TAFSEER AS-SA'DI

Juz' 19-21

تفسير السعدي

تيسير الكريم الرحمن في تفسير كلام المنان

'Abdur-Rahmân Nâsir as-Sa'di

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Abdur-Rahmân Nâsir as-Sa'di

Translated by

Nasiruddin al-Khattab

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Pronunciation and Transliteration Chart

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

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

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

Diphthongs

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Trans-literated form
أو، ـَـو	long 'o', as in *owe*, *boat* and *go*	au, aw
أي، ـَـي	long 'a', as in *aid*, *rain* and *say*	ay, ai, ei

Diacritical marks (tashkeel)

Name of mark	Pronunciation	Trans-literated form
ـَ fatḥah	very short 'a' or schwa (unstressed vowel)	a
ـِ kasrah	shorter version of ee or schwa (unstressed vowel)	i
ـُ ḍammah	shorter version of oo	u
ـّ shaddah	a doubled consonant is stressed in the word, and the length of the sound is also doubled	double letter
ـْ sukoon	no vowel sound between consonants or at the end of a word	absence of vowel

Arabic honorific symbols

(ﷻ)	*Subḥânahu wa Ta'âlâ*	The Exalted
(ﷺ)	*ṣalla Allâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*	Blessings and peace be upon him
(عليه السلام)	*'alayhi as-salâm*	May peace be upon him
(رضي الله عنه)	*raḍiya Allâhu 'anhu*	May Allah be pleased with him
(رضي الله عنها)	*raḍiya Allâhu 'anhâ*	May Allah be pleased with her
(رضي الله عنهما)	*raḍiya Allâhu 'anhumâ*	May Allah be pleased with both of them
(رضي الله عنهم)	*raḍiya Allâhu 'anhum*	May Allah be pleased with all of them
(رضي الله عنهن)	*raḍiya Allâhu 'anhunna*	May Allah be pleased with all of them (females only)

Hadith grade terms

Sound:	*ṣaḥeeḥ*
Reliable:	*ḥasan*
Weak:	*ḍa'eef*
Odd:	*ghareeb*
Authentic:	includes sound, reliable, or any grade in between
Acceptable:	*sakat 'anhu;* the grader of the hadith did not comment on it, meaning that he found nothing unacceptable in it

25.
Soorat al-Furqân

(continued)

﴿ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَآءَنَا لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ أَوْ نَرَىٰ رَبَّنَا ۗ لَقَدِ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَعَتَوْ عُتُوًّا كَبِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ لَا بُشْرَىٰ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُجْرِمِينَ وَيَقُولُونَ حِجْرًا مَّحْجُورًا ﴿٢٢﴾ وَقَدِمْنَآ إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا۟ مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَٰهُ هَبَآءً مَّنثُورًا ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٢١-٢٣)

25:21. Those who do not expect to meet Us say: Why have angels not been sent down to us, or why do we not see our Lord? Indeed they think too highly of themselves and have greatly exceeded all bounds in their arrogance.[1]

25:22. On the day when they see the angels, on that day there will be no glad tidings for the evildoers. The [angels] will say: That [glad tidings] is absolutely forbidden for you.

25:23. We will look at the [good] deeds they did and We will turn them into scattered floating specks of dust.

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

---

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

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

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

﴿Indeed they think too highly of themselves﴾ when they made these audacious suggestions. Who are you, O poor and wretched people, to demand to see Allah and claim that the proof of the message depends on that? What arrogance could be greater than this?
﴿and have greatly exceeded all bounds in their arrogance﴾ that is, they have grown very hard-hearted and become too stubborn to follow the truth; their hearts are harder than rocks or iron, and they will not soften and open to the truth or pay any heed to sincere advisers. Therefore exhortation and reminders were of no avail to them, and they did not follow the truth when the warning came to them. Rather they responded to the most truthful and sincere of people and to the clear signs and revelations of Allah by turning away, rejecting them and opposing them. What arrogance could be greater than this? Therefore their deeds were rendered invalid and they incurred the greatest loss and the utmost deprivation.

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

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

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

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

﴿أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَيْرٌ مُّسْتَقَرًّا وَأَحْسَنُ مَقِيلًا ﴿٢٤﴾﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٢٤)

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

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

﴿ وَيَوْمَ تَشَقَّقُ ٱلسَّمَآءُ بِٱلْغَمَٰمِ وَنُزِّلَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ تَنزِيلًا ﴿٢٥﴾ ٱلْمُلْكُ يَوْمَئِذٍ ٱلْحَقُّ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ ۚ وَكَانَ يَوْمًا عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَسِيرًا ﴿٢٦﴾ وَيَوْمَ يَعَضُّ ٱلظَّالِمُ عَلَىٰ يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ يَٰلَيْتَنِى ٱتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ ٱلرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا ﴿٢٧﴾ يَٰوَيْلَتَىٰ لَيْتَنِى لَمْ أَتَّخِذْ فُلَانًا خَلِيلًا ﴿٢٨﴾ لَّقَدْ أَضَلَّنِى عَنِ ٱلذِّكْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَآءَنِى ۗ وَكَانَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ خَذُولًا ﴿٢٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٢٥-٢٩)

25:25. On the day when the heaven will be rent asunder with clouds and the angels will be sent down in succession,

25:26. On that day true dominion will belong to the Most Gracious, and it will be a difficult day for the disbelievers.

25:27. On that day, the wrongdoer will bite on his hands and say: Would that I had taken a path with the Messenger.

25:28. Alas for me! Would that I had not taken So-and-so as a friend!

25:29. He led me astray from the Reminder [the Qur'an] after it had come to me. And Shaytân is ever treacherous to man.

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

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

What is meant is that the angels, even though they are so many and so strong – will descend and surround all of creation in submission to the command of their Lord. Not one of them will speak except by Allah's leave. So what do you think of weak human beings, especially the one who challenged his Sovereign by committing major sins and doing that which incurred His wrath, then he comes to Him with sins from which he never repented, for which the true Sovereign will pass judgement on him, and He will never be unjust and will not wrong him in the slightest. Hence Allah says:
﴿and it will be a difficult day for the disbelievers﴾ because it will be so hard and because of the troubles the disbeliever will go through. This is in contrast to the believer, for it will be easy for him and the burden will be light.

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿Alas for me! Would that I had not taken So-and-so﴾ – this refers to devils, be they human or *jinn*
﴿as a friend﴾ that is, as a dear and close friend; I took as enemies the most sincere and kindest of people to me and I took as friends the most hostile, from whose friendship I gained nothing but misery, loss, disgrace and doom.
﴿He led me astray from the Reminder [the Qur'an] after it had come to me﴾ when he made fair-seeming to me, by means of tricks and insinuating thoughts, what he was following of misguidance.
﴿And Shaytân is ever treacherous to man﴾ – he makes falsehood fair-seeming to him and makes the truth appear repulsive; he makes false promises, then he abandons him and disavows him, as he will

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

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

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

﴿وَقَالَ ٱلرَّسُولُ يَٰرَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِى ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ مَهْجُورًا ﴿٣٠﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِىٍّ عَدُوًّا مِّنَ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ هَادِيًا وَنَصِيرًا ﴿٣١﴾﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٣٠-٣١)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ جُمْلَةً وَٰحِدَةً ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِۦ فُؤَادَكَ ۖ وَرَتَّلْنَٰهُ تَرْتِيلًا ﴿٣٢﴾ وَلَا يَأْتُونَكَ بِمَثَلٍ إِلَّا جِئْنَٰكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَأَحْسَنَ تَفْسِيرًا ﴿٣٣﴾﴾

(سورة الفرقان: ٣٢-٣٣)

25:32. Those who disbelieve say: Why was the Qur'an not sent down to him all at once? [It has been revealed] thus so that We may strengthen your heart thereby, and We have imparted it to you by gradual revelation.

25:33. Whenever they come to you [O Muhammad] with an argument, We reveal to you the truth and the best explanation.

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

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

﴿[It has been revealed] thus﴾ that is, piecemeal

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

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

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

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

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

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

This is also a refutation of those philosopher types who try to make things difficult, such as the Jahamis[2] and others, who think that many of the Qur'anic texts are to be understood in a manner other than what their apparent meanings would suggest, and they say that they have meanings other than what may be understood from them. Therefore – according to their view – the Qur'an does not offer a better explanation than anything else; rather – according to their view – the best explanation is their own explanation in which they distorted the meanings.

