْ رَبِّ اُنِّى
يَكُوْنُ لِيْ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِيْ بَشْرٌ قَالَ كَذٰلِكَ اللّٰهُ

يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ
فَيَكُونُ)

(45. (Remember) when the angels said: "O Maryam! Verily, Allah gives you the glad tidings of a Word from Him, his name will be Al-Masih, `Isa, the son of Maryam, held in honor in this world and in the Hereafter, and he will be one of those who are near to Allah.") (46. "He will speak to the people, in the cradle and in manhood, and he will be one of the righteous.") (47. She said: "O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man has touched me." He said: "So (it will be) for Allah creates what He wills. When He has decreed something, He says to it only: `Be! and it is.")

Delivering the Good News to Maryam of `Isa's Birth

This Ayah contains the glad tidings the angels brought to Maryam that she would give birth to a mighty son who will have a great future. Allah said,

إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلِكَةُ مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ
مِّنْهُ)

((Remember) when the angels said: "O Maryam! Verily, Allah gives you the glad tidings of a Word from Him,) a son who will come into existence with a word from Allah, `Be', and he was. This is the meaning of Allah's statement (about Yahya)

(مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ)

(Believing in the Word from Allah.) 3:39 , according to the majority of the scholars.

(اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ)

(His name will be Al-Masih, `Isa, the son of Maryam) and he will be known by this name in this life, especially by the believers. `Isa was called "Al-Masih" (the Messiah) because when he touched (Mash) those afflicted with an illness, they would be healed by Allah's leave. Allah's statement,

(عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ)

(`Isa, the son of Maryam) relates `Isa to his mother, because he did not have a father.

(وَجِيهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ)

(Held in honor in this world and in the Hereafter, and will be one of those who are near to Allah.) meaning, he will be a leader and honored by Allah in this life, because of the Law that Allah will reveal to him, sending down the Scripture to him, along with the other bounties that Allah will grant him with. `Isa will be honored in the Hereafter and will intercede with Allah, by His leave, on behalf of some people, just as is the case with his brethren the mighty Messengers of Allah, peace be upon them all.

`Isa Spoke When He was Still in the Cradle

Allah said,

(وَيُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا)

(He will speak to the people, in the cradle and in manhood,) calling to the worship of Allah Alone without partners, while still in the cradle, as a miracle from Allah, and when he is a man, by Allah's revelation to him.

Muhammad bin Ishaq recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَا تَكَلَّمَ مَوْلُودٌ فِي صِغَرِهِ إِلَّا عِيسَى وَصَاحِبُ
جُرَيْجٍ»

(No infant spoke in the cradle except `Isa and the companion of Jurayj.)

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Prophet said,

«لَمْ يَتَكَلَّمْ فِي الْمَهْدِ إِلَّا ثَلَاثَةٌ: عِيسَى، وَصَيْبِيُّ
كَانَ فِي زَمَنِ جُرَيْجٍ، وَصَيْبِيُّ آخَرٌ»

(No infant spoke in the cradle except three, `Isa, the boy during the time of Jurayj, and another boy.)

(وَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ)

(And he will be one of the righteous.) in his statements and actions, for he will possess, pure knowledge and righteous works.

` Isa was Created Without a Father

When Maryam heard the good news that the angels conveyed from Allah, she said;

(رَبِّ أُنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ)

("O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man has touched me.")

Mary said, "How can I have a son while I did not marry, nor intend to marry, nor am I an indecent woman, may Allah forbid" The angel conveyed to Maryam, Allah's answer,

(كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ)

(So (it will be) for Allah creates what He wills.)

He is Mighty in power and nothing escapes His ability. Allah used the word `create' here instead of the word `does' as in the tale about Zakariyya 3:40 , to eradicate any evil thought concerning `Isa. Allah next emphasized this fact when He said,

(إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ)

(When He has decreed something, He says to it only: "Be! and it is.) meaning, what Allah wills, comes into existence instantly and without delay. In another Ayah, Allah said,

(وَمَا أَمْرُنَا إِلَّا وَحِدَةً كَلَمْحٍ بِالْبَصَرِ)

(And Our commandment is but one as the twinkling of an eye.) 54:50 , meaning, "We only issue the command once, and it comes into existence instantly, as fast as, and faster than, a blink of the eye. "

(وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ -
وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن
رَّبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلَقُ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ

فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ
 وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا
 تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً
 لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ - وَمُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ
 التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ
 وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا - إِنَّ
 اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ)

(48. And He will teach him the Book and Al-Hikmah, and the Tawrah and the Injil.) (49. And will make him a Messenger to the Children of Israel (saying): "I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I design for you out of clay, a figure like that of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave; and I heal the blind, and the leper, and I bring the dead to life by Allah's leave. And I inform you of what you eat, and what you store in your houses. Surely, therein is a sign for you, if you believe.") (50. "(And I have come) confirming that which was before me of the Tawrah, and to make lawful to you part of what was forbidden to you, and I have come to you with a proof from your Lord. So have Taqwa of Allah and obey me.") (51. "Truly, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him (Alone). This is the straight path.")

The Description of `Isa and the Miracles He Performed

Allah states that the good news brought to Maryam about `Isa was even better because Allah would teach him,

(الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ)

(the Book and Al-Hikmah). It appears that the `Book' the Ayah mentioned here refers to writing. We explained the meaning of Al-Hikmah in the Tafsir of Surat Al-Baqarah.

(التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ)

(the Tawrah and the Injil). The Tawrah is the Book that Allah sent down to Musa, son of `Imran, while the Injil is what Allah sent down to `Isa, son of Maryam, peace be upon them, and `Isa memorized both Books. Allah's statement,

(وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ)

(And will make him a Messenger to the Children of Israel) means, that Allah will send `Isa as a Messenger to the Children of Israel, proclaiming to them,

(أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلَقُ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ)

(I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I design for you out of clay, a figure like that of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave). These are the miracles that `Isa performed; he used to make the shape of a bird from clay and blow into it, and it became a bird by Allah's leave. Allah made this a miracle for `Isa to testify that He had sent him.

(وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ)

(And I heal him who is Akmah) meaning, 'a person who was born blind,' which perfects this miracle and makes the challenge more daring.

(وَالأَبْرَصَ)

(And the leper) which is a known disease,

(وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ)

(And I bring the dead to life by Allah's leave).

Many scholars stated that Allah sent every Prophet with a miracle suitable to his time. For instance, in the time of Musa, magic was the trade of the time, and magicians held a high position. So Allah sent Musa with a miracle that captured the eyes and bewildered every magician. When the magicians realized that Musa's miracle came from the Almighty, Most Great, they embraced Islam and became pious believers. As for `Isa, he was sent during a time when medicine and knowledge in physics were advancing. `Isa brought them the types of miracles that could not be performed, except by one sent by Allah. How can any physician bring life to clay, cure blindness and leprosy and bring back to life those entrapped in the grave Muhammad was sent during the time of eloquent people and proficient poets. He brought them a Book from Allah; if mankind and the Jinn tried to imitate ten chapters, or even one chapter of it, they will utterly fail in this task, even if they tried to do it by collective

cooperation. This is because the Qur'an is the Word of Allah and is nothing like that of the creatures.

`Isa's statement,

(وَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ)

(And I inform you of what you eat, and what you store in your houses) means, I tell you about what one of you has just eaten and what he is keeping in his house for tomorrow.

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ)

(Surely, therein), all these miracles,

(لَايَةً لَكُمْ)

(is a sign for you) testifying to the truth of what I was sent to you with,

(إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ
التَّوْرَةِ)

(If you believe. And I have come confirming that which was before me of the Tawrah,) affirming the Tawrah and upholding it,

(وَالْحِلَّ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(and to make lawful to you part of what was forbidden to you.)

This part of the Ayah indicates that `Isa abrogated some of the Laws of the Tawrah and informed the Jews of the truth regarding some issues that they used to dispute about. In another Ayah;

(وَلَا بَيِّنَ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي تَخْتَلَفُونَ فِيهِ)

(And in order to make clear to you some of the (points) in which you differ) 43:63 .

`Isa said next,

(وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ)

(And I have come to you with a proof from your Lord.) "Containing affirmation and evidence to the truth of what I am conveying to you."

(فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ
فَاعْبُدُوهُ)

(So have Taqwa of Allah and obey me. Truly, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him (Alone).) for I and you are equal in our servitude, submission and humbleness to Him,

(هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ)

(This is the straight path.)

(فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَى مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي
إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ ءَامِنًا
بِاللَّهِ وَآشْهَدُ بِأَنَا مُسْلِمُونَ - رَبَّنَا ءَامِنًا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ
وَآتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ - وَمَكْرُؤًا
وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَكْرِينِ)

(52. Then when `Isa came to know of their disbelief, he said: "Who will be my helpers in Allah's cause" Al-Hawariyyun said: "We are the helpers of Allah; we believe in Allah, and bear witness that we are Muslims.") (53. "Our Lord! We believe in what You have sent down, and we follow the Messenger `Isa ; so write us down among those who bear witness.") (54. And they (disbelievers) plotted and Allah planned too. And Allah is the Best of those who plot)

The Disciples Give Their Support to `Isa

Allah said,

(فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَى)

(Then when `Isa came to know), meaning, `Isa felt that they were adamant in disbelief and continuing in misguidance. He said to them,

﴿مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ﴾

(Who will be my helper in Allah's cause) Mujahid commented, "Meaning, who would follow me to Allah" However, it appears that `Isa was asking, "Who would help me convey the Message of Allah"

The Prophet said during the Hajj season, before the Hijrah,

﴿مَنْ رَجُلٌ يُؤْوِينِي حَتَّى أَبْلُغَ كَلَامَ رَبِّي؟، فَإِنَّ
فَرِيضًا قَدْ مَنَعُونِي أَنْ أَبْلُغَ كَلَامَ رَبِّي﴾

(Who will give me asylum so that I can convey the Speech of my Lord, for the Quraysh have prevented me from conveying the Speech of my Lord.) until he found the Ansar. The Ansar helped the Prophet and gave him refuge. He later migrated to them, they comforted the Prophet and protected him from all his enemies, may Allah be pleased with them all. This is similar to what happened with `Isa, for some of the Children of Israel believed in him, gave him their aid and support and followed the light that was sent with him. This is why Allah said about them;

﴿قَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَى مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي
إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ ءَامَنَّا
بِاللَّهِ وَآشْهَدُ بِأَنَا مُسْلِمُونَ - رَبَّنَا ءَامَنَّا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ
وَآتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ)

(Al-Hawariyyun said: "We are the helpers of Allah; we believe in Allah, and bear witness that we are Muslims. Our Lord! We believe in what You have sent down, and we follow the Messenger; so write us down among those who bear witness.") Hawari in Arabic - means `support'. The Two Sahih recorded that when the Prophet encouraged the people to fight during the battle of Al-Ahzab, Az-Zubayr came forward, and again, when the Prophet asked for fighters a second time. The Prophet said,

﴿إِنَّ لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ حَوَارِيًّا، وَحَوَارِيِّي الزُّبَيْرُ﴾

(Every Prophet has a Hawari, and Az-Zubayr is my Hawari)

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn ` Abbas said about,

(فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ)

(so write us down among those who bear witness) "Meaning among the Ummah of Muhammad."
This Hadith has a good chain of narration

The Jews Plot to Kill ` Isa

Allah states that the Children of Israel tried to kill ` Isa by conspiring to defame him and crucify him. They complained about him to the king who was a disbeliever. They claimed that ` Isa was a man who misguided people, discouraged them from obeying the king, caused division, and separated between man and his own son. They also said other lies about ` Isa, which they will carry on their necks, including accusing him of being an illegitimate son. The king became furious and sent his men to capture ` Isa to torture and crucify him. When they surrounded ` Isa's home and he thought that they would surely capture him, Allah saved him from them, raising him up from the house to heaven. Allah put the image of ` Isa on a man who was in the house; when the unjust people went in the house while it was still dark, they thought that he was ` Isa. They captured that man, humiliated and crucified him. They also placed thorns on his head. However, Allah deceived these people. He saved and raised His Prophet from them, leaving them in disarray in the darkness of their transgression, thinking that they had successfully achieved their goal. Allah made their hearts hard, and defiant of the truth, disgracing them in such disgrace that it will remain with them until the Day of Resurrection. This is why Allah said,

(وَمَكْرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَكْرِينَ)

(And they plotted, and Allah planned too. And Allah is the Best of those who plot.)

(إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَعْيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَا كَفَرْتُمْ فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ اللَّهِ وَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ يَصِفُونَ -
وَمَطَّهْرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ -
فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَأَعَذَّبْنَاهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا فِي الدُّنْيَا
وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ - وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ

وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ - ذَلِكَ نَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ
الآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ)

t(55. And (remember) when Allah said: "O `Isa! I will take you and raise you to Myself and purify save you from those who disbelieve, and I will make those who follow you superior to those who disbelieve till the Day of Resurrection. Then you will return to Me and I will judge between you in the matters in which you used to dispute." (56. "As to those who disbelieve, I will punish them with severe torment in this world and in the Hereafter, and they will have no helpers.") (57. And as for those who believe and do righteous good deeds, Allah will pay them their reward in full. And Allah does not like the wrongdoers.) (58. This is what We recite to you of the verses and the Wise Reminder.)

Meaning of `Take You

Allah said,

(إِنِّي مُتَوَقِّئُكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ)

(I will take you and raise you to Myself) while you are asleep. Allah said in a similar Ayat,

(وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَقَّكُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ)

(It is He Who takes your souls by night (when you are asleep).) 6:60 , and,

(اللَّهُ يَتَوَقَّى الْأَنْفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ
فِي مَنَامِهَا)

(It is Allah Who takes away the souls at the time of their death, and those that die not during their sleep.) 39:42 .

The Messenger of Allah used to recite the following words when he would awaken;

«الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَحْيَانَا بَعْدَ مَا أَمَاتَنَا، وَإِلَيْهِ
النُّشُورُ»

(All the thanks are due to Allah Who brought us back to life after He had caused us to die (sleep), and the Return is to Him).

Allah said,

(وَيَكْفُرُهُمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَى مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَنًا عَظِيمًا
وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ
اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ)

(And because of their disbelief and allegations against Maryam and because of their saying "We killed Al-Masih `Isa, son of Maryam, the Messenger of Allah, but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but it appeared that way to them) until,

(وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ
رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ
وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ
مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا - بَلْ
رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا)

(وَإِنْ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ
وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا)

(For surely; they killed him not But Allah raised him up unto Himself. And Allah is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise. And there is none of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) but must believe in him before his death. And on the Day of Resurrection, he `Isa will be a witness against them.) 4:156-159

`His death' refers to `Isa, and the Ayah means that the People of the Book will believe in `Isa, before `Isa dies. This will occur when `Isa comes back to this world before the Day of Resurrection, as we will explain. By that time, all the People of the Book will believe in `Isa, for he will annul the Jizyah and he will only accept Islam from people. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Al-Hasan said that Allah's statement,

(إِنِّي مُتَوَقِّئُكَ)

(I will take you) is in reference to sleep, for Allah raised `Isa while he was asleep.

Altering the Religion of `Isa

Allah said,

(وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا)

(And purify save you from those who disbelieve) by raising you to heaven,

(وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى
يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ)

(And I will make those who follow you superior to those who disbelieve, till the Day of Resurrection)

This is what happened. When Allah raised `Isa to heaven, his followers divided into sects and groups. Some of them believed in what Allah sent `Isa as, a servant of Allah, His Messenger, and the son of His female-servant.

However, some of them went to the extreme over `Isa, believing that he was the son of Allah. Some of them said that `Isa was Allah Himself, while others said that he was one of a Trinity. Allah mentioned these false creeds in the Qur'an and refuted them. The Christians remained like this until the third century CE, when a Greek king called, Constantine, became a Christian for the purpose of destroying Christianity. Constantine was either a philosopher, or he was just plain ignorant. Constantine changed the religion of `Isa by adding to it and deleting from it. He established the rituals of Christianity and the so-called Great Trust, which is in fact the Great Treachery. He also allowed them to eat the meat of swine, changed the direction of the prayer that `Isa established to the east, built churches for `Isa, and added ten days to the fast as compensation for a sin that he committed, as claimed. So the religion of `Isa became the religion of Constantine, who built more than twelve thousand churches, temples and monasteries for the Christians as well as the city that bears his name, Constantinople (Istanbul). Throughout this time, the Christians had the upper hand and dominated the Jews. Allah aided them against the Jews because they used to be closer to the truth than the Jews, even though both groups were and still are disbelievers, may Allah's curse descend on them.

When Allah sent Muhammad , those who believed in him also believed in Allah, His Angels, Books and Messengers in the correct manner. So they were the true followers of every Prophet who came to earth. They believed in the unlettered Prophet , the Final Messenger and the master of all mankind, who called them to believe in the truth in its entirety. This is why they had more right to every Prophet than his own nation, especially those who claim to follow their Prophet's way and religion, yet change and alter his religion. Furthermore, Allah abrogated all the laws that were sent down to the Prophets with the Law He sent Muhammad with, which

consists of the true religion that shall never change or be altered until the commencement of the Last Hour. Muhammad's religion shall always be dominant and victorious over all other religions. This is why Allah allowed Muslims to conquer the eastern and western parts of the world and the kingdoms of the earth. Furthermore, all countries submitted to them; they demolished Kisra (king of Persia) and destroyed the Czar, ridding them of their treasures and spending these treasures for Allah's sake. All this occurred just as their Prophet told them it would, when he conveyed Allah's statement,

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن
قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ
وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا
يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا

(Allah has promised those among you who believe and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession in the land, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practice their religion which He has chosen for them. And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they worship Me and do not associate anything with Me.) 24:55 .

Therefore, Muslims are the true believers in `Isa. The Muslims then acquired Ash-Sham from the Christians, causing them to evacuate to Asia Minor, to their fortified city in Constantinople. The Muslims will be above them until the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, he, Muhammad , who is truthful and who received the true news, has conveyed to Muslims that they will conquer Constantinople in the future, and seize its treasures.

Threatening the Disbelievers with Torment in This Life and the Hereafter

Allah said,

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يٰعِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ خُذْ إِلَيْنَا مَا نَزَّلْنَا فِي الْقُرْآنِ مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا
مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ -

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَأَعْدَبُهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا فِي الدُّنْيَا
وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَّاصِرِينَ)

(And I will make those who follow you superior to those who disbelieve till the Day of Resurrection. Then you will return to Me and I will judge between you in the matters in which you used to dispute. As to those who disbelieve, I will punish them with a severe torment in this world and in the Hereafter, and they will have no helpers.)

This is what Allah did to the Jews who disbelieved in `Isa and the Christians who went to the extreme over him. Allah tormented them in this life; they were killed, captured, and lost their wealth and kingdoms. Their torment in the Hereafter is even worse and more severe,

(وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَاقٍ)

(And they have no Waq (defender or protector) against Allah) 13:34 .

(وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ
أَجْرَهُمْ)

(And as for those who believe and do righteous good deeds, Allah will pay them their reward in full) in this life, with victory and domination, and in the Hereafter, with Paradise and high grades,

(وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ)

(And Allah does not like the wrongdoers.)

Allah then said,

(ذَلِكَ نَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ)

(This is what We recite to you of the verses and the Wise Reminder.) meaning, "What We narrated to you, O Muhammd, regarding `Isa, his birth and his life, is what Allah conveyed and revealed to you, sent down from the Al-Lawh Al-Mahfuz (The Preserved Tablet). So there is no doubt in it. Similarly, Allah said in Surah Maryam;

ذَلِكَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قَوْلَ الْحَقِّ الَّذِي فِيهِ
يَمْتَرُونَ - مَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ مِنْ وُلْدٍ سُبْحَانَهُ
إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ)

(Such is `Isa, son of Maryam. (It is) a statement of truth, about which they doubt (or dispute). It befits not Allah that He should beget a son. Glorified be He. When He decrees a thing, He only says to it: "Be!" and it is.)

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ
تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ - الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا
تَكُنْ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ - فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا
جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ
وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ
فَنَجْعَلْ لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ - إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ
الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ
الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ - فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ
بِالْمُفْسِدِينَ)

(59. Verily, the likeness of `Isa before Allah is the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to him: "Be!" and he was.) (60. (This is) the truth from your Lord, so be not of those who doubt.) (61. Then whoever disputes with you concerning him after the knowledge that has come to you, say: "Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves, then we pray and we invoke Allah's curse upon the liars.") (62. Verily, this is the true narrative, and there is no god except Allah. And indeed, Allah is the Almighty, the All-Wise.) (63. And if they turn away, then surely, Allah is All-Aware of those who do mischief.)

**The Similarities Between the Creation of Adam and the Creation of
`Isa**

Allah said,

(إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ)

(Verily, the likeness of `Isa before Allah) regarding Allah's ability, since He created him without a father,

(كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ)

(is the likeness of Adam), for Allah created Adam without a father or a mother. Rather,

(خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ)

(He created him from dust, then (He) said to him: "Be!" and he was.)

Therefore, He Who created Adam without a father or a mother is able to create `Isa, as well, without a father. If the claim is made that `Isa is Allah's son because he was created without a father, then the same claim befits Adam even more. However, since such a claim regarding Adam is obviously false, then making the same claim about `Isa is even more false.

Furthermore, by mentioning these facts, Allah emphasizes His ability, by creating Adam without a male or female, Hawa' from a male without a female, and `Isa from a mother without a father, compared to His creating the rest of creation from male and female. This is why Allah said in Surah Maryam,

(وَلِنَجْعَلَهُ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ)

(And We made him a sign for mankind) 19: 21 .

Allah said in this Ayah,

(الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ)

((This is) the truth from your Lord, so be not of those who doubt.) meaning, this is the only true story about `Isa, and what is beyond truth save falsehood Allah next commands His Messenger to call those who defy the truth, regarding `Isa, to the Mubalah (the curse).

The Challenge to the Mubalah

فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ
تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ
وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ

(Then whoever disputes with you concerning him after the knowledge that has come to you, say: "Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves") for the Mubalahah,

(ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلُ)

(then we pray), supplicate,

فَنَجْعَلُ لَعْنَتُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ

(and we invoke Allah's curse upon the liars) among the two of us.

The reason for the call to Mubalahah and the revelation of the Ayat from the beginning of this Surah until here, is that a delegation from the Christians of Najran (in Yemen) came to Al-Madinah to argue about `Isa, claiming that he was divine and the son of Allah. Allah sent down the beginning of this Surah until here, to refute their claims, as Imam Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar and other scholars stated.

Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar said in his famous Sraah, "The delegation of Christians from Najran came to the Messenger of Allah . The delegation consisted of sixty horsemen, including fourteen of their chiefs who make decisions. These men were Al-`Aqib, also known as `Abdul-Masih, As-Sayyid, also known as Al-Ayham, Abu Harithah bin `Alqamah, of the family of Bakr bin Wa`il and Uways bin Al-Harith. They also included, Zayd, Qays, Yazid, Nabih, Khuwaylid, `Amr, Khalid, `Abdullah and Yuhannas. Three of these men were chiefs of this delegation, Al-`Aqib, their leader and to whom they referred for advice and decision; As-Sayyid, their scholar and leader in journeys and social gatherings; and Abu Harithah bin `Alqamah, their patriarch, priest and religious leader. Abu Harithah was an Arab man from the family of Bakr bin Wa`il, but when he embraced Christianity, the Romans and their kings honored him and built churches for him (or in his honor). They also supported him financially and gave him servants, because they knew how firm his faith in their religion was." Abu Harithah knew the description of the Messenger of Allah from what he read in earlier divine Books. However, his otherwise ignorance led him to insist on remaining a Christian, because he was honored and had a high position with the Christians. Ibn Ishaq said, "Muhammad bin Ja`far bin Az-Zubayr said that, `The (Najran) delegation came to the Messenger of Allah in Al-Madinah, entered his Masjid wearing robes and garments, after the Prophet had prayed the `Asr prayer. They accompanied a caravan of camels led by Bani Al-Harith bin Ka`b. The Companions of the Messenger of Allah who saw them said that they never saw a delegation like them after that... Then Abu Harithah bin `Alqamah and Al-`Aqib `Abdul-Masih or As-Sayyid Al-Ayham spoke to the Messenger of Allah , and they were Christians like the king (Roman King). However, they disagreed about `Isa; some

of them said, 'He is Allah,' while some said, 'He is the son of Allah,' and some others said, 'He is one of a trinity.' Allah is far from what they attribute to Him."

Indeed, these are the creeds of the Christians. They claim that 'Isa is God, since he brought the dead back to life, healed blindness, leprosy and various illnesses, told about matters of the future, created the shape of birds and blew life into them, bringing them to life. However, all these miracles occurred by Allah's leave, so that 'Isa would be a sign from Allah for people.

They also claim that 'Isa is the son of Allah, since he did not have a father and he spoke when he was in the cradle, a miracle which had not occurred by any among the Children of Adam before him, so they claim. They also claim that 'Isa is one of a trinity, because Allah would say, 'We did, command, create and demand.' They said, 'If Allah were one, he would have said, 'I did, command, create and decide.' This is why they claim that 'Isa and Allah are one (Trinity). Allah is far from what they attribute to Him, and we should mention that the Qur'an refuted all these false Christian claims.

Ibn Ishaq continued, "When these Ayat came to the Messenger from Allah, thus judging between him and the People of the Book, Allah also commanded the Prophet to call them to the Mubalahah if they still refused the truth. The Prophet called them to the Mubalahah. They said, 'O Abu Al-Qasim! Let us think about this matter and get back to you with our decision to what we want to do.' They left the Prophet and conferred with Al-'Aqib, to whom they referred to for advice. They said to him, 'O 'Abdul-Masih! What is your advice?' He said, 'By Allah, O Christian fellows! You know that Muhammad is a Messenger and that he brought you the final word regarding your fellow ('Isa). You also know that no Prophet conducted Mubalahah with any people, and the old persons among them remained safe and the young people grew up. Indeed, it will be the end of you if you do it. If you have already decided that you will remain in your religion and your creed regarding your fellow ('Isa), then conduct a treaty with the man (Muhammad) and go back to your land.' They came to the Prophet and said, 'O Abu Al-Qasim! We decided that we cannot do Mubalahah with you and that you remain on your religion, while we remain on our religion. However, send with us a man from your Companions whom you are pleased with to judge between us regarding our monetary disputes, for you are acceptable to us in this regard.'"

Al-Bukhari recorded that Hudhayfah said, "Al-'Aqib and As-Sayyid, two leaders from Najran, came to the Messenger of Allah seeking to invoke Allah for curses (against whoever is unjust among them), and one of them said to the other, 'Let us not do that. By Allah, if he were truly a Prophet and we invoke Allah for curses, we and our offspring shall never succeed afterwards.' So they said, 'We will give you what you asked and send a trusted man with us, just a trusted man.' The Messenger of Allah said;

«لَأُبْعَثَنَّ مَعَكُمْ رَجُلًا أَمِينًا حَقَّ أَمِينٍ»

:

«قُمْ يَا أَبَا عُبَيْدَةَ بْنِ الْجَرَّاحِ»

:

«هَذَا أَمِينُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ»

("Verily, I will send a trusted man with you, a truly trustworthy man." The Companions of the Messenger of Allah all felt eager to be that man. The Messenger said, "O Abu `Ubaydah bin Al-Jarrah! Stand up." When Abu `Ubaydah stood up, the Messenger of Allah said, "This is the trustee of this Ummah.")

Al-Bukhari recorded that Anas said that the Messenger of Allah said on another occasion,

«لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَمِينٌ، وَأَمِينُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ أَبُو عُبَيْدَةَ بْنُ الْجَرَّاحِ»

(Every Ummah has a trustee, and the trustee of this Ummah is Abu `Ubaydah bin Al-Jarrah.)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Abu Jahl, may Allah curse him, said, 'If I see Muhammad praying next to the Ka`bah, I will step on his neck.' The Prophet later said,

«لَوْ فَعَلَ لَأَخَذَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ عِيَانًا، وَلَوْ أَنَّ الْيَهُودَ تَمَنَوُا الْمَوْتَ لَمَاتُوا، وَرَأَوْا مَقَاعِدَهُمْ مِنَ النَّارِ، وَلَوْ خَرَجَ الَّذِينَ يَبَاهِلُونَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَرَجَعُوا لَا يَجِدُونَ مَالًا وَلَا أَهْلًا»

(Had he tried to do it, the angels would have taken him publicly. Had the Jews wished for death, they would have perished and would have seen their seats in the Fire. Had those who sought Mubalahah with the Messenger of Allah, went ahead with it, they would not have found estates or families when they returned home)." Al-Bukhari, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i also recorded this Hadith, which At-Tirmidhi graded Hasan Sahih.

Allah then said,

(إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ)

(Verily, this is the true narrative) meaning, what we narrated to you, O Muhammad, about `Isa is the plain truth that cannot be avoided,

(وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْحَكِيمُ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا)

(and none has the right to be worshipped but Allah. And indeed, Allah is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. And if they turn away,) by abandoning this truth,

(فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُفْسِدِينَ)

(then surely, Allah is All-Aware of those who do mischief.) for those who abandon the truth for falsehood commit mischief, and Allah has full knowledge of them and will subject them to the worst punishment. Verily, Allah is able to control everything, all praise and thanks are due to Him, and we seek refuge with Him from His revenge.

(قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا
وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا
يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ
تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ)

(64. Say: "O people of the Scripture: Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allah the same, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah." Then, if they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims.")

Every Person Knows about Tawhid

This Ayah includes the People of the Book, the Jews and Christians, and those who follow their ways.

(قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ)

(Say: "O people of the Scripture! Come to a word")

`Word' - in Arabic - also means a complete sentence, as evident from this Ayah. Allah described this word as being one,

(سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ)

(that is the same between us and you), an honest and righteous word that is fair to both parties. Allah then explained this word,

(أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا)

(that we worship none but Allah (Alone), and that we associate no partners with Him,) we worship neither a statue, cross, idol, Taghut (false gods), fire or anything else. Rather, we worship Allah Alone without partners, and this is the message of all of Allah's Messengers. Allah said,

(وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ
أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ)

(And We did not send any Messenger before you but We revealed to him (saying): "None has the right to be worshipped but I (Allah) , so worship Me (Alone and none else).") 21:25 and,

(وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ
وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ)

(And verily, We have sent among every Ummah a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allah (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Taghut (all false deities).") 16:36 . Allah said next,

(وَلَا يَتَّخِذُ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ)

("and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah.") Ibn Jurayj commented, "We do not obey each other in disobedience to Allah."

(فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ)

(Then, if they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims.") if they abandon this fair call, then let them know that you will remain in Islam as Allah has legislated for you.

We should mention that the letter that the Prophet sent to Heraclius reads, "In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. From Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, to Heraclius, Leader of the Romans: peace be upon those who follow the true guidance. Embrace

Islam and you will acquire safety, embrace Islam and Allah will grant you a double reward. However, if you turn away from it, then you will carry the burden of the peasants, and,

(يَأْهَلِ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ
أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ
بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا
فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ)

("O people of the Scripture: Come to a word that is the same between us and you, that we worship none but Allah (Alone), and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah." Then, if they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims.")"

Muhammad bin Ishaq and other scholars said that the beginning of Surah Al `Imran, and more than eighty verses thereafter; were revealed about the delegation of Najran. Az-Zuhri stated that the people of Najran were the first people to pay the Jizyah (tax money paid to the Muslim State). However, there is no disagreement that the Ayah that ordained the Jizyah 9:29 was revealed after the Fath (conquering Makkah, and therefore, after the delegation of Najran came to Al-Madinah). So, how can this Ayah 3:64 be contained in the Prophet's letter to Heraclius before the victory of Makkah, and how can we harmonize between the statements of Muhammad bin Ishaq and Az-Zuhri The answer is that the delegation of Najran came before Al-Hudaybiyyah (before the victory of Makkah), and what they paid was in lieu of the Mubahalah; not as Jizyah. The Ayah about the Jizyah was later revealed, and its ruling supported what occurred with the Najran people. In support of this opinion, we should mention that in another instance, the ruling on dividing the booty into one - fifth (for the Prophet) and four-fifths (for the fighters) agreed with the practice of `Abdullah bin Jahsh during the raid that he led before Badr. An Ayah later on upheld the way `Abdullah divided the booty. Therefore, it is possible that the Prophet wrote this statement (Say, "O People of the Scripture. . .") in his letter to Heraclius before the Ayah was revealed. Later on, the Qur'an agreed with the Prophet's statement, word by word. It is also a fact that the Qur'an was revealed in agreement with what `Umar said regarding the captured disbelievers at Badr, the Hijab (Muslim woman code of dress), refraining from performing prayer for the hypocrites, and regarding his statements:

(وَآتَّخِذُوا مِنْ مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى)

(And take you the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim as a place of prayer.) 2:125 , and,

(عَسَى رَبُّهُ إِن طَلَّقَنَّ أَنْ يُبَدِّلَهُ أَزْوَاجًا خَيْرًا
مِّنْكَنَّ)

(It may be if he divorced you (all) that his Lord will give him instead of you, wives better than you.) 66:5 .

(يَأْهَلِ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تُحَاجُّونَ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَا أُنزِلَتِ
التَّوْرَةُ وَالْإِنْجِيلُ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ -
هَأَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ حَاجِبْتُمْ فِيمَا لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلِمَ
تُحَاجُّونَ فِيمَا لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا
تَعْلَمُونَ - مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا
وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ
- إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَذَا
النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(65. O people of the Scripture! Why do you dispute about Ibrahim, while the Tawrah and the Injil were not revealed till after him Have you then no sense) (66. Verily, you are those who have disputed about that of which you have knowledge. Why do you then dispute concerning that of which you have no knowledge It is Allah Who knows, and you know not.) (67. Ibrahim was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim Hanifa and he was not of the Mushrikin) (68. Verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Ibrahim are those who followed him, and this Prophet and those who have believed. And Allah is the Wali (Protector and Helper) of the believers.)

Disputing with the Jews and Christians About the Religion of Ibrahim

Allah censures the Jews and Christians for their dispute with Muslims over Ibrahim Al-Khalil and the claim each group made that he was one of them. Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "The Christians of Najran and Jewish rabbis gathered before the Messenger of Allah and disputed in front of him. The rabbis said, `Ibrahim was certainly Jewish.' The Christians said, `Certainly, Ibrahim was Christian.' So Allah sent down,

(يَأْهَلِ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تُحَاجُّونَ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ)

(O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Why do you dispute about Ibrahim,) meaning, `How is it that you, Jews, claim that Ibrahim was Jew, although he lived before Allah sent down the Tawrah to Musa How is it that you, Christians, claim that Ibrahim was Christian, although Christianity came after his time" This is why Allah said,

(أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ)

(Have you then no sense)

Allah then said,

(هَأَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ حَاجِبْتُمْ فِيْمَا لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلِمَ
تُحَاجُّونَ فِيْمَا لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ)

(Verily, you are those who have disputed about that of which you have knowledge. Why do you then dispute concerning that of which you have no knowledge)

This Ayah criticizes those who argue and dispute without knowledge, just as the Jews and Christians did concerning Ibrahim. Had they disputed about their religions, which they had knowledge of, and about the Law that was legislated for them until Muhammad was sent, it would have been better for them. Rather, they disputed about what they had no knowledge of, so Allah criticized them for this behavior. Allah commanded them to refer what they have no knowledge of to He Who knows the seen and unseen matters and Who knows the true reality of all things. This is why Allah said,

(وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(It is Allah Who knows, and you know not.)

Allah said,

(مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ
حَنِيفًا مُّسْلِمًا)

(Ibrahim was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim Hanifa), shunning Shirk and living in Iman,

(وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ)

(and he was not of the Mushrikin.)

This Ayah is similar to the Ayah in Surat Al-Baqarah,

(وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى تَهْتَدُوا)

(And they say, "Be Jews or Christians, then you will be guided...") 2:135 .

Allah said next,

(إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَذَا
النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(Verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Ibrahim are those who followed him, and this Prophet and those who have believed. And Allah is the Wali (Protector and Helper) of the believers.)

This Ayah means, "The people who have the most right to be followers of Ibrahim are those who followed his religion and this Prophet, Muhammad , and his Companions from the Muhajirin, Ansar and those who followed their lead." Sa`id bin Mansur recorded that Ibn Mas`ud said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ وَلِيًّا مِنْ النَّبِيِّينَ، وَإِنَّ وَلِيَّيَّ مِنْهُمْ
أَبِي وَخَلِيلُ رَبِّي عَزَّ وَجَلَّ»

(Every Prophet had a Wali (supporter, best friend) from among the Prophets. My Wali among them is my father Ibrahim, the Khalil (intimate friend) of my Lord, the Exalted and Most Honored)

The Prophet then recited,

(إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ)

(Verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Ibrahim are those who followed him...)

Allah's statement,

(وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(And Allah is the Wali (Protector and Helper) of the believers.) means, Allah is the Protector of all those who believe in His Messengers.

(وَدَّتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يُضِلُّونَكُمْ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ - يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ - يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَلْبِسُونَ الْحَقَّ بِالْبَطْلِ وَتَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ - وَقَالَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ ءَامِنُوا بِالَّذِي أُنزِلَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَجَهُ النَّهَارِ وَكُفِّرُوا ءَاخِرَهُ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ - وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا لِمَنْ تَبِعَ دِينَكُمْ قُلْ إِنَّ الْهُدَىٰ هُدَىٰ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُؤْتَىٰ أَحَدٌ مِّثْلَ مَا أُوتِيْتُمْ أَوْ يُحَاجُّوكُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ قُلْ إِنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ - يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ)

(69. A party of the People of the Scripture wish to lead you astray. But they shall not lead astray anyone except themselves, and they perceive not.) (70. "O People of the Scripture! Why do you disbelieve in the Ayat of Allah, while you bear witness.") (71. "O People of the Scripture! Why do you mix truth with falsehood and conceal the truth while you know") (72. And a party of the People of the Scripture say: "Believe in the morning in that which is revealed to the believers, and reject it at the end of the day, so that they may turn back.) (73. And believe no one except the one who follows your religion." Say (O Prophet): "Verily, right guidance is the guidance of Allah." (And they say:) "Do not believe that anyone can receive like that which you have received, otherwise they would engage you in argument before your Lord." Say: "All the bounty is in the Hand of Allah; He grants to whom He wills. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.") (74. He selects for His Mercy whom He wills and Allah is the Owner of great bounty.)

**The Envy the Jews Feel Towards Muslims; Their Wicked Plots
Against Muslims**

Allah states that the Jews envy the faithful and wish they could misguide them. Allah states that the punishment of this behavior will fall back upon them, while they are unaware. Allah criticizes them,

(يَاهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأَنْتُمْ
تَشْهَدُونَ)

(O People of the Scripture!: Why do you disbelieve in the Ayat of Allah, while you bear witness.)

You know for certain that Allah's Ayat are true and authentic,

(يَاهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَلْبِسُونَ الْحَقَّ بِالْبَطْلِ وَتَكْتُمُونَ
الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ)

(O People of the Scripture: Why do you mix truth with falsehood and conceal the truth while you know) by hiding what is in your Books about the description of Muhammad , while you know what you do.

(وَقَالَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ ءَامِنُوا بِالَّذِي
أُنزِلَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامِنُوا وَجَهَ النَّهَارَ وَكَفَرُوا
ءَاخِرَهُ)

(And a party of the People of the Scripture say: "Believe in the morning in that which is revealed to the believers, and reject it at the end of the day,)

This is a wicked plan from the People of the Book to deceive Muslims who are weak in the religion. They decided that they would pretend to be believers in the beginning of the day, by attending the dawn prayer with the Muslims. However, when the day ended, they would revert to their old religion so that the ignorant people would say, "They reverted to their old religion because they uncovered some shortcomings in the Islamic religion." This is why they said next.

(لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ)

(so that they may turn back.) Ibn Abi Najih said that Mujahid commented about this Ayah, which refers to the Jews, "They attended the dawn prayer with the Prophet and disbelieved in

the end of the day in order to misguide the people. This way, people would think that they have uncovered shortcomings in the religion that they briefly followed."

(وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا لِمَن تَبِعَ دِينَكُمْ)

("And believe no one except the one who follows your religion.")

They said, do not trust anyone with your secret knowledge, except those who follow your religion. Therefore, they say, do not expose your knowledge to Muslims in order to prevent them from believing in it and, thus, use it as proof against you. Allah replied,

(قُلْ إِنَّ الْهُدَىٰ هُدَىٰ اللَّهِ)

(Say: (O Prophet) "Verily, right guidance is the guidance of Allah.")

Allah guides the hearts of the faithful to the perfect faith through the clear Ayat, plain proofs and unequivocal evidence that He has sent down to His servant and Messenger Muhammad . This occurs, O you Jews, even though you hide the description of Muhammad . the unlettered Prophet whom you find in your Books that you received from the earlier Prophets. Allah's statement;

(أَنْ يُؤْتَىٰ أَحَدٌ مِّثْلَ مَا أُوتِيْتُمْ أَوْ يُحَاجُّوْكُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ)

((And they say:) "Do not believe that anyone can receive like that which you have received, otherwise they would engage you in argument before your Lord.")

They say, "Do not disclose the knowledge that you have to the Muslims, to prevent them from learning it and thus becoming your equals. They will be even better because they will believe in it or will use it against you as evidence with your Lord, and thus establish Allah's proof against you in this life and the Hereafter." Allah said,

(قُلْ إِنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ)

(Say: "All the bounty is in the Hand of Allah; He grants to whom He wills.) meaning, all affairs are under His control, and He gives and takes. Verily, Allah gives faith, knowledge and sound comprehension to whomever He wills. He also misguides whomever He wills by blinding his sight, mind, sealing his heart, hearing and stamping his eyes closed. Allah has the perfect wisdom and the unequivocal proofs.

(وَاللَّهُ وَسِعَ عَلِيمِيحْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ
دُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ)

(And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower." He selects for His mercy whom He wills and Allah is the Owner of great bounty.) meaning, He has endowed you, O believers, with tremendous virtue, in that He honored your Prophet Muhammad over all other prophets, and by directing you to the best Shari` ah there is.

(وَمِنَ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ إِن تَأْمَنهُ بِقِنطَارٍ يُؤدِّهِ
إِلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ إِن تَأْمَنهُ بدينارٍ لَّا يُؤدِّهِ إِلَيْكَ إِلَّا
مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قَائِمًا ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا
فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ سَبِيلٌ وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ
يَعْلَمُونَ - بلى مَنْ أوفى بعهده وَاَتَّقى فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ
يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ)

(75. Among the People of the Scripture is he who, if entrusted with a Qintar (a great amount of wealth), will readily pay it back; and among them there is he who, if entrusted with a single silver coin, will not repay it unless you constantly stand demanding, because they say: "There is no blame on us to betray and take the properties of the illiterates (Arabs)." But they tell a lie against Allah while they know it.) (76. Yes, whoever fulfills his pledge and fears Allah much; verily, then Allah loves the Muttaqin (the pious).)

How Trustworthy Are the Jews

Allah states that there are deceitful people among the Jews. He also warns the faithful against being deceived by them, because some of them,

(مَنْ إِن تَأْمَنهُ بِقِنطَارٍ)

(if entrusted with a Qintar (a great amount)) of money,

(يُؤَدُّهُ إِلَيْكَ)

(will readily pay it back;) This Ayah indicates that this type would likewise give what is less than a Qintar, as is obvious. However,

(وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ بِدِينَارٍ لَّا يُؤَدُّهُ إِلَيْكَ إِلَّا مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قَائِمًا)

(and among them there is he who, if entrusted with a single silver coin, will not repay it unless you constantly stand demanding,) and insisting on acquiring your rightful property. If this is what he would do with one Dinar, then what about what is more than a Dinar We mentioned the meaning of Qintar in the beginning of this Surah, while the value of Dinar is well known. Allah's statement,

(ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ سَبِيلٌ)

(because they say: "There is no blame on us to betray and take the properties of the illiterates (Arabs).") means, what made them reject the truth (or what they owed) is that they said, "There is no harm in our religion if we eat up the property of the unlettered ones, the Arabs, for Allah has allowed it for us." Allah replied,

(وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(But they tell a lie against Allah while they know it.) for they invented this lie and word of misguidance. Rather, Allah would not allow this money for them unless they had a right to it.

`Abdur-Razzaq recorded that Sa`sa`ah bin Yazid said that a man asked Ibn `Abbas, "During battle, we capture some property belonging to Ahl Adh-Dhimmah, such as chickens and sheep." Ibn `Abbas said, "What do you do in this case" The man said, "We say that there is no sin (if we confiscate them) in this case." He said, "That is what the People of the Book said,

(لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ سَبِيلٌ)

(There is no blame on us to betray and take the properties of the illiterates (Arabs).)

Verily, if they pay the Jizyah, then you are not allowed their property, except when they willingly give it up."

Allah then said,

(بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِ وَاتَّقَىٰ)

(Yes, whoever fulfills his pledge and fears Allah much,) fulfills his promise and fears Allah among you, O People of the Book, regarding the covenant Allah took from you to believe in Muhammad when he is sent, just as He took the same covenant from all Prophets and their nations. Whoever avoids Allah's prohibitions, obeys Him and adheres to the Shari`ah that He sent with His Final Messenger and the master of all mankind.

(فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ)

(verily, then Allah loves the Muttaqin.)

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا
أُولَئِكَ لَا خَلْقَ لَهُمْ فِي الْأُخْرَةِ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ
وَلَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ)

(77. Verily, those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allah's covenant and their oaths, they shall have no portion in the Hereafter (Paradise). Neither will Allah speak to them nor look at them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them, and they shall have a painful torment.)

There is No Share in the Hereafter for Those Who Break Allah's Covenant

Allah states that whoever prefers the small things of this short, soon to end life, instead of fulfilling what they have promised Allah by following Muhammad , announcing his description from their books to people and affirming his truth, then,

(أُولَئِكَ لَا خَلْقَ لَهُمْ فِي الْأُخْرَةِ)

(they shall have no portion in the Hereafter.)

They will not have a share or part in the Hereafter's rewards,

(وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ)

(Neither will Allah speak to them nor look at them on the Day of Resurrection) with His mercy. This Ayah indicates that Allah will not speak words of kindness nor look at them with any mercy,

(وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ)

(nor will He purify them) from sins and impurities. Rather, He will order them to the Fire,

(وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ)

(and they shall have a painful torment.)

There are several Hadiths on the subject of this Ayah, some of which follow. The First Hadith

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Dharr said, "The Messenger of Allah said, c

«ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ، وَلَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ، وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ»

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«المُسَيَّلُ، وَالْمُنَقِقُ سِلْعَتَهُ بِالْحَلْفِ الْكَاذِبِ،
وَالْمَنَّانُ»

(There are three persons whom Allah will not speak to, look at on the Day of Resurrection or purify, and they shall taste a painful torment. I said, `O Messenger of Allah! Who are they, may they gain failure and loss' He said, repeating this statement thrice, `The Musbil (man whose clothes reach below the ankles), he who swears while lying so as to sell his merchandize and the one who gives charity and reminds people of it).'" This was also recorded by Muslim, and the collectors of the Sunan. Another Hadith

Imam Ahmad recorded that `Adi bin `Amirah Al-Kindi said, "Imru' Al-Qays bin `Abis, a man from Kindah, disputed with a man from Hadramut in front of the Messenger of Allah concerning a piece of land. The Prophet required the man from Hadramut to present his evidence, but he did not have any. The Prophet required Imru' Al-Qays to swear to his truthfulness, but the man

from Hadramut said, `O Messenger of Allah! If you only require him to swear, then by the Lord of the Ka`bah (Allah), my land is lost.' The Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ حَلَفَ عَلَى يَمِينٍ كَاذِبَةٍ لِيَقْتَطِعَ بِهَا مَالَ أَحَدٍ، لَقِيَ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِ غَضَبَانِ»

(Whoever swears while lying to acquire the property of others, will meet Allah while He is angry with him.)" Raj'a' one of the narrators of the Hadith, said that the Messenger of Allah then recited,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا)

(Verily, those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allah's covenant and their oaths...)

Imru' Al-Qays said, `What if one forfeits this dispute, what will he gain, O Messenger of Allah' The Prophet answered, `Paradise.' Imru' Al-Qays said, `Bear witness that I forfeit all the land for him.'" An-Nasa'i also recorded this Hadith. Another Hadith

Imam Ahmad recorded that `Abdullah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ حَلَفَ عَلَى يَمِينٍ هُوَ فِيهَا فَاجِرٌ، لِيَقْتَطِعَ بِهَا مَالَ امْرِئٍ مُسْلِمٍ، لَقِيَ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِ غَضَبَانِ»

(Whoever takes a false oath to deprive a Muslim of his property will meet Allah while He is angry with him.)

Al-Ash`ath said, "By Allah! This verse was revealed concerning me. I owned some land with a Jewish man who denied my right, and I complained against him to the Messenger of Allah. The Prophet asked me, `Do you have evidence' I said, `I don't have evidence.' He said to the Jew, `Take an oath then.' I said, `O Allah's Messenger! He will take a (false) oath immediately, and I will lose my property.' Allah revealed the verse,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا)

(Verily, those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allah's covenant and their oaths...)"

The Two Sahihs recorded this Hadith. Another Hadith

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَلَا يَنْظُرُ
إِلَيْهِمْ، وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ، وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ: رَجُلٌ مَنَعَ
ابْنَ السَّبِيلِ فَضْلَ مَاءٍ عِنْدَهُ، وَرَجُلٌ حَلَفَ عَلَى
سِلْعَةٍ بَعْدَ الْعَصْرِ يَعْنِي كَاذِبًا وَرَجُلٌ بَايَعَ إِمَامًا،
فَإِنْ أَعْطَاهُ وَفَى لَهُ، وَإِنْ لَمْ يُعْطِهِ لَمْ يَفِ لَهُ»

(Three persons whom Allah shall not speak to on the Day of Resurrection, or look at, or purify them, and they shall taste a painful torment. (They are) a man who does not give the wayfarer some of the water that he has; a man who swears, while lying, in order to complete a sales transaction after the `Asr prayer; and a man who gives his pledge of allegiance to an Imam (Muslim Ruler), and if the Imam gives him (something), he fulfills the pledge, but if the Imam does not give him, he does not fulfill the pledge).

Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi also recorded this Hadith, and At-Tirmidhi graded it Hasan Sahih.

(وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ لَفَرِيقًا يَلْوُونَ أَلْسِنَتَهُم بِالْكِتَابِ
لِتَحْسَبُوهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ
وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ
وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ)

78. And verily, among them is a party who distort the Book with their tongues, so that you may think it is from the Book, but it is not from the Book, and they say: This is from Alla0h, but it is not from Alla0h and they speak a lie against Alla0h while they know it.

The Jews Alter Allah's Words

Allah states that some Jews, may Allah's curses descend on them, distort Allah's Words with their tongues, change them from their appropriate places, and alter their intended meanings. They do this to deceive the ignorant people by making it appear that their words are in the Book of Allah. They attribute their own lies to Allah, even though they know that they have lied and invented falsehood. Therefore, Allah said,

(وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(and they speak a lie against Allah while they know it.)

Mujahid, Ash-Sha`bi, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that,

(يَلْوُونَ أَلْسِنَتَهُمْ بِالْكِتَابِ)

(who distort the Book with their tongues,) means, "They alter them (Allah's Words)."

Al-Bukhari reported that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah means they alter and add although none among Allah's creation can remove the Words of Allah from His Books, they alter and distort their apparent meanings. Wahb bin Munabbih said, "The Tawrah and the Injil remain as Allah revealed them, and no letter in them was removed. However, the people misguide others by addition and false interpretation, relying on books that they wrote themselves. Then,

(وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ)

(they say: "This is from Allah," but it is not from Allah;)

As for Allah's Books, they are still preserved and cannot be changed." Ibn Abi Hatim recorded this statement. However, if Wahb meant the books that are currently in the hands of the People of the Book, then we should state that there is no doubt that they altered, distorted, added to and deleted from them. For instance, the Arabic versions of these books contain tremendous error, many additions and deletions and enormous misinterpretation. Those who rendered these translations have incorrect comprehension in most, rather, all of these translations. If Wahb meant the Books of Allah that He has with Him, then indeed, these Books are preserved and were never changed.

(مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُؤْتِيَهُ اللَّهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ
وَالنُّبُوَّةَ ثُمَّ يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ كُونُوا عِبَادًا لِي مِنْ دُونِ
اللَّهِ وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّينَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ
الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ - وَلَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ
تَتَّخِذُوا الْمَالِيكَةَ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ أَرْبَابًا أَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْكَفْرِ
بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ)

(79. It is not (possible) for any human being to whom Allah has given the Book and Al-Hukm and prophethood to say to the people: "Be my worshippers rather than Allah's." On the contrary (he would say): "Be you Rabbaniyyun, because you are teaching the Book, and you are studying it.")
(80. Nor would he order you to take angels and Prophets for lords. Would he order you to disbelieve after you have submitted to Allah's will)

No Prophet Ever Called People to Worship him or to Worship Other Than Allah

This Ayah 3:79 means, it is not for a person whom Allah has given the Book, knowledge in the Law and prophethood to proclaim to the people, "Worship me instead of Allah," meaning, along with Allah. If this is not the right of a Prophet or a Messenger, then indeed, it is not the right of anyone else to issue such a claim.

This criticism refers to the ignorant rabbis, priests and teachers of misguidance, unlike the Messengers and their sincere knowledgeable followers who implement their knowledge; for they only command what Allah commands them, as their honorable Messengers conveyed to them. They also forbid what Allah forbade for them, by the words of His honorable Messengers. The Messengers, may Allah's peace and blessings be on all of them, are the emissaries between Allah and His creation, conveying Allah's Message and Trust. The messengers indeed fulfilled their mission, gave sincere advice to creation and conveyed the truth to them. Allah's statement,

(وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّينَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكُتُبَ
وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ)

(On the contrary (he would say), "Be you Rabbaniyyun, because you are teaching the Book, and you are studying it.") means, the Messenger recommends the people to be Rabbaniyyun. Ibn `Abbas, Abu Razin and several others said that Rabbaniyyun means, "Wise, learned, and forbearing." Ad-Dahhak commented concerning Allah's statement,

(بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكُتُبَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ)

(because you are teaching the Book, and you are studying it.) "Whoever learns the Qur'an deserves to become a Faqih (learned)."

(وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ)

(and you are studying it), preserving its words.

Allah then said,

(وَلَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَتَّخِذُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ أَرْبَابًا)

(Nor would he order you to take angels and Prophets for lords.) The Prophet does not command worshipping other than Allah, whether a sent Messenger or an angel.

(أَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْكَفْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ)

(Would he order you to disbelieve after you have submitted to Allah's will) meaning, he would not do that, for whoever calls to worshipping other than Allah, will have called to Kufr. The Prophets only call to Iman which commands worshipping Allah Alone without partners. Allah said in other Ayat,

(وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيَ إِلَيْهِ
أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ)

(And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad) but We revealed to him (saying): "None has the right to be worshipped but I, so worship Me".) 21:25 ,

(وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ
وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ)

(And verily, We have sent among every Ummah a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allah (Alone), and avoid Taghut (all false deities).") 16:36 , and,

(وَأَسْأَلُ مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رُسُلِنَا أَجَعَلْنَا
مِنْ دُونِ الرَّحْمَنِ ءَالِهَةً يُعْبَدُونَ)

(And ask those of Our Messengers whom We sent before you: "Did We ever appoint gods to be worshipped besides the Most Gracious (Allah)") 43:45

Allah said concerning the angels,

وَمَنْ يَقُلْ مِنْهُمْ إِنِّي إِلَهٌ مِّنْ دُونِهِ فَذَلِكَ نَجْزِيهِ
جَهَنَّمَ كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ)

(And if any of them should say: "Verily, I am a god besides Him (Allah)," such a one We should recompense with Hell. Thus We recompense the wrongdoers.) 21:29 .

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَا آتَيْنُكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ
وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُّصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ
لْتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِ وَتَتَّصِرُنَّهُ قَالُوا أَأَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَخَذْتُمْ عَلَىٰ
ذَلِكَمْ إِصْرِي قَالُوا أَقْرَرْنَا قَالَ فَاشْهَدُوا وَأَنَا
مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ - فَمَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ
هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ)

(81. And (remember) when Allah took the covenant of the Prophets, saying: "Take whatever I gave you from the Book and Hikmah, and afterwards there will come to you a Messenger confirming what is with you; you must, then, believe in him and help him." Allah said: "Do you agree (to it) and will you take up Isri" They said: "We agree." He said: "Then bear witness; and I am with you among the witnesses.") (82. Then whoever turns away after this, they are the rebellious.)

Taking a Pledge From the Prophets to Believe in Our Prophet, Muhammad

Allah states that He took a pledge from every Prophet whom He sent from Adam until `Isa, that when Allah gives them the Book and the Hikmah, thus acquiring whatever high grades they deserve, then a Messenger came afterwards, they would believe in and support him. Even though Allah has given the Prophets the knowledge and the prophethood, this fact should not make them refrain from following and supporting the Prophet who comes after them. This is why Allah, the Most High, Most Honored, said

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَا آتَيْتُكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ
وَحِكْمَةٍ

(And (remember) when Allah took the covenant of the Prophets, saying: "Take whatever I gave you from the Book and Hikmah.") meaning, if I give you the Book and the Hikmah,

ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِ
وَلَتَنْصُرُنَّهُ قَالَ أَأَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَخَذْتُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَلِكُمْ
إِصْرِي

("and afterwards there will come to you a Messenger confirming what is with you; you must, then, believe in him and help him." Allah said, "Do you agree (to it) and will you take up Isri")

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Ar-Rabi`, Qatadah and As-Suddi said that `Isri' means, "My covenant." Muhammad bin Ishaq said that,

(إِصْرِي)

(Isri) means, "The responsibility of My covenant that you took," meaning, the ratified pledge that you gave Me.

قَالُوا أَأَقْرَرْنَا قَالَ فَاشْهَدُوا وَأَنَا مَعَكُمْ مِنَ
الشَّاهِدِينَ فَمَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ

(They said: "We agree." He said: "Then bear witness; and I am with you among the witnesses." then whoever turns away after this,") from fulfilling this pledge and covenant, c

(قَاوِلِيكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ)

(they are the rebellious.) `Ali bin Abi Talib and his cousin `Abdullah bin `Abbas said, "Allah never sent a Prophet but after taking his pledge that if Muhammad were sent in his lifetime, he would believe in and support him." Allah commanded each Prophet to take a pledge from his nation that if Muhammad were sent in their time, they would believe in and support him. Tawus, Al-Hasan Al-Basri and Qatadah said, "Allah took the pledge from the Prophets that they would believe in each other", and this statement does not contradict what `Ali and Ibn `Abbas stated.

Therefore, Muhammad is the Final Prophet until the Day of Resurrection. He is the greatest Imam, who if he existed in any time period, deserves to be obeyed, rather than all other Prophets. This is why Muhammad led the Prophets in prayer during the night of Isra' when they gathered in Bayt Al-Maqdis (Jerusalem). He is the intercessor on the Day of Gathering, when the Lord comes to judge between His servants. This is Al-Maqam Al-Mahmud (the praised station) refer to 17:79 that only Muhammad deserves, a responsibility which the mighty Prophets and Messengers will decline to assume. However, Muhammad will carry the task of intercession, may Allah's peace and blessings be on him.

(أَفْغَيْرَ دِينَ اللَّهِ يَبْعُونَ وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا وَإِلَيْهِ
يُرْجَعُونَ - قُلْ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَمَا
أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ
وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ
مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ
مُسْلِمُونَ - وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ
مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ)

(83. Do they seek other than the religion of Allah, while to Him submitted all creatures in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly. And to Him shall they all be returned.) (84. Say: "We believe in Allah and in what has been sent down to us, and what was sent down to Ibrahim, Isma`il, Ishaq, Ya`qub and Al-Asbat, and what was given to Musa, `Isa and the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between one another among them and to Him (Allah) we have submitted.") (85. And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.)

The Only Valid Religion To Allah is Islam

Allah rebukes those who prefer a religion other than the religion that He sent His Books and Messengers with, which is the worship of Allah Alone without partners, to Whom,

(وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ)

(submitted all creatures in the heavens and the earth,) Willingly, or not. Allah said in other Ayat,

(وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا
وَكَرْهًا)

(And unto Allah (Alone) falls in prostration whoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly.) 13:15 , and,

(أَوْ لَمِيرُوا إِلَى خَلْقِ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ يَتَفَيَّ ظِلُّهُ
عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَالشَّمَائِلِ سُجَّدًا لِلَّهِ وَهُمْ وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ
مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ دَابَّةٍ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ يَخْفُونَ رَبَّهُمْ مَنْ
فَوْقِهِمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ)

(Have they not observed things that Allah has created: (how) their shadows incline to the right and to the left, making prostration unto Allah, and they are lowly And to Allah prostrate all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, of the moving creatures and the angels, and they are not proud. They fear their Lord above them, and they do what they are commanded) 16: 48-50 .

Therefore, the faithful believer submits to Allah in heart and body, while the disbeliever unwillingly submits to Him in body only, since he is under Allah's power, irresistible control and mighty kingship that cannot be repelled or resisted. Waki` reported that Mujahid said that the Ayah,

(وَلَهُ أُسْلِمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا
وَكَرْهًا)

(While to Him submitted all creatures in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly), is similar to the Ayah,

وَلَّيْنِ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ
لَيَقُولَنَّ اللَّهُ

(And verily, if you ask them: "Who created the heavens and the earth" Surely, they will say: "Allah") 39:38 .

He also reported that Ibn ` Abbas said about ,

وَلَهُ أُسْلِمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا
وَكَرْهًا

(while to Him submitted all creatures in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly.)

"When He took the covenant from them."

وَالِيهِ يُرْجَعُونَ

(And to Him shall they all be returned) on the Day of Return, when He will reward or punish each person according to his or her deeds.

Allah then said,

قُلْ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا

(Say: "We believe in Allah and in what has been sent down to us) the Qur'an,

وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ
وَيَعْقُوبَ

(and what was sent down to Ibrahim, Ismai` Ol, Ishaq, Ya` qub) the scriptures and revelation,

وَالْأَسْبَاطِ

(and the Asbat,) the Asbat are the twelve tribes who originated from the twelve children of Israel (Ya` qub).

(وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ)

(and what was given to Musa, `Isa) the Tawrah and the Injil,

(وَالنَّبِيِّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ)

(and the Prophets from their Lord.) and this encompasses all of Allah's Prophets.

(لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ)

(We make no distinction between one another among them) we believe in all of them,

(وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ)

(And to Him (Allah) we have submitted (in Islam))

Therefore, faithful Muslims believe in every Prophet whom Allah has sent and in every Book He revealed, and never disbelieve in any of them. Rather, they believe in what was revealed by Allah, and in every Prophet sent by Allah. Allah said next,

(وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ)

(And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him,) whoever seeks other than what Allah has legislated, it will not be accepted from him,

(وَهُوَ فِي الآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِينَ)

(and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.)

As the Prophet said in an authentic Hadith,

«مَنْ عَمِلَ عَمَلًا لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُنَا، فَهُوَ رَدٌّ»

(Whoever commits an action that does not conform to our matter (religion) then it is rejected).

(كَيْفَ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ قَوْمًا كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ
 وَشَهِدُوا أَنَّ الرَّسُولَ حَقٌّ وَجَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَاللَّهُ
 لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ - أُولَئِكَ جَزَاءُ هُمْ أَنْ
 عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ
 خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ
 يُنظَرُونَ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا
 فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ)

(86. How shall Allah guide a people who disbelieved after their belief and after they bore witness that the Messenger is true and after clear proofs came to them And Allah guides not the people who are wrongdoers. (87. They are those whose recompense is that on them (rests) the curse of Allah, of the angels and of all mankind.) (88. They will abide therein. Neither will their torment be lightened nor will it be delayed or postponed.) (89. Except for those who repent after that and do righteous deeds. Verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.)

Allah Does Not Guide People Who Disbelieve After they Believed, Unless They Repent

Ibn Jarir recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "A man from the Ansar embraced Islam, but later reverted and joined the polytheists. He later on became sorry and sent his people to, `Ask the Messenger of Allah for me, if I can repent.' Then,

(كَيْفَ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ قَوْمًا كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ)

(How shall Allah guide a people who disbelieved after their belief) until,

(فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ)

(Verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) was revealed and his people sent word to him and he re-embraced Islam."

This is the wording recorded by An-Nasa'i, Al-Hakim and Ibn Hibban. Al-Hakim said, "Its chain is Sahih and they did not record it."

Allah's statement,

كَيْفَ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ قَوْمًا كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ
وَشَهِدُوا أَنَّ الرِّسُولَ حَقٌّ وَجَاءَهُمُ البَيِّنَاتُ

(How shall Allah guide a people who disbelieved after their belief and after they bore witness that the Messenger is true and after clear proofs came to them)

means, the proofs and evidences were established, testifying to the truth of what the Messenger was sent with. The truth was thus explained to them, but they reverted to the darkness of polytheism. Therefore, how can such people deserve guidance after they willingly leapt into utter blindness This is why Allah said,

وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

(And Allah guides not the people who are wrongdoers.)

He then said,

أُولَئِكَ جزَاؤُهُمْ أَنَّ عَلَيْهِمُ لعنة الله وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ
وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ

(They are those whose recompense is that on them (rests) the curse of Allah, of the angels and of all mankind.)

Allah curses them and His creation also curses them.

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا

(They will abide therein) in the curse,

لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ العَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ

(Neither will their torment be lightened nor will it be delayed or postponed.) for, the torment will not be lessened, not even for an hour. After that, Allah said,

(إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ
غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ)

(Except for those who repent after that and do righteous deeds. Verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.)

This Ayah indicates Allah's kindness, graciousness, compassion, mercy and favor on His creatures when they repent to Him, for He forgives them in this case.

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ ثُمَّ أَزْدَادُوا كُفْرًا لَنْ
تُقْبَلَ تَوْبَتُهُمْ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الضَّالُّونَ - إِنَّ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمْ
مِلَّةٌ الْأَرْضُ ذَهَبًا وَلَوْ اقْتَدَى بِهِ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ)

(90. Verily, those who disbelieved after their belief and then went on increasing in their disbelief never will their repentance be accepted. And they are those who are astray.) (91. Verily, those who disbelieved, and died while they were disbelievers, the (whole) earth full of gold will not be accepted from anyone of them if they offered it as a ransom. For them is a painful torment and they will have no helpers.)

Neither Repentance of the Disbeliever Upon Death, Nor His Ransoming Himself on the Day of Resurrection Shall be Accepted

Allah threatens and warns those who revert to disbelief after they believed and who thereafter insist on disbelief until death. He states that in this case, no repentance shall be accepted from them upon their death. Similarly, Allah said,

(وَلَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ حَتَّى إِذَا
حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ)

(And of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil deeds until death faces one of them) 4:18 .

This is why Allah said,

(لَنْ يُقْبَلَ تَوْبَتُهُمْ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الضَّالُّونَ)

(never will their repentance be accepted. And they are those who went astray.) to those who abandon the path of truth for the path of wickedness. Al-Hafiz Abu Bakr Al-Bazzar recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that some people embraced Islam, reverted to disbelief, became Muslims again, then reverted from Islam. They sent their people inquiring about this matter and they asked the Messenger of Allah . On that, this Ayah was revealed,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ ثُمَّ ازدَادُوا كُفْرًا لَنْ يُقْبَلَ تَوْبَتُهُمْ)

(Verily, those who disbelieved after their belief and then went on increasing in their disbelief never will their repentance be accepted). The chain of narration is satisfactory. Thereafter, Allah said,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمْ مِلءُ الْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا وَلَوْ اقْتَدَى بِهِ)

(Verily, those who disbelieved, and died while they were disbelievers, the (whole) earth full of gold will not be accepted from anyone of them even if they offered it as a ransom.)

Those who die while disbelievers, shall have no good deed ever accepted from them, even if they spent the earth's fill of gold in what was perceived to be an act of obedience. The Prophet was asked about `Abdullah bin Jud`an, who used to be generous to guests, helpful to the indebted and who gave food (to the poor); will all that benefit him The Prophet said,

«لَا، إِنَّهُ لَمْ يَقُلْ يَوْمًا مِنَ الدَّهْرِ: رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي خَطِيئَتِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ»

(No, for not even one day during his life did he pronounce, `O my Lord! Forgive my sins on the Day of Judgment.)

Similarly, if the disbeliever gave the earth's full of gold as ransom, it will not be accepted from him. Allah said,

(وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا تَنْفَعُهَا شَفْعَةٌ)

(...nor shall compensation be accepted from him, nor shall intercession be of use to him,) 2:123 , and

(لَا يَبِيعُ فِيهِ وَلَا خِلٌّ)

(...on which there will be neither mutual bargaining nor befriending.) 14:31 , and,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ أَنَّ لَهُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لِيَفْتَدُوا بِهِ مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمِ
الْقِيَامَةِ مَا تُقْبَلُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ)

(Verily, those who disbelieve, if they had all that is in the earth, and as much again therewith to ransom themselves thereby from the torment on the Day of Resurrection, it would never be accepted of them, and theirs would be a painful torment) 5:36 .

This is why Allah said here,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْ
أَحَدِهِمْ مِلءُ الْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا وَلَوْ افْتَدَى بِهِ)

.(Verily, those who disbelieved, and died while they were disbelievers, the (whole) earth full of gold will not be accepted from anyone of them if they offered it as a ransom).

The implication of this Ayah is that the disbeliever shall never avoid the torment of Allah, even if he spent the earth's fill of gold, or if he ransoms himself with the earth's fill of gold, - all of its mountains, hills, sand, dust, valleys, forests, land and sea.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Anas said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«يُوتَى بِالرَّجُلِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ فَيَقُولُ لَهُ: يَا ابْنَ
آدَمَ، كَيْفَ وَجَدْتَ مَنْزِلَكَ؟ فَيَقُولُ: أَيُّ رَبِّ خَيْرٍ
مَنْزِلٍ، فَيَقُولُ: سَلْ وَتَمَنَّ، فَيَقُولُ: مَا أَسْأَلُ وَلَا
أَتَمَنَّى إِلَّا أَنْ تَرُدَّنِي إِلَى الدُّنْيَا فَأَقْتَلَ فِي سَبِيلِكَ

عَشْرَ مِرَارٍ، لِمَا يَرَى مِنْ فَضْلِ الشَّهَادَةِ، وَيُؤْتَى
 بِالرَّجُلِ مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ فَيَقُولُ لَهُ: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ،
 كَيْفَ وَجَدْتَ مَنْزِلَكَ؟ فَيَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّ شَرَّ مَنْزِلٍ،
 فَيَقُولُ لَهُ: تَقْتَدِي مِنِّي بِطِلَاعِ الْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا؟
 فَيَقُولُ: أَيُّ رَبِّ نَعَمْ، فَيَقُولُ: كَذَبْتَ، قَدْ سَأَلْتُكَ
 أَقَلَّ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَأَيْسَرَ فَلَمْ تَفْعَلْ، فَيُرَدُّ إِلَى النَّارِ»

(A man from among the people of Paradise will be brought and Allah will ask him, "O son of Adam! How did you find your dwelling" He will say, "O Lord, it is the best dwelling." Allah will say, "Ask and wish." The man will say, "I only ask and wish that You send me back to the world so that I am killed ten times in Your cause," because of the honor of martyrdom he would experience. A man from among the people of the Fire will be brought, and Allah will say to him, "O son of Adam! How do you find your dwelling" He will say, "It is the worst dwelling, O Lord." Allah will ask him, "Would you ransom yourself from Me with the earth's fill of gold" He will say, "Yes, O Lord." Allah will say, "You have lied. I asked you to do what is less and easier than that, but you did not do it," and he will be sent back to the Fire.)