﴿ٱلَّذِينَ يُحْشَرُونَ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ أُولَٰئِكَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٣٤﴾﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٣٤)

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

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

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

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

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

﴿ وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَجَعَلْنَا مَعَهُۥٓ أَخَاهُ هَٰرُونَ وَزِيرًا ﴿٣٥﴾ فَقُلْنَا ٱذْهَبَآ إِلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا فَدَمَّرْنَٰهُمْ تَدْمِيرًا ﴿٣٦﴾ وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ لَّمَّا كَذَّبُوا۟ ٱلرُّسُلَ أَغْرَقْنَٰهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَٰهُمْ لِلنَّاسِ ءَايَةً ۖ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿٣٧﴾ وَعَادًا وَثَمُودَا۟ وَأَصْحَٰبَ ٱلرَّسِّ وَقُرُونًۢا بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٣٨﴾ وَكُلًّا ضَرَبْنَا لَهُ ٱلْأَمْثَٰلَ ۖ وَكُلًّا تَبَّرْنَا تَتْبِيرًا ﴿٣٩﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَتَوْا۟ عَلَى ٱلْقَرْيَةِ ٱلَّتِىٓ أُمْطِرَتْ مَطَرَ ٱلسَّوْءِ ۚ أَفَلَمْ يَكُونُوا۟ يَرَوْنَهَا ۚ بَلْ كَانُوا۟ لَا يَرْجُونَ نُشُورًا ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٣٥-٤٠)

25:35. We gave Moosâ the Book and appointed his brother Hâroon to be with him as a helper.

25:36. We said: Go, both of you, to the people who have rejected Our signs. Then We destroyed them utterly.

25:37. And [We destroyed] the people of Nooḥ, when they rejected the Messengers; We drowned them and made them a sign for all people. And We have prepared for the wrongdoers a painful punishment.

25:38. And [We destroyed] ʿÂd and Thamood, and the people of the well,[3] and many nations between them.

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

25:39. To each of them We gave examples [of how We had dealt with previous nations who disbelieved, as a warning] and each of them We obliterated completely.

25:40. They [the disbelievers of Makkah] must surely have passed by the city [Sodom] on which an evil rain poured down. Did they not then see it? But they do not expect to be resurrected.

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

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

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

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

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

﴿ وَإِذَا رَأَوْكَ إِن يَتَّخِذُونَكَ إِلَّا هُزُوًا أَهَٰذَا الَّذِي بَعَثَ اللَّهُ رَسُولًا ﴿٤١﴾ إِن كَادَ لَيُضِلُّنَا عَنْ آلِهَتِنَا لَوْلَا أَن صَبَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا ۚ وَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ حِينَ يَرَوْنَ الْعَذَابَ مَنْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾ أَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُ هَوَاهُ أَفَأَنتَ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٤٣﴾ أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ ۚ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَنْعَامِ ۖ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٤١-٤٤)

25:41. When they see you, they treat you only with ridicule, [saying]: Is this the one whom Allah has sent as a Messenger?

25:42. He might almost have turned us away from our gods had we not been steadfast in our devotion to them. But they will come to know, when they see the punishment, who is further astray from the right path.

25:43. Have you seen the one who takes his own whims and desires as his god? Can you be his keeper?

25:44. Or do you think that most of them listen or understand? They are just like cattle; nay, they are further astray from the right path.

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

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

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

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

The reason for their casting aspersions on him and their mockery of him was their rigid adherence to their falsehood and their desire to deceive the weak-minded. Hence they said:
﴿He﴾ that is, this man (the Prophet [ﷺ]) ﴿might almost have turned us away from our gods﴾ by making the gods into One God ﴿had we not been steadfast in our devotion to them﴾, and he might almost have led us astray. They claimed that *tawheed*[4] (affirmation of the oneness of Allah) was misguidance, whereas real misguidance was what they were following of ascribing partners to Him. Therefore they urged one another to be steadfast in adhering to it.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

25:45. Have you not seen how your Lord extends the shadow? If He willed, He could make it still. Then We have made the sun an indication of it.

25:46. Then We gradually draw it [the shadow] in towards Us [as the sun climbs up].

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

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

﴿وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا وَٱلنَّوْمَ سُبَاتًا وَجَعَلَ ٱلنَّهَارَ نُشُورًا ﴿٤٧﴾﴾

(سورة الفرقان: ٤٧)

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

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

﴿وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَرْسَلَ ٱلرِّيَٰحَ بُشْرًۢا بَيْنَ يَدَىْ رَحْمَتِهِۦ ۚ وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً طَهُورًا ﴿٤٨﴾ لِّنُحْيِىَ بِهِۦ بَلْدَةً مَّيْتًا وَنُسْقِيَهُۥ مِمَّا خَلَقْنَآ أَنْعَٰمًا وَأَنَاسِىَّ كَثِيرًا ﴿٤٩﴾ وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَٰهُ بَيْنَهُمْ لِيَذَّكَّرُوا۟ فَأَبَىٰٓ أَكْثَرُ ٱلنَّاسِ إِلَّا كُفُورًا ﴿٥٠﴾﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٤٨-٥٠)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَبَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ نَّذِيرًا ﴿٥١﴾ فَلَا تُطِعِ الْكَافِرِينَ وَجَاهِدْهُم بِهِ جِهَادًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٥٢﴾﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٥١-٥٢)

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

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

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

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

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

﴿ ۞ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى مَرَجَ ٱلْبَحْرَيْنِ هَٰذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ وَهَٰذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخًا وَحِجْرًا مَّحْجُورًا ﴿٥٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٥٣)

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

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

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

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

﴿وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ مِنَ ٱلْمَآءِ بَشَرًا فَجَعَلَهُۥ نَسَبًا وَصِهْرًا ۗ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ قَدِيرًا ﴿٥٤﴾﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٥٤)

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

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

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

﴿وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنفَعُهُمْ وَلَا يَضُرُّهُمْ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱلْكَافِرُ عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِۦ ظَهِيرًا ﴿٥٥﴾﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٥٥)

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

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

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

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

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

﴿وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَٰكَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرٗا وَنَذِيرٗا ٥٦ قُلۡ مَآ أَسۡـَٔلُكُمۡ عَلَيۡهِ مِنۡ أَجۡرٍ إِلَّا مَن شَآءَ أَن يَتَّخِذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِۦ سَبِيلٗا ٥٧ وَتَوَكَّلۡ عَلَى ٱلۡحَيِّ ٱلَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ وَسَبِّحۡ بِحَمۡدِهِۦۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِهِۦ بِذُنُوبِ عِبَادِهِۦ خَبِيرًا ٥٨ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ وَمَا بَيۡنَهُمَا فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٖ ثُمَّ ٱسۡتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلۡعَرۡشِۚ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنُ فَسۡـَٔلۡ بِهِۦ خَبِيرٗا ٥٩ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ٱسۡجُدُواْ لِلرَّحۡمَٰنِ قَالُواْ وَمَا ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنُ أَنَسۡجُدُ لِمَا تَأۡمُرُنَا وَزَادَهُمۡ نُفُورَۢا ٦٠﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٥٦-٦٠)

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

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

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

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

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

Here Allah tells us that He did not send His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) to be in control of people, He did not make him an angel, and he does not possess the treasuries of things. Rather He sent him ﴿as a bearer of glad tidings﴾, to give glad tidings to those who obeyed Allah of reward in this world and in the hereafter

﴿and a warner﴾ to warn those who disobeyed Allah of punishment in this world and in the hereafter. This requires him to explain how to attain that reward and how to protect oneself from that punishment, by way of commands and prohibitions. Moreover, you – O Muhammad (ﷺ) – do not ask them for any recompense for conveying to them the Qur'an and guidance, such that this would give them an excuse for not following you and lead to them finding burdensome the fee that you ask of them.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿When it is said to them [the disbelievers]: Prostrate to the Most Gracious﴾ that is, the One Who alone bestowed all blessings upon you and warded off all harm from you,
﴿they say﴾ in denial and disbelief:
﴿What is the Most Gracious?﴾ They falsely claimed that they do not know the Most Gracious, and this is one of the things that they thought was grounds for their denial and criticism of the Messenger (ﷺ); they said: He forbids us to take other gods alongside Allah, yet he calls upon another god alongside Him and says: O Most Gracious (*Yâ Raḥmân*), and so on. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

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

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

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

﴿تَبَارَكَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ بُرُوجًا وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا سِرَٰجًا وَقَمَرًا مُّنِيرًا ﴿٦١﴾ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ خِلْفَةً لِّمَنْ أَرَادَ أَن يَذَّكَّرَ أَوْ أَرَادَ شُكُورًا ﴿٦٢﴾﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٦١-٦٢)

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿It is He Who causes the night and the day to succeed one another﴾ that is, one departs and is replaced by the other, and so on. They never meet and they are never both absent.
﴿for whoever wishes to reflect or give thanks﴾ that is, for whoever wants to reflect upon them and learn lessons, and to take them as evidence for many divine aims and purposes, and to give thanks to Allah for that; and for whoever wants to remember Allah and give thanks to Him, and who has a portion (*wird*) to recite by night or day, and if he misses reciting his regular portion for one of them, he can catch up in the other. Moreover, people's moods alter and change throughout the hours of the night and day. So they may feel energetic or feel tired, be mindful or be heedless, sometimes under stress and sometimes at ease, sometimes focusing in worship and sometimes

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

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

﴿ وَعِبَادُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ ٱلْجَٰهِلُونَ قَالُوا۟
سَلَٰمًا ﴿٦٣﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَٰمًا ﴿٦٤﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا
ٱصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا ﴿٦٥﴾ إِنَّهَا سَآءَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا
وَمُقَامًا ﴿٦٦﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا۟ وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا۟ وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ
قَوَامًا ﴿٦٧﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ ٱلنَّفْسَ ٱلَّتِى حَرَّمَ
ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ ۚ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا ﴿٦٨﴾ يُضَٰعَفْ لَهُ ٱلْعَذَابُ
يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِۦ مُهَانًا ﴿٦٩﴾ إِلَّا مَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَٰلِحًا
فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ ٱللَّهُ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ حَسَنَٰتٍ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٧٠﴾ وَمَن تَابَ
وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَإِنَّهُۥ يَتُوبُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ مَتَابًا ﴿٧١﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَشْهَدُونَ ٱلزُّورَ وَإِذَا
مَرُّوا۟ بِٱللَّغْوِ مَرُّوا۟ كِرَامًا ﴿٧٢﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَخِرُّوا۟ عَلَيْهَا
صُمًّا وَعُمْيَانًا ﴿٧٣﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَٰجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّٰتِنَا قُرَّةَ
أَعْيُنٍ وَٱجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا ﴿٧٤﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُجْزَوْنَ ٱلْغُرْفَةَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا۟

وَيُلَقَّوْنَ فِيهَا تَحِيَّةً وَسَلَامًا ﴿٧٥﴾ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ حَسُنَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا
﴿٧٦﴾ قُلْ مَا يَعْبَؤُا بِكُمْ رَبِّي لَوْلَا دُعَاؤُكُمْ ۖ فَقَدْ كَذَّبْتُمْ فَسَوْفَ يَكُونُ لِزَامًا
﴿٧٧﴾ (سورة الفرقان: ٦٣-٧٧)

25:63. The true slaves of the Most Gracious are those who walk humbly and with dignity on the earth and, when the ignorant address them, they say words of peace;

25:64. those who spend the night prostrating and standing before their Lord;

25:65. And who say: Our Lord, avert from us the punishment of hell, for verily its punishment is unrelenting.

25:66. Indeed, it is an evil halting-place and an evil abode;[6]

25:67. And who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor stingy, but follow a middle path between the [two];

25:68. Those who do not call upon any other god besides Allah; and who do not kill, for that is forbidden by Allah, except in the course of justice; and who do not commit fornication or adultery, for whoever does any of these things will receive the punishment.

25:69. The punishment will be doubled for them on the Day of Resurrection, and they will abide therein disgraced forever,

25:70. Except those who repent and believe, and do righteous deeds; for them Allah will change their evil deeds into good deeds, for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

25:71. Whoever repents to Allah and does righteous deeds has truly turned to Allah.

25:72. Those who will not witness falsehood[7] and, if they pass by [people engaged in] idle talk, they pass by with dignity;

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

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

25:73. Those who, when they are reminded of the revelations of their Lord, do not turn a deaf ear and a blind eye to them;

25:74. And those who say: Our Lord, let our spouses and children be a source of joy for us, and make us good examples for those who fear You;

25:75. Those are the ones who will be rewarded with high places in paradise for their patience and steadfastness; they will be met therein with greetings and salutations of peace.

25:76. They will abide therein forever, an excellent halting-place and an excellent abode.

25:77. Say [O Muhammad, to the disbelievers]: My Lord would not concern Himself with you, were it not for your supplication. But you have rejected the call, so it [punishment] is inevitable.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿and who do not kill, for that is forbidden by Allah﴾ – this refers to killing Muslims and disbelievers who have covenants with the Muslims
﴿except in the course of justice﴾ such as execution of murderers and previously married adulterers, and disbelievers whom it is permissible to kill (in the case of war)
﴿and who do not commit fornication or adultery﴾; rather they restrain their carnal desires:

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

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

Then Allah explains that further:

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

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

﴿Except those who repent﴾ from these sins and others, by giving them up immediately, regretting what has been done in the past and firmly resolving not to do that again

﴿and believe﴾ in Allah, with sound faith, which requires one to give up sin and do acts of obedience

﴿and do righteous deeds﴾ that are enjoined by the Lawgiver, seeking thereby the pleasure of Allah.

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

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

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

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

And Allah knows best.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

26.
Soorat ash-Shu'arâ'

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

﴿طسٓمٓ ﴿١﴾ تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلْمُبِينِ ﴿٢﴾ لَعَلَّكَ بَٰخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ أَلَّا يَكُونُوا۟ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣﴾
إِن نَّشَأْ نُنَزِّلْ عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ ءَايَةً فَظَلَّتْ أَعْنَٰقُهُمْ لَهَا خَٰضِعِينَ ﴿٤﴾ وَمَا يَأْتِيهِم مِّن ذِكْرٍ مِّنَ
ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ مُحْدَثٍ إِلَّا كَانُوا۟ عَنْهُ مُعْرِضِينَ ﴿٥﴾ فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوا۟ فَسَيَأْتِيهِمْ أَنۢبَٰٓؤُا۟ مَا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ
﴿٦﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ إِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ كَمْ أَنۢبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٧﴾ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ
أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٩﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١-٩)

26:1. Ṭâ'. Seen. Meem.[10]

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

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

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

26:4. If We willed, We could send down to them a sign from heaven, at which their heads would be bowed in submission.

26:5. No fresh revelation comes to them from the Most Gracious, but they turn away from it.

26:6. Thus they denied [the revelation], but soon they will learn the consequences of their ridicule.

26:7. Do they not see the earth, and how much We have caused to grow therein of all kinds of beneficial plants?

26:8. Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe.

26:9. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Allah says, pointing out the type of reflection that may be of benefit:
﴿Do they not see the earth, and how much We have caused to grow therein of all kinds of beneficial plants?﴾ That is, all kinds of beautiful plants that are of benefit to people

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

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

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

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

﴿وَإِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبُّكَ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنِ ٱئْتِ ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ قَوْمَ فِرْعَوْنَ ۚ أَلَا يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١١﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّيٓ أَخَافُ أَن يُكَذِّبُونِ ﴿١٢﴾ وَيَضِيقُ صَدْرِي وَلَا يَنطَلِقُ لِسَانِي فَأَرْسِلْ إِلَىٰ هَٰرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَلَهُمْ عَلَيَّ ذَنۢبٌ فَأَخَافُ أَن يَقْتُلُونِ ﴿١٤﴾ قَالَ كَلَّا ۖ فَٱذْهَبَا بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ ۖ إِنَّا مَعَكُم مُّسْتَمِعُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ فَأْتِيَا فِرْعَوْنَ فَقُولَآ إِنَّا رَسُولُ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ أَنْ أَرْسِلْ مَعَنَا بَنِيٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿١٧﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١٠-١٧)

26:10. And [remember] when your Lord called Moosâ [saying]: Go to the people who are given to wrongdoing,

26:11. The people of Pharaoh; will they not fear [the punishment of Allah]?

26:12. Moosâ said: My Lord, I fear that they will reject me

26:13. and I will feel distressed, and my speech will not be clear; so send for Hâroon [to help me].

26:14. Moreover, they have a charge against me, and I am afraid they will kill me.

26:15. Allah said: By no means! Go, both of you, with Our signs; We will be with you, listening.

26:16. Go, both of you, to Pharaoh and say: We are Messengers of the Lord of the worlds,

26:17. [sent with the message]: Let the Children of Israel go with us.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿قَالَ أَلَمْ نُرَبِّكَ فِينَا وَلِيدًا وَلَبِثْتَ فِينَا مِنْ عُمُرِكَ سِنِينَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَفَعَلْتَ فَعْلَتَكَ ٱلَّتِي فَعَلْتَ وَأَنتَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ قَالَ فَعَلْتُهَآ إِذًا وَأَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ فَفَرَرْتُ مِنكُمْ لَمَّا خِفْتُكُمْ فَوَهَبَ لِي رَبِّي حُكْمًا وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَتِلْكَ نِعْمَةٌ تَمُنُّهَا عَلَيَّ أَنْ عَبَّدتَّ بَنِيٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١٨-٢٢)

26:18. Pharaoh said: Did we not bring you up as a child among us, and did you not spend many years of your life among us?