This is why Allah said,

(أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ)

(For them is a painful torment and they will have no helpers.) for they shall not have anyone who will save them from the torment of Allah or rescue them from His painful punishment.

(لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ وَمَا
 تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ)

(92. By no means shall you attain Al-Birr, unless you spend of that which you love; and whatever of good you spend, Allah knows it well.)

Al-Birr is Spending from the Best of One's Wealth

In his Tafsir, Waki` reported, that `Amr bin Maymun said that

(لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ)

(By no means shall you attain Al-Birr) is in reference to attaining Paradise.

Imam Ahmad reported that Anas bin Malik said, "Abu Talhah had more property than any other among the Ansar in Al-Madinah, and the most beloved of his property to him was Bayruha' garden, which was in front of the (Messenger's) Masjid. Sometimes, Allah's Messenger used to go to the garden and drink its fresh water." Anas added, "When these verses were revealed,

(لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ)

(By no means shall you attain Al-Birr unless You spend of that which you love,)

Abu Talhah said, ` O Allah's Messenger! Allah says,

(لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ)

(By no means shall you attain Al-Birr, unless you spend of that which you love;) No doubt, Bayruha' garden is the most beloved of all my property to me. So I want to give it in charity in Allah's cause, and I expect its reward and compensation from Allah. O Allah's Messenger! Spend it where Allah makes you think is feasible. ' On that, Allah's Messenger said,

«بَخٍ بَخٍ، ذَاكَ مَالٌ رَاحٍ، ذَاكَ مَالٌ رَاحٍ، وَقَدْ سَمِعْتُ، وَأَنَا أَرَى أَنْ تَجْعَلَهَا فِي الْأَقْرَبِينَ»

(Well-done! It is profitable property, it is profitable property. I have heard what you have said, and I think it would be proper if you gave it to your kith and kin.)

Abu Talhah said, ` I will do so, O Allah's Messenger.' Then Abu Talhah distributed that garden among his relatives and cousins."

This Hadith was recorded in the Two Sahihs. They also recorded that ` Umar said, "O Messenger of Allah! I never gained possession of a piece of property more precious to me than my share in Khaybar. Therefore, what do you command me to do with it" The Prophet said,

«حَبَسَ الْأَصْلَ وَسَبَّلَ الثَّمَرَةَ»

(Retain the land to give its fruits in Allah's cause.)

(كُلُّ الطَّعَامِ كَانَ حَلَالًا لِّبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِلَّا مَا حَرَّمَ
 إِسْرَائِيلُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تُنَزَّلَ التَّوْرَةُ قُلْ
 فَأْتُوا بِالتَّوْرَةِ فَاتْلُوهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ - فَمَنْ
 افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ
 الظَّالِمُونَ - قُلْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ فَاتَّبِعُوا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
 حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ)

(93. All food was lawful to the Children of Israel, except what Isra'il made unlawful for himself before the Tawrah was revealed. Say: "Bring here the Tawrah and recite it, if you are truthful. ") (94. Then after that, whosoever shall invent a lie against Allah, then it is these that are the wrongdoers.) (95. Say: "Allah has spoken the truth; follow the religion of Ibrahim the Hanif (monotheist), and he was not of the Mushrikin (idolators).")

The Questions that the Jews Asked Our Prophet

Imam Ahmad recorded that Ibn ` Abbas said, "A group of Jews came to Allah's Prophet and said, `Talk to us about some things we will ask you and which only a Prophet would know.' He said, `Ask me about whatever you wish. However, give your pledge to Allah, similar to the pledge that Ya`qub took from his children, that if I tell you something and you recognize its truth, you will follow me in Islam.' They said, `Agreed.' The Prophet said, `Ask me about whatever you wish.' They said, `Tell us about four matters: 1. What kinds of food did Isra'il prohibit for himself 2. What about the sexual discharge of the woman and the man, and what role does each play in producing male or female offspring 3. Tell us about the condition of the unlettered Prophet during sleep, 4. And who is his Wali (supporter) among the angels' The Prophet took their covenant that they will follow him if he answers these questions, and they agreed. He said, `I ask you by He Who sent down the Tawrah to Musa, do you not know that Isra'il once became very ill When his illness was prolonged, he vowed to Allah that if He cures His illness, he would prohibit the best types of drink and food for himself. Was not the best food to him camel meat and the best drink camel milk' They said, `Yes, by Allah.' The Messenger said, `O Allah, be Witness against them.' The Prophet then said, `I ask you by Allah, other than Whom there is no deity (worthy of worship), Who sent down the Tawrah to Musa, do you not know that man's discharge is thick and white and woman's is yellow and thin If any of these fluids becomes dominant, the offspring will take its sex and resemblance by Allah's leave. Hence, if the man's is more than the woman's, the child will be male, by Allah's leave. If the woman's discharge is more than the man's, then the child will be female, by Allah's leave.' They said, `Yes.' He said, `O Allah, be Witness against them.' He then said, `I ask you by He Who sent down the Tawrah to Musa, do you not know that the eyes of this unlettered Prophet sleep, but his heart does not sleep' They said, `Yes, by Allah!' He said, `O Allah, be Witness.' They said, `Tell us now about your Wali among the angels, for this is when we either follow or shun you.' He said, `My Wali (who brings down the revelation from Allah) is Jibril, and Allah never sent a Prophet, but Jibril is his Wali.' They said, `We then shun you. Had you a Wali other than Jibril, we would have followed you.' On that, Allah, the Exalted revealed,

(قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجِبْرِيلَ)

(Say: "Whoever is an enemy to Jibril...") 2:97 ."

Allah's statement ,

(نَفْسِهِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تُنَزَّلَ)

(before the Tawrah was revealed) 3:93 , means, Isra'il forbade that for himself before the Tawrah was revealed. There are two objectives behind revealing this segment of the Ayah. First, he forbade himself the most delightful things for Allah's sake. This practice was allowed during his period of Law, and is, thus, suitable that it is mentioned after Allah's statement,

(لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ)

(By no means shall you attain Al-Birr, unless you spend of that which you love) 3: 92 .

What we are allowed in our Law is to spend in Allah's obedience from what we like and covet but not to prohibit what Allah has allowed . Allah said in other Ayat;

(وَأَتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ)

(And gives his wealth, in spite of love for it,) 2:177 , and;

(وَيُطْعَمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ)

(And they give food, in spite of their love for it,) 76:8 .

The second reason is that after Allah refuted the false Christian beliefs and allegations about `Isa and his mother. Allah started refuting the Jews here, may Allah curse them, by stating that the abrogation of the Law, that they denied occurs, already occurred in their Law. For instance, Allah has stated in their Book, the Tawrah, that when Nuh departed from the ark, Allah allowed him to eat the meat of all types of animals. Afterwards, Isra'il forbade the meat and milk of camels for himself, and his children imitated this practice after him. The Tawrah later on prohibited this type of food, and added several more types of prohibitions. Allah allowed Adam to marry his daughters to his sons, and this practice was later forbidden. The Law of Ibrahim allowed the man to take female servants as companions along with his wife, as Ibrahim did when he took Hajar, while he was married to Sarah. Later on, the Tawrah prohibited this practice. It was previously allowed to take two sisters as wives at the same time, as Ya`qub married two sisters at the same time. Later on, this practice was prohibited in the Tawrah. All these examples are in the Tawrah and constitute a Naskh (abrogation) of the Law. Therefore, let the Jews consider what Allah legislated for `Isa and if such legislation falls under the category of abrogation or not. Why do they not then follow `Isa in this regard

Rather, the Jews defied and rebelled against `Isa and against the correct religion that Allah sent Muhammad with.

This is why Allah said,

(كُلُّ الطَّعَامِ كَانَ حَلَالًا لِّبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِلَّا مَا حَرَّمَ
إِسْرَائِيلُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تُنَزَّلَ التَّوْرَةُ)

(All food was lawful to the Children of Israel, except what Isra'il made unlawful for himself before the Tawrah was revealed) 3:93 meaning, before the Tawrah was revealed, all types of foods were allowed, except what Isra'il prohibited for himself. Allah then said,

(التَّوْرَةَ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِالتَّوْرَةِ فَاتْلُوهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ)

(Say: "Bring here the Tawrah and recite it, if you are truthful."),

for the Tawrah affirms what we are stating here. Allah said next,

(فَمَنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ
فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ)

(Then after that, whosoever shall invent a lie against Allah, then these it is that are the wrongdoers.) 3:94 , in reference to those who lie about Allah and claim that He made the Sabbath and the Tawrah eternal. They are those who claim that Allah did not send another Prophet calling to Allah with the proofs and evidences, although evidence indicates that abrogation, as we have described, occurred before in the Tawrah,

(فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ)

(then these it is that are the wrongdoers.)

Allah then said,

(قُلْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ)

(Say, "Allah has spoken the truth;") 3:95 meaning, O Muhammad, say that Allah has said the truth in what He conveyed and legislated in the Qur'an,

فَاتَّبِعُوا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ
الْمُشْرِكِينَ

(follow the religion of Ibrahim the Hanif, and he was not of the idolators.) 3:95 .

Therefore, follow the religion of Ibrahim that Allah legislated in the Qur'an. Indeed, this is the truth, there is no doubt in it, and the perfect way, and no Prophet has brought a more complete, clear, plain and perfect way than he did. Allah said in other Ayat,

قُلْ إِنِّي هَدَانِي رَبِّي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا
قِيمًا مِّلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

(Say: "Truly, my Lord has guided me to a straight path, a right religion, the religion of Ibrahim, the Hanif, and he was not of the idolators.") 6:161

and,

ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ أَنْ اتَّبِعْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا
كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

(Then, We have sent the revelation to you (saying): "Follow the religion of Ibrahim, the Hanif, and he was not of the idolators.) 16:123 .

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا
وَهُدًى لِلْعَالَمِينَ - فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ ءَامِنًا وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ
مَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ
عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

(96. Verily, the first House (of worship) appointed for mankind was that at Bakkah (Makkah), full of blessing, and a guidance for Al-'Alamin (mankind and Jinn). (97. In it are manifest signs (for example), the Maqam (station) of Ibrahim; whosoever enters it, he attains security. And

Hajj to the House is a duty that mankind owes to Allah, for those who are able to undertake the journey; and whoever disbelieves, then Allah stands not in need of any of the `Alamin.)

The Ka` bah is the First House of Worship

Allah said,

(إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ)

(Verily, the first House appointed for mankind) for all people, for their acts of worship and religious rituals. They go around the House in Tawaf, pray in its vicinity and remain in its area in I'tikaf.

(لِلَّذِي بُيِّنَّا)

(was that at Bakkah,) meaning, the Ka` bah that was built by Ibrahim Al-Khalil, whose religion the Jews and Christians claim they follow. However, they do not perform Hajj to the house that Ibrahim built by Allah's command, and to which he invited the people to perform Hajj. Allah said next, i

(مُبَارَكًا)

(full of blessing), sanctified,

(وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ)

(and a guidance for Al-`Alamin.)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Dharr said; "I said, `O Allah's Messenger! Which Masjid was the first to be built on the surface of the earth' He said, `Al-Masjid Al-Haram (in Makkah).' I said, `Which was built next' He replied `Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa (in Jerusalem).' I said, `What was the period of time between building the two' He said, `Forty years.' He added,

«ثُمَّ حَيْثُ أُدْرِكْتَ الصَّلَاةَ فَصَلِّ، فَكُلُّهَا مَسْجِدٌ»

(Wherever (you may be, and) the prayer becomes due, perform the prayer there, for the whole earth was made a Masjid.)" Al-Bukhari and Muslim also collected this Hadith.

The Names of Makkah, Such As `Bakkah

Allah said,

(اللَّذِي بَكَتْ)

(was that at Bakkah), where Bakkah is one of the names of Makkah. Bakkah means, 'it brings Buka' (crying, weeping) to the tyrants and arrogant, meaning they cry and become humble in its vicinity. It was also said that Makkah was called Bakkah because people do Buka next to it, meaning they gather around it. There are many names for Makkah, such as Bakkah, Al-Bayt Al-`Atiq (the Ancient House), Al-Bayt Al-Haram (the Sacred House), Al-Balad Al-Amin (the City of Safety) and Al-Ma'mun (Security). Makkah's names include Umm Rahm (Mother of Mercy), Umm Al-Qura (Mother of the Towns), Salah, as well as others .

The Station of Ibrahim

Allah's statement,

(فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ)

(In it are manifest signs) 3:97 , means, clear signs that Ibrahim built the Ka`bah and that Allah has honored and blessed it. Allah then said,

(مَقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ)

(the Maqam (station) of Ibrahim) When the building the Ka`bah was raised, Ibrahim stood on; the Maqam so that he could raise the walls higher, while his son Isma`il was handing the stones to him. We should mention that the Maqam used to be situated right next to the House. Later, and during his reign, `Umar bin Al-Khattab moved the Maqam farther to the east, so that those who go around the House in Tawaf are able to perform it easily, without disturbing those who pray next to the Maqam after finishing their Tawaf. Allah commanded us to pray next to the Maqam;

(وَاتَّخِذُوا مِنْ مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى)

(And take you (people) the Maqam (station) of Ibrahim as a place of prayer) 2:125 .

We mentioned the Hadiths about this subject before, and all the thanks are due to Allah. Al-`Awfi said that, Ibn `Abbas commented on Allah's statement,

(فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ)

(In it are manifest signs, the Maqam of Ibrahim;)

"Such as the Maqam and Al-Mash`ar Al-Haram ." Mujahid said, "The impression of Ibrahim's feet remains on the Maqam as a clear sign." It was reported that `Umar bin `Abdul-`Aziz, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, As-Suddi, Muqatil bin Hayyan and others said similarly.

Al-Haram, the Sacred Area, is a Safe Area

Allah said,

(وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ ءَامِنًا)

(whosoever enters it, he attains security,) 3:97 meaning, the Haram of Makkah is a safe refuge for those in a state of fear. There in its vicinity, they will be safe, just as was the case during the time of Jahiliyyah. Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, "(During the time of Jahiliyyah) a man would commit murder, then wear a piece of wool around his neck and enter the Haram. And even when the son of the murdered person would meet him, he would not make a move against him, until he left the sanctuary." Allah said,

(أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا حَرَمًا ءَامِنًا وَيُتَخَطَّفُ
النَّاسُ مِنْ حَوْلِهِمْ)

(Have they not seen that We have made (Makkah) a secure sanctuary, while men are being snatched away from all around them) 29:67 , and,

(فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ - الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِنْ
جُوعٍ وَءَامَنَهُمْ مِنْ خَوْفٍ)

(So let them worship (Allah) the Lord of this House (the Ka`bah). (He) Who has fed them against hunger, and has made them safe from fear) 106:3-4 .

It is not allowed for anyone to hunt in the Haram or to drive game out of its den to be hunted, or cut the trees in its vicinity, or pick its grass, as the Hadiths of the Prophet and the statements of the Companions testify. The Two Sahih recorded (this being the wording of Muslim) that Ibn `Abbas said, "On the day of the conquest of Makkah, the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَا هِجْرَةَ، وَلَكِنْ جِهَادٌ وَنِيَّةٌ، وَإِذَا اسْتَنْفَرْتُمْ
فَأَنْفِرُوا»

(There is no more Hijrah (migration to Makkah), only Jihad and good intention. If you were mobilized, then march forth.)

He also said on the day of the conquest of Makkah,

«إِنَّ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ حَرَّمَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضَ، فَهُوَ حَرَامٌ بِحُرْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ
الْقِيَامَةِ، وَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَحِلَّ الْقِتَالُ فِيهِ لِأَحَدٍ قَبْلِي، وَلَمْ
يَحِلَّ لِي إِلَّا فِي سَاعَةٍ مِنْ نَهَارٍ، فَهُوَ حَرَامٌ
بِحُرْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، لَا يُعْضَدُ شَوْكُهُ، وَلَا
يُنَقَرُ صَيْدُهُ، وَلَا يَلْتَقَطُ لِقَطَّتْهَا إِلَّا مَنْ عَرَفَهَا، وَلَا
يُخْتَلَى خَلَاهَا»

(Beware! Allah made this town (Makkah) a sanctuary when He created the heavens and earth, and it is sacred by Allah's decree until the Day of Resurrection. Fighting in Makkah was not permitted for anyone before me, and it was made legal for me for only a few hours or so on that day. No doubt it is at this moment a sanctuary by Allah's decree until the Day of Resurrection. It is not allowed to uproot its thorny shrubs, hunt its game, pick up its lost objects, except by announcing it, or to uproot its trees.)

Al-` Abbas said, `Except the lemon grass, O Allah's Messenger, as they use it in their houses and graves.' The Prophet said:

«إِلَّا الْإِدْخِرَ»

(Except lemongrass)."

The Two Sahihs also recorded that Abu Shurayh Al-` Adawi said that he said to ` Amr bin Sa` id while he was sending the troops to Makkah (to fight ` Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr), "O Commander! Allow me to tell you what Allah's Messenger said on the day following the conquest of Makkah. My ears heard it and my heart memorized it thoroughly, and I saw the Prophet with my own eyes when he, after glorifying and praising Allah, said,

«إِنَّ مَكَّةَ حَرَّمَهَا اللَّهُ، وَلَمْ يُحَرِّمْهَا النَّاسُ، فَلَا يَحِلُّ لِأَمْرِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أَنْ يَسْفِكَ بِهَا دَمًا، وَلَا يَعْضِدَ بِهَا شَجَرَةً، فَإِنْ أَحَدٌ تَرَخَّصَ بِقِتَالِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِيهَا فَقُولُوا لَهُ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَذِنَ لِرَسُولِهِ وَلَمْ يَأْذِنْ لَكُمْ، وَإِنَّمَا أَذِنَ لِي فِيهَا سَاعَةً مِنْ نَهَارٍ، وَقَدْ عَادَتْ حُرْمَتُهَا الْيَوْمَ كَحُرْمَتِهَا بِالْأَمْسِ فَلْيُبَلِّغِ الشَّاهِدُ الْغَائِبَ»

(Allah, not the people, made Makkah a sanctuary. Therefore, anybody who has belief in Allah and the Last Day, should neither shed blood in it nor cut down its trees. If anybody argues that fighting in it is permissible on the basis that Allah's Messenger fought in Makkah, say to him, 'Allah allowed His Messenger and did not allow you.' Allah allowed me only for a few hours on that day (of the conquest), and today its sanctity is as valid as it was before. So, those who are present, should inform those who are absent of this fact.)."

Abu Shurayh was asked, "What did `Amr reply" He said that `Amr said, "O Abu Shurayh! I know better than you in this respect; Makkah does not give protection to a sinner, a murderer or a thief."

Jabir bin `Abdullah said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah saying,

«لَا يَحِلُّ لِأَحَدِكُمْ أَنْ يَحْمِلَ بِمَكَّةَ السَّلَاحَ»

(None of you is allowed to carry a weapon in Makkah.) Muslim recorded this Hadith.

`Abdullah bin `Adi bin Al-Hamra' Az-Zuhri said that he heard the Messenger of Allah say while standing at Al-Hazwarah in the marketplace of Makkah,

«وَاللَّهِ إِنَّكَ لَخَيْرُ أَرْضِ اللَّهِ، وَأَحَبُّ أَرْضِ اللَّهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ، وَلَوْلَا أَنِّي أَخْرَجْتُ مِنْكَ مَا خَرَجْتُ»

(By Allah! You are the best of Allah's land and the most beloved land to Allah. Had it not been for the fact that I was driven out of you, I would not have left you.)

Imam Ahmad collected this Hadith and this is his wording. At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah also collected it. At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih."

The Necessity of Performing Hajj

Allah said,

وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ
سَبِيلًا

(And Hajj to the House is a duty that mankind owes to Allah, for those who are able to undertake the journey) 3:97 .

This Ayah established the obligation of performing Hajj. There are many Hadiths that mention it as one of the pillars and fundamentals of Islam, and this is agreed upon by the Muslims. According to texts and the consensus of the scholars, it is only obligatory for the adult Muslim to perform it once during his lifetime. Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah once gave a speech in which he said,

«أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ فُرِضَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْحَجُّ فَحُجُّوا»

(O people! Hajj has been enjoined on you, therefore, perform Hajj.)

A man asked, "Is it every year, O Allah's Messenger" The Prophet remained silent until the man repeated the question three times and he then said,

«لَوْ قُلْتُ: نَعَمْ لَوْجِبَتْ وَلَمَّا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ»

(Had I said yes, it would have become an obligation and you would not have been able to fulfill it.) He said next,

«ذُرُونِي مَا تَرَكَتُكُمْ فَإِنَّمَا هَلَكَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ
بِكثْرَةِ سُؤَالِهِمْ وَاخْتِلَافِهِمْ عَلَى أَنْبِيَائِهِمْ، وَإِذَا

أَمْرُكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ فَأَتُوا مِنْهُ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ، وَإِذَا
نَهَيْتُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ فَدَعُوهُ»

(Leave me as I leave you, those before you were destroyed because of their many questions and disputing with their Prophets. If I command you with something, perform it as much as you can. If I forbid something for you, then refrain from it.) Muslim recorded similarly.

Meaning of `Afford' in the Ayah

There are several categories of "the ability to under take the journey". There is the physical ability of the person himself and the ability that is related to other things as mentioned in the books of jurisprudence. Abu `Isa At-Tirmidhi recorded that Ibn `Umar said, "A man stood up and asked the Messenger of Allah , `O Messenger of Allah! Who is the pilgrim' He said, `He who has untidy hair and clothes.' Another man asked, `Which Hajj is better, O Messenger of Allah' He said, `The noisy (with supplication to Allah) and bloody (with sacrifice).' Another man asked, `What is the ability to undertake the journey, O Messenger of Allah' He said, `Having provision and a means of transportation.'" This is the narration that Ibn Majah collected. Al-Hakim narrated that Anas said that the Messenger of Allah was asked about Allah's statement,

(مَنْ اسْتَطَعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا)

(for those who are able to undertake the journey;) 3:97 "What does `able to undertake the journey' mean" The Prophet answered, "Having sufficient provision and a means of transportation." Al-Hakim stated that this Hadith's chain of narration is authentic, following the guidelines of Muslim in his Sahih, but the Two Sahihs did not collect it. Ahmad recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ أَرَادَ الْحَجَّ فَلْيَتَّعَجَلْ»

(Whoever intends to perform Hajj, let him rush to perform it.) Abu Dawud also collected this Hadith.

The One who Denies the Necessity of Hajj Becomes a Disbeliever

Allah said,

(وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(...and whoever disbelieves, then Allah stands not in need of any of the `Alamin) 3:97 .

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid and several others commented on this Ayah, "Whoever denies the necessity of Hajj becomes disbeliever, and Allah is far Richer than to need him." Al-Hafiz Abu Bakr Al-Isma`ili recorded that `Umar bin Al-Khattab said, "Whoever can afford Hajj but did not perform it, there is no difference in his case if he dies while Jew or Christian." This has an authentic chain of narration leading to `Umar.

(قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَىٰ مَا تَعْمَلُونَ - قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ مَن ءَامَنَ تَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا وَأَنتُمْ شُهَدَاءُ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ)

(98. Say: "O People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Why do you reject the Ayat of Allah, while Allah is Witness to what you do") (99. Say: "O People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Why do you stop those who have believed, from the path of Allah, seeking to make it seem crooked, while you (yourselves) are witnesses And Allah is not unaware of what you do.")

Chastising the People of the Book for Their Disbelief and Blocking the Path of Allah

In this Ayah Allah criticizes the disbelieving People of the Book for refusing the truth, rejecting Allah's Ayat and hindering those who seek to believe from His path, although they know that what the Messenger was sent with is the truth from Allah. They learned this from the previous Prophets and honorable Messengers, may Allah's peace and blessings be on them all. They all brought the glad tidings and the good news of the coming of the unlettered, Arab, Hashimi Prophet from Makkah, the master of the Children of Adam, the Final Prophet and the Messenger of the Lord of heavens and earth. Allah has warned the People of the Book against this behavior, stating that He is Witness over what they do, indicating their defiance of the knowledge conveyed to them by the Prophets. They rejected, denied and refused the very Messenger whom they were ordered to convey the glad tidings about his coming. Allah states that He is never unaware of what they do, and He will hold them responsible for their actions,

R

(يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ)

(The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail) 26:88 .

(يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تُطِيعُوا فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ
أَوْثُوا الْكِتَابَ يَرُدُّوكُم بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ كَافِرِينَ -
وَكَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ وَأَنتُمْ تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَاتُ اللَّهِ
وَفِيكُمْ رَسُولُهُ وَمَن يَعْتَصِم بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ هُدِيَ إِلَى
صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ)

(100. O you who believe! If you obey a group of those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians), they would (indeed) render you disbelievers after you have believed!) (101. And how would you disbelieve, while unto you are recited the verses of Allah, and among you is His Messenger And whoever depends upon Allah, then he is indeed guided to the right path.)

Warning Muslims Against Imitating People of the Scriptures

Allah warns His believing servants against obeying the People of the Book, who envy the believers for the favor that Allah gave them by sending His Messenger . Similarly, Allah said,

(وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يَرُدُّونَكُمْ مِن بَعْدِ
إِيمَانِكُمْ كُفَّارًا حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ أَنفُسِهِمْ)

(Many of the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) wish that they could turn you away as disbelievers after you have believed, out of their own envy) 2:109 .

In this Ayah 3:100 , Allah said,

(إِن تُطِيعُوا فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أَوْثُوا الْكِتَابَ
يَرُدُّوكُم بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ كَافِرِينَ)

(If you obey a group of those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians), they would (indeed) render you disbelievers after you have believed!), then said,

وَكَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ وَأَنْتُمْ تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ
وَفِيكُمْ رَسُولُهُ)

(And how would you disbelieve, while unto you are recited the verses of Allah, and among you is His Messenger), meaning, disbelief is far from touching you, since the Ayat of Allah are being sent down on His Messenger day and night, and he recites and conveys them to you. Similarly, Allah said,

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ يَدْعُوكُمْ
لِئْتُمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ وَقَدْ أَخَذَ مِيثَاقَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ
(

(And what is the matter with you that you believe not in Allah! While the Messenger invites you to believe in your Lord; and He has indeed taken your covenant, if you are real believers) 57:8 . A Hadith states that one day, the Prophet said to his Companions,

«أَيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعْجَبُ إِلَيْكُمْ إِيْمَانًا؟»

: . . :

«وَكَيْفَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ وَهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ»

:

«وَكَيْفَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْوَحْيُ يَنْزِلُ عَلَيْهِمْ؟»

: . . :

«وَكَيْفَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَنَا بَيْنَ أَعْظَمِكُمْ؟»

: . . :

«قَوْمٌ يَحِبُّونَ مِنْ بَعْدِكُمْ يَجِدُونَ صُحُفًا يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِمَا فِيهَا»

("Who among the faithful believers do you consider has the most amazing faith" They said, "The angels." He said, "Why would they not believe, since they are with their Lord" They mentioned the Prophets, and the Prophet said, "Why would they not believe while the revelation is sent down to them" They said, "Then, we are." He said, "Why would not you believe when I am among you" They asked, "Who has the most amazing faith" The Prophet said, "A people who will come after you and who will find only books that they will believe in.")

Allah said next,

(وَمَنْ يَعْتَصِمِ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ هُدِيَ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ)

(And whoever depends upon Allah, then he is indeed guided to the right path) 3:101 for trusting and relying on Allah are the basis of achieving the right guidance and staying away from the path of wickedness. They also represent the tool to acquiring guidance and truth and achieving the righteous aims.

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا
تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ - وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ
اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ
إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ
مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ)

(102. O you who believe! Have Taqwa of Allah as is His due, and die not except as (true) Muslims.) (103. And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allah, and be not divided among yourselves, and remember Allah's favor on you, for you were enemies of one another but He joined your hearts together, so that, by His grace, you became brethren, and you were on the brink of a pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus Allah makes His Ayat clear to you, that you may be guided.)

Meaning of `Taqwa of Allah

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud commented on the Ayah,

(اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ)

(Have Taqwa of Allah as is His due,)

"That He is obeyed and not defied, remembered and not forgotten and appreciated and not unappreciated." This has an authentic chain of narration to `Abdullah bin Mas`ud. Al-Hakim collected this Hadith in his Mustadrak, from Ibn Mas`ud, who related it to the Prophet . Al-Hakim said, "It is authentic according to the criteria of the Two Shaykhs Al-Bukhari and Muslim , and they did not record it." This is what he said, but it appears that it is only a statement of `Abdullah bin Mas`ud, and Allah knows best. It was also reported that Anas said, "The servant will not have Taqwa of Allah as is His due until he keeps his tongue idle." Allah's statement,

(وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ)

(and die not except as (true) Muslims) 3:102 , means, preserve your Islam while you are well and safe, so that you die as a Muslim. The Most Generous Allah has made it His decision that whatever state one lives in, that is what he dies upon and is resurrected upon. We seek refuge from dying on other than Islam.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Mujahid said, "The people were circling around the Sacred House when Ibn `Abbas was sitting, holding a bent-handled walking stick. Ibn `Abbas said, The Messenger of Allah recited ,

(يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ)

(Have Taqwa of Allah as is His due, die not except as (true) Muslims.) 3:102 , then he said;

«وَلَوْ أَنَّ قَطْرَةً مِنَ الزَّقُّومِ قَطِرَتْ لَأَمْرَتْ عَلَى
أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ عَيْشَتَهُمْ، فَكَيْفَ يَمَنْ لَيْسَ لَهُ طَعَامٌ
إِلَّا الزَّقُّومُ؟»

(Verily, if a drop of Zaqqum (a tree in Hell) falls, it will spoil life for the people of earth. What about those whose food is only from Zaqqum)"

This was recorded by At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban in his Sahih and Al-Hakim his Mustadrak. At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih" while Al-Hakim said; "It meets the conditions of the Two Sahihis and they did not record it."

Imam Ahmad recorded that Jabir said that three nights before the Messenger of Allah died he heard him saying;

«لَا يَمُوتَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ إِلَّا وَهُوَ يُحْسِنُ الظَّنَّ بِاللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ»

(None of you should die except while having sincere trust in Allah, the Exalted and Most Honorable.) Muslim also recorded it. The Two Sahihs record that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«يَقُولُ اللَّهُ: أَنَا عِنْدَ ظَنِّ عَبْدِي بِي»

(Allah said, "I am as My servant thinks of Me.")

The Necessity of Holding to the Path of Allah and the Community of the Believers

Allah said next,

(وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا)

(And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allah, and be not divided among yourselves.) It was said that,

(بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ)

(to the Rope of Allah) refers to Allah's covenant, just as Allah said in the following Ayah,

(ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الدَّلَّةُ أَيْنَ مَا تُقِفُوا إِلَّا بِحَبْلِ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَحَبْلِ مِّنَ النَّاسِ)

(Indignity is put over them wherever they may be, except when under a covenant (of protection) from Allah, and from men;) 3:112 , in reference to pledges and peace treaties.

Allah's statement

(وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا)

(and be not divided among yourselves), orders sticking to the community of the believers and forbids division. There are several Hadiths that require adhering to the Jama` ah (congregation of believers) and prohibit division. Muslim recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْضَى لَكُمْ ثَلَاثًا، وَيَسْخَطُ لَكُمْ ثَلَاثًا: يَرْضَى لَكُمْ أَنْ تَعْبُدُوهُ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا، وَأَنْ تَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا، وَأَنْ تَنَاصَحُوا مَنْ وَلَّاهُ اللَّهُ أَمْرَكُمْ. وَيَسْخَطُ لَكُمْ ثَلَاثًا: قِيلَ وَقَالَ، وَكَثْرَةُ السُّؤَالِ، وَإِضَاعَةُ الْمَالِ»

(It pleases Allah for you to acquire three qualities and displeases Him that you acquire three characteristics. It pleases Him that you worship Him Alone and not associate anything or anyone with Him in worship, that you hold on to the Rope of Allah altogether and do not divide, and that you advise whoever Allah appoints as your Leader. The three that displease Him are that you say, 'It was said,' and, 'So-and-so said,' asking many unnecessary questions and wasting money.)

Allah said,

(وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا)

(and remember Allah's favor on you, for you were enemies one to another but He joined your hearts together, so that, by His grace, you became brethren) 3:103 .

This was revealed about the Aws and Khazraj. During the time of Jahiliyyah, the Aws and Khazraj were at war and had great hatred, enmity and ill feelings towards each other, causing long conflicts and battles to occur between them. When Allah brought Islam, those among them who embraced it became brothers who loved each other by Allah's grace, having good ties for Allah's sake and helping each other in righteousness and piety. Allah said,

(هُوَ الَّذِي أَيْدَكَ بِنَصْرِهِ وَبِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلْفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ لَوْ أَنْفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَّا أَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ)

(He it is Who has supported you with His Help and with the believers. And He has united their hearts. If you had spent all that is in the earth, you could not have united their hearts, but Allah has united them) 8:62,63 , until the end of the Ayah. Before Islam, their disbelief had them standing at the edge of a pit of the Fire, but Allah saved them from it and delivered them to faith. The Messenger of Allah reminded the Ansar from both Aws and Khazraj of this bounty when he was dividing the war booty of Hunayn. During that time, some Ansar did not like the way the booty was divided, since they did not get what the others did, although that was what Allah directed His Prophet to do. The Messenger of Allah gave them a speech, in which he said,

«يَا مَعْشَرَ الْأَنْصَارِ أَلَمْ أُجِدْكُمْ ضَلَالًا فَهَدَاكُمْ اللَّهُ بِي، وَكُنْتُمْ مُتَفَرِّقِينَ فَأَلَّفَكُمْ اللَّهُ بِي، وَعَالَةٌ فَأَغْنَاكُمْ اللَّهُ بِي؟»

(O Ansar! Did I not find you misguided and Allah directed you to guidance because of me Were you not divided beforehand and Allah united you around me Were you not poor and Allah enriched you because of me)

Whenever the Prophet asked them a question, they would answer, "Indeed, Allah and His Messenger have granted us bounty."

(وَلَتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُقْلِحُونَ - وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ - يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْوَدَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ أَكْفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ

فَدُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ - وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ
ابْيَضَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فَفِي رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ هُمْ فِيهَا
خَالِدُونَ - تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ
وَمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا لِّلْعَالَمِينَ)

(وَاللَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ
تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ)

(104. Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good (Islam), enjoining Al-Ma`ruf (all that Islam orders) and forbidding Al-Munkar (all that Islam has forbidden). And it is they who are the successful.) (105. And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves after the clear proofs had come to them. It is they for whom there is an awful torment.) (106. On the Day (i.e. the Day of Resurrection) when some faces will become white and some faces will become black; as for those whose faces will become black (to them will be said): "Did you reject faith after accepting it Then taste the torment (in Hell) for rejecting faith.") (107. And for those whose faces will become white, they will be in Allah's mercy (Paradise), therein they shall dwell forever.) (108. These are the Ayat of Allah. We recite them to you in truth, and Allah wills no injustice to the `Alamin.) (109. And to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And all matters go back (for decision) to Allah.)

The Command to Establish the Invitation to Allah

Allah said,

(وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ)

(Let there arise out of you a group of people)

that calls to righteousness, enjoins all that is good and forbids evil in the manner Allah commanded,

(وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُقْلِحُونَ)

(And it is they who are the successful.)

Ad-Dahhak said, "They are a special group of the Companions and a special group of those after them, that is those who perform Jihad and the scholars."

The objective of this Ayah is that there should be a segment of this Muslim Ummah fulfilling this task, even though it is also an obligation on every member of this Ummah, each according to his ability. Muslim recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ، وَذَلِكَ أضعفُ الْإِيمَانِ»

(Whoever among you witnesses an evil, let him change it with his hand. If he is unable, then let him change it with his tongue. If he is unable, then let him change it with his heart, and this is the weakest faith.) In another narration, The Prophet said,

«وَلَيْسَ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ حَبَّةُ خَرْدَلٍ»

(There is no faith beyond that, not even the weight of a mustard seed.)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Hudhayfah bin Al-Yaman said that the Prophet said,

«وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، لَتَأْمُرُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ، وَلَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، أَوْ لَيُوشِكَنَّ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عِقَابًا مِنْ عِنْدِهِ، ثُمَّ لَتَدْعُنَّهُ فَلاَ يُسْتَجِيبَ لَكُمْ»

(By He in Whose Hand is my soul! You will enjoin righteousness and forbid evil, or Allah shall send down a punishment from Him to you. Then, you will supplicate to Him, but He will not accept your supplication.)

At-Tirmidhi also collected this Hadith and said, "Hasan". There are many other Hadiths and Ayat on this subject, which will be explained later.

The Prohibition of Division

Allah said,

(وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا
جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ)

(And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves after the clear proofs had come to them) 3:105 .

In this Ayah, Allah forbids this Ummah from imitating the division and discord of the nations that came before them. These nations also abandoned enjoining righteousness and forbidding evil, although they had proof of its necessity.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu `Amir `Abdullah bin Luhay said, "We performed Hajj with Mu`awiyah bin Abi Sufyan. When we arrived at Makkah, he stood up after praying Zuhr and said, `The Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابَيْنِ افْتَرَقُوا فِي دِينِهِمْ عَلَى ثِنْتَيْنِ
وَسَبْعِينَ مِئَةً، وَإِنَّ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةَ سَتَفْتَرِقُ عَلَى ثَلَاثٍ
وَسَبْعِينَ مِئَةً يَعْنِي الْأَهْوَاءَ كُلَّهَا فِي النَّارِ إِلَّا
وَاحِدَةً وَهِيَ الْجَمَاعَةُ وَإِنَّهُ سَيَخْرُجُ فِي أُمَّتِي
أَقْوَامٌ تَجَارَى بِهِمْ تِلْكَ الْأَهْوَاءُ كَمَا يَتَجَارَى
الْكَلْبُ بِصَاحِبِهِ، لَا يَبْقَى مِنْهُ عِرْقٌ وَلَا مَفْصِلٌ
إِلَّا دَخَلَهُ»

(The People of the Two Scriptures divided into seventy-two sects. This Ummah will divide into seventy-three sects, all in the Fire except one, that is, the Jama' ah. Some of my Ummah will be guided by desire, like one who is infected by rabies; no vein or joint will be saved from these desires.)

Mu`awiyah said next: By Allah, O Arabs! If you do not adhere to what came to you from your Prophet then other people are even more prone not to adhere to it. " Similar was recorded by Abu Dawud from Ahmad bin Hanbal and Muhammad bin Yahya.

**The Benefits of Brotherly Ties and Unity and the Consequence of
Division on the Day of the Gathering**

Allah said next,

(يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌُ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌُ)

(On the Day when some faces will become white and some faces will become black;) 3:106 on the Day of Resurrection. This is when the faces of followers of the Sunnah and the Jama`ah will radiate with whiteness, and the faces of followers of Bid`ah (innovation) and division will be darkened, as has been reported from Ibn `Abbas. Allah said,

(فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْوَدَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ أَكْفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ
إِيمَانِكُمْ)

(As for those whose faces will become black (to them will be said): "Did you reject faith after accepting it")

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, "They are the hypocrites."

(فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ)

(Then taste the torment (in Hell) for rejecting faith,) and this description befits every disbeliever.

(وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ابْيَضَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فَفِي رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ هُمْ
فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ)

(And for those whose faces will become white, they will be in Allah's mercy (Paradise), therein they shall dwell forever.) in Paradise, where they will reside for eternity and shall never desire to be removed. Abu `Isa At-Tirmidhi recorded that Abu Ghalib said, "Abu Umamah saw heads (of the Khawarij sect) hanging on the streets of Damascus. He commented, `The Dogs of the Fire and the worst dead people under the cover of the sky. The best dead men are those whom these have killed.' He then recited,

(يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌُ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌُ)

(On the Day (i.e. the Day of Resurrection) when some faces will become white and some faces will become black;) until the end of the Ayah. I said to Abu Umamah, `Did you hear this from the Messenger of Allah' He said, `If I only heard it from the Messenger of Allah once, twice, thrice, four times, or seven times, I would not have narrated it to you.'" At-Tirmidhi said, "This Hadith is Hasan." Ibn Majah and Ahmad recorded similarly.

Allah said,

(تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ)

(These are the Ayat of Allah. We recite them to you) meaning, `These are the verses of Allah, His proofs and signs that We reveal to you, O Muhammad,'

(بِالْحَقِّ)

(in truth) making known the true reality of this world and the Hereafter.

(وَمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا لِّلْعَالَمِينَ)

(and Allah wills no injustice to the `Alamin.) for He never treats them with injustice. Rather, He is the Just Ruler Who is able to do everything and has knowledge of everything. Therefore, He does not need to treat any of His creatures with injustice, and this is why He said next,

(وَاللَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ)

(and to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the Earth.),

they are all His servants and His property,

(وَالِى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ)

(And all matters go back to Allah,) for His is the decision concerning the affairs of this life and the Hereafter, and His is the Supreme Authority in this life and the Hereafter.

(كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ
وَلَوْ ءَامَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِّنْهُمْ
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ - لَنْ يَضُرُّكُمْ إِلَّا
أَدَى وَإِنْ يُقْتَلُوا يُوَلَّوْكُمْ الْأُدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا

يُنصَرُونَ - ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الدَّلَّةُ أَيْنَ مَا تُقِفُوا إِلَّا
بِحَبْلِ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَحَبْلِ مِّنَ النَّاسِ وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ
مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَسْكَنَةُ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ
كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ
حَقِّ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ)

(110. You are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin Al-Ma`ruf (all that Islam has ordained) and forbid Al-Munkar (all that Islam has forbidden), and you believe in Allah. And had the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) believed, it would have been better for them; among them are some who have faith, but most of them are Fasiqun (rebellious).) (111. They will do you no harm, barring a trifling annoyance; and if they fight against you, they will show you their backs, and they will not be helped.) (112. They are stricken with humility wherever they may be, except when under a covenant (of protection) from Allah, and a covenant from men; they have drawn on themselves the wrath of Allah, and destitution is put over them. This is because they disbelieved in the Ayat of Allah and killed the Prophets without right. This is because they disobeyed (Allah) and used to transgress (the limits set by Allah).)

Virtues of the Ummah of Muhammad , the Best Nation Ever

Allah states that the Ummah of Muhammad is the best nation ever,

(كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ)

(You are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind) 3:110 .

Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Hurayrah commented on this Ayah, "(You, Muslims, are) the best nation of people for the people, you bring them tied in chains on their necks (capture them in war) and they later embrace Islam." Similar was said by Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Atiyah Al-`Awfi, `Ikrimah, `Ata' and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas that,

(كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ)

(You are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind;) means, the best of peoples for the people.

The meaning of the Ayah is that the Ummah of Muhammad is the most righteous and beneficial nation for mankind. Hence Allah's description of them,

تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ

(you enjoin Al-Ma`ruf and forbid Al-Munkar and believe in Allah) 3:110 .

Ahmad, At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, and Al-Hakim recorded that Hakim bin Mu`awiyah bin Haydah narrated that his father said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«أَنْتُمْ تُوَقُّونَ سَبْعِينَ أُمَّةً، أَنْتُمْ خَيْرُهَا، وَأَنْتُمْ
أَكْرَمُ عَلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ»

(You are the final of seventy nations, you are the best and most honored among them to Allah.)

This is a well-known Hadith about which At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan", and which is also narrated from Mu`adh bin Jabal and Abu Sa`id. The Ummah of Muhammad achieved this virtue because of its Prophet, Muhammad, peace be upon him, the most regarded of Allah's creation and the most honored Messenger with Allah. Allah sent Muhammad with the perfect and complete Law that was never given to any Prophet or Messenger before him. In Muhammad's Law, few deeds take the place of the many deeds that other nations performed. For instance, Imam Ahmad recorded that `Ali bin Abi Talib said, "The Messenger of Allah said,

«أُعْطِيتُ مَا لَمْ يُعْطَ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ»

(I was given what no other Prophet before me was given.)

We said, `O Messenger of Allah! What is it' He said,

«نُصِرْتُ بِالرُّعْبِ، وَأُعْطِيتُ مَفَاتِيحَ الْأَرْضِ،
وَسُمِّيتُ أَحْمَدَ، وَجُعِلَ التُّرَابُ لِي طَهُورًا،
وَجُعِلَتْ أُمَّتِي خَيْرَ الْأُمَّةِ»

(I was given victory by fear, I was given the keys of the earth, I was called Ahmad, the earth was made a clean place for me (to pray and perform Tayammum with it) and my Ummah was made the best Ummah.)"

The chain of narration for this Hadith is Hasan. There are several Hadiths that we should mention here.

The Two Sahihs recorded that Az-Zuhri said that, Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib said that Abu Hurayrah narrated to him, "I heard the Messenger of Allah saying,

«يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ مِنْ أُمَّتِي زُمْرَةٌ وَهُمْ سَبْعُونَ
أَلْفًا، تُضِيءُ وُجُوهُهُمْ إِضَاءَةَ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ»

«اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ مِنْهُمْ»

«سَبَقَكَ بِهَا عُكَّاشَةُ»

(A group of seventy thousand from my Ummah will enter Paradise, while their faces are radiating, just like the moon when it is full." Ukkashah bin Mihsan Al-Asadi stood up, saying, `O Messenger of Allah! Supplicate to Allah that I am one of them.' The Messenger of Allah said, `O Allah! Make him one of them.' A man from the Ansar also stood and said, `O Messenger of Allah! Supplicate to Allah that I am one of them.' The Messenger said, `Ukkashah has beaten you to it.)

Another Hadith that Establishes the Virtues of the Ummah of Muhammad in this Life and the Hereafter.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Jabir said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah saying,

«إِنِّي لَأَرْجُو أَنْ يَكُونَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعُنِي مِنْ أُمَّتِي يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ رُبْعَ الْجَنَّةِ»

قال: فكبرنا، ثم قال

«أَرْجُو أَنْ يَكُونُوا ثُلُثَ النَّاسِ»

قال: فكبرنا، ثم قال

«أَرْجُو أَنْ تَكُونُوا الشَّطْرَ»

('I hope that those who follow me will be one-fourth of the residents of Paradise on the Day of Resurrection.' We said, `Allahu Akbar'. He then said, `I hope that they will be one-third of the people.' We said, `Allahu Akbar'. He then said, `I hope that you will be one-half.')

Imam Ahmad recorded the same Hadith with another chain of narration, and this Hadith meets the criteria of Muslim in his Sahih. In the Two Sahih, it is recorded that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said, "The Messenger of Allah said to us,

«أَمَّا تَرْضَوْنَ أَنْ تَكُونُوا رُبْعَ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ؟»

(Does it please you that you will be one-fourth of the people of Paradise)

We said, `Allahu Akbar!' He added,

«أَمَّا تَرْضَوْنَ أَنْ تَكُونُوا ثُلُثَ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ؟»

(Does it please you that you will be one-third of the people of Paradise) We said, `Allahu Akbar!' He said,

«إِنِّي لَأَرْجُو أَنْ تَكُونُوا شَطْرَ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ؟»

(I hope that you will be half of the people of Paradise.)" Another Hadith

Imam Ahmad recorded that Buraydah said that the Prophet said,

«أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ عِشْرُونَ وَمِائَةٌ صَفًّا، هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةُ
مِنْ ذَلِكَ تَمَانُونَ صَفًّا»

(The people of Paradise are one hundred and twenty rows, this Ummah takes up eighty of them.)

Imam Ahmad also collected this Hadith through another chain of narration. At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah also collected this Hadith, and At-Tirmidhi said, `This Hadith is Hasan.` `Abdur-Razzaq recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that, the Prophet said,

«نَحْنُ الْآخِرُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، نَحْنُ أَوَّلُ
النَّاسِ دُخُولًا الْجَنَّةِ، بَيِّدَ أَنَّهُمْ أَوْتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ
قَبْلِنَا وَأَوْتَيْنَاهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ، فَهَدَانَا اللَّهُ لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوا
فِيهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ، فَهَذَا الْيَوْمُ الَّذِي اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ،
النَّاسُ لَنَا فِيهِ تَبَعٌ، غَدًا لِلْيَهُودِ، وَلِلنَّصَارَى بَعْدَ
غَدٍ»

(We (Muslims) are the last to come, but the foremost on the Day of Resurrection, and the first people to enter Paradise, although the former nations were given the Scriptures before us and we after them. Allah gave us the guidance of truth that they have been disputing about. This (Friday) is the Day that they have been disputing about, and all the other people are behind us in this matter: the Jews' (day of congregation is) tomorrow (Saturday) and the Christians' is the day after tomorrow (Sunday).)

Al-Bukhari and Muslim collected this Hadith. Muslim recorded Abu Hurayrah saying that the Messenger of Allah said,

«نَحْنُ الْآخِرُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، نَحْنُ أَوَّلُ
مَنْ يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ»

(We (Muslims) are the last (to come), but (will be) the foremost on the Day of Resurrection, and will be the first people to enter Paradise...) until the end of the Hadith.

These and other Hadiths conform to the meaning of the Ayah,

(كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ)

(You are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin Al-Ma`ruf (all that Islam has ordained) and forbid Al-Munkar (all that Islam has forbidden), and you believe in Allah).

Therefore, whoever among this Ummah acquires these qualities, will have a share in this praise. Qatadah said, "We were told that `Umar bin Al-Khattab recited this Ayah 3:110 during a Hajj that he performed, when he saw that the people were rushing. He then said, `Whoever

likes to be among this praised Ummah, let him fulfill the condition that Allah set in this Ayah." Ibn Jarir recorded this. Those from this Ummah who do not acquire these qualities will be just like the People of the Scriptures whom Allah criticized, when He said,

(كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنِ مُنْكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ)

(They did not forbid one another from the Munkar which they committed. ..) 5:79 .

This is the reason why, after Allah praised the Muslim Ummah with the qualities that He mentioned, He criticized the People of the Scriptures and chastised them, saying,

(وَلَوْ ءَامَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ)

(And had the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) believed) 3:110 ,

in what was sent down to Muhammad ,

(لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِّنْهُمْ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ
الْفَاسِقُونَ)

(it would have been better for them; among them are some who have faith, but most of them are Fasiqun (rebellious).)

Therefore only a few of them believe in Allah and in what was sent down to you and to them. The majority of them follow deviation, disbelief, sin and rebellion.

The Good News that Muslims will Dominate the People of the Book

While delivering the good news to His believing servants that victory and dominance will be theirs against the disbelieving, atheistic People of the Scriptures, Allah then said,

(لَنْ يَضُرُّكُمْ إِلَّا أَدَىٰ وَإِنْ يُقَاتِلْكُمْ يُوَلُّكُمْ
الْأُدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا يُنصَرُونَ)

(They will do you no harm, barring a trifling annoyance; and if they fight against you, they will show you their backs, and they will not be helped.) 3:111

This is what occurred, for at the battle of Khaybar, Allah brought humiliation and disgrace to the Jews. Before that, the Jews in Al-Madinah, the tribes of Qaynuqa` , Nadir and Qurayzah, were also humiliated by Allah. Such was the case with the Christians in the area of Ash-Sham

later on, when the Companions defeated them in many battles and took over the leadership of Ash-Sham forever. There shall always be a group of Muslims in Ash-Sham area until `Isa, son of Maryam, descends while they are like this on the truth, apparent and victorious . `Isa will at that time rule according to the Law of Muhammad , break the cross, kill the swine, banish the Jizyah and only accept Islam from the people.

Allah said next,

(ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الدَّلَّةُ أَيْنَ مَا تُقِفُوا إِلَّا بِحَبْلٍ مِّنَ
اللَّهِ وَحَبْلٍ مِّنَ النَّاسِ)

(Indignity is put over them wherever they may be, except when under a covenant (of protection) from Allah, and a covenant from men;) meaning, Allah has placed humiliation and disgrace on them wherever they may be, and they will never be safe,

(إِلَّا بِحَبْلٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ)

(except when under a covenant from Allah,) under the Dhimmah (covenant of protection) from Allah that requires them to pay the Jizyah (tax, to Muslims,) and makes them subservient to Islamic Law.

(وَحَبْلٍ مِّنَ النَّاسِ)

(and a covenant from men;) meaning, covenant from men, such as pledges of protection and safety offered to them by Muslim men and women, and even a slave, according to one of the sayings of the scholars. Ibn `Abbas said that,

(إِلَّا بِحَبْلٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَحَبْلٍ مِّنَ النَّاسِ)

(except when under a covenant from Allah, and a covenant from men;) refers to a covenant of protection from Allah and a pledge of safety from people. Similar was said by Mujahid, `Ikrimah, `Ata', Ad-Dahhak, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, As-Suddi and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas. Allah's statement,

(وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ)

(they have drawn on themselves the wrath of Allah,) means, they earned Allah's anger, which they deserved,

(وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَسْكَنَةُ)

(and destitution is put over them), meaning they deserve it by decree and legislatively.

Allah said next,

(ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ
الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ)

(This is because they disbelieved in the Ayat of Allah and killed the Prophets without right.) meaning, what drove them to this was their arrogance, transgression and envy, earning them humiliation, degradation and disgrace throughout this life and the Hereafter. Allah said,

(ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ)

(This is because they disobeyed and used to transgress (the limits set by Allah).) meaning, what lured them to disbelieve in Allah's Ayat and kill His Messengers, is the fact that they often disobeyed Allah's commands, committed His prohibitions and transgressed His set limits. We seek refuge from this behavior, and Allah Alone is sought for each and every type of help.

(لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ
آيَاتِ اللَّهِ ءَانَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ - يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَأُولَئِكَ مِنَ
الصَّالِحِينَ - وَمَا يَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَنْ يُكْفَرُوهُ
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُتَّقِينَ - إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ نُغْنِيَ
عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادَهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَأُولَئِكَ
أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ - مَثَلُ مَا يُنْفِقُونَ

فِي هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ رِيحٍ فِيهَا صِرٌّ
أَصَابَتْ حَرْثَ قَوْمٍ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فَأُهْلِكَتْهُ وَمَا
ظَلَمَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَكِنْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ)

(113. Not all of them are alike; a party of the People of the Scripture stand for the right, they recite the verses of Allah during the hours of the night, prostrating themselves in prayer.) (114. They believe in Allah and the Last Day; they enjoin Al-Ma`ruf and forbid Al-Munkar; and they hasten in (all) good works; and they are among the righteous.) (115. And whatever good they do, nothing will be rejected of them; for Allah knows well the Muttaqin (the pious).) (116. Surely, those who disbelieve, neither their properties nor their offspring will avail them against Allah. They are the dwellers of the Fire, therein they will abide.) (117. The parable of what they spend in this world is that of a wind of Sr; it struck the harvest of a people who did wrong against themselves and destroyed it. Allah wronged them not, but they wronged themselves.)

Virtues of the People of the Scriptures Who Embrace Islam

Muhammad bin Ishaq and others, including Al-`Awfi who reported it from Ibn `Abbas, said; "These Ayat were revealed about the clergy of the People of the Scriptures who embraced the faith. For instance, there is `Abdullah bin Salam, Asad bin `Ubayd, Tha`labah bin Sa`yah, Usayd bin Sa`yah, and so forth. This Ayah means that those among the People of the Book whom Allah rebuked earlier are not at all the same as those among them who embraced Islam. Hence Allah's statement,

(لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً)

(Not all of them are alike) 3:113 ."

Therefore, these two types of people are not equal, and indeed, there are believers and also criminals among the People of the Book, just as Allah said,

(مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ)

(a party of the People of the Scripture stand for the right) for they implement the Book of Allah, adhere to His Law and follow His Prophet Muhammad . Therefore, this type is on the straight path,

(يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ عِندَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ)

(they recite the verses of Allah during the hours of the night, prostrating themselves in prayer.)

They often stand in prayer at night for Tahajjud, and recite the Qur'an in their prayer,

(يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُسْرِعُونَ فِي
الْخَيْرَاتِ وَأُولَئِكَ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ)

(They believe in Allah and the Last Day; they enjoin Al-Ma`ruf and forbid Al-Munkar; and they hasten in (all) good works; and they are among the righteous) 3: 114 .

This is the same type of people mentioned at the end of the Surah;

(وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ
إِلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ خَشَعِينَ لِلَّهِ)

(And there are, certainly, among the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), those who believe in Allah and in that which has been revealed to you, and in that which has been revealed to them, humbling themselves before Allah.) 3:199 .

Allah said here,

(وَمَا يَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَنْ يُكْفَرُوهُ)

(And whatever good they do, nothing will be rejected of them;) 3:115 meaning, their good deeds will not be lost with Allah. Rather, He will award them the best rewards,

(وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُتَّقِينَ)

(for Allah knows well the Muttaqin (the pious).) for no deed performed by any person ever escapes His knowledge, nor is any reward for those who do good deeds ever lost with Him. Allah mentions the disbelieving polytheists:

(لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ
شَيْئًا)

(neither their properties nor their offspring will avail them against Allah) 3:116 . meaning, nothing can avert Allah's torment and punishment from striking them,

وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

(They are the dwellers of the Fire, therein they will abide.)

The Parable of What the Disbelievers Spend in This Life

Allah gave a parable for what the disbelievers spend in this life, as Mujahid, Al-Hasan and As-Suddi said.

مَثَلُ مَا يُنْفِقُونَ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ رِيحٍ
فِيهَا صِرٌّ

(The likeness of what they spend in this world is the likeness of a wind of Sr; a frigid wind, as Ibn `Abbas, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and others have said. `Ata' said that Sr, means, `cold and snow.' Ibn `Abbas and Mujahid are also reported to have said that Sr means, `fire'. This latter meaning does not contradict the meanings we mentioned above, because extreme cold weather, especially when accompanied by snow, burns plants and produce, and has the same effect fire has on such growth.

أَصَابَتْ حَرَّتَ قَوْمٍ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فَأَهْلَكَتْهُ

(It struck the harvest of a people who did wrong against themselves and destroyed it) 3:117 , by burning. This Ayah mentions a calamity that strikes produce that is ready to harvest, destroying it by burning and depriving its owner of it when he needs it the most. Such is the case with the disbelievers, for Allah destroys the rewards for their good deeds in this life, just as He destroyed the produce of the sinner because of his sins. Both types did not build their work on firm foundations,

وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَكِنْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ

(And Allah wronged them not, but they wronged themselves.)

يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا بَطَانَةَ مَنْ دُونِكُمْ
لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ خَبَالًا وَدُّوا مَا عَنِتُّمْ قَدْ بَدَتِ الْبَغْضَاءُ
مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَمَا تُخْفِي صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا

لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ - هَآأَنْتُمْ أَوْلَآءِ
تُحِبُّونَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِبُّونَكُمْ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ كُلِّهِ
وَإِذَا لَفُوكُمْ قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا عَضُّوا عَلَيْكُمْ
الْأَنَامِلَ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ قُلْ مُؤْتُوا بَغَيْظِكُمْ إِنْ أَرَادَ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْكُمْ بَدَاتِ الصُّدُورِ - إِنْ تَمَسَسَكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ
وَإِنْ تُصِيبَكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَفْرَحُوا بِهَا وَإِنْ تَصِيرُوا
وَتَتَّقُوا لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِمَا
يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ)

(118. O you who believe! Take not as (your) Bitanah (advisors, helpers) those other than your own, since they will not fail to do their best to corrupt you. They desire to harm you severely. Hatred has already appeared from their mouths, but what their breasts conceal is far worse. Indeed We have made plain to you the Ayat if you understand.) (119. Lo! You are the ones who love them but they love you not, and you believe in all the Scriptures. And when they meet you, they say, "We believe." But when they are alone, they bite their Anamil at you in rage. Say: "Perish in your rage. Certainly, Allah knows what is in the breasts (all the secrets). ") (120. If a good befalls you, it grieves them, but if some evil overtakes you, they rejoice at it. But if you remain patient and have Taqwa, not the least harm will their cunning do to you. Surely, Allah surrounds all that they do.)

The Prohibition of Taking Advisors From Among the Disbelievers

Allah forbids His believing servants from taking the hypocrites as advisors, so that the hypocrites do not have the opportunity to expose the secrets of the believers and their plans against their enemies. The hypocrites try their very best to confuse, oppose and harm the believers any way they can, and by using any wicked, evil means at their disposal. They wish the very worst and difficult conditions for the believers. Allah said,

(لَا تَتَّخِذُوا بَطَانَةً مِّنْ دُونِكُمْ)

(Take not as (your) Bitanah those other than your own) 3:118 , in reference to taking followers of other religions as consultants and advisors, for advisors of a certain person have access to his most secret affairs. Al-Bukhari and An-Nasa'i recorded that, Abu Sa'id said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَا بَعَثَ اللَّهُ مِنْ نَبِيٍّ وَلَا اسْتَخْلَفَ مِنْ خَلِيفَةٍ إِلَّا
كَانَتْ لَهُ بَطَانَتَانِ: بَطَانَةٌ تَأْمُرُهُ بِالْخَيْرِ وَتَحُضُّهُ
عَلَيْهِ، وَبَطَانَةٌ تَأْمُرُهُ بِالسُّوءِ وَتَحُضُّهُ عَلَيْهِ،
وَالْمَعْصُومُ مَنْ عَصَمَ اللَّهُ»

(Allah has not sent any Prophet nor was there any Khalifah but they have two types of advisors, one that commands him with righteousness and advises it, and another that commands him with evil and advises him with it. Only those whom Allah gives immunity are immune.)

Ibn Abi Hatim reported that Ibn Abi Ad-Dahqanah said, "Umar bin Al-Khattab was told, 'There is a young man here from the people of Hirah (in Iraq, who were Christians) who is a proficient scribe. Why do you not appoint him as a scribe?' Umar said, 'I would then be taking advisors from among the disbelievers.'" This Ayah and the story about Umar testify to the fact that Muslims are not allowed to use Ahl Adh-Dhimmah to be scribes in matters that affect the affairs of Muslims and expose their secrets, for they might convey these secrets to combatant disbelievers. This is why Allah said,

(لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ خَبَالًا وَدُّوا مَا عَنِتُّمْ)

(since they will not fail to do their best to corrupt you. They desire to harm you severely.)

Allah then said,

(قَدْ بَدَتِ الْبَغْضَاءُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَمَا تُخْفِي
صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ)

(Hatred has already appeared from their mouths, but what their breasts conceal is far worse.) meaning, enmity appears on their faces and in what they sometimes utter, as well as, the enmity they have against Islam and its people in their hearts. Since this fact is apparent to every person who has sound comprehension, therefore,

(قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ)

(Indeed We have made plain to you the Ayat if you understand.)

Allah said next,

(هَآأَنُتُمْ أَوْلَآءُ تُحِبُّونَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِبُّونَكُمُ)

(O! You are the ones who love them but they love you not), meaning, O believers! You like the hypocrites because you think they are believers, for they pretend to be so, but they do not like you publicly or secretly.

(وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِآلِكِتَابِ كُلِّهِ)

(And you believe in all the Scriptures) meaning, you have no doubt in any part of Allah's Book, while the hypocrites have deep doubts, confusion and reservations about it.

Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn ` Abbas said that,

(وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِآلِكِتَابِ كُلِّهِ)

(and you believe in all the Scriptures,) means, you believe in your Book, their Book, and the previous Books, while the hypocrites disbelieve in your Book, and this is why they deserve that you dislike them instead of them disliking you. Ibn Jarir collected this statement.

(وَإِذَا لَقَوْكُمْ قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا عَضُّوا عَلَيْكُمُ
الْأَنَامِلَ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ)

(And when they meet you, they say, "We believe." But when they are alone, they bite their Anamil at you in rage.)

The word Anamil, means the tips of the fingers, as Qatadah stated. This is the behavior of the hypocrites who pretend to be believers and kind when they are with the believers, all the while concealing the opposite in their hearts in every respect. This is the exact situation that Allah describes,

(وَإِذَا خَلَوْا عَضُّوا عَلَيْكُمُ الْأَنَامِلَ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ)

(But when they are alone, they bite their Anamil at you in rage) and rage is extreme anger and fury. Allah said to them,

(قُلْ مَوْتُوْا بِغَيْظِكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ)

(Say: "Perish in your rage. Certainly, Allah knows what is in the breasts (all the secrets).") for no matter how much you envy the believers and feel rage towards them, know that Allah shall

perfect His favor on His believing servants, complete His religion, raise high His Word and give dominance to His religion. Therefore, O hypocrites, die in rage,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ)

(Allah knows what is in the breasts.)

Allah has perfect knowledge of what you conceal in your hearts and chests and in the rage, envy and hatred you have against the believers. Allah will punish you for all this in this life, and they will have the good that you dislike for them. In the Hereafter, you will suffer severe torment in the Fire where you will remain for eternity.

Thereafter, Allah said,

(إِنْ تَمَسَسَكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ وَإِنْ تُصِيبْكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَفْرَحُوا بِهَا)

(If a good befalls you, it grieves them, but if some evil overtakes you, they rejoice at it) 3:120 . This only emphasizes the severity of the enmity that the hypocrites feel against the believers. If the believers enjoy fertile years, victories, support and their numbers and following increase, the hypocrites become displeased. When the Muslims suffer a drought or their enemies gain the upper hand against them, by Allah's decree, just as occurred during the battle of Uhud, the hypocrites become pleased. Allah said to His believing servants,

(وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا)

(But if you remain patient and have Taqwa, not the least harm will their cunning do to you.)

Allah directs the believers to safety from the wickedness of evil people and the plots of the sinners, by recommending them to revert to patience and by having fear of Allah and trusting Him. Allah encompasses the enemies of the believers, all the while the believers have no power or strength except from Him. Whatever Allah wills, occurs, and whatever He does not will, does not occur. Nothing happens in His Kingdom except with His decision and according to His decrees. Verily, whoever relies on Allah, Allah shall suffice for him.

Allah then mentions the story of Uhud, the defeat that He tested the believers with, His distinguishing the believers from the hypocrites and their patience.

(وَإِذْ غَدَوْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ تُبَوِّئُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مَقَاعِدَ لِلْقِتَالِ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ - إِذْ هَمَّتْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنْكُمْ

أَنْ تَقْشَلَا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّهُمَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ - وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنْتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ
فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ)

(121. And (remember) when you left your household in the morning to post the believers at their stations for the battle (of Uhud). And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.) (122. When two parties from among you were about to lose heart, but Allah was their Wali (Supporter and Protector). And in Allah should the believers put their trust.) (123. And Allah has already made you victorious at Badr, when you were a weak little force. So have Taqwa of Allah that you may be grateful.)

The Battle of Uhud

According to the majority of scholars, these Ayat are describing the battle of Uhud, as Ibn `Abbas, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, As-Suddi and others said. The battle of Uhud occurred on a Saturday, in the month of Shawwal on the third year of Hijrah. `Ikrimah said that Uhud occurred in the middle of the month of Shawwal, and Allah knows best.

The Reason Behind the Battle of Uhud

The idolators suffered many casualties among their noble men at the battle of Badr. The caravan that Abu Sufyan led (before Badr) returned safely to Makkah, prompting the remaining Makkan leaders and the children of those who were killed at Badr to demand from Abu Sufyan to, "Spend this money on fighting Muhammad!" Consequently, they spent the money from the caravan on warfare expenses and mobilized their forces including the Ahabish tribes (tribes living around the city). They gathered three thousand soldiers and marched until they camped near Uhud facing Al-Madinah. The Messenger of Allah led the Friday prayer and when he finished with it, he performed the funeral prayer for a man from Bani An-Najjar called Malik bin `Amr. The Prophet then asked the Muslims for advice, if they should march to meet the disbelievers, or fortify themselves in Al-Madinah. `Abdullah bin Ubayy (the chief hypocrite) advised that they should remain in Al-Madinah, saying that if the disbelievers lay siege to Al-Madinah, the siege would be greatly disadvantageous to them. He added that if they decide to attack Al-Madinah, its men would face off with them, while women and children could throw rocks at them from above their heads; and if they decide to return to Makkah, they would return with failure. However, some companions who did not attend the battle of Badr advised that the Muslims should go out to Uhud to meet the disbelievers.

The Messenger of Allah went to his home, put on his shield and came out. The companions were weary then and said to each other, "Did we compel the Messenger of Allah to go out" They said, "O Messenger of Allah! If you wish, we will remain in Al-Madinah. " The Messenger of Allah said,

«مَا يَبْغِي لِنَبِيِّ إِذَا لَيْسَ لَأُمَّتِهِ أَنْ يَرْجِعَ حَتَّى
يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ لَهُ»

(It is not for a Prophet to wear his shield for war then lay down his arms before Allah decides in his favor.)

The Messenger of Allah marched with a thousand of his Companions. When they reached the Shawt area, `Abdullah bin Ubayy went back to Al-Madinah with a third of the army, claiming he was angry the Prophet did not listen to his advice. He and his supporters said, "If we knew that you would fight today, we would have accompanied you. However, we do not think that you will fight today." The Messenger of Allah marched until he reached the hillside in the area of Uhud, where they camped in the valley with Mount Uhud behind them. The Messenger of Allah said,

«لَا يُقَاتِلَنَّ أَحَدٌ حَتَّى نَأْمُرَهُ بِالْقِتَالِ»

(No one starts fighting until I issue the command to fight.)

The Messenger prepared his forces for battle, and his army was seven hundred men. He appointed `Abdullah bin Jubayr, from Bani `Amr bin `Awf, to lead the archers who were fifty men. The Prophet said to them,

«انْضَحُوا الْخَيْلَ عَنَّا، وَلَا تُؤْتَيْنَا مِنْ قِبَلِكُمْ،
وَالزَّمُوا مَكَانَكُمْ، إِنْ كَانَتِ النَّوْبَةُ لَنَا أَوْ عَلَيْنَا،
وَإِنْ رَأَيْتُمُونَا تَخْطِفُنَا الطَّيْرُ فَلَا تَبْرَحُوا مَكَانَكُمْ»

(Keep the horsemen away from us, and be aware that we might be attacked from your direction. If victory was for or against us, remain in your positions. And even if you see us being picked up by birds, do not abandon your positions.)