26:19. Yet you did the deed you did [the crime of killing a man]; at that time, you were a disbeliever.

26:20. Moosâ said: I did it then, when I was in a state of ignorance.

26:21. So I fled from you, as I was afraid of you. But [since then] my Lord has granted me wisdom and made me one of the Messengers.

26:22. Is this the favour for which you reproach me, that you have enslaved the Children of Israel?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿ قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَا رَبُّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾ قَالَ رَبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ ۖ إِن كُنتُم
مُّوقِنِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾ قَالَ لِمَنْ حَوْلَهُۥٓ أَلَا تَسْتَمِعُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ ءَابَآئِكُمُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾
قَالَ إِنَّ رَسُولَكُمُ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ لَمَجْنُونٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ قَالَ رَبُّ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَٱلْمَغْرِبِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ

إِن كُنتُم تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ قَالَ لَئِنِ اتَّخَذْتَ إِلَٰهًا غَيْرِي لَأَجْعَلَنَّكَ مِنَ الْمَسْجُونِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ قَالَ أَوَلَوْ جِئْتُكَ بِشَيْءٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣٠﴾ قَالَ فَأْتِ بِهِ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٢٣-٣١)

26:23. Pharaoh said: And what is the 'Lord of the worlds'?

26:24. Moosâ said: The Lord of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, if you would but be convinced!

26:25. Pharaoh said to those around him: Did you hear [what he said]?

26:26. Moosâ said: He is your Lord, and the Lord of your forefathers.

26:27. Pharaoh said: Indeed your Messenger who has been sent to you is surely insane!

26:28. Moosâ said: He is Lord of the east and the west and all that is between them, if you would but understand!

26:29. Pharaoh said: If you take any god other than me, I will surely throw you into prison.

26:30. Moosâ said: Even if I bring you clear proof?

26:31. Pharaoh said: Bring it then, if you are telling the truth!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿Pharaoh said: Bring it then, if you are telling the truth!﴾

﴿فَأَلْقَىٰ عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُۥ فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَآءُ لِلنَّٰظِرِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ قَالَ لِلْمَلَإِ حَوْلَهُۥٓ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَسَٰحِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ يُرِيدُ أَن يُخْرِجَكُم مِّنْ أَرْضِكُم بِسِحْرِهِۦ فَمَاذَا تَأْمُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ أَرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ وَٱبْعَثْ فِى ٱلْمَدَآئِنِ حَٰشِرِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ يَأْتُوكَ بِكُلِّ سَحَّارٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٧﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٣٢-٣٧)

26:32. So Moosâ threw down his staff, and suddenly it was a serpent, plain for all to see

26:33. And he drew forth his hand, and it appeared shining white to all beholders.

26:34. Pharaoh said to the chiefs around him: Verily this is a learned magician!

26:35. He wants to drive you out of your land with his magic. What then do you advise?

26:36. They said: Let him and his brother wait a while, and send heralds to the cities to gather

26:37. and bring to you all the learned magicians.

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

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

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

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

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

﴿They said: Let him and his brother wait a while﴾ that is, delay them ﴿and send heralds to the cities to gather and bring to you all the learned magicians﴾ that is, send word to all of your cities that are seats of knowledge and places where magic originates, and send people to gather every skilled magician who is knowledgeable about magic,

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

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

﴿ فَجُمِعَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ لِمِيقَٰتِ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَقِيلَ لِلنَّاسِ هَلْ أَنتُم مُّجْتَمِعُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ لَعَلَّنَا
نَتَّبِعُ ٱلسَّحَرَةَ إِن كَانُوا۟ هُمُ ٱلْغَٰلِبِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ قَالُوا۟ لِفِرْعَوْنَ أَئِنَّ لَنَا لَأَجْرًا
إِن كُنَّا نَحْنُ ٱلْغَٰلِبِينَ ﴿٤١﴾ قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ إِذًا لَّمِنَ ٱلْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ قَالَ لَهُم مُّوسَىٰٓ أَلْقُوا۟
مَآ أَنتُم مُّلْقُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ فَأَلْقَوْا۟ حِبَالَهُمْ وَعِصِيَّهُمْ وَقَالُوا۟ بِعِزَّةِ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّا لَنَحْنُ ٱلْغَٰلِبُونَ
﴿٤٤﴾ فَأَلْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِىَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ فَأُلْقِىَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ سَٰجِدِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾
قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ رَبِّ مُوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ قَالَ ءَامَنتُمْ لَهُۥ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَاذَنَ لَكُمْ ۖ
إِنَّهُۥ لَكَبِيرُكُمُ ٱلَّذِى عَلَّمَكُمُ ٱلسِّحْرَ ۚ فَلَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۚ لَأُقَطِّعَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُم مِّنْ خِلَٰفٍ
وَلَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾ قَالُوا۟ لَا ضَيْرَ ۖ إِنَّآ إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا مُنقَلِبُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ إِنَّا نَطْمَعُ أَن يَغْفِرَ لَنَا
رَبُّنَا خَطَٰيَٰنَآ أَن كُنَّآ أَوَّلَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٣٨-٥١)

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

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

26:40. So that we may follow the magicians [in their religion], if they are the victors?

26:41. When the magicians came, they said to Pharaoh: Will we have a reward if we are the victors?

26:42. He said: Yes, and then you will surely be among those who are close to me.

26:43. Moosâ said to them: Throw whatever you wish to throw.

26:44. So they threw their ropes and sticks, and said: By the might of Pharaoh, it is surely we who will be the victors!

26:45. Then Moosâ threw his staff, and thereupon it swallowed up all their deceptions.

26:46. So the magicians fell down in prostration.

26:47. They said: We believe in the Lord of the worlds,

26:48. The Lord of Moosâ and Hâroon.

26:49. Pharaoh said: How dare you believe him before I give you permission! He must be your master, who taught you magic! But indeed you will soon know the consequences. I will certainly cut off your hands and feet on opposite sides, then I will certainly crucify you all.

26:50. They said: No harm;[11] it is to our Lord that we will surely return.

26:51. Verily we hope that our Lord will forgive us our sins, as we are the first of the believers.

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

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

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

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

﴿When the magicians came﴾ to Pharaoh, they said to him: ﴿Will we have a reward if we are the victors﴾ over Moosâ?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿ وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنْ أَسْرِ بِعِبَادِى إِنَّكُم مُّتَّبَعُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ فَأَرْسَلَ فِرْعَوْنُ فِى ٱلْمَدَآئِنِ
حَٰشِرِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾ إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ لَشِرْذِمَةٌ قَلِيلُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَنَا لَغَآئِظُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ وَإِنَّا لَجَمِيعٌ حَٰذِرُونَ

﴿٥٦﴾ فَأَخْرَجْنَٰهُم مِّن جَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَكُنُوزٍ وَمَقَامٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٥٨﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ وَأَوْرَثْنَٰهَا بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿٥٩﴾ فَأَتْبَعُوهُم مُّشْرِقِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٥٢-٦٠)

26:52. We inspired Moosâ: Travel by night with My slaves; you will surely be pursued.

26:53. So Pharaoh sent heralds to the cities [to mobilise troops],

26:54. saying: These are but a small band,

26:55. and they have enraged us,

26:56. but we are all well-prepared.

26:57. Thus did We cause them to leave their gardens and springs,

26:58. And their treasures and fine dwellings.

26:59. And so it was; and We caused the Children of Israel to inherit such things.

26:60. Then [the Egyptians] caught up with them at sunrise.

﴿Travel by night with My slaves﴾ that is, set out with the Israelites at the beginning of the night, so that they may take their time when leaving

﴿you will surely be pursued﴾ that is, Pharaoh and his troops will come after you.

And it happened as Allah said: when morning came, and all the Israelites had already departed with Moosâ at night,

﴿Pharaoh sent heralds to the cities﴾ to rally his people and urge them to capture the Israelites. He said, encouraging his people:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿فَلَمَّا تَرَٰٓءَا ٱلْجَمْعَانِ قَالَ أَصْحَٰبُ مُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّا لَمُدْرَكُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ قَالَ كَلَّآ ۖ إِنَّ مَعِىَ رَبِّى سَيَهْدِينِ ﴿٦٢﴾ فَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنِ ٱضْرِب بِّعَصَاكَ ٱلْبَحْرَ ۖ فَٱنفَلَقَ فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرْقٍ كَٱلطَّوْدِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٦٣﴾ وَأَزْلَفْنَا ثَمَّ ٱلْءَاخَرِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾ وَأَنجَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ وَمَن مَّعَهُۥٓ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾ ثُمَّ

أَغْرَقْنَا ٱلْءَاخَرِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٦٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٦١-٦٨)

26:61. When the two groups came within sight of one another, the companions of Moosâ said: We are sure to be overtaken.

26:62. Moosâ said: No indeed! Verily my Lord is with me and He will guide me.

26:63. Then We inspired Moosâ: Strike the sea with your staff. So it parted, and every part became like a huge mountain.[12]

26:64. We brought the other group closer to that place.

26:65. We saved Moosâ and all those who were with him,

26:66. Then We drowned the others.

26:67. Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe.

26:68. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

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

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

﴿Moosâ said﴾, reassuring them and telling them of the true promise of his Lord:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿Verily in that is a sign﴾ that is, a great sign of the truthfulness of the message brought by Moosâ, and the falseness of the path followed by Pharaoh and his people.
﴿yet most of them will not believe﴾ despite these signs that should lead to faith, because of the corruption in their hearts.

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

﴿وَٱتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ﴿٦٩﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِۦ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾ قَالُوا۟ نَعْبُدُ
أَصْنَامًا فَنَظَلُّ لَهَا عَٰكِفِينَ ﴿٧١﴾ قَالَ هَلْ يَسْمَعُونَكُمْ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ أَوْ يَنفَعُونَكُمْ أَوْ
يَضُرُّونَ ﴿٧٣﴾ قَالُوا۟ بَلْ وَجَدْنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا كَذَٰلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٦٩-٧٤)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

– and they said to him:

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

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

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

﴿ قَالَ أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ أَنتُمْ وَءَابَآؤُكُمُ ٱلْأَقْدَمُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِّىٓ
إِلَّا رَبَّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَنِى فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ ﴿٧٨﴾ وَٱلَّذِى هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِى وَيَسْقِينِ ﴿٧٩﴾
وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَٱلَّذِى يُمِيتُنِى ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ ﴿٨١﴾ وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَطْمَعُ أَن
يَغْفِرَ لِى خَطِيٓـَٔتِى يَوْمَ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿٨٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٧٥-٨٢)

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

Ibrâheem said to them: You and your fathers are all on the opposing side concerning this matter. ﴿Then do you see those which you have been worshipping, you and your forefathers? Verily they are enemies to me﴾ so let them do me the least harm, and let them scheme against me, for they are not able to do anything.

﴿except the Lord of the worlds, Who created me, so He guides me﴾, for He is the only One Who bestows blessings upon people and guides them to that which is in their best interests in both spiritual and worldly terms; then he singled out for mention some necessities of life, as he said: ﴿And it is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink. When I am sick He heals me; and He will cause me to die, and then bring me to life again; and I hope that He will forgive me my sins on the Day of Judgement﴾.

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

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

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

﴿رَبِّ هَبْ لِي حُكْمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَاجْعَل لِّي لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِي الْآخِرِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَاجْعَلْنِي مِن وَرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٨٥﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٨٣-٨٥)

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

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

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

Then Ibrâheem (عليه السلام) called upon his Lord, saying: ﴿My Lord, grant me knowledge and wisdom﴾ that is, a great deal of knowledge, by means of which I may know rulings and what is lawful and what is prohibited, and I may be able to judge between people.
﴿and join me with the righteous﴾ – this refers to his fellow Prophets and Messengers.

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

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

﴿وَٱغْفِرْ لِأَبِىٓ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَلَا تُخْزِنِى يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾ يَوْمَ لَا يَنفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى ٱللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ﴿٨٩﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٨٦-٨٩)

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

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

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

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

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

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

But Allah (ﷻ) said:

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

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

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

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

﴿ وَأُزْلِفَتِ ٱلْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾ وَبُرِّزَتِ ٱلْجَحِيمُ لِلْغَاوِينَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ هَلْ يَنصُرُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَنتَصِرُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾ فَكُبْكِبُوا۟ فِيهَا هُمْ وَٱلْغَاوُۥنَ ﴿٩٤﴾ وَجُنُودُ إِبْلِيسَ أَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٩٠-٩٥)

26:90. [On that day] paradise will be brought within sight of the righteous,

26:91. And hell will be placed in full view of those who went astray.

26:92. It will be said to them: Where are those whom you used to worship

26:93. besides Allah? Can they help you or even help themselves?

26:94. Then they will be thrown headlong into hell, both they [the false gods] and those who went astray,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿ قَالُوا۟ وَهُمْ فِيهَا يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾ تَٱللَّهِ إِن كُنَّا لَفِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٩٧﴾ إِذْ نُسَوِّيكُم بِرَبِّ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾ وَمَآ أَضَلَّنَآ إِلَّا ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾ فَمَا لَنَا مِن شَٰفِعِينَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ وَلَا صَدِيقٍ حَمِيمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾
فَلَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٣﴾ وَإِنَّ
رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٠٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٩٦-١٠٤)

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

26:97. By Allah, we were clearly misguided

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

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

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

26:101. and no caring friend.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

26:105. The people of Nooḥ rejected the Messengers.
26:106. When their brother Nooḥ said to them: Will you not fear Allah?
26:107. Verily I am a faithful Messenger to you,
26:108. So fear Allah, and obey me.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿I do not ask you for any recompense for this﴾ so I am not imposing any burden on you

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

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

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

– and:

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

﴿ ۞ قَالُوٓا۟ أَنُؤْمِنُ لَكَ وَٱتَّبَعَكَ ٱلْأَرْذَلُونَ ﴿١١١﴾ قَالَ وَمَا عِلْمِى بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾
إِنْ حِسَابُهُمْ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّى ۖ لَوْ تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ بِطَارِدِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾ إِنْ أَنَا۠ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ
﴿١١٥﴾ قَالُوا۟ لَئِن لَّمْ تَنتَهِ يَٰنُوحُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْمَرْجُومِينَ ﴿١١٦﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِى كَذَّبُونِ
﴿١١٧﴾ فَٱفْتَحْ بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَهُمْ فَتْحًا وَنَجِّنِى وَمَن مَّعِىَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾ فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَمَن مَّعَهُۥ
فِى ٱلْفُلْكِ ٱلْمَشْحُونِ ﴿١١٩﴾ ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا بَعْدُ ٱلْبَاقِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ
أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٢١﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٢٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١١١-١٢٢)

26:111. They said: Should we believe in you when only the lowest people follow you?

26:112. Nooḥ said: What knowledge do I have of their doings?[13]

26:113. Their reckoning[14] is only with my Lord, if you could but understand.

26:114. I will not drive away those who believe;

26:115. I am to you but a clear warner.

26:116. They said: If you do not desist, O Nooḥ, you will surely be stoned.

26:117. He said: My Lord, my people have rejected me.

26:118. So judge decisively between me and them, and save me and the believers who are with me.

26:119. So We saved him and those who were with him, in the fully-laden ark.

26:120. Then after that We drowned the others.

26:121. Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe.

26:122. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿Then after that﴾ that is, after Nooḥ and the believers who were with him
﴿We drowned the others﴾ that is, all of his people.

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

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

﴿Verily your Lord is the Almighty﴾ Who subjugated His enemies by His might, so He drowned them in the flood

﴿the Most Merciful﴾ towards His close friends, for He saved Nooh and the believers who were with him.

﴿كَذَّبَتْ عَادٌ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ هُودٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٢٥﴾ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٢٦﴾ وَمَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٢٧﴾ أَتَبْنُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيعٍ ءَايَةً تَعْبَثُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾ وَتَتَّخِذُونَ مَصَانِعَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾ وَإِذَا بَطَشْتُم بَطَشْتُمْ جَبَّارِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٣١﴾ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَمَدَّكُم بِمَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾ أَمَدَّكُم بِأَنْعَٰمٍ وَبَنِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾ وَجَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿١٣٤﴾ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٣٥﴾ قَالُوا۟ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْنَآ أَوَعَظْتَ أَمْ لَمْ تَكُن مِّنَ ٱلْوَٰعِظِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا خُلُقُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿١٣٨﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَهْلَكْنَٰهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٤٠﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١٢٣-١٤٠)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

26:129. And do you construct magnificent works in the hope of living forever?

26:130. And when you strike, do you strike ruthlessly?

26:131. So fear Allah, and obey me.

26:132. And fear Him Who has bestowed upon you what you know:

26:133. He has bestowed upon you livestock and sons,

26:134. And gardens and springs.