The Prophet wore two protective shields and gave the flag to Mus`ab bin `Umayr of Bani `Abd Ad-Dar. The Prophet also allowed some young men to participate in fighting, but not others, whom he allowed to participate in the battle of Al-Khandaq two years later. The Quraysh mobilized their forces of three thousand men with two hundred horsemen on each flank. They appointed Khalid bin Al-Walid to lead the right side of the horsemen and `Ikrimah Ibn Abi Jahl on the left side. They also gave their grand flag to the tribe of Bani `Abd Ad-Dar. Allah willing, we will mention the details of this battle later on, if Allah wills. Allah said here,

وَإِذْ غَدَوْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ تُبَوِّئُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مَقَاعِدَ
لِلْقِتَالِ

(And (remember) when you left your household in the morning to post the believers at their stations for the battle) 3:121 , designating them to various positions, dividing the army to the left and right sides and placing them wherever you command them.

وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

(And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower), He hears what you say and knows what you conceal in your hearts. Allah said next,

إِذْ هَمَّتْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ تَفْشَلَا

(When two parties from among you were about to lose heart,) 3:122 .

Al-Bukhari recorded that Jabir bin `Abdullah said, "The Ayah,

إِذْ هَمَّتْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ تَفْشَلَا

(When two parties from among you were about to lose heart) was revealed about us, the two Muslim tribes of Bani Harithah and Bani Salamah. I (or we) would not be pleased if it was not revealed, because Allah said in it,

وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّهُمَا

(but Allah was their Wali (Supporter and Protector)) 3:122 ."

Muslim recorded this Hadith from Sufyan bin `Uyaynah.

Reminding the Believers of Their Victory at Badr

Allah said,

وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ

(And Allah has already made you victorious at Badr,) 3:123 meaning, during the battle of Badr, which occurred on a Friday, the seventeenth of Ramadan, in the second year of Hijrah.

The day of Badr is known as Yawm Al-Furqan the Day of the Clarification , by which Allah gave victory and dominance to Islam and its people and disgraced and destroyed Shirk, even though the Muslims were few. The Muslims numbered three hundred and thirteen men, with two horses and seventy camels. The rest were foot soldiers without enough supplies for the battle. The enemy army consisted of nine hundred to a thousand men, having enough shields and supplies, battle-ready horses and even various adornments.

However, Allah gave victory to His Messenger , supported His revelation, and illuminated success on the faces of the Prophet and his following. Allah also brought disgrace to Shayatan and his army. This is why Allah reminded His believing servants and pious party of this favor,

(وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنْتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ)

(And Allah has already made you victorious at Badr, when you were a weak little force), when you were few then. This Ayah reminds them that victory is only from Allah, not because of a large army and adequate supplies. This is why Allah said in another Ayah,

(وَيَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ إِذْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ كَثْرَتُكُمْ فَلَمْ تُغْنِ عَنْكُمْ شَيْئًا)

(. .and on the day of Hunayn (battle) when you rejoiced at your great number, but it availed you naught) 9:25 , until,

(وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ)

(And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful) 9:27 .

Badr is an area between Makkah and Al-Madinah and is known by the well that bears its name, which in turn was so named after Badr bin An-Narayn, the person who dug the well.

(فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ)

(So have Taqwa of Allah that you may be grateful.) 3:123 , means, fulfill the obligations of His obedience.

(إِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلَنْ يَكْفِيَكُمْ أَنْ يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِثَلَاثَةِ آَلَفٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُنَزَّلِينَ - بَلَى إِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَيَأْتُوكُمْ مِنْ فُورِهِمْ هَذَا يُمِدِّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ آَلَفٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ - وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ لَكُمْ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُكُمْ بِهِ وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ - لِيَقْطَعَ طَرَفًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْ يَكْبِتَهُمْ فَيَنْقَلِبُوا خَائِبِينَ - لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ)

(وَاللَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ)

(124. (Remember) when you said to the believers, "Is it not enough for you that your Lord should help you with three thousand angels sent down") (125. "But, if you hold on to patience and have Taqwa, and the enemy comes rushing at you; your Lord will help you with five thousand angels having marks (of distinction).") (126. Allah made it not but as a message of good news for you and as an assurance to your hearts. And there is no victory except from Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.) (127. That He might cut off a part of those who disbelieve, or expose them to infamy, so that they retire frustrated.) (128. Not for you is the decision; whether He turns in mercy to (pardon) them or punishes them; verily, they are the wrongdoers.) (129. And to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. He forgives whom He wills, and punishes whom He wills. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.)

The Support of the Angels

The scholars of Tafsir differ over whether the promise contained in these Ayat referred to the battle of Badr or Uhud. The First View

There are two opinions about this, one of them saying that Allah's statement,

(إِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

((Remember) when you said to the believers) 3:124 , is related to His statement,

(وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ)

(And Allah has already made you victorious at Badr) 3:123 .

This was reported from Al-Hasan Al-Basri, `Amr Ash-Sha`bi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and several others, Ibn Jarir also agreed with this opinion. `Abbad bin Mansur said that Al-Hasan said that Allah's statement,

(إِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلَنْ يَكْفِيَكُمْ أَنْ يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ
بِثَلَاثَةِ آفٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ)

((Remember) when you said to the believers, "Is it not enough for you that your Lord should help you with three thousand angels") 3:124 , is about the battle of Badr; Ibn Abi Hatim also recorded this statement.

Ibn Abi Hatim then reported that `Amr Ash-Sha`bi said, "On the day of Badr, the Muslims received information that Kurz bin Jabir (a prominent tribe chief) was aiding the idolators, and this news was hard on them, so Allah revealed;

(أَلَنْ يَكْفِيَكُمْ أَنْ يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِثَلَاثَةِ آفٍ مِنَ
الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُنَزَّلِينَ)

("Is it not enough for you that your Lord (Allah) should help you with three thousand angels sent down"), until,

(مُسَوِّمِينَ)

(having marks (of distinction)) 3:124,125 .

The news of the defeat of the idolators at Badr reached Kurz and he did not reinforce them, and thus, Allah did not reinforce the Muslims with the five (thousands of angels)."

As for Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, he said, "Allah supported the Muslims with one thousand (angels), then the number reached three thousand, then five thousand." If one asks, according to this opinion, how can we combine between this Ayah and Allah's statement about Badr,

إِذْ تَسْتَغِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ فَاسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ أَنِّي مُمِدُّكُمْ
بِأَلْفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُرَدِّفِينَ)

((Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you (saying): "I will help you with a thousand angels, each behind the other (following one another) in succession." 8:9 , until,

(أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ)

(Verily! Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise) We say that the one thousand mentioned here does not contradict the three thousand mentioned in the above Ayah 3:124 . The word "in succession" means they follow each other and thus indicates that thousands more will follow them. The two Ayat above 8:9 and 3:124 are similar in meaning and it appears that they both were about the battle of Badr, because the angels did fight in the battle of Badr, as the evidence indicates. Allah knows best. Allah's statement,

(بَلَىٰ إِن تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا)

(But if you hold on to patience and have Taqwa,) 3:125 means, if you observe patience while fighting the enemy, all the while fearing Me and obeying My command. Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` and As-Suddi said that Allah's statement,

(وَيَأْتُوكُمْ مِّن قَوْمِهِمْ هَذَا)

(and they will come rushing) means, they (angels) will rush to you instantaneously. Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah means, "All at once". It is also said that it means, before their anger subsides (against the disbelievers). The Second View

The second opinion stipulates that the promise mentioned here concerning the angels participating in battle is related to Allah's statement,

(وَإِذْ غَدَوْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ تُبَوِّئُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مَقَاعِدَ
الْقِتَالِ)

(And (remember) when you left your household in the morning to post the believers at their stations for the battle) of Uhud. However, we should add, the angels did not come to the aid of Muslims at Uhud, because Allah made it conditional,

(بَلَىٰ إِن تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا)

(But if you hold on to patience and have Taqwa) 3: 125 .

The Muslims were not patient at Uhud. Rather, they ran away and, consequently, did not receive the support of even one angel.

Allah's statement,

(يُمَدِّدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ آلَافٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ)

(your Lord will help you with five thousand angels having marks), of distinction.

Abu Ishaq As-Subay`i said; from Harithah bin Mudarrib said that `Ali bin Abi Talib said, "The angels were distinguished by wearing white wool at Badr." The angels also had special markings distinguishing their horses.

Allah said,

(وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ لَكُمْ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُكُمْ بِهِ)

(Allah made it not but as a message of good news for you and as an assurance to your hearts) 3:126 .

This Ayah means, "Allah sent down angels and told you about their descent to encourage you and to comfort and reassure your hearts. You should know that victory only comes from Allah and that if He willed, He would have defeated your enemy without you having to fight them." For instance, Allah said after commanding the believers to fight,

(ذَٰلِكَ وَلَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَانتَصَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَلَكِن لِّيَبْلُوَ بَعْضَكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ وَالَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَن يُضِلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ سَيَهْدِيهِمْ وَيُصْلِحُ بَالَهُمْ وَيُدْخِلُهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ عَرَّفَهَا لَهُمْ)

(But if it had been Allah's will, He Himself could certainly have punished them (without you). But (He lets you fight) in order to test some of you with others. But those who are killed in the way of Allah, He will never let their deeds be lost. He will guide them and set right their state. And admit them to Paradise which He has made known to them) 47:4-6 .

This is why Allah said here,

(وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ لَكُمْ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُكُمْ
بِهِ وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ)

(Allah made it not but as a message of good news for you and as an assurance to your hearts. And there is no victory except from Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise) 3:126 .

This Ayah means, "Allah is the Almighty Whose power can never be undermined, and He has the perfect wisdom in His decrees and in all His decisions." Allah said,

(لِيَقْطَعَ طَرَفًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا)

(That He might cut off a part of those who disbelieve,) 3:127 meaning, out of His wisdom, He commands you to perform Jihad and to fight.

Allah then mentions the various consequences of performing Jihad against the disbelievers. For instance, Allah said,

(لِيَقْطَعَ طَرَفًا)

(That He might cut off a part...) meaning, to cause a part of a nation to perish,

(مِّنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْ يَكْبِتَهُمْ)

(of those who disbelieve, or expose them to infamy,) by disgracing them and forcing them to return with only their rage, having failed in their aim to harm you. This is why Allah said next,

(أَوْ يَكْبِتَهُمْ فَيَنْقَلِبُوا)

(or expose them to infamy, so that they retire) to go back to their land,

(خَائِبِينَ)

(frustrated) without achieving their aims.

Allah then mentions a statement that testifies that the decision in this life and the Hereafter is for Him Alone without partners,

(لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ)

(Not for you is the decision) 3:128

meaning, "The matter is all in My Hand." Allah also said,

(فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلْغُ وَعَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ)

(your duty is only to convey (the Message) and on Us is the reckoning.) 13:40 , and,

(لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَاهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ)

(Not upon you is their guidance, but Allah guides whom He wills.) 2:272 , and,

(إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ)

(Verily, you guide not whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills) 28: 56 .

Muhammad bin Ishaq said that Allah's statement,

(لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ)

(Not for you is the decision;), means, "No part of the decision regarding My servants is yours, except what I command you." Allah then mentions the rest of the consequences of Jihad,

(أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ)

(whether He pardons them) concerning the acts of disbelief that they commit, thus delivering them from misguidance to the guidance.

(أَوْ يُعَذِّبُهُمْ)

(or punishes them;) in this life and the Hereafter because of their disbelief and errors,

(فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ)

(verily, they are the wrongdoers), and thus, they deserve such a fate.

Al-Bukhari recorded that, Salim bin `Abdullah said that his father said that he heard the Messenger of Allah saying -- when he raised his head from bowing in the second unit of the Fajr prayer -- "O Allah! Curse so-and-so," after saying; Sami` Allahu Liman Hamidah, Rabbana wa lakal-Hamd. Thereafter, Allah revealed this Ayah,

(لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ)

(Not for you is the decision;) This was also recorded by An-Nasa'i. Imam Ahmad recorded that Salim bin `Abdullah said that his father said that he heard the Messenger of Allah saying,

«اللَّهُمَّ الْعَنْ فُلَانًا، اللَّهُمَّ الْعَنْ الْحَارِثَ بْنَ هِشَامٍ،
اللَّهُمَّ الْعَنْ سُهَيْلَ بْنَ عَمْرٍو، اللَّهُمَّ الْعَنْ صَفْوَانَ
بْنَ أُمَيَّةَ»

(O Allah! Curse so-and-so. O Allah! Curse Al-Harith bin Hisham. O Allah! Curse Suhayl bin `Amr. O Allah! Curse Safwan bin Umayyah.)

Thereafter, this Ayah was revealed;

(لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ
يُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ)

(Not for you is the decision; whether He turns in mercy to (pardon) them or punishes them; verily, they are the wrongdoers) 3:128 .

All these persons were pardoned (after they embraced Islam later on).

Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that when Allah's Messenger would supplicate against or for someone, he would do so when he was finished bowing and saying; Sami` Allahu Liman Hamidah, Rabbana wa lakal-Hamd. He would then say, (the Qunut)

«اللَّهُمَّ أَنْجِ الْوَالِدَ بْنَ الْوَالِدِ، وَسَلْمَةَ بْنَ هِشَامٍ
وَعَيَّاشَ بْنَ أَبِي رَبِيعَةَ، وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنْ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، اللَّهُمَّ اشْدُدْ وَطْأَتَكَ عَلَى مُضَرَ،
وَاجْعَلْهَا عَلَيْهِمْ سِنِينَ كَسَنِي يُوسُفَ»

(O Allah! Save Al-Walid bin Al-Walid, Salamah bin Hisham, `Ayyash bin Abi Rabi`ah and the weak and the helpless people among the faithful believers. O Allah! Be hard on the tribe of Mudar and let them suffer from years of famine like that of the time of Yusuf.)

He would say this supplication aloud. He sometimes would supplicate during the Dawn prayer, "O Allah! Curse so-and-so (persons)," mentioning some Arab tribes. Thereafter, Allah revealed,

(لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ)

(Not for you is the decision.)

Al-Bukhari recorded that Hamid and Thabit said that, Anas bin Malik said that the Prophet was injured during the battle of Uhud and said,

«كَيْفَ يُفْلِحُ قَوْمٌ شَجَّوْا نَبِيَّهُمْ؟»

(How can a people achieve success after having injured their Prophet)

Thereafter,

(لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ)

(Not for you is the decision,) was revealed.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Anas said that, the Prophet's front tooth was broken during the battle of Uhud and he also sustained injuries on his forehead until blood dripped on his face. The Prophet said,

«كَيْفَ يُقْلِحُ قَوْمٌ فَعَلُوا هَذَا بِنَبِيِّهِمْ، وَهُوَ يَدْعُوهُمْ
إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ؟»

(How can a people achieve success after having done this to their Prophet who is calling them to their Lord, the Exalted and Most Honored) Allah revealed,

(لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ
يُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ)

(Not for you is the decision; whether He turns in mercy to (pardons) them or punishes them; verily, they are the wrongdoers.) Muslim also collected this Hadith.

Allah then said,

(وَاللَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ)

(And to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the Earth.) 3:129 , everything is indeed the property of Allah and all are servants in His Hand.

(يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ)

(He forgives whom He wills, and punishes whom He wills.) for His is the decision and none can resist His decision. Allah is never asked about what He does, while they will be asked,

(وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ)

(and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.)

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا الرِّبَا أَضْعَافًا
مُّضَاعَفَةً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ - وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ
الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ - وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ

لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ - وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ
لِلْمُتَّقِينَ - الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ
وَالكُظْمِينَ الْغَيْظِ وَالْعَفِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ
يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ - وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَحِشَةً أَوْ
ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ
وَمَنْ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَى مَا
فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ - أُولَئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن
رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ
فِيهَا وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَمَلِينَ)

(130. O you who believe! Do not consume Riba doubled and multiplied, but fear Allah that you may be successful.) (131. And fear the Fire, which is prepared for the disbelievers.) (132. And obey Allah and the Messenger that you may obtain mercy.) (133. And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the Muttaqin (the pious).) (134. Those who spend (in Allah's cause) in prosperity and in adversity, who repress anger, and who pardon men; verily, Allah loves the Muhsinin (the good-doers).) (135. And those who, when they have committed Fahishah (immoral sin) or wronged themselves with evil, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their sins; and none can forgive sins but Allah, and do not persist in what (wrong) they have done, while they know.) (136. For such, the reward is forgiveness from their Lord, and Gardens with rivers flowing underneath (Paradise), wherein they shall abide forever. How excellent is this reward for the doers (of good).)

Interest (Riba) is Prohibited

Allah prohibits His believing servants from dealing in Riba and from requiring interest on their capital, just as they used to do during the time of Jahiliyyah. For instance, when the time to pay a loan comes, the creditor would say to the debtor, "Either pay now, or the loan will incur interest." If the debtor asks for deferment of the loan, the creditor would require interest and this would occur year after year until the little capital becomes multiplied many times. Allah also commands His servants to have Taqwa of Him so that they may achieve success in this life and the Hereafter. Allah also threatens them with the Fire and warns them against it, saying,

(وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ - وَأَطِيعُوا
اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ)

(And fear the Fire, which is prepared for the disbelievers. And obey Allah and the Messenger that you may obtain mercy.) 3:131,132 .

The Encouragement to Do Good for which Paradise is the Result

Allah encourages His servants to perform righteous deeds and to rush to accomplish the acts of obedience. Allah said,

(وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا
السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the Muttaqin (the pious)) 3:133 .

Just as the Fire was prepared for the disbelievers. It was reported that the meaning of Allah's statement,

(عَرْضُهَا السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ)

(as wide as the heavens and the earth) draws the attention to the spaciousness of Paradise. For instance, Allah said in another Ayah, while describing the couches of Paradise,

(بَطَائِنُهَا مِنْ إِسْتَبْرَقٍ)

(lined with silk brocade) 55:54 , so what about their outer covering It was also said that Paradise is as wide as its length, because it is a dome under the Throne. The width and length of a dome or a circle are the same in distance. This is supported by what is found in the Sahih;

«إِذَا سَأَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ الْجَنَّةَ فَاَسْأَلُوهُ الْفِرْدَوْسَ، فَإِنَّهُ
أَعْلَى الْجَنَّةِ، وَأَوْسَطُ الْجَنَّةِ، وَمِنْهُ تَفَجَّرُ أَنْهَارُ
الْجَنَّةِ، وَسَقْفُهَا عَرْشُ الرَّحْمَنِ»

(When you ask Allah for Paradise, ask Him for Al-Firdaws which is the highest and best part of Paradise. From it originate the rivers of Paradise, and above it is the Throne of the Most Beneficent (Allah).)

This Ayah 3:133 above is similar to Allah's statement in Surat Al-Hadid,

(سَابِقُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا
كَعَرْضِ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ)

(Race with one another in hastening towards forgiveness from your Lord (Allah), and Paradise the width whereof is as the width of the heaven and the Earth) 57:21 .

Al-Bazzar recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that a man came to the Messenger of Allah and asked him, about Allah's statement,

(وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ)

(Paradise as wide as the heavens and the Earth) 3:133 ; "Where is the Fire then" The Prophet said,

«أَرَأَيْتَ اللَّيْلَ إِذَا جَاءَ لَيْسَ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ، فَأَيْنَ
النَّهَارُ؟»

(When the night comes, it overtakes everything, so where is the day) The man said, "Where Allah wants it to be." The Prophet said,

«وَكَذَلِكَ النَّارُ تَكُونُ حَيْثُ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ»

(Similarly, the Fire is where Allah wants it to be.) This Hadith has two possible meanings. First, when we do not see the night during the day, this does not mean that the day is not somewhere else, even though we cannot see it. Such is the case with Hell-fire, for it is where Allah wants it to be. The second meaning is that when the day overcomes this part of the world, the night overtakes the other part. Such is the case with Paradise, for it is in the utmost heights above the heavens and under the Throne. The width of Paradise is, as Allah stated,

(كَعَرْضِ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ)

(whereof is as the width of the heaven and the Earth) 57:21 .

The Fire, on the other hand, is in the lowest of lows. Therefore, Paradise being as wide as the heavens and Earth does not contradict the fact that the Fire exists wherever Allah wills it to be.

Allah said, while describing the people of Paradise,

(الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ)

(Those who spend (in Allah's cause) in prosperity and in adversity) 3:134 , in hard times and easy times, while active (or enthusiastic) and otherwise, healthy or ill, and in all conditions, just as Allah said in another Ayah,

(الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً)

(Those who spend their wealth (in Allah's cause) by night and day, in secret and in public) 2:274 These believers are never distracted from obeying Allah, spending on what pleases Him, being kind to His servants and their relatives, and other acts of righteousness. Allah said,

(وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ)

(who repress anger, and who pardon men;) 3:134 for when they are angry, they control their anger and do act upon it. Rather, they even forgive those who hurt them. Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Prophet said,

«لَيْسَ الشَّدِيدُ بِالصُّرْعَةِ، وَلَكِنَّ الشَّدِيدَ الَّذِي يَمْلِكُ نَفْسَهُ عِنْدَ الْغَضَبِ»

(The strong person is not he who is able to physically overcome people. The strong person is he who overcomes his rage when he is angry.)

This Hadith is also recorded in the Two Sahih. Imam Ahmad recorded that Ibn ` Abbas said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ أَنْظَرَ مُعْسِرًا أَوْ وَضَعَ لَهُ، وَقَاهُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَيْحِ جَهَنَّمَ، أَلَا إِنَّ عَمَلَ الْجَنَّةِ حَزْنٌ بِرَبْوَةٍ ثَلَاثًا

أَلَا إِنَّ عَمَلَ النَّارِ سَهْلٌ بِسَهْوَةٍ. وَالسَّعِيدُ مَنْ وَقِيَ
الْفِتْنَ، وَمَا مِنْ جَرْعَةٍ أَحَبُّ إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ جَرْعَةٍ
غَيْظٍ يَكْظِمُهَا عَبْدٌ، مَا كَظَمَهَا عَبْدٌ لِلَّهِ إِلَّا مَلَأَ
جَوْفَهُ إِيْمَانًا»

(He who gives time to a debtor or forgives him, then Allah will save him from the heat of Jahannam (Hell-fire). Behold! The deeds of Paradise are difficult to reach, for they are on top of a hill, while the deeds of the Fire are easy to find in the lowlands. The happy person is he who is saved from the tests. Verily, there is no dose of anything better to Allah than a dose of rage that the servant controls, and whenever the servant of Allah controls it, he will be internally filled with faith.)

This Hadith was recorded by Imam Ahmad, its chain of narration is good, it does not contain any dispranged narrators, and the meaning is good.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Sahl bin Mu`adh bin Anas said that his father said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ كَظَمَ غَيْظًا وَهُوَ قَادِرٌ عَلَى أَنْ يُنْفِذَهُ دَعَاهُ
اللَّهُ عَلَى رُؤُوسِ الْخَلَائِقِ حَتَّى يُخَيِّرَهُ مِنْ أَيِّ
الْحُورِ شَاءَ»

(Whoever controlled rage while able to act upon it, then Allah will call him while all creation is a witness, until He gives him the choice of any of the Huris (fair females with wide, lovely eyes - as mates for the pious) he wishes.)

Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah collected this Hadith, which At-Tirmidhi said was "Hasan Gharib".

Ibn Marduwyah recorded that Ibn `Umar said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَا تَجَرَّعَ عَبْدٌ مِنْ جَرْعَةٍ أَفْضَلَ أَجْرًا مِنْ
جَرْعَةٍ غَيْظٍ كَظَمَهَا ابْتِغَاءً وَجْهَ اللَّهِ»

(There is not a dose of anything that the servant takes which is better than a dose of control of rage that he feels, when he does it seeking Allah's Face.) Ibn Jarir and Ibn Majah also collected this Hadith.

Allah said,

(وَالْكٰظِمِيْنَ الْغَيْظِ)

(who repress anger) meaning, they do not satisfy their rage upon people. Rather, they refrain from harming them and await their rewards with Allah, the Exalted and Most Honored. Allah then said,

(وَالْعٰفِيْنَ عَنِ النَّاسِ)

(and who pardon men;) They forgive those who treat them with injustice. Therefore, they do not hold any ill feelings about anyone in their hearts, and this is the most excellent conduct in this regard. This is why Allah said,

(وَاللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ)

(verily, Allah loves the Muhsinin (the good-doers)).

This good conduct is a type of Ihsan excellence in the religion . There is a Hadith that reads,

«ثَلَاثٌ أَقْسِمُ عَلَيْهِنَّ: مَا نَقَصَ مَالٌ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ،
وَمَا زَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا بِعَفْوٍ إِلَّا عِزًّا، وَمَنْ تَوَاضَعَ لِلَّهِ
رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ»

(I swear regarding three matters: no charity shall ever decrease the wealth; whenever one forgives people, then Allah will magnify his honor; and he who is humble for Allah, then Allah will raise his rank.)

Allah said,

(وَالَّذِيْنَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَحِيْشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ
ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ)

(And those who, when they have committed Fahishah or wronged themselves with evil, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their sins) 3:135 .

Therefore, if they commit an error they follow it with repentance and ask forgiveness. Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Prophet said,

«إِنَّ رَجُلًا أَدْنَبَ ذَنْبًا فَقَالَ: رَبِّ إِنِّي أَدْنَبْتُ ذَنْبًا
فَاغْفِرْهُ، فَقَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: عَبْدِي عَمِلَ ذَنْبًا
فَعَلِمَ أَنَّ لَهُ رَبًّا يَغْفِرُ الذَّنْبَ وَيَأْخُذُ بِهِ، قَدْ غَفَرْتُ
لِعَبْدِي، ثُمَّ عَمِلَ ذَنْبًا آخَرَ فَقَالَ: رَبِّ إِنِّي عَمِلْتُ
ذَنْبًا فَاغْفِرْهُ، فَقَالَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى: عَلِمَ عَبْدِي أَنَّ
لَهُ رَبًّا يَغْفِرُ الذَّنْبَ وَيَأْخُذُ بِهِ، قَدْ غَفَرْتُ لِعَبْدِي،
ثُمَّ عَمِلَ ذَنْبًا آخَرَ فَقَالَ: رَبِّ إِنِّي عَمِلْتُ ذَنْبًا
فَاغْفِرْهُ لِي، فَقَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: عَلِمَ عَبْدِي أَنَّ
لَهُ رَبًّا يَغْفِرُ الذَّنْبَ وَيَأْخُذُ بِهِ، قَدْ غَفَرْتُ لِعَبْدِي،
ثُمَّ عَمِلَ ذَنْبًا آخَرَ فَقَالَ: رَبِّ إِنِّي عَمِلْتُ ذَنْبًا
فَاغْفِرْهُ لِي، فَقَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: عَلِمَ عَبْدِي أَنَّ
لَهُ رَبًّا يَغْفِرُ الذَّنْبَ وَيَأْخُذُ بِهِ، أَشْهَدُكُمْ أَنِّي قَدْ
غَفَرْتُ لِعَبْدِي فَلْيَعْمَلْ مَا شَاءَ»

(A man once committed an error and said, 'O Lord! I committed an error, so forgive me.' Allah said, 'My servant committed an error and knew that he has a Lord Who forgives or punishes for the error. I have forgiven My servant.' The man committed another error and said, 'O Lord! I committed an error, so forgive me.' Allah said, 'My servant knew that he has a Lord Who forgives or punishes for the sin. I have forgiven My servant.' The man committed another error and said, 'O Lord! I committed an error, so forgive me.' Allah said, 'My servant knew that he has a Lord Who forgives or punishes for the error. I have forgiven my servant.' He then committed another error and said, 'O Lord! I committed an error, so forgive me.' Allah said, 'My servant knew that he has a Lord Who forgives or punishes for the error. Bear witness that I

have forgiven My servant, so let him do whatever he likes.'). A similar narration was collected in the Sahih.

`Abdur-Razzaq recorded that Anas bin Malik said, "I was told that when the Ayah,

(وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ
ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ)

(And those who, when they have committed Fahishah or wronged themselves with evil, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their sins,) was revealed, Iblis (Shayatan) cried." Allah's statement,

(وَمَنْ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ)

(and none can forgive sins but Allah), means that none except Allah forgives sins. Allah said,

(وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(And do not persist in what (wrong) they have done, while they know), for they repent from their error, return to Allah before death, do not insist on error, and if they err again, they repent from it. Allah said here,

(وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(while they know) Mujahid and `Abdullah bin `Ubayd bin `Umayr commented, "Whoever repents, then Allah will forgive him." Similarly, Allah said,

(أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ)

(Know they not that Allah accepts repentance from His servants) 9:104 , and,

(وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ
يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا)

(And whoever does evil or wrongs himself but afterwards seeks Allah's forgiveness, he will find Allah Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) 4: 110 and there are several examples similar to this Ayah.

Next, Allah said after this description,

(أُولَئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ)

(For such, the reward is forgiveness from their Lord) 3:136 , as a reward for these qualities,

(مَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا
الأنهـرُ)

(forgiveness from their Lord, and Gardens with rivers flowing underneath (Paradise)) carrying all kinds of drinks,

(خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا)

(wherein they shall abide forever) and ever,

(وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَمَلِينَ)

(How excellent is this reward for the doers) Allah praises Paradise in this part of the Ayah.

(قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ - هَذَا بَيَانٌ
لِّلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
مُؤْمِنِينَ - إِنْ يَمَسُّكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ قَرْحٌ
مِّثْلُهُ وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ
الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ

الظَّالِمِينَ - وَلِيُمَحِّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَيَمْحَقَ
الْكَافِرِينَ - أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ
اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الصَّابِرِينَ - وَلَقَدْ
كُنْتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَلْقَوْهُ فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ
وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ)

(137. Many similar ways (and mishaps of life) were faced by nations (believers and disbelievers) that have passed away before you, so travel through the earth, and see what was the end of those who denied.) (138. This is a plain statement for mankind, a guidance and instruction for the Muttaqin.) (139. So do not become weak, nor be sad, and you will be triumphant if you are indeed believers.) (140. If a wound has touched you, be sure a similar wound has touched the others. And so are the days, that We give to men by turns, that Allah may know (test) those who believe, and that He may take martyrs from among you. And Allah likes not the wrongdoers.) (141. And that Allah may test those who believe and destroy the disbelievers.). (142. Do you think that you will enter Paradise before Allah knows (tests) those of you who performed Jihad and knows (tests) those who are patient) (143. You did indeed wish for death before you met it. Now you have seen it openly with your own eyes.)

The Wisdom Behind the Losses Muslims Suffered During Uhud

Allah states to His believing servants who suffered losses in the battle of Uhud, including seventy dead,

(قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ)

(Many similar ways (and mishaps of life) were faced before you), for the previous nations who followed their Prophets before you, they too suffered losses. However, the good end was theirs, and the ultimate defeat was for the disbelievers. This is why Allah said,

(فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ
الْمُكْذِبِينَ)

(so travel through the earth, and see what was the end of those who denied). Allah said next,

(هَذَا بَيَانٌ لِلنَّاسِ)

(This is a plain statement for mankind), meaning, the Qur'an explains the true reality of things and narrates how the previous nations suffered by the hands of their enemies.

(وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ)

(And a guidance and instruction) for the Qur'an contains the news of the past, and,

(هُدًى)

(guidance) for your hearts,

(وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(and instruction for the Muttaqin) to discourage committing the prohibited and forbidden matters. Allah comforts the believers by saying,

(وَلَا تَهِنُوا)

(So do not become weak), because of what you suffered,

(وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ)

(nor be sad, and you will be triumphant if you are indeed believers), for surely, the ultimate victory and triumph will be yours, O believers.

(إِنْ يَمَسُّكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ قَرْحٌ مِّثْلَهُ)

(If a wound has touched you, be sure a similar wound has touched the others) 3:140 .

Therefore, the Ayah says, if you suffered injuries and some of you were killed, then your enemies also suffered injuries and fatalities.

(وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ)

(And so are the days, that We give to men by turns) , and at times -- out of wisdom -- We allow the enemy to overcome you, although the final good end will be yours.

(وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا)

(and that Allah may know (test) those who believe,) meaning, "So that We find out who would be patient while fighting the enemies," according to Ibn ` Abbas.

(وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ)

(and that He may take martyrs from among you) those who would be killed in Allah's cause and gladly offer their lives seeking His pleasure.

(وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ وَلِيَمْحَصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا)

(And Allah likes not the wrongdoers. And that Allah may test those who believe) 3:140,141 , by forgiving them their sins if they have any. Otherwise, Allah will raise their grades according to the losses they suffered. Allah's statement,

(وَيَمْحَقَ الْكٰفِرِينَ)

(and destroy the disbelievers), for it is their conduct that if they gain the upper hand, they transgress and commit aggression. However, this conduct only leads to ultimate destruction, extermination, perishing and dying out.

Allah then said,

(أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الصَّابِرِينَ)

(Do you think that you will enter Paradise before Allah knows (tests) those of you who will perform Jihad and (also) knows (tests) those who are the patient) 3:142 .

The Ayah asks, do you think that you will enter Paradise without being tested with warfare and hardships Allah said in Surat Al-Baqarah,

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ
خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَّاءُ
وَزُلْزِلُوا

(Or think you that you will enter Paradise without such (trials) as came to those who passed away before you They were afflicted with severe poverty and ailments and were so shaken. ...) 2:214 . Allah said,

(الم - ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(Alif Lam Mim. Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: "We believe," and will not be tested) 29:1,2 , This is why He said here,

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ
جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الصَّابِرِينَ)

(Do you think that you will enter Paradise before Allah knows (tests) those of you who will perform Jihad and (also) knows (tests) those who are the patient) 3:142 meaning, you will not earn Paradise until you are tested and thus Allah knows who among you are the ones who struggle and fight in His cause and are patient in the face of the enemy. Allah said,

وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَلْقَوْهُ فَقَدْ
رَأَيْتُمُوهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ)

(You did indeed wish for death (martyrdom) before you met it. Now you have seen it openly with your own eyes) 3:143 .

The Ayah proclaims, O believers! Before today, you wished that you could meet the enemy and were eager to fight them. What you wished has occurred, so fight them and be patient.

In the Two Sahihs it is recorded that the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَا تَتَمَنَّوْا لِقَاءَ الْعَدُوِّ، وَسَلُّوْا اللّٰهَ الْعَافِيَةَ، فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمْهُمْ فَأَصْبِرُوا، وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الْجَنَّةَ تَحْتَ ظِلَالِ السُّيُوفِ»

(Do not wish to encounter the enemy, and ask Allah for your well-being. However, if you do encounter them, then observe patience and know that Paradise is under the shade of swords.)

This is why Allah said here,

(فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ)

(Now you have seen it): death, you saw it when the swords appeared, the blades were sharpened, the spears crisscrossed and men stood in lines for battle. This part of the Ayah contains a figure of speech that mentions imagining what can be felt but not seen.

(وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقْبَيْهِ فَلَنْ يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ - وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ كِتَابًا مُّوَجَّلًا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الْآخِرَةِ نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَسَنَجْزِي الشَّاكِرِينَ - وَكَأَيِّنْ مِنْ نَّبِيٍّ قَاتَلَ مَعَهُ رِبِّيُّونَ كَثِيرٌ فَمَا وَهَنُوا لِمَا أَصَابَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَمَا ضَعُفُوا وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ - وَمَا كَانَ قَوْلُهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا

اغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَإِسْرَافَنَا فِي أَمْرِنَا وَتَبَّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا
وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ - فَاتَهُمُ اللَّهُ
تَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا وَحُسْنَ ثَوَابِ الْآخِرَةِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ
الْمُحْسِنِينَ)

(144. Muhammad is no more than a Messenger, and indeed Messengers have passed away before him. If he dies or is killed, will you then turn back on your heels And he who turns back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah; and Allah will reward the grateful.) (145. And no person can ever die except by Allah's leave and at an appointed term. And whoever desires a reward in the world, We shall give him of it; and whoever desires a reward in the Hereafter, We shall give him thereof. And We shall reward the grateful.) (146. And many a Prophet fought and along with him many Ribbiyyun. But they never lost heart for that which befell them in Allah's way, nor did nor they weaken nor degrade themselves. And Allah loves the patient.) (147. And they said nothing but: "Our Lord! Forgive us our sins and our transgressions, establish our feet firmly, and give us victory over the disbelieving folk.") (148. So Allah gave them the reward of this world, and the excellent reward of the Hereafter. And Allah loves the good-doers.)

The Rumor that the Prophet was Killed at Uhud

When Muslims suffered defeat in battle at Uhud and some of them were killed, Shaytan shouted, "Muhammad has been killed." Ibn Qami'ah went back to the idolators and claimed, "I have killed Muhammad." Some Muslims believed this rumor and thought that the Messenger of Allah had been killed, claiming that this could happen, for Allah narrated that this occurred to many Prophets before. Therefore, the Muslims' resolve was weakened and they did not actively participate in battle. This is why Allah sent down to His Messenger His statement,

(وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ)

(Muhammad is no more than a Messenger, and indeed Messengers have passed away before him.) he is to deliver Allah's Message and may be killed in the process, just as what happened to many Prophets before. Ibn Abi Najih said that his father said that a man from the Muhajirin passed by an Ansari man who was bleeding (during Uhud) and said to him, "O fellow! Did you know that Muhammad was killed" The Ansari man said, "Even if Muhammad was killed, he has indeed conveyed the Message. Therefore, defend your religion." The Ayah,

(وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ)

(Muhammad is no more than a Messenger, and indeed (many) Messengers have passed away before him), was revealed. This story was collected by Al-Hafiz Abu Bakr Al-Bayhaqi in Dala'il An-Nubuwwah.

Allah said next, while chastising those who became weak,

(أَفَايِن مَّاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ)

(If he dies or is killed, will you then turn back on your heels), become disbelievers,

(وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقْبَيْهِ فَلَن يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا
وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ)

(And he who turns back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah; and Allah will give reward to those who are grateful), those who obeyed Allah, defended His religion and followed His Messenger whether he was alive or dead. The Sahih, Musnad and Sunan collections gathered various chains of narration stating that Abu Bakr recited this Ayah when the Messenger of Allah died. Al-Bukhari recorded that `A'ishah said that Abu Bakr came riding his horse from his dwelling in As-Sunh. He dismounted, entered the Masjid and did not speak to anyone until he came to her in her room and went directly to the Prophet, who was covered with a marked blanket. Abu Bakr uncovered his face, knelt down and kissed him, then started weeping and proclaimed, "My father and my mother be sacrificed for you! Allah will not combine two deaths on you. You have died the death, which was written for you."

Ibn `Abbas narrated that Abu Bakr then came out, while `Umar was addressing the people, and Abu Bakr told him to sit down but `Umar refused, and the people attended to Abu Bakr and left `Umar. Abu Bakr said, "To proceed; whoever among you worshipped Muhammad, then Muhammad is dead, but whoever worshipped Allah, Allah is alive and will never die. Allah said,

(وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ
أَفَايِن مَّاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ وَمَنْ
يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقْبَيْهِ فَلَن يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَسَيَجْزِي
اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ)

(Muhammad is no more than a Messenger and indeed (many) Messengers have passed away before him. If he dies or is killed, will you then turn back on your heels And he who turns back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah; and Allah will reward the grateful.)"

The narrator added, "By Allah, it was as if the people never knew that Allah had revealed this verse before until Abu Bakr recited it, and then whoever heard it, started reciting it." Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib said that `Umar said, "By Allah! When I heard Abu Bakr recite this Ayah, my feet could not hold me, and I fell to the ground."

Allah said,

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ كِتَابًا
مُّؤَجَّلًا

(And no person can ever die except by Allah's leave and at an appointed term.) 3:145 meaning, no one dies except by Allah's decision, after he has finished the term that Allah has destined for him. This is why Allah said,

(كِتَابًا مُؤَجَّلًا)

(at an appointed term) which is similar to His statements,

وَمَا يُعَمَّرُ مِنْ مُعَمَّرٍ وَلَا يُنْقَصُ مِنْ عُمُرِهِ إِلَّا
فِي كِتَابٍ

(And no aged man is granted a length of life nor is a part cut off from his life, but it is in a Book) 35:11 , and,

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ طِينٍ ثُمَّ قَضَىٰ أَجَلًا وَأَجَلٌ
مُّسَمًّى عِنْدَهُ

(He it is Who has created you from clay, and then has decreed a (stated) term (for you to die). And there is with Him another determined term (for you to be resurrected)) 6:2 .

This Ayah 3:145 encourages cowards to participate in battle; for doing so, or avoiding battle neither decreases, nor increases the life term. Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that, Habib bin Suhban said that a Muslim man, Hujr bin `Adi, said in a battle, "What prevents you from crossing this river (the Euphrates) to the enemy

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ كِتَابًا
مُّؤَجَّلًا

(And no person can ever die except by Allah's leave and at an appointed term)" He then crossed the river riding his horse, and when he did, the Muslims followed him. When the enemy saw them, they started shouting, "Diwan (Persian; crazy)," and they ran away.

Allah said next,

(وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ
الْآخِرَةِ نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا)

(And whoever desires a reward in the world, We shall give him of it; and whoever desires a reward in the Hereafter, We shall give him thereof).

Therefore, the Ayah proclaims, whoever works for the sake of this life, will only earn what Allah decides he will earn. However, he will not have a share in the Hereafter. Whoever works for the sake of the Hereafter, Allah will give him a share in the Hereafter, along with what He decides for him in this life. In similar statements, Allah said,

(مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الْآخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُ فِي حَرْثِهِ
وَمَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي
الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ نَصِيبٍ)

(Whosoever desires (by his deeds) the reward of the Hereafter, We give him increase in his reward, and whosoever desires the reward of this world (by his deeds), We give him thereof (what is decreed for him), and he has no portion in the Hereafter.) 42:20 , and,

(مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعَجَلَةَ عَجَّلْنَا لَهُ فِيهَا مَا نَشَاءُ
لِمَنْ نُرِيدُ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَاهَا مَذْمُومًا
مَذْحُورًا - وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَى لَهَا سَعْيَهَا
وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَشْكُورًا)

(Whoever desires the quick-passing (transitory enjoyment of this world), We readily grant him what We will for whom We like. Then, afterwards, We have appointed for him Hell; he will burn therein disgraced and despised. And whoever desires the Hereafter and strives for it, with the necessary effort due for it while he is a believer, then such are the ones whose striving shall be appreciated) 17:18-19 .

In this Ayah 3:145 , Allah said,

(وَسَنَجْزِي الشَّاكِرِينَ)

(And We shall reward the grateful.) meaning, We shall award them with Our favor and mercy in this life and the Hereafter, according to the degree of their appreciation of Allah and their good deeds.

Allah then comforts the believers because of what they suffered in Uhud,

(وَكَايِن مِّن نَّبِيٍّ قَاتَلَ مَعَهُ رَبِّيُونَ كَثِيرٌ)

(And many a Prophet fought and along with him many Ribbiyyun.)

It was said that this Ayah means that many Prophets and their companions were killed in earlier times, as is the view chosen by Ibn Jarir. It was also said that the Ayah means that many Prophets witnessed their companions' death before their eyes. However, Ibn Ishaq mentioned another explanation in his S'rah, saying that this Ayah means, "Many a Prophet was killed, and he had many companions whose resolve did not weaken after their Prophet died, and they did not become feeble in the face of the enemy. What they suffered in Jihad in Allah's cause and for the sake of their religion did not make them lose heart. This is patience,

(وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ)

(and Allah loves the patient.)" As-Suhayli agreed with this explanation and defended it vigorously. This view is supported by Allah saying;

(مَعَهُ رَبِّيُونَ كَثِيرٌ)

(And along with him many Ribbiyyun).

In his book about the battles, Al-Amawi mentioned only this explanation for the Ayah. Sufyan Ath-Thawri reported that, Ibn Mas'ud said that,

(رَبِّيُونَ كَثِيرٌ)

(many Ribbiyyun) means, thousands. Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Ikrimah, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, As-Suddi, Ar-Rabi` and `Ata' Al-Khurasani said that the word Ribbiyyun means, `large bands'. `Abdur-Razzaq narrated that Ma`mmar said that Al-Hasan said that,

(رَبِّيُونَ كَثِيرٌ)

(many Ribbiyyun) means, many scholars. He also said that it means patient and pious scholars.

(فَمَا وَهَنُوا لِمَا أَصَابَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَمَا
ضَعُفُوا وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا)

(But they never lost heart for that which befell them in Allah's way, nor did they weaken nor degrade themselves.)

Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that,

(وَمَا ضَعُفُوا)

(nor did they weaken), means, after their Prophet was killed.

(وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا)

(nor degrade themselves), by reverting from the true guidance and religion. Rather, they fought on the path that Allah's Prophet fought on until they met Allah. Ibn ` Abbas said that,

(وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا)

(nor degrade themselves) means, nor became humiliated, while As-Suddi and Ibn Zayd said that it means, they did not give in to the enemy.

(وَكَايِن مِّن نَّبِيٍّ قَاتَلَ مَعَهُ رَبِّيُونَ كَثِيرٌ فَمَا
وَهَنُوا لِمَا أَصَابَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَمَا ضَعُفُوا
وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ - وَمَا كَانَ
قَوْلُهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَإِسْرَافَنَا
فِي أَمْرِنَا وَثَبِّتْ أَرْجُلَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ
الْكَافِرِينَ)

(And Allah loves the patient. And they said nothing but: "Our Lord! Forgive us our sins and our transgressions, establish our feet firmly, and give us victory over the disbelieving folk.")
3:146-147 , and this was the statement that they kept repeating. Therefore,

(فَاتَهُمُ اللَّهُ تَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا)

(So Allah gave them the reward of this world) victory, triumph and the good end,

(وَحَسَنَ تَوَابِ الْآخِرَةِ)

(and the excellent reward of the Hereafter) added to the gains in this life,

(وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ)

(And Allah loves the good-doers).

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تُطِيعُوا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ - بَلِ اللَّهُ
مَوْلَاكُمْ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ النَّاصِرِينَ - سَنُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ بِمَا أَشْرَكُوا بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ
يُنزَلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا وَمَأْوَاهُمُ النَّارُ وَيَسَ مَثْوَى
الظَّالِمِينَ - وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ إِذْ تَحُسُّونَهُمْ
بِأَيْدِيهِمْ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ وَتَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ
وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَرَاكُمْ مَا تُحِبُّونَ مِّنْكُمْ مَّن
يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ ثُمَّ صَرَفَكُمْ
عَنْهُمْ لِيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ
عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ - إِذْ تُصْعِدُونَ وَلَا تَلْوُونَ عَلَىٰ
أَحَدٍ وَالرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ فِي أَخْرَاكُمْ فَأَتَيْتُمْ غَمًّا

يَغْمُّ لَكَيْلًا تَحْزَنُوا عَلَى مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا مَا أَصَابَكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ خَيْرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ)

(149. O you who believe! If you obey those who disbelieve, they will send you back on your heels, and you will turn back as losers.) (150. Nay, Allah is your protector, and He is the best of helpers.) (151. We shall cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve, because they joined others in worship with Allah, for which He sent no authority; their abode will be the Fire and how evil is the abode of the wrongdoers.) (152. And Allah did indeed fulfill His promise to you when you were killing them (your enemy) with His permission; until Fashiltum and fell to disputing about the order, and disobeyed after He showed you what you love. Among you are some that desire this world and some that desire the Hereafter. Then He made you flee from them, that He might test you. But surely, He forgave you, and Allah is Most Gracious to the believers.) (153. (And remember) when you ran away without even casting a side glance at anyone, and the Messenger was in your rear calling you back. There did Allah give you one distress after another by way of requital, to teach you not to grieve for that which had escaped you, nor for what struck you. And Allah is Well-Aware of all that you do.)

The Prohibition of Obeying the Disbelievers; the Cause of Defeat at Uhud

Allah warns His believing servants against obeying the disbelievers and hypocrites, because such obedience leads to utter destruction in this life and the Hereafter. This is why Allah said,

(إِنْ تُطِيعُوا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ
فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ)

(If you obey those who disbelieve, they will send you back on your heels, and you will turn back (from faith) as losers) 3:149 .

Allah also commands the believers to obey Him, take Him as their protector, seek His aid and trust in Him. Allah said,

(بَلِ اللّٰهُ مَوْلَاكُمْ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ النَّاصِرِينَ)

(Nay, Allah is your protector, and He is the best of helpers).

Allah next conveys the good news that He will put fear of the Muslims, and feelings of subordination to the Muslims in the hearts of their disbelieving enemies, because of their Kufr and Shirk. And Allah has prepared torment and punishment for them in the Hereafter. Allah said,

(سَنُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ بِمَا
أَشْرَكُوا بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزَّلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا وَمَأْوَاهُمُ
النَّارُ وَيَسَ مَثْوَى الظَّالِمِينَ)

(We shall cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve, because they joined others in worship with Allah, for which He sent no authority; their abode will be the Fire and how evil is the abode of the wrongdoers). In addition, the Two Sahih recorded that Jabir bin `Abdullah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«أُعْطِيتُ خَمْسًا لَمْ يُعْطَهُنَّ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ
قَبْلِي: نُصِرْتُ بِالرُّعْبِ مَسِيرَةَ شَهْرٍ، وَجُعِلَتْ
لِي الْأَرْضُ مَسْجِدًا وَطَهُورًا، وَأُحِلَّتْ لِي
الْغَنَائِمُ، وَأُعْطِيتُ الشَّفَاعَةَ، وَكَانَ النَّبِيُّ يُبْعَثُ
إِلَى قَوْمِهِ خَاصَّةً وَبُعِثْتُ إِلَى النَّاسِ عَامَّةً»

(I was given five things that no other Prophet before me was given. I was aided with fear the distance of one month, the earth was made a Masjid and clean place for me, I was allowed war booty, I was given the Intercession, and Prophets used to be sent to their people, but I was sent to all mankind particularly.)

Allah said,

(وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ)

(And Allah did indeed fulfill His promise to you) 3:152 ,

in the beginning of the day of Uhud,

(إِذْ تَحْسُونَهُمْ)

(when you were killing them), slaying your enemies,

(بِإِذْنِهِ)

(with His permission), for He allowed you to do that against them,

(حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ)

(until when you Fashiltum). Ibn Jurayj said that Ibn `Abbas said that Fashiltum means, 'lost courage'.

(وَتَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُمْ)

(and fell to disputing about the order, and disobeyed) such as the mistake made by the archers,

(مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَرَاكُمْ مَا تُحِبُّونَ)

(after He showed you what you love), that is, victory over the disbelievers,

(مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا)

(Among you are some that desire this world) referring to those who sought to collect the booty when they saw the enemy being defeated,

(وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ ثُمَّ صَرَفَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ
لِيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ)

(and some that desire the Hereafter. Then He made you flee from them, that He might test you).

This Ayah means, Allah gave them the upper hand to try and test you, O believers,

(وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ)

(but surely, He forgave you),

He forgave the error you committed, because, and Allah knows best, the idolators were many and well supplied, while Muslims had few men and few supplies.

Al-Bukhari recorded that Al-Bara' said, "We met the idolators on that day (Uhud) and the Prophet appointed `Abdullah bin Jubayr as the commander of the archers. He instructed them, `Retain your position, and if you see that we have defeated them, do not abandon your positions. If you see that they defeated us, do not rush to help us.' The disbelievers gave flight when we met them, and we saw their women fleeing up the mountain while lifting up their clothes revealing their anklets and their legs. So, the companions (of `Abdullah bin Jubayr) said, `The booty, the booty!' `Abdullah bin Jubayr said, `Allah's Messenger commanded me not to allow you to abandon your position.' They refused to listen, and when they left their position, Muslims were defeated and seventy of them were killed. Abu Sufyan shouted, `Is Muhammad present among these people' The Prophet said, `Do not answer him.' Then he asked, `Is the son of Abu Quhafah (Abu Bakr) present among these people' The Prophet said, `Do not answer him.' He asked again, `Is the son of Al-Khattab (`Umar) present among these people As for these (men), they have been killed, for had they been alive, they would have answered me.' `Umar could not control himself and said (to Abu Sufyan), `You lie, O enemy of Allah! The cause of your misery is still present.' Abu Sufyan said, `O Hubal, be high!' On that the Prophet said (to his Companions), `Answer him back.' They said, `What shall we say' He said, `Say, Allah is Higher and more Sublime.' Abu Sufyan said, `We have the (idol) Al-`Uzza, and you have no `Uzza.' The Prophet said, `Answer him back.' They asked, `What shall we say' He said, `Say, Allah is our protector and you have no protector.' Abu Sufyan said, `Our victory today is vengeance for yours in the battle of Badr, and in war (the victory) is always undecided and is shared in turns by the belligerents. You will find some of your killed men mutilated, but I did not urge my men to do so, yet I do not feel sorry for their deed.'" Only Al-Bukhari collected this Hadith using this chain of narration. cMuhammad bin Ishaq said that, `Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr narrated that Az-Zubayr bin Al-`Awwam said, "By Allah! I saw the female servants and female companions of Hind (Abu Sufyan's wife) when they uncovered their legs and gave flight. At that time, there was no big or small effort separating us from capturing them. However, the archers went down the mount when the enemy gave flight from the battlefield, seeking to collect the booty. They uncovered our back lines to the horsemen of the disbelievers, who took the chance and attacked us from behind. Then a person shouted, `Muhammad has been killed.' So we pulled back, and the disbelievers followed us, after we had killed those who carried their flag, and none of them dared to come close the flag, until then." Muhammad bin Ishaq said next, "The flag of the disbelievers was left on the ground until `Amrah bint `Alqamah Al-Harithiyyah picked it up and gave it to the Quraysh who held it."

Allah said,

(ثُمَّ صَرَفَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ لِيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ)

(Then He made you flee from them, that He might test you) 3:152 .

Al-Bukhari recorded that Anas bin Malik said, "My uncle Anas bin An-Nadr was absent from the battle of Badr. He said, `I was absent from the first battle the Prophet fought (against the pagans). (By Allah) if Allah gives me a chance to fight along with the Messenger of Allah, then Allah will see how (bravely) I will fight.' On the day of Uhud when the Muslims turned their backs and fled, he said, `O Allah! I apologize to You for what these (meaning the Muslims) have done, and I denounce what these pagans have done.' Then he advanced lifting his sword, and when Sa`d bin Mu`adh met him, he said to him, `O Sa`d bin Mu`adh! Where are you! Paradise! I am smelling its aroma coming from before (Mount) Uhud,' and he went forth, fought and was killed. We found more than eighty stab wounds, sword blows or arrow holes on his body, which

was mutilated so badly that none except his sister could recognize him, and she could only do so by his fingers or by a mole." This is the narration reported by Al-Bukhari, Muslim also collected a similar narration from Thabit from Anas.

The Defeat that the Muslims Suffered During the Battle of Uhud

Allah said,

(إِذْ تُصْعِدُونَ وَلَا تَلَوْنَنَا عَلَى أَحَدٍ)

((And remember) when you (Tus`iduna) ran away dreadfully without casting even a side glance at anyone), and Allah made the disbelievers leave you after you went up the mount, escaping your enemy. Al-Hasan and Qatadah said that, Tus`iduna, means, `go up the mountain'.

(وَلَا تَلَوْنَنَا عَلَى أَحَدٍ)

(without even casting a side glance at anyone) meaning, you did not glance at anyone else due to shock, fear and fright.

(وَالرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ فِي أُخْرَائِكُمْ)

(and the Messenger was in your rear calling you back), for you left him behind you, while he was calling you to stop fleeing from the enemy and to return and fight.

As-Suddi said, "When the disbelievers attacked Muslim lines during the battle of Uhud and defeated them, some Muslims ran away to Al-Madinah, while some of them went up Mount Uhud, to a rock and stood on it. On that, the Messenger of Allah kept heralding, `Come to me, O servants of Allah! Come to me, O servants of Allah!' Allah mentioned that the Muslims went up the Mount and that the Prophet called them to come back, and said,

(إِذْ تُصْعِدُونَ وَلَا تَلَوْنَنَا عَلَى أَحَدٍ وَالرَّسُولُ
يَدْعُوكُمْ فِي أُخْرَائِكُمْ)

((And remember) when you ran away without even casting a side glance at anyone, and the Messenger was in your rear calling you back)." Similar was said by Ibn `Abbas, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` and Ibn Zayd.

The Ansar and Muhajirin Defended the Messenger

Al-Bukhari recorded that Qays bin Abi Hazim said, "I saw Talhah's hand, it was paralyzed, because he shielded the Prophet with it." meaning on the day of Uhud. It is recorded in the Two Sahihs that Abu `Uthman An-Nahdi said, "On that day (Uhud) during which the Prophet fought, only Talhah bin `Ubaydullah and Sa`d remained with the Prophet."

Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib said, "I heard Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas saying, `The Messenger of Allah gave me arrows from his quiver on the day of Uhud and said, `Shoot, may I sacrifice my father and mother for you.'" Al-Bukhari also collected this Hadith. The Two Sahihs recorded that Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas said, "On the day of Uhud, I saw two men wearing white clothes, one to the right of the Prophet and one to his left, who were defending the Prophet fiercely. I have never seen these men before or after that day." Meaning angels Jibril and Mika'il, peace be upon them.

Abu Al-Aswad said that, `Urwah bin Az-Zubayr said, "Ubayy bin Khalaf of Bani Jumah swore in Makkah that he would kill the Messenger of Allah . When the Messenger was told of his vow, he said, `Father, I shall kill him, Allah willing.' On the day of Uhud, Ubayy came while wearing iron shields and proclaiming, `May I not be saved, if Muhammad is saved.' He then headed to the direction of the Messenger of Allah intending to kill him, but Mus`ab bin `Umayr, from Bani Abd Ad-Dar, intercepted him and shielded the Prophet with his body, and Mus`ab bin `Umayr was killed. The Messenger of Allah saw Ubayy's neck exposed between the shields and helmet, stabbed him with his spear, and Ubayy fell from his horse to the ground. However, no blood spilled from his wound. His people came and carried him away while he was moaning like an ox. They said to him, `Why are you so anxious, it is only a flesh wound' Ubayy mentioned to them the Prophet's vow, `Rather, I shall kill Ubayy', then commented, `By He in Whose Hand is my soul! If what hit me hits the people of Dhul-Majaz (a popular pre-Islamic marketplace), they would all have perished.' He then died and went to the Fire,

(فَسُحِّقًا لِأَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ)

(So, away with the dwellers of the blazing Fire!) 67:11 ."

This was collected by Musa bin `Uqbah from Az-Zuhri from Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib.

It is recorded in the Two Sahih that when he was asked about the injuries the Messenger sustained in Uhud , Sahl bin Sa`d said, "The face of Allah's Messenger was injured, his front tooth was broken and his helmet was smashed on his head. Therefore, Fatimah, the daughter of Allah's Messenger washed off the blood while `Ali was pouring water on her hand. When Fatimah saw that the bleeding increased more by the water, she took a mat, burnt it, and placed the ashes in the wound of the Prophet and the blood stopped oozing out." Allah said next,

(فَأْتَبِكُمْ غَمًّا بَعْدَ غَمٍّ)

(There did Allah give you one distress after another) 3:153 ,

He gave you grief over your grief. Ibn `Abbas said, `The first grief was because of the defeat, especially when it was rumored that Muhammad was killed. The second grief was when the idolators went up the mount and The Messenger of Allah said, `O Allah! It is not for them to rise above us.'"

`Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf said, "The first distress was because of the defeat and the second when a rumor started that Muhammad was killed, which to them, was worse than defeat." Ibn Marduwyah recorded both of these. Mujahid and Qatadah said, "The first distress was when they heard that Muhammad was killed and the second when they suffered casualties and injury." It has also been reported that Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that it was the opposite order . As-Suddi said that the first distress was because of the victory and booty that they missed and the second because of the enemy rising above them (on the mount). Allah said,

(لَكَيْلًا تَحْزَنُوا عَلَى مَا فَاتَكُمْ)

(by way of requital to teach you not to grieve for that which had escaped you), for that you missed the booty and triumph over your enemy.

(وَلَا مَا أَصَابَكُمْ)

(nor for what struck you), of injury and fatalities, as Ibn `Abbas, `Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and As-Suddi stated. Allah said next,

(وَاللَّهُ خَيْرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ)

(And Allah is Well-Aware of all that you do.) all praise is due to Him, and thanks, there is no deity worthy of worship except Him, the Most High, Most Honored.

(ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّن بَعْدِ الْغَمِّ أَمَنَةً نُّعَاسًا يَغْشَى طَائِفَةً مِّنْكُمْ وَطَائِفَةٌ قَدْ أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ يَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ ظَنَّ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَقُولُونَ هَل لَّنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَمْرَ كُلَّهُ لِلَّهِ يُخْفُونَ فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ مَا لَا يُبْدُونَ لَكَ يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ مَّا قُتِلْنَا هَهُنَا قُلْ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ إِلَى مَضَاجِعِهِمْ وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللَّهُ مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِي

قُلُوبِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ - إِنَّ الَّذِينَ
تَوَلَّوْا مِنْكُمْ يَوْمَ التَّقَى الْجَمْعَانَ إِنَّمَا اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ
الشَّيْطَانُ بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ)

(154. Then after the distress, He sent down security for you. Slumber overtook a party of you, while another party was thinking about themselves and thought wrongly of Allah -- the thought of ignorance. They said, "Have we any part in the affair" Say: "Indeed the affair belongs wholly to Allah." They hide within themselves what they dare not reveal to you, saying: "If we had anything to do with the affair, none of us would have been killed here." Say: "Even if you had remained in your homes, those for whom death was decreed would certainly have gone forth to the place of their death," but that Allah might test what is in your breasts; and to purify that which was in your hearts (sins), and Allah is All-Knower of what is in the breasts). (155. Those of you who turned back on the day the two hosts met, Shaytan only caused them to err because of some of what they had earned. But Allah, indeed, has forgiven them. Surely, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing.)

Slumber Overcame the Believers; the Fear that the Hypocrites Suffered

Allah reminds His servants of His favor when He sent down on them tranquillity and slumber that overcame them while they were carrying their weapons and feeling distress and grief. In this case, slumber is a favor and carries meanings of calmness and safety. For instance, Allah said in Surat Al-Anfal about the battle of Badr,

إِذْ يُغَشِّيكُمُ النُّعَاسَ أَمَنَةً مِّنْهُ)

((Remember) when He covered you with a slumber as a security from Him) 8:11 .

Al-Bukhari recorded that Anas said that, Abu Talhah said, "I was among those who were overcome by slumber during the battle of Uhud. My sword fell from my hand several times and I would pick it up, then it would fall and I would pick it up again." Al-Bukhari collected this Hadith in the stories of the battles without a chain of narration, and in the book of Tafsir with a chain of narrators. At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Al-Hakim recorded from Anas that Abu Talhah said, "On the day of Uhud, I raised my head and looked around and found that everyone's head was nodding from slumber." This is the wording of At-Tirmidhi, who said, "Hasan Sahih". An-Nasa'i also recorded this Hadith from Anas who said that Abu Talhah said, "I was among those who were overcome by slumber."

The second group mentioned in the Ayah were the hypocrites who only thought about themselves, for they are the most cowardly people and those least likely to support the truth,

(يَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ ظَنَّ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ)

(and thought wrongly of Allah - the thought of ignorance) 3:154 , for they are liars and people who have doubts and evil thoughts about Allah, the Exalted and Most Honored. Allah said,

(ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّن بَعْدِ الْغَمِّ أَمْنَةً نُعَاسًا يَعْشَى
طَائِفَةً مِّنْكُمْ)

(Then after the distress, He sent down security for you. Slumber overtook a party of you), the people of faith, certainty, firmness and reliance (on Allah) who are certain that Allah shall give victory to His Messenger and fulfill his objective.

(وَأَطِيفَةٌ قَدْ أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ)

(While another party was thinking about themselves), and they were not overcome by slumber because of their worry, fright and fear,

(يَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ ظَنَّ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ)

(and thought wrongly of Allah --- the thought of ignorance).

Similarly, Allah said in another statement,

(بَلْ ظَنَّيْتُمْ أَن لَّن يَنْقَلِبَ الرَّسُولُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَى
أَهْلِيهِمْ أَبَدًا)

(Nay, but you thought that the Messenger and the believers would never return to their families) 48:12 .

This group thought that the idolators achieved ultimate victory, when their forces took the upper hand in battle, and that Islam and its people would perish. This is typical of people of doubt and hesitation, in the event of a hardship, they fall into such evil thoughts. Allah then described them that,

(يَقُولُونَ)

(they said) in this situation,

(هَلْ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ)

("Have we any part in the affair") Allah replied,

(قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَمْرَ كُلَّهُ لِلَّهِ يُخْفُونَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ مَا لَا يُبْدُونَ لَكَ)

(Say: "Indeed the affair belongs wholly to Allah." They hide within themselves what they dare not reveal to you.) wAllah exposed their secrets, that is,

(يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ مَا قُتِلْنَا هَهُنَا)

(saying: "If we had anything to do with the affair, none of us would have been killed here." although they tried to conceal this thought from the Messenger of Allah .

Ibn Ishaq recorded that `Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr said that Az-Zubayr said, "I was with the Messenger of Allah when fear intensified and Allah sent sleep to us (during the battle of Uhud). At that time, every man among us (except the hypocrites) was nodding off. By Allah! As if in a dream, I heard the words of Mu`attib bin Qushayr, `If we had anything to do with the affair, none of us would have been killed here.' I memorized these words of his, which Allah mentioned later on,

(يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ مَا قُتِلْنَا هَهُنَا)

(saying: "If we had anything to do with the affair, none of us would have been killed here.")

Ibn Abi Hatim collected this Hadith.

Allah the Exalted said,

(قُلْ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ إِلَى مَضَاجِعِهِمْ)

(Say: "Even if you had remained in your homes, those for whom death was decreed would certainly have gone forth to the place of their death,") meaning, this is Allah's appointed destiny and a decision that will certainly come to pass, and there is no escaping it. Allah's statement,

(وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللَّهُ مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحَّصَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ)

(that Allah might test what is in your breasts; and to purify that which was in your hearts,) means, so that He tests you with whatever befell you, to distinguish good from evil and the deeds and statements of the believers from those of the hypocrites,

(وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ)

(and Allah is All-Knower of what is in the breasts), and what the hearts conceal.

Some of the Believers Give Flight on the Day of Uhud

Allah then said,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا مِنْكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ إِنَّمَا اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا)

(Those of you who turned back on the day the two hosts met, Shaytan only caused them to err because of some of what they had earned) 3:155 ,

because of some of their previous errors. Indeed, some of the Salaf said, "The reward of the good deed includes being directed to another good deed that follows it, while the retribution of sin includes committing another sin that follows it." Allah then said,

(وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ)

(but Allah, indeed, has forgiven them), their giving flight,

(أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ)

(surely, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing)

He forgives sins, pardons and exonerates His creatures. Imam Ahmad recorded that Shaiq said, " `Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf met Al-Walid bin `Uqbah, who said to him, `Why did you desert `Uthman, the Leader of the Faithful' `Abdur-Rahman said, `Tell him that I did not run away during Uhud, remain behind during Badr, nor abandon the Sunnah of `Umar.' Al-Walid told `Uthman what `Abdur-Rahman said. `Uthman replied, `As for his statement, `I did not run away during Uhud,' how can he blame me for an error that Allah has already forgiven. Allah said,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا مِنْكُمْ يَوْمَ التَّقَى الْجَمْعَانَ إِنَّمَا
 اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللَّهُ
 عَنْهُمْ)

(Those of you who turned back on the day the two hosts met, Shaytan only caused them to err because of some of what they had earned. But Allah, indeed, has forgiven them).

As for his statement that I remained behind from participating in Badr, I was nursing Ruqayyah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah , until she passed away. The Messenger of Allah gave me a share in the booty of Badr, and whoever gets a share in the booty from the Messenger of Allah will have participated in battle. As for his statement that I abandoned the Sunnah of `Umar, neither I nor he are able to endure it. Go and convey this answer to him."

(يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
 وَقَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ إِذَا ضَرَبُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَوْ كَانُوا
 غُزًى لَوْ كَانُوا عِنْدَنَا مَا مَاتُوا وَمَا قُتِلُوا لِيَجْعَلَ
 اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ حَسْرَةً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ
 وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ - وَلَئِنْ قُتِلْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ
 اللَّهِ أَوْ مِتُّمُ لِمَغْفِرَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَحْمَةٍ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا
 يَجْمَعُونَ - وَلَئِنْ مِتُّمُ أَوْ قُتِلْتُمْ لِإِلَى اللَّهِ تُحْشَرُونَ
 (

(156. O you who believe! Be not like those who disbelieve and who say to their brethren when they travel through the earth or go out to fight: "If they had stayed with us, they would not have died or been killed," so that Allah may make it a cause of regret in their hearts. It is Allah

that gives life and causes death. And Allah is All-Seeing of what you do.) (157. And if you are killed or die in the way of Allah, forgiveness and mercy from Allah are far better than all that they amass.) (158. And whether you die or are killed, verily, unto Allah you shall be gathered.)

Prohibiting the Ideas of the Disbelievers about Death and Predestination

Allah forbids His believing servants from the disbelievers' false creed, seen in their statement about those who died in battle and during travel; "Had they abandoned these trips, they would not have met their demise." Allah said,

يَأْيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
وَقَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ

(O you who believe! Be not like those who disbelieve (hypocrites) and who say to their brethren), about their dead brethren,

(إِذَا ضَرَبُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ)

(when they travel through the earth) for the purpose of trading and otherwise,

(أَوْ كَانُوا غُزًى)

(or go out to fight), participating in battles,

(لَوْ كَانُوا عِنْدَنَا)

("If they had stayed with us,") in our area,

(مَا مَاتُوا وَمَا قُتِلُوا)

("they would not have died or been killed,") they would not have died while traveling or been killed in battle. Allah's statement,

(لِيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ حَسْرَةً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ)

(so that Allah may make it a cause of regret in their hearts.) means, Allah creates this evil thought in their hearts so that their sadness and the grief they feel for their loss would increase. Allah refuted them by saying,

(وَاللَّهُ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ)

(It is Allah that gives life and causes death.) for the creation is under Allah's power, and the decision is His Alone. No one lives or dies except by Allah's leave, and no one's life is increased or decreased except by His decree.

(وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ)

(And Allah is All-Seer of what you do,) for His knowledge and vision encompasses all His creation and none of their affairs ever escapes Him. Allah's statement,

(وَلَئِن قُتِلْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ مِتُّم لَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ
وَرَحْمَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ)

(And if you are killed or die in the way of Allah, forgiveness and mercy from Allah are far better than all that they amass.) 3:157 , indicating that death and martyrdom in Allah's cause are a means of earning Allah's mercy, forgiveness and pleasure. This, indeed, is better than remaining in this life with its short lived delights. Furthermore, whoever dies or is killed will return to Allah, the Exalted and Most Honored, and He will reward him if he has done good deeds, or will punish him for his evil deeds. Allah said,

(وَلَئِن مِّن مِّنكُمْ أَوْ قُتِلْتُمْ لَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُحْشَرُونَ)

(And whether you die or are killed, verily, unto Allah you shall be gathered.) 3:158 .

(فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا
غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَأَنْفَضُوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ
وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ
فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ - إِنْ
يَنْصُرْكُمْ اللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ وَإِنْ يَخْذُلْكُمْ فَمَنْ دَا

الَّذِي يَنْصُرُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ - وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغُلَّ وَمَنْ يَغُلْ
يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا
كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ - أَفَمَنْ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ
كَمَنْ بَاءَ بِسَخَطٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَمَأْوَاهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَيَسَّرَ
الْمَصِيرُ - هُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بِصِيرٍ بِمَا
يَعْمَلُونَ - لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ
فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ
وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا
مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ (

(159. And by the mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so pardon them, and ask forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him).) (160. If Allah helps you, none can overcome you; and if He forsakes you, who is there after Him that can help you And in Allah (Alone) let believers put their trust.) (161. It is not for any Prophet to illegally take a part of the booty, and whosoever deceives his companions over the booty, he shall bring forth on the Day of Resurrection that which he took. Then every person shall be paid in full what he has earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.) (162. Is then one who follows (seeks) the pleasure of Allah like the one who draws on himself the wrath of Allah His abode is Hell, and worse indeed is that destination!) (163. They are in varying grades with Allah, and Allah is All-Seer of what they do.) (164. Indeed, Allah conferred a great favor on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from among themselves, reciting unto them His verses (the Qur'an), and purifying them, and instructing them (in) the Book (the Qur'an) and Al-Hikmah the wisdom and the Sunnah , while before that they had been in manifest error.)

Among the Qualities of Our Prophet Muhammad are Mercy and Kindness

Allah addresses His Messenger and reminds him and the believers of the favor that He has made his heart and words soft for his Ummah, those who follow his command and refrain from what he prohibits.

(فِيمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لَئِن لَّمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ رَحِيمًا لَّفَلْتَحِثُّوا عَلَيْهِمْ حَبًّٰلًا)

(And by the mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently) 3:159 . meaning, who would have made you this kind, if it was not Allah's mercy for you and them. Qatadah said that,

(فِيمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لَئِن لَّمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ رَحِيمًا لَّفَلْتَحِثُّوا عَلَيْهِمْ حَبًّٰلًا)

(And by the mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently) means, "With Allah's mercy you became this kind." Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that this, indeed, is the description of the behavior that Allah sent Muhammad with. This Ayah is similar to Allah's statement,

(لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُم بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ)

(Verily, there has come unto you a Messenger from among yourselves. It grieves him that you should receive any injury or difficulty. He is anxious over you (to be rightly guided, to repent to Allah); for the believers (he is) full of pity, kind, and merciful) 9:128 . Allah said next,

(وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ)

(And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you;)

The severe person is he who utters harsh words, and,

(غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ)

(harsh-hearted) is the person whose heart is hard. Had this been the Prophet's behavior, "They would have scattered from around you. However, Allah gathered them and made you kind and soft with them, so that their hearts congregate around you." `Abdullah bin `Amr said that he read the description of the Messenger of Allah in previous Books, "He is not severe, harsh, obscene in the marketplace or dealing evil for evil. Rather, he forgives and pardons."

The Order for Consultation and to Abide by it

Allah said,

(فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ)

(So pardon them, and ask (Allah's) forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs.)

The Messenger of Allah used to ask his Companions for advice about various matters, to comfort their hearts, and so they actively implement the decision they reach. For instance, before the battle of Badr, the Prophet asked his Companions for if Muslims should intercept the caravan (led by Abu Sufyan). They said, "O Messenger of Allah! If you wish to cross the sea, we would follow you in it, and if you march forth to Barkul-Ghimad we would march with you. We would never say what the Children of Israel said to Musa, 'So go, you and your Lord, and fight you two, we are sitting right here.' Rather, we say march forth and we shall march forth with you; and before you, and to your right and left shall we fight." The Prophet also asked them for their opinion about where they should set up camp at Badr. Al-Mundhir bin `Amr suggested to camp close to the enemy, for he wished to acquire martyrdom.

Concerning the battle of Uhud, the Messenger asked the Companions if they should fortify themselves in Al-Madinah or go out to meet the enemy, and the majority of them requested that they go out to meet the enemy, and he did. He also took their advice on the day of Khandaq (the Trench) about conducting a peace treaty with some of the tribes of Al-Ahzab (the Confederates), in return for giving them one-third of the fruits of Al-Madinah. However, Sa`d bin `Ubadah and Sa`d bin Mu`adh rejected this offer and the Prophet went ahead with their advice. The Prophet also asked them if they should attack the idolators on the Day of Hdaybiyyah, and Abu Bakr disagreed, saying, "We did not come here to fight anyone. Rather, we came to perform `Umrah." The Prophet agreed.

On the day of Ifk, (i.e. the false accusation), the Messenger of Allah said to them, "O Muslims! Give me your advice about some men who falsely accused my wife (`A'ishah). By Allah! I never knew of any evil to come from my wife. And they accused whom They accused he from whom I only knew righteous conduct, by Allah!" The Prophet asked `Ali and Usamah about divorcing `A'ishah. In summary, the Prophet used to take his Companions' advice for battles and other important events.

Ibn Majah recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Prophet said;

«المُسْتَشَارُ مُؤْتَمَنٌ»

(The one whom advice is sought from is to be entrusted) tThis was recorded by Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, and An-Nasa'i who graded it Hasan.

Trust in Allah After Taking the Decision

Allah's statement,

(فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ)

(Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah,) means, if you conduct the required consultation and you then make a decision, trust in Allah over your decision,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ)

(certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him)).

Allah's statement,

(إِنْ يَنْصُرْكُمُ اللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ وَإِنْ يَخْذَلْكُمْ
فَمَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَنْصُرُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ
فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ)

(If Allah helps you, none can overcome you; and if He forsakes you, who is there after Him that can help you And in Allah (Alone) let believers put their trust), is similar to His statement that we mentioned earlier,

(وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ)

(And there is no victory except from Allah the Almighty, the All-Wise) 3:126 .

Allah next commands the believers to trust in Him,

(وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ)

(And in Allah (Alone) let believers put their trust).

Treachery with the Spoils of War was not a Trait of the Prophet

Allah said,

(وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغُلَّ)

(It is not for any Prophet to illegally take a part of the booty,)

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid and Al-Hasan said that the Ayah means, "It is not for a Prophet to breach the trust." Ibn Jarir recorded that, Ibn `Abbas said that, this Ayah,

(وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغُلَّ)

(It is not for any Prophet to illegally take a part of the booty,) was revealed in connection with a red robe that was missing from the spoils of war of Badr. Some people said that the Messenger of Allah might have taken it. When this rumor circulated, Allah sent down,

(وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغُلَّ وَمَنْ يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ)

(It is not for any Prophet to illegally take a part of the booty, and whosoever is deceitful with the booty, he shall bring forth on the Day of Resurrection that which he took.)

This was also recorded by Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi, who said "Hasan Gharib". This Ayah exonerates the Messenger of Allah of all types of deceit and treachery, be it returning what was entrusted with him, dividing the spoils of war, etc.

Allah then said,

(وَمَنْ يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ
نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ)

(and whosoever is deceitful with the booty, he shall bring forth on the Day of Resurrection that which he took. Then every person shall be paid in full what he has earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.)

This Ayah contains a stern warning and threat against Ghulul stealing from the booty, and there are also Hadiths, that prohibit such practice. Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Malik Al-Ashja'i said that the Prophet said,

«أَعْظَمُ الْعُتُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ذِرَاعٌ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ،
تَجِدُونَ الرَّجُلَيْنِ جَارَيْنِ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَوْ فِي الدَّارِ
فَيَقْطَعُ أَحَدُهُمَا مِنْ حَظِّ صَاحِبِهِ ذِرَاعًا، فَإِذَا
اِقْتَطَعَهُ، طَوَّقَهُ مِنْ سَبْعِ أَرْضِينَ إِلَى يَوْمِ
الْقِيَامَةِ»

(The worst Ghulul (i.e. stealing) with Allah is a yard of land, that is, when you find two neighbors in a land or home and one of them illegally acquires a yard of his neighbor's land. When he does, he will be tied with it from the seven earths until the Day of Resurrection.)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Humayd As-Sa`idi said, "The Prophet appointed a man from the tribe of Al-Azd, called Ibn Al-Lutbiyyah, to collect the Zakah. When he returned he said, 'This (portion) is for you and this has been given to me as a gift.' The Prophet stood on the Minbar and said,

«مَا بَالُ الْعَامِلِ نَبَعْتُهُ فَيَجِي فَيَقُولُ: هَذَا لَكُمْ،
وَهَذَا أَهْدَيْ لِي، أَفَلَا جَلَسَ فِي بَيْتِ أَبِيهِ وَأُمَّهِ
فَيَنْظُرُ أَيُهْدَى إِلَيْهِ أَمْ لَأ؟ وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ،
لَا يَأْتِي أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنْهَا بِشَيْءٍ إِلَّا جَاءَ بِهِ يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَى رَقَبَتِهِ، إِنْ كَانَ بَعِيرًا لَهُ رُغَاءٌ، أَوْ
بَقْرَةٌ لَهَا حُورٌ، أَوْ شَاةٌ تَعْرُ»

:

«اللَّهُمَّ هَلْ بَلَّغْتَ»

.(What is the matter with a man whom we appoint to collect Zakah, when he returns he said, 'This is for you and this has been given to me as a gift.' Why hadn't he stayed in his father's or mother's house to see whether he would be given presents or not By Him in Whose Hand my life is, whoever takes anything from the resources of the Zakah (unlawfully), he will carry it on his neck on the Day of Resurrection; if it be a camel, it will be grunting; if a cow, it will be mooing; and if a sheep, it will be bleating. The Prophet then raised his hands till we saw the whiteness of his armpits, and he said thrice, 'O Allah! Haven't I conveyed Your Message.')"

Hisham bin `Urwah added that Abu Humayd said, "I have seen him with my eyes and heard him with my ears, and ask Zayd bin Thabit." This is recorded in the Two Sahihs.

In the book of Ahkam of his Sunan, Abu `Isa At-Tirmidhi recorded that Mu`adh bin Jabal said, "The Messenger of Allah sent me to Yemen, but when I started on the journey, he sent for me to come back and said,

«أَتَدْرِي لِمَ بَعَثْتُ إِلَيْكَ؟ لَا تُصِيبَنَّ شَيْئًا بِغَيْرِ
إِذْنِي، فَإِنَّهُ غُلُولٌ»

(Do you know why I summoned you back Do not take anything without my permission, for if you do, it will be Ghulul.)

(وَمَنْ يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ)

(and whosoever deceives his companions over the booty, he shall bring forth on the Day of Resurrection that which he took).

«لِهَذَا دَعَوْتُكَ فَأَمْضِ لِعَمَلِكَ»

(This is why I summoned you, so now go and fulfill your mission.)" At-Tirmidhi said, "This Hadith is Hasan Gharib."

In addition, Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Hurayrah said, "The Prophet got up among us and mentioned Ghulul and emphasized its magnitude. He then said,

«لَا أَلْفِينَ أَحَدَكُمْ يَجِيءُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَى رَقَبَتِهِ
بَعِيرٌ لَهُ رُغَاءٌ، فَيَقُولُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ اغْنِنِي،
فَأَقُولُ: لَا أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا، قَدْ أَبْلَعْتُكَ، لَا
أَلْفِينَ أَحَدَكُمْ يَجِيءُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَى رَقَبَتِهِ فَرَسٌ
لَهَا حَمْحَمَةٌ، فَيَقُولُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ اغْنِنِي،
فَأَقُولُ: لَا أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا، قَدْ أَبْلَعْتُكَ، لَا
أَلْفِينَ أَحَدَكُمْ يَجِيءُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَى رَقَبَتِهِ رِقَاعٌ
تَخْفِقُ فَيَقُولُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ اغْنِنِي، فَأَقُولُ: لَا
أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا، قَدْ أَبْلَعْتُكَ، لَا أَلْفِينَ أَحَدَكُمْ

يَجِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَى رَقَبَتِهِ صَامِتٌ، فَيَقُولُ: يَا
رَسُولَ اللَّهِ اغْنِنِي، فَأَقُولُ: لَا أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ
شَيْئًا، قَدْ أَبْلَعْتُكَ»

(I will not like to see anyone among you on the Day of Resurrection, carrying a grunting camel over his neck. Such a man will say, 'O Allah's Messenger! Intercede on my behalf,' and I will say, 'I can't intercede for you with Allah, for I have conveyed (Allah's Message) to you.' I will not like to see any of you coming on the Day of Resurrection while carrying a neighing horse over his neck. Such a man will be saying, 'O Allah's Messenger! Intercede on my behalf,' and I will reply, 'I can't intercede for you with Allah, for I have conveyed (Allah's Message) to you.' I will not like to see any of you coming on the Day of Resurrection while carrying clothes that will be fluttering, and the man will say, 'O Allah's Messenger! Intercede (with Allah) for me,' and I will say, 'I can't help you with Allah, for I have conveyed (Allah's Message) to you.' I will not like to see any of you coming on the Day of Resurrection while carrying gold and silver on his neck. This person will say, 'O Allah's Messenger! Intercede (with Allah) for me.' And I will say, 'I can't help you with Allah, for I have conveyed (Allah's Message) to you.')" This Hadith was recorded in the Two Sahih.

Imam Ahmad recorded that `Umar bin Al-Khattab said, "During the day (battle) of Khaybar, several Companions of the Messenger of Allah came to him and said, 'So-and-so died as a martyr, so-and-so died as a martyr.' When they mentioned a certain man that died as a martyr, the Messenger of Allah said,

«كَلَّا إِنِّي رَأَيْتُهُ فِي النَّارِ فِي بُرْدَةٍ غَلَّهَا أَوْ عَبَاءَةٍ
»

(No. I have seen him in the Fire because of a robe that he stole (from the booty).)

The Messenger of Allah then said,

«يَا ابْنَ الْخَطَّابِ، اذْهَبْ فَنَادِ فِي النَّاسِ: إِنَّهُ لَا
يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ»

(O Ibn Al-Khattab! Go and announce to the people that only the faithful shall enter Paradise.)

So I went out and proclaimed that none except the faithful shall enter Paradise." This was recorded by Muslim and At-Tirmidhi, who said "Hasan Sahih".

The Honest and Dishonest are Not Similar

Allah said,

(أَفَمَنْ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ كَمَنْ بَاءَ بِسَخَطٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ
وَمَا وَاهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَيُسَّ الْمَصِيرُ)

(Is then one who follows (seeks) the pleasure of Allah like the one who draws on himself the wrath of Allah His abode is Hell, and worse indeed is that destination!) 3:162 ,

This refers to those seeking what pleases Allah by obeying His legislation, thus earning His pleasure and tremendous rewards, while being saved from His severe torment. This type of person is not similar to one who earns Allah's anger, has no means of escaping it and who will reside in Jahannam on the Day of Resurrection, and what an evil destination it is.

There are many similar statements in the Qur'an, such as,

(أَفَمَنْ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ الْحَقُّ كَمَنْ
هُوَ أَعْمَى)

(Shall he then who knows that what has been revealed unto you (O Muhammad) from your Lord is the truth be like him who is blind) 13:19 , and,

(أَفَمَنْ وَعَدْنَاهُ وَعَدًّا حَسَنًا فَهُوَ لَاقِيهِ كَمَنْ مَتَّعْنَاهُ
مَتَّعَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا)

(Is he whom We have promised an excellent promise (Paradise) which he will find true, like him whom We have made to enjoy the luxuries of the life of (this) world) 28:61 .

Allah then said,

(هُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ)

(They are in varying grades with Allah,) 3:163 meaning, the people of righteousness and the people of evil are in grades, as Al-Hasan Al-Basri and Muhammad bin Ishaq said. Abu `Ubaydah and Al-Kisa'i said that this Ayah refers to degrees, meaning there are various degrees and dwellings in Paradise, as well as, various degrees and dwellings in the Fire. In another Ayah, Allah said,

(وَلِكُلِّ دَرَجَاتٍ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوا)

(For all there will be degrees (or ranks) according to what they did) 6:132 . Next, Allah said,

(وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ)

(and Allah is All-Seer of what they do), and He will compensate or punish them, and will never rid them of a good deed, or increase their evil deeds. Rather, each will be treated according to his deeds.

The Magnificent Blessing in the Advent of Our Prophet Muhammad

Allah the Most High said:

(لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا
مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ)

(Indeed Allah conferred a great favor on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from among themselves,)

Meaning, from their own kind, so that it is possible for them to speak with him, ask him questions, associate with him, and benefit from him. Just as Allah said:

(وَمِنْ ءَايَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا
لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا)

(And among His signs is that he created for them mates, that they may find rest in.)

Meaning; of their own kind. And Allah said;

(قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمْ
إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ)

(Say: "I am only a man like you. It has been revealed to me that your God is One God")
18:110 .

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا إِنَّهُمْ لِيَأْكُلُونَ
الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشُونَ فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ)

(And We never sent before you any of the Messengers but verily, they ate food and walked in the markets) 25:20 .

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رَجَالًا نُوحِيَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ
أَهْلِ الْقُرَى)

(And We sent not before you any but men unto whom We revealed, from among the people of townships) 12:109 , and,

يَمَعَشَرَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِنْكُمْ)

(O you assembly of Jinn and mankind! "Did not there come to you Messengers from among you...") 6:130 .

Allah's favor is perfected when His Messenger to the people is from their own kind, so that they are able to talk to him and inquire about the meanings of Allah's Word. This is why Allah said,

يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ)

(reciting unto them His verses) 3:164 , the Qur'an,

وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ)

(and purifying them), commanding them to do righteous works and forbidding them from committing evil. This is how their hearts will be purified and cleansed of the sin and evil that used to fill them when they were disbelievers and ignorant.

وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ)

(and instructing them (in) the Book and the Hikmah,) the Qur'an and the Sunnah,

وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ)

(while before that they had been), before sending this Prophet, Muhammad ,

(لَفِي ضَلَلٍ مُّبِينٍ)

(in manifest error.) indulging in plain and unequivocal error and ignorance that are clear to everyone.

(أَوْ لَمَّا أَصَابَكُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَدْ أَصَبْتُمْ مِثْلَهَا قُلْتُمْ
أَنَّى هَذَا قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ - وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ يَوْمَ التَّقَى الْجَمْعَانِ
فَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ - وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا
وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا قَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ ادْفَعُوا
قَالُوا لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا لَاتَّبَعْنَاكُمْ هُمْ لِلْكَفْرِ يَوْمَئِذٍ
أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ يَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ مَا لَيْسَ فِي
قُلُوبِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَكْتُمُونَ - الَّذِينَ قَالُوا
لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ وَقَعَدُوا لَوْ أَطَاعُونَا مَا قُتِلُوا قُلْ
فَادْرَأُوا عَنْ أَنْفُسِكُمُ الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ)

t(165. (What is the matter with you) When a single disaster smites you, although you smote (your enemies) with one twice as great, you say: "From where does this come to us" Say, "It is from yourselves." And Allah has power over all things.) (166. And what you suffered on the day the two armies met, was by the leave of Allah, in order that He might test the believers). (167. And that He might test the hypocrites, it was said to them: "Come, fight in the way of Allah or defend yourselves." They said: "Had we known that fighting will take place, we would certainly have followed you." They were that day, nearer to disbelief than to faith, saying with their mouths what was not in their hearts. And Allah has full knowledge of what they conceal.) (168. (They are) the ones who said about their killed brethren while they themselves sat (at home): "If only they had listened to us, they would not have been killed." Say: "Avert death from your own selves, if you speak the truth.")

The Reason and Wisdom Behind the Defeat at Uhud

Allah said,

(أَوْ لَمَّا أَصَبَتْكُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ)

(When a single disaster smites you), in reference to when the Muslims suffered seventy fatalities during the battle of Uhud,

(قَدْ أَصَبْتُمْ مِّثْلَيْهَا)

(although you smote (your enemies) with one twice as great,) during Badr, when the Muslims killed seventy Mushriks and captured seventy others,

(قُلْتُمْ أُنَّى هَذَا)

(you say: "From where does this come to us") why did this defeat happen to us

(قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِكُمْ)

(Say, "It is from yourselves.") Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `Umar bin Al-Khattab said, "When Uhud occurred, a year after Badr, Muslims were punished for taking ransom from the disbelievers at Badr in return for releasing the Mushriks whom they captured in that battle . Thus, they suffered the loss of seventy fatalities and the Companions of the Messenger of Allah gave flight and abandoned him. The Messenger suffered a broken tooth, the helmet was smashed on his head and blood flowed onto his face. Allah then revealed,

(أَوْ لَمَّا أَصَبَتْكُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَدْ أَصَبْتُمْ مِّثْلَيْهَا قُلْتُمْ
أُنَّى هَذَا قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِكُمْ)

(When a single disaster smites you, although you smote (your enemies) with one twice as great, you say: "From where does this come to us" Say, "It is from yourselves".), because you took the ransom." Furthermore, Muhammad bin Ishaq, Ibn Jurayj, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and As-Suddi said that the Ayah,

(قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِكُمْ)

(Say, "It is from yourselves.") means, because you, the archers, disobeyed the Messenger's command to not abandon your positions.

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)

(And Allah has power over all things.) and He does what He wills and decides what He wills, and there is none who can resist His decision.

Allah then said,

(وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ يَوْمَ التَّقَىٰ الْجَمْعَانَ فَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ)

(And what you suffered on the day the two armies met, was by the leave of Allah), for when you ran away from your enemy, who killed many of you and injured many others, all this occurred by Allah's will and decree out of His perfect wisdom,

(وَلِيَعْلَمَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(in order that He might test the believers.) who were patient, firm and were not shaken,

(وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ نَاقَضُوا وَعَقِلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا قَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ ادْفَعُوا قَالُوا لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا لَاتَّبَعْنَاكُمْ)

(And that He might test the hypocrites, it was said to them: "Come, fight in the way of Allah or defend yourselves." They said: "Had we known that fighting will take place, we would certainly have followed you.") 3:167 ,

This refers to the Companions of `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul who went back (to Al-Madinah) with him before the battle. Some believers followed them and encouraged them to come back and fight, saying,

(أَوْ ادْفَعُوا)

(or defend), so that the number of Muslims increases, as Ibn `Abbas, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Ad-Dahhak, Abu Salih, Al-Hasan and As-Suddi stated. Al-Hasan bin Salih said that this part of the Ayah means, help by supplicating for us, while others said it means, man the posts. However, they refused, saying,

(لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا لَاتَّبَعْنَاكُمْ)

("Had we known that fighting will take place, we would certainly have followed you.") meaning, according to Mujahid, if we knew that you would fight today, we would join you, but we think you will not fight. Allah said,

(هُمُ لِلْكَفْرِ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ)

(They were that day, nearer to disbelief than to faith,)

This Ayah indicates that a person passes through various stages, sometimes being closer to Kufir and sometimes closer to faith, as evident by,

(هُمُ لِلْكَفْرِ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ)

(They were that day, nearer to disbelief than to faith,)

Allah then said,

(يَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ مَا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ)

(saying with their mouths what was not in their hearts.) for they utter what they do not truly believe in, such as,

(لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا لَا تَبْعَنَّاكُمْ)

("Had we known that fighting will take place, we would certainly have followed you.")

They knew that there was an army of idolators that came from a far land raging against the Muslims, to avenge their noble men whom the Muslims killed in Badr. These idolators came in larger numbers than the Muslims, so it was clear that a battle will certainly occur. Allah said;

(وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَكْتُمُونَ)

(And Allah has full knowledge of what they conceal.)

(الَّذِينَ قَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ وَقَعَدُوا لَوْ أَطَاعُونَا مَا قُتِلُوا)

((They are) the ones who said about their killed brethren while they themselves sat (at home): "If only they had listened to us, they would not have been killed.") had they listened to our advice and not gone out, they would not have met their demise. Allah said,

﴿قُلْ فَادْرَءُوا عَنْ أَنْفُسِكُمُ الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
صَادِقِينَ﴾

(Say: "Avert death from your own selves, if you speak the truth.") meaning, if staying at home saves one from being killed or from death, then you should not die. However death will come to you even if you were hiding in fortified castles. Therefore, fend death off of yourselves, if you are right.

Mujahid said that Jabir bin `Abdullah said, "This Ayah 3:168 was revealed about `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul (the chief hypocrite)."

﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ
أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ - فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ
اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ
مِّنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ -
يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا
يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ - الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِلَّهِ
وَالرَّسُولِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ لِلَّذِينَ
أَحْسَنُوا مِنْهُمْ وَاتَّقُوا أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ - الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ
النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ
إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ - فَأَنْقَلَبُوا
بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ لَّمْ يَمْسَسْهُمْ سُوءٌ وَاتَّبَعُوا
رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَظِيمٍ - إِنَّمَا ذَلِكُمْ

الشَّيْطَانُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَاءَهُ فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُونَ
إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ)

(169. Think not of those as dead who are killed in the way of Allah. Nay, they are alive, with their Lord, and they have provision.) (170. They rejoice in what Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounty and rejoice for the sake of those who have not yet joined them, but are left behind (not yet martyred) that on them no fear shall come, nor shall they grieve.) (171. They rejoice in a grace and a bounty from Allah, and that Allah will not waste the reward of the believers.) (172. Those who answered (the Call of) Allah and the Messenger after being wounded; for those of them who did good deeds and feared Allah, there is a great reward.) (173. Those to whom the people said, "Verily, the people have gathered against you, therefore, fear them." But it (only) increased them in faith, and they said: "Allah is Sufficient for us, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs.") (174. So they returned with grace and bounty from Allah. No harm touched them; and they followed the pleasure of Allah. And Allah is the Owner of great bounty.) (175. It is only Shaytan that suggests to you the fear of his friends; so fear them not, but fear Me, if you are indeed believers.)

Virtues of the Martyrs

Allah states that even though the martyrs were killed in this life, their souls are alive and receiving provisions in the Dwelling of Everlasting Life. In his Sahih, Muslim recorded that Masruq said, "We asked `Abdullah about this Ayah,

«وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ
أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ)

(Think not of those as dead who are killed in the way of Allah. Nay, they are alive, with their Lord, and they have provision.)

He said, ` We asked the Messenger of Allah the same question and he said,

«أُرْوَاهُمْ فِي جَوْفِ طَيْرٍ حُضِرَ، لَهَا قَنَادِيلُ
مُعَلَّقَةٌ بِالْعَرْشِ، تَسْرَحُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ شَاءَتْ،
ثُمَّ تَأْوِي إِلَى تِلْكَ الْقَنَادِيلِ، فَاطَّلَعَ إِلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ
اطِّلَاعَةً فَقَالَ: هَلْ تَسْتَهُونَ شَيْئًا؟ فَقَالُوا: أَيُّ
شَيْءٍ نَسْتَهِي وَنَحْنُ نَسْرَحُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ

شِينَا؟ ففعل ذلك بهم ثلاث مرّات، فلما رأوا أنّهم
لن يتركوها من أن يسألوا، قالوا: يا ربّ نريد أن
تردّ أرواحنا في أجسادنا حتى نُقتل في سبيلك
مرّةً أخرى، فلما رأى أن ليس لهم حاجة،
تركوها»

(Their souls are inside green birds that have lamps, which are hanging below the Throne (of Allah), and they wander about in Paradise wherever they wish. Then they return to those lamps. Allah looks at them and says, `Do you wish for anything' They say, `What more could we wish for, while we go wherever we wish in Paradise' Allah asked them this question thrice, and when they realize that He will keep asking them until they give an answer, they say, `O Lord! We wish that our souls be returned to our bodies so that we are killed in Your cause again.' Allah knew that they did not have any other wish, so they were left.)" There are several other similar narrations from Anas and Abu Sa`id.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Anas said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَا مِنْ نَفْسٍ تَمُوتُ، لَهَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ، يَسُرُّهَا
أَنْ تَرْجِعَ إِلَى الدُّنْيَا، إِلَّا الشَّهِيدُ، فَإِنَّهُ يَسُرُّهُ أَنْ
يَرْجِعَ إِلَى الدُّنْيَا فَيُقْتَلَ مَرَّةً أُخْرَى، لِمَا يَرَى مِنْ
فَضْلِ الشَّهَادَةِ»

(No soul that has a good standing with Allah and dies would wish to go back to the life of this world, except for the martyr. He would like to be returned to this life so that he could be martyred again, for he tastes the honor achieved from martyrdom.) Muslim collected this Hadith

In addition, Imam Ahmad recorded that, Ibn `Abbas said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَمَّا أُصِيبَ إِخْوَانُكُمْ بِأَحَدٍ، جَعَلَ اللَّهُ أَرْوَاحَهُمْ
فِي أَجْوَابِ طَيْرٍ حُضِرَ، تَرُدُّ أُنْهَارَ الْجَنَّةِ،

وَتَأْكُلُ مِنْ ثَمَارِهَا، وَتَأْوِي إِلَى قَنَادِيلَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ
 فِي ظِلِّ الْعَرْشِ، فَلَمَّا وَجَدُوا طَيْبَ مَشْرَبِهِمْ
 وَمَأْكَلِهِمْ، وَحُسْنَ مُتَقَلَّبِهِمْ قَالُوا: يَا لَيْتَ إِخْوَانَنَا
 يَعْلَمُونَ مَا صَنَعَ اللَّهُ لَنَا، لِنَلَّا يَزْهَدُوا فِي الْجِهَادِ،
 وَلَا يَنْكَلُوا عَنِ الْحَرْبِ، فَقَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: أَنَا
 أَبْلَغُهُمْ عَنْكُمْ»

(When your brothers were killed in Uhud, Allah placed their souls inside green birds that tend to the rivers of Paradise and eat from its fruits. They then return to golden lamps hanging in the shade of the Throne. When they tasted the delight of their food, drink and dwelling, they said, `We wish that our brothers knew what Allah gave us so that they will not abandon Jihad or warfare.' Allah said, `I will convey the news for you.') Allah revealed these and the following Ayat,

(وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ
 أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ)

(Think not of those as dead who are killed in the way of Allah. Nay, they are alive, with their Lord, and they have provision.)

Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` and Ad-Dahhak said that these Ayat were revealed about the martyrs of Uhud.

Abu Bakr Ibn Marduwyah recorded that Jabir bin `Abdullah said, "The Messenger of Allah looked at me one day and said, `O Jabir! Why do I see you sad' I said, `O Messenger of Allah! My father was martyred and left behind debts and children.' He said,

«أَلَا أُخْبِرُكَ؟ مَا كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ أَحَدًا قَطُّ إِلَّا مِنْ وَرَاءِ
 حِجَابٍ، وَإِنَّهُ كَلَّمَ أَبَاكَ كِفَاحًا»

«قَالَ: سَلْنِي أُعْطِكَ. قَالَ: أَسْأَلُكَ أَنْ أُرَدَّ إِلَى
الدُّنْيَا فَأُقْتَلَ فِيكَ تَانِيَةً، فَقَالَ الرَّبُّ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: إِنَّهُ
قَدْ سَبَقَ مِنِّي الْقَوْلُ: إِنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهَا لَا يَرْجِعُونَ. قَالَ:
أَيُّ رَبِّ فَأُبْلِغْ مَنْ وَرَائِي»

(Should I tell you that Allah never spoke to anyone except from behind a veil However, He spoke to your father directly. He said, 'Ask Me and I will give you.' He said, 'I ask that I am returned to life so that I am killed in Your cause again.' The Lord, Exalted He be, said, 'I have spoken the word that they shall not be returned back to it (this life). ' He said, 'O Lord! Then convey the news to those I left behind.') Allah revealed,

(وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا)

(Think not of those as dead who are killed in the way of Allah...)"

Imam Ahmad recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«الشُّهَدَاءُ عَلَى بَارِقِ نَهْرٍ يَبَابِ الْجَنَّةِ، فِي قُبَّةٍ
خَضْرَاءَ، يَخْرُجُ عَلَيْهِمْ رِزْقُهُمْ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ بُكْرَةً
وَعَشِيًّا»

(The martyrs convene at the shore of a river close to the door of Paradise, in a green tent, where their provisions are brought to them from Paradise day and night.)

Ahmad and Ibn Jarir collected this Hadith, which has a good chain of narration. It appears that the martyrs are of different types, some of them wander in Paradise, and some remain close to this river by the door of Paradise. It is also possible that the river is where all the souls of the martyrs convene and where they are provided with their provision day and night, and Allah knows best. Imam Ahmad narrated a Hadith that contains good news for every believer that his soul will be wandering in Paradise, as well, eating from its fruits, enjoying its delights and happiness and tasting the honor that Allah has prepared in it for him. This Hadith has a unique, authentic chain of narration that includes three of the Four Imams. Imam Ahmad narrated this Hadith from Muhammad bin Idris Ash-Shafi'i who narrated it from Malik bin Anas Al-Asbuhi, from Az-Zuhri, from `Abdur-Rahman bin Ka'b bin Malik that his father said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«نَسَمَةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ طَائِرٌ يَعْلُقُ فِي شَجَرِ الْجَنَّةِ
حَتَّى يَرْجِعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَى جَسَدِهِ يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُ»

(The soul of the believer becomes a bird that feeds on the trees of Paradise, until Allah sends him back to his body when He resurrects him.)

This Hadith states that the souls of the believers are in the shape of a bird in Paradise. As for the souls of martyrs, they are inside green birds, like the stars to the rest of the believing souls. We ask Allah the Most Generous that He makes us firm on the faith.

Allah's statement,

(فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ)

(They rejoice in what Allah has bestowed upon them) indicates that the martyrs who were killed in Allah's cause are alive with Allah, delighted because of the bounty and happiness they are enjoying. They are also awaiting their brethren, who will die in Allah's cause after them, for they will be meeting them soon. These martyrs do not have fear about the future or sorrow for what they left behind. We ask Allah to grant us Paradise. The Two Sahihs record from Anas, the story of the seventy Ansar Companions who were murdered at Bir Ma`unah in one night. In this Hadith, Anas reported that the Prophet used to supplicate to Allah in Qunut in prayer against those who killed them. Anas said, "A part of the Qur'an was revealed about them, but was later abrogated, `Convey to our people that we met Allah and He was pleased with us and made us pleased."

Allah said next,

(يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا
يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(They rejoice in a grace and a bounty from Allah, and that Allah will not waste the reward of the believers) 3:171 .

Muhammad bin Ishaq commented, "They were delighted and pleased because of Allah's promise that was fulfilled for them, and for the tremendous rewards they earned." `Abdur-Fahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said, "This Ayah encompasses all the believers, martyrs and otherwise. Rarely does Allah mention a bounty and a reward that He granted to the Prophets, without following that with what He has granted the believers after them."

The Battle of Hamra' Al-Asad

Allah said,

(الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا
أَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ)

(Those who answered (the Call of) Allah and the Messenger after being wounded) 3:172 .

This occurred on the day of Hamra' Al-Asad. After the idolators defeated the Muslims (at Uhud), they started on their way back home, but soon they were concerned because they did not finish off the Muslims in Al-Madinah, so they set out to make that battle the final one. When the Messenger of Allah got news of this, he commanded the Muslims to march to meet the disbelievers, to bring fear to their hearts and to demonstrate that the Muslims still had strength to fight. The Prophet only allowed those who were present during Uhud to accompany him, except for Jabir bin `Abdullah Al-Ansari, as we will mention. The Muslims mobilized, even though they were still suffering from their injuries, in obedience to Allah and His Messenger .

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `Ikrimah said, "When the idolators returned towards Makkah after Uhud, they said, `You neither killed Muhammad nor collected female captives. Woe to you for what you did. Let us go back.' When the Messenger of Allah heard this news, he mobilized the Muslim forces, and they marched until they reached Hamra Al-Asad. The idolators said, `Father, we will meet next year', and the Messenger of Allah went back to Al-Madinah , and this was considered a Ghazwah (battle). Allah sent down,

(الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا
أَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا مِنْهُمْ وَاتَّقُوا أَجْرٌ
عَظِيمٌ)

(Those who answered (the Call of) Allah and the Messenger after being wounded; for those of them who did good deeds and feared Allah, there is a great reward.)

Al-Bukhari recorded that `A'ishah said to `Urwah about the Ayah;

(الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ)

(Those who answered (the Call of) Allah and the Messenger)

"My nephew! Your fathers Az-Zubayr and Abu Bakr were among them. After the Prophet suffered the calamity at Uhud and the idolators went back, he feared that the idolators might try to come back and he said, `Who would follow them' Seventy men, including Az-Zubayr and Abu Bakr, volunteered." This was recorded by Al-Bukhari alone.

As for Allah's statement,

(الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا)

(Those unto whom the people said, "Verily, the people have gathered against you, therefore, fear them." But it (only) increased them in faith) 3:173 , it means, those who threatened the people, saying that the disbelievers have amassed against them, in order to instill fear in them, but this did not worry them, rather, they trusted in Allah and sought His help,

(وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ)

(and they said: "Allah is Sufficient for us, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs.")

Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn ` Abbas said,

(حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ)

("Allah Alone is Sufficient for us and He is the Best Disposer of affairs for us.")

"Ibrahim said it when he was thrown in fire. Muhammad said it when the people said, ` Verily, the people have gathered against you, therefore, fear them.' But it only increased them in faith, and they said, ` Allah is Sufficient for us and He is the Best Disposer of affairs for us.'" Abu Bakr Ibn Marduwyah recorded that Anas bin Malik said that the Prophet was told on the day of Uhud, "Verily, the people have gathered against you, therefore, fear them." Thereafter, Allah sent down this Ayah 3:173 .

This is why Allah said,

(فَانْقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةِ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ لَّمْ يَمَسَّسَهُمْ سُوءٌ)

(So they returned with grace and bounty from Allah. No harm touched them;) for when they relied on Allah, Allah took care of their worries, He confounded the plots of their enemies, and the Muslims returned to their land,

(بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ لَّمْ يَمَسَّسَهُمْ سُوءٌ)

(with grace and bounty from Allah. No harm touched them;) safe from the wicked plots of their enemies,

(وَاتَّبَعُوا رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَظِيمٍ)

(and they followed the pleasure of Allah. And Allah is the Owner of great bounty.)

Al-Bayhaqi recorded that Ibn ` Abbas said about Allah's statement,

(فَانْقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ)

(So they returned with grace and bounty from Allah,) "The `Grace' was that they were saved. The `Bounty' was that a caravan passed by, and those days were Hajj season days. Thus the Messenger of Allah bought and sold and made a profit, which he divided between his Companions."

Allah then said,

(إِنَّمَا ذَلِكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَاءَهُ)

(It is only Shaytan that suggests to you the fear of his friends,) 3:175 meaning, Shaytan threatens you with his friends and tries to pretend they are powerful and fearsome. Allah said next,

(فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُونَ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ)

(so fear them not, but fear Me, if you are indeed believers.) meaning, "If Shaytan brings these thoughts to you, then depend on Me and seek refuge with Me. Indeed, I shall suffice you and make you prevail over them." Similarly, Allah said,

(أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ وَيُخَوِّفُونَكَ بِالَّذِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِ)

(Is not Allah Sufficient for His servant Yet they try to frighten you with those besides Him!) 39:36 , until,

(قُلْ حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ يَتَوَكَّلُ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ)

(Say: "Sufficient for me is Allah; in Him those who trust must put their trust.") 39:38 . Allah said,

فَقَاتِلُوا أَوْلِيَاءَ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ
ضَعِيفًا

(So fight you against the friends of Shaytan; ever feeble indeed is the plot of Shaytan.) 4:76
and

أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ الشَّيْطَانِ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ الشَّيْطَانِ
هُمُ الْخَسِرُونَ

(They are the party of Shaytan. Verily, it is the party of Shaytan that will be the losers!)
58:19 ,

كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَأَغْلِبَنَّ أَنَا وَرُسُلِي إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ
عَزِيزٌ

(Allah has decreed: "Verily, it is I and My Messengers who shall be the victorious." Verily, Allah
is All-Powerful, All-Mighty.) 58:21 and

وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَن يَنْصُرُهُ

(Verily, Allah will help those who help His (cause).) 22:40 and

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ

(O you who believe! If you help (in the cause of) Allah, He will help you) 47:7 , and,

إِنَّا لَنَنْصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ
الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْأَشْهُدُ - يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ الظَّالِمِينَ
مَعذِرَتُهُمْ وَلَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوءُ الدَّارِ)

(Verily, We will indeed make victorious Our Messengers and those who believe, in this world's life and on the Day when the witnesses will stand forth. The Day when their excuses will be of no profit to wrongdoers. Theirs will be the curse, and theirs will be the evil abode.) 40:51,52

وَلَا يَحْزُنُكَ الَّذِينَ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ إِنَّهُمْ لَن
يَضُرُّوهُ اللَّهُ شَيْئًا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَلَّا يَجْعَلَ لَهُمْ حِطًّا
فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ - إِنَّ الَّذِينَ
اشْتَرَوْا الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ لَن يَضُرُّوهُ اللَّهُ شَيْئًا وَلَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ - وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ مِثْلَ
لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّأَنْفُسِهِمْ إِنَّمَا نُمَلِّى لَهُمْ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِثْمًا
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ)

(مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ
حَتَّى يَمِيزَ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ
لِيُطْلِعَكُمْ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَجْتَبِي مِنْ رُسُلِهِ
مَنْ يَشَاءُ فَاْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَإِنْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا
فَلَكُمْ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ - وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ بِمَا
ءَاتَهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ
لَهُمْ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخُلُوا بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ وَاللَّهُ
مِيرَاتُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
خَبِيرٌ)

(176. And let not those grieve you who rush with haste to disbelieve; verily, not the least harm will they do to Allah. It is Allah's will to give them no portion in the Hereafter. For them there is a great torment.) (177. Verily, those who purchase disbelief at the price of faith, not the least harm will they do to Allah. For them, there is a painful torment.) (178. And let not the disbelievers think that Our postponing their punishment is good for them. We postpone the punishment only so that they may increase in sinfulness. And for them is a disgraceful torment.) (179. Allah will not leave the believers in the state in which you are now, until He distinguishes the wicked from the good. Nor will Allah disclose to you the secrets of the Unseen, but Allah chooses of His Messengers whom He wills. So believe in Allah and His Messengers. And if you believe and have Taqwa of Allah, then for you there is a great reward.) (180. And let not those who are stingy with that which Allah has bestowed on them of His bounty think that it is good for them. Nay, it will be worse for them; the things that they were stingy with shall be tied to their necks like a collar on the Day of Resurrection. And Allah's is the inheritance of the heavens and the earth; and Allah is Well-Acquainted with all that you do.)

Comforting the Messenger of Allah

Allah said to His Prophet,

(وَلَا يَحْزُنكَ الَّذِينَ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ)

(And let not those grieve you who rush with haste to disbelieve) 3:176 .

Because the Prophet was eager for people's benefit, he would become sad when the disbelievers would resort to defiance, rebellion and stubbornness. Allah said, 'Do not be saddened by this behavior,'

(إِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَلَّا يَجْعَلَ
لَهُمْ حَظًّا فِي الْأَخِرَةِ)

(verily, not the least harm will they do to Allah. It is Allah's will to give them no portion in the Hereafter.) for He decided with His power and wisdom that they shall not acquire any share in the Hereafter,

(وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ)

(For them there is a great torment.)

Allah said about the disbelievers,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوْا الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ)

(Verily, those who purchase disbelief at the price of faith,) by exchanging disbelief for faith,

(لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا)

(not the least harm will they do to Allah.) Rather, they will only harm themselves,

(وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ)

(For them, there is a painful torment.)

Allah said next,

(وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ نُمْلِي لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ
لأنفسِهِمْ إِنَّما نُمْلِي لَهُمْ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِثْمًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
مُهِينٌ)

(And let not the disbelievers think that Our postponing their punishment is good for them. We postpone the punishment only so that they may increase in sinfulness. And for them is a disgraceful torment) 3:178 .

This statement is similar to Allah's other statements,

(أَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّ نُمِدُّهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ مَّالٍ وَبَنِينَ -
نُسَارِعُ لَهُمْ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ بَلْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ)

(Do they think that because We have given them abundant wealth and children, that We hasten unto them with good things. Nay, but they perceive not.) 23:55,56 and

(فَدَرْنِي وَمَنْ يُكَدِّبُ بِهِذَا الْحَدِيثِ سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ
مِّنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ)

(Then leave Me Alone with such as belie this Qur'an. We shall punish them gradually from directions they perceive not.) 68:44 , and,

وَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَأَوْلَادُهُمْ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ
يُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ
كَافِرُونَ)

(And let not their wealth or their children amaze you. Allah's plan is to punish them with these things in this world, and that their souls shall depart (die) while they are disbelievers) 9:85 .

Allah then said,

مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَىٰ مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ
حَتَّىٰ يَمِيزَ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ)

(Allah will not leave the believers in the state in which you are now, until He distinguishes the wicked from the good.) 3:179 , meaning, He allows a calamity to happen, and during this calamity His friend becomes known and His enemy exposed, the patient believer recognized and the sinful hypocrite revealed. This Ayah refers to Uhud, since Allah tested the believers in that battle, thus making known the faith, endurance, patience, firmness and obedience to Allah and His Messenger that the believers had. Allah exposed the hypocrites in their defiance, reverting from Jihad, and the treachery they committed against Allah and His Messenger . This is why Allah said,

مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَىٰ مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ
حَتَّىٰ يَمِيزَ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ)

(Allah will not leave the believers in the state in which you are now, until He distinguishes the wicked from the good.)

Mujahid commented, "He distinguished between them during the day of Uhud." Qatadah said, "He distinguished between them in Jihad and Hijrah." Allah said next,

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُطَّلِعَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ)

(Nor will Allah disclose to you the secrets of the Unseen.) meaning, you do not have access to Allah's knowledge of His creation so that you can distinguish between the believer and the hypocrite, except by the signs of each type that Allah uncovers. Allah's statement,

(وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَجْتَبِي مِنْ رُسُلِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ)

(but Allah chooses of His Messengers whom He wills.) is similar to another Ayah,

(عَلِمُ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَى غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا - إِلَّا مَنْ
ارْتَضَى مِنْ رَسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُ يَسْلُكُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ
وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ رَصَدًا)

((He Alone is) the All-Knower of the Unseen, and He reveals to none His Unseen. Except to a Messenger (from mankind) whom He has chosen, and then He makes a band of watching guards (angels) to march before him and behind him.) 72:26,27 . Allah then said,

(فَأْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ)

(So believe in Allah and His Messengers.) Obey Allah and His Messenger and adhere to the law that he legislated for you,

(وَإِنْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَلَكُمْ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ)

(and if you believe and fear Allah, then for you there is a great reward.)

The Censure of Selfishness, and Warning Against it

Allah said,

(وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ
فَضْلِهِ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُمْ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَّهُمْ)

(And let not those who are stingy with that which Allah has bestowed on them of His bounty (wealth) think that it is good for them. Nay, it will be worse for them.) 3:180

Therefore, the Ayah says that the miser should not think that collecting money will benefit him. Rather, it will harm him in his religion and worldly affairs. Allah mentions the money that the miser collected on the Day of Resurrection,

(سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخِلُوا بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ)

(the things that they stingy with shall be tied to their necks like a collar on the Day of Resurrection.)

Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا فَلَمْ يُؤَدِّ زَكَاتَهُ، مُثِّلَ لَهُ شُجَاعًا
أَقْرَعَ، لَهُ زَبَيْبَتَانِ، يُطَوَّقُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، يَأْخُذُ
بِلَهْزَمَتَيْهِ يَعْنِي بِشِدْقَيْهِ يَقُولُ: أَنَا مَالِكٌ، أَنَا
كَنْزُكَ»

(Whoever Allah makes wealthy and he does not pay the Zakah due on his wealth, then (on the Day of Resurrection) his wealth will be made in the likeness of a bald-headed poisonous male snake with two black spots over the eyes. The snake will encircle his neck and bite his cheeks and proclaim, 'I am your wealth, I am your treasure.')

The Prophet then recited the Ayah,

(وَلَا يَحْسِبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ
فَضْلِهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَّهُمْ)

(And let not those who are stingy with that which Allah has bestowed on them of His bounty think that it is good for them. Nay, it will be worse for them), until the end. Al-Bukhari, but not Muslim, collected this Hadith using this chain of narration, Ibn Hibban also collected it in his Sahih.

Imam Ahmad recorded that `Abdullah said that the Prophet said,

«مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ يُؤَدِّي زَكَاةَ مَالِهِ إِلَّا جُعِلَ لَهُ
شُجَاعٌ أَقْرَعٌ يَتَّبِعُهُ، يَفِرُّ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ يَتَّبِعُهُ، فَيَقُولُ:
أَنَا كَنْزُكَ»

(Every person who does not pay the Zakah due on his wealth, will have his money made into the shape of a bald-headed, poisonous male snake who will follow him. The person will run away from the snake, who will follow him and proclaim, `I am your treasure.)

` Abdullah then recited the Ayah in Allah's Book that testifies to this fact,

(سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخِلُوا بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ)

(the things that they were stingy with shall be tied to their necks like a collar on the Day of Resurrection.)

This was recorded by At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah, and At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih."

Allah's statement,

(وَاللَّهُ مِيرَاثُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ)

(And to Allah belongs the inheritance of the heavens and the Earth), means,

(وَأَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا جَعَلَكُمْ مُسْتَخْلِفِينَ فِيهِ)

(and spend of that whereof He has made you trustees) 57: 7 . Therefore, since all affairs are under Allah's control, then spend from your money so it will benefit you on the Day of Return,

(وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ)

(and Allah is Well-Acquainted with all that you do.) with your intentions and what your hearts conceal.

لَقَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ
وَنَحْنُ أَغْنِيَاءُ سَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَالُوا وَقَتْلَهُمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ
بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَنَقُولُ دُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ - ذَلِكَ
بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمْ أُيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَمٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ)

(الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَاهَدَ إِلَيْنَا أَلَّا نُؤْمِنَ لِرَسُولٍ
حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَنَا بِقُرْبَانٍ تَأْكُلُهُ النَّارُ قُلْ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ
رُسُلٌ مِّن قَبْلِي بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَبِالَّذِي قُلْتُمْ فَلِمَ قَتَلْتُمُوهُمْ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ)

(فَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ رَسُولٌ مِّن قَبْلِكَ جَاءُوا
بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالزُّبُرِ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُنِيرِ)

(181. Indeed, Allah has heard the statement of those who say: "Truly, Allah is poor and we are rich!" We shall record what they have said and their killing of the Prophets unjustly, and We shall say: "Taste you the torment of the burning (Fire).") (182. This is because of that which your hands have sent before you. And certainly, Allah is never unjust to (His) servants.) (183. Those who said: "Verily, Allah has taken our promise not to believe in any Messenger unless he brings to us an offering which the fire (from heaven) shall devour. " Say: "Verily, there came to you Messengers before me, with Al-Bayinat and even with with what you speak of; why then did you kill them, if you are truthful") (184. Then if they reject you, so were Messengers rejected before you, who came with Al-Bayinat and the Scriptures and the Book of Enlightenment.)

Allah Warns the Idolators

Sa`id bin Jubayr said that Ibn `Abbas said, "When Allah's statement,

(مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ
لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً)

(Who is he that will lend to Allah a goodly loan so that He may multiply it to him many times)
2:245 was revealed, the Jews said, `O Muhammad! Has your Lord become poor so that He asks His servants to give Him a loan' Allah sent down,

(لَقَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ
وَنَحْنُ أَغْنِيَاءُ)

(Indeed, Allah has heard the statement of those (Jews) who say: "Truly, Allah is poor and we are rich!") 3:181 ."

This Hadith was collected by Ibn Marduwyah and Ibn Abi Hatim.

Allah's statement,

(سَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَالُوا)

(We shall record what they have said) contains a threat and a warning that Allah followed with His statement,

(وَقَتْلِهِمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بَغَيْرِ حَقٍّ)

(and their killing of the Prophets unjustly,)

This is what they say about Allah and this is how they treat His Messengers. Allah will punish them for these deeds in the worst manner,

(لَقَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ
وَنَحْنُ أَغْنِيَاءُ سَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَالُوا وَقَتْلِهِمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ
بَغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَنَقُولُ ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ - ذَلِكَ
بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَمٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ)

(and We shall say: "Taste you the torment of the burning (Fire)." This is because of that which your hands have sent before you. And certainly, Allah is never unjust to (His) servants.)

They will be addressed like this as a way of chastising, criticism, disgrace and humiliation.

Allah said,

(الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَاهَدَ إِلَيْنَا أَلَّا نُؤْمِنَ لِرَسُولٍ
حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِينَا بِقُرْبَانٍ تَأْكُلُهُ النَّارُ)

(Those (Jews) who said: "Verily, Allah has taken our promise not to believe in any Messenger unless he brings to us an offering which the fire (from heaven) shall devour.")

Allah refuted their claim that in their Books, Allah took a covenant from them to only believe in the Messenger whose miracles include fire coming down from the sky that consumes the charity offered by a member of the Messenger's nation, as Ibn `Abbas and Al-Hasan stated. Allah replied,

(قُلْ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّن قَبْلِي بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ)

(Say: "Verily, there came to you Messengers before me, with Al-Bayinat...") with proofs and evidence,

(وَبِالَّذِي قُلْتُمْ)

(and even with what you speak of) a fire that consumes the accepted charity, as you asked,

(فَلِمَ قَتَلْتُمُوهُمْ)

(why then did you kill them) Why did you meet these Prophets with denial, defiance, stubbornness and even murder,

(إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ)

(if you are truthful), if you follow the truth and obey the Messengers.

Allah then comforts His Prophet Muhammad ,

(فَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ جَاءُوا
بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالزُّبُرِ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُنِيرِ)

(Then if they reject you, so were Messengers rejected before you, who came with Al-Baiyyinat and the Scripture, and the Book of Enlightenment.) meaning, do not be sad because they deny you, for you have an example in the Messengers who came before you. These Messengers were rejected although they brought clear proofs, plain evidence and unequivocal signs,

(وَالزُّبُرِ)

(and the Zubur), the divinely revealed Books that were sent down to the Messengers,

(وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُنِيرِ)

(and the Book of Enlightenment) meaning the clarification and best explanation.

(كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّقُونَ أُجُورَكُمْ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَمَنْ زُحْزِحَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ
فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَّعُ الْعُرُورِ)

لنُبَلُونَ فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَلَتَسْمَعَنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ
أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَدَى
كَثِيرًا وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ
الْأُمُورِ-)

(185. Everyone shall taste death. And only on the Day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. And whoever is moved away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception.) (186. You shall certainly be tried and tested in your wealth and properties and in yourselves, and you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the Scripture before you (Jews and Christians) and from those who ascribe partners to Allah; but if you persevere patiently, and have Taqwa, then verily, that will be a determining factor in all affairs.)

Every Soul Shall Taste Death

Allah issues a general and encompassing statement that every living soul shall taste death. In another statement, Allah said,

(كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ - وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو
الْجَلَلِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ)

(Whatsoever is on it (the earth) will perish. And the Face of your Lord full of majesty and honor will remain forever) 55:26,27 .

Therefore, Allah Alone is the Ever-Living Who never dies, while the Jinn, mankind and angels, including those who carry Allah's Throne, shall die. The Irresistible One and Only, will alone remain for ever and ever, remaining Last, as He was the First. This Ayah comforts all creation, since every soul that exists on the earth shall die. When the term of this life comes to an end and the sons of Adam no longer have any new generations, and thus this world ends, Allah will command that the Day of Resurrection commence. Allah will then recompense the creation for their deeds, whether minor or major, many or few, big or small. Surely, Allah will not deal unjustly with anyone, even the weight of an atom, and this is why He said,

(وَإِنَّمَا تُوقُونَ أَجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ)

(And only on the Day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full) 3:185 .

Who Shall Gain Ultimate Victory

Allah said,

(فَمَنْ زُحِرَ حَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ)

(And whoever is moved away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful.) meaning, whoever is kept away from the Fire, saved from it and entered into Paradise, will have achieved the ultimate success.

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَوْضِعُ سَوَاطِ فِي الْجَنَّةِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا
فِيهَا، اقْرَأُوا إِن شِئْتُمْ»

(A place in Paradise as small as that which is occupied by a whip is better than the world and whatever is on its surface. Read if you will),

(فَمَنْ زُحِرَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ)

(And whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful). This was collected in the Two Sahihs, but using another chain of narration and without the addition (the Ayah.) Abu Hatim Ibn Hibban recorded it in his Sahih without the addition as did Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak.

Allah said,

(وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَعُ الْعُرُورِ)

(The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception.) belittling the value of this life and degrading its importance. This life is short, little and finite, just as Allah said,

(بَلْ تُؤْتِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا - وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى
(

(Nay, you prefer the life of this world. Although the Hereafter is better and more lasting.)
87:16,17 , and,

(وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَمَتَعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا
وَزِينَتُهَا وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى)

(And whatever you have been given is an enjoyment of the life of (this) world and its adornment, and that (Hereafter) which is with Allah is better and will remain forever) 28:60 .
A Hadith states,

«وَاللَّهِ مَا الدُّنْيَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا كَمَا يَغْمِسُ أَحَدُكُمْ
أَصْبَعَهُ فِي الْيَمِّ، فَلْيَنْظُرْ بِمَ تَرْجِعُ إِلَيْهِ»

(By Allah! This life, compared to the Hereafter, is just as insignificant as when one of you dips his finger in the sea; let him contemplate what his finger will come back with.)

Qatadah commented on Allah's statement,

(وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ)

(The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception.) "Life is a delight. By Allah, other than Whom there is no deity, it will soon fade away from its people. Therefore, take obedience to Allah from this delight, if you can. Verily, there is no power except from Allah."

The Believer is Tested and Hears Grieving Statements from the Enemy

Allah said,

(لَتُبْلَوْنَ فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ)

(You shall certainly be tried and tested in your wealth and properties and in yourselves), just as He said in another Ayah,

(وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ
مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ)

(And certainly, We shall test you with something of fear, hunger, loss of wealth, lives and fruits) 2:155 .

Therefore, the believer shall be tested, in his wealth, himself, his offspring and family. The believer shall be tested according to the degree of his faith, and when his faith is stronger, the test is larger.

(وَلَتَسْمَعَنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آتَوْا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ
وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَدْيَى كَثِيرًا)

(and you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the Scripture before you (Jews and Christians) and from those who ascribe partners to Allah) 3:186 .

Allah said to the believers upon their arrival at Al-Madinah, before Badr, while comforting them against the harm they suffered from the People of the Scriptures and the polytheists;

(وَإِن تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ)

(but if you persevere patiently, and have Taqwa, then verily, that will be a determining factor in all affairs.)

Therefore, Allah commanded the believers to be forgiving, patient and forbearing until He brought His awaited aid.

Al-Bukhari recorded that Usamah bin Zayd said that Allah's Messenger rode a donkey with a saddle covered by a velvet sheet and let Usamah ride behind him (on the donkey). The Prophet wanted to visit Sa`d bin `Ubadah in Bani Al-Harith bin Al-Khazraj, and this occurred before the battle of Badr. The Prophet passed by a gathering in which `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul was sitting, before `Abdullah bin Ubayy became Muslim. That gathering was made up of various Muslims as well as Mushriks, who worshipped the idols, and some Jews. `Abdullah bin Rawahah was sitting in that gathering. When the Prophet reached `Abdullah bin Ubayy, the donkey caused some sand to fall on the group. Then, `Abdullah bin Ubayy covered his nose with his robe and said, `Do not fill us with sand.' The Messenger of Allah greeted the gathering with Salam, called them to Allah and recited some of the Qur'an to them. `Abdullah bin Ubayy said, `O fellow! No other speech is better than what you said, if it was true! However, do not bother us in our gatherings. Go back to your place and whoever came to you, narrate your stories to him.' `Abdullah bin Rawahah said, `Father, O Messenger of Allah! Attend our gatherings for we like that.' The Muslims, Mushriks and Jews then cursed each other, and they almost fought with each other. The Prophet tried to calm them down, until they finally settled. The Prophet rode his donkey and went to Sa`d bin `Ubadah, saying, `O Sa`d! Have you heard what Abu Hubbab said (meaning `Abdullah bin Ubayy) He said such and such things. ' Sa`d said, `O Messenger of Allah! Forgive and pardon him. By Allah, Who sent down the Book to you, Allah brought us the truth that you came with at a time when the people of this city almost appointed him king. When Allah changed all that with the truth that He gave you, he choked on it, and this is the reason behind the behavior you saw from him.' The Messenger of Allah forgave him. Indeed, the Messenger of Allah and his Companions used to forgive the Mushriks and the People of the Scriptures, just as Allah commanded them, and they used to tolerate the harm that they suffered. Allah said,

(وَلَتَسْمَعَنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آوَوْا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ
وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَذًى كَثِيرًا)

(and you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the Scripture before you (Jews and Christians) and from those who ascribe partners to Allah;) 3:186 , and,

(وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يَرُدُّونَكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ
إِيمَانِكُمْ كُقَارًا حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا
تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ
بِأَمْرِهِ)

(Many of the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) wish that they could turn you away as disbelievers after you have believed, out of envy from their own selves, even after the truth has become manifest unto them. But forgive and overlook, till Allah brings His command) 2:109 .

The Prophet used to implement the pardon that Allah commanded him until He gave His command (to fight the disbelievers). When the Messenger fought at Badr, and Allah killed, by his hand, the leaders of the disbelievers from Quraysh, `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul and the Mushriks and idol worshippers who were with him said, `This matter has prevailed,' and they gave their pledge to the Prophet and became Muslims."

Therefore, every person who stands for truth, enjoins righteousness and forbids evil, will be harmed in some manner. In such cases, there is no cure better than being patient in Allah's cause, trusting in Him and returning to Him.

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُ
لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْفُمُونَهُ فَنَبَذُوهُ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ
وَاشْتَرَوْا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا فَبُئْسَ مَا يَشْتَرُونَ)

(لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا أُوتُوا وَيُحِبُّونَ أَنْ
يُحْمَدُوا بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّهُمْ بِمَفَازَةٍ مِّنَ
الْعَذَابِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ)

(وَاللَّهُ مَلِكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)

(187. (And remember) when Allah took a covenant from those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) to make it (the truth) known and clear to mankind, and not to hide it, but they threw it away behind their backs, and purchased with it some miserable gain! And indeed worst is that which they bought.) (188. Think not that those who rejoice in what they have done (or brought about), and love to be praised for what they have not done, think not that they are rescued from the torment, and for them is a painful torment.) (189. And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and Allah has power over all things.)

Chastising the People of the Scriptures for Breaking the Covenant and Hiding the Truth

In this Ayah, Allah chastises the People of the Scriptures, from whom Allah took the covenant by the words of their Prophets, that they would believe in Muhammad and describe him to the people, so that they would recognize and follow him when Allah sent him. However, they hid this truth and preferred the the small amounts and the material gains instead of the rewards of this life and the Hereafter that they were promised. This is a losing deal and a failing trade, indeed.

These Ayat also contain a warning for the scholars not to imitate their behavior, so that they do not suffer the same fate and become like them. Therefore, the scholars are required to spread the beneficial knowledge that they have, encouraging the various righteous good deeds. They are also warned against hiding any part of their knowledge. A Hadith states that the Prophet said,

«مَنْ سُئِلَ عَنْ عِلْمٍ فَكْتَمَهُ، أُجِمَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
بِلِجَامٍ مِنْ نَارٍ»

(Whoever was asked about knowledge that he knew but did not disclose it, will be tied with a bridle made of fire on the Day of Resurrection.)

Chastising Those Who Love to be Praised for What They Have not Done

Allah's statement,

(لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا أَتَوْا وَيُحِبُّونَ أَنْ
يُحْمَدُوا بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا)

(Think not that those who rejoice in what they have done, and love to be praised for what they have not done), refers to those who show off, rejoice in what they do and claim to do what they have not done. The Two Sahih recorded that the Prophet said,

«مَنْ ادَّعَى دَعْوَةَ كَاذِبَةٍ لِيَتَكَبَّرَ بِهَا، لَمْ يَزِدْهُ اللَّهُ
إِلَّا قَلِيلًا»

(Whoever issues a false claim to acquire some type of gain, then Allah will only grant him decrease.)

The Sahih also recorded;

«الْمُتَشَبِّعُ بِمَا لَمْ يُعْطَ، كَلَّابِسُ ثَوْبَيْ زُورٍ»

(He who claims to do what he has not done, is just like a person who wears two robes made of falsehood.)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Marwan told his guard Rafi` to go to Ibn `Abbas and proclaim to him, "If every person among us who rejoices with what he has done and loves to be praised for what he has not done will be tormented, we all will be tormented." Ibn `Abbas said, "This Ayah was revealed about the People of the Scriptures." He then recited the Ayah,

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَتُبَيِّنَهُ
لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْفُرُونَهُ فَنَبَذُوهُ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ
وَاشْتَرَوْا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا فَبُئِسَ مَا يَشْتَرُونَ)

((And remember) when Allah took a covenant from those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) to make it (the truth) known and clear to mankind, and not to hide it, but they threw it away behind their backs, and purchased with it some miserable gain! And indeed worst is that which they bought.) then the Ayah,

(لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا أَتَوْا وَيُحِبُّونَ أَنْ
يُحْمَدُوا بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا)

(Think not that those who rejoice in what they have done, and love to be praised for what they have not done)

Ibn `Abbas said, "The Prophet asked them about something, and they hid its knowledge, giving him an incorrect answer. They parted after showing off and rejoicing in front of him because they answered him, so they pretended, and they were delighted that they hid the correct news about what he had asked them." This was recorded by Al-Bukhari, Muslim, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i.

Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri said, "During the time of the Messenger of Allah , when the Messenger would go to battle, some hypocrite men would remain behind and rejoice because they did not accompany the Prophet in battle. When the Messenger would come back, they would ask him to excuse them swearing to having some excuse, and wanting to be praised for that which they did not do. So Allah revealed,

(لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا أَتَوْا وَيُحِبُّونَ أَنْ
يُحْمَدُوا بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا)

(Think not that those who rejoice in what they have done, and love to be praised for what they have not done),"

to the end of the Ayah." And Muslim recorded similarly.

Allah said;

(فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّهُمْ بِمَفَازَةٍ مِّنَ الْعَذَابِ)

(think not that they are rescued from the torment,) Do not think that they will be saved from punishment, rather it will certainly strike them. So Allah said;

(وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ)

(and for them is a painful torment.) Allah then said,

(وَاللَّهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)

(And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and Allah has power over all things.) He is the Owner of everything, able to do all things and nothing escapes His might. Therefore, fear Him, never defy Him and beware of His anger and revenge. He is the Most Great, none is greater than Him, and the Most Able, none is more able than He is.

(إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ
وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ - الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ
اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي
خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا
بَطْلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ - رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ مَن

تُدْخِلِ النَّارَ فَقَدْ أَخْزَيْتَهُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَرٍ
 - رَبَّنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلإِيمَنِ أَنْ
 ءَامِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ
 عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَقَّنَا مَعَ الأَبْرَارِ - رَبَّنَا وَءَاتِنَا مَا
 وَعَدْتَنَا عَلَى رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ القِيمَةِ إِنَّكَ لَا
 تُخْلِفُ المِيعَادَ)

(190. Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the Earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding.) (191. Those who remember Allah standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying): "Our Lord! You have not created this without purpose, glory to You! Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire.) (192. "Our Lord! Verily, whom You admit to the Fire, indeed, You have disgraced him; and never will the wrongdoers find any helpers.) (193. "Our Lord! Verily, we have heard the call of one calling to faith: 'Believe in your Lord,' and we have believed. Our Lord! Forgive us our sins and expiate from us our evil deeds, and make us die along with Al-Abrar (the most righteous).) (194. "Our Lord! Grant us what You promised us through Your Messengers and disgrace us not on the Day of Resurrection, for You never break (Your) Promise.")

The Proofs of Tawhid for People of Understanding, their Characteristics, Speech, and Supplications

Allah said,

(إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ)

(Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the Earth,) 3:190 , referring to the sky in its height and spaciousness, the earth in its expanse and density, the tremendous features they have of rotating planets, seas, mountains, deserts, trees, plants, fruits, animals, metals and various beneficial colors, scents, tastes and elements.

(وَآخْتَلَفِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ)

(And in the alternation of night and day), as one follows and takes from the length of the other. For instance, at times one of them becomes longer than the other, shorter than the

other at times and equal to the other at other times, and the same is repeated again and again, and all this occurs by the decision of the Almighty, Most Wise. This is why Allah said,

(لَايَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ)

(there are indeed signs for men of understanding), referring to the intelligent and sound minds that contemplate about the true reality of things, unlike the deaf and mute who do not have sound comprehension. Allah said about the latter type,

(وَكَايِنَ مِّنْ ءَايَةٍ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ يَمُرُّونَ عَلَيْهَا وَهُمْ عَنْهَا مُعْرِضُونَ - وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُمْ بِٱللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُمْ مُّشْرِكُونَ)

(And how many a sign in the heavens and the earth they pass by, while they are averse therefrom. And most of them believe not in Allah except that they attribute partners unto Him) 12:105,106 .

Allah then describes those who have good minds,

(الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ)

(Those who remember Allah standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides) 3:191 .

Al-Bukhari recorded that `Imran bin Husayn said that, the Messenger of Allah said,

«صَلِّ قَائِمًا، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَسْتَطِعْ فَقَاعِدًا، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَسْتَطِعْ فَعَلَىٰ جَنْبٍ»

(Pray while standing, and if you can't, pray while sitting, and if you cannot do even that, then pray lying on your side.) These people remember Allah in all situations, in their heart and speech,

(وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ)

(and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the Earth), contemplating about signs in the sky and earth that testify to the might, ability, knowledge, wisdom, will and mercy of the Creator. Allah criticizes those who do not contemplate about His creation, which testifies to His existence, Attributes, Shari`ah, His decree and Ayat. Allah said,

وَكَايِنٍ مِّنْ ءَايَةٍ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَٱلْاَرْضِ يَمُرُّوْنَ
عَلَيْهَا وَهُمْ عَنْهَا مُعْرِضُوْنَ - وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ اَكْثَرُهُمْ
بِاللّٰهِ اِلَّا وَهُمْ مُّشْرِكُوْنَ)

(And how many a sign in the heavens and the Earth they pass by, while they are averse therefrom. And most of them believe not in Allah except that they attribute partners unto Him)
12:105,106 .

Allah also praises His believing servants,

الَّذِيْنَ يَذْكُرُوْنَ اللّٰهَ قِيَمًا وَقَعُوْدًا وَعَلٰى جُنُوْبِهِمْ
وَيَتَفَكَّرُوْنَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَٱلْاَرْضِ)

(Those who remember Allah standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth), supplicating;

رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هٰذَا بَطِيْلًا)

("Our Lord! You have not created this without purpose,")

You did not create all this in jest and play. Rather, You created it in truth, so that You recompense those who do evil in kind, and reward those who do righteous deeds with what is better.