26:135. Verily I fear for you the punishment of a momentous day.

26:136. They said: It is the same to us whether you admonish us or not.

26:137. This is only the custom of those who came before us,

26:138. And we are not going to be punished.

26:139. Thus they rejected him, so We destroyed them. Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe.

26:140. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

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

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

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

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

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= (ash-Shawkâni)

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

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

﴿And do you construct magnificent works﴾ namely ponds and reservoirs
﴿in the hope of living forever?﴾ When in fact there is no way anyone can live forever.

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

﴿...Who is more powerful than us?...﴾ *(Fussilat 41: 15)*
– and they used their strength to disobey Allah and for vain and foolish purposes. Hence their Prophet told them not to do that.

﴿So fear Allah﴾ and give up your ascription of partners to Him and your insolence
﴿and obey me﴾ as you know that I am the Messenger of Allah to you, and I am honest and sincere.

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿Thus they rejected him﴾ that is, rejection became second nature to them, and they could not be deterred from it, ﴿so We destroyed them﴾.

﴿And as for 'Âd, they were destroyed by a furious cold wind which He unleashed against them for seven nights and eight days in succession,

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

﴿Verily in that is a sign﴾ of the truthfulness of Our Prophet Hood (ﷺ) and the soundness of the message he brought, and the falseness of the path of polytheism and tyranny followed by his people.
﴿yet most of them will not believe﴾ despite the signs that should lead to faith.

﴿Verily your Lord is the Almighty﴾, Who destroyed by His might the people of Hood, despite their strength and power
﴿the Most Merciful﴾ towards His Prophet Hood, as He saved him and the believers who were with him.

﴿كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ صَٰلِحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٤٢﴾ إِنِّى لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ
أَمِينٌ ﴿١٤٣﴾ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٤٤﴾ وَمَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾ أَتُتْرَكُونَ فِى مَا هَٰهُنَآ ءَامِنِينَ ﴿١٤٦﴾ فِى جَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿١٤٧﴾ وَزُرُوعٍ وَنَخْلٍ
طَلْعُهَا هَضِيمٌ ﴿١٤٨﴾ وَتَنْحِتُونَ مِنَ ٱلْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا فَٰرِهِينَ ﴿١٤٩﴾ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٥٠﴾
وَلَا تُطِيعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿١٥١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يُفْسِدُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٢﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَآ
أَنتَ مِنَ ٱلْمُسَحَّرِينَ ﴿١٥٣﴾ مَآ أَنتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا فَأْتِ بِـَٔايَةٍ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ
﴿١٥٤﴾ قَالَ هَٰذِهِۦ نَاقَةٌ لَّهَا شِرْبٌ وَلَكُمْ شِرْبُ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿١٥٥﴾ وَلَا تَمَسُّوهَا بِسُوٓءٍ فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ
عَذَابُ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٥٦﴾ فَعَقَرُوهَا فَأَصْبَحُوا۟ نَٰدِمِينَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ فَأَخَذَهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ ۗ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٥٨﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٥٩﴾﴾

(سورة الشعراء: ١٤١-١٥٩)

26:141. Thamood rejected the Messengers.

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

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

26:144. So fear Allah, and obey me.

26:145. I do not ask you for any recompense for this; my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds.

26:146. Will you be left secure [from death and punishment] in the midst of what you have here,

26:147. Amidst gardens and springs,

26:148. And cornfields and palm trees laden with ripe fruit,

26:149. Carving out houses in the mountains with great skill?

26:150. So fear Allah, and obey me,

26:151. And do not obey the bidding of the transgressors,

26:152. Those who spread mischief in the land and do no good at all.

26:153. They said: You are but one of those who are bewitched!

26:154. You are but a human being like ourselves. So bring us a sign, if you are telling the truth.

26:155. Ṣâliḥ said: Here is a she-camel; she will have her share of water and you will have your share, each on an appointed day.

26:156. Do not harm her in any way, lest the punishment of a momentous day overtake you.

26:157. But they hamstrung her, then they came to regret it.

26:158. So the punishment overtook them. Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe.

26:159. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

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

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

﴿Verily I am a faithful Messenger to you﴾ from Allah your Lord; He has sent me to you out of kindness and mercy towards you, so accept His mercy and respond to it with submission.
﴿faithful﴾ – you know my honesty and sincerity, which requires you to believe in me and in the message that I have brought.

﴿I do not ask you for any recompense for this﴾ so that you might say: What prevents us from following you is the fact that you want to take our wealth
﴿my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds﴾ that is, I only seek reward from Him.

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

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

﴿So fear Allah, and obey me, and do not obey the bidding of the transgressors﴾ who overstep the mark,
﴿Those who spread mischief in the land and do no good at all﴾ that is, those whose characteristic and preoccupation is the spreading of mischief in the land by committing sins and calling people to them, spreading mischief and not doing any good at all. This is the most harmful of all attitudes, because it is pure evil.

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

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

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

﴿You are but a human being like ourselves﴾; what makes you better than us so that you call us to follow you?
﴿So bring us a sign, if you are telling the truth﴾ – this was despite the fact that reflecting on him as an individual and the message that he brought were among the greatest of clear signs that would prove that the message he brought was true. But because of their hardheartedness they demanded specific signs, and in most cases the one who demands signs will not benefit from them, because his demand is based on stubbornness, not on seeking guidance.

So Ṣâliḥ said: ﴿Here is a she-camel﴾ that came out of solid, smooth rock (in this regard we are following many commentators, and there is no reason not to do so) – you will all see her.
﴿she will have her share of water and you will have your share, each on an appointed day﴾ that is, she will drink water from the well on one day, and you will drink her milk, then on the next day she will move away, and you can drink from the well.

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

﴿But they hamstrung her, then they came to regret it. So the punishment overtook them﴾ – that was the blast that came upon them and destroyed them all.
﴿Verily in that is a sign﴾ of the truthfulness of the message brought by Our Messengers and the falseness of what their opponents said.
﴿yet most of them will not believe. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful﴾.

﴿كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ لُوطٍ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٦٠﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ لُوطٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٦١﴾ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ
أَمِينٌ ﴿١٦٢﴾ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٦٣﴾ وَمَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ
رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٦٤﴾ أَتَأْتُونَ ٱلذُّكْرَانَ مِنَ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٦٥﴾ وَتَذَرُونَ مَا خَلَقَ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُم مِّنْ
أَزْوَٰجِكُم ۚ بَلْ أَنتُمْ قَوْمٌ عَادُونَ ﴿١٦٦﴾ قَالُوا۟ لَئِن لَّمْ تَنتَهِ يَٰلُوطُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْمُخْرَجِينَ ﴿١٦٧﴾
قَالَ إِنِّي لِعَمَلِكُم مِّنَ ٱلْقَالِينَ ﴿١٦٨﴾ رَبِّ نَجِّنِي وَأَهْلِي مِمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾ فَنَجَّيْنَٰهُ وَأَهْلَهُۥٓ
أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٧٠﴾ إِلَّا عَجُوزًا فِي ٱلْغَٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٧١﴾ ثُمَّ دَمَّرْنَا ٱلْـَٔاخَرِينَ ﴿١٧٢﴾ وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِم مَّطَرًا ۖ فَسَآءَ
مَطَرُ ٱلْمُنذَرِينَ ﴿١٧٣﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧٤﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ
ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٧٥﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١٦٠-١٧٥)

26:160. The people of Loot rejected the Messengers.

26:161. When their brother Loot said to them: Will you not fear Allah?

26:162. Verily I am a faithful Messenger to you,

26:163. So fear Allah, and obey me.

26:164. I do not ask you for any recompense for this; my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds.

26:165. Do you approach with lust the males, of all the people?

26:166. And ignore that which your Lord has created for you of your wives?[16] You are indeed people who transgress.

26:167. They said: If you do not desist, O Loot, you will surely be driven away.

26:168. Loot said: I utterly abhor your deeds.

26:169. My Lord, save me and my family from [the consequences of] what they do.

26:170. So We saved him and all his family,

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

26:171. Except an old woman who stayed behind.

26:172. Then We destroyed the others

26:173. and We let loose upon them a shower [of stones]. And evil was the shower that fell upon those who had been warned [but did not pay heed].

26:174. Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe.

26:175. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

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

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

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

﴿Then We destroyed the others and We let loose upon them a shower [of stones]﴾ that is, stones of baked clay.
﴿And evil was the shower that fell upon those who had been warned [but did not pay heed]﴾ for it destroyed every last one of them.