The faithful believers praise Allah and deny that He does anything in jest and without purpose, saying,

(سُبْحٰنَكَ)

("glory to You,") , for You would never create anything without purpose,

(فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ)

("Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire."), meaning, "O You Who created the creation in truth and justice, Who is far from any shortcomings, or doing things without purpose or with jest, save us from the torment of the Fire with Your power and strength. Direct us to perform the deeds that make You pleased with us. Guide us to righteous work from which You admit us into the delightful Paradise, and save us from Your painful torment."

They next supplicate,

(رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ مَن تُدْخِلِ النَّارَ فَقَدْ أَخْزَيْتَهُ)

("Our Lord! Verily, whom You admit to the Fire, indeed, You have disgraced him;), by humiliating and disgracing him before all people on the Day of Gathering,

(وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِن أَنْصَارٍ)

("and never will the wrongdoers find any helpers."), on the Day of Judgment, who would save them from You. Therefore, there is no escaping whatever fate You decided for them.

(رَبَّنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ)

("Our Lord! Verily, we have heard the call of one calling to faith,"), a caller who calls to faith, referring to the Messenger of Allah ,

(أَنْ ءَامِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا)

(' Believe in your Lord,' and we have believed), accepted his call and followed him.

(رَبَّنَا فَاعْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا)

("Our Lord! Forgive us our sins"), on account of our faith and obeying Your Prophet

(فَاعْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا)

("Forgive us our sins"), and cover them,

(وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا)

("and expiate from us our evil deeds"), between us and You, in private,

(وَتَوَقَّانَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ)

("and make us die along with Al-Abrar."), join us with the righteous people.

(رَبَّنَا وَعَايَتِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا عَلَى رُسُلِكَ)

("Our Lord! Grant us what You promised unto us through Your Messengers") for our faith in Your Messengers, or, and this explanation is better; grant us what You promised us by the words of Your Messengers,

(وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ)

("and disgrace us not on the Day of Resurrection,"), before all creation,

(إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ)

("for You never break (Your) Promise."), for surely, the promise that You conveyed to Your Messengers, which includes us being resurrected before You, shall certainly come to pass.

It was the Prophet's tradition to recite the ten Ayat at the end of Surah Al `Imran when he woke up at night for (voluntary) prayer. Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "I slept one night at the house of my aunt, Maymunah. The Messenger of Allah spoke with his wife for a while and then went to sleep. When it was the third part of the night, he stood up, looked at the sky and recited,

(إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ)

(Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding) 3:190 .

The Prophet then stood up, performed ablution, used Swak (to clean his teeth) and prayed eleven units of prayer. When Bilal said the Adhan, the Prophet prayed two units of prayer, went out (to the Masjid) and led the people in the Dawn prayer." This was also collected by Muslim.

Ibn Marduwyah recorded that `Ata' said, "I, Ibn `Umar and `Ubayd bin `Umayr went to `A'ishah and entered her room, and there was a screen between us and her. She said, `O `Ubayd! What prevents you from visiting us' He said, `What the poet said, `Visit every once in a while, and you will be loved more.' Ibn `Umar said, `Tell us about the most unusual thing you witnessed from the Messenger of Allah .' She cried and said, `All his matters were amazing. On night, he

came close to me until his skin touched my skin and said, 'Let me worship my Lord.' I said, 'By Allah I love your being close to me. I also love that you worship your Lord.' He used the water-skin and performed ablution, but did not use too much water. He then stood up in prayer and cried until his beard became wet. He prostrated and cried until he made the ground wet. He then laid down on his side and cried. When Bilal came to alert the Prophet for the Dawn prayer, he said, 'O Messenger of Allah! What makes you cry, while Allah has forgiven you your previous and latter sins' He said,

«وَيَحْكُ يَا بِلَالُ، وَمَا يَمْنَعُنِي أَنْ أَبْكِي، وَقَدْ
أُنزِلَ عَلَيَّ فِي هَذِهِ اللَّيْلَةِ»

(O Bilal! What prevents me from crying, when this night, this Ayah was revealed to me,)

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ
وَالنَّهَارِ لآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ)

(Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding.)

«وَيْلٌ لِّمَنْ قَرَأَهَا وَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرْ فِيهَا»

(Woe to he who recites it but does not contemplate it.)"

فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ
مِّنْكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْضٍ فَالَّذِينَ
هَجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأُودُوا فِي سَبِيلِي
وَقَتَّلُوا وَقَتِّلُوا لِأَكْفَرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَا يُدْخِلُهُمْ
جَنَّةٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ تَوَابًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ
اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ التَّوَابِ)

(195. So their Lord accepted of them (their supplication and answered them), "Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female. You are (members) one of

another, so those who emigrated and were driven out from their homes, and suffered harm in My cause, and who fought and were killed (in My cause), verily, I will expiate from them their evil deeds and admit them into Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise); a reward from Allah, and with Allah is the best of rewards."

Allah Accepts the Supplication of Men of Understanding

Allah said,

(فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ)

(So their Lord accepted of them), answered their invocation. Sa`id bin Mansur recorded that Salamah, a man from the family of Umm Salamah said, "Umm Salamah said, `O Messenger of Allah! Allah does not mention women in connection with Hijrah (Migration).' Allah sent down the Ayah,

(فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ
مِّنْكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَى)

(So their Lord accepted of them (their supplication and answered them), "Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female.)

The Ansar say that Umm Salamah was the first woman to migrate to them." Al-Hakim collected this Hadith in his Mustadrak, and said, "It is Sahih according to the criteria of Al-Bukhari but they Al-Bukhari and Muslim did not collect it".

Allah's statement,

(أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِّنْكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ
أُنْثَى)

("Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female,) explains the type of answer Allah gave them, stating that no deed of any person is ever lost with Him. Rather, He will completely reward each person for his or her good deeds. Allah's statement,

(بَعْضُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْضٍ)

(You are (members) one of another) means, you are all equal in relation to gaining My reward. Therefore,

(فَالَّذِينَ هَجَرُوا)

(those who emigrated), by leaving the land of Shirk and migrating to the land of faith, leaving behind their loved ones, brethren, friends and neighbors,

(وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ)

(and were driven out from their homes), when the Mushriks tormented them and forced them to migrate,

(وَأُودُوا فِي سَبِيلِي)

(and suffered harm in My cause), for their only wrong, to the people, was that they believed in Allah Alone. In similar Ayat, Allah said,

(يُخْرِجُونَ الرَّسُولَ وَإِيَّكُمْ أَنْ تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ رَبِّكُمْ)

(and have driven out the Messenger and yourselves because you believe in Allah your Lord!)
60:1 , and,

(وَمَا نَقَمُوا مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ)

(And they had no fault except that they believed in Allah, the Almighty, Worthy of all praise!)
85:8 . Allah's statement,

(وَقَاتِلُوا وَقَاتِلُوا)

(and who fought and were killed (in My cause),) 3:195 refers to the highest rank there is, that one fights in the cause of Allah and dies in the process, with his face covered in dust and blood. It is recorded in the Sahih that a man said,

:

«نَعَمْ»

«كَيْفَ قُلْتَ؟»

«نَعَمْ، إِلَّا الدَّيْنَ، قَالَهُ لِي جِبْرِيلُ أَنْفًا»

(‘O Messenger of Allah! If I was killed in Allah’s cause, observing patience, awaiting Allah’s reward, attacking, not retreating, would Allah forgive my sins’ The Prophet said, ‘Yes.’ The Prophet then asked the man, ‘What did you ask’ When the man repeated the question, the Prophet said, ‘Yes, except for the debt, for Jibril conveyed this to me right now’.)

This is why Allah said here,

(لَا كُفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَا نُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ)

(verily, I will expiate from them their evil deeds and admit them into Gardens under which rivers flow), within Paradise, where there are rivers of various drinks: milk, honey, wine and fresh water. There is what no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard and no heart has ever imagined of delights in Paradise . Allah’s statement,

(ثَوَابًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ)

(a reward from Allah) testifies to His might, for the Mighty and Most Great only gives tremendous rewards. Allah’s statement,

(وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ)

(and with Allah is the best of rewards.) for those who perform good deeds.

(لَا يَغُرَّتْكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ - مَتَّعٌ قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَيَسَّ الْمِهَادُ - لَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا نُزُلًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِلْأَبْرَارِ)

(196. Let not the free disposal (and affluence) of the disbelievers throughout the land deceive you.) (197. A brief enjoyment; then their ultimate abode is Hell; and worst indeed is that place for rest.) (198. But, for those who have Taqwa of their Lord, are Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise); therein are they to dwell, an entertainment from Allah; and that which is with Allah is the best for Al-Abrar (the most righteous).) u

Warning Against Being Deceived by This Life; the Rewards of the Righteous Believers

Allah said, do not look at the disbelievers, who are enjoying various delights and joys. Soon, they will loose all this and be tied to their evil works, for verily, we are only giving them time, which deceives them, when all they have is,

(مَتَّعٌ قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَيَسَّ الْمِهَادُ)

(A brief enjoyment; then their ultimate abode is Hell; and worst indeed is that place for rest.)

This Ayah is similar to several other Ayat, such as,

(مَا يُجَادِلُ فِي آيَاتِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَلَا يَغُرُّكَ تَقَلُّبُهُمْ فِي الْبِلَادِ)

(None disputes in the Ayat of Allah but those who disbelieve. So, let not their ability of going about here and there through the land deceive you!) 40:4 ,

قُلْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ لَا
يُفْلِحُونَ - مَتَّعْ فِي الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ ثُمَّ
نُذِيقُهُمُ الْعَذَابَ الشَّدِيدَ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ)

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

(نُمَتِّعُهُمْ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ نَضْطَرُّهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابٍ غَلِيظٍ)

(We let them enjoy for a little while, then in the end We shall oblige them to (enter) a great torment.) 31:24 ,

(فَمَهْلٌ الْكَافِرِينَ أَمَهْلُهُمْ رُويَدًا)

(So, give a respite to the disbelievers; deal gently with them for a while.) 86:17 , and,

(أَفَمَنْ وَعَدْنَاهُ وَعَدْنَاهُ وَحَدًّا حَسَنًا فَهُوَ لِأَقْبِيهِ كَمَنْ مَتَّعْنَاهُ
مَتَّعَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ هُوَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنَ
الْمُحْضَرِينَ)

(Is he whom We have promised an excellent promise (Paradise) which he will find true -- like him whom We have made to enjoy the luxuries of the life of (this) world, then on the Day of Resurrection, he will be among those brought up (to be punished in the Hell-fire)) 28:61 .

After Allah mentioned the condition of the disbelievers in this life and their destination to the Fire, He said,

(لَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا نُزُلًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ)

(But, for those who have Taqwa of their Lord, are Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise); therein are they to dwell, an entertainment from Allah,) 3:198 , for certainly,

(وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِلْأَبْرَارِ)

(and that which is with Allah is the best for Al-Abrar.)

Ibn Jarir recorded that Abu Ad-Darda' used to say, "Death is better for every believer. Death is better for every disbeliever, and those who do not believe me should read Allah's statements,

(وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِلْأَبْرَارِ)

(and that which is with Allah is the best for Al-Abrar), and,

(وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّمَا نُؤْمَلِي لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ
لأنفسِهِمْ إِنَّمَا نُؤْمَلِي لَهُمْ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِثْمًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
مُّهِينٌ)

(And let not the disbelievers think that Our postponing of their punishment is good for them. We postpone the punishment only so that they may increase in sinfulness. And for them is a disgraceful torment.) 3:178 ."

(وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ
إِلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ خَشَعِينَ لِلَّهِ لَا يَشْتَرُونَ
بَايَتِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ
رَبِّهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ - يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ)

(199. And there are, certainly, among the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), those who believe in Allah and in that which has been revealed to you, and in that which has been revealed to them, humbling themselves before Allah. They do not sell the verses of Allah for a small price, for them is a reward with their Lord. Surely, Allah is swift in account.) (200. O you who believe! Endure and be more patient, and Rabitu, and have Taqwa of Allah, so that you may be successful.)

The Condition of Some of the People of the Scriptures and their Rewards

Allah states that some of the People of the Book truly believe in Him and in what was sent down to Muhammad , along with believing in the previously revealed Books, and they are obedient to Him and humble themselves before Allah.

(لَا يَشْتَرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا)

(They do not sell the verses of Allah for a small price) 3:199 , for they do not hide what they know of the glad tidings about the description of Muhammad , his Prophethood, and the description of his Ummah. Indeed, these are the best people among the People of the Book, whether they were Jews or Christians. Allah said in Surat Al-Qasas,

(الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ هُمْ بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ
وَإِذَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا ءَأَمَّا بِهِ إِنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّنَا
إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مُّسْلِمِينَ أَجْرَهُمْ مَرَّتَيْنِ بِمَا
صَبَرُوا)

(Those to whom We gave the Scripture before it, they believe in it (the Qur'an). And when it is recited to them, they say: "We believe in it. Verily, it is the truth from our Lord. Indeed even before it we were Muslims. These will be given their reward twice over, because they are patient,) 28:52-54 . Allah said,

(الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَتْلُونَهُ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ)

(Those to whom We gave the Book, recite it (follow it) as it should be recited (i.e. followed), they are the ones who believe therein.) 2:121 ,

(وَمِنْ قَوْمِ مُوسَىٰ أُمَّةٌ يَهْدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ
(

(And of the people of Musa there is a community who lead with truth and establish justice therewith.) 7:159 ,

(لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ
آيَاتِ اللَّهِ ءَانَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ)

(Not all of them are alike; a party of the people of the Scripture stand for the right, they recite the verses of Allah during the hours of the night, prostrating themselves in prayer.) 3:113 , and,

(قُلْ ءَامِنُوا بِهِ أَوْ لَا تُؤْمِنُوا إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ
مِن قَبْلِهِ إِذَا يُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ يَخِرُّونَ لِلأَذْقَانِ سُجَّدًا -
وَيَقُولُونَ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّنَا إِنْ كَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّنَا لَمَفْعُولًا
- وَيَخِرُّونَ لِلأَذْقَانِ يَبْكُونَ وَيَزِيدُهُمْ خُشُوعًا)

(Say: "Believe in it (the Qur'an) or do not believe (in it). Verily, those who were given knowledge before it, when it is recited to them, fall down on their faces in humble prostration." And they say: "Glory be to our Lord! Truly, the promise of our Lord must be fulfilled." And they fall down on their faces weeping and it increases their humility.) 17:107-109 .

These qualities exist in some of the Jews, but only a few of them. For instance, less than ten Jewish rabbis embraced the Islamic faith, such as `Abdullah bin Salam. Many among the Christians, on the other hand, embraced the Islamic faith. Allah said,

(لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا الْيَهُودَ
وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُم مَّوَدَّةً لِّلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصَارَى)

(Verily, you will find the strongest among men in enmity to the believers the Jews and those who commit Shirk, and you will find the nearest in love to the believers those who say: "We are Christians.") 5:82 , until,

(فَأَتَابَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا قَالُوا جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا)

(So because of what they said, Allah rewarded them Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise), they will abide therein forever) 5:85 . In this Ayah,

Allah said,

(أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ)

(for them is a reward with their Lord) 3:199 .

When Ja`far bin Abi Talib recited Surah Maryam chapter 19 to An-Najashi, King of Ethiopia, in the presence of Christian priests and patriarchs, he and they cried until their beards became wet from crying. The Two Sahihs record that when An-Najashi died, the Prophet conveyed the news to his Companions and said,

«إِنَّ أَخًا لَكُمْ بِالْحَبَشَةِ قَدْ مَاتَ، فَصَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ»

(A brother of yours from Ethiopia has passed, come to offer the funeral prayer.) He went out with the Companions to the Musalla lined them up in rows, and after that led the prayer.

Ibn Abi Najih narrated that Mujahid said that,

(وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ)

(And there are, certainly, among the People of the Scripture), refers to those among them who embraced Islam. `Abbad bin Mansur said that he asked Al-Hasan Al-Basri about Allah's statement,

(وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ)

(And there are, certainly, among the People of the Scripture, those who believe in Allah).

Al-Hasan said, "They are the People of the Book, before Muhammad was sent, who believed in Muhammad and recognized Islam. Allah gave them a double reward, for the faith that they had before Muhammad , and for believing in Muhammad (after he was sent as Prophet)." Ibn Abi Hatim recorded both of these statements. The Two Sahihs record that Abu Musa said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«ثَلَاثَةٌ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُمْ مَرَّتَيْنِ»

(Three persons will acquire a double reward.)

He mentioned among them,

«وَرَجُلٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ آمَنَ بِنَبِيِّهِ وَآمَنَ بِي»

(A person from among the People of the Book who believed in his Prophet and in me.)

Allah's statement,

(لَا يَشْتَرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا)

(They do not sell the verses of Allah for a small price), means, they do not hide the knowledge that they have, as the cursed ones among them have done. Rather, they share the knowledge without a price, and this is why Allah said,

(أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ
الْحِسَابِ)

(for them is a reward with their Lord. surely, Allah is Swift in account.)

Mujahid commented on the verse,

(سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ)

((Surely, Allah is) swift in account), "He is swift in reckoning," as Ibn Abi Hatim and others have recorded from him.

The Command for Patience and Ribat

Allah said,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا
وَرَابِطُوا)

(O you who believe! Endure and be more patient, and Rābitu) 3:200 .

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, "The believers are commanded to be patient in the religion that Allah chose for them, Islam. They are not allowed to abandon it in times of comfort or hardship, ease or calamity, until they die as Muslims. They are also commanded to endure against their enemies, those who hid the truth about their religion." Similar explanation given by several other scholars among the Salaf.

As for Murabatah, it is to endure in acts of worship and perseverance. It also means to await prayer after prayer, as Ibn `Abbas, Sahl bin Hanif and Muhammad bin Ka`b Al-Qurazi stated. Ibn Abi Hatim collected a Hadith that was also collected by Muslim and An-Nasa'i from Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet said,

«أَلَا أَخَيْرُكُمْ بِمَا يَمْحُو اللَّهُ بِهِ الْخَطَايَا، وَيَرْفَعُ بِهِ
الدَّرَجَاتِ؟ إِسْبَاحُ الْوُضُوءِ عَلَى الْمَكَارِهِ، وَكَثْرَةُ
الْخُطَا إِلَى الْمَسَاجِدِ، وَانْتِظَارُ الصَّلَاةِ بَعْدَ
الصَّلَاةِ، فَذَلِكَ الرَّبَّاطُ، فَذَلِكَ الرَّبَّاطُ، فَذَلِكَ
الرَّبَّاطُ»

(Should I tell you about actions with which Allah forgives sins and raises the grade Performing perfect ablution in unfavorable conditions, the many steps one takes to the Masajid, and awaiting prayer after the prayer, for this is the Ribat, this is the Ribat, this is the Ribat.)

They also say that the Murabatah in the above Ayah refers to battles against the enemy, and manning Muslim outposts to protect them from enemy incursions inside Muslim territory. There are several Hadiths that encourage Murabatah and mention its rewards. Al-Bukhari recorded that Sahl bin Sa`d As-Sa`idi said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«رَبَّاطُ يَوْمٍ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا
عَلَيْهَا»

(A Day of Ribat in the cause of Allah is better than this life and all that is in it.)

Muslim recorded that Salman Al-Farisi said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«رِبَاطُ يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ خَيْرٌ مِنْ صِيَامِ شَهْرٍ وَقِيَامِهِ،
وَإِنْ مَاتَ جَرَى عَلَيْهِ عَمَلُهُ الَّذِي كَانَ
يَعْمَلُهُ، وَأَجْرِي عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُ، وَأَمِنَ
الْفِتَانَ»

(Ribat for a day and a night is better than fasting the days of a month and its Qiyam (voluntary prayer at night). If one dies in Ribat, his regular righteous deeds that he used to perform will keep being added to his account, and he will receive his provision, and will be saved from the trials of the grave.)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Fadalāh bin `Ubayd said that he heard the Messenger of Allah saying,

«كُلُّ مَيِّتٍ يُخْتَمُ عَلَى عَمَلِهِ إِلَّا الَّذِي مَاتَ
مُرَاطِبًا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّهُ يَنْمِي لَهُ عَمَلُهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ
الْقِيَامَةِ، وَيَأْمَنُ فِتْنَةَ الْقَبْرِ»

(Every dead person will have his record of deeds sealed, except for whoever dies while in Ribat in the cause of Allah, for his work will keep increasing until the Day of Resurrection, and he will be safe from the trial of the grave.)

This is the same narration collected by Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi, who said, "Hasan Sahih". Ibn Hibban also collected this Hadith in his Sahih. fAt-Tirmidhi recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that he heard the Messenger of Allah saying,

«عَيْنَانِ لَا تَمَسُّهُمَا النَّارُ: عَيْنٌ بَكَتْ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ
اللَّهِ، وَعَيْنٌ بَاتَتْ تَحْرُسُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ»

(Two eyes shall not be touched by the Fire: an eye that cried for fear from Allah and an eye that spent the night guarding in Allah's cause.)

Al-Bukhari recorded in his Sahih that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«تَعِسَ عَبْدُ الدِّينَارِ وَعَبْدُ الدِّرْهِمِ وَعَبْدُ الْخَمِيصَةِ،
 إِنْ أُعْطِيَ رَضِيَ، وَإِنْ لَمْ يُعْطَ سَخِطَ، تَعِسَ
 وَأَنْتَكَسَ، وَإِذَا شَيْكَ فَلَا انْتَقَشَ، طُوبَى لِعَبْدٍ أَخَذَ
 بِعِنَانِ فَرَسِهِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، أَشَعَتْ رَأْسُهُ، مُعْبَرَةً
 قَدَمَاهُ، إِنْ كَانَ فِي الْحِرَاسَةِ كَانَ فِي الْحِرَاسَةِ،
 وَإِنْ كَانَ فِي السَّاقَةِ كَانَ فِي السَّاقَةِ، إِنْ اسْتَأْذَنَ
 لَمْ يُؤْذَنَ لَهُ، وَإِنْ شَفَعَ لَمْ يُشَفَّعَ»

(Let the servant of the Dinar, the servant of the Dirham and the servant of the Khamisah (of clothes) perish, as he is pleased if these things are given to him, and if not, he is displeased. Let such a person perish and be humiliated, and if he is pierced with a thorn, let him not find anyone to take it out for him. Paradise is for him who holds the reins of his horse, striving in Allah's cause, with his hair unkempt and feet covered with dust: if he is appointed to the vanguard, he is perfectly satisfied with his post of guarding, and if he is appointed in the rearguard, he accepts his post with satisfaction; if he asks for permission he is not permitted, and if he intercedes, his intercession is not accepted.)

Ibn Jarir recorded that Zayd bin Aslam said, "Abu `Ubaydah wrote to `Umar bin Al-Khattab and mentioned to him that the Romans were mobilizing their forces. `Umar wrote back, `Allah will soon turn whatever hardship a believing servant suffers, to ease, and no hardship shall ever overcome two types of ease. Allah says in His Book,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا
 وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ)

(O you who believe! Endure and be more patient, and Rabitu, and have Taqwa of Allah, so that you may be successful)' 3:200 ."

Al-Hafiz Ibn `Asakir mentioned in the biography of `Abdullah bin Al-Mubarak, that Muhammad bin Ibrahim bin Abi Sakinah said, "While in the area of Tarsus, `Abdullah bin Al-Mubarak dictated this poem to me when I was greeting him goodbye. He sent the poem with me to Al-Fudayl bin `Iyad in the year one hundred and seventy, `O he who worships in the vicinity of the Two Holy Masjids! If you but see us, you will realize that you are only jesting in worship. He who brings wetness to his cheek with his tears, should know that our necks are being wet by our blood. He who tires his horses without purpose, know that our horses are getting tired in battle. Scent of perfume is yours, while our scent is the glimmer of spears and the stench of dust in battle . We were narrated about in the speech of our Prophet, an authentic statement

that never lies. That the dust that erupts by Allah's horses and which fills the nostrils of a man shall never be combined with the smoke of a raging Fire. This, the Book of Allah speaks among us that the martyr is not dead, and the truth in Allah's Book cannot be denied.' I met Al-Fudayl Ibn `lyad in the Sacred Masjid and gave him the letter. When he read it, his eyes became tearful and he said, `Abu `Abdur-Rahman (`Abdullah bin Al-Mubarak) has said the truth and offered sincere advice to me.' He then asked me, `Do you write the Hadith' I said, `Yes.' He said, `Write this Hadith as reward for delivering the letter of Abu `Abdur-Rahman to me. He then dictated, `Mansur bin Al-Mu`tamir narrated to us that Abu Salih narrated from Abu Hurayrah that a man asked, `O Messenger of Allah! Teach me a good deed that will earn me the reward of the Mujahidin in Allah's cause.' The Prophet said,

«هَلْ تَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ تُصَلِّيَ فَلَا تَقْرَ، وَتَصُومَ فَلَا تُفْطِرَ؟»

(Are you able to pray continuously and fast without breaking the fast) The man said, `O Messenger of Allah! I cannot bear it.' The Prophet said,

«فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَوْ طَوَّقْتَ ذَلِكَ مَا بَلَغْتَ
الْمُجَاهِدِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، أَوْ مَا عَلِمْتَ أَنَّ فَرَسَ
الْمُجَاهِدِ لَيْسَتْ فِي طَوْلِهِ، فَيُكْتَبُ لَهُ بِذَلِكَ
الْحَسَنَاتُ»

(By He in Whose Hand is my soul! Even if you were able to do it, you will not achieve the grade of the Mujahidin in Allah's cause. Did you not know that the horse of the Mujahid earns rewards for him as long as it lives.)

Allah said next,

(وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ)

(and have Taqwa of Allah), concerning all your affairs and situations. For instance, the Prophet said to Mu`adh when he sent him to Yemen,

«اتَّقِ اللَّهَ حَيْثُمَا كُنْتَ، وَأَتَّبِعِ السَّيِّئَةَ الْحَسَنَةَ
تَمَحُّهَا، وَخَالِقِ النَّاسَ بِخُلُقِ حَسَنٍ»

(Have Taqwa of Allah wherever you may be, follow the evil deed with a good deed and it will erase it, and deal with people in a good manner.)

Allah said next,

(لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ)

(so that you may be successful.), in this life and the Hereafter. Ibn Jarir recorded that Muhammad bin Ka`b Al-Qurazi said that, Allah's statement,

(وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ)

(and have Taqwa of Allah, so that you may be successful.) means, "Fear Me concerning what is between you and Me, so that you may acquire success when you meet Me tomorrow."

The Tafsir of Surah Al `Imran ends here, all praise is due to Allah, and we ask Him that we die while on the path of the Qur'an and Sunnah, Amin.

The Tafsir of Surat An-Nisa

(Chapter 4)

Virtues of Surat An-Nisa 257 , A Madinan Surah

Al-`Awfi reported that Ibn `Abbas said that Surat An-Nisa' was revealed in Al-Madinah. Ibn Marduwyah recorded similar statements from `Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr and Zayd bin Thabit. In his Mustadrak, Al-Hakim recorded that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said, "There are five Ayat in Surat An-Nisa' that I would prefer to the life of this world and all that is in it,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ)

(Surely, Allah wrongs not even the weight of an atom,) 4:40 ,

(إِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ)

(If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden to do) 4:31 ,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ)

(Verily, Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), but He forgives except that (anything else) to whom He wills) 4:48 ,

(وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ)

(If they (hypocrites), when they had been unjust to themselves, had come to you) 4:64 , and,

(وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءاً أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ
يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُوراً رَحِيماً)

(And whoever does evil or wrongs himself, but afterwards seeks Allah's forgiveness, he will find Allah Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful) 4:110 . " Al-Hakim recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Ask me about Surat An-Nisa', for I learned the Qur'an when I was still young." Al-Hakim said, "This Hadith is Sahih according to the criteria of the Two Sahihs, and they did not collect it."

(بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ)

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

(يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ
وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالاً
كَثِيراً وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ
وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيباً)

(1. O mankind! Have Taqwa of your Lord, Who created you from a single person, and from him He created his mate, and from them both He created many men and women, and have Taqwa of Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and revere the wombs. Surely, Allah is always watching over you.)

The Command to have Taqwa, a Reminder about Creation, and Being Kind to Relatives

Allah commands His creatures to have Taqwa of Him by worshipping Him Alone without partners. He also reminds to them of His ability, in that He created them all from a single person, Adam, peace be unto him.

(وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا)

(And from him He created his wife) Hawwa' (Eve), who was created from Adam's left rib, from his back while he was sleeping. When Adam woke up and saw Hawwa', he liked her and had affection for her, and she felt the same toward him. An authentic Hadith states,

«إِنَّ الْمَرْأَةَ خُلِقَتْ مِنْضَلْعٍ، وَإِنَّ أَعْوَجَ شَيْءٍ فِي الضِّلْعِ أَعْلَاهُ، فَإِنْ ذَهَبْتَ تُقِيمُهُ كَسَرْتَهُ، وَإِنْ اسْتَمْتَعْتَ بِهَا اسْتَمْتَعْتَ بِهَا وَفِيهَا عِوَجٌ»

(Woman was created from a rib. Verily, the most curved portion of the rib is its upper part, so, if you should try to straighten it, you will break it, but if you leave it as it is, it will remain crooked.) Allah's statement,

(وَبَتَّ مِنْهُمَا رَجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً)

(And from them both He created many men and women;) means, Allah created from Adam and Hawwa' many men and women and distributed them throughout the world in various shapes, characteristics, colors and languages. In the end, their gathering and return will be to Allah. Allah then said,

(وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ)

(And have Taqwa of Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights) and revere the wombs), protect yourself from Allah by your acts of obedience to Him. Allah's statement,

(الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ)

(through Whom you demand your mutual (rights)), is in reference to when some people say, "I ask you by Allah, and then by the relation of the Rahim (the womb, i.e. my relationship to you)", according to Ibrahim, Mujahid and Al-Hasan. Ad-Dahhak said; "Fear Allah Whom you invoke when you conduct transactions and contracts." "And revere the womb by not cutting the relations of the womb, but keep and honor them, as Ibn `Abbas, `Ikrimah, Mujahid, Al-Hasan, Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi`, and others have stated. Allah's statement,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا)

(Surely, Allah is always watching over you.) means, He watches all your deeds and sees your every circumstance. In another Ayah, Allah said;

﴿وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ﴾

(And Allah is Witness over all things.) 58:6 . An authentic Hadith states,

«اعْبُدِ اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ، فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ»

(Worship Allah as if you see Him, for even though you cannot see Him, He sees you.) This part of the Ayah encourages having a sense of certainty that Allah is always watching, in a complete and perfect manner. Allah mentioned that He has created mankind from a single father and a single mother, so that they feel compassion for each other and are kind to the weaker among them. In his Sahih, Muslim recorded that Jarir bin `Abdullah Al-Bajali said that a delegation from Mudar came to the Messenger of Allah , and he saw their state, wearing striped woolen clothes due to poverty. After the Zuhr prayer, the Messenger of Allah stood up and gave a speech in which he recited,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ﴾

(O mankind! Have Taqwa of your Lord, Who created you from a single person,) until the end of the Ayah. He also recited,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ﴾

(O you who believe! Have Taqwa of Allah. And let every person look to what he has sent forth for the tomorrow) 59:18 . He also encouraged them to give charity, saying,

«تَصَدَّقَ رَجُلٌ مِنْ دِينَارِهِ، مِنْ دِرْهَمِهِ، مِنْ صَاعِ بُرِّهِ، مِنْ صَاعِ تَمْرِهِ»

(A man gave Sadaqah from his Dinar, from his Dirham, from his Sa` of wheat, from his Sa` of dates) until the end of the Hadith. This narration was also collected by Ahmad and the Sunan compilers from Ibn Mas`ud.

وَعَائُوا الْيَتَمَى أَمْوَلَهُمْ وَلَا تَتَبَدَّلُوا الْخَبِيثَ
بِالطَّيِّبِ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَى أَمْوَالِكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ
حُوبًا كَبِيرًا - وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَمَى
فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَنَى وَثَلَاثَ
وَرُبَاعَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ
أَيْمَانُكُمْ ذَلِكَ أَذْنَى أَلَّا تَعُولُوا - وَعَائُوا النِّسَاءَ
صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً فَإِنْ طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا
فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَّرِيئًا)

(2. And give unto orphans their property and do not exchange (your) bad things for (their) good ones; and devour not their substance (by adding it) to your substance. Surely, this is a great sin.) (3. And if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan girls, then marry (other) women of your choice, two or three, or four; but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one or (the captives and the servants) that your right hands possess. That is nearer to prevent you from Ta`ulu.) (4. And give to the women (whom you marry) their Saduqat (or dowry) Nihlah (with a good heart), but if they, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it, and enjoy it without fear of any harm.)

Protecting the Property of the Orphans

Allah commands that the property of the orphans be surrendered to them in full when they reach the age of adolescence, and He forbids using or confiscating any part of it. So He said;

(وَلَا تَتَبَدَّلُوا الْخَبِيثَ بِالطَّيِّبِ)

(and do not exchange (your) bad things for (their) good ones;) Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib and Az-Zuhri commented, "Do not substitute a weak animal of yours for a fat animal (of the orphans)." Ibrahim An-Nakha'i and Ad-Dahhak commented, "Do not give something of bad quality for something of good quality." As-Suddi said, "One of them (caretakers of orphans) would take a fat sheep from the orphan's property and put in its place, a weak sheep of his, saying, `A sheep

for a sheep.' He would also take a good Dirham and exchange it for a fake Dirham, saying, 'A Dirham for a Dirham.'" Allah's statement,

(وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَمْوَالِكُمْ)

(and devour not their substance to your substance.) means, do not mix them together so that you eat up both, as Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Muqatil bin Hayyan, As-Suddi and Sufyan bin Hassin stated. Allah said,

(إِنَّهُ كَانَ حُوبًا كَبِيرًا)

(Surely, this is a great sin.), a major and substantial sin, according to Ibn `Abbas. This was also reported from Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Al-Hasan, Ibn Srin, Qatadah, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Ad-Dahhak, Abu Malik, Zayd bin Aslam and Abu Snan. The meaning above is: adding their property to your property is a grave sin and a major mistake, so avoid it.

The Prohibition of Marrying Female Orphans Without Giving a Dowry

Allah said,

(وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَنَّىٰ)

(And if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan girls, then marry (other) women of your choice, two) Allah commands, when one of you is the caretaker of a female orphan and he fears that he might not give her a dowry that is suitable for women of her status, he should marry other women, who are plenty as Allah has not restricted him. Al-Bukhari recorded that `Aishah said, "A man was taking care of a female orphan and he married her, although he did not desire to marry her. That girl's money was mixed with his, and he was keeping her portion from her. Afterwards, this Ayah was revealed about his case;

(وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا)

(If you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly)" Al-Bukhari recorded that `Urwah bin Az-Zubayr said that he asked `Aishah about the meaning of the statement of Allah,

(وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ)

(If you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan girls.) She said, "O my nephew! This is about the orphan girl who lives with her guardian and shares his property. Her wealth and beauty may tempt him to marry her without giving her an adequate dowry which might have been given by another suitor. So, such guardians were forbidden to marry such orphan girls unless they treated them justly and gave them the most suitable dowry; otherwise they were ordered to marry woman besides them." `A'ishah further said, "After that verse, the people again asked the Messenger of Allah (about marriage with orphan girls), so Allah revealed the Ayah,

(وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِي النِّسَاءِ)

(They ask your instruction concerning the women..) 4:127 ." She said, "Allah's statement in this Ayah,

(وَتَرَّ غُبُونًا أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ)

(yet whom you desire to marry) 4:127 refers to the guardian who does not desire to marry an orphan girl under his supervision because she is neither wealthy nor beautiful. The guardians were forbidden to marry their orphan girls possessing property and beauty without being just to them, as they generally refrain from marrying them (when they are neither beautiful nor wealthy)."

The Permission to Marry Four Women

Allah's statement,

(مَنْنَى وَثَلَاثَ وَرُبَاعًا)

(two or three, or four), means, marry as many women as you like, other than the orphan girls, two, three or four. We should mention that Allah's statement in another Ayah,

(جَاعِلِ الْمَلَكَةَ رُسُلًا أُولَىٰ أَجْنِحَةٍ مِّننَىٰ وَثَلَاثَ وَرُبَاعًا)

(Who made the angels messengers with wings, - two or three or four) 35:1 , does not mean that other angels do not have more than four wings, as there are proofs that some angels do have more wings. Yet, men are prohibited from marrying more than four wives, as the Ayah decrees, since the Ayah specifies what men are allowed of wives, as Ibn `Abbas and the majority of scholars stated. If it were allowed for them to have more than four wives, the Ayah would have mentioned it. Imam Ahmad recorded that Salim said that his father said that Ghilan bin Salamah Ath-Thaqafi had ten wives when he became Muslim, and the Prophet said to him, "Choose any four of them (and divorce the rest)." During the reign of `Umar, Ghilan divorced his remaining wives and divided his money between his children. When `Umar heard news of

this, he said to Ghilan, "I think that the devil has conveyed to your heart the news of your imminent death, from what the devil hears during his eavesdropping. It may as well be that you will not remain alive but for a little longer. By Allah! You will take back your wives and your money, or I will take possession of this all and will order that your grave be stoned as is the case with the grave of Abu Righal (from Thamud, who was saved from their fate because he was in the Sacred Area. But, when he left it, he was tormented like they were)." Ash-Shafi`i, At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, Ad-Daraqutni and Al-Bayhaqi collected this Hadith up to the Prophet's statement, "Choose any four of them." Only Ahmad collected the full version of this Hadith. Therefore, had it been allowed for men to marry more than four women at the same time, the Prophet would have allowed Ghilan to keep more than four of his wives since they all embraced Islam with him. When the Prophet commanded him to keep just four of them and divorce the rest, this indicated that men are not allowed to keep more than four wives at a time under any circumstances. If this is the case concerning those who already had more than four wives upon embracing Islam, then this ruling applies even more so to marrying more than four.

Marrying Only One Wife When One Fears He Might not Do Justice to His Wives

Allah's statement,

(فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ)

(But if you fear that you will not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one or what your right hands possess.) The Ayah commands, if you fear that you will not be able to do justice between your wives by marrying more than one, then marry only one wife, or satisfy yourself with only female captives, for it is not obligatory to treat them equally, rather it is recommended. So if one does so, that is good, and if not, there is no harm on him. In another Ayah, Allah said,

(وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعُوا أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ)

(You will never be able to do perfect justice between wives even if it is your ardent desire) 4:129 . Allah said,

(ذَلِكَ أَذْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَعُولُوا)

(That is nearer to prevent you from Ta`ulu), meaning, from doing injustice. Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Marduwyah and Abu Hatim Ibn Hibban, in his Sahih, recorded that `Aishah said that, the Prophet said that the Ayah,

(ذَلِكَ أَذْنَىٰ إِلَّا تَعُولُوا)

(That is nearer to prevent you from Ta`ulu), means, from doing injustice. However, Ibn Abi Hatim said that his father said that this Hadith to the Prophet is a mistake, for it should be attributed to `A'ishah not the Prophet . Ibn Abi Hatim reported from Ibn `Abbas, `A'ishah, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Al-Hasan, Abu Malik, Abu Razin, An-Nakha`i, Ash-Sha`bi, Ad-Dahhak, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, Qatadah, As-Suddi and Muqatil bin Hayyan that Ta`ulu means to deviate from justice .

Giving the Dowry is Obligatory

`Ali bin Abi Talhah reported Ibn `Abbas saying, Nihlah, in Allah's statement,

(وَأَتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً)

(And give to the women (whom you marry) their Saduqat Nihlah) refers to the dowry. Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated from Az-Zuhri that `Urwah said that `A'ishah said that `Nihlah' means `obligatory'. Muqatil, Qatadah and Ibn Jurayj said, `Nihlah' means `obligatory' Ibn Jurayj added: `specified.' Ibn Zayd said, "In Arabic, Nihlah, refers to what is necessary. So Allah is commanding: Do not marry unless you give your wife something that is her right. No person after the Prophet is allowed to marry a woman except with the required dowry, nor by giving false promises about the dowry intended ." Therefore, the man is required to pay a dowry to his wife with a good heart, just as he gives a gift with a good heart. If the wife gives him part or all of that dowry with a good heart, her husband is allowed to take it, as it is lawful for him in this case. This is why Allah said afterwards,

(فَإِنْ طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَّرِيئًا)

(But if they, of their own pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it, and enjoy it without fear of any harm.)

(وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَمًا وَارزُقوهُم فِيهَا وَاكسُوهُم وَقُولُوا لَهُم قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا - وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ

فَإِنْ ءَانَسْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ رُشْدًا فَادْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا
تَأْكُلُوهَا إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا أَنْ يَكْبَرُوا وَمَنْ كَانَ غَنِيًّا
فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ وَمَنْ كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
فَإِذَا دَفَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فَأَشْهَدُوا عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَفَى
بِاللَّهِ حَسِيبًا)

(5. And give not unto the unwise your wealth which Allah has made a means of support for you, but feed and clothe them therewith, and speak to them words of kindness and justice.) (6. And test orphans until they reach the age of marriage; if then you find sound judgment in them, release their property to them, but consume it not wastefully and hastily, fearing that they should grow up. And whoever among guardians is rich, he should take no wages, but if he is poor, let him have for himself what is just and reasonable (according to his work). And when you release their property to them, take a witness in their presence; and Allah is All-Sufficient in taking account.)

Holding the Property of the Unwise in Escrow

Allah prohibited giving the unwise the freedom to do as they wish with wealth, which Allah has made as a means of support for people. This ruling sometimes applies because of being young, as young people are incapable of making wise decisions. It also applies in cases of insanity, erratic behavior and having a weak intellect or religious practice. It applies in cases of bankruptcy, when the debtors ask that the property of a bankrupt person is put in escrow, when his debts cannot be paid off with his money. Ad-Dahhak reported that Ibn `Abbas said that Allah's statement,

(وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ)

(And give not unto the unwise your property) refers to children and women. Similar was also said by Ibn Mas`ud, Al-Hakam bin `Uyaynah, Al-Hasan and Ad-Dahhak: "Women and boys." Sa`id bin Jubayr said that `the unwise' refers to the orphans. Mujahid, `Ikrimah and Qatadah said; "They are women."

Spending on the Unwise with Fairness

Allah said,

وَأَرْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا وَاكْسُوهُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا
مَعْرُوفًا)

(but feed and clothe them therewith, and speak to them words of kindness and justice.) `Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas commented, "Do not give your wealth, what Allah has made you responsible for and made a means of sustenance to you, to your wife or children. Rather, hold on to your money, take care of it, and be the one who spends on them for clothes, food and provision." Mujahid said that the Ayah,

وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا)

(and speak to them words of kindness and justice.) refers to kindness and keeping good relations. This honorable Ayah commands kind treatment, in deed, with family and those under one's care. One should spend on them for clothes and provisions, and be good to them, such as saying good words to them.

Giving Back the Property of the Orphans When They Reach Adulthood

Allah said,

وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتَامَى)

(And test orphans) meaning, test their intelligence, as Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Al-Hasan, As-Suddi and Muqatil bin Hayyan stated.

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النُّكَاحَ)

(until they reach the age of marriage), the age of puberty, according to Mujahid. The age of puberty according to the majority of scholars comes when the child has a wet dream. In his Sunan, Abu Dawud recorded that `Ali said, "I memorized these words from the Messenger of Allah ,

«لَا يُتَمَّ بَعْدَ احْتِلَامٍ، وَلَا صُمَاتَ يَوْمٍ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ»

(There is no orphan after the age of puberty nor vowing to be silent throughout the day to the night.) In another Hadith, `A'ishah and other Companions said that the Prophet said,

«رُفِعَ الْقَلَمُ عَنْ ثَلَاثَةٍ، عَنِ الصَّبِيِّ حَتَّى يَحْتَلِمَ،
وَعَنِ النَّائِمِ حَتَّى يَسْتَيْقِظَ، وَعَنِ الْمَجْنُونِ حَتَّى
يُفِيْقَ»

(The pen does not record the deeds of three persons: the child until the age of puberty, the sleeping person until waking up, and the senile until sane.) Or, the age of fifteen is considered the age of adolescence. In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that Ibn `Umar said, "I was presented in front of the Prophet on the eve of the battle of Uhud, while I was fourteen years of age, and he did not allow me to take part in that battle. But I was presented in front of him on the eve of the battle of Al-Khandaq (The Trench) when I was fifteen years old, and he allowed me (to join that battle)." `Umar bin `Abdul-`Aziz commented when this Hadith reached him, "This is the difference between a child and an adult." There is a difference of opinion over whether pubic hair is considered a sign of adulthood, and the correct opinion is that it is. The Sunnah supports this view, according to a Hadith collected by Imam Ahmad from `Atiyah Al-Qurazi who said, We were presented to the Prophet on the day of Qurizah, whoever had pubic hair was killed, whoever did not was left free to go, I was one of those who did not, so I was left free." The Four Sunan compilers also recorded similar to it. At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih." Allah's statement,

(فَإِنْ ءَانَسْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ رُشْدًا فَادْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ)

(if then you find sound judgment in them, release their property to them,) Sa`id bin Jubayr said that this portion of the Ayah means, when you find them to be good in the religion and wise with their money. Similar was reported from Ibn `Abbas, Al-Hasan Al-Basri and others among the Imams. The scholars of Fiqh stated that when the child becomes good in the religion and wise concerning with money, then the money that his caretaker was keeping for him should be surrendered to him.

Poor Caretakers are Allowed to Wisely Spend from the Money of the Orphan Under Their Care, to Compensate for Their Work

Allah said,

(وَلَا تَأْكُلُوْهَا إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا أَنْ يَكْبَرُوْا)

(But consume it not wastefully and hastily, fearing that they should grow up.) Allah commands that the money of the orphan should not be spent unnecessarily,

(إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا)

(Wastefully and hastily) for fear they might grow up. Allah also commands,

(وَمَنْ كَانَ غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ)

(And whoever among guardians is rich, he should take no wages,) Hence, the guardian who is rich and does not need the orphan's money, should not take any of it as wages.

(وَمَنْ كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ)

(but if he is poor, let him have for himself what is just and reasonable.) Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `A'ishah said, "This Ayah,

(وَمَنْ كَانَ غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ وَمَنْ كَانَ فَقِيرًا
فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ)

(And whoever among guardians is rich, he should take no wages, but if he is poor, let him have for himself what is just and reasonable.) was revealed about the guardian of the orphan and pertains to whatever work he does for the orphan's estate. " Al-Bukhari also collected this Hadith. Imam Ahmad recorded that `Amr bin Shu`ayb said that his father said that his father told him that a man asked the Messenger of Allah , "I do not have money, but I have an orphan under my care." The Messenger said,

«كُلْ مِنْ مَالِ يَتِيمِكَ غَيْرَ مُسْرِفٍ وَلَا مُبَدِّرٍ وَلَا
مُتَأَثِّلٍ مَالًا، وَمِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ تَقِيَ مَالِكَ أَوْ قَالَ تَقْدِي
مَالِكَ بِمَالِهِ»

(Eat from your orphan's wealth without extravagance or wastefulness, or mixing it, and without saving your money by spending his.)" Allah said,

(فَإِذَا دَفَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ)

(And when you release their property to them.) after they become adults, and you see that they are wise, then,

(فَأَشْهَدُوا عَلَيْهِمْ)

(take a witness in their presence;) Allah commands the guardians of orphans to surrender the property of the orphans who become consenting adults, in the presence of witnesses, so that none of them denies the fact that he received his money. Allah said next,

(وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ حَسِيبًا)

(and Allah is All-Sufficient in taking account.) meaning, Allah is sufficient as Witness, Reckoner and Watcher over their work for orphans, and when they surrender their money to them, whether their property was complete and whole, or deficient and less. Indeed, Allah knows all of that. In his Sahih, Muslim recorded that the Messenger of Allah said,

«يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ إِنِّي أُرَاكَ ضَعِيفًا، وَإِنِّي أَحِبُّ لَكَ مَا أَحِبُّ لِنَفْسِي، لَا تَأْمُرَنَّ عَلَى اثْنَيْنِ، وَلَا تَلِينَنَّ مَالَ يَتِيمٍ»

(O Abu Dharr! Verily, you are weak, and I love for you what I love for myself. Do not become a leader of two nor assume guardianship of an orphan's property.)

(لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ
وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا
قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا - وَإِذَا حَضَرَ
الْقِسْمَةَ أُولُو الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسْكِينُ
فَارْزُقُوهُمْ مِنْهُ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا -
وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكَوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعَفًا
خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا -
إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَى ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ
فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا وَسَيَصْلُونَ سَعِيرًا)

(7. There is a share for men and a share for women from what is left by parents and those nearest in relation, whether the property be small or large -- a legal share.) (8. And when the relatives, and the orphans, and the poor are present at the time of division, give them from the property, and speak to them words of kindness and justice.) (9. And let those (executors and guardians) have the same fear in their minds as they would have for their own, if they had left weak offspring behind. So, let them have Taqwa of Allah and speak truthfully.) (10. Verily, those who unjustly eat up the property of orphans, they eat up only a fire into their bellies, and they will be burnt in the blazing Fire!)

The Necessity of Surrendering the Inheritance According to the Portions that Allah Ordained

Sa`id bin Jubayr and Qatadah said, "The idolators used to give adult men a share of inheritance and deprive women and children of it. Allah revealed;

(لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ)

(There is a share for men from what is left by parents and those nearest in relation)." Therefore, everyone is equal in Allah's decision to inherit, even though their shares vary according to the degree of their relationship to the deceased, whether being a relative, spouse, etc. Ibn Marduwyah reported that Jabir said, "Umm Kujjah came to the Messenger of Allah and said to him, 'O Messenger of Allah! I have two daughters whose father died, and they do not own anything.' So Allah revealed;

(لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ)

(There is a share for men from what is left by parents and those nearest in relation.)" We will mention this Hadith when explaining the two Ayat about inheritance. Allah knows best. Allah said,

(وَإِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ)

(are present at the time of division,) those who do not have a share in the inheritance,

(وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينُ)

(and the orphans and the poor), are also present upon dividing the inheritance, give them a share of the inheritance. Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah,

(وَإِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ أُولُو الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينُ)

(And when the relatives and the orphans and the poor are present at the time of division), was not abrogated. Ibn Jarir recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that this Ayah still applies and should be implemented. Ath-Thawri said that Ibn Abi Najih narrated from Mujahid that implementing this Ayah, "Is required from those who have anything to inherit, paid from whatever portions their hearts are satisfied with giving away." Similar explanation was reported from Ibn Mas`ud, Abu Musa, `Abdur-Rahman bin Abi Bakr, Abu Al-`Aliyah, Ash-Sha`bi and Al-Hasan. Ibn `Urin, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Makhul, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, `Ata' bin Abi Rabah, Az-Zuhri and Yahya bin Ya`mar said this payment is obligatory. Others say that this refers to the bequeathal at the time of death. And others say that it was abrogated. Al-`Awfi reported that Ibn `Abbas said that this Ayah,

(وَإِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ)

(And when are present at the time of division), refers to divisions of inheritance. So, when poor relatives, who are ineligible for inheritance, orphans, and the poor attend the division of the inheritance, which is sometimes substantial, their hearts will feel eager to have a share, seeing each eligible person assuming his share; while they are desperate, yet are not given anything. Allah the Most Kind, Most Compassionate, commands that they should have a share in the inheritance as an act of kindness, charity, compassion and mercy for them.

Observing Fairness in the Will

Allah said,

(وَلِيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكَوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ)

(And let those have the same fear in their minds as they would have for their own, if they had left behind...) `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said that this part of the Ayah, "Refers to a man who is near death and he dictates a will and testament that harms some of the rightful inheritors. Allah commands whoever hears such will to fear Allah, and direct the dying man to do what is right and to be fair, being as eager to protect the inheritors of the dying man as he would be with his own." Similar was reported from Mujahid and several others. The Two Sahihs record that when the Messenger of Allah visited Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas during an illness he suffered from, Sa`d said to the Messenger, "O Messenger of Allah! I am wealthy and have no inheritors except a daughter. Should I give two-thirds of my property in charity" He said, "No." Sa`d asked, "Half" He said, "No." Sa`d said, "One-third" The Prophet said;

«الثُّلُثُ، وَالثُّلُثُ كَثِيرٌ»

(One-third, and even one-third is too much.) The Messenger of Allah then said,

«إِنَّكَ أَنْ تَذَرَ وَرَثَتَكَ أَغْنِيَاءَ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَنْ تَذَرَهُمْ
عَالَةً يَتَكَفَّفُونَ النَّاسَ»

(You'd better leave your inheritors wealthy rather than leaving them poor, begging from others.)

A Stern Warning Against Those Who Use Up the Orphan's Wealth

It was also said that the Ayah

(وَلَا تَأْكُلُوها إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا أَنْ يَكْبَرُوا)

(consume it not wastefully and hastily, fearing that they should grow up,) means, let them have Taqwa of Allah when taking care of the orphan's wealth, as Ibn Jarir recorded from Al-`Awfi who reported this explanation from Ibn `Abbas. This is a sound opinion that is supported by the warning that follows against consuming the orphan's wealth unjustly. In this case, the meaning becomes: Just as you would want your offspring to be treated fairly after you, then treat other people's offspring fairly when you are given the responsibility of caring for them. Allah proclaims that those who unjustly consume the wealth of orphans, will be eating fire into their stomach, this is why Allah said,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَى ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا
يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا وَسَيَصْلُونَ سَعِيرًا)

(Verily, those who unjustly eat up the property of orphans, they eat up only a fire into their bellies, and they will be burnt in the blazing Fire!) meaning, when you consume the orphan's wealth without a right, then you are only consuming fire, which will kindle in your stomach on the Day of Resurrection. It is recorded in the Two Sahihs that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«اجْتَنِبُوا السَّبْعَ الْمُؤِيقَاتِ»

(Avoid the seven great destructive sins.) The people asked, "O Allah's Messenger! What are they" He said,

«الشِّرْكَ بِاللَّهِ، وَالسَّحْرُ، وَقَتْلُ النَّفْسِ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ
اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ، وَأَكْلُ الرِّبَا، وَأَكْلُ مَالِ الْيَتِيمِ،
وَالتَّوَلَّى يَوْمَ الزَّحْفِ، وَقَدْفُ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ
المُؤْمِنَاتِ الْغَافِلَاتِ»

(To join others in worship along with Allah, magic, to kill the life which Allah has forbidden except for a just cause, to consume interest, to consume an orphan's property, to turn your back to the enemy and flee from the battlefield at the time of fighting, and to accuse chaste women who never even think of anything harmful to their chastity being good believers.)

(يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ
الْأُنثَى فَإِن كُنَّ نِسَاءً فَوْقَ اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا
تَرَكَ وَإِن كَانَتْ وَاحِدَةً فَلَهَا النِّصْفُ وَلِأَبَوَيْهِ لِكُلِّ
وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِن كَانَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ فَإِن
لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَوَرَثَتْهُ أَبَوَاهُ فَلِأُمِّهِ الثُّلُثُ فَإِن كَانَ
لَهُ إِخْوَةٌ فَلِأُمِّهِ السُّدُسُ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِي
بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ ءَابَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ أَيُّهُمْ
أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفْعًا فَرِيضَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ
عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا)

(11. Allah commands you for your children's (inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two - females; if only daughters, two or more, their share is two thirds of the inheritance; if only one, her share is half. For parents, a sixth share of inheritance to each if the deceased left children; if no children, and the parents are the (only) heirs, the mother has a third; if the deceased left brothers or (sisters), the mother has a sixth. (The distribution in all cases is) after the payment of legacies he may have bequeathed or debts. You know not which of them, whether your parents or your children, are nearest to you in benefit, (these fixed shares) are ordained by Allah. And Allah is Ever All-Knower, All-Wise.)

Learning the Various Shares of the Inheritance is Encouraged

This, the following, and the last honorable Ayah in this Surah contain the knowledge of Al-Fara'id, inheritance. The knowledge of Al-Fara'id is derived from these three Ayat and from the Hadiths on this subject which explain them. Learning this knowledge is encouraged, especially the specific things mentioned in the Ayat. Ibn `Uyaynah said; "Knowledge of Al-Fara'id was called half of knowledge, because it effects all people." o

The Reason Behind Revealing Ayah 4:11

Explaining this Ayah, Al-Bukhari recorded that Jabir bin `Abdullah said, "Allah's Messenger came visiting me on foot with Abu Bakr at Banu Salamah's (dwellings), and the Prophet found me unconscious. He asked for some water, performed ablution with it, then poured it on me, and I regained consciousness. I said, `What do you command me to do with my money, O Allah's Messenger' this Ayah was later revealed,

(يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ
الأنثيين)

(Allah commands you for your children's (inheritance); to the male, a portion equal to that of two females)." This is how it was recorded by Muslim and An-Nasa'i. The remainder of the Six compilers also collected this Hadith. Another Hadith from Jabir concerning the reason behind revealing Ayah 4:11 Ahmad recorded from Jabir that he said, "The wife of Sa`d bin Ar-Rabi` came to Allah's Messenger and said to him, `O Allah's Messenger! These are the two daughters of Sa`d bin Ar-Rabi`, who was killed as a martyr at Uhud. Their uncle took their money and did not leave anything for them. They will not be married unless they have money.' The Messenger said, `Allah will decide on this matter.' The Ayah about the inheritance was later revealed and the Messenger of Allah sent word to their uncle commanding him,

«أَعْطِ ابْنَتِي سَعْدِ الثُّلُثَيْنِ، وَأُمَّهُمَا الثُّمْنَ، وَمَا
بَقِيَ فَهُوَ لَكَ»

(Give two-thirds (of Sa`d's money) to Sa`d's two daughters and one eighth for their mother, and whatever is left is yours.)" Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah collected this Hadith. It is apparent, however, that the first Hadith from Jabir was about the case of the last Ayah in the Surah 4:176, rather than 4:11, for at the time this incident occurred, Jabir had sisters and did not have daughters, parents or offspring to inherit from him. Yet, we mentioned the Hadith here just as Al-Bukhari did.

Males Get Two Times the Share of Females for Inheritance

Allah said,

(يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ
الْأُنثَى)

(Allah commands you for your children's (inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two females;) Allah commands: observe justice with your children. The people of Jahiliyyah used to give the males, but not the females, a share in the inheritance. Therefore, Allah commands that both males and females take a share in the inheritance, although the portion of the males is twice as much as that of the females. There is a distinction because men need money to spend on their dependants, commercial transactions, work and fulfilling their obligations. Consequently, men get twice the portion of the inheritance that females get. Allah's statement,

(يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ
الْأُنثَى)

(Allah commands you for your children's (inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two females;) testifies to the fact that Allah is more merciful with children than their own parents are with them, since He commands the parents to be just and fair with their own children. An authentic Hadith stated that a captured woman was looking for her child and when she found him, she held him, gave him her breast and nursed him. The Messenger of Allah said to his Companions,

«أُثْرُونَ هَذِهِ طَارِحَةً وَوَلَدَهَا فِي النَّارِ وَهِيَ تَقْدِرُ
عَلَى ذَلِكَ»

(Do you think that this woman would willingly throw her child in the fire) They said, "No, O Messenger of Allah." He said,

«قَوْلَ اللَّهِ لِي أَرْحَمُ بِعِبَادِهِ مِنْ هَذِهِ بِوَلَدِهَا»

(By Allah! Allah is more merciful with His servants than this woman is with her own child.) Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "The custom (in old days) was that the property of the deceased would be inherited by his offspring; as for the parents (of the deceased), they would inherit by the will of the deceased. Then Allah cancelled whatever He willed from that custom and ordained that the male get twice the amount inherited by the female, and for each parent a sixth (of the whole legacy), for the wife an eighth or a fourth, and for the husband a half or a fourth."

The Share of the Females When They Are the Only Eligible Heirs

Allah said,

(فَإِنْ كُنَّ نِسَاءً فَوْقَ اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ)

(if only daughters, two or more, their share is two-thirds of the inheritance;) We should mention here that some people said the Ayah only means two daughters, and that 'more' is redundant, which is not true. Nothing in the Qur'an is useless or redundant. Had the Ayah been talking about only two women, it would have said, "The share of both of them is two-thirds." As for the daughters, two or more, the ruling that they get two-thirds was derived from this Ayah, stating that the two sisters get two-thirds. We also mentioned the Hadith in which the Prophet commanded that two-thirds be the share of the two daughters of Sa'd bin Ar-Rabi'. So this is proven in the Book and the Sunnah.

(وَإِنْ كَانَتْ وَاحِدَةً فَلَهَا النِّصْفُ)

(if only one, her share is half.) If there are two daughters, then there are texts to prove they share a half. Therefore, two-thirds is the share of the two daughters or sisters, and Allah knows best.

Share of the Parents in the Inheritance

Allah said,

(وَالْأَبَوَيْنِ لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ)

(For parents, a sixth share of inheritance to each) There are several forms of the share that the parents get in the inheritance. 1. If the deceased left behind children, the parents get a sixth each. When the deceased had only one daughter, she gets half of the inheritance and the parents each one sixth, and another sixth is given to the father. 2. When the parents are the only inheritors, the mother gets one-third while the father gets the remaining two-thirds. In this case, the father's share will be twice the mother's share. If the deceased had a surviving spouse, the spouse gets half, in the case of a husband, or a fourth in the case of a surviving wife. In both cases, the mother of the deceased gets one-third of the remaining inheritance. This is because the remaining portion of the inheritance is treated just as the entire legacy in regard to the parents' share. Allah has given the mother one-half of what the father gets. Therefore, the mother gets a third of the remaining inheritance while the father gets two-thirds. 3. If the deceased left behind surviving brothers and sisters, whether half brothers, half sisters or from the same father and mother, their presence does not cause reduction in the father's share. Yet, their presence reduces the share of the mother to one-sixth instead of one-third, and the father gets the rest, when there are no other heirs. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Qatadah commented on the Ayah,

(فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُ إِخْوَةٌ فَلِأُمِّهِ السُّدُسُ)

(If the deceased left brothers or (sisters), the mother has a sixth.) "Their presence will reduce the share of the mother, but they will not inherit. If there is only one surviving brother, the mother's share will remain one-third, but her share will be reduced if there is more than one surviving brother. The people of knowledge attribute this reduction in the mother's share from one-third (to one-sixth) to the fact that the father is the one who helps the brothers (and sisters) of the deceased get married, spending from his own money for this purpose. The mother does not spend from her money for this purpose." This is a sound opinion.

First the Debts are Paid Off, then the Will, then the Fixed Inheritance

Allah said,

(مِن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَىٰ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ)

((The distribution in all cases is) after the payment of legacies he may have bequeathed or debts.) The scholars of the Salaf and the Khalaf agree that paying debts comes before fulfilling the will, and this is apparent to those who read the Ayah carefully. Allah said next,

(ءَابَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفَعًا)

(You know not which of them, whether your parents or your children, are nearest to you in benefit.) This Ayah means: We have appointed a share to the parents and children, contrary to the practice of Jahiliyyah and the early Islamic era, when the inheritance would go to the children, and parents get a share only if they were named in the will, as Ibn `Abbas stated. Allah abrogated this practice and appointed a fixed share for the children and for the parents. One may derive benefit in this life or for the Hereafter from his parents, the likes of which he could not get from his children. The opposite of this could also be true. Allah said,

(ءَابَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفَعًا)

(You know not which of them, whether your parents or your children, are nearest to you in benefit,): since benefit could come from one or the other of these relatives, We appointed a fixed share of inheritance for each. Allah knows best. Allah said,

(فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ)

(ordained by Allah), meaning: These appointed shares of inheritance that We mentioned and which give some inheritors a bigger share than others, is a commandment from Allah that He has decided and ordained,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا)

(And Allah is Ever All-Knower, All-Wise.), Who places everything in its rightful place and gives each his rightful share.

(وَلَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَزْوَاجُكُمْ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُنَّ
وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَلَكُمْ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ مِنْ
بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِينَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ وَلَهُنَّ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا
تَرَكَتُمْ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ
النُّصْبُ مِمَّا تَرَكَتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ تُوصُونَ بِهَا أَوْ
دَيْنٍ وَإِنْ كَانَ رَجُلٌ يُورَثُ كَلَالَةً أَوْ امْرَأَةٌ وَلَهُ
أَخٌ أَوْ أُخْتٌ فَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ فَإِنْ كَانُوا
أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ فِي الثُّلُثِ مِنْ بَعْدِ
وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَى بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ غَيْرَ مُضَارٍّ وَصِيَّةً
مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ)

(12. In that which your wives leave, your share is half if they have no child; but if they leave a child, you get a fourth of that which they leave after payment of legacies that they may have bequeathed or debts. In that which you leave, their (your wives) share is a fourth if you leave no child; but if you leave a child, they get an eighth of that which you leave after payment of legacies that you may have bequeathed or debts. If the man or woman whose inheritance is in Kalalah has left neither ascendants nor descendants, but has left a brother or a sister, each one of the two gets a sixth; but if more than two, they share in a third; after payment of legacies he (or she) may have bequeathed or debts, so that no loss is caused (to anyone). This is a Commandment from Allah; and Allah is Ever All-Knowing, Most Forbearing.)

Share of the Spouses in the Inheritance

Allah says to the husband, you get half of what your wife leaves behind if she dies and did not have a child. If she had a child, you get one-fourth of what she leaves behind, after payment of legacies that she may have bequeathed, or her debts. We mentioned before that payment of debts comes before fulfilling the will, and then comes the will, then the inheritance, and there is a consensus on this matter among the scholars. And the rule applies to the grandchildren as well as the children, even if they are great-grandchildren (or even further in generation) Allah then said,

(وَلَهُنَّ الرَّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَتُمْ)

(In that which you leave, their (your wives) share is a fourth) and if there is more than one wife, they all share in the fourth, or one-eighth that the wife gets. Earlier, we explained Allah's statement,

(مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ)

(After payment of legacies)

The Meaning of Kalalah

Allah said,

(وَإِنْ كَانَ رَجُلٌ يُورَثُ كَلَالَةً)

(If the man or woman whose inheritance is in question was left in Kalalah.) Kalalah is a derivative of Iklil; the crown that surrounds the head. The meaning of Kalalah in this Ayah is that the person's heirs come from other than the first degree of relative. Ash-Sha`bi reported that when Abu Bakr As-Siddiq was asked about the meaning of Kalalah, he said, "I will say my own opinion about it, and if it is correct, then this correctness is from Allah. However, if my opinion is wrong, it will be my error and because of the evil efforts of Shaytan, and Allah and His Messenger have nothing to do with it. Kalalah refers to the man who has neither descendants nor ascendants." When `Umar became the Khalifah, he said, "I hesitate to contradict an opinion of Abu Bakr." This was recorded by Ibn Jarir and others. In his Tafsir, Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "I was among the last persons to see `Umar bin Al-Khattab, and he said to me, `What you said was the correct opinion.' I asked, `What did I say?' He said, `That Kalalah refers to the person who has no child or parents.'" This is also the opinion of `Ali bin Abi Talib, Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Zayd bin Thabit, Ash-Sha`bi, An-Nakha'i, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Qatadah, Jabir bin Zayd and Al-Hakam. This is also the view of the people of Al-Madinah, Kufah, Basrah, the Seven Fuqaha', the Four Imams and the majority of scholars of the past and present, causing some scholars to declare that there is a consensus on this opinion.

The Ruling Concerning Children of the Mother From Other Than the Deceased's Father

Allah said,

(وَلَهُ أَخٌ أَوْ أُخْتٌ)

(But has left a brother or a sister), meaning, from his mother's side, as some of the Salaf stated, including Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas. Qatadah reported that this is the view of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq.

(فَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ فَإِن كَانُوا أَكْثَرَ مِن ذَلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ فِي الثُّلُثِ)

(Each one of the two gets a sixth; but if more than two, they share in a third.) There is a difference between the half brothers from the mother's side and the rest of the heirs. First, they get a share in the inheritance on account of their mother. Second, the males and females among them get the same share. Third, they only have a share in the inheritance when the deceased's estate is inherited in Kalalah, for they do not have a share if the deceased has a surviving father, grandfather, child or grandchild. Fourth, they do not have more than a third, no matter how numerous they were. Allah's statement,

(مِن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَىٰ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ غَيْرَ مُضَارٍّ)

(After payment of legacies he (or she) may have bequeathed or debts, so that no loss is caused (to anyone).) means, let the will and testament be fair and free of any type of harm, without depriving some rightful heirs from all, or part of their share, or adding to the fixed portion that Allah or dained for some heirs. Indeed, whoever does this, will have disputed with Allah concerning His decision and division. An authentic Hadith states,

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَعْطَىٰ كُلَّ ذِي حَقٍّ حَقَّهُ فَلَا وَصِيَّةَ لِمَوَارِثٍ»

(Allah has given each his fixed due right. Therefore, there is no will for a rightful inheritor.)

(تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا)

وَذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ - وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَاراً خَالِداً فِيهَا وَلَهُ عَذَابٌ
مُهِينٌ (

(13. These are the limits (set by) Allah, and whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, will be admitted to Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise), to abide therein, and is the great success.) (14. And whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, and transgresses His (set) limits, He will cast him into the Fire, to abide therein; and he shall suffer a disgraceful torment.)

Warning Against Transgressing the Limits for Inheritance

Meaning, the Fara'id are Allah's set limits. This includes what Allah has allotted for the heirs, according to the degree of relation they have to the deceased, and their degree of dependency on him. Therefore, do not transgress or violate them. So Allah said;

(وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ)

(And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger,) regarding the inheritance, and does not add or decrease any of these fixed shares by use of tricks and plots. Rather, he gives each his appointed share as Allah commanded, ordained and decided,

(تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ
جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
وَذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ - وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَاراً خَالِداً فِيهَا وَلَهُ عَذَابٌ
مُهِينٌ (

(Will be admitted to Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise), to abide therein, and is the great success. And whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, and transgresses His (set) limits, He will cast him into the Fire, to abide therein; and he shall have a disgraceful torment.) This is because he changed what Allah has ordained and disputed with His judgment. Indeed, this is the behavior of those who do not agree with what Allah has decided and divided,

and this is why Allah punishes them with humiliation in the eternal, painful torment. Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that, the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَعْمَلُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ الْخَيْرِ سَبْعِينَ سَنَةً، فَإِذَا أَوْصَى حَافٍ فِي وَصِيَّتِهِ، فَيُخْتَمُ لَهُ بِشَرِّ عَمَلِهِ، فَيَدْخُلُ النَّارَ، وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَعْمَلُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ الشَّرِّ سَبْعِينَ سَنَةً، فَيَعْدِلُ فِي وَصِيَّتِهِ فَيُخْتَمُ لَهُ بِخَيْرِ عَمَلِهِ فَيَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ»

(A man might perform the actions of righteous people for seventy years, but when it is time to compile his will, he commits injustice. So his final work will be his worst, and he thus enters the Fire. A man might perform the deeds of evil people for seventy years, yet he is fair in his will. So his final work will be his best, and he thus enters Paradise.) Abu Hurayrah said, "Read, if you will,

(تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ)

(These are the limits (set by) Allah) until,

(عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ)

(a disgraceful torment.)." In the chapter on injustice in the will, Abu Dawud recorded in his Sunan that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَعْمَلُ أَوْ الْمَرْأَةُ بِطَاعَةِ اللَّهِ سِتِّينَ سَنَةً، ثُمَّ يَحْضُرُهُمَا الْمَوْتُ، فَيُضَارَّانِ فِي الْوَصِيَّةِ، فَتَجِبُ لَهُمَا النَّارُ»

(A man or a woman might perform actions in obedience to Allah for sixty years. Yet, when they are near death, they leave an unfair will and thus acquire the Fire.) Abu Hurayrah then recited the Ayah,

(مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَىٰ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ غَيْرِ مُضَارٍّ)

(After payment of legacies he (or she) may have bequeathed or debts, so that no loss is caused), until,

(وَذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ)

(and that is the great success.) This was also recorded by At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah, and At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Gharib".