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

﴿ كَذَّبَ أَصْحَٰبُ لْـَٔيْكَةِ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٧٦﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ شُعَيْبٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾ إِنِّى لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ
أَمِينٌ ﴿١٧٨﴾ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٧٩﴾ وَمَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٨٠﴾ أَوْفُوا۟ ٱلْكَيْلَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْمُخْسِرِينَ ﴿١٨١﴾ وَزِنُوا۟ بِٱلْقِسْطَاسِ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمِ
﴿١٨٢﴾ وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا۟ ٱلنَّاسَ أَشْيَآءَهُمْ وَلَا تَعْثَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿١٨٣﴾ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱلَّذِى
خَلَقَكُمْ وَٱلْجِبِلَّةَ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٨٤﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مِنَ ٱلْمُسَحَّرِينَ ﴿١٨٥﴾ وَمَآ أَنتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ
مِّثْلُنَا وَإِن نَّظُنُّكَ لَمِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿١٨٦﴾ فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسَفًا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ
ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٨٧﴾ قَالَ رَبِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابُ يَوْمِ ٱلظُّلَّةِ ۚ
إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٨٩﴾ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾ وَإِنَّ
رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٩١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١٧٦-١٩١)

26:176. The dwellers of the Wood rejected the Messengers.

26:177. When Shu'ayb said to them: Will you not fear Allah?

26:178. Verily I am a faithful Messenger to you,

26:179. So fear Allah, and obey me.

26:180. I do not ask you for any recompense for this; my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds.

26:181. Give full measure and do not be among those who defraud others;

26:182. and weigh with accurate scales;

26:183. and do not undermine people's rights and dues, and do not strive to spread mischief in the land.

26:184. And fear Him Who created you and those who came before you.

26:185. They said: You are but one of those who are bewitched!

26:186. You are but a human being like ourselves. We think you are nothing but a liar.

26:187. Then cause pieces of the sky to fall upon us,[17] if you are telling the truth.

26:188. Shu'ayb said: My Lord knows best what you do.

26:189. Thus they rejected him, so they were overtaken by the punishment of the day of the overshadowing cloud,[18] and that was the punishment of a momentous day.

26:190. Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them will not believe.

26:191. Verily your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.

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

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

﴿Verily I am a faithful Messenger to you﴾ which dictates that you should fear Allah and obey me. In addition to their polytheism, they used to give short weight and measure, so he said to them:
﴿Give full measure﴾ that is, give the complete amount,
﴿and do not be among those who defraud others﴾ that is, those who detract from people's wealth and steal it by giving short weight and measure.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿وَإِنَّهُۥ لَتَنزِيلُ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٩٢﴾ نَزَلَ بِهِ ٱلرُّوحُ ٱلْأَمِينُ ﴿١٩٣﴾ عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُنذِرِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾ بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١٩٥﴾ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَفِى زُبُرِ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٩٦﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُمْ ءَايَةً أَن يَعْلَمَهُۥ عُلَمَٰٓؤُا۟ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿١٩٧﴾ وَلَوْ نَزَّلْنَٰهُ عَلَىٰ بَعْضِ ٱلْأَعْجَمِينَ ﴿١٩٨﴾ فَقَرَأَهُۥ عَلَيْهِم مَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٩٩﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ سَلَكْنَٰهُ فِى قُلُوبِ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٢٠٠﴾ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ حَتَّىٰ يَرَوُا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ ٱلْأَلِيمَ ﴿٢٠١﴾ فَيَأْتِيَهُم بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢٠٢﴾ فَيَقُولُوا۟ هَلْ نَحْنُ مُنظَرُونَ ﴿٢٠٣﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ١٩٢-٢٠٣)

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

26:193. The faithful Spirit has brought it down

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

26:195. in clear Arabic speech.

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

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

26:198. If We had sent it down to any of the non-Arabs,

26:199. and he had recited it to them, they still would not have believed in it.

26:200. Thus We let it [disbelief] enter the hearts of the evildoers.

26:201. They will not believe in it until they see the painful punishment.

26:202. It will come upon them suddenly, when they least expect it.

26:203. Then they will say: Can we be granted some respite?

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

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

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

﴿The faithful Spirit has brought it down﴾ – the faithful Spirit is Jibreel (عليه السلام), who is the best and strongest of the angels. The word

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

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

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

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

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

﴿Rather he has brought the truth and confirmed the [message of the earlier] Messengers.﴾ *(as-Saffāt 37: 37)*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿أَفَبِعَذَابِنَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ﴿٢٠٤﴾ أَفَرَءَيْتَ إِن مَّتَّعْنَٰهُمْ سِنِينَ ﴿٢٠٥﴾ ثُمَّ جَآءَهُم مَّا كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٢٠٦﴾ مَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا يُمَتَّعُونَ ﴿٢٠٧﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٢٠٤-٢٠٧)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿وَمَآ أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا لَهَا مُنذِرُونَ ﴿٢٠٨﴾ ذِكْرَىٰ وَمَا كُنَّا ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٠٩﴾ وَمَا تَنَزَّلَتْ بِهِ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينُ ﴿٢١٠﴾ وَمَا يَنۢبَغِى لَهُمْ وَمَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ﴿٢١١﴾ إِنَّهُمْ عَنِ ٱلسَّمْعِ لَمَعْزُولُونَ ﴿٢١٢﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٢٠٨-٢١٢)

26:208. We never destroyed any city without first sending Messengers to warn it

26:209. by way of reminder, for We are never unjust.

26:210. It was not the devils who brought this [Qur'an] down;

26:211. It is not appropriate for them to do that, nor is it within their capability.

26:212. Indeed they are excluded from hearing it [the Qur'an].

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

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

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

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

– and:

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

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

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

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

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

﴿فَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿٢١٣﴾ وَأَنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ ٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ ﴿٢١٤﴾ وَٱخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢١٥﴾ فَإِنْ عَصَوْكَ فَقُلْ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢١٦﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٢١٣-٢١٦)

26:213. Do not call upon any other god alongside Allah, lest you be among those who will be punished.

26:214. And [O Muhammad] warn your nearest kinsfolk,

26:215. And lower your wing [in humility and gentleness] to the believers who follow you.

26:216. Then if they [your kinsfolk] disobey you, say: I am not accountable for what you do.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

26:223. Who listens eagerly [to what the devils say], but most of them are liars.

26:224. As for poets, those who are misguided follow them.

26:225. Do you not see that they wander aimlessly from one idle pursuit to another,[20]

26:226. and that they say that which they do not do,

26:227. except those who believe, do righteous deeds, remember Allah much and defend themselves after having been wronged?[21] And those who do wrong will come to know what fate awaits them.

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

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

﴿They descend upon every evil liar﴾ that is, one who speaks much falsehood and fabricates lies.
﴿evil﴾ that is, in his deeds; he commits a lot of sin. This is the one upon whom the devils descend, for his character matches theirs and they are compatible.

﴿Who listens eagerly [to what the devils say]﴾ that is, what they snatch from heaven
﴿but most of them are liars﴾ that is, most of what they say to him is lies. They may say one thing that is true, and add a hundred lies to it,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

27.
Soorat an-Naml

(Makki)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

﴿طسٓ تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلْقُرْءَانِ وَكِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١﴾ هُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَهُم بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ زَيَّنَّا لَهُمْ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فَهُمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿٤﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَهُمْ سُوٓءُ ٱلْعَذَابِ وَهُمْ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمُ ٱلْأَخْسَرُونَ ﴿٥﴾ وَإِنَّكَ لَتُلَقَّى ٱلْقُرْءَانَ مِن لَّدُنْ حَكِيمٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿٦﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ١-٦)

27:1. Ṭâ'. Seen.[22] These are verses of the Qur'an and the clear Book,

27:2. guidance and glad tidings for the believers,

27:3. those who establish prayer and give zakâh, and who believe with certainty in the hereafter.

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

27:4. As for those who do not believe in the hereafter, We have made their deeds fair-seeming to them, so they wander blindly [in their misguidance].

27:5. Such are the ones who will have a grievous punishment, and in the hereafter, it is they who will be the greatest losers.

27:6. Verily you [O Muhammad] are receiving the Qur'an from One Who is Most Wise, All-Knowing.

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

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

Hence He says:

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

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

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

﴿and give zakâh﴾ as is obligatory, to those who are entitled to it.

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

﴿As for those who do not believe in the hereafter﴾ and they deny it and reject the one who was sent to confirm it to them,

﴿We have made their deeds fair-seeming to them, so they wander blindly [in their misguidance]﴾. They are confused and give precedence to that which incurs the wrath of Allah over that which earns His pleasure. They have turned facts on their heads, so they see falsehood as truth and truth as falsehood.