(وَاللَّتِي يَأْتِيَنَّ الْفَحِشَةَ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ فَاسْتَشْهِدُوا
عَلَيْهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنْكُمْ فَإِنْ شَهِدُوا فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ فِي
الْبُيُوتِ حَتَّىٰ يَتَوَقَّاهُنَّ الْمَوْتُ أَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُنَّ
سَبِيلًا - وَاللَّذَانِ يَأْتِيَنَّهَا مِنْكُمْ فَادُّوهُمَا فَإِنْ تَابَا
وَأَصْلَحَا فَأَعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ تَوَّابًا
رَّحِيمًا)

(15. And those of your women who commit illegal sexual intercourse, take the evidence of four witnesses from among you against them; and if they testify, confine them (i.e. women) to houses until death comes to them or Allah ordains for them some (other) way.) (16. And the two persons among you who commit illegal sexual intercourse, punish them both. And if they repent and do righteous good deeds, leave them alone. Surely, Allah is Ever the One Who accepts repentance, (and He is) Most Merciful.)

The Adulteress is Confined in her House; A Command Later Abrogated

At the beginning of Islam, the ruling was that if a woman commits adultery as stipulated by sufficient proof, she was confined to her home, without leave, until she died. Allah said,

(وَاللَّتِي يَأْتِيَنَّ الْفَحِشَةَ)

يعني الزنا

(مِنْ نِّسَائِكُمْ فَاسْتَشْهِدُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنْكُمْ فَإِنْ شَهِدُوا فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ فِي الْبُيُوتِ حَتَّىٰ يَتَوَقَّاهُنَّ الْمَوْتُ أَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيلًا)

(And those of your women who commit illegal sexual intercourse, take the evidence of four witnesses from among you against them; and if they testify, confine them (i.e. women) to houses until death comes to them or Allah ordains for them some (other) way.) `Some other way' mentioned here is the abrogation of this ruling that came later. Ibn `Abbas said, "The early ruling was confinement, until Allah sent down Surat An-Nur (chapter 24) which abrogated that ruling with the ruling of flogging (for fornication) or stoning to death (for adultery)." Similar was reported from `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Al-Hasan, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, Abu Salih, Qatadah, Zayd bin Aslam and Ad-Dahhak, and this is a matter that is agreed upon. Imam Ahmad recorded that `Ubadah bin As-Samit said, "When the revelation descended upon the Messenger of Allah , it would affect him and his face would show signs of strain. One day, Allah sent down a revelation to him, and when the Messenger was relieved of its strain, he said,

«خُذُوا عَنِّي، قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيلًا، النَّيِّبُ
بِالنَّيِّبِ، وَالْبِكْرُ بِالْبِكْرِ، النَّيِّبُ جَلْدُ مِائَةٍ، وَرَجْمٌ
بِالْحِجَارَةِ، وَالْبِكْرُ جَلْدُ مِائَةٍ ثُمَّ نَقْيُ سَنَةٍ»

(Take from me: Allah has made some other way for them. The married with the married, the unmarried with the unmarried. The married gets a hundred lashes and stoning to death, while the unmarried gets a hundred lashes then banishment for a year.)" Muslim and the collectors of the Sunan recorded that `Ubadah bin As-Samit said that the Prophet said,

«خُذُوا عَنِّي خُذُوا عَنِّي، قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيلًا،
الْبِكْرُ بِالْبِكْرِ جَلْدُ مِائَةٍ وَتَعْرِيبُ عَامٍ، وَالنَّيِّبُ
بِالنَّيِّبِ جَلْدُ مِائَةٍ وَالرَّجْمُ»

(Take from me, take from me. Allah has made some other way for them: the (unmarried) gets a hundred lashes and banishment for one year, while the (married) gets a hundred lashes and stoning to death.) At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih". Allah said,

(وَاللَّذَانَ يَأْتِيَنَهَا مِنْكُمْ فَادُوهُمَا)

(And the two persons among you who commit illegal sexual intercourse, punish them both.) Ibn `Abbas and Sa`id bin Jubayr said that this punishment includes cursing, shaming them and beating them with sandals. This was the ruling until Allah abrogated it with flogging or stoning, as we stated. Mujahid said, "It was revealed about the case of two men who do it." As if he was referring to the actions of the people of Lut, and Allah knows best. The collectors of Sunan recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ يَعْمَلُ عَمَلَ قَوْمِ لُوطٍ، فَاقْتُلُوا
الْفَاعِلَ وَالْمَفْعُولَ بِهِ»

(Whoever you catch committing the act of the people of Lut (homosexuality), then kill both parties to the act.) Allah said,

(فَإِنْ تَابَا وَأَصْلَحَا)

(And if they repent and do righteous good deeds), by refraining from that evil act, and thereafter their actions become righteous,

(فَأَعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمَا)

(leave them alone), do not verbally abuse them after that, since he who truly repents is just like he who has no sin,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا)

(Surely, Allah is Ever the One Who accepts repentance, Most Merciful.) The following is recorded in the Two Sahihs:

«إِذَا زَنَتْ أَمَةٌ أَحَدِكُمْ، فَلْيَجْلِدْهَا الْحَدَّ، وَلَا يُتْرَبُ
عَلَيْهَا»

(When the slave-girl of one of you commits illegal sexual intercourse, let him flog her and not chastise her afterwards.) because the lashes she receives erase the sin that she has committed.

(إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ
بِجَهْلَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ فَأُولَئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا - وَلَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ
لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ حَتَّى إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمْ
الْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّي تُبْتُ الْآنَ وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ
وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ أُولَئِكَ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا)

(17. Allah accepts only the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and foolishness and repent soon afterwards ; it is they to whom Allah will forgive and Allah is Ever All-Knower, All-Wise.) (18. And of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil deeds until death faces one of them and he says: "Now I repent;" nor of those who die while they are disbelievers. For them, We have prepared a painful torment.)

Repentance is Accepted Until one Faces death

Allah states that He accepts repentance of the servant who commits an error in ignorance and then repents, even just before he sees the angel who captures the soul, before his soul reaches his throat. Mujahid and others said, "Every person who disobeys Allah by mistake, or intentionally is ignorant, until he refrains from the sin." Qatadah said that Abu Al-`Aliyah narrated that the Companions of the Messenger of Allah used to say, "Every sin that the servant commits, he commits out of ignorance." `Abdur-Razzaq narrated that, Ma`mar said that Qatadah said that, the Companions of the Messenger of Allah agreed that every sin that is committed by intention or otherwise, is committed in ignorance." Ibn Jurayj said, "Abdullah bin Kathir narrated to me that Mujahid said, `Every person who disobeys Allah (even willfully), is ignorant while committing the act of disobedience.'" Ibn Jurayj said, "Ata' bin Abi Rabah told me something similar." Abu Salih said that Ibn `Abbas commented, "It is because of one's ignorance that he commits the error." `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said about the Ayah,

(ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ)

(and repent soon (afterwards)), "Until just before he (or she) looks at the angel of death." Ad-Dahhak said, "Every thing before death is `soon afterwards ." Al-Hasan Al-Basri said about the Ayah,

(ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ)

(and repent soon afterwards), "Just before his last breath leaves his throat." `Ikrimah said, "All of this life is `soon afterwards ." Imam Ahmad recorded that Ibn `Umar said that the Messenger said,

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَقْبَلُ تَوْبَةَ الْعَبْدِمَالِمِ يُغْرُغِرُ»

(Allah accepts the repentance of the servant as long as the soul does not reach the throat.) This Hadith was also collected by At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah, and At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Gharib". By mistake, Ibn Majah mentioned that this Hadith was narrated through `Abdullah bin `Amr. However, what is correct is that `Abdullah bin `Umar bin Al-Khattab was the narrator. Allah said,

(فَأُولَئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا
حَكِيمًا)

(It is they to whom Allah will forgive and Allah is Ever All-Knower, All-Wise.) Surely, when hope in continued living diminishes, the angel of death comes forth and the soul reaches the throat, approaches the chest and arrives at the state where it is being gradually pulled out, then there is no accepted repentance, nor a way out of that certain end. Hence Allah's statements,

وَلَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ حَتَّى إِذَا
حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّي تُبْتُ الْآنَ

(And of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil deeds until death faces one of them and he says: "Now I repent,") and,

(فَلَمَّا رَأَوْا بَأْسَنَا قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَحْدَهُ)

(So when they saw Our punishment, they said: "We believe in Allah Alone...") 40:84 Allah decided that repentance shall not be accepted from the people of the earth when the sun rises from the west, as Allah said,

(يَوْمَ يَأْتِي بَعْضُ ءَايَاتِ رَبِّكَ لَا يَنْفَعُ نَفْسًا
إِيمَانُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ ءَامَنَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ أَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِي
إِيمَانِهَا خَيْرًا)

(The day that some of the signs of your Lord do come, no good will it do to a person to believe then, if he believed not before, nor earned good through his faith.) 6:158 . oAllah said,

(وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ)

(nor of those who die while they are disbelievers.) Consequently, when the disbeliever dies while still a disbeliever and polytheist, his sorrow and repentance shall not avail him. If he were to ransom himself, even with the earth's fill of gold, it will not be accepted from him. Ibn `Abbas, Abu Al-`Aliyah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that the Ayah:

(وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ)

(nor of those who die while they are disbelievers), was revealed about the people of Shirk. Imam Ahmad recorded that Usamah bin Salman said that Abu Dharr said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَقْبَلُ تَوْبَةَ عَبْدِهِ أَوْ يَعْفِرُ لِعَبْدِهِ مَا لَمْ يَقَعِ الْحِجَابُ»

(Allah accepts the repentance of His servant, or forgives His servant, as long as the veil does not drop.) They asked, "And what does the drop of the veil mean " He said,

«أَنْ تَخْرُجَ النَّفْسُ وَهِيَ مُشْرِكَةٌ»

(When the soul is removed while one is a polytheist.) Allah then said,

(أُولَئِكَ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا)

(For them We have prepared a painful torment), torment that is severe, eternal and enormous.

(يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرِهًا وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَا ءَاتِيَهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيَّنَةٍ

وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَى
 أَنْ تَكْرَهُنَّ شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا -
 وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ اسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَّكَانَ زَوْجٍ وَعَآتَيْتُمْ
 إِحْدَاهُنَّ قِنطَارًا فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا مِنْهُ شَيْئًا أَتَأْخُذُونَهُ
 بُهْتَنًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا - وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ وَقَدْ أَفْضَى
 بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ وَأَخَذْنَ مِنْكُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا -
 وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا مَا نَكَحَ آبَاؤُكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ
 سَلَفَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَحِشَةً وَمَقْتًا وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا)

(19. O you who believe! You are not permitted to inherit women against their will, nor to prevent them from marriage in order to get part of (the dowry) what you have given them, unless they commit open Fahishah. And live with them honorably. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing and Allah brings through it a great deal of good.) (20. But if you intend to replace a wife by another and you have given one of them a Qintar, take not the least bit of it back; would you take it wrongfully without a right and (with) a manifest sin) (21. And how could you take it (back) while you have gone in unto each other, and they have taken from you a firm and strong covenant) (22. And marry not women whom your fathers married, except what has already passed; indeed it was shameful and Maqtan, and an evil way.)

Meaning of ` Inheriting Women Against Their Will

Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn ` Abbas said about the Ayah,

(يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ
 كَرِهًا)

(O you who believe! You are not permitted to inherit women against their will.) "Before, the practice was that when a man dies, his male relatives used to have the right to do whatever they wanted with his wife. If one of them wants, he would marry her, give her in marriage, or prevent her from marriage, for they had more right to her than her own family. Thereafter, this Ayah was revealed about this practice,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ
كَرْهًا

(O you who believe! You are not permitted to inherit women against their will)."

Women Should not Be Treated with Harshness

Allah said,

وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَا ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ

(nor to prevent them from marriage, in order to take part of what you have given them,) Allah commands: Do not treat the woman harshly so that she gives back all or part of the dowry that she was given, or forfeits one of her rights by means of coercion and oppression. Allah's statement,

إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبَيَّنَةٍ

(unless they commit open Fahishah.) Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib, Ash-Sha`bi, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Muhammad bin Srin, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, Ad-Dahhak, Abu Qilabah, Abu Salih, As-Suddi, Zayd bin Aslam and Sa`id bin Abi Hilal said that this refers to illicit sex. Meaning that if the wife commits adultery, you are allowed to take back the dowry you gave her. You are also allowed to annoy her, until she gives back the dowry in return for a Khula`." In Surat Al-Baqarah, Allah said,

وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا إِلَّا
أَنْ يَخَافَا أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ

(And it is not lawful for you (men) to take back (from your wives) any of what you have given them, except when both parties fear that they would be unable to keep the limits ordained by Allah) 2:229 . Ibn `Abbas, `Ikrimah and Ad-Dahhak said that Fahishah refers to disobedience and defiance. Ibn Jarir chose the view that it is general, encompasses all these meanings, adultery, disobedience, defiance, rudeness, and so forth. Meaning that he is allowed to annoy his wife when she does any of these acts until she forfeits all or part of her rights and he then separates from her, and this view is good, and Allah knows best.

Live With Women Honorably

Allah said,

(وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ)

(And live with them honorably), by saying kind words to them, treating them kindly and making your appearance appealing for them, as much as you can, just as you like the same from them. Allah said in another Ayah,

(وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ)

(And they have rights similar over them to what is reasonable) 2:228 . The Messenger of Allah said,

«خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ، وَأَنَا خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِي»

(The best among you is he who is the best with his family. Verily, I am the best one among you with my family.) It was the practice of the Messenger of Allah to be kind, cheerful, playful with his wives, compassionate, spending on them and laughing with them. The Messenger used to race with `A'ishah, the Mother of the Faithful, as a means of kindness to her. `A'ishah said, "The Messenger of Allah raced with me and I won the race. This occurred before I gained weight, and afterwards I raced with him again, and he won that race. He said,

«هَذِهِ بِتِلْكَ»

(This victory is for that victory .)" When the Prophet was at the home of one of his wives, sometimes all of his wives would meet there and eat together, and they would then go back to their homes. He and his wife would sleep in the same bed, he would remove his upper garment, sleeping in only his lower garment. The Prophet used to talk to the wife whose night it was, after praying `Isha' and before he went to sleep. Allah said,

(لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ)

(Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow) 33:21 . Allah said,

(فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُنَّ هُوَ شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا)

(If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing and Allah brings through it a great deal of good.) Allah says that your patience, which is demonstrated by keeping wives whom you

dislike, carries good rewards for you in this life and the Hereafter. Ibn `Abbas commented on this Ayah, "That the husband may feel compassion towards his wife and Allah gives him a child with her, and this child carries tremendous goodness." An authentic Hadith states,

«لَا يَفْرَكُ مُؤْمِنٌ مُؤْمِنَةً، إِنْ سَخِطَ مِنْهَا خُلُقًا،
رَضِيَ مِنْهَا آخَرَ»

(No believing man should hate his believing wife. If he dislikes a part of her conduct, he would surely like another.)

The Prohibition of Taking Back the Dowry

Allah said,

(وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ اسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَّكَانَ زَوْجٍ وَعَآئِبْتُمْ
إِحْدَاهُنَّ قِنْطَارًا فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا مِنْهُ شَيْئًا أَتَأْخُذُونَهُ
بُهْتَنًا وَآثِمًا مُبِينًا)

(But if you intend to replace a wife by another and you have given one of them a Qintar, take not the least bit of it back; would you take it wrongfully without a right and (with) a manifest sin) The Ayah commands: When one of you wants to divorce a wife and marry another one, he must not take any portion of the dowry he gave to the first wife, even if it were a Qintar of money. We mentioned the meaning of Qintar in the Tafsir of Surah Al `Imran. This Ayah is clear in its indication that the dowry could be substantial. `Umar bin Al-Khattab used to discourage giving a large dowry, but later on changed his view. Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Al-`Ajfa' As-Sulami said that he heard `Umar bin Al-Khattab saying, "Do not exaggerate with the dowry of women, had this practice been an honor in this world or a part of Taqwa, then the Prophet would have had more right to practice it than you. The Messenger of Allah never gave any of his wives, nor did any of his daughters receive a dowry more than twelve Uwqiyah. A man used to pay a substantial dowry and thus conceal enmity towards his wife!" Ahmad and the collectors of Sunan collected this Hadith through various chains of narration, and At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih". Al-Hafiz Abu Ya`la recorded that Masruq said, "Umar bin Al-Khattab stood up on the Minbar of the Messenger of Allah and said, `O people! Why do you exaggerate concerning the dowry given to women The Messenger of Allah and his Companions used to pay up to four hundred Dirhams for a dowry, or less than that. Had paying more for a dowry been a part of Taqwa or an honor, you would not have led them in this practice. Therefore, I do not want to hear about a man who pays more than four hundred Dirhams for a dowry.' He then went down the Minbar, but a woman from Quraysh said to him, `O Leader of the Faithful! You prohibited people from paying more than four hundred Dirhams in a dowry for women' He said, `Yes.' She said, `Have you not heard what Allah sent down in the Qur'an' He said, `Which part of it' She said, `Have you not heard Allah's statement,

(وَأَتَيْتُمْ إِحْدَاهُنَّ قِنْطَارًا)

(And you have given one of them a Qintar)' He said, `O Allah! Forgive me...' He then went back and stood up on the Minbar saying, `I had prohibited you from paying more than four hundred Dirhams in a dowry for women. So, let everyone pay what he likes from his money.'" The chain of narration for this Hadith is strong.

(وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ وَقَدْ أَفْضَى بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ)

(And how could you take it (back) while you have gone in unto each other) how can you take back the dowry from the woman with whom you had sexual relations and she had sexual relations with you Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, As-Suddi and several others said that this means sexual intercourse. The Two Sahih's record that the Messenger of Allah said three times to the spouses who said the Mula`anah;

«اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ كَاذِبٌ، فَهَلْ مِنْكُمْ تَائِبٌ؟»

(Allah knows that one of you is a liar, so would any of you repent) The man said, "O Messenger of Allah! My money," referring to the dowry that he gave his wife. The Messenger said,

«لَا مَالَ لَكَ، إِنْ كُنْتَ صَدَقْتَ عَلَيْهَا فَهُوَ بِمَا
اسْتَحَلَّتْ مِنْ فَرْجِهَا، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ كَذَبْتَ عَلَيْهَا
فَهُوَ أَبْعَدُ لَكَ مِنْهَا»

(You have no money. If you are the one who said the truth, the dowry is in return for the right to have sexual intercourse with her. If you are the one who uttered the lie, then this money is even farther from your reach.) Similarly Allah said;

(وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ وَقَدْ أَفْضَى بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ
وَأَخَذْنَ مِنْكُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا)

(And how could you take it (back) while you have gone in unto each other and they have taken from you a firm and strong covenant) (Be kind with women, for you have taken them by Allah's covenant and earned the right to have sexual relations with them by Allah's Word.)

Marrying the Wife of the Father is Prohibited

Allah said,

(وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا مَا نَكَحَ آبَاؤُكُمْ مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ)

(And marry not women whom your fathers married,) Allah prohibits marrying the women whom the father married, in honor and respect to the fathers, not allowing their children to have sexual relations with their wives after they die. A woman becomes ineligible for the son of her husband as soon as the marriage contract is conducted, and there is a consensus on this ruling. Ibn Jarir recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "During the time of Jahiliyyah, the people used to prohibit what Allah prohibits (concerning marriage), except marrying the stepmother and taking two sisters as rival wives. Allah sent down,

(وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا مَا نَكَحَ آبَاؤُكُمْ مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ)

(And marry not women whom your fathers married,) and,

(وَأَن تَجْمَعُوا بَيْنَ الْأُخْتَيْنِ)

(and two sisters in wedlock at the same time) 4:23 ." Similar was reported from `Ata' and Qatadah. Therefore, the practice that the Ayah mentions is prohibited for this Ummah, being disgraced as an awful sin, r

(إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَحِشَةً وَمَقْتًا وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا)

(Indeed it was shameful and Maqtan, and an evil way.) Allah said in other Ayat,

(وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطْنَ)

(Come not near to Al-Fawahish (shameful acts) whether committed openly or secretly) 6:151 , and,

(وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزِّنَىٰ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا)

(And come not near to unlawful sex. Verily, it is a Fahishah and an evil way.) 17:32 In this Ayah (4:22), Allah added,

(وَمَقْتًا)

(and Maqtan), meaning, offensive. It is a sin itself and causes the son to hate his father after he marries his wife. It is usual that whoever marries a woman dislikes those who married her before him. This is one reason why the Mothers of the Faithful were not allowed for anyone in marriage after the Messenger . They are indeed the Mothers of the Faithful since they married the Messenger , who is like the father to the believers. Rather, the Prophet's right is far greater than the right of a father, and his love comes before each person loving himself, may Allah's peace and blessings be on him. `Ata' bin Abi Rabah said that the Ayah,

(وَمَقْتًا)

(and Maqtan), means, Allah will hate him,

(وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا)

(and an evil way), for those who take this way. Therefore, those who commit this practice will have committed an act of reversion from the religion and deserve capital punishment and confiscation of their property, which will be given to the Muslim Treasury. Imam Ahmad and the collectors of Sunan recorded that Al-Bara' bin `Azib said that his uncle Abu Burdah was sent by the Messenger of Allah to a man who married his stepmother to execute him and confiscate his money.

(حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ
وَعَمَّاتُكُمْ وَخَالَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُ الْأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ الْأُخْتِ
وَأُمَّهَاتُكُمُ اللَّاتِي أَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُم مِّنَ
الرِّضَاعَةِ وَأُمَّهَاتُ نِسَائِكُمْ وَرَبَائِبُكُمُ اللَّاتِي فِي
حُجُورِكُمْ مِّن نِّسَائِكُمُ اللَّاتِي دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَإِن لَّمْ
تَكُونُوا دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَحَلَائِلُ
أَبْنَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَابِكُمْ وَأَن تَجْمَعُوا بَيْنَ
الْأَخْتَيْنِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا
رَّحِيمًا)

(23. Forbidden to you (for marriage) are: your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your father's sisters, your mother's sisters, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters, your foster mothers who suckled you, your foster milk suckling sisters, your wives' mothers, your stepdaughters under your guardianship, born of your wives unto whom you have gone in -- but there is no sin on you if you have not gone in unto them (to marry their daughters), -- the wives of your sons who (spring) from your own loins, and two sisters in wedlock at the same time, except for what has already passed; verily, Allah is Oft- Forgiving, Most Merciful.)

Degrees of Women Never Eligible for One to Marry

This honorable Ayah is the Ayah that establishes the degrees of women relatives who are never eligible for one to marry, because of blood relations, relations established by suckling or marriage. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "(Allah said) I have prohibited for you seven types of relatives by blood and seven by marriage." Ibn `Abbas then recited the Ayah,

(حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ)

(Forbidden to you (for marriage) are: your mothers, your daughters, your sisters...) At-Tabari recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Seven degrees of blood relation and seven degrees of marriage relation are prohibited (for marriage)." He then recited the Ayah,

(حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ
وَعَمَّاتُكُمْ وَخَالَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُ الْأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ الْأُخْتِ)

(Forbidden to you (for marriage) are: your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your father's sisters, your mother's sisters, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters) and these are the types prohibited by blood relation." Allah's statement,

(وَأُمَّهَاتُكُمُ اللَّاتِي أَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ مِّنَ
الرِّضَاعَةِ)

(Your foster mothers who suckled you, your foster milk suckling sisters) means, just as your mother who bore you is prohibited for you in marriage, so is your mother from suckling prohibited for you. Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded that `A'ishah, the Mother of the Faithful, said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ الرِّضَاعَةَ تُحَرِّمُ مَا تُحَرِّمُ الْوِلَادَةُ»

(Suckling prohibits what birth prohibits.) In another narration reported by Muslim,

«يَحْرُمُ مِنَ الرَّضَاعَةِ مَا يَحْرُمُ مِنَ النَّسَبِ»

(Suckling establishes prohibited degrees just as blood does.)

` Suckling' that Establishes Prohibition for Marriage

Less than five incidents of suckling will not establish prohibition for marriage. In his Sahih, Muslim recorded that `A'ishah said, "Among the parts of the Qur'an that were revealed, is the statement, `Ten incidents of suckling establishes the prohibition (concerning marriage).' It was later abrogated with five, and the Messenger of Allah died while this statement was still recited as part of the Qur'an." A Hadith that Sahlah bint Suhayl narrated states that the Messenger of Allah ordered her to suckle Salim the freed slave of Abu Hudhayfah with five." We should assert that the suckling mentioned here must occur before the age of two, as we stated when we explained the Ayah in Surat Al-Baqarah,

(يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ)

((The mothers) should suckle their children for two whole years, (that is) for those (parents) who desire to complete the term of suckling) 2:233 . The Mother-in-Law and Stepdaughter are Prohibited in Marriage Allah said next,

(وَأُمَّهَاتُ نِسَائِكُمْ وَرَبَائِبُكُمُ اللَّاتِي فِي حُجُورِكُمْ
مِّن نِّسَائِكُمُ اللَّاتِي دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَإِن لَّمْ تَكُونُوا
دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(Your wives' mothers, your stepdaughters under your guardianship, born of your wives unto whom you have gone in - but there is no sin on you if you have not gone in unto them,) As for the mother of the wife, she becomes prohibited for marriage for her son-in-law when the marriage is conducted, whether the son-in-law has sexual relations with her daughter or not. As for the wife's daughter, she becomes prohibited for her stepfather when he has sexual relations with her mother, after the marriage contract is ratified. If the man divorces the mother before having sexual relations with her, he is allowed to marry her daughter. So Allah said;

وَرَبَائِبُكُمُ اللَّاتِي فِي حُجُورِكُمْ مِّن نِّسَائِكُمُ اللَّاتِي
دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَإِن لَّمْ تَكُونُوا دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ
عَلَيْكُمْ

(Your stepdaughters under your guardianship, born of your wives unto whom you have gone in -
- but there is no sin on you if you have not gone in unto them,) to marry the stepdaughter.

The Stepdaughter is Prohibited in Marriage Even if She Was Not Under the Guardianship of Her Stepfather

Allah said,

وَرَبَائِبُكُمُ اللَّاتِي فِي حُجُورِكُمْ

(...your stepdaughters under your guardianship,) The majority of scholars state that the stepdaughter is prohibited in marriage for her stepfather who consummated his marriage to her mother whether she was under his guardianship or not. The Two Sahih recorded that Umm Habibah said, "O Messenger of Allah! Marry my sister, the daughter of Abu Sufyan (and in one narration `Azzah bint Abu Sufyan)." He said,

«أَوْ تُحِبِّينَ ذَلِكَ»

؟ قالت: نعم. لست لك بمخلية، وأحب من شاركني في خير أختي، قال

«فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَأَيُّحِلُّ لِي»

قالت: فإنا نتحدث أنك تريد أن تتكح بنت أبي سلمة، قال .

«بِنْتِ أُمِّ سَلْمَةَ»

؟ قالت: نعم. قال

«إِنَّهَا لَوْ لَمْ تَكُنْ رَيْبِي فِي حِجْرِي مَا حَلَّتْ
لِي، إِنَّهَا لَبِنْتُ أُخِي مِنَ الرِّضَاعَةِ، أَرْضَعَنِي

وَأَبَا سَلَمَةَ ثَوَيْبَةَ، فَلَا تَعْرُضُنَّ عَلَيَّ بَنَاتِكُنَّ وَلَا
أَخَوَاتِكُنَّ»

("Do you like that I do that" She said, "I would not give you up for anything, but the best of whom I like to share with me in that which is righteously good, is my sister." He said, "That is not allowed for me." She said, "We were told that you want to marry the daughter of Abu Salamah." He asked, "The daughter of Umm Salamah" She said, "Yes." He said, "Even if she was not my stepdaughter and under my guardianship, she is still not allowed for me because she is my niece from suckling, for Thuwaybah suckled me and Abu Salamah. Therefore, do not offer me to marry your daughters or sisters. ") In another narration from Al-Bukhari,

«إِنِّي لَوْ لَمْ أَتَزَوَّجْ أُمَّ سَلَمَةَ مَا حَلَّتْ لِي»

(Had I not married Umm Salamah, her daughter would not have been allowed for me anyway.) Consequently, the Messenger stated that his marriage to Umm Salamah was the real reason behind that prohibition.

Meaning of ` gone in unto them

The Ayah continues,

(الَّتِي دَخَلْتُمْ فِيهَا)

(Your wives unto whom you have gone in), meaning, had sexual relations with them, according to Ibn ` Abbas and several others.

Prohibiting the Daughter-in-Law for Marriage

Allah said,

(وَحَلَائِلُ أَبْنَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَابِكُمْ)

(The wives of your sons who (spring) from your own loins.) Therefore, you are prohibited to marry the wives of your own sons, but not the wives of your adopted sons, as adoption was common practice in Jahiliyyah. Allah said,

فَلَمَّا قَضَى زَيْدٌ مِّنْهَا وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنَاكَهَا لِيَأْتِيَكَ بِهَا كَمَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْمَرْءِ الَّذِي تَتَّبِعُونَ ۚ فَكُلٌّ مِّنْ أُمَّهَاتِ نِسَائِكُمْ ۗ فَلَمَّا قَضَى زَيْدٌ مِّنْهَا وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنَاكَهَا لِيَأْتِيَكَ بِهَا كَمَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْمَرْءِ الَّذِي تَتَّبِعُونَ ۚ فَكُلٌّ مِّنْ أُمَّهَاتِ نِسَائِكُمْ ۗ

(So when Zayd had accomplished his desire from her (i.e. divorced her), We gave her to you in marriage, so that (in future) there may be no difficulty to the believers in respect of (the marriage of) the wives of their adopted sons when the latter have no desire to keep them (i.e. they had divorced them).) 33:37 Ibn Jurayj said, "I asked `Ata' about Allah's statement,

وَحَلِيلُ أَبْنَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَابِكُمْ

(The wives of your sons who (spring) from your own loins.) He said, `We were told that when the Prophet married the ex-wife of Zayd (who was the Prophet's adopted son before Islam prohibited this practice), the idolators in Makkah criticized him. Allah sent down the Ayat:

وَحَلِيلُ أَبْنَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَابِكُمْ

(The wives of your sons who (spring) from your own loins),

وَمَا جَعَلَ أَدْعِيَاءَكُمْ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ

(nor has He made your adopted sons your real sons.) 33:4 , and,

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ

(Muhammad is not the father of any of your men) 33:40 ." Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Al-Hasan bin Muhammad said, "These Ayat are encompassing,

وَحَلِيلُ أَبْنَائِكُمْ

(the wives of your sons), and,

وَأُمَّهَاتُ نِسَائِكُمْ

(your wives' mothers). This is also the explanation of Tawus, Ibrahim, Az-Zuhri and Makhul. It means that these two Ayat encompass these types of women, whether the marriage was consummated or not, and there is a consensus on this ruling.

A Doubt and Rebuttal

Why is the wife of one's son from suckling prohibited for him for marriage - that is, if she is no longer married to his son from suckling - as the majority of scholars state, although they are not related by blood The answer is the Prophet's statement,

«يَحْرُمُ مِنَ الرَّضَاعِ مَا يَحْرُمُ مِنَ النَّسَبِ»

(Suckling prohibits what blood relations prohibit.)

The Prohibition of Taking Two Sisters as Rival Wives

Allah said,

(وَأَنْ تَجْمَعُوا بَيْنَ الْأَخْتَيْنِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ)

(...and two sisters in wedlock at the same time, except for what has already passed;) The Ayah commands: you are prohibited to take two sisters as rival wives, or rival female-servants, except for what had happened to you during the time of Jahiliyyah, which We have forgiven and erased. Therefore, no one is allowed to take or keep two sisters as rival wives, according to the consensus of the scholars of the Companions, their followers, and the Imams of old and present. They all stated that taking two sisters as rival wives is prohibited, and that whoever embraces Islam while married to two sisters at the same time is given the choice to keep one of them and divorce the other. Imam Ahmad recorded that Ad-Dahhak bin Fayruz said that his father said, "I embraced Islam while married to two sisters at the same time and the Prophet commanded me to divorce one of them."

(وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ
كُتِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأُحِلَّ لَكُمْ مَا وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ أَنْ
تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسْفِحِينَ فَمَا
اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً
وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا تَرَضَيْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ
الْفَرِيضَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا)

(24. Also (forbidden are) women already married, except those (slaves) whom your right hands possess. Thus has Allah ordained for you. All others are lawful, provided you seek them (with a dowry) from your property, desiring chastity, not fornication. So with those among them whom you have enjoyed, give them their required due, but if you agree mutually (to give more) after the requirement (has been determined), there is no sin on you. Surely, Allah is Ever All-Knowing, All-Wise.)

Forbidding Women Already Married, Except for Female Slaves

Allah said,

(وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ)

(Also (forbidden are) women already married, except those whom your right hands possess.) The Ayah means, you are prohibited from marrying women who are already married,

(إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ)

(except those whom your right hands possess) except those whom you acquire through war, for you are allowed such women after making sure they are not pregnant. Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri said, "We captured some women from the area of Awtas who were already married, and we disliked having sexual relations with them because they already had husbands. So, we asked the Prophet about this matter, and this Ayah was revealed, e

(وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ)

(Also (forbidden are) women already married, except those whom your right hands possess). Consequently, we had sexual relations with these women." This is the wording collected by At-Tirmidhi An-Nasa'i, Ibn Jarir and Muslim in his Sahih. Allah's statement,

(كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(Thus has Allah ordained for you) means, this prohibition was ordained for you by Allah. Therefore, adhere to Allah's Book, do not transgress His set limits, and adhere to His legislation and decrees.

The Permission to Marry All Other Women

Allah said,

(وَأَحِلَّ لَكُمْ مَا وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ)

(All others are lawful) meaning, you are allowed to marry women other than the prohibited types mentioned here, as `Ata' and others have stated. Allah's statement,

(أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسْفِحِينَ)

(provided you seek them (with a dowry) from your property, desiring chastity, not fornication,) meaning, you are allowed to use your money to marry up to four wives and for (the purchase of) as many female slaves as you like, all through legal means,

(مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسْفِحِينَ)

((desiring) chastity, not fornication.) Allah's statement,

(فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ
فَرِيضَةً)

(So with those among them whom you have enjoyed, give them their required due,) means, to enjoy them sexually, surrender to them their rightful dowry as compensation. In other Ayat, Allah said,

(وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ وَقَدْ أَفْضَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ)

(And how could you take it (back) while you have gone in unto each other),

(وَأْتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً)

(And give to the women (whom you marry) their dowry with a good heart), and,

(وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا)

(And it is not lawful for you (men) to take back (from your wives) any of what (dowry) you gave them)

Prohibiting the Mut`ah of Marriage

Mujahid stated that,

(فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ
فَرِيضَةً)

(So with those among them whom you have enjoyed, give them their required due,) was revealed about the Mut`ah marriage. A Mut`ah marriage is a marriage that ends upon a predetermined date. In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that the Leader of the Faithful `Ali bin Abi Talib said, "The Messenger of Allah prohibited Mut`ah marriage and eating the meat of domesticated donkeys on the day of Khaybar (battle)." In addition, in his Sahih, Muslim recorded that Ar-Rabi` bin Sabrah bin Ma`bad Al-Juhani said that his father said that he accompanied the Messenger of Allah during the conquest of Makkah, and that the Prophet said,

«يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي كُنْتُ أَذِنْتُ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَسْتِمْتَاعِ
مِنَ النِّسَاءِ، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ حَرَّمَ ذَلِكَ إِلَى يَوْمِ
الْقِيَامَةِ، فَمَنْ كَانَ عِنْدَهُ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْءٌ فَلْيُخَلِّ
سَبِيلَهُ، وَلَا تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا»

(O people! I allowed you the Mut`ah marriage with women before. Now, Allah has prohibited it until the Day of Resurrection. Therefore, anyone who has any women in Mut`ah, let him let them go, and do not take anything from what you have given them.) Allah's statement,

(وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا تَرَاضَيْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ
الْفَرِيضَةِ)

(but if you agree mutually (to give more) after the requirement (has been determined), there is no sin on you.) is similar to His other statement,

(وَأَتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً)

(And give to the women their dowry with a good heart). The meaning of these Ayat is: If you have stipulated a dowry for her, and she later forfeits it, either totally or partially, then this bears no harm on you or her in this case. Ibn Jarir said, "Al-Hadrami said that some men would

designate a certain dowry, but then fall into financial difficulties. Therefore, Allah said that there is no harm on you, O people, concerning your mutual agreement after the requirement (has been determined)." meaning, if she gives up part of the dowry, then you men are allowed to accept that. Allah's statement,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا)

(Surely, Allah is Ever All-Knowing, All-Wise.) is suitable here, after Allah mentioned these prohibitions.

(وَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ طَوْلًا أَنْ يَنْكِحَ
الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَمِنْ مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ مِّنْ
فَتَيَاتِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَانِكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ مِّنْ
بَعْضٍ فَانكِحُوهُنَّ بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ وَءَاثُوهُنَّ
أَجُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ مُحْصَنَاتٍ غَيْرَ مُسَفِحَاتٍ
وَلَا مُتَّخِذَاتِ أَخْدَانٍ فَإِذَا أَحْصَيْنَ فَإِنْ أَتَيْنَ
بِفَحِشَةٍ فَعَلَيْهِنَّ نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ مِنَ
الْعَذَابِ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ مِنْكُمْ وَأَنْ
تَصِيرُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ)

(25. And whoever of you have not the means wherewith to wed free believing women, they may wed believing girls from among those whom your right hands possess, and Allah has full knowledge about your faith, you are one from another. Wed them with the permission of their own folk (guardians) and give them their due in a good manner; they should be chaste, not fornicators, nor promiscuous. And after they have been taken in wedlock, if they commit Fahishah, their punishment is half that for free (unmarried) women. This is for him among you who is afraid of being harmed in his religion or in his body; but it is better for you that you practice self-restraint, and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.)

Marrying a Female Slave, if One Cannot Marry a Free Woman

Allah said, those who do not have,

(مِنْكُمْ طَوْلًا)

(the means), financial capability,

(أَنْ يَنْكِحَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ)

(Wherewith to wed free believing women) meaning, free faithful, chaste women.

(فَمِنْ مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ مِنْ فَتَيَاتِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ)

(They may wed believing girls from among those whom your right hands possess,) meaning, they are allowed to wed believing slave girls owned by the believers.

(وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَيْمَانِكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ)

(and Allah has full knowledge about your faith; you are one from another.) Allah knows the true reality and secrets of all things, but you people know only the apparent things. Allah then said,

(فَأَنْكِحُوهُنَّ بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ)

(Wed them with the permission of their own folk) indicating that the owner is responsible for the slave girl, and consequently, she cannot marry without his permission. The owner is also responsible for his male slave and they cannot wed without his permission. A Hadith states,

«أَيُّمَا عَبْدٍ تَزَوَّجَ بِغَيْرِ إِذْنِ مَوْلِيهِ، فَهُوَ عَاهِرٌ»

(Any male slave who marries without permission from his master, is a fornicator.) When the owner of the female slave is a female, those who are allowed to give away the free woman in marriage, with her permission, become responsible for giving away her female slave in marriage, as well. A Hadith states that

«لَا تُزَوِّجُ الْمَرْأَةُ الْمَرْأَةَ، وَلَا الْمَرْأَةُ نَفْسَهَا، فَإِنَّ الزَّانِيَةَ هِيَ الَّتِي تُزَوِّجُ نَفْسَهَا»

(The woman does not give away another woman, or herself in marriage, for only the adulteress gives herself away in marriage.) Allah's statement,

(وَأَتَوْهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ)

(And give them their due in a good manner;) meaning, pay them their dowry with a good heart, and do not keep any of it, belittling the matter due to the fact that they are owned slaves. Allah's statement,

(مُحْصَنَاتٍ)

(they should be chaste) means, they are honorable women who do not commit adultery, and this is why Allah said,

(غَيْرَ مُسَفِّحَاتٍ)

(not fornicators) referring to dishonorable women, who do not refrain from illicit sexual relations with those who ask. Ibn `Abbas said that the fornicating women are the whores, who do not object to having relations with whomever seeks it, while,

(وَلَا مُتَّخِذَاتِ أَخْدَانٍ)

(nor promiscuous.) refers to taking boyfriends. Similar was said by Abu Hurayrah, Mujahid, Ash-Sha`bi, Ad-Dahhak, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, Yahya bin Abi Kathir, Muqatil bin Hayyan and As-Suddi.

The Slave Girl's Punishment for Adultery is Half that of a Free Unmarried Woman

Allah said,

(فَإِذَا أَحْصَيْنَ فَإِنَّ أَتَيْنَ بِفَحِشَةٍ فَعَلَيْهِنَّ نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ)

(And after they have been taken in wedlock, if they commit Fahishah, their punishment is half of that for free (unmarried) women.) this is about the slave women who got married, as indicated by the Ayah;

وَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ طَوْلًا أَنْ يَنْكِحَ
الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَمِنْ مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ مِّنْ
فَتَيَاتِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ

(And whoever of you have not the means wherewith to wed free believing women, they may wed believing girls from among those whom your right hands possess,) Therefore, since the honorable Ayah is about believing slave girls, then,

(فَإِذَا أَحْصَيْنَ)

(And after they have been taken in wedlock,) refers to when they (believing slave girls) get married, as Ibn ` Abbas and others have said. Allah's statement,

(نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ)

(their punishment is half of that for free (unmarried) women.) indicates that the type of punishment prescribed here is the one that can be reduced to half, lashes in this case, not stoning to death, and Allah knows best. Allah's statement,

(ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ مِنْكُمْ)

(This is for him among you who is afraid of being harmed in his religion or in his body;) indicates that marrying slave girls, providing one satisfies the required conditions, is for those who fear for their chastity and find it hard to be patient and refrain from sex. In this difficult circumstance, one is allowed to marry a slave girl. However, it is better to refrain from marrying slave girls and to observe patience, for otherwise, the offspring will become slaves to the girl's master. Allah said,

(وَأَنْ تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ)

(but it is better for you that you practice self-restraint, and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.)

(يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنْنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ
قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ - وَاللَّهُ

يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ
الشَّهَوَاتِ أَنْ تَمِيلُوا مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا - يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ
يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ وَخُلِقَ الْإِنْسَانُ ضَعِيفًا)

(26. Allah wishes to make clear (what is lawful and what is unlawful) to you, and to show you the ways of those before you, and accept your repentance, and Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise.)
(27. Allah wishes to accept your repentance, but those who follow their lusts, wish that you (believers) should deviate tremendously away (from the right path)) (28. Allah wishes to lighten (the burden) for you; and man was created weak.) Allah explains to the believers what He has allowed and prohibited for them in this and other Surahs,

(وَيَهْدِيكُمْ سُنَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ)

(And to show you the ways of those before you,) meaning their righteous ways and how to adhere to the commandments that He likes and is pleased with.

(وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(and accept your repentance) from sin and error,

(وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ)

(and Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise.) in His commands, decrees, actions and statements. Allah's statement,

(وَيُرِيدُ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ أَنْ تَمِيلُوا مَيْلًا
عَظِيمًا)

(but those who follow their lusts, wish that you (believers) should deviate tremendously away from the right path)) indicates that the followers of Shaytan among the Jews, Christians and the adulterous, wish that you would take the horrendous path of falsehood instead of the truth.

(يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ)

(Allah wishes to lighten (the burden) for you") His legislation, orders, what He prohibits and what He decrees for you. This is why Allah has allowed free men to marry slave girls under certain conditions, as Mujahid and others have stated.

(وَحَلِقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ضَعِيفًا)

(and man was created weak.) and this is why it is suitable in his case that the commands are made easy for him, because of his weakness and feebleness. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Tawus said that,

(وَحَلِقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ضَعِيفًا)

(and man was created weak), "Concerning women". Waki` said, "Man's mind leaves when women are involved."

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ
بِالْبَطْلِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْكُمْ
وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا - وَمَنْ
يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ عُدْوَانًا وَظُلْمًا فَسَوْفَ نُصَلِّيهِ نَارًا
وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا - إِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ
مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلِكُمْ
مُدْخَلَ كَرِيمًا)

(29. O you who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves unjustly except it be a trade amongst you, by mutual consent. And do not kill yourselves (nor kill one another). Surely, Allah is Most Merciful to you.) (30. And whoever commits that through aggression and injustice, We shall cast him into the Fire, and that is easy for Allah.) (31. If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden to do, We shall remit from you your (small) sins, and admit you to a Noble Entrance (i.e. Paradise).)

Prohibiting Unlawfully Earned Money

Allah, the Exalted and Most Honored, prohibits His believing servants from illegally acquiring each other's property using various dishonest methods such as Riba, gambling and other wicked methods that appear to be legal, but Allah knows that, in reality, those involved seek to deal in interest. Ibn Jarir recorded that Ibn `Abbas commented on a man who buys a garment, saying that if he likes it he will keep it, or he will return it along with an extra Dirham, "This is what Allah meant, when He said, o

(وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ)

(Eat not up your property among yourselves unjustly.) `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "When Allah sent down,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ
بِالْبَاطِلِ)

(O you who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves unjustly) some Muslims said, `Allah has forbidden us from eating up each other's property unjustly, and food is our best property. Therefore, none among us is allowed to eat from anyone else's food.' After that Allah sent down,

(لَيْسَ عَلَى الْأَعْمَى حَرَجٌ)

(There is no restriction on the blind) (until the end of the Ayah). 24:61 ."' Qatadah said similarly. Allah's statement,

(إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْكُمْ)

(except it be a trade amongst you, by mutual consent.) means, do not revert to illegal ways and means to acquire money. However, there is no harm in commercial transactions that transpire between the buyer and the seller with mutual consent, so that money is legally earned from these transactions. Mujahid said that,

(إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْكُمْ)

(except it be a trade amongst you, by mutual consent.) means, "By selling and buying, or giving someone a gift." Ibn Jarir recorded this statement.

The Option to Buy or Sell Before Parting, is Part of `Mutual Consent' in Trading

Mutual agreement in various transactions is attained when both parties have the right to uphold or dissolve the agreement before they part. In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that the Messenger of Allah said,

«الْبَيْعَانِ بِالْخِيَارِ مَا لَمْ يَتَفَرَّقَا»

(The seller and the buyer retain the (right to change their mind) as long as they have not parted.) Al-Bukhari's wording for this Hadith reads,

«إِذَا تَبَايَعَ الرَّجُلَانِ فَكُلُّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا بِالْخِيَارِ،
مَا لَمْ يَتَفَرَّقَا»

(When two men conduct a transaction, they retain their (right to change their mind) as long as they have not parted.)

Forbidding Murder and Suicide

Allah said,

(وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ)

(And do not kill yourselves.) by committing Allah's prohibitions, falling into sin and eating up each other's property unjustly,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا)

(Surely, Allah is Most Merciful to you.) in what He commanded you and prohibited you from. Imam Ahmad recorded that `Amr bin Al-`As said that when the Prophet sent him for the battle of Dhat As-Salasil, "I had a wet dream during a very cold night and feared that if I bathed, I would die. So I performed Tayammum (with pure earth) and led my company in the Dawn prayer. When I went back to the Messenger of Allah , I mentioned what had happened to me and he said,

«يَا عَمْرُو صَلَّيْتَ بِأَصْحَابِكَ وَأَنْتَ جُنُبٌ»

(O `Amr! Have you led your people in prayer while you were in a state of sexual impurity) I said, 'O Messenger of Allah! I had a wet dream on a very cold night and feared that if I bathed I would perish, and I remembered Allah's statement,

﴿وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا﴾

(And do not kill yourselves. Surely, Allah is Most Merciful to you). So I performed Tayammum and prayed.' The Messenger of Allah smiled and did not say anything." This is the narration reported by Abu Dawud. Ibn Marduwyah mentioned this honorable Ayah and then reported that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ بِحَدِيدَةٍ، فَحَدِيدَتُهُ فِي يَدِهِ، يَجَأُ بِهَا بَطْنَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ، خَالِدًا مُخَلَّدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا، وَمَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ بِسُمِّ فَسُمُّهُ فِي يَدِهِ، يَتَحَسَّاهُ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ، خَالِدًا مُخَلَّدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا، وَمَنْ تَرَدَّى مِنْ جَبَلٍ فَقَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ، فَهُوَ مُتَرَدِّدٌ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ، خَالِدًا مُخَلَّدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا»

(Whoever kills himself with an iron tool, then his tool will be in his hand and he will keep stabbing himself with it in the Fire of Jahannam, forever and ever. Whoever kills himself with poison, then his poison will be in his hand and he will keep taking it in the Fire of Jahannam forever and ever. Whoever kills himself by throwing himself from a mountain, will keep falling in the Fire of Jahannam forever and ever.) This Hadith was also collected in the Two Sahihs. Abu Qilabah said that Thabit bin Ad-Dahhak said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ بِشَيْءٍ، عُدِّبَ بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ»

(Whoever kills himself with an instrument, will be punished with it on the Day of Resurrection.) This Hadith was collected by the Group. This is why Allah said,

﴿وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ عُدُونًا وَظُلْمًا﴾

(And whoever commits that through aggression and injustice,) meaning, whoever commits what Allah has forbidden for him transgression and injustice - while knowing that it is forbidden for him, yet he still dares to commit it,

(فَسَوْفَ نُصَلِّيهِ نَارًا)

(We shall cast him into the Fire,). This Ayah carries a stern warning and a truthful promise. Therefore, every sane person should beware of it, those who hear the speech with full comprehension.

Minor Sins Will be Pardoned if One Refrains from Major Sins

Allah said,

(إِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ)

(If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden to do, We shall remit from you your (small sins,) meaning, if you avoid the major evil deeds that you were prohibited We will forgive you the minor evil deeds and will admit you into Paradise. This is why Allah said,

(وَنُدْخِلْكُمْ مَدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا)

(and admit you to a Noble Entrance (i.e. Paradise).) There are several Hadiths on the subject of this honorable Ayah. Imam Ahmad recorded that Salman Al-Farisi said, "The Prophet said to me, 'Do you know what the day of Al-Jumu`ah is?' I said, 'It is the day during which Allah brought together the creation of your father (Adam).' He said,

«لَكِنْ أَذْرِي مَا يَوْمُ الْجُمُعَةِ، لَا يَتَطَهَّرُ الرَّجُلُ فَيُحْسِنُ طَهْرَهُ، ثُمَّ يَأْتِي الْجُمُعَةَ فَيُصَلِّي حَتَّى يَقْضِيَ الْإِمَامُ صَلَاتَهُ، إِلَّا كَانَ كَقَارَةٍ لَهُ مَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ الْجُمُعَةِ الْمُقْبِلَةِ، مَا اجْتَنِبَتِ الْمَقْتَلَةَ»

(I know what the day of Jumu`ah is. Anyone who takes a bath and cleans himself as much as he can and then proceeds for the Friday prayer and remains quiet until the Imam finishes the prayer, all his sins in between the present and the next Friday will be forgiven, as long as major sins were avoided.)" Al-Bukhari recorded similar wording from Salman Al-Farisi.

The Seven Destructive Sins

What are the Seven Destructive Sins In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«اجْتَنِبُوا السَّبْعَ الْمُؤِيقَاتِ»

(Avoid the seven great destructive sins.) The people inquired, 'O Allah's Messenger! What are they' He said,

«الشِّرْكَ بِاللهِ، وَقَتْلُ النَّفْسِ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ، وَالسَّحْرُ، وَأَكْلُ الرِّبَا، وَأَكْلُ مَالِ الْيَتِيمِ، وَالنَّوْءِي يَوْمَ الزَّحْفِ، وَقَذْفُ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ الْغَافِلَاتِ»

(To join others in worship along with Allah, to kill the life which Allah has forbidden except for a just cause, magic, to consume Riba, to consume an orphan's wealth, to turn away from the enemy and flee from the battlefield when the battle begins, and to accuse chaste women, who never even think of anything that would tarnish their chastity and are good believers.) Another Hadith that mentions False Witness Imam Ahmad recorded that Anas bin Malik said, "The Messenger of Allah mentioned the major sins, or was asked about the major sins. He said,

«الشِّرْكَ بِاللهِ، وَقَتْلُ النَّفْسِ، وَعُقُوقُ الْوَالِدَيْنِ»

(Associating others with Allah in worship, killing the life, and being undutiful to the parents.) He then said,

«أَلَا أَنْبِئُكُمْ بِأَكْبَرِ الْكَبَائِرِ؟»

:

«قَوْلُ الزُّورِ أَوْ شَهَادَةُ الزُّورِ»

(Should I tell you about the biggest of the major sins The false statement - or the false testimony.)" Shu`bah - one of the narrators of the Hadith - said, "Most likely, in my opinion, he said, `False testimony.'" The Two Sahihs recorded this Hadith from Shu`bah from Anas. Another Hadith In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that `Abdur-Rahman bin Abi Bakrah said that his father said, "The Prophet said,

«أَلَا أَنْبِئُكُمْ بِأَكْبَرَ الْكِبَائِرِ؟»

(Should I inform you about the greatest of the great sins) We said, `Yes, O Allah's Messenger !'
He said,

«الِإِشْرَاقُ بِاللَّهِ، وَعُقُوقُ الْوَالِدَيْنِ»

(To join others in worship with Allah and to be undutiful to one's parents.) He was reclining,
then he sat up and said;

«أَلَا وَشَهَادَةُ الزُّورِ، أَلَا وَقَوْلُ الزُّورِ»

(And I warn you against false testimony and false speech.) and he continued repeating it until
we wished that he would stop." Another Hadith that mentions killing the Offspring In the Two
Sahihs, it is recorded that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said, "I asked, `O Allah's Messenger! What is
the greatest sin' (in one narration) the biggest sin ' He said,

«أَنْ تَجْعَلَ لِلَّهِ نِدًّا وَهُوَ خَلَقَكَ»

(To make a rival for Allah while He Alone created you.) I said, `Then' He said,

«أَنْ تَقْتُلَ وَلَدَكَ خَشْيَةَ أَنْ يَطْعَمَ مَعَكَ»

(To kill your offspring for fear that he might share your food with you.) I said, `Then' He said,

«أَنْ تُزَانِيَ حَلِيلَةَ جَارِكَ»

(To commit adultery with your neighbor's wife.) He then recited,

(وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ)

(And those who invoke not any other god along with Allah), until,

(إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ)

(Except those who repent)." Another Hadith from `Abdullah bin `Amr Imam Ahmad recorded that `Abdullah bin `Amr said that the Prophet said,

«أَكْبَرُ الْكَبَائِرِ: الْإِشْرَاكُ بِاللَّهِ، وَعُقُوقُ الْوَالِدَيْنِ
أَوْ قَتْلُ النَّفْسِ شَعْبَةَ الشَّاكِ وَالْيَمِينُ الْغَمُوسُ»

(The greatest sins are: To join others in worship with Allah, to be undutiful to one's parents - or to take a life) Shu`bah was uncertain of which one - (and the false oath). Recorded by Al-Bukhari, At-Tirmidhi, and An-Nasai. Another Hadith by `Abdullah bin `Amr about Causing one's Parents to be Cursed `Abdullah bin `Amr said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ مِنْ أَكْبَرِ الْكَبَائِرِ أَنْ يَلْعَنَ الرَّجُلُ وَالِدَيْهِ»

(Among the worst of the major sins is for a man to curse his own parents.) They said, "How can one curse his own parents" He said,

«يَسُبُّ الرَّجُلُ أَبَا الرَّجُلِ، فَيَسُبُّ أَبَاهُ، وَيَسُبُّ
أُمَّهُ فَيَسُبُّ أُمَّهُ»

(One curses another man's father, and that man curses his father in retaliation, or he curses someone's mother and that man curses his mother.) This is the wording of Muslim. At-Tirmidhi said, "Sahih." It is recorded in the Sahih that the Messenger of Allah said,

«سِبَابُ الْمُسْلِمِ فُسُوقٌ، وَقِتَالُهُ كُفْرٌ»

(Cursing a Muslim is a sin and fighting him is Kufr.)

(وَلَا تَتَمَتَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ
لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَتَسَبُوا وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا
اِكْتَسَبْنَ وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ
شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا)

(32. And wish not for the things in which Allah has made some of you to excel others. For men there is reward for what they have earned, (and likewise) for women there is reward for what they have earned, and ask Allah of His bounty. Surely, Allah is Ever All-Knower of everything.)

Do Not Wish for the Things Which Allah has Made Some Others to Excel In

Imam Ahmad recorded that Umm Salamah said, "O Messenger of Allah! Men go to battle, but we do not go to battle, and we earn one-half of the inheritance (that men get)." Allah sent down,

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى
بَعْضٍ

(And wish not for the things in which Allah has made some of you to excel others). At-Tirmidhi also recorded this Hadith. Allah's statement,

لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَتَبْتُ لَهُمْ وَاللِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ
مِّمَّا كَتَبْتُ لَهُنَّ

(For men there is reward for what they have earned, (and likewise) for women there is reward for what they have earned,) indicates, according to Ibn Jarir, that each person will earn his wages for his works, a reward if his deeds are good, and punishment if his deeds are evil. It was also reported that this Ayah is talking about inheritance, indicating the fact that each person will get his due share of the inheritance, as Al-Walibi reported from Ibn `Abbas. Allah then directed the servants to what benefits them,

وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ

(and ask Allah of His Bounty.) Therefore, the Ayah states, "Do not wish for what other people were endowed with over you, for this is a decision that will come to pass, and wishing does not change its decree. However, ask Me of My favor and I will grant it to you, for I Am Most Generous and Most Giving." Allah then said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا

(Surely, Allah is Ever All-Knower of everything.) meaning, Allah knows who deserves this life, and so He gives him riches, and whoever deserves poverty, He makes him poor. He also knows who deserves the Hereafter, and He directs him to perform the deeds that will help him to be

successful in it, and whoever deserves failure, He prevents him from achieving righteousness and what leads to it. Hence, Allah said, m

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا)

(Surely, Allah is Ever All-Knower of everything).

(وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِيَ مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ
وَالَّذِينَ عَقَدْتَ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَأَتَوْهُمْ نَصِيبَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدًا)

(33. And to everyone, We have appointed Mawali of that left by parents and relatives. To those also with whom you have made a pledge (brotherhood), give them their due portion (by wills). Truly, Allah is Ever a Witness over all things.) Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Abu Salih, Qatadah, Zayd bin Aslam, As-Suddi, Ad-Dahhak, Muqatil bin Hayyan, and others said that Allah's statement,

(وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِيَ)

(And to everyone, We have appointed Mawali) means, "Heirs." Ibn `Abbas was also reported to have said that Mawali refers to relatives. Ibn Jarir commented, "The Arabs call the cousin a Mawla." Ibn Jarir continued, "Allah's statement,

(مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ)

(of that (property) left by parents and relatives.) means, from what he inherited from his parents and family members. Therefore, the meaning of the Ayah becomes: `To all of you, O people, We appointed relatives (such as children) who will later inherit what you inherited from your own parents and relatives." Allah's statement,

(وَالَّذِينَ عَقَدْتَ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَأَتَوْهُمْ نَصِيبَهُمْ)

(To those also with whom you have made a pledge (brotherhood), give them their due portion.) means, "Those with whom you have a pledge of brotherhood, give them their share of inheritance, thus fulfilling the ratified pledges that you gave them. Allah has witnessed all of you when you gave these pledges and promises." This practice was followed in the beginning of Islam, but was later on abrogated when Muslims were commanded to fulfill the pledges (brotherhood) they had already given, but to refrain from making any new pledges after that. Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn `Abbas said,

(وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِي)

(And to everyone, We have appointed Mawali) "meaning, heirs;

(وَالَّذِينَ عَقَدْتَ أَيْمَانُكُمْ)

(To those also with whom you have made a pledge (brotherhood)) When the emigrants came to Al-Madinah, the emigrant would inherit from the Ansari, while the latter's relatives would not inherit from him because of the bond of brotherhood which the Prophet established between them (the emigrants and the Ansar). When the verse,

(وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِي)

(And to everyone We have appointed Mawali) was revealed, it cancelled (the pledge of brotherhood regarding inheritance)." Then he said, "The verse,

(وَالَّذِينَ عَقَدْتَ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَأَوْهْمَ نَصِيْبَهُمْ)

(To those also with whom you have made a pledge (brotherhood), give them their due portion.) remained valid for cases of co-operation and mutual advice, while the matter of inheritance was excluded and it became permissible to assign something in one's will to the person who had the right of inheriting before."

(الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ
بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ
فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ
وَاللَّتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ
فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ فَإِنِ اطَّعْنَكُمْ فَلَا
تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلاً إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيماً كَبِيراً)

(34. Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means. Therefore the righteous women are Qanitat, and guard in the husband's absence what Allah orders them to guard. As to those women on whose part you see ill conduct, admonish them, and abandon

them in their beds, and beat them, but if they return to obedience, do not seek a means against them. Surely, Allah is Ever Most High, Most Great.) Allah said,

(الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ)

(Men are the protectors and maintainers of women,) meaning, the man is responsible for the woman, and he is her maintainer, caretaker and leader who disciplines her if she deviates.

(بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ)

(because Allah has made one of them to excel the other,) meaning, because men excel over women and are better than them for certain tasks. This is why prophethood was exclusive of men, as well as other important positions of leadership. The Prophet said,

«لَنْ يُقْلِحَ قَوْمٌ وَلَوْ أُمِرَ هُمْ امْرَأَةً»

(People who appoint a woman to be their leader, will never achieve success.) Al-Bukhari recorded this Hadith. Such is the case with appointing women as judges or on other positions of leadership.

(وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ)

(and because they spend from their means.) meaning the dowry, expenditures and various expenses that Allah ordained in His Book and the Sunnah of His Messenger for men to spend on women. For these reasons it is suitable that he is appointed her maintainer, just as Allah said,

(وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ)

(But men have a degree (of responsibility) over them).

Qualities of the Righteous Wife

Allah said,

(فَالصَّالِحَاتُ)

(Therefore, the righteous) women,

(قَانِتَاتٍ)

(are Qanitah), obedient to their husbands, as Ibn `Abbas and others stated.

(حَفِظَتْ لِّلْغَيْبِ)

(and guard in the husband's absence) As-Suddi and others said that it means she protects her honor and her husband's property when he is absent, and Allah's statement,

(بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ)

(what Allah orders them to guard.) means, the protected husband is the one whom Allah protects. Ibn Jarir recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«خَيْرُ النِّسَاءِ امْرَأَةٌ إِذَا نَظَرْتَ إِلَيْهَا سَرَّتَكَ، وَإِذَا
أَمَرْتَهَا أَطَاعَتْكَ، وَإِذَا غَبَّتَ عَنْهَا حَفِظَتْكَ فِي
نَفْسِهَا وَمَالِكَ»

(The best woman is she who when you look at her, she pleases you, when you command her she obeys you, and when you are absent, she protects her honor and your property.) Then, the Messenger of Allah recited the Ayah,

(الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ)

(Men are the protectors and maintainers of women,) until its end. Imam Ahmad recorded that `Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِذَا صَلَّتِ الْمَرْأَةُ خَمْسَهَا، وَصَامَتْ شَهْرَهَا،
وَحَفِظَتْ فَرْجَهَا، وَأَطَاعَتْ زَوْجَهَا، قِيلَ لَهَا:
ادْخُلِي الْجَنَّةَ مِنْ أَيِّ الْأَبْوَابِ شِئْتَ»

(If the woman prayed her five daily prayers, fasted her month, protected her chastity and obeyed her husband, she will be told, 'Enter Paradise from any of its doors you wish.'))

Dealing with the Wife's Ill-Conduct

Allah said,

(وَاللَّتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ)

(As to those women on whose part you see ill conduct,) meaning, the woman from whom you see ill conduct with her husband, such as when she acts as if she is above her husband, disobeys him, ignores him, dislikes him, and so forth. When these signs appear in a woman, her husband should advise her and remind her of Allah's torment if she disobeys him. Indeed, Allah ordered the wife to obey her husband and prohibited her from disobeying him, because of the enormity of his rights and all that he does for her. The Messenger of Allah said,

«لَوْ كُنْتُ أَمِيرًا أَحَدًا أَنْ يَسْجُدَ لِأَحَدٍ، لِأَمَرْتُ
الْمَرْأَةَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِزَوْجِهَا، مِنْ عِظَمِ حَقِّهِ عَلَيْهَا»

(If I were to command anyone to prostrate before anyone, I would have commanded the wife to prostrate before her husband, because of the enormity of his right upon her.) Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِذَا دَعَا الرَّجُلُ امْرَأَتَهُ إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ فَأَبَتْ عَلَيْهِ،
لَعَنَتَهَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى تُصْبِحَ»

(If the man asks his wife to come to his bed and she declines, the angels will keep cursing her until the morning.) Muslim recorded it with the wording,

«إِذَا بَاتَتِ الْمَرْأَةُ هَاجِرَةً فِرَاشِ زَوْجِهَا، لَعَنَتَهَا
الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى تُصْبِحَ»

(If the wife goes to sleep while ignoring her husband's bed, the angels will keep cursing her until the morning.) This is why Allah said,

(وَاللَّتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ)

(As to those women on whose part you see ill conduct, admonish them (first)). Allah's statement,

(وَافْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ)

(abandon them in their beds,) `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said "The abandonment refers to not having intercourse with her, to lie on her bed with his back to her." Several others said similarly. As-Suddi, Ad-Dahhak, `Ikrimah, and Ibn `Abbas, in another narration, added, "Not to speak with her or talk to her." The Sunan and Musnad compilers recorded that Mu`awiyah bin Haydah Al-Qushayri said, "O Allah's Messenger! What is the right that the wife of one of us has on him" The Prophet said,

«أَنْ تُطْعِمَهَا إِذَا طَعِمْتَ، وَتَكْسُوَهَا إِذَا اكْتَسَيْتَ،
وَلَا تَضْرِبَ الْوَجْهَ، وَلَا تُقَبِّحَ، وَلَا تَهْجُرَ إِلَّا فِي
الْبَيْتِ»

(To feed her when you eat, cloth her when you buy clothes for yourself, refrain from striking her face or cursing her, and to not abandon her, except in the house.) Allah's statement,

(وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ)

(beat them) means, if advice and ignoring her in the bed do not produce the desired results, you are allowed to discipline the wife, without severe beating. Muslim recorded that Jabir said that during the Farewell Hajj, the Prophet said;

«وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ فِي النِّسَاءِ، فَإِنَّهُنَّ عِنْدَكُمْ عَوَانٍ،
وَلَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ أَنْ لَا يُوطِئَنَّ فُرُشَكُمْ أَحَدًا
تَكَرَّهُونَهُ، فَإِنْ فَعَلْنَ ذَلِكَ فَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ ضَرْبًا غَيْرَ
مُبْرَحٍ، وَلَهُنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ»

(Fear Allah regarding women, for they are your assistants. You have the right on them that they do not allow any person whom you dislike to step on your mat. However, if they do that, you are allowed to discipline them lightly. They have a right on you that you provide them with

their provision and clothes, in a reasonable manner.) Ibn `Abbas and several others said that the Ayah refers to a beating that is not violent. Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that it means, a beating that is not severe.

When the Wife Obeys Her Husband, Means of Annoyance Against Her are Prohibited

Allah said,

(فَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمْ فَمَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلاً)

(but if they return to obedience, seek not against them means (of annoyance),) meaning, when the wife obeys her husband in all that Allah has allowed, then no means of annoyance from the husband are allowed against his wife. Therefore, in this case, the husband does not have the right to beat her or shun her bed. Allah's statement,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيًّا كَبِيرًا)

(Surely, Allah is Ever Most High, Most Great.) reminds men that if they transgress against their wives without justification, then Allah, the Ever Most High, Most Great, is their Protector, and He will exert revenge on those who transgress against their wives and deal with them unjustly.

(وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِ
وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا إِنْ يُرِيدَا إِصْلَاحًا يُوَفِّقِ اللَّهُ
بَيْنَهُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا)

(35. If you fear a breach between the two, appoint (two) arbitrators, one from his family and the other from her's; if they both wish for peace, Allah will cause their reconciliation. Indeed Allah is Ever All-Knower, Well-Acquainted with all things.)

Appointing Two Arbitrators When the Possibility of Estrangement Between Husband and Wife Occurs

Allah first mentioned the case of rebellion on the part of the wife. He then mentioned the case of estrangement and alienation between the two spouses. Allah said,

(وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِ
وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا)

(If you fear a breach between the two, appoint (two) arbitrators, one from his family). The Fuqaha' (scholars of Fiqh) say that when estrangement occurs between the husband and wife, the judge refers them to a trusted person who examines their case in order to stop any wrongs committed between them. If the matter continues or worsens, the judge sends a trustworthy person from the woman's family and a trustworthy person from the man's family to meet with them and examine their case to determine whether it is best for them to part or to remain together. Allah gives preference to staying together, and this is why Allah said,

(إِنْ يُرِيدَا إِصْلَاحًا يُوَفِّقِ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا)

(if they both wish for peace, Allah will cause their reconciliation.) `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "Allah commands that a righteous man from the husband's side of the family and the wife's side of the family are appointed, so that they find out who among the spouses is in the wrong. If the man is in the wrong, they prevent him from his wife, and he pays some restitution. If the wife is in the wrong, she remains with her husband, and he does not pay any restitution. If the arbitrators decide that the marriage should remain intact or be dissolved, then their decision is upheld. If they decide that the marriage remains intact, but one of the spouses disagrees while the other agrees, and one of them dies, then the one who agreed inherits from the other, while the spouse who did not agree does not inherit from the spouse who agreed." This was collected by Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Jarir. Shaykh Abu `Umar bin `Abdul-Barr said, "The scholars agree that when the two arbitrators disagree, then the opinion that dissolves the marriage will not be adopted. They also agree that the decision of the arbitrators is binding, even if the two spouses did not appoint them as agents. This is the case if it is decided that they should stay together, but they disagree whether it is binding or not when they decide for separation." Then he mentioned that the majority holds the view that the decision is still binding, even if they did not appoint them to make any decision.

(وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَيَالِوَالِدَيْنِ
إِحْسَانًا وَيَٰ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ
وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّحْبِ
بِالْجُنُبِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا)

(36. Worship Allah and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, the poor, the neighbor who is near of kin, the neighbor who is a stranger, the

companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and those (slaves) whom your right hands possess. Verily, Allah does not like such as are proud and boastful.)

The Order to Worship Allah Alone and to Be Dutiful to Parents

Allah orders that He be worshipped Alone without partners, because He Alone is the Creator and Sustainer Who sends His favors and bounties on His creation in all situations and instances. Therefore He deserves to be singled out, without associating anything or anyone from His creation with Him in worship. Indeed, the Prophet said to Mu`adh,

«أَتَدْرِي مَا حَقُّ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ؟»

(Do you know what Allah's right on His servants is) Mu`adh replied, "Allah and His Messenger know better." He said,

«أَنْ يَعْبُدُوهُ وَلَا يُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا»

(That they should worship Him and should not worship any others with Him.) The Prophet then said,

«أَتَدْرِي مَا حَقُّ الْعِبَادِ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِذَا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ؟
أَنْ لَا يُعَذِّبَهُمْ»

(Do you know what the right of the servants on Allah is if they do this He should not punish them.) Allah then commands the servants to be dutiful to their parents, for Allah made parents the reason for the servants to come to existence, after they did not exist. Allah joins the order to worship Him with being dutiful to parents in many places. For example, He said,

(أَنْ أَشْكُرَ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ)

(give thanks to Me and to your parents), and,

(وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَيَالِوَالِدَيْنِ
إِحْسَانًا)

(And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents). After Allah ordained being dutiful to parents, He ordained kind treatment of relatives, males and females. A Hadith states,

«الصدقة على المسكين صدقة، وعلى ذي
الرحم صدقة وصلة»

(Charity given to the poor is Sadaqah, while charity given to relatives is both Sadaqah and Silah (keeping the relations).) Allah then said,

(وَالْيَتَامَى)

(orphans), because they lost their caretakers who would spend on them. So Allah commands that the orphans be treated with kindness and compassion. Allah then said,

(وَالْمَسْكِينُ)

(Al-Masakin (the poor)) who have various needs and cannot find what sustains these needs. Therefore, Allah commands they should be helped in acquiring their needs in a sufficient manner that will end their inadequacy. We will further elaborate on the matter of the destitute and the poor in Surah Bara'h (9:60).

The Right of the Neighbor

Allah said,

(وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ)

(the neighbor who is near of kin, the neighbor who is a stranger) `Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ)

(the neighbor who is near of kin) means, "The neighbor who is also a relative", while,

(وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ)

(The neighbor who is a stranger) means, "Who is not a relative." It was also reported that `Ikrimah, Mujahid, Maymun bin Mihran, Ad-Dahhak, Zayd bin Aslam, Muqatil bin Hayyan and Qatadah said similarly. Mujahid was also reported to have said that Allah's statement,

(وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ)

(the neighbor who is a stranger) means, "The companion during travel." There are many Hadiths that command kind treatment to the neighbors, and we will mention some of them here with Allah's help. The First Hadith Imam Ahmad recorded that `Abdullah bin `Umar said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَا زَالَ جِبْرِيلُ يُوصِينِي بِالْجَارِ حَتَّى ظَنَنْتُ أَنَّهُ سَيُورُنِي»

(Jibril kept reminding of the neighbor's right, until I thought that he was going to give him a share of the inheritance.) The Two Sahihs recorded this Hadith. The Second Hadith Imam Ahmad recorded that `Abdullah bin `Amr said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَا زَالَ جِبْرِيلُ يُوصِينِي بِالْجَارِ حَتَّى ظَنَنْتُ أَنَّهُ سَيُورُنِي»

(Jibril kept reminding me of the neighbor's right, until I thought he was going to appoint a share of the inheritance for him.) Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi recorded this Hadith, which At-Tirmidhi said was "Hasan Gharib through this route." The Third Hadith Imam Ahmad recorded that `Abdullah bin `Amr bin Al-`As said that the Prophet said,

«خَيْرُ الْأَصْحَابِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرُهُمْ لِصَاحِبِهِ،
وَخَيْرُ الْجِيرَانِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرُهُمْ لِجَارِهِ»

(The best companions according to Allah are those who are the best with their friends, and the best neighbors according to Allah are the best with their neighbors.) At-Tirmidhi recorded this Hadith and said, "Hasan Gharib". The Fourth Hadith Imam Ahmad recorded that Al-Miqdad bin Al-Aswad said that the Messenger of Allah asked his Companions,

«مَا تَقُولُونَ فِي الزَّانَا؟»

(What do you say about adultery) They said, "It is prohibited, for Allah and His Messenger have prohibited it. So it is forbidden until the Day of Resurrection." The Messenger of Allah said,

«لَأَنْ يَزْنِيَ الرَّجُلُ بِعَشْرٍ نِسْوَةٍ، أَيْسَرُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَنْ يَزْنِيَ بِامْرَأَةِ جَارِهِ»

(For a man to commit adultery with his neighbor's wife is worse than if he commits adultery with ten women.) He then said,

«مَا تَقُولُونَ فِي السَّرْقَةِ؟»

(What do you say about theft) They said, "It is prohibited, for Allah and His Messenger prohibited it." He said,

«لَأَنْ يَسْرِقَ الرَّجُلُ مِنْ عَشْرَةِ أَهْبَاتٍ، أَيْسَرُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَنْ يَسْرِقَ مِنْ جَارِهِ»

(If a man steals from his neighbor, it is worse for him than stealing from ten homes.) Only Ahmad recorded this Hadith. A similar Hadith is recorded in the Two Sahihs, Ibn Mas'ud said, "I asked, `O Allah's Messenger! What is the greatest sin' He said,

«أَنْ تَجْعَلَ لِلَّهِ نِدًّا وَهُوَ خَلَقَكَ»

(To make a rival for Allah while He Alone created you.) I said, `Then' He said,

«أَنْ تَقْتُلَ وَلَدَكَ خَشْيَةَ أَنْ يَطْعَمَ مَعَكَ»

(To kill your offspring for fear that he might share your food with you.) I said, `Then' He said,

«أَنْ تُزَانِيَ حَلِيلَةَ جَارِكَ»

(To commit adultery with your neighbor's wife.)" The Fifth Hadith Imam Ahmad recorded that `A'ishah asked the Messenger of Allah, "I have two neighbors, so whom among them should I give my gift" He said,

«إِلَى أَقْرَبِهِمَا مِنْكَ بِأَبَا»

(The neighbor whose door is the closest to you.) Al-Bukhari narrated this Hadith We will elaborate on this subject in the Tafsir of Surah Bara'h, Allah willing and upon Him we depend.

Being Kind to Slaves and Servants

Allah said,

﴿وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ﴾

(and those (slaves) whom your right hands possess,) this is an order to be kind to them because they are weak, being held as captives by others. An authentic Hadith records that during the illness that preceded his death, the Messenger of Allah continued advising his Ummah:

﴿الصَّلَاةَ الصَّلَاةَ، وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ﴾

((Protect) the prayer, (protect) the prayer, and (those slaves) whom your hands possess.) He was repeating it until his tongue was still. Imam Ahmad recorded that Al-Miqdam bin Ma`dykarib said that the Messenger of Allah said,

﴿مَا أَطْعَمْتَ نَفْسَكَ فَهُوَ لَكَ صَدَقَةٌ، وَمَا أَطْعَمْتَ
وَلَدَكَ فَهُوَ لَكَ صَدَقَةٌ، وَمَا أَطْعَمْتَ زَوْجَتَكَ فَهُوَ
لَكَ صَدَقَةٌ، وَمَا أَطْعَمْتَ خَادِمَكَ فَهُوَ لَكَ صَدَقَةٌ﴾

(What you feed yourself is a Sadaqah (charity) for you, what you feed your children is Sadaqah for you, what you feed your wife is Sadaqah for you and what you feed your servant is Sadaqah for you.) An-Nasa'i recorded this Hadith which has an authentic chain of narration, all the thanks are due to Allah. `Abdullah bin `Amr said to a caretaker of his, "Did you give the slaves their food yet" He said, "No." Ibn `Amr said, "Go and give it to them, for the Messenger of Allah said,

﴿كَفَى بِالْمَرْءِ إِثْمًا أَنْ يَحْبِسَ عَمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ قُوَّتَهُمْ﴾

(It is enough sin for someone to prevent whomever he is responsible for from getting their food.)" Muslim recorded this Hadith. Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet said,

«لِلْمَمْلُوكِ طَعَامُهُ وَكِسْوَتُهُ، وَلَا يُكَلَّفُ مِنَ الْعَمَلِ
إِلَّا مَا يُطِيقُ»

(The slave has the right to have food, clothing and to only be required to perform what he can bear of work.) Muslim also recorded this Hadith. Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet said,

«إِذَا أَتَى أَحَدَكُمْ خَادِمُهُ بِطَعَامِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يُجْلِسْهُ
مَعَهُ فَلْيُنَاوِلْهُ لُقْمَةً أَوْ لُقْمَتَيْنِ أَوْ أَكْلَةً أَوْ أَكْلَتَيْنِ
فَإِنَّهُ وَلِيَّ حَرِّهِ وَعِلَاجِهِ»

(When your servant brings meals to one of you, if he does not let him sit and share the meal, then he should at least give him a mouthful or two mouthfuls of that meal or a meal or two, for he has prepared it.) This is the wording collected by Al-Bukhari.

Allah Does Not Like the Arrogant

Allah said,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا)

(Verily, Allah does not like such as are proud and boastful.) meaning, one who is proud and arrogant, insolent and boasts to others. He thinks that he is better than other people, thus thinking high of himself, even though he is insignificant to Allah and hated by people. Mujahid said that Allah's statement,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا)

(Verily, Allah does not like such as are proud) means arrogant, while,

(فَخُورًا)

(boastful) means boasting about what he has, while he does not thank Allah. This Ayah indicates that such a person boasts with people about the bounty that Allah has given him, but he is actually ungrateful to Allah for this bounty. Ibn Jarir recorded that `Abdullah bin Waqid Abu Raja' Al-Harawi said, "You will find that those who are mean are also proud and boasting. He then recited,

(وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ)

(and those (slaves) whom your right hands possess,) You will find that he who is undutiful (to parents) is also arrogant, and deprived. He then recited,

(وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَتِي وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْنِي جَبَّارًا شَقِيًّا)

(And dutiful to my mother, and made me not arrogant, deprived.) Once a man asked the Prophet, "O Messenger of Allah, advise me." The Prophet said,

«إِيَّاكَ وَإِسْبَالَ الْإِزَارِ، فَإِنَّ إِسْبَالَ الْإِزَارِ مِنَ
الْمَخِيلَةِ، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمَخِيلَةَ»

(Avoid lengthening the dress (below the ankles), for this practice is from arrogance. Verily, Allah does not like arrogance.)"

(الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ وَيَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ وَيَكْتُمُونَ
مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا
مُهِينًا - وَالَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَنْ يَكُنْ
الشَّيْطَانُ لَهُ قَرِينًا فَسَاءَ قَرِينًا - وَمَاذَا عَلَيْهِمْ لَوْ
ءَامَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَنْفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَهُمُ
اللَّهُ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِهِمْ عَلِيمًا)

(37. Those who are stingy and encourage people to be stingy and hide what Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounties. And We have prepared for the disbelievers a disgraceful torment.)

(38. And (also) those who spend of their wealth to be seen of men, and believe not in Allah and the Last Day, and whoever takes Shaytan as an intimate; then what a dreadful intimate he has!) (39. And what loss have they if they had believed in Allah and in the Last Day, and they spend out of what Allah has given them for sustenance And Allah is Ever All-Knower of them.)

The Censure of Stingy Behavior

Allah chastises the stingy behavior of those who refuse to spend their money for what Allah ordered them, such as being kind to parents and compassionate to relatives, orphans, the poor, the relative who is also a neighbor, the companion during travel, the needy wayfarer, the slaves and servants. Such people do not give Allah's right from their wealth, and they assist in the spread of stingy behavior. The Messenger of Allah said,

«وَأَيُّ دَاءٍ أَدْوَأُ مِنَ الْبُخْلِ»

(What disease is more serious than being stingy) He also said,

«إِيَّاكُمْ وَالشُّحَّ، فَإِنَّهُ أَهْلَكَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ، أَمْرَهُمْ
بِالْقَطِيعَةِ فَقَطَعُوا، وَأَمْرَهُمْ بِالْفُجُورِ فَفَجَرُوا»

(Beware of being stingy, for it destroyed those who were before you, as it encouraged them to cut their relations and they did, and it encouraged them to commit sin and they did.) Allah said,

(وَيَكْتُمُونَ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ)

(and hide what Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounties.) Therefore, the miser is ungrateful for Allah's favor, for its effect does not appear on him, whether in his food, clothes or what he gives. Similarly, Allah said,

(إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنُودٌ - وَإِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ
(

(Verily, man is ungrateful to his Lord. And to that he bears witness.) by his manners and conduct,

(وَإِنَّهُ لِحُبِّ الْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ)

(And verily, he is violent in the love of wealth.) Allah said,

(وَيَكْتُمُونَ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ)

(and hide what Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounties) and this is why He threatened them,

﴿وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا﴾

(And We have prepared for the disbelievers a disgraceful torment.) Kufr means to cover something. Therefore, the Bakhil (miser) covers the favors that Allah has blessed him with, meaning he does not spread those favors. So he is described by the term Kafir (ungrateful) regarding the favors that Allah granted him. A Hadith states that,

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا أَنْعَمَ نِعْمَةً عَلَى عَبْدٍ، أَحَبَّ أَنْ يَظْهَرَ
أَثْرَهَا عَلَيْهِ»

(When Allah grants a servant a favor, He likes that its effect appears on him.) Some of the Salaf stated that this Ayah 4:37 is describing the Jews who hid the knowledge they had about the description of Muhammad, and there is no doubt that the general meaning of the Ayah includes this. The apparent wording for this Ayah indicates that it is talking about being stingy with money, even though miserly conduct with knowledge is also included. The Ayah talks about spending on relatives and the weak, just as the Ayah after it,

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ﴾

(And (also) those who spend of their wealth to be seen of men,) Allah first mentions the punished misers who do not spend, then He mentions those who spend to show off to gain the reputation that they are generous, not for the Face of Allah. A Hadith states that the first three persons on whom the fire will feed are a scholar, a fighter and a spender who shows off with their actions. For instance,

«يَقُولُ صَاحِبُ الْمَالِ: مَا تَرَكْتُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ تُحِبُّ
أَنْ يُنْفَقَ فِيهِ، إِلَّا أَنْفَقْتُ فِي سَبِيلِكَ، فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ:
كَذَّبْتَ، إِنَّمَا أَرَدْتَ أَنْ يُقَالَ: جَوَادُّ، فَقَدِّقِيلُ»

(The wealthy will say, "I did not leave any area that You like to be spent on, but I spent on it in Your cause." Allah will say, "You lie, you only did that so that it is said, 'He is generous.' And it was said...") meaning you acquired your reward in the life, and this is indeed what you sought with your action. This is why Allah said,

﴿وَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ﴾

(and believe not in Allah and the Last Day,) meaning, it is Shaytan who lured them to commit this evil action, instead of performing the good deed as it should be performed. Shaytan encouraged, excited and lured them by making the evil appear good,

(وَمَنْ يَكُن الشَّيْطَانُ لَهُ قَرِينًا فَسَاءَ قَرِينًا)

(And whoever takes Shaytan as an intimate; then what a dreadful intimate he has!) Allah then said,

(وَمَاذَا عَلَيْهِمْ لَوْ ءَامَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَأَنْفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ)

(And what loss have they if they had believed in Allah and in the Last Day, and they spend out of what Allah has given them for sustenance) This Ayah means, what harm would it cause them if they believe in Allah, go on the righteous path, replace showing off with sincerity, have faith in Allah, and await His promise in the Hereafter, for those who do good and spend what He has given them on what He likes and is pleased with. Allah's statement:

(وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِهِمْ عَلِيمًا)

(And Allah is Ever All-Knower of them.) means, He has perfect knowledge of their intentions, whether good or evil. Indeed, Allah knows those who deserve success, and He grants them success and guidance, directing them to perform righteous actions that will earn them His pleasure. He also knows those who deserve failure and expulsion from His great mercy, which amounts to utter failure in this life and the Hereafter for them, we seek refuge in Allah from this evil end.

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ وَإِنْ تَكَ حَسَنَةً
يُضَعِفَهَا وَيُوتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا - فَكَيْفَ
إِذَا جِئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَى
هَؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا - يَوْمَئِذٍ يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَعَصَوْا
الرَّسُولَ لَوْ تُسَوَّى بِهِمُ الْأَرْضُ وَلَا يَكْتُمُونَ اللَّهَ
حَدِيثًا)

(40. Surely! Allah wrongs not even of the weight of a speck of dust, but if there is any good (done), He doubles it, and gives from Him a great reward.) (41. How (will it be) then, when We bring from each nation a witness and We bring you (O Muhammad) as a witness against these people) (42. On that day those who disbelieved and disobeyed the Messenger will wish that they were buried in the earth, but they will never be able to hide a single fact from Allah.)

Allah Wrongs Not Even the Weight of a Speck of Dust

Allah states that He does not treat any of His servants with injustice on the Day of Resurrection, be it the weight of a mustard seed or a speck of dust. Rather, Allah shall reward them for this action and multiply it, if it were a good deed. For instance, Allah said,

(وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ)

(And We shall set up balances of justice) Allah said that Luqman said,

(يَبْنِيَّ إِنَّهَا إِنْ تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُنْ فِي
صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا
اللَّهُ)

(O my son! If it be (anything) equal to the weight of a mustard seed, and though it be in a rock, or in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth). Allah said,

(يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصُدُّرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِّيُرَوْا أَعْمَلُهُمْ -
فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ - وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ
مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ)

(That Day mankind will proceed in scattered groups that they may be shown their deeds. So whosoever does good equal to the weight of a speck of dust shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of a speck of dust shall see it.) The Two Sahihs recorded the long Hadith about the intercession that Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri narrated, and in which the Messenger of Allah said,

«فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: ارْجِعُوا، فَمَنْ وَجَدْتُمْ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةِ خَرْدَلٍ مِنْ إِيْمَانٍ، فَأَخْرِجُوهُ مِنَ النَّارِ»

(Allah then says, "Go back, and take out of the Fire everyone in whose heart you find the weight of a mustard seed of faith") In another narration, Allah says, :

«أَدْنَى أَدْنَى مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ مِنْ إِيْمَانٍ، فَأَخْرِجُوهُ مِنَ النَّارِ، فَيُخْرَجُونَ خَلْقًا كَثِيرًا»

("Whosoever had the least, least, least speck of faith, take him out of the Fire," and they will take out many people.) Abu Sa`id then said, "Read, if you will,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ)

(Surely! Allah wrongs not even of the weight of a speck of dust)."

Will Punishment be Diminished for the Disbelievers

Sa`id bin Jubayr commented about Allah's statement,

(وَإِنْ تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضَعِفَهَا)

(but if there is any good (done), He doubles it,) "As for the disbeliever, his punishment will be lessened for him on the Day of Resurrection, but he will never depart the Fire." He used as evidence the authentic Hadith in which Al-` Abbas said, "O Messenger of Allah! Your uncle Abu Talib used to protect and support you, did you benefit him at all" The Messenger said,

«نَعَمْ هُوَ فِي ضَحْضَاحٍ مِنْ نَارٍ، وَلَوْ لَأَنَا، لَكَانَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ»

(Yes. He is in a shallow area in Hell-fire, and were it not for me, he would have been in the deepest depths of the Fire.) However, this Hadith only applies to Abu Talib, not the rest of the

disbelievers. To support this, we mention what Abu Dawud At-Tayalisi recorded in his Musnad that Anas said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ الْمُؤْمِنَ حَسَنَةً، يُثَابُ عَلَيْهَا
الرِّزْقَ فِي الدُّنْيَا، وَيُجْزَى بِهَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ، وَأَمَّا
الْكَافِرُ فَيُطْعَمُ بِهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا، فَإِذَا كَانَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ حَسَنَةٌ»

(Allah does not wrong the faithful even concerning one good action, for he will be rewarded for it by provision in this life and awarded for it in the Hereafter. As for the disbeliever, he will be provided provision in this life for his good action, and on the Day of Resurrection, he will not have any good deed.)

What Does 'Great Reward' Mean

Abu Hurayrah, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and Ad-Dahhak said that Allah's statement,

(وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا)

(and gives from Him a great reward.) refers to Paradise. We ask Allah for His pleasure and Paradise. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Abu `Uthman An-Nahdi said, "No other person accompanied Abu Hurayrah more than I. One year, he went to Hajj before me, and I found the people of Al-Basrah saying that he narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allah saying,

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضَاعِفُ الْحَسَنَةَ أَلْفَ أَلْفِ حَسَنَةٍ»

(Allah rewards the good deed with a million deeds.) So I said, 'Woe to you! No person accompanied Abu Hurayrah more than I, and I never heard him narrate this Hadith!' When I wanted to meet him, I found that he had left for Hajj so I followed him to Hajj to ask him about this Hadith." Ibn Abi Hatim also recorded this Hadith using another chain of narration leading to Abu `Uthman. In this narration, Abu `Uthman said, "I said, 'O Abu Hurayrah! I heard my brethren in Al-Basrah claim that you narrated that you heard the Messenger of Allah saying,

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَجْزِي بِالْحَسَنَةِ أَلْفَ أَلْفِ حَسَنَةٍ»

(Allah rewards the good deed with a million deeds.) Abu Hurayrah said, `By Allah! I heard the Messenger of Allah saying,

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَجْزِي بِالْحَسَنَةِ أَلْفِ أَلْفِ حَسَنَةٍ»

(Allah rewards the good deed with two million deeds.) He then recited this Ayah,

(فَمَا مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فِي الْأَخْرَةِ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ)

(But little is the enjoyment of the life of this world as compared to the Hereafter)."

Our Prophet will be a Witness Against, or For his Ummah on the Day of Resurrection, When the Disbelievers Will Wish for Death

Allah said,

(فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا)

(How (will it be) then, when We bring from each nation a witness and We bring you (O Muhammad) as a witness against these people) Allah describes the horrors, hardships and difficulties of the Day of Resurrection, saying, how would it be on that Day when there will be a witness from every nation, meaning the Prophets, just as Allah said;

(وَأَشْرَقَتِ الْأَرْضُ بِنُورِ رَبِّهَا وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ وَجِيءَ بِالنَّبِيِّينَ وَالشَّهَدَاءِ)

(And the earth will shine with the light of its Lord, and the Book will be placed (open); and the Prophets and the witnesses will be brought forward), and,

(وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ)

(There will then be no test for them but to say: "By Allah, our Lord, we were not those who joined others in worship with Allah.") but He also says,

(وَلَا يَكْتُمُونَ اللَّهَ حَدِيثًا)

(but they will never be able to hide a single fact from Allah.) They have indeed hid something.' Ibn `Abbas said, `As for Allah's statement,

(ثُمَّ لَمْ تَكُنْ فِتْنَتُهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا وَاللَّهِ رَبَّنَا مَا كُنَّا
مُشْرِكِينَ)

(There will then be no test for them but to say: "By Allah, our Lord, we were not those who joined others in worship with Allah."), when they see that on the Day of Resurrection that Allah does not forgive, except for the people of Islam, and that He forgives the sins, no matter how big they are, except Shirk, then the Mushriks will lie. They will say,

(وَاللَّهِ رَبَّنَا مَا كُنَّا مُشْرِكِينَ)

("By Allah, our Lord, we were not those who joined others in worship with Allah."), hoping that Allah will forgive them. However, Allah will then seal their mouths, and their hands and feet will disclose what they used to do. Then,

(يَوْمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَعَصَوُا الرَّسُولَ لَوْ تُسَوَّىٰ
بِهِمُ الْأَرْضُ وَلَا يَكْتُمُونَ اللَّهَ حَدِيثًا)

(those who disbelieved and disobeyed the Messenger will wish that they were buried in the earth, but they will never be able to hide a single fact from Allah.)"

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تَقَرَّبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَرَىٰ حَتَّى
تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ
حَتَّىٰ تَغْتَسِلُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَّرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ
جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَمَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ

تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا
بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا غَفُورًا

(43. O you who believe! Do not approach Salah while you are in a drunken state until you know what you are saying, nor while Junub (sexually impure), except while passing through, until you bathe (your entire body), and if you are ill, or on a journey, or one of you comes from the Gha'it (toilet), or from Lamastum (touching) women, but you do not find water, then perform Tayammum with clean earth, rubbing your faces and hands. Truly, Allah is Ever Oft-Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving.)

The Prohibition of Approaching Prayer When Drunk or Junub

Allah forbade His believing servants from praying while drunk, for one does not know the meaning of what he is saying in that state, and He forbade them from attending the Masjids while sexually impure, except when one is just passing through the Masjid from one door to another. This Ayah was revealed before alcohol consumption was completely prohibited, as evident by the Hadith that we mentioned in Surat Al-Baqarah when we explained Allah's statement,

(يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ)

(They ask you about alcoholic drink and gambling). In that Hadith, the Messenger of Allah recited this Ayah to `Umar, who said, "O Allah! Explain the ruling about Khamr (intoxicants) for us in a plain manner." When this Ayah 4:43 was revealed, the Prophet recited it to `Umar, who still said, "O Allah! Explain the ruling about Khamr (intoxicants) for us in a plain manner." After that, they would not drink alcohol close to the time of prayer. When Allah's statement,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ
وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ
فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ)

(O you who believe! alcoholic drinks, gambling, Al-Ansab, and Al-Azlam are an abomination of Shayatan's handiwork. So avoid that in order that you may be successful.) 5:90 , until,

(فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ)

(So, will you not then abstain) 5:91 was revealed, `Umar said, "We abstain, we abstain." In another narration, when the Ayah in Surat An-Nisa' was revealed,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنتُمْ
سُكْرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ)

(O you who believe! Do not approach Salah while you are in a drunken state until you know what you are saying,) at the time of prayer, the Messenger of Allah would have someone proclaim; "Let not any drunk approach the prayer." This is the wording collected by Abu Dawud.

Causes of Its Revelation

Ibn Abi Hatim has recorded some reports about the incident of its revelation: Sa`d said, "Four Ayat were revealed concerning me. A man from the Ansar once made some food and invited some Muhajirin and Ansar men to it, and we ate and drank until we became intoxicated. We then boasted about our status." Then a man held a camel's bone and injured Sa`d's nose, which was scarred ever since. This occurred before Al-Khamr was prohibited, and Allah later revealed,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنتُمْ
سُكْرَىٰ)

(O you who believe! Approach not AsSalat (the prayer) when you are in a drunken state). Muslim recorded this Hadith, and the collectors of the Sunan recorded it, with the exception of Ibn Majah. Another Reason Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that `Ali bin Abi Talib said, "Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf made some food to which he invited us and served some alcohol to drink. When we became intoxicated, and the time for prayer came, they asked someone to lead us in prayer. He recited `Say, `O disbelievers! I do not worship that which you worship, but we worship that which you worship refer to the correct wording of the Surah: 109 ." Allah then revealed,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنتُمْ
سُكْرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ)

(O you who believe! Do not approach Salah when you are in a drunken state until you know what you are saying). " This is the narration collected by Ibn Abi Hatim and At-Tirmidhi, who said "Hasan Gharib Sahih." Allah's statement,

(حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ)

(until you know what you are saying) is the best description for when one is intoxicated, that is, when he does not know the meaning of what he is saying. When a person is drunk, he makes obvious mistakes in the recitation and will not be able to be humble during the prayer. Imam Ahmad recorded that Anas said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِذَا نَعَسَ أَحَدُكُمْ وَهُوَ يُصَلِّي، فَلْيَنْصِرْفْ فَلَيْنَمْ،
حَتَّى يَعْلَمَ مَا يَقُولُ»

(If one feels sleepy while he is praying, let him sleep for a while so that he knows the meaning of what he is saying.) This was also recorded by Al-Bukhari and An-Nasa'i. In some of the narrations of this Hadith, the Messenger said,

«فَلَعَلَّهُ يَذْهَبُ يَسْتَعْفِرُ فَيَسُبُّ نَفْسَهُ»

(...For he might want to ask for forgiveness, but instead curses himself!) Allah said,

(وَلَا جُنْبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّى تَغْتَسِلُوا)

(nor while Junub (sexually impure), except while passing through, until you bathe (your entire body),) Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that Allah's statement,

(وَلَا جُنْبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّى تَغْتَسِلُوا)

(nor while Junub (sexually impure), except while passing through, until you bathe (your entire body),) means, "Do not enter the Masjid when you are Junub, unless you are just passing by, in which case, you pass through without sitting down." Ibn Abi Hatim said that similar is reported from `Abdullah bin Mas`ud, Anas, Abu `Ubaydah, Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib, Abu Ad-Duha, `Ata', Mujahid, Masruq, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Zayd bin Aslam, Abu Malik, `Amr bin Dinar, Al-Hakam bin `Utaybah, `Ikrimah, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Yahya bin Sa`id Al-Ansari, Ibn Shihab and Qatadah. Ibn Jarir recorded that Yazid bin Abi Habib commented on Allah's statement,

(وَلَا جُنْبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ)

(nor while Junub (sexually impure), except while passing through,) when some men from the Ansar, whose doors literally opened into the Masjid, were sexually impure, and they did not have water, their only way to get water was to pass through the Masjid. So, Allah sent down,

(وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ)

(nor while Junub (sexually impure), except while passing through,)." What supports this statement by Yazid bin Abi Habib, may Allah have mercy upon him, is Al-Bukhari's report in his Sahih, that the Messenger of Allah said,

«سُدُّوا كُلَّ خَوْخَةٍ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ إِلَّا خَوْخَةَ أَبِي بَكْرٍ»

(Close all the small doors in this Masjid, except that of Abu Bakr.) This is what the Prophet commanded at the end of his life, knowing that Abu Bakr will be the Khalifah after him, and that he would need to enter the Masjid on numerous occasions to manage the important affairs of the Muslims. Yet, the Messenger of Allah commanded that all the small doors that open into the Masjid be closed, except Abu Bakr's door. Some of the Sunan compilers recorded the Prophet saying that only `Ali's door should remain open, but this is an error, what is in the Sahih is what is correct. In his Sahih, Muslim recorded that `A'ishah said, "The Messenger of Allah said to me,

«نَاوِلِينِي الْخُمْرَةَ مِنَ الْمَسْجِدِ»

(Bring me the garment from the Masjid.) I said, 'I am having my period.' He said,

«إِنَّ حَيْضَتَكَ لَيْسَتْ فِي يَدِكَ»

(Your period is not in your hand.) Muslim also collected a similar narration from Abu Hurayrah. This Hadith indicates that the woman is allowed to pass through the Masjid during menses or post-natal bleeding, and Allah knows best.

Description of Tayammum

Allah said,

(وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَّرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَمَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا)

(and if you are ill, or on a journey, or one of you comes from the Gha'it (toilet), or from Lamastum (touching) women, but you do not find water, then perform Tayammum with clean earth, rubbing your face and hands. Truly, Allah is Ever Oft-Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving.) As for the type of illness which would allow Tayammum, it is an illness that one fears would be aggravated by using water, which could be detrimental to a part of the body, or when doing so would prolong an illness. Some scholars said that any type of illness warrants Tayammum, because of the general indications of the Ayah. As for travelling on a journey, it is known, regardless of its length. Allah then said,

(أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ)

(or comes from the Gha'it). The Gha'it is, literally, the flat land, and this part of the Ayah refers to the minor impurity. Allah then said,

(أَوْ لَمَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ)

(or you Lamastum women), which was recited Lamastum and Lamastum, referring to sexual intercourse. For instance, Allah said in another Ayah,

(وَإِنْ طَلَقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ)

(And if you divorce them before you have touched them, and you have appointed unto them the dowry, then pay half of that) 2:237 , and,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا نَكَحْتُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ثُمَّ طَلَقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ فَمَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ عِدَّةٍ تَعْتَدُونَهَا)

(O you who believe! When you marry believing women, and then divorce them before you have touched them, no `Iddah (period of waiting) have you to count in respect of them) 33:49 . Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that Allah's statement,

(أَوْ لَمَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ)

(or Lamastum women) refers to sexual intercourse. It was reported that `Ali, Ubayy bin Ka`b, Mujahid, Tawus, Al-Hasan, `Ubayd bin `Umayr, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Ash-Sha`bi, Qatadah and Muqatil bin Hayyan said similarly. Allah said,

﴿قَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا﴾

(but you do not find water, them perform Tayammum with clean earth,) In the Two Sahih, it is recorded that `Imran bin Husayn said,

«يَا فُلَانُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تُصَلِّيَ مَعَ الْقَوْمِ، أَلَسْتَ
بِرَجُلٍ مُسْلِمٍ؟»

«عَلَيْكَ بِالصَّعِيدِ، فَإِنَّهُ يَكْفِيكَ»

(Allah's Messenger saw a person sitting away from the people and not praying with them. He asked him, `O so-and-so! What prevented you from offering the prayer with the people, are not you Muslim' He replied, `Yes, O Allah's Messenger! I am Junub and there is no water.' The Prophet said, `Perform Tayammum with clean earth and that will be sufficient for you.' The linguistic meaning of Tayammum is to intend, as Arabs say, "May Allah Tayammamaka (direct at you) His care." `Clean earth' means dust. In his Sahih, Muslim recorded that Hudhayfah bin Al-Yaman said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«فُضِّلْنَا عَلَى النَّاسِ بِثَلَاثٍ: جُعِلَتْ صُفُوفُنَا
كَصُفُوفِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ، وَجُعِلَتْ لَنَا الْأَرْضُ كُلُّهَا
مَسْجِدًا، وَجُعِلَتْ تُرْبَتُهَا لَنَا طَهُورًا، إِذَا لَمْ نَجِدِ
الْمَاءَ»

(We were given preference over people in three things. Our lines (in prayer) were arranged in rows to resemble the rows of the angels, all of the earth was made a Masjid for us, and its dust was made clean for us when there is no water.) The Messenger mentioned the favor of making dust a purifyer for us, and if there were any other substance to replace it for Tayammum, he would have mentioned it. Imam Ahmad and the collectors of Sunan, with the exception of Ibn Majah, recorded that Abu Dharr said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«الصَّعِيدُ الطَّيِّبُ طَهُورُ الْمُسْلِمِ، وَإِنْ لَمْ يَجِدِ
الْمَاءَ عَشْرَ حَجَجٍ، فَإِذَا وَجَدَهُ فَلْيَمِسَّهُ بَشْرَتَهُ،
فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ»

(Clean earth is pure for the Muslim, even if he does not find water for ten years. When he finds water, let him use it for his skin, for this is better.) At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih". Allah's statement,

(فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ)

(rubbing your faces and hands (Tayammum)) indicates that Tayammum is a substitute for normal ablution, not that it involves cleaning the parts that normal ablution does. Therefore, it is sufficient in Tayammum to just wipe the face and hands, as the consensus concurs. The face and hands are wiped with one strike on the sand in this case, as Imam Ahmad recorded that `Abdur-Rahman bin Abza said that a man came to `Umar and asked him, "I am Junub, but there is no water." `Umar said, "Then, do not pray." Ammar said, "Do you not remember, O Leader of the Faithful! You and I were on a military expedition when we became Junub and did not find water. You did not pray, but I rolled myself in the sand and then prayed. When we went back to the Prophet, we mentioned to him what had happened. He said to me, S

«إِنَّمَا كَانَ يَكْفِيكَ»

(This would have been sufficient for you), and the Prophet stroked his hand on the earth once, blew into it and wiped his face and hands." The Muslim Ummah, rather than all other nations, was favored with the allowance of Tayammum. In the Two Sahih, it is recorded that Jabir bin `Abdullah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«أَعْطَيْتُ خَمْسًا لَمْ يُعْطَهُنَّ أَحَدٌ قَبْلِي: نُصِرْتُ
بِالرُّعْبِ مَسِيرَةَ شَهْرٍ، وَجُعِلَتْ لِي الْأَرْضُ
مَسْجِدًا وَطَهُورًا، فَأَيُّمَا رَجُلٍ مِنْ أُمَّتِي أَدْرَكَهُ
الصَّلَاةُ فَلْيُصَلِّ»

«فَعِنْدَهُ طُهُورُهُ وَمَسْجِدُهُ، وَأَحَلَّتْ لِي الْغَنَائِمُ،
وَلَمْ تَحِلَّ لِأَحَدٍ قَبْلِي، وَأَعْطَيْتُ الشَّفَاعَةَ، وَكَانَ
النَّبِيُّ يُبْعَثُ إِلَى قَوْمِهِ، وَبُعِثْتُ إِلَى النَّاسِ عَامَّةً»

(I have been given five things which were not given to any (Prophet) before me: Allah made me victorious with fright that covers a month's distance. The earth has been made for me (and for my followers) a place for praying and an object to perform purification with. Therefore let my followers pray wherever the time of a prayer is due - and in another narration - he will have his means of purity and his Masjid. The spoils of war have been made lawful for me and it was not made so for anyone else before me. I have been given the right of intercession (on the Day of Resurrection.) Every Prophet used to be sent to his nation exclusively, but I have been sent to all mankind.) We also mentioned the Hadith of Hudhayfah that Muslim recorded;

«فُضِّلْنَا عَلَى النَّاسِ بِثَلَاثٍ، جُعِلَتْ صُفُوفُنَا
كَصُفُوفِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ، وَجُعِلَتْ لَنَا الْأَرْضُ مَسْجِدًا،
وَتُرِبُهَا طُهُورًا، إِذَا لَمْ نَجِدِ الْمَاءَ»

(We were preferred with three things over people. Our lines (in prayer) were arranged in rows to resemble the rows of the angels, all of the earth was made a Masjid for us, and its dust was made clean for us when there is no water.) Allah said in this Ayah,

(فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا
غَفُورًا)

(rubbing your faces and hands. Truly, Allah is Ever Oft-Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving.) meaning, a part of His pardoning and forgiving is that He allows you to use Tayammum and to pray after using it when there is no water, to make things easy for you. This Ayah sanctifies the position of the prayer, it being too sacred than to be performed in a deficient manner, like in a state of drunkenness, until one becomes aware of what he is saying, or sexually impure, until he bathes (Ghusl), or after answering the call of nature, until he performs ablution. There are exceptions when one is ill or when there is no water. In this case, Allah allows us to use Tayammum, out of His mercy and kindness for His servants, and to facilitate them, all praise is due to Allah.

The Reason behind allowing Tayammum

Al-Bukhari recorded that `A'ishah said, "We set out with Allah's Messenger on one of his journeys until we reached Al-Bayda' or Dhat-ul-Jaysh, where a necklace of mine was broken

(and lost). Allah's Messenger stayed there to search for it, and so did the people along with him. There was no water source or any water with them at that place, so the people went to Abu Bakr As-Sddiq and said, `Don't you see what `A'ishah has done! She has made Allah's Messenger and the people stay where there is no source of water and they have no water with them.' Abu Bakr came while Allah's Messenger was sleeping with his head on my thigh. He said to me, `You have detained Allah's Messenger and the people where there is no source of water and they have no water with them.' So he admonished me and said what Allah wished him to say and hit me on my flank with his hand. Nothing prevented me from moving (because of pain) but the position of Allah's Messenger on my thigh. Allah's Messenger got up when dawn broke and there was no water. So Allah revealed the verses of Tayammum, and they all performed Tayammum. Usayd bin Hudayr said, `O the family of Abu Bakr! This is not the first blessing of yours.' Then the camel on which I was riding was moved from its place and the necklace was found beneath it." Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded this Hadith.

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيْبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ
يَشْتَرُونَ الضَّلَّةَ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَن تَضِلُّوا السَّبِيلَ -
وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَعْدَائِكُمْ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ
نَصِيرًا - مِّنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَن
مَوَاضِعِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَاسْمَعْ غَيْرَ
مُسْمَعٍ وَرَاعِنَا لَيًّا بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ وَطَعْنًا فِي الدِّينِ وَلَوْ
أَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَاسْمَعْ وَانظُرْنَا لَكَانَ
خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ وَأَقْوَمَ وَلَكِن لَّعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا)

(44. Have you not seen those (the Jews) who were given a portion of the Book, purchasing the wrong path, and wishing that you should go astray from the right path.) (45. Allah has full knowledge of your enemies, and Allah is sufficient as a Wali (Protector), and Allah is sufficient as a Helper.) (46. Among those who are Jews, there are some who displace words from (their) right places and say: "We hear your word and disobey," and "Hear and let you hear nothing." And Pa`ina with a twist of their tongues and as a mockery of the religion. And if only they had said: "We hear and obey", and "Do make us understand," it would have been better for them, and more proper; but Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, so they believe not except a few.)

**Chastising the Jews for Choosing Misguidance, Altering Allah's
Words, and Mocking Islam**

Allah states that the Jews, may Allah's continued curse fall on them until the Day of Resurrection, have purchased the wrong path instead of guidance, and ignored what Allah sent down to His Messenger Muhammad . They also ignored the knowledge that they inherited from previous Prophets, about the description of Muhammad , so that they may have a small amount of the delights of this life.

(وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَضِلُّوا السَّبِيلَ)

(and wishing that you should go astray from the right path.) for they would like that you disbelieve in what was sent down to you, O believers, and that you abandon the guidance and beneficial knowledge that you have.

(وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَعْدَائِكُمْ)

(Allah has full knowledge of your enemies) meaning, Allah has better knowledge of your enemies, and He warns you against them.

(وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ نَصِيرًا)

(and Allah is sufficient as a Wali (Protector), and Allah is Sufficient as a Helper) He is a Sufficient Protector for those who seek refuge with Him and a Sufficient Supporter for those who seek His help. Allah then said,

(يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِ)

(there are some who displace words from (their) right places) meaning, they intentionally and falsely alter the meanings of the Words of Allah and explain them in a different manner than what Allah meant,

(وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا)

(And say: "We hear your word and disobey) saying, "We hear what you say, O Muhammad, but we do not obey you in it," as Mujahid and Ibn Zayd explained. This is the implied meaning of the Ayah, and it demonstrates the Jews' disbelief, stubbornness and disregard for Allah's Book after they understood it, all the while aware of the sin and punishment that this behavior will earn for them. Allah's statement,

(وَأَسْمَعُ غَيْرَ مُسْمِعٍ)

(And "Hear and let you hear nothing.") means, hear our words, may you never hear anything, as Ad-Dahhak reported from Ibn ` Abbas. This is the Jews' way of mocking and jesting, may Allah's curse descend on them.

(وَرَعِنَا لِيَا بِالسِّنْتِهِمْ وَطَعْنَا فِي الدِّينِ)

(And Ra`ina, with a twist of their tongues and as a mockery of the religion.) meaning, they pretend to say, `Hear us,' when they say, Ra`ina (an insult in Hebrew, but in Arabic it means `Listen to us.'). Yet, their true aim is to curse the Prophet . We mentioned this subject when we explained Allah's statement,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقُولُوا رَعِنَا وَفَقُولُوا
انظُرْنَا)

(O you who believe! Say not Ra`ina but say Unzurna (make us understand)). Therefore, Allah said about them, while they pretend to say other than what they truly mean,

(لِيَا بِالسِّنْتِهِمْ وَطَعْنَا فِي الدِّينِ)

(With a twist of their tongues and as a mockery of the religion) because of their cursing the Prophet . Allah then said,

(وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَأَسْمَعُ وَانظُرْنَا
لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَأَقْوَمَ وَلَكِن لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ
فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا)

(And if only they had said: "We hear and obey", and "Do make us understand," it would have been better for them, and more proper; but Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, so they believe not except a few.) meaning, their hearts are cast away from the path of righteousness and therefore, no beneficial part of faith enters it. Earlier, when we explained,

(فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(so little is that which they believe) which means they do not have beneficial faith.

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ ءَامِنُوا بِمَا نَزَّلْنَا
مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ مِّن قَبْلِ أَن نَّطْمِسَ وُجُوهًا
فَنَرُدَّهَا عَلَىٰ أَدْبِرَهَا أَوْ نَلْعَنَهُمْ كَمَا لَعَنَّا أَصْحَابَ
السَّبْتِ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا - إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ
أَن يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَمَن
يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا)

(47. O you who have been given the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Believe in what We have revealed confirming what is with you, before We efface faces and turn them backwards or curse them as We cursed the people of the Sabbath. And the commandment of Allah is always executed.) (48. Verily, Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), but He forgives except that to whom He wills; and whoever sets up partners with Allah in worship, he has indeed invented a tremendous sin.)

Calling the People of the Book to Embrace the Faith, Warning them Against Doing Otherwise

Allah commands the People of the Scriptures to believe in what He has sent down to His servant and Messenger, Muhammad , the Glorious Book that conforms to the good news that they already have about Muhammad . He also warns them,

(مِّن قَبْلِ أَن نَّطْمِسَ وُجُوهًا فَنَرُدَّهَا عَلَىٰ
أَدْبِرَهَا)

(before We efface faces and turn them backwards) Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said that `effacing' here refers to blindness,

(فَنَرُدَّهَا عَلَىٰ أَدْبِرَهَا)

(and turn them backwards) meaning, We put their faces on their backs, and make them walk backwards, since their eyes will be in their backs. Similar was said by Qatadah and `Atiyah Al-`Awfi. This makes the punishment even more severe, and it is a parable that Allah set for ignoring the truth, preferring the wrong way and turning away from the plain path for the paths of misguidance. Therefore, such people walk backwards. Similarly, some said that Allah's statement,

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ أَغْلَالًا فَهِيَ إِلَى الْأَذْقَانِ
فَهُمْ مُّقْمَحُونَ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ سَدًّا

(Verily, We have put on their necks iron collars reaching to the chins, so that their heads are raised up. And We have put a barrier before them) that is a parable that Allah gave for their deviation and hindrance from guidance.

Ka` b Al-Ahbar Embraces Islam Upon Hearing this Ayah [4:47]

It was reported that Ka` b Al-Ahbar became Muslim when he heard this Ayah 4:47 . Ibn Jarir recorded that `Isa bin Al-Mughirah said: We were with Ibrahim when we talked about the time when Ka` b became Muslim. He said, `Ka` b became Muslim during the reign of `Umar, for he passed by Al-Madinah intending to visit Jerusalem, and `Umar said to him, "Embrace Islam, O Ka` b." Ka` b said, `Do you not read in your Book,

(مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِّلُوا التَّوْرَةَ)

(The likeness of those who were entrusted with the Tawrah...) 62:5 until,

(أَسْفَارًا)

(Books) I am among those who were entrusted with the Tawrah.' `Umar left him alone and Ka` b went on to Hims (in Syria) and heard one of its inhabitants recite this Ayah while feeling sad,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ ءَامِنُوا بِمَا نَزَّلْنَا
مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَكُمْ مِّن قَبْلُ أَن نُّظْمِسَ وُجُوهًا
فَنَرُدَّهَا عَلَىٰ أَدْبُرَهَا

(O you who have been given the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Believe in what We have revealed confirming what is with you, before We efface faces and turn them backwards). Ka` b said, `I believe, O Lord! I embraced Islam, O Lord!' for He feared that this might be struck by this threat. He then went back to his family in Yemen and returned with them all as Muslims." Allah's statement,

(أَوْ نَلْعَنَهُمْ كَمَا لَعَنَّا أَصْحَابَ السَّبْتِ)

(or curse them as We cursed the people of the Sabbath.) refers to those who breached the sanctity of the Sabbath, using deceit, for the purpose of doing more work. Allah changed these people into apes and swine, as we will come to know in the explanation of Surat Al-A'raf (7). Allah's statement,

(وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا)

(And the commandment of Allah is always executed.) means, when He commands something, then no one can dispute or resist His command.

Allah Does not Forgive Shirk, Except After Repenting From it

Allah said that He,

(لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ)

(forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship),) meaning, He does not forgive a servant if he meets Him while he is associating partners with Him,

(وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ)

(but He forgives except that) of sins,

(لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ)

(to whom He wills) of His servants. Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Dharr said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَقُولُ: يَا عَبْدِي مَا عَبَدْتَنِي وَرَجَوْتَنِي،
فَأَنَا غَافِرٌ لَكَ عَلَى مَا كَانَ فِيكَ، يَا عَبْدِي إِنَّكَ
إِنْ لَقَيْتَنِي بِقُرَابِ الْأَرْضِ خَطِيئَةً مَا لَمْ تُشْرِكْ
بِي، لَقِيْتُكَ بِقُرَابِهَا مَغْفِرَةً»

(Allah said, "O My servant! As long as you worship and beg Me, I will forgive you, no matter your shortcomings. O My servant! If you meet Me with the earth's fill of sin, yet you do not associate

any partners with Me, I will meet you with its fill of forgiveness.") Only Ahmad recorded this Hadith with this chain of narration. Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Dharr said, "I came to the Messenger of Allah and he said,

«مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ قَالَ: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ مَاتَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ، إِلَّا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ»

: :

«وَإِنْ زَنَى وَإِنْ سَرَقَ»

. : :

«وَإِنْ زَنَى وَإِنْ سَرَقَ ثَلَاثًا»

:

«عَلَى رَغْمِ أَنْفِ أَبِي ذَرٍّ»

("No servant proclaims, 'There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah,' and dies on that belief, but will enter Paradise." I said, "Even if he committed adultery and theft." He said, "Even if he committed adultery and theft." I asked again, "Even if he committed adultery and theft." He said, "Even if he committed adultery and theft." The fourth time, he said, "Even if Abu Dharr's nose was put in the dust." Abu Dharr departed while pulling his Izar and saying, "Even if Abu Dharr's nose was put in the dust." Ever since that happened, Abu Dharr used to narrate the Hadith and then comment, "Even if Abu Dharr's nose was put in dust." The Two Sahihs recorded this Hadith Al-Bazzar recorded that Ibn `Umar said, "We used to refrain from begging (Allah) for forgiveness for those who commit major sins until we heard our Prophet reciting,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ)

(Verily, Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), but He forgives except that (anything else) to whom He wills;), and his saying,

«أَحْرْتُ شَفَاعَتِي لِأَهْلِ الْكَبَائِرِ مِنْ أُمَّتِي يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ»

(I have reserved my intercession on the Day of Resurrection for those among my Ummah who commit major sins.)" Allah's statement,

(وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا)

(and whoever sets up partners with Allah in worship, he has indeed invented a tremendous sin.) is similar to His statement,

(إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ)

(Verily, joining others in worship with Allah is a great Zulm (wrong) indeed.) In the Two Sahih, it is recorded that Ibn Mas`ud said, "I said, `O Messenger of Allah! Which is the greatest sin' He said,

«أَنْ تَجْعَلَ لِلَّهِ نِدًّا وَهُوَ خَلَقَكَ»

(To make a rival with Allah, while He Alone created you.)"

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يُزَكُّونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ بَلِ اللَّهُ يُزَكِّي
مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا - انظُرْ كَيْفَ
يَقْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَكَفَىٰ بِهِ إِثْمًا مُّبِينًا -
أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْحَبِيبِ وَالطَّعُوتِ وَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا هَؤُلَاءِ أهدَىٰ مِنَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا سَبِيلًا -

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ يَلْعَنَ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ
لَهُ نَصِيرًا)

(49. Have you not seen those who claim sanctity for themselves Nay, but Allah sanctifies whom He wills, and they will not be dealt with injustice even equal to the extent of a Fatil.) (50. Look, how they invent a lie against Allah, and enough is that as a manifest sin.) (51. Have you not seen those who were given a portion of the Scripture They believe in Jibt and Taghut and say to those who disbelieve, "These people are better guided on the way, " than the believers.) (52. They are those whom Allah has cursed, and he whom Allah curses, you will not find for him (any) helper.)

Chastising and Cursing the Jews for Claiming Purity for Themselves and Believing in Jibt and Taghut

Al-Hasan and Qatadah said, "This Ayah,

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يُزَكُّونَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ)

(Have you not seen those who claim sanctity for themselves) was revealed about the Jews and Christians when they said, `We are Allah's children and His loved ones.'" Ibn Zayd also said, "This Ayah was revealed concerning their statement,

(نَحْنُ أَبْنَاءُ اللَّهِ وَأَحِبَّاؤُهُ)

(We are the children of Allah and His loved ones) and their statement,

(لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصْرِي)

(None shall enter Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian)." This is why Allah said,

(بَلِ اللَّهُ يُزَكِّي مَنْ يَشَاءُ)

(Nay, but Allah sanctifies whom He wills,) meaning, the decision in this matter is with Allah Alone, because He has perfect knowledge of the true reality and secrets of all things. Allah then said,

(وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا)

(And they will not be dealt with injustice even equal to the extent of a Fatil,) meaning, He does no injustice with anyone's compensation in any part of his reward, even if it was the weight of a Fatil. Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, `Ata', Al-Hasan, Qatadah and others among the Salaf said that Fatil means, "The scaly thread in the long slit of the date-stone." Allah said,

انظُرْ كَيْفَ يَقْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ

(Look, how they invent a lie against Allah,) claiming purity for themselves, their claim that they are Allah's children and His loved ones, their statement;

لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصْرِي

(None shall enter Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian) their statement;

لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ

(The Fire shall not touch us but for a number of days) and their reliance on the righteous deeds of their forefathers. Allah has decreed that the good actions of the fathers do not help the children, when He said,

تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ

(That was a nation who has passed away. They shall receive the reward of what they earned and you of what you earn). Allah then said,

وَكَفَىٰ بِهِ إِثْمًا مُّبِينًا

(and enough is that as a manifest sin.) meaning, these lies and fabrications of theirs are sufficient. Allah's statement,

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيحًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْحِبْتِ وَالطُّغُوتِ

(Have you not seen those who were given a portion of the Scripture They believe in Jibt and Taghut). Muhammad bin Ishaq said from Hassan bin Fa'id that `Umar bin Al-Khattab said, "Jibt is sorcery and Taghut is the Shaytan." Abu Nasr Isma'il bin Hammad Al-Jawhari, the renowned scholar, said in his book As-Shah, "Al-Jibt means idol, soothsayer and sorcerer." Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Jabir bin `Abdullah was asked about Taghut, and he said, "They are soothsayers

upon whom the devils descend." Mujahid said "Taghut is a devil in the shape of man, and they refer to him for judgment." Imam Malik said, "Taghut is every object that is worshipped instead of Allah, the Exalted and Most Honored."

Disbelievers Are not Better Guided Than Believers

Allah said,

(وَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَوْلًا أَهْدَى مِنَ الَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا سَبِيلًا)

(and say to those who disbelieve, "These people are better guided on the way," than the believers.) preferring the disbelievers over Muslims, because of their ignorance, un-religious nature and disbelief in Allah's Book which is before them. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `Ikrimah said, "Huyay bin Akhtab and Ka`b bin Al-Ashraf (two Jewish leaders) came to the people of Makkah, who said to them, `You (Jews) are people of the Book and knowledge, so judge us and Muhammad.' They said, `Describe yourselves and describe Muhammad.' They said, `We keep relation with kith and kin, slaughter camels (for the poor), release the indebted and provide water for the pilgrims. As for Muhammad he is without male children, he severed our relations, and the thieves who rob pilgrims (the tribe of) Ghifar follow him. So who is better, we or him?' They said, `You are more righteous and better guided.' Thereafter, Allah sent down,

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا)

(Have you not seen those who were given a portion)." This story was also reported from Ibn `Abbas and several others among the Salaf. Allah's Curse on the Jews This Ayah 4:52 contains a curse for the Jews and informs them that they have no supporter in this life or the Hereafter, because they sought the help of the idolators. They uttered this statement in Ayah 4:51 to lure the disbelievers into supporting them, and they ultimately gathered their forces for the battle of Al-Ahzab, forcing the Prophet and his Companions to dig a defensive tunnel around Al-Madinah. But, Allah saved the Muslims from their evil,

(وَرَدَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِغَيْظِهِمْ لَمْ يَنَالُوا خَيْرًا
وَكَفَى اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الْقِتَالَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ قَوِيًّا
عَزِيزًا)

(And Allah drove back those who disbelieved in their rage, they gained no advantage (booty). Allah sufficed for the believers in the fighting. And Allah is Ever All-Strong, All-Mighty).

(أَمْ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُلْكِ فَإِذَا لَا يُؤْتُونَ النَّاسَ
 نَقِيرًا - أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَى مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ
 مِنْ فَضْلِهِ فَقَدْ آتَيْنَا آلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْكِتَابَ
 وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَآتَيْنَاهُمْ مُلْكًا عَظِيمًا - فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ
 ءَامَنَ بِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ صَدَّ عَنْهُ وَكَفَىٰ بِجَهَنَّمَ
 سَعِيرًا)

(53. Or have they a share in the dominion Then in that case they would not give mankind even a Naqir.) (54. Or do they envy men for what Allah has given them of His bounty Then, We have already given the family of Ibrahim the Book and Al-Hikmah, and conferred upon them a great kingdom.) (55. Of them were (some) who believed in it, and of them were (some) who rejected it; and enough is Hell for burning (them).)

The Envy and Miserly Conduct of the Jews

Allah asked the Jews if they have a share in the dominion. That is merely a statement of rebuke, since they do not have any share in the dominion. Allah then described them as misers,

(فَإِذَا لَا يُؤْتُونَ النَّاسَ نَقِيرًا)

(Then in that case they would not give mankind even a Naqir.) Meaning, if they had a share in the sovereignty and dominion, they would not give anyone anything, especially Muhammad , even if it was the speck on the back of a date-stone, which is the meaning of Naqir according to Ibn `Abbas and the majority of the scholars. This Ayah is similar to another of Allah's statements,

(قُلْ لَوْ أَنُّكُمْ تَمْلِكُونَ خَزَائِنَ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّي إِذَا
 لَأَمْسَكْتُمْ خَشْيَةَ الْإِنْفَاقِ)

(Say: "If you possessed the treasure of the mercy of my Lord, then you would surely withhold it out of fear of spending it.) meaning, for fear that what you have might end, although there is no such possibility here. This only demonstrates their greedy and stingy nature. This is why Allah said,

(وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ قَتُورًا)

(And man is ever Qatur) meaning Bakhil (stingy). Allah then said,

(أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَى مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ)

(Or do they envy men for what Allah has given them of His Bounty) referring to their envy of the Prophet for the great prophethood that Allah entrusted him with. Their envy made them reject him, because he was an Arab and not from the Children of Israel. At-Tabarani recorded that Ibn ` Abbas said that,

(أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ)

(Or do they envy men) means, "We are the worthy people, rather than the rest of the people." Allah said,

(فَقَدْ آتَيْنَا آلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَآتَيْنَاهُمْ مُلْكًا عَظِيمًا)

(Then, We have already given the family of Ibrahim the Book and Al-Hikmah, and conferred upon them a great kingdom.) meaning, We gave the prophethood to the tribes of the Children of Israel, who are among the offspring of Ibrahim and sent down the Books to them. These Prophets ruled the Jews with the prophetic tradition, and We made kings among them. Yet,

(فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ آمَنَ بِهِ)

(Of them were (some) who believed in it;) referring to Allah's favor and bounty (Prophets, Books, kingship),

(وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ صَدَّ عَنْهُ)

(and of them were (some) who rejected it) by disbelieving in it, ignoring it, and hindering the people from its path, although this bounty was from and for them, the Children of Israel. They disputed with their own Prophets; so what about you, O Muhammad , especially since you are not from the Children of Israel Mujahid said,

(فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِهِ)

(Of them were (some) who believed in him ,) "Muhammad ,

(وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ صَدَّ عَنْهُ)

(and of them were (some) who rejected him .)" Therefore, O Muhammad, the rejection of you because of their disbelief is even more severe and they are even further from the truth that you brought them. This is why Allah threatened them,

(وَكَفَىٰ بَجَهَنَّمَ سَعِيرًا)

(and enough is Hell for burning (them).), meaning, the Fire is a just punishment for them because of their disbelief, rebellion and defiance of Allah's Books and Messengers.

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَوْفَ نُصَلِّيهِمْ نَارًا كَلَّمَا
نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُمْ بِدَلَانِهِمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا
الْعَذَابَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا - وَالَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ
تَجْرَىٰ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا لَهُمْ
فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَنُدْخِلُهُمْ ظِلًّا ظَلِيلًا)

(56. Surely, those who disbelieved in Our Ayat, We shall burn them in Fire. As often as their skins are roasted through, We shall change them for other skins that they may taste the punishment. Truly, Allah is Ever Most Powerful, All-Wise.) e(57. But those who believe and do deeds of righteousness, We shall admit them to Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), abiding therein forever. Therein they shall have Azwajun Mutahharatun (purified mates), and We shall admit them to shades, wide and ever deepening.)

The Punishment of Those Who Disbelieve in Allah's Books and Messengers

Allah describes the torment in the Fire of Jahannam for those who disbelieve in His Ayat and hinder from the path of His Messengers. Allah said,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا)

(Surely, those who disbelieved in Our Ayat ,) meaning, We will place them in the Fire which will encompass every part of their bodies. Allah then states that their punishment and torment are everlasting,

(كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُمْ بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا
لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ)

(We shall burn them in Fire. As often as their skins are roasted through, We shall change them for other skins that they may taste the punishment). Al-A`mash said that Ibn `Umar said, "When their skin are burned, they will be given another skin in replacement, and this skin will be as white as paper." This was collected by Ibn Abi Hatim, who also recorded that Al-Hasan said,

(كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُمْ)

(As often as their skins are roasted through,) "Their skin will be roasted through, seventy thousand times every day." Husayn said; Fudayl added that Hisham said that Al-Hasan also said that,

(كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُمْ)

(As often as their skins are roasted through,) means, "Whenever the Fire has roasted them through and consumed their flesh, they will be told, 'Go back as you were before,' and they will."

The Wealth of the Righteous; Paradise and its Joy

Allah said,

وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ
جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
أَبَدًا

(But those who believe and do deeds of righteousness, We shall admit them to Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), abiding therein forever.) describing the destination of the happy ones in the gardens of Eden, beneath which rivers flow in all of its areas, spaces and corners, wherever they desire and wish. They will reside in it for eternity, and they will not be transferred or removed from it, nor would they want to move from it. Allah said,

لَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ

(Therein they shall have Azwajun Mutahharatun (purified mates),) free of menstruation, postnatal bleeding, filth, bad manners and shortcomings. Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah means, "They are purified of filth and foul things." Similar was said by `Ata', Al-Hasan, Ad-Dahhak, An-Nakha`i, Abu Salih, `Atiyah, and As-Suddi. Mujahid said that they are, free of urine, menstruation, spit, mucous and pregnancies." Allah's statement,

وَنُدْخِلُهُمْ ظِلًّا ظَلِيلًا

(And We shall admit them to shades, wide and ever deepening (Paradise).) means, wide, extensive, pure and elegant shade. Ibn Jarir recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Prophet said,

«إِنَّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ لَشَجْرَةً يَسِيرُ الرَّكَّابُ فِي ظِلِّهَا
مِائَةَ عَامٍ لَا يَقْطَعُهَا: شَجْرَةُ الْخُلْدِ»

(There is a tree in Paradise, that if a rider travels under its shade for a hundred years, he will not cross it. It is the Tree of Everlasting Life.)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَحْمَنتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا
وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا)

(58. Verily, Allah commands that you should render back the trusts to those, to whom they are due; and that when you judge between men, you judge with justice. Verily, how excellent is the teaching which He (Allah) gives you! Truly, Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All-Seer.)

The Command to Return the Trusts to Whomever They Are Due

Allah commands that the trusts be returned to their rightful owners. Al-Hasan narrated that Samurah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«أَدِّ الْأَمَانَةَ إِلَى مَنْ ائْتَمَنَكَ، وَلَا تَخُنْ مَنْ خَانَكَ»

(Return the trust to those who entrusted you, and do not betray those who betrayed you.) Imam Ahmad and the collectors of Sunan recorded this Hadith. This command refers to all things that one is expected to look after, such as Allah's rights on His servants: praying, Zakah, fasting, penalties for sins, vows and so forth. The command also includes the rights of the servants on each other, such as what they entrust each other with, including the cases that are not recorded or documented. Allah commands that all types of trusts be fulfilled. Those who do not implement this command in this life, it will be extracted from them on the Day of Resurrection. It is recorded in the Sahih that the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَتُؤَدَّنَ الْحُقُوقُ إِلَى أَهْلِهَا حَتَّى يُقْتَصَّ لِلشَّاةِ الْجَمَاءِ مِنَ الْقَرْنَاءِ»

(The rights will be rendered back to those to whom they are due, and even the sheep that does not have horns will take revenge from the horned sheep.) Ibn Jarir recorded that Ibn Jurayj said about this Ayah, "It was revealed concerning `Uthman bin Talhah from whom the Messenger of Allah took the key of the Ka`bah and entered it on the Day of the victory of Makkah. When the Prophet went out, he was reciting this Ayah,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَحْمَنَاتِ إِلَى أَهْلِهَا)

(Verily, Allah commands that you should render back the trusts to those, to whom they are due). He then called `Uthman and gave the key back to him." Ibn Jarir also narrated that `Umar bin Al-Khattab said, "When the Messenger of Allah went out of the Ka`bah, he was reciting this Ayah,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَحْمَنَاتِ إِلَى أَهْلِهَا)

(Verily, Allah commands that you should render back the trusts to those, to whom they are due). May I sacrifice my father and mother for him, I never heard him recite this Ayah before that." It is popular that this is the reason behind revealing the Ayah (4:58). Yet, the application

of the Ayah is general, and this is why Ibn ` Abbas and Muhammad bin Al-Hanafiyyah said, "This Ayah is for the righteous and wicked," meaning it is a command that encompasses everyone.

The Order to Be Just

Allah said,

(وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ)

(and that when you judge between men, you judge with justice.) commanding justice when judging between people. Muhammad bin Ka` b, Zayd bin Aslam and Shahr bin Hawshab said; "This Ayah was revealed about those in authority", meaning those who judge between people. A Hadith states,

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْحَاكِمِ مَا لَمْ يَجُرْ، فَإِذَا جَارَ وَكَلَهُ
اللَّهُ إِلَى نَفْسِهِ»

(Allah is with the judge as long as he does not commit injustice, for when he does, Allah will make him reliant on himself.) A statement goes, "One day of justice equals forty years of worship." Allah said,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعْمًا يَعْظُمُ بِهِ)

(Verily, how excellent is the teaching which He (Allah) gives you!) meaning, His commands to return the trusts to their owners, to judge between people with justice, and all of His complete, perfect and great commandments and laws. Allah's statement,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا)

(Truly, Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All-Seer.) means, He hears your statements and knows your actions.

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا
الرَّسُولَ وَأُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي

شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ
بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا)

(59. O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and those of you who are in authority. If you differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.)

The Necessity of Obeying the Rulers in Obedience to Allah

Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah,

(أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ
مِنْكُمْ)

(Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and those of you who are in authority.) "Was revealed about `Abdullah bin Hudhafah bin Qays bin `Adi, who the Messenger of Allah sent on a military expedition." This statement was collected by the Group, with the exception of Ibn Majah At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan, Gharib". Imam Ahmad recorded that `Ali said, "The Messenger of Allah sent a troop under the command of a man from Al-Ansar. When they left, he became angry with them for some reason and said to them, `Has not the Messenger of Allah commanded you to obey me' They said, `Yes.' He said, `Collect some wood,' and then he started a fire with the wood, saying, `I command you to enter the fire.' The people almost entered the fire, but a young man among them said, `You only ran away from the Fire to Allah's Messenger. Therefore, do not rush until you go back to Allah's Messenger, and if he commands you to enter it, then enter it.' When they went back to Allah's Messenger, they told him what had happened, and the Messenger said,

«لَوْ دَخَلْتُمُوهَا مَا خَرَجْتُمْ مِنْهَا أَبَدًا، إِنَّمَا الطَّاعَةُ
فِي الْمَعْرُوفِ»

(Had you entered it, you would never have departed from it. Obedience is only in righteousness.)" This Hadith is recorded in the Two Sahihs. Abu Dawud recorded that `Abdullah bin `Umar said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«السَّمْعُ وَالطَّاعَةُ عَلَى الْمَرْءِ الْمُسْلِمِ فِيمَا أَحَبَّ
وَكْرَهُ، مَا لَمْ يُؤْمَرْ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ، فَإِذَا أُمِرَ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ
فَلَا سَمْعَ وَلَا طَاعَةَ»

(The Muslim is required to hear and obey in that which he likes and dislikes, unless he was commanded to sin. When he is commanded with sin, then there is no hearing or obeying.) This Hadith is recorded in the Two Sahihs. `Ubadah bin As-Samit said, "We gave our pledge to Allah's Messenger to hear and obey (our leaders), while active and otherwise, in times of ease and times of difficulty, even if we were deprived of our due shares, and to not dispute this matter (leadership) with its rightful people. The Prophet said,

«إِلَّا أَنْ تَرَوْا كُفْرًا بَوَاحًا، عِنْدَكُمْ فِيهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ
بُرْهَانٌ»

(Except when you witness clear Kufr about which you have clear proof from Allah.)" This Hadith is recorded in the Two Sahihs. Another Hadith narrated by Anas states that the Messenger of Allah said,

«اسْمَعُوا وَأَطِيعُوا، وَإِنْ أَمَّرَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَبْدٌ حَبَشِيٌّ
كَأَنَّ رَأْسَهُ زَيْبَةٌ»

(Hear and obey (your leaders), even if an Ethiopian slave whose head is like a raisin, is made your chief.) Al-Bukhari recorded this Hadith. Umm Al-Husayn said that she heard the Messenger of Allah giving a speech during the Farewell Hajj, in which he said;

«وَلَوْ اسْتُعْمِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَبْدٌ يَفُودُكُمْ بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ،
اسْمَعُوا لَهُ وَأَطِيعُوا»

(Even if a slave was appointed over you, and he rules you with Allah's Book, then listen to him and obey him.) Muslim recorded this Hadith. In another narration with Muslim, the Prophet said,

«عَبْدًا حَبَشِيًّا مَجْدُوعًا»

(Even if an Ethiopian slave, whose nose was mutilated...) In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ أَطَاعَنِي فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَقَدْ عَصَى اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ أَطَاعَ أَمِيرِي فَقَدْ أَطَاعَنِي، وَمَنْ عَصَى أَمِيرِي فَقَدْ عَصَانِي»

(Whoever obeys me, obeys Allah, and whoever disobeys me, disobeys Allah. Whoever obeys my commander, obeys me, and whoever disobeys my commander, disobeys me.) This is why Allah said,

(أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ)

(Obey Allah), adhere to His Book,

(وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ)

(and obey the Messenger), adhere to his Sunnah,

(وَأُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ)

(And those of you who are in authority) in the obedience to Allah which they command you, not what constitutes disobedience of Allah, for there is no obedience to anyone in disobedience to Allah, as we mentioned in the authentic Hadith,

«إِنَّمَا الطَّاعَةُ فِي الْمَعْرُوفِ»

(Obedience is only in righteousness.)

The Necessity of Referring to the Qur'an and Sunnah for Judgment

Allah said,

(فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ)

((And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger). Mujahid and several others among the Salaf said that the Ayah means, "(Refer) to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger." This is a command from Allah that whatever areas the people dispute about, whether major or minor areas of the religion, they are required to refer to the Qur'an and Sunnah for judgment concerning these disputes. In another Ayah, Allah said,

(وَمَا اخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَحُكْمُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ)

(And in whatsoever you differ, the decision thereof is with Allah). Therefore, whatever the Book and Sunnah decide and testify to the truth of, then it, is the plain truth. What is beyond truth, save falsehood This is why Allah said, u

(إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ)

(if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day.) meaning, refer the disputes and conflicts that arise between you to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger for judgment. Allah's statement,

(إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ)

(if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day.) indicates that those who do not refer to the Book and Sunnah for judgment in their disputes, are not believers in Allah or the Last Day. Allah said,

(ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ)

(That is better) meaning, referring to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger for judgment in various disputes is better,

(وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا)

(and more suitable for final determination.) meaning, "Has a better end and destination," as As-Suddi and several others have stated while Mujahid said, "Carries a better reward."

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ ءَامَنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أَنْزَلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَحَاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّغُوتِ وَقَدْ أُمِرُوا أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ وَيُرِيدُ

الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا - وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ
تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ رَأَيْتَ
الْمُنَافِقِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَنْكَ صُدُودًا - فَكَيْفَ إِذَا
أُصِيبَتْهُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ جَاءُوكَ
يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَا إِلَّا إِحْسَانًا وَتَوْفِيقًا -
أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَعْرِضْ
عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُلْ لَهُمْ فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا)

(60. Have you not seen those (hypocrites) who claim that they believe in that which has been sent down to you, and that which was sent down before you, and they wish to go for judgment (in their disputes) to the Taghut while they have been ordered to reject them. But Shaytan wishes to lead them far astray.) (61. And when it is said to them: "Come to what Allah has sent down and to the Messenger," you see the hypocrites turn away from you with aversion.) (62. How then, when a catastrophe befalls them because of what their hands have sent forth, they come to you swearing by Allah, "We meant no more than goodwill and conciliation!") (63. They (hypocrites) are those of whom Allah knows what is in their hearts; so turn aside from them (do not punish them) but admonish them, and speak to them an effective word to reach their inner selves.)

Referring to Other than the Qur'an and Sunnah for Judgment is Characteristic of Non-Muslims

Allah chastises those who claim to believe in what Allah has sent down to His Messenger and to the earlier Prophets, yet they refer to other than the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger for judgment in various disputes. It was reported that the reason behind revealing this Ayah was that a man from the Ansar and a Jew had a dispute, and the Jew said, "Let us refer to Muhammad to judge between us." However, the Muslim man said, "Let us refer to Ka' b bin Al-Ashraf (a Jew) to judge between us." It was also reported that the Ayah was revealed about some hypocrites who pretended to be Muslims, yet they sought to refer to the judgment of Jahiliyyah. Other reasons were also reported behind the revelation of the Ayah. However, the Ayah has a general meaning, as it chastises all those who refrain from referring to the Qur'an and Sunnah for judgment and prefer the judgment of whatever they chose of falsehood, which befits the description of Taghut here. This is why Allah said,

(يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُتَحَاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّغُوتِ)

(and they wish to go for judgment to the Taghut) until the end of the Ayah. Allah's statement,

(يَصُدُّونَ عَنْكَ صُدُودًا)

(turn away from you with aversion) means, they turn away from you in arrogance, just as Allah described the polytheists,

(وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا)

(When it is said to them: "Follow what Allah has sent down." They say: "Nay! We shall follow what we found our fathers following.") This is different from the conduct of the faithful believers, whom Allah describes as,

(إِنَّمَا كَانَ قَوْلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا دُعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَنْ يَقُولُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا)

(The only saying of the faithful believers, when they are called to Allah and His Messenger, to judge between them, is that they say: "We hear and we obey.")

Chastising the Hypocrites

Chastising the hypocrites, Allah said,

(فَكَيْفَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ)

(How then, when a catastrophe befalls them because of what their hands have sent forth,) meaning, how about it if they feel compelled to join you because of disasters that they suffer due to their sins, then they will be in need of you.

(ثُمَّ جَاءُوكَ يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَا إِلَّا إِحْسَانًا وَتَوْفِيقًا)

(They come to you swearing by Allah, "We meant no more than goodwill and conciliation!") apologizing and swearing that they only sought goodwill and reconciliation when they referred to other than the Prophet for judgment, not that they believe in such alternative judgment, as they claim. Allah describes these people to us further in His statement,

(فَتَرَى الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ يُسْرِعُونَ فِيهِمْ
يَقُولُونَ نَخْشَى)

(And you see those in whose hearts there is a disease (of hypocrisy), they hurry to their friendship, saying: "We fear"), until,

(فَيُصِيبُحُوا عَلَى مَا أَسْرَوْا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ نَدِيمِينَ)

(Then they will become regretful for what they have been keeping as a secret in themselves). At-Tabarani recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Abu Barzah Al-Aslami used to be a soothsayer who judged between the Jews in their disputes. When some Muslims came to him to judge between them, Allah sent down,

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ ءَامَنُوا بِمَا أُنزِلَ
إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ)

(Have you not seen those (hypocrites) who claim that they believe in that which has been sent down to you, and that which was sent down before you), until,

(إِنْ أَرَدْنَا إِلَّا إِحْسَانًا وَتَوْفِيقًا)

("We meant no more than goodwill and conciliation!") Allah then said,

(أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ)

(They (hypocrites) are those of whom Allah knows what is in their hearts;) These people are hypocrites, and Allah knows what is in their hearts and will punish them accordingly, for nothing escapes Allah's watch. Consequently, O Muhammad! Let Allah be sufficient for you in this regard, because He has perfect knowledge of their apparent and hidden affairs. This is why Allah said,

(فَاعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ)

(so turn aside from them (do not punish them)) meaning, do not punish them because of what is in their hearts.

(وَعِظُهُمْ)

(but admonish them) means, advise them against the hypocrisy and evil that reside in their hearts,

(وَقُلْ لَهُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا)

(and speak to them an effective word to reach their inner selves) advise them, between you and them, using effective words that might benefit them.

(وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا - فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّى يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِي مَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا)

(64. We sent no Messenger, but to be obeyed by Allah's leave. If they, when they were unjust to themselves, had come to you and begged Allah's forgiveness, and the Messenger had begged forgiveness for them, indeed, they would have found Allah All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) (65. But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith, until they make you judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.)

The Necessity of Obeying the Messenger

Allah said,

(وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ)

(We sent no Messenger, but to be obeyed) meaning, obeying the Prophet was ordained for those to whom Allah sends the Prophet. Allah's statement,

(يَاذُنَ اللّٰهِ)

(by Allah's leave) means, "None shall obey, except by My leave," according to Mujahid. This Ayah indicates that the Prophets are only obeyed by whomever Allah directs to obedience. In another Ayah, Allah said,

(وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَعَدَهُ إِذْ تَحُسُّونَهُمْ بِآيٰتِهِ)

(And Allah did indeed fulfill His promise to you when you were killing them (your enemy) with His permission) meaning, by His command, decree, will and because He granted you superiority over them. Allah's statement,

(وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ)

(If they (hypocrites), when they had been unjust to themselves,) directs the sinners and evildoers, when they commit errors and mistakes, to come to the Messenger, so that they ask Allah for forgiveness in his presence and ask him to supplicate to Allah to forgive them. If they do this, Allah will forgive them and award them His mercy and pardon. This is why Allah said,

(لَوْ جَدُوا اللّٰهَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيمًا)

(they would have found Allah All-Forgiving (One Who forgives and accepts repentance), Most Merciful).

One Does not Become a Believer Unless He Refers to the Messenger for Judgment and Submits to his Decisions

Allah said,

(فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ)

(But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith, until they make you judge in all disputes between them,) Allah swears by His Glorious, Most Honorable Self, that no one shall attain faith until he refers to the Messenger for judgment in all matters. Thereafter, whatever the Messenger commands, is the plain truth that must be submitted to inwardly and outwardly. Allah said,

ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ
وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا)

(and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.) meaning: they adhere to your judgment, and thus do not feel any hesitation over your decision, and they submit to it inwardly and outwardly. They submit to the Prophet's decision with total submission without any rejection, denial or dispute. Al-Bukhari recorded that `Urwah said, "Az-Zubayr quarreled with a man about a stream which both of them used for irrigation. Allah's Messenger said to Az-Zubayr,

«اسْقِ يَا زُبَيْرُ ثُمَّ أَرْسِلِ الْمَاءَ إِلَى جَارِكَ»

(O Zubayr! Irrigate (your garden) first, and then let the water flow to your neighbor.) The Ansari became angry and said, `O Allah's Messenger! Is it because he is your cousin' On that, the face of Allah's Messenger changed color (because of anger) and said,

«اسْقِ يَا زُبَيْرُ ثُمَّ أَحْبِسِ الْمَاءَ حَتَّى يَرْجِعَ إِلَى
الْجَدْرِ، ثُمَّ أَرْسِلِ الْمَاءَ إِلَى جَارِكَ»

(Irrigate (your garden), O Zubayr, and then withhold the water until it reaches the walls (surrounding the palms). Then, release the water to your neighbor.) So, Allah's Messenger gave Az-Zubayr his full right when the Ansari made him angry. Before that, Allah's Messenger had given a generous judgment, beneficial for Az-Zubayr and the Ansari. Az-Zubayr said, `I think the following verse was revealed concerning that case,

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّى يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ
بَيْنَهُمْ)

(But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith, until they make you (O Muhammad) judge in all disputes between them.)" Another Reason In his Tafsir, Al-Hafiz Abu Ishaq Ibrahim bin `Abdur-Rahman bin Ibrahim bin Duhaym recorded that Damrah narrated that two men took their dispute to the Prophet , and he gave a judgment to the benefit of whoever among them had the right. The person who lost the dispute said, "I do not agree." The other person asked him, "What do you want then" He said, "Let us go to Abu Bakr As-Siddiq." They went to Abu Bakr and the person who won the dispute said, "We went to the Prophet with our dispute and he issued a decision in my favor." Abu Bakr said, "Then the decision is that which the Messenger of Allah issued." The person who lost the dispute still rejected the decision and said, "Let us go to `Umar bin Al-Khattab." When they went to `Umar, the person who won the dispute said, "We took our dispute to the Prophet and he decided in my favor, but this man refused to submit to the decision." `Umar bin Al-Khattab asked the second man and he concurred. `Umar went to

his house and emerged from it holding aloft his sword. He struck the head of the man who rejected the Prophet's decision with the sword and killed him. Consequently, Allah revealed,

(فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith).

(وَلَوْ أَنَّا كَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَنْ اقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ أَوْ
اخْرُجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ مَا فَعَلُوهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ مِنْهُمْ وَلَوْ
أَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوا مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَأَشَدَّ
تَثْبِيثًا - وَإِذَا لَاتَيْنَهُمْ مِنْ لَدُنَّا أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا -
وَلَهَدَيْنَهُمْ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا - وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ
وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ
النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ
أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا - ذَلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ
عَلِيمًا)

(66. And if We had ordered them (saying), "Kill yourselves (i.e. the innocent ones kill the guilty ones) or leave your homes," very few of them would have done it; but if they had done what they were told, it would have been better for them, and would have strengthened their conviction;) (67. And indeed We would then have bestowed upon them a great reward from Ourselves.) (68. And indeed We would have guided them to the straight way.) (69. And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His grace, of the Prophets, the Sddiqin, the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these companions are!) (70. Such is the bounty from Allah, and Allah is sufficient as All-Knower.)

Most People Disobey What They Are Ordered

Allah states that even if the people were commanded to commit what they were prohibited from doing, most of them would not submit to this command, for their wicked nature is such that they dispute orders. Allah has complete knowledge of what has not occurred, and how it would be if and when it did occur. This is why Allah said,

(وَلَوْ أَنَّا كَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَنْ اقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ)

(And if We had ordered them (saying), "Kill yourselves (i.e. the innocent ones kill the guilty ones) until the end of the Ayah. This is why Allah said,

(وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوا مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِ)

(but if they had done what they were told,) meaning, if they do what they were commanded and refrain from what they were prohibited,

(لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ)

(it would have been better for them,) than disobeying the command and committing the prohibition,

(وَأَشَدَّ تَثْبِيثًا)

(and would have strengthened their conviction), stronger Tasdiq (conviction of faith), according to As-Suddi.

(وَإِذَا لَأَتَيْنَهُمْ مِّن لَّدُنَّا)

(And indeed We should then have bestowed upon them from Ladunna) from Us,

(أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا)

(A great reward), Paradise,

(وَلَهَدَيْنَهُمْ صِرَاطًا مُّسْتَقِيمًا)

(And indeed We should have guided them to the straight way.) in this life and the Hereafter.

Whoever Obeys Allah and His Messenger Will Be Honored by Allah

Allah then said,

(وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا)

(And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His grace, of the Prophets, the Sddiqin, the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these companions are!) Consequently, whosoever implements what Allah and His Messenger have commanded him and avoids what Allah and His Messenger have prohibited, then Allah will grant him a dwelling in the Residence of Honor. There, Allah will place him in the company of the Prophets, and those who are lesser in grade, the true believers, then the martyrs and then the righteous, who are righteous inwardly and outwardly. Allah then praised this company,

(وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا)

(And how excellent these companions are!) Al-Bukhari recorded that `A'ishah said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah saying,

«مَا مِنْ نَبِيٍّ يَمْرُضُ إِلَّا خَيْرَ بَيْنِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ»

(Every Prophet who falls ill is given the choice between this life and the Hereafter.) During the illness that preceded his death, his voice became weak and I heard him saying,

(مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ)

(in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His grace, the Prophets, the true believers (Sddiqin), the martyrs and the righteous) I knew then that he was being given the choice." Muslim recorded this Hadith. This Hadith explains the meaning of another Hadith; the Prophet said before his death;

«اللَّهُمَّ (فِي) الرَّفِيقِ الْأَعْلَى»

(O Allah! In the Most High Company) three times, and he then died, may Allah's best blessings be upon him.

The Reason Behind Revealing this Honorable Ayah

Ibn Jarir recorded that Sa`id bin Jubayr said, "An Ansari man came to the Messenger of Allah while feeling sad. The Prophet said to him, 'Why do I see you sad?' He said, 'O Allah's Prophet! I was contemplating about something.' The Prophet said, 'What is it?' The Ansari said, 'We come to you day and night, looking at your face and sitting by you. Tomorrow, you will be raised with the Prophets, and we will not be able to see you.' The Prophet did not say anything, but later Jibril came down to him with this Ayah,

(وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ)

(And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His grace, of the Prophets), and the Prophet sent the good news to the Ansari man." This Hadith was narrated in Mursal form from Masruq, `Ikrimah, `Amir Ash-Sha`bi, Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas. This is the version with the best chain of narrators. Abu Bakr bin Marduwyah recorded it with a different chain from `Aishah, who said; "A man came to the Prophet and said to him, 'O Messenger of Allah! You are more beloved to me than myself, my family and children. Sometimes, when I am at home, I remember you, and I cannot wait until I come and look at you. When I contemplate about my death and your death, I know that you will be with the Prophets when you enter Paradise. I fear that I might not see you when I enter Paradise.' The Prophet did not answer him until the Ayah,

(وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا)

(And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His grace, of the Prophets, the true believers, the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these companions are!) was revealed to him." This was collected by Al-Hafiz Abu `Abdullah Al-Maqdisi in his book, Sfat Al-Jannah, he then commented, "I do not see problems with this chain." And Allah knows best. Muslim recorded that Rabi`ah bin Ka`b Al-Aslami said, "I used to sleep at the Prophet's house and bring him his water for ablution and his needs. He once said to me, 'Ask me.' I said, 'O Messenger of Allah! I ask that I be your companion in Paradise.' He said, 'Anything except that?' I said, 'Only that.' He said,

«فَأَعِنِّي عَلَى نَفْسِكَ بِكَثْرَةِ السُّجُودِ»

(Then help me (fulfill this wish) for you by performing many prostrations.)" Imam Ahmad recorded that `Amr bin Murrah Al-Juhani said, "A man came to the Prophet and said, `O Allah's Messenger! I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that you are the Messenger of Allah, pray the five (daily prayers), give the Zakah due on my wealth and fast the month of Ramadan.' The Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ مَاتَ عَلَى هَذَا كَانَ مَعَ النَّبِيِّينَ
وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ، هَكَذَا وَنَصَبَ أُصْبُعِيهِ مَا لَمْ يَعْقُ
وَالِدِيهِ»

(Whoever dies in this state will be with the Prophets, the truthful and martyrs on the Day of Resurrection, as long as - and he raised his finger - he is not disobedient to his parents.)" Only Ahmad recorded this Hadith. Greater news than this is in the authentic Hadith collected in the Sahih and Musnad compilations, in Mutawatir form, narrated by several Companions that the Messenger of Allah was asked about the person who loves a people, but his status is not close to theirs. The Messenger said,

«الْمَرْءُ مَعَ مَنْ أَحَبَّ»

(One is with those whom he loves.) Anas commented, "Muslims were never happier than with this Hadith." In another narration, Anas said, "I love the Messenger of Allah, Abu Bakr and `Umar, and I hope that Allah will resurrect me with them, even though I did not perform actions similar to theirs." Allah said,

(ذَلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ)

(Such is the bounty from Allah) meaning, from Allah by His mercy, for it is He who made them suitable for this, not their good deeds.

(وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ عَلِيماً)

(and Allah is sufficient as All-Knower), He knows those who deserve guidance and success.

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا خُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ فَانفِرُوا تُبَاتٍ
أَوْ انْفِرُوا جَمِيعاً - وَإِنَّ مِنْكُمْ لَمَنْ لَيُبَطِّئَنَّ فَإِنْ

أَصَابَكُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالَ قَدْ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ إِذْ لَمْ أَكُنْ
مَعَهُمْ شَهِيدًا - وَلَئِنْ أَصَابَكُمْ فَضْلٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ
لَيَقُولَنَّ كَأَنْ لَّمْ تَكُنْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُ مَوَدَّةٌ يَلِيْتَنِي كُنْتُ
مَعَهُمْ فَأَفُوزَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا - فَلْيُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
الَّذِينَ يَشْرُونَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ وَمَنْ يُقَاتِلْ
فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيُقْتَلْ أَوْ يَغْلِبْ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا
عَظِيمًا)

(71. O you who believe! Take your precautions, and either go forth (on an expedition) in parties, or go forth all together.) (72. There is certainly among you he who would linger behind. If a misfortune befalls you, he says, "Indeed Allah has favored me in that I was not present among them.") (73. But if a bounty comes to you from Allah, he would surely say as if there had never been ties of affection between you and him, "Oh! I wish I had been with them; then I would have achieved a great success.") (74. So fight those who trade the life of this world with the Hereafter, in the cause of Allah, and whoever fights in the cause of Allah, and is killed or gets victory, We shall bestow on him a great reward.)

The Necessity of Taking Necessary Precautions Against the Enemy

Allah commands His faithful servants to take precautions against their enemies, by being prepared with the necessary weapons and supplies, and increasing the number of troops fighting in His cause.

(تُبَاتٍ)

(in parties) means, group after group, party after party, and expedition after expedition. `Ali bin Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(فَانْفِرُوا تُبَاتٍ)

(and either go forth in parties) means, "In groups, expedition after expedition,

(أَوْ انْفِرُوا جَمِيعًا)

(or go forth all together), means, all of you." Similar was reported from Mujahid, `Ikrimah, As-Suddi, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, `Ata' Al-Khurrasani, Muqatil bin Hayyan and Khusayf Al-Jazari.

Refraining from Joining Jihad is a Sign of Hypocrites

Allah said,

(وَإِنَّ مِنْكُمْ لَمَنْ لَّيْطُنَّ)

(There is certainly among you he who would linger behind.) Mujahid and others said that this Ayah was revealed about the hypocrites. Muqatil bin Hayyan said that,

(لَّيْطُنَّ)

(linger behind) means, stays behind and does not join Jihad. It is also possible that this person himself lingers behind, while luring others away from joining Jihad. For instance, `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul, may Allah curse him, used to linger behind and lure other people to do the same and refrain from joining Jihad, as Ibn Jurayj and Ibn Jarir stated. This is why Allah said about the hypocrite, that when he lingers behind from Jihad, then:

(فَإِنْ أَصَبَكُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ)

(If a misfortune befalls you) death, martyrdom, or - by Allah's wisdom - being defeated by the enemy,

(قَالَ قَدْ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ إِذْ لَمْ أَكُنْ مَعَهُمْ شَهِيدًا)

(he says, "Indeed Allah has favored me that I was not present among them.") meaning, since I did not join them in battle. Because he considers this one of Allah's favors on him, unaware of the reward that he might have gained from enduring war or martyrdom, if he was killed.

(وَلَئِنْ أَصَبَكُمْ فَضْلٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ)

(But if a bounty comes to you from Allah) such as victory, triumph and booty,

(لَيَقُولَنَّ كَأَنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُ مَوَدَّةً)

(he would surely say - as if there had never been ties of affection between you and him,) meaning, as if he was not a follower of your religion,

(يَلِيْتَنِي كُنْتُ مَعَهُمْ فَأَفُوزَ فَوْزاً عَظِيماً)

("Oh! I wish I had been with them; then I would have achieved a great success.") by being assigned a share of the booty and taking possession of that share. This is his ultimate aim and objective.

The Encouragement to Participation in Jihad

Allah then said,

(فَلْيُقَاتِلْ)

(So fight) the believer with an aversion (to fighting),

(فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يَشْرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا
بِالْآخِرَةِ)

(those who trade the life of this world with the Hereafter) referring to those sell their religion for the meager goods of the world, and they only do this because of their disbelief and lack of faith. Allah then said;

(وَمَنْ يُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيُقْتَلْ أَوْ يَغْلِبْ فَسَوْفَ
نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْراً عَظِيماً)

(And whoever fights in the cause of Allah, and is killed or gets victory, We shall bestow on him a great reward.) meaning, whoever fights in the cause of Allah, whether he was killed or triumphant, he will earn an immense compensation and a great reward with Allah. The Two Sahihs recorded,

«وَتَكْفَلُ اللَّهُ لِلْمُجَاهِدِ فِي سَبِيلِهِ، إِنْ تَوَقَّاهُ أَنْ
يُدْخِلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ، أَوْ يَرْجِعَهُ إِلَى مَسْكَنِهِ الَّذِي خَرَجَ
مِنْهُ، بِمَا نَالَ مِنْ أَجْرٍ أَوْ غَنِيمَةٍ»

(Allah has guaranteed the Mujahid in His cause that He will either bring death to him, admitting into Paradise; or, He will help him return safely to his home with whatever reward and booty he gained.)

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ
مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا
أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا
مِن لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ نَصِيرًا -
الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ الطَّغُوتِ فَقَاتِلُوا أَوْلِيَاءَ
الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا)

(75. And what is wrong with you that you fight not in the cause of Allah, and for those weak, ill-treated and oppressed among men, women, and children, whose cry is: "Our Lord! Rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from You one who will protect, and raise for us from You one who will help.") (76. Those who believe, fight in the cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve, fight in the cause of the Taghut. So fight against the friends of Shaytan; ever feeble indeed is the plot of Shaytan.)

Encouraging Jihad to Defend the Oppressed

Allah encouraged His believing servants to perform Jihad in His cause and to strive hard to save the oppressed Muslims in Makkah, men, women and children who were restless because of having to remain there. This is why Allah said,

(الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ)

(whose cry is: "Our Lord! Rescue us from this town), referring to Makkah. In a similar Ayah, Allah said,

(وَكَايِن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ هِيَ أَشَدُّ قُوَّةً مِّن قَرْيَتِكَ الَّتِي
أَخْرَجْنَاكَ)

(And many a town, stronger than your town which has driven you out) Allah then describes this town,

(الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا وَاجْعَلْ
لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ نَصِيرًا)

(whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from You one who will protect, and raise for us from You one who will help) meaning, send protectors and helpers for us. Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn ` Abbas said, "I and my mother were from the oppressed (in Makkah)." Allah then said,

(الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ الطَّغُوتِ)

(Those who believe, fight in the cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve, fight in the cause of the Taghut.) Therefore, the believers fight in obedience to Allah and to gain His pleasure, while the disbelievers fight in obedience to Shaytan. Allah then encourages the believers to fight His enemies,

(فَقَاتِلُوا أَوْلِيَاءَ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ
ضَعِيفًا)

(So fight against the friends of Shaytan; ever feeble indeed is the plot of Shaytan).

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ قِيلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوا أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَقِيمُوا
الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتُوا الزَّكَاةَ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ
إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ أَوْ
أَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا لِمَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْنَا الْقِتَالُ لَوْ
أَخَّرْتَنَا إِلَى أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ قُلْ مَتَّعْتُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلًا
وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِمَنِ اتَّقَى وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا -

أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ
مُشِيدَةٍ وَإِنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ
اللَّهِ وَإِنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ قُلْ
كُلُّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ فَمَا لِهَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ
يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا)

(مَا أَصَبَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَصَبَكَ مِنْ
سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنَ نَفْسِكَ وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا وَكَفَى
بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا)

(77. Have you not seen those who were told to hold back their hands (from fighting) and perform Salah and give Zakah, but when the fighting was ordained for them, behold! a section of them fear men as they fear Allah or even more. They say: "Our Lord! Why have You ordained for us fighting Would that You granted us respite for a short period" Say: "Short is the enjoyment of this world. The Hereafter is (far) better for him who fears Allah, and you shall not be dealt with unjustly even equal to the Fatil.) (78. "Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high!" And if some good reaches them, they say, "This is from Allah," but if some evil befalls them, they say, "This is from you." Say: "All things are from Allah," so what is wrong with these people that they fail to understand any word) (79. Whatever of good reaches you, is from Allah, but whatever of evil befalls you, is from yourself. And We have sent you as a Messenger to mankind, and Allah is sufficient as a Witness.)

The Wish that the Order for Jihad be Delayed

In the beginning of Islam, Muslims in Makkah were commanded to perform the prayer and pay some charity, so as to comfort the poor among them. They were also commanded to be forgiving and forbearing with the idolators and to observe patience with them at the time. However, they were eager and anticipating the time when they would be allowed to fight, so that they could punish their enemies. The situation at that time did not permit armed conflict for many reasons. For instance, Muslims were few at the time, compared to their numerous enemies. The Muslims' city was a sacred one and the most honored area on the earth, and this is why the command to fight was not revealed in Makkah. Later on when the Muslims controlled a town of their own, Al-Madinah, and had strength, power and support, Jihad was then legislated. Yet, when the command to fight was revealed, just as Muslims wished, some of them became weary and were very fearful of facing the idolators in battle.

وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا لِمَ كَتَبْتَ عَلَيْنَا الْقِتَالَ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنَا
إِلَى أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ)

(They say: "Our Lord! Why have You ordained for us fighting Would that You had granted us respite for a short period") meaning, we wish that Jihad was delayed until a later time, because it means bloodshed, orphans and widows. In a similar Ayah, Allah said,

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَتْ سُورَةٌ فَإِذَا
أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ مُحْكَمَةٌ وَذُكِرَ فِيهَا الْقِتَالُ)

(Those who believe say: "Why is not a Surah sent down (for us) But when a decisive is sent down, and fighting is mentioned). Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that `Abdur-Rahman bin `Awf and several of his companions came to the Prophet while in Makkah and said, "O Allah's Prophet! We were mighty when we were pagans, but when we embraced the faith, we became weak." The Prophet said,

«إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ بِالْعَفْوِ فَلَا تُقَاتِلُوا الْقَوْمَ»

(I was commanded to pardon the people, so do not fight them.) When Allah transferred the Prophet to Al-Madinah, He commanded him to fight (the idolators), but they (some Muslims) held back. So, Allah revealed the Ayah;

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ قِيلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوا أَيْدِيَكُمْ)

(Have you not seen those who were told to hold back their hands) This Hadith was collected by An-Nasa'i and Al-Hakim. Allah's statement,

قُلْ مَتَّعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ اتَّقَى)

(Say: "Short is the enjoyment of this world. The Hereafter is (far) better for him who fears Allah,) means, the destination of the one who with Taqwa is better for him than this life.

وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا)

(and you shall not be dealt with unjustly even equal to the Fatil.) for your good deeds. Rather, you will earn your full rewards for them. This promise directs the focus of believers away from

this life and makes them eager for the Hereafter, all the while encouraging them to fight in Jihad.

There is No Escaping Death

Allah said,

(أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّشِيدَةٍ)

(Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high!) meaning, you shall certainly die and none of you shall ever escape death. Allah said,

(كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ)

(Whatsoever is on it (the earth) will perish),

(كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ)

(Everyone shall taste death), and,

(وَمَا جَعَلْنَا لِبَشَرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ الْخُلْدَ)

(And We granted not to any human being immortality before you). Therefore, every soul shall taste death and nothing can save any person from it, whether he performed Jihad or not. Everyone has an appointed time, and a limited term of life. In the illness that preceded his death, Khalid bin Al-Walid said, while in his bed, "I participated in so and so number of battles, and every part of my body sustained an injury due to a stab or a shot. Yet here I am, I die in my bed! Let not the eyes of the cowards ever taste sleep." Allah's statement,

(وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّشِيدَةٍ)

(even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high!) means, entrenched, fortified, high and towering. No caution or fortification can ever avert death.

The Hypocrites Sense a Bad Omen Because of the Prophet !

Allah said,

(وَإِنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ)

(And if some good reaches them) meaning, fertile years and provision of fruits, produce, children, etc., as said by Ibn ` Abbas, Abu Al-` Aliyah and As-Suddi.

(يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَإِنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ)

(they say, "This is from Allah," but if some evil befalls them) drought, famine, shortages of fruits and produce, death that strikes their children or animals, and so forth, as Abu Al-` Aliyah and As-Suddi stated.

(يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ)

(they say, "This is from you,") meaning, because of you and because we followed you and embraced your religion. Allah said about the people of Fir`awn,

(فَإِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْحَسَنَةُ قَالُوا لَنَا هَذِهِ وَإِنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ
سَيِّئَةٌ يَطَّيَّرُوا بِمُوسَىٰ وَمَنْ مَعَهُ)

(But whenever good came to them, they said: "Ours is this." And if evil afflicted them, they ascribed it to evil omens connected with Musa and those with him.) Allah said,

(وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ حَرْفٍ)

(And among mankind is he who worships Allah as it were upon the edge (i. e. in doubt)). The same is the statement uttered by the hypocrites, who embraced Islam outwardly, but disliked it inwardly. This is why when a calamity befell them, they attributed it to following the Prophet . Consequently, Allah revealed,

(قُلْ كُلُّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ)

Say: All things are from Alla0h, Allah's statement that all things are from Him means, everything occurs by the decision and decree of Allah, and His decision shall come to pass for both the righteous and the wicked, the faithful and the disbelievers. Allah then said while addressing His Messenger , but refering to mankind in general,

(مَا أَصَبَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ)

(Whatever of good reaches you, is from Allah,) meaning, of Allah's bounty, favor, kindness and mercy.

(وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ)

(But whatever of evil befalls you, is from yourself.), meaning because of you and due to your actions. Similarly, Allah said,

(وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فَمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ
وَيَعْفُوا عَنْ كَثِيرٍ)

(And whatever of misfortune befalls you, it is because of what your hands have earned. And He pardons much.) As-Suddi, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Ibn Jurayj and Ibn Zayd said that,

(فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ)

(from yourself) means, because of your errors. Qatadah said that,

(فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ)

(From yourself) means, as punishment for you, O son of Adam, because of your sins. Allah said,

(وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا)

(And We have sent you as a Messenger to mankind,) so that you convey to them Allah's commandments, what He likes and is pleased with, and what He dislikes and refuses.

(وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا)

(and Allah is sufficient as a Witness.) that He has sent you. He is also Witness over you and them, having full knowledge in what you convey to them and the disbelief and rebellion with which they respond to the truth.

(مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ تَوَلَّى فَمَا
أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا - وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ فَإِذَا

بَرَزُوا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ بَيَّتَ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي
تَقُولُ وَاللَّهُ يَكْتُبُ مَا يُبَيِّنُونَ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ
وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا)

(80. He who obeys the Messenger, has indeed obeyed Allah, but he who turns away, then We have not sent you as a watcher over them.) (81. They say: "We are obedient," but when they leave you, a section of them spends all night in planning other than what you say. But Allah records their nightly (plots). So turn aside from them (do not punish them), and put your trust in Allah. And Allah is Ever All-Sufficient as a Disposer of affairs.)

Obeying the Messenger is Obeying Allah

Allah states that whoever obeys His servant and Messenger, Muhammad , obeys Allah; and whoever disobeys him, disobeys Allah. Verily, whatever the Messenger utters is not of his own desire, but a revelation inspired to him. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ أَطَاعَنِي فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَقَدْ
عَصَى اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ أَطَاعَ الْأَمِيرَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَنِي،
وَمَنْ عَصَى الْأَمِيرَ فَقَدْ عَصَانِي»

(Whoever obeys me, obeys Allah; and whoever disobeys me, disobeys Allah. Whoever obeys the Amir (leader, ruler), obeys me; and whoever disobeys the Amir, disobeys me.) This Hadith was recorded in the Two Sahih. Allah's statement,

(وَمَنْ تَوَلَّى فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا)

(But he who turns away, then We have not sent you as a watcher over them.) means, do not worry about him. Your job is only to convey, and whoever obeys you, he will acquire happiness and success and you will gain a similar reward to that he earns. As for the one who turns away from you, he will gain failure and loss and you will not carry a burden because of what he does. A Hadith states,

«مَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ رَشِدَ، وَمَنْ يَعْصِ
اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَضُرُّهُ إِلَّا نَفْسَهُ»

(Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, will acquire guidance; and whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, will only harm himself.)

The Foolishness of the Hypocrites

Allah said,

(وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةً)

(They say: "We are obedient,"). Allah states that the hypocrites pretend to be loyal and obedient.

(فَإِذَا بَرَزُوا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ)

(but when they leave you), meaning, when they depart and are no longer with you,

(بَيَّتَ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي تَقُولُ)

(a section of them spends all night in planning other than what you say). They plot at night among themselves for other than what they pretend when they are with you. Allah said,

(وَاللَّهُ يَكْتُبُ مَا يُبَيِّتُونَ)

(But Allah records their nightly (plots).) meaning, He has full knowledge of their plots and records it through His command to His scribes, the angels who are responsible for recording the actions of the servants. This is a threat from Allah, stating that He knows what the hypocrites try to hide, their plotting in the night to defy the Messenger and oppose him, even though they pretend to be loyal and obedient to him. Allah will certainly punish them for this conduct. In a similar Ayah, Allah said,

(وَيَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَبِالرَّسُولِ وَأَطَعْنَا)

(They (hypocrites) say: "We have believed in Allah and in the Messenger, and we obey,") until the end of the Ayah. Allah's statement,

(فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهُمْ)

(So turn aside from them) means, pardon them, be forbearing with them, do not punish them, do not expose them to the people and do not fear them.

(وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا)

(and put your trust in Allah. And Allah is Ever All-Sufficient as a Disposer of affairs.) meaning, He is sufficient as Protector, Supporter and Helper for those who rely on Him and return to Him.

(أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا)

(وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوْ الْخَوْفِ أَدَاعَوْا بِهِ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَى أُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَاتَّبَعْتُمُ الشَّيْطَانَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا)

(82. Do they not then consider the Qur'an carefully Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely, have found therein contradictions in abundance). (83. When there comes to them some matter touching (public) safety or fear, they make it known (among the people); if only they had referred it to the Messenger or to those charged with authority among them, the proper investigators would have understood it from them (directly). Had it not been for the grace and mercy of Allah upon you, you would have followed Shaytan, except a few of you.)

The Qur'an is True

Allah commands them to contemplate about the Qur'an and forbids them from ignoring it, or ignoring its wise meanings and eloquent words. Allah states that there are no inconsistencies, contradictions, conflicting statements or discrepancies in the Qur'an, because it is a revelation from the Most-Wise, Worthy of all praise. Therefore, the Qur'an is the truth coming from the Truth, Allah. This is why Allah said in another Ayah,

(أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا)

(Do they not then think deeply in the Qur'an, or are their hearts locked up (from understanding it)) Allah then said,

(وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ)

(Had it been from other than Allah,) meaning, had it been fraudulent and made up, as the ignorant idolators and hypocrites assert in their hearts,

(لَوْ جَدُّوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا)

(they would surely, have found therein contradictions), discrepancies and inconsistencies,

(كَثِيرًا)

(in abundance). However, this Qur'an is free of shortcomings, and therefore, it is from Allah. Similarly, Allah describes those who are firmly grounded in knowledge,

(ءَامَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا)

(We believe in it, all of it is from our Lord.)(3:7) meaning, the Muhkam sections (entirely clear) and the Mutashabih sections (not entirely clear) of the Qur'an are all true. So they understand the not entirely clear from the clear, and thus gain guidance. As for those in whose heart is the disease of hypocrisy, they understand the Muhkam from the Mutashabih; thus only gaining misguidance. Allah praised those who have knowledge and criticized the wicked. Imam Ahmad recorded that `Amr bin Shu`ayb said that his father said that his grandfather said, "I and my brother were present in a gathering, which is more precious to me than red camels. My brother and I came and found that some of the leaders of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah were sitting close to a door of his. We did not like the idea of being separate from them, so we sat near the room. They then mentioned an Ayah and began disputing until they raised their voices. The Messenger of Allah was so angry that when he went out his face was red. He threw sand on them and said to them,

«مَهْلًا يَا قَوْمَ، بِهَذَا أَهْلَكْتَ الْأُمَّةَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ،
بِاخْتِلَافِهِمْ عَلَى أَنْبِيَائِهِمْ، وَضَرَبِهِمُ الْكُتُبَ بَعْضَهَا
بِبَعْضٍ، إِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ لَمْ يَنْزِلْ يُكَدِّبُ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا،

إِنَّمَا يُصَدِّقُ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا، فَمَا عَرَفْتُمْ مِنْهُ
فَاعْمَلُوا بِهِ، وَمَا جَهِلْتُمْ مِنْهُ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى عَالِمِهِ»

(Behold, O people! This is how the nations before you were destroyed, because of their disputing with their Prophets and their contradicting parts of the Books with other parts. The Qur'an does not contradict itself. Rather, it testifies to the truth of itself. Therefore, whatever of it you have knowledge in, then implement it, and whatever you do not know of it, then refer it to those who have knowledge in it.)" Ahmad recorded that `Abdullah bin `Amr said, "I went to the Messenger of Allah one day. When we were sitting, two men disputed about an Ayah, and their voices became loud. The Prophet said,

«إِنَّمَا هَلَكَتِ الْأُمَّمُ قَبْلَكُمْ بِاخْتِلَافِهِمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ»

(Verily, the nations before you were destroyed because of their disagreements over the Book.) Muslim and An-Nasa'i recorded this Hadith

The Prohibition of Disclosing Unreliable and Uninvestigated News

Allah said,

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوْ الْخَوْفِ أَدَاعَوْا
(بِهِ)

(When there comes to them some matter touching (public) safety or fear, they make it known (among the people); chastising those who indulge in things before being sure of their truth, disclosing them, making them known and spreading their news, even though such news might not be true at all. In the introduction to his Sahih, Imam Muslim recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Prophet said,

«كَفَى بِالْمَرْءِ كَذِبًا أَنْ يُحَدِّثَ بِكُلِّ مَا سَمِعَ»

(Narrating everything one hears is sufficient to make a person a liar.) This is the same narration collected by Abu Dawud in the section of Adab (manners) in his Sunan. In the Two Sahih, it is recorded that Al-Mughirah bin Shu`bah said that the Messenger of Allah prohibited, "It was said," and, "So-and-so said." This Hadith refers to those who often convey the speech that people utter without investigating the reliability and truth of what he is disclosing. The Sahih also records,

«مَنْ حَدَّثَ بِحَدِيثٍ وَهُوَ يُرَى أَنَّهُ كَذِبٌ، فَهُوَ
أَحَدُ الْكَاذِبِينَ»

(Whoever narrates a Hadith while knowing it is false, then he is one of the two liars (who invents and who spreads the lie).) We should mention here the Hadith of `Umar bin Al-Khattab collected in the Two Sahihs. When `Umar was informed that the Messenger of Allah divorced his wives, he came from his house, entered the Masjid and found the people talking about this news. He could not wait and went to the Prophet to ask him about what had truly happened, asking him, "Have you divorced your wives" The Prophet said, "No." `Umar said, "I said, Allahu Akbar..." and mentioned the rest of the Hadith. In the narration that Muslim collected, `Umar said, "I asked, `Have you divorced them' He said, `No.' So, I stood by the door of the Masjid and shouted with the loudest voice, `The Messenger of Allah did not divorce his wives.' Then, this Ayah was revealed,

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوْ الْخَوْفِ أَدَّعَوْا
بِهِ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَى أَوْلَى الْأَمْرِ
مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنْبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ)

(When there comes to them some matter touching (public) safety or fear, they make it known (among the people), if only they had referred it to the Messenger or to those charged with authority among them, the proper investigators would have understood it from them (directly).) So I properly investigated that matter." This Ayah refers to proper investigation, or extraction of matters from their proper resources. Allah's statement,

(لَا تَبِعْتُمُ الشَّيْطَانَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا)

(you would have followed Shaytan except a few of you.) refers to the believers, as `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported from Ibn `Abbas.

فَقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا تُكَلِّفُ إِلَّا نَفْسَكَ وَحَرِّضِ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَكْفِيَ بَأْسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
وَاللَّهُ أَشَدُّ بَأْسًا وَأَشَدُّ تَنْكِيلًا - مَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَعَةً
حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ نَصِيبٌ مِّنْهَا وَمَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَعَةً

سَيِّئَةٌ يَكُنْ لَهُ كِفْلٌ مِّنْهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
مُّقْتِبًا - وَإِذَا حُيِّيتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا أَوْ
رُدُّوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيبًا - اللَّهُ
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لِيَجْمَعََنَّكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ
فِيهِ وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَدِيثًا)

(84. Then fight in the cause of Allah, you are not tasked (held responsible) except for yourself, and incite the believers (to fight along with you), it may be that Allah will restrain the evil might of the disbelievers. And Allah is Stronger in might and Stronger in punishing.) (85. Whosoever intercedes for a good cause, will have the reward thereof; and whosoever intercedes for an evil cause, will have a share in its burden. And Allah is Ever All-Able to do everything.) (86. When you are greeted with a greeting, greet in return with what is better than it, or (at least) return it equally. Certainly, Allah is Ever a Careful Account Taker of all things.) (87. Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He. Surely, He will gather you together on the Day of Resurrection about which there is no doubt. And who is truer in statement than Allah)

Allah Commands His Messenger to Perform Jihad

Allah commands His servant and Messenger, Muhammad , to himself fight in Jihad and not to be concerned about those who do not join Jihad. Hence Allah's statement,

(لَا تُكَلَّفُ إِلَّا نَفْسَكَ)

(you are not tasked (held responsible except for yourself,) Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Abu Ishaq said, "I asked Al-Bara bin `Azib about a man who meets a hundred enemies and still fights them, would he be one of those referred to in Allah's statement,

(وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ)

(And do not throw yourselves into destruction (by not spending your wealth in the cause of Allah)) He said, `Allah said to His Prophet,

(فَقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ إِلَّا نَفْسَكَ وَحَرِّضَ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(Then fight in the cause of Allah, you are not tasked (held responsible) except for yourself, and incite the believers (to fight along with you))." Imam Ahmad recorded Sulayman bin Dawud saying that Abu Bakr bin `Ayyash said that Abu Ishaq said, "I asked Al-Bara', `If a man attacks the lines of the idolators, would he be throwing himself to destruction' He said, `No because Allah has sent His Messenger and commanded him,

(فَقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ إِلَّا نَفْسَكَ)

(Then fight in the cause of Allah, you are not tasked (held responsible) except for yourself,) That Ayah is about spending in Allah's cause ."

Inciting the Believers to Fight

Allah said,

(وَحَرِّضَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(and incite the believers) to fight, by encouraging them and strengthening their resolve in this regard. For instance, the Prophet said to the believers at the battle of Badr, while organizing their lines,

«قُومُوا إِلَى جَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ»

(Stand up and march forth to a Paradise, as wide as the heavens and Earth.) There are many Hadiths that encourage Jihad. Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

**«مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ، وَآتَى
الزَّكَاةَ، وَصَامَ رَمَضَانَ، كَانَ حَقًّا عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ
يُدْخِلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ، هَاجَرَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ جَلَسَ فِي
أَرْضِهِ الَّتِي وُلِدَ فِيهَا»**

(Whoever believes in Allah and His Messenger, offers prayer, pays the Zakah and fasts the month of Ramadan, will rightfully be granted Paradise by Allah, no matter whether he migrates in Allah's cause or remains in the land where he is born.) The people said, `O Allah's Messenger! Shall we acquaint the people with this good news' He said,

«إِنَّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ مِائَةَ دَرَجَةٍ أَعَدَّهَا اللَّهُ لِلْمُجَاهِدِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، بَيْنَ كُلِّ دَرَجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ، فَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمْ اللَّهَ فَاسْأَلُوهُ الْفِرْدَوْسَ، فَإِنَّهُ وَسَطُ الْجَنَّةِ، وَأَعْلَى الْجَنَّةِ، وَفَوْقَهُ عَرْشُ الرَّحْمَنِ، وَمِنْهُ تَفَجَّرُ أَنْهَارُ الْجَنَّةِ»

(Paradise has one hundred grades which Allah has reserved for the Mujahidin who fight in His cause, the distance between each two grades is like the distance between the heaven and the Earth. So, when you ask Allah, ask for Al-Firdaws, which is the best and highest part of Paradise, above it is the Throne of the Most Beneficent (Allah) and from it originate the rivers of Paradise.) There are various narrations for this Hadith from `Ubadah, Mu`adh, and Abu Ad-Darda'. Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri narrated that the Messenger of Allah said,

«يَا أَبَا سَعِيدٍ مَنْ رَضِيَ بِاللَّهِ رَبًّا، وَبِالْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا، وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ نَبِيًّا، وَجَبَتْ لَهُ الْجَنَّةُ»

(O Abu Sa`id! Whoever accepts Allah as his Lord, Islam as his religion and Muhammad as the Prophet, then he would rightfully acquire Paradise.) Abu Sa`id liked these words and said, "O Allah's Messenger! Repeat them for me." The Prophet repeated his words, then said,

«وَأُخْرَى يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الْعَبْدَ بِهَا مِائَةَ دَرَجَةٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، مَا بَيْنَ كُلِّ دَرَجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ»

(And (there is) another deed for which Allah raises the servant a hundred grades in Paradise, between each two grades is the distance between heaven and Earth.) Abu Sa`id said, "What is it, O Allah's Messenger " He said,

«الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ»

(Jihad in Allah's cause.) This Hadith was collected by Muslim. Allah's statement,

(عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَكْفَ بِأَسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا)

(it may be that Allah will restrain the evil might of the disbelievers.) means, by your encouraging them to fight, their resolve will be strengthened to meet the enemy in battle, to defend Islam and its people and to endure and be patient against the enemy. Allah's statement,

(وَاللَّهُ أَشَدُّ بِأَسًا وَأَشَدُّ تَنْكِيلًا)

(And Allah is Stronger in might and Stronger in punishing.) means, He is able over them in this life and the Hereafter, just as He said in another Ayah,

(ذَلِكَ وَلَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَانتَصَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَ بَعْضَكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ)

(But if it had been Allah's will, He Himself could certainly have punished them (without you). But (He lets you fight) in order to test some of you with others) (47:4).

Interceding for a Good or an Evil Cause

Allah said,

(مَنْ يَشْفَعُ شَفَعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ نَصِيبٌ مِنْهَا)

(Whosoever intercedes for a good cause, will have the reward thereof;) meaning, whoever intercedes in a matter that produces good results, will acquire a share in that good.

(وَمَنْ يَشْفَعُ شَفَعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ كِفْلٌ مِنْهَا)

(And whosoever intercedes for an evil cause, will have a share in its burden.) meaning, he will carry a burden due to what resulted from his intercession and intention. For instance, it is recorded in the Sahih that the Prophet said,

«اشْفَعُوا تُوجَرُوا، وَيَقْضِي اللَّهُ عَلَى لِسَانِ نَبِيِّهِ
مَا شَاءَ»

(Intercede and you will gain a reward of it. Yet, Allah shall decide whatever He wills by the words of His Prophet.) Mujahid bin Jabr said, "This Ayah was revealed about the intercession of people on behalf of each other." Allah then said,

(وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّقِيتًا)

(And Allah is Ever Muqit over everything.) Ibn `Abbas, `Ata', `Atiyah, Qatadah and Matar Al-Warraqa said that,

(مُقِيتًا)

(Muqit) means, "Watcher." Mujahid said that Muqit means, `Witness', and in another narration, `Able to do.'

Returning the Salam, With a Better Salam

Allah said,

(وَإِذَا حُيِّئْتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا أَوْ رُدُّوهَا)

(When you are greeted with a greeting, greet in return with what is better than it, or (at least) return it equally.) meaning, if the Muslim greets you with the Salam, then return the greeting with a better Salam, or at least equal to the Salam that was given. Therefore, the better Salam is recommended, while returning it equally is an obligation. Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Raja' Al-Utaridi said that `Imran bin Husayn said that a man came to the Messenger of Allah and said, "As-Salamu `Alaykum". The Prophet returned the greeting, and after the man sat down he said, "Ten." Another man came and said, "As-Salamu `Alaykum wa Rahmatullah, O Allah's Messenger." The Prophet returned the greeting, and after the man sat down he said, "Twenty." Then another man came and said, "As-Salamu `Alaykum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuh." The Prophet returned the greeting, and after the man sat down he said, "Thirty." This is the narration recorded by Abu Dawud. At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Al-Bazzar also recorded it. At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Gharib". There are several other Hadiths on this subject from Abu Sa'id, `Ali, and Sahl bin Hanif. When the Muslim is greeted with the full form of Salam, he is obliged to return the greeting equally. As for Ahl Adh-Dhimmah the Salam should not be initiated nor should the greeting be added to when returning their greeting. Rather, as recorded in the Two Sahih their greeting is returned to them equally. Ibn `Umar narrated that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِذَا سَلَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ الْيَهُودُ، فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ أَحَدُهُمْ: السَّامُ عَلَيْكَ، فَقُلْ: وَعَلَيْكَ»

(When the Jews greet you, one of them would say, `As-Samu `Alayka (death be unto you).¹ Therefore, say, `Wa `Alayka (and the same to you).²) In his Sahih, Muslim recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَا تَبْدَأُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَى بِالسَّلَامِ، وَإِذَا لَقَيْتُمُوهُمْ فِي طَرِيقٍ فَاضْطَرُّوهُمْ إِلَى أَضْيَقِهِ»

(Do not initiate greeting the Jews and Christians with the Salam, and when you pass by them on a road, force them to its narrowest path.) Abu Dawud recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، لَا تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا، وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوا حَتَّى تَحَابُّوا، أَفَلَا أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَى أَمْرٍ إِذَا فَعَلْتُمُوهُ تَحَابَبْتُمْ؟ أَفَشُوا السَّلَامَ بَيْنَكُمْ»

(By He in Whose Hand is my soul! You will not enter Paradise until you believe, and you will not believe until you love each other. Should I direct you to an action that would direct you to love each other Spread the Salam among yourselves.) Allah said,

(اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ)

(Allah! none has the right to be worshipped but He) informing that He is singled out as the sole God of all creation. Allah then said,

(لِيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ)

(Surely, He will gather you together on the Day of Resurrection about which there is no doubt.) swearing that He will gather the earlier and latter generations in one area, rewarding or punishing each person according to his or her actions. Allah said,

(وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَدِيثًا)

(And who is truer in statement than Allah) meaning, no one utters more truthful statements than Allah, in His promise, warning, stories of the past and information of what is to come; there is no deity worthy of worship nor Lord except Him.

(فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِتْنَيْنِ وَاللَّهُ أَرْكَسَهُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوا أَتُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَهْدُوا مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ سَبِيلًا - وَذُؤُوا لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَاءً فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ حَتَّى يُهَاجِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَخُذُواهُمْ وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ وُلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا - إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ إِلَى قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ أَوْ جَاءُوكُمْ حَصِرَتْ صُدُورُهُمْ أَنْ يَقْتُلُوكُمْ أَوْ يُقَاتِلُوا قَوْمَهُمْ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَقَاتَلُوكُمْ فَإِنْ اعْتَزَلُوكُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ وَالْقَوَا إِلَيْكُمْ السَّلَامَ فَمَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا - سَتَجِدُونَ ءَاخِرِينَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَأْمَنُوكُمْ وَيَأْمَنُوا قَوْمَهُمْ كُلًّا مَا رُدُّوا إِلَى الْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكَسُوا فِيهَا فَإِنْ لَمْ يَعْتَزِلُوكُمْ وَيُلْقُوا إِلَيْكُمْ السَّلَامَ وَيَكْفُوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَخُذُواهُمْ وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ تَقَعْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَوْلِيَكُمْ جَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا)

(88. Then what is the matter with you that you are divided into two parties about the hypocrites Allah has cast them back because of what they have earned. Do you want to guide

him whom Allah has made to go astray And he whom Allah has made to go astray, you will never find for him a way.) (89. They wish that you reject faith, as they have rejected, and thus that you all become equal (like one another). So take not Awliya' from them, till they emigrate in the way of Allah. But if they turn back, take (hold of) them and kill them wherever you find them, and take neither Awliya' nor helpers from them.) (90. Except those who join a group, between you and whom there is a treaty (of peace), or those who approach you with their breasts restraining from fighting you as well as fighting their own people. Had Allah willed, indeed He would have given them power over you, and they would have fought you. So, if they withdraw from you, and fight not against you, and offer you peace, then Allah has made no way for you against them.) (91. You will find others that wish to have security from you and security from their people. Every time they are sent back to Fitnah, they yield thereto. If they withdraw not from you, nor offer you peace, nor restrain their hands, take (hold of) them and kill them wherever you Thaqiftumuhum. In their case, We have provided you with a clear warrant against them.)

Censuring the Companions for Disagreeing over the Hypocrites who Returned to Al-Madinah Before Uhud

Allah criticizes the believers for disagreeing over the hypocrites. There are conflicting opinions over the reason behind revealing this Ayah. Imam Ahmad recorded that Zayd bin Thabit said that Messenger of Allah marched towards Uhud. However, some people who accompanied him went back to Al-Madinah, and the Companions of the Messenger of Allah divided into two groups concerning them, one saying they should be killed and the other objecting. Allah sent down,

﴿فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِئَتَيْنِ﴾

(Then what is the matter with you that you are divided into two parties about the hypocrites)
The Messenger of Allah said,

﴿إِنَّهَا طَيْبَةٌ، وَإِنَّهَا تُنْفِي الْخَبَثَ، كَمَا يَنْفِي الْكَبِيرُ
خَبَثَ الْحَدِيدِ﴾

(She (Al-Madinah) is Taybah, and she expels filth, just as the billow expels rust from iron.) The Two Sahihs also recorded this Hadith. Al-`Awfi reported that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah was revealed about some people in Makkah who said they embraced Islam, yet they gave their support to the idolators. One time, these people went out of Makkah to fulfill some needs and said to each other, "If we meet the Companions of Muhammad, there will be no harm for us from their side." When the believers got news that these people went out of Makkah, some of them said, "Let us march to these towards and kill them, because they support your enemy against you." However, another group from the believers said, "Glory be to Allah! Do you kill a people who say as you have said, just because they did not perform Hijrah or leave their land Is it allowed to shed their blood and confiscate their money in this case" So they divided to two groups, while the Messenger was with them, and did not prohibit either group from reiterating their argument. Thereafter, Allah revealed,

(فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِتْنَيْنِ)

(Then what is the matter with you that you are divided into two parties about the hypocrites) Ibn Abi Hatim recorded this Hadith. Allah said,

(وَاللَّهُ أَرْكَسَهُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوا)

(Allah has cast them back because of what they have earned.) meaning, He made them revert to, and fall into error. Ibn `Abbas said that,

(أَرْكَسَهُمْ)

(Arkasahum) means, 'cast them'. Allah's statement,

(بِمَا كَسَبُوا)

(because of what they have earned) means, because of their defiance and disobedience to the Messenger and following falsehood.

(أَتُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَهْدُوا مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ
اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا)

(Do you want to guide him whom Allah has made to go astray And he whom Allah has made to go astray, you will never find for him a way.) meaning, there will be no path for him, or way to guidance. Allah's statement,

(وَدُّوا لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَاءً)

(They wish that you reject faith, as they have rejected, and thus that you all become equal.) means, they wish that you fall into misguidance, so that you and they are equal in that regard. This is because of their extreme enmity and hatred for you. Therefore, Allah said,

(فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا)

(So take not Awliya' from them, till they emigrate in the way of Allah. But if they turn back,) if they abandon Hijrah, as Al-`Awfi reported from Ibn `Abbas. As-Suddi said that this part of the Ayah means, "If they make their disbelief public."

Combatants and Noncombatants

Allah excluded some people;

(إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ إِلَى قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ)

(Except those who join a group, between you and whom there is a treaty (of peace),) meaning, except those who join and take refuge with a people with whom you have a pact of peace, or people of Dhimmah, then treat them as you treat the people with whom you have peace. This is the saying of As-Suddi, Ibn Zayd and Ibn Jarir. In his Sahih, Al-Bukhari recorded the story of the treaty of Al-Hudaybiyyah, where it was mentioned that whoever liked to have peace with Quraysh and conduct a pact with them, then they were allowed. Those who liked to have peace with Muhammad and his Companions and enter a pact with them were allowed. It was reported that Ibn `Abbas said that this Ayah was later abrogated by Allah's statement,

(فَإِذَا انْسَلَخَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرْمُ فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ)

(Then when the Sacred Months have passed, kill the idolators wherever you find them) Allah said,

(أَوْ جَاءُوكُمْ حَصِرَتْ صُدُورُهُمْ)

(or those who approach you with their breasts restraining) referring to another type of people covered by the exclusion from fighting. They are those who approach the Muslims with hesitation in their hearts because of their aversion to fighting the Muslims. They do not have the heart to fight with the Muslims against their own people. Therefore, they are neither with nor against Muslims.

(وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَقَاتَلُوكُمْ)

(Had Allah willed, indeed He would have given them power over you, and they would have fought you.) meaning, it is from Allah's mercy that He has stopped them from fighting you.

(فَإِنْ اعْتَرَفْتُمْ بِالْإِسْلَامِ فَلَكُمْ أُسْرًا وَمِنْ قَبْلِهَا جَاهِلِيَّةٌ وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا إِنَّمَا أَكْرَمْنَا عَلَى الْعَرَبِ فَذُنُوبُنَا أَوْ نَبَايَاهُمْ يَوْمَ الْمَيْمَنَةِ وَكَانُوا تَارِكِينَ)

(So, if they withdraw from you, and fight not against you, and offer you peace,) meaning, they revert to peace,

(فَمَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا)

(then Allah has opened no way for you against them), you do not have the right to kill them, as long as they take this position. This was the position of Banu Hashim (the tribe of the Prophet), such as Al-` Abbas, who accompanied the idolators in the battle of Badr, for they joined the battle with great hesitation. This is why the Prophet commanded that Al-` Abbas not be killed, but only captured. Allah's statement, d

(سَتَجِدُونَ ءآخَرِينَ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يَأْمَنُوكُمْ وَيَأْمَنُوا قَوْمَهُمْ)

(You will find others that wish to have security from you and security from their people.) refers to a type of people who on the surface appear to be like the type we just mentioned. However, the intention of each type is different, for the latter are hypocrites. They pretend to be Muslims with the Prophet and his Companions, so that they could attain safety with the Muslims for their blood, property and families. However, they support the idolators in secret and worship what they worship, so that they are at peace with them also. These people have secretly sided with the idolators, just as Allah described them,

(وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ)

(But when they are alone with their Shayatin, they say: "Truly, we are with you."). In this Ayah, Allah said,

(كُلَّ مَا رُدُّوا إِلَىٰ الْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكَسُوا فِيهَا)

(Every time they are sent back to Fitnah, they yield thereto.) meaning, they dwell in Fitnah. As-Suddi said that the Fitnah mentioned here refers to Shirk. Ibn Jarir recorded that Mujahid said that the Ayah was revealed about a group from Makkah who used to go to the Prophet in Al-Madinah pretending to be Muslims. However, when they went back to Quraysh, they reverted to worshipping idols. They wanted to be at peace with both sides. Allah commanded they should be fought against, unless they withdraw from combat and resort to peace. This is why Allah said,

(فَإِن لَّمْ يَعتَزلوكم وَيَلقوا إِلَيْكم السَّلَامَ)

(If they withdraw not from you, nor offer you peace) meaning, revert to peaceful and complacent behavior,

(وَيَكْفُوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ)

(nor restrain their hands) refrain from fighting you,

(فَخُذُوهُمْ)

(take (hold of) them), capture them,

(وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ تَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ)

(and kill them wherever you find them), wherever you find them,

(وَأُولَئِكَ جَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانًا مُّبِينًا)

(In their case, We have provided you with a clear warrant against them), meaning an unequivocal and plain warrant.

(وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَنْ يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا إِلَّا خَطَأً وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَأً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَدِيَةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَصَدَّقُوا فَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ فَدِيَةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا - وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ

خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ
عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا)

(92. It is not for a believer to kill a believer except by mistake; and whosoever kills a believer by mistake, he must set free a believing slave and submit compensation (blood money) to the deceased's family unless they remit it. If the deceased belonged to a people at war with you and he was a believer, the freeing of a believing slave (is prescribed); and if he belonged to a people with whom you have a treaty of mutual alliance, then compensation (blood money) must be paid to his family, and a believing slave must be freed. And whoso finds this beyond his means, he must fast for two consecutive months in order to seek repentance from Allah. And Allah is Ever All-Knowing, All-Wise.) (93. And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell to abide therein; and the wrath and the curse of Allah are upon him, and a great punishment is prepared for him.)

The Ruling Concerning Killing a Believer by Mistake

Allah states that the believer is not allowed to kill his believing brother under any circumstances. In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that Ibn Mas`ud said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَا يَحِلُّ دَمُ امْرِئٍ مُسْلِمٍ يَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ،
وَأَنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، إِلَّا يَأْخُذِي ثَلَاثٌ: النَّفْسُ
بِالنَّفْسِ، وَالنَّيْبُ الزَّانِي، وَالتَّارِكُ لِدِينِهِ الْمَفَارِقُ
لِلْجَمَاعَةِ»

(The blood of a Muslim who testifies that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah, is sacred, except in three instances. (They are:) life for life, the married adulterer, and whoever reverts from the religion and abandons the Jama`ah (community of the faithful believers).) When one commits any of these three offenses, it is not up to ordinary citizens to kill him or her, because this is the responsibility of the Muslim Leader or his deputy. Allah said,

(إِلَّا خَطَأً)

(except by mistake). There is a difference of opinion concerning the reason behind revealing this part of the Ayah. Mujahid and others said that it was revealed about `Ayyash bin Abi Rabi`ah, Abu Jahl's half brother, from his mother's side, Asma' bint Makhrabah. `Ayyash killed a man called Al-Harith bin Yazid Al-`Amiri, out of revenge for torturing him and his brother

because of their Islam. That man later embraced Islam and performed Hijrah, but `Ayyash did not know this fact. On the Day of the Makkah conquest, `Ayyash saw that man and thought that he was still a disbeliever, so he attacked and killed him. Later, Allah sent down this Ayah. `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said that this Ayah was revealed about Abu Ad-Darda' because he killed a man after he embraced the faith, just as Abu Ad-Darda' held the sword above him. When this matter was conveyed to the Messenger of Allah, Abu Ad-Darda' said, "He only said that to avert death." The Prophet said to him,

«هَلَّا شَقَّتَ عَنْ قَلْبِهِ»

(Have you opened his heart) The basis for this story is in the Sahih, but it is not about Abu Ad-Darda'. Allah said,

وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَاً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ
وَدِيَّةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ

(and whosoever kills a believer by mistake, he must set free a believing slave and submit compensation (blood money) to the deceased's family) thus, ordaining two requirements for murder by mistake. The first requirement is the Kaffarah (fine) for the great sin that has been committed, even if it was a mistake. The Kaffarah is to free a Muslim slave, not a non-Muslim slave. Imam Ahmad recorded that a man from the Ansar said that he brought a slave and said, "O Messenger of Allah! I have to free a believing slave, so if you see that this slave is a believer, I will free her." The Messenger of Allah asked her,

«أَتَشْهَدِينَ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ؟»

(Do you testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah) She said, "Yes." He asked her,

«أَتَشْهَدِينَ أَنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ؟»

(Do you testify that I am the Messenger of Allah) She said, "Yes." He asked,

«أَتُؤْمِنِينَ بِالْبَعْثِ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ؟»

(Do you believe in Resurrection after death) She said, "Yes." The Prophet said,

«أُعْتِقَهَا»

(Then free her.) This is an authentic chain of narration, and not knowing the name of the Ansari Companion does not lessen its authenticity. Allah's statement,

(وَدِيَّةٌ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ)

(and submit compensation (blood money) to the deceased's family) is the second obligation which involves the killer and the family of the deceased, who will receive blood money as compensation for their loss. The compensation is only obligatory for the one who possesses one of five; as Imam Ahmad, and the Sunan compilers recorded from Ibn Mas`ud. He said; "Allah's Messenger determined that the Diah (blood money) for unintentional murder is twenty camels which entered their fourth year, twenty camels which entered their fifth year, twenty camels which entered their second year, and twenty camels which entered their third year." This is the wording of An-Nasa'i. This Diah is required from the elders of the killer's tribe, not from his own money. In the Two Sahih, it is recorded that Abu Hurayrah said, "Two women from Hudhayl quarreled and one of them threw a stone at the other and killed her and her unborn fetus. They disputed before the Messenger of Allah and he decided that the Diah of the fetus should be to free a male or a female slave. He also decided that the Diah of the deceased is required from the elders of the killer's tribe." This Hadith indicates that in the case of what appears to be intentional murder, the Diah is the same as that for killing by virtual mistake. The former type requires three types of Diah, just like intentional murder, because it is somewhat similar to intentional murder. Al-Bukhari recorded in his Sahih that `Abdullah bin `Umar said, "The Messenger of Allah sent Khalid bin Al-Walid to Banu Jadhimah and he called them to Islam, but they did not know how to say, `We became Muslims.' They started saying, `Saba'na, Saba'na (we became Sabians). Khalid started killing them, and when this news was conveyed to the Messenger of Allah , he raised his hands and said,

«اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَبْرَأُ إِلَيْكَ مِمَّا صَنَعَ خَالِدٌ»

(O Allah! I declare my innocence before You of what Khalid did.) The Messenger sent `Ali to pay the Diah of those who were killed and to compensate for the property that was destroyed, to the extent of replacing the dog's bowl. This Hadith indicates that the mistake of the Leader or his deputy (Khalid in this case) is paid from the Muslim Treasury. Allah said,

(إِلَّا أَنْ يَصَدَّقُوا)

(unless they remit it), meaning, the Diah must be delivered to the family of the deceased, unless they forfeit their right, in which case the Diah does not become necessary. Allah's statement,

(فَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ)

(If the deceased belonged to a people at war with you and he was a believer, the freeing of a believing slave (is prescribed);) means, if the murdered person was a believer, yet his family

were combatant disbelievers, then they will receive no Diah. In this case, the murderer only has to free a believing slave. Allah's statement,

(وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنَ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ)

(and if he belonged to a people with whom you have a treaty of mutual alliance,) meaning, if the family of the deceased were from Ahl Adh-Dhimmah or with whom there is a peace treaty, then they deserve his Diah; full Diah if the deceased was a believer, in which case the killer is required to free a believing slave also.

(فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ)

(And whoso finds this beyond his means, he must fast for two consecutive months) without breaking the fast (in the days of) the two months. If he breaks the fast without justification, i.e. illness, menstruation, post-natal bleeding, then he has to start all over again. Allah's statement,

(تَوْبَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا)

(to seek repentance from Allah. And Allah is Ever All-Knowing, All-Wise.) means, this is how the one who kills by mistake can repent, he fasts two consecutive months if he does not find a slave to free.

(وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا)

(And Allah is Ever All-Knowing, All-Wise), we mentioned the explanation of this before.

Warning Against Intentional Murder

After Allah mentioned the ruling of unintentional murder, He mentioned the ruling for intentional murder. Allah said,

(وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا)

(And whoever kills a believer intentionally,) This Ayah carries a stern warning and promise for those who commit so grave a sin that it is mentioned along with Shirk in several Ayat of Allah's Book. For instance, in Surat Al-Furqan, Allah said,

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا
يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ

(And those who invoke not any other god along with Allah, nor kill such person as Allah has forbidden, except for just cause). Allah said,

﴿قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَنلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا
بِهِ شَيْئًا﴾

(Say: "Come, I will recite what your Lord has prohibited you from: Join not anything in worship with Him.) 6:151 . There are many Ayat and Hadiths that prohibit murder. In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that Ibn Mas' ud said that the Messenger of Allah said,

﴿أَوَّلُ مَا يُقْضَى بَيْنَ النَّاسِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِي
الدِّمَاءِ﴾

(Blood offenses are the first disputes to be judged between the people on the Day of Resurrection.) In a Hadith that Abu Dawud recorded, `Ubadah bin As-Samit states that the Messenger of Allah said,

﴿لَا يَزَالُ الْمُؤْمِنُ مُعْنِقًا صَالِحًا، مَا لَمْ يُصِْبْ دَمًا
حَرَامًا، فَإِذَا أَصَابَ دَمًا حَرَامًا بَلَّحَ﴾

(The believer will remain unburdened in righteousness as long as he does not shed prohibited blood. When he sheds forbidden blood, he will become burdened.) Another Hadith, states,

﴿لِزْوَالِ الدُّنْيَا أَهْوَنُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ قَتْلِ رَجُلٍ
مُسْلِمٍ﴾

(The destruction of this earthly life is less significant before Allah than killing a Muslim man (or woman).)