﴿Such are the ones who will have a grievous punishment﴾ that is, the most severe and dreadful punishment

﴿and in the hereafter, it is they who will be the greatest losers﴾ – the loss will be theirs alone, because they will have lost themselves and their families on the Day of Resurrection, and they will have lost the faith to which the Messengers called them.

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

﴿إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِأَهْلِهِۦٓ إِنِّىٓ ءَانَسْتُ نَارًا سَـَٔاتِيكُم مِّنْهَا بِخَبَرٍ أَوْ ءَاتِيكُم بِشِهَابٍ قَبَسٍ لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ ﴿٧﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهَا نُودِىَ أَنۢ بُورِكَ مَن فِى ٱلنَّارِ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا وَسُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٨﴾ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّهُۥٓ أَنَا ٱللَّهُ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٩﴾ وَأَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ۚ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَآنٌّ وَلَّىٰ مُدْبِرًا وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ ۚ يَٰمُوسَىٰ لَا تَخَفْ إِنِّى لَا يَخَافُ لَدَىَّ ٱلْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ إِلَّا مَن ظَلَمَ ثُمَّ بَدَّلَ حُسْنًۢا بَعْدَ سُوٓءٍ فَإِنِّى غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾ وَأَدْخِلْ يَدَكَ فِى جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجْ بَيْضَآءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوٓءٍ ۖ فِى تِسْعِ ءَايَٰتٍ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَقَوْمِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ قَوْمًا فَٰسِقِينَ ﴿١٢﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَتْهُمْ ءَايَٰتُنَا مُبْصِرَةً قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٣﴾ وَجَحَدُوا۟ بِهَا وَٱسْتَيْقَنَتْهَآ أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا ۚ فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿١٤﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٧-١٤)

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

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

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

27:9. O Moosâ, verily I am Allah, the Almighty, the Most Wise.

27:10. Throw down your staff. But when he saw it moving as if it was a snake, he turned and fled without a backward glance. [It was said:] O Moosâ, do not be afraid; the Messengers need have no fear in My presence.

27:11. But whoever has done wrong, then after that substitutes good for evil, verily I am Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

27:12. Put your hand into your garment; it will come forth shining white, without harm, as one of nine signs to Pharaoh and his people, for they are indeed a rebellious and wicked people.

27:13. But when Our clear signs came to them, they said: This is obviously magic.

27:14. They rejected the signs, although in their hearts they were certain that they were true, out of wickedness and arrogance. So see what was the fate of those who spread mischief.

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

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

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

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

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

﴿the Almighty﴾ Who has subjugated all things and to Whom all created beings submit

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

﴿Throw down your staff﴾ so he threw it down

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

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

﴿O Moosâ, do not be afraid﴾. Elsewhere, Allah tells us that He said:

﴿...come back, and do not be afraid, for you are quite safe.﴾ *(al-Qaṣaṣ 28: 31)*

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

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

﴿Put your hand into your garment; it will come forth shining white, without harm﴾ that is, with no leprosy or disease; rather its gleaming whiteness will dazzle the onlookers.
﴿as one of nine signs to Pharaoh and his people﴾ that is, these two signs – the turning of the staff into a moving snake, and the hand coming out of the garment gleaming white – are among nine signs. Go with them and call Pharaoh and his people,
﴿for they are indeed a rebellious and wicked people﴾, who have committed evil by ascribing partners to Allah, rebelling and looking down on the slaves of Allah, and by their arrogant behaviour in the land.

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

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

﴿They rejected the signs﴾ and disbelieved and denied the signs of Allah

﴿although in their hearts they were certain that they were true﴾ that is, their rejection was not based on doubt or uncertainty; rather they rejected them despite their certain knowledge that they were true

﴿out of wickedness﴾ and unfairness towards the truth of their Lord and towards themselves

﴿and arrogance﴾ towards the truth and towards other people, and they were too arrogant to submit to the Messengers.

﴿So see what was the fate of those who spread mischief﴾ for it was the worst fate. Allah destroyed them and drowned them in the sea; He disgraced them and caused the weak and oppressed among His slaves to inherit their dwellings.

﴿ وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُۥدَ وَسُلَيْمَٰنَ عِلْمًا ۖ وَقَالَا ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى فَضَّلَنَا عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٥﴾ وَوَرِثَ سُلَيْمَٰنُ دَاوُۥدَ ۖ وَقَالَ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ عُلِّمْنَا مَنطِقَ ٱلطَّيْرِ وَأُوتِينَا مِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ ۖ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ ٱلْفَضْلُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿١٦﴾ وَحُشِرَ لِسُلَيْمَٰنَ جُنُودُهُۥ مِنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ وَٱلطَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة النمل: ١٥-١٧)

27:15. We bestowed knowledge upon Dâwood and Sulaymân, and they both said: Praise be to Allah, Who has favoured us above many of His believing slaves.

27:16. Sulaymân succeeded Dâwood. He said: O people, we have been taught the speech of birds and we have been given abundantly; this is indeed a manifest favour.

27:17. His armies of jinn, men and birds were assembled before Sulaymân, and marched forth in orderly ranks.

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

﴿And [remember] Dâwood and Sulaymân, when they gave judgement in the case of the field into which some people's sheep had strayed at night and eaten the crops. We were witness to their judgement. We guided Sulaymân to the right verdict, and to each of them We gave wisdom and knowledge...﴾ *(al-Anbiyâ' 21: 78-79)*

﴿and they both said﴾, in gratitude to their Lord for His great blessings and bestowing knowledge upon them:
﴿Praise be to Allah, Who has favoured us above many of His believing slaves﴾. So they both praised Allah for making them believers and people who were blessed, for they were among the elite.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَتَوْا۟ عَلَىٰ وَادِ ٱلنَّمْلِ قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّمْلُ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ مَسَٰكِنَكُمْ لَا يَحْطِمَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمَٰنُ وَجُنُودُهُۥ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ فَتَبَسَّمَ ضَاحِكًا مِّن قَوْلِهَا وَقَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِىٓ أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ ٱلَّتِىٓ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَىَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَٰلِدَىَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَٰلِحًا تَرْضَىٰهُ وَأَدْخِلْنِى بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِى عِبَادِكَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٩﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ١٨-١٩)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿وَتَفَقَّدَ ٱلطَّيْرَ فَقَالَ مَا لِيَ لَآ أَرَى ٱلْهُدْهُدَ أَمْ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْغَآئِبِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ لَأُعَذِّبَنَّهُۥ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا أَوْ لَأَاْذْبَحَنَّهُۥٓ أَوْ لَيَأْتِيَنِّي بِسُلْطَٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢١﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٢٠-٢١)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿ فَمَكَثَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحَطتُ بِمَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِۦ وَجِئْتُكَ مِن سَبَإٍۭ بِنَبَإٍ يَقِينٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِنِّى وَجَدتُّ ٱمْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ مِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَجَدتُّهَا وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّمْسِ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ أَلَّا يَسْجُدُوا۟ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى يُخْرِجُ ٱلْخَبْءَ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُخْفُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ ٱلْعَرْشِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة النمل: ٢٢-٢٦)

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

[24] Saba': the land of Sheba in Yemen.

27:23. I found a woman reigning over them, who has been granted everything [that a ruler is expected to have], and she has a splendid throne.

27:24. I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allah. The Shaytân has made their deeds fair-seeming to them and has barred them from the right path, so they are not guided.

27:25. Rather they should worship Allah, Who brings forth what is hidden in the heavens and the earth,[25] and Who knows what you conceal and what you disclose.

27:26. Allah: there is no god but He, Lord of the magnificent Throne.

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

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

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

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

[25] ﴿What is hidden in the heavens and the earth﴾ for example, rain in the heavens and the seeds that produce vegetation in the earth.

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

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

﴿Allah: there is no god but He﴾ that is, no one should worship, turn to, humble himself before or love any but Him, for He is the only one to whom devotion should be shown, because of what He has of perfect attributes and because of the blessings He bestows, which make that pure devotion a must.
﴿Lord of the magnificent Throne﴾ which is the roof of creation, as vast as the earth and the heavens. The Sovereign, Who is possessed of great authority and might, is the One to Whom we should humble ourselves, prostrate and bow. The hoopoe was spared punishment when he delivered this important news, and Sulaymân was amazed at how it had been hidden from him.

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

﴿ قَالَ سَنَنظُرُ أَصَدَقْتَ أَمْ كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ ٱذْهَب بِّكِتَٰبِى هَٰذَا فَأَلْقِهْ إِلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ فَٱنظُرْ مَاذَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة النمل: ٢٧-٢٨)

27:27. Sulaymân said: We shall see whether you are telling the truth or you are a liar.

27:28. Take this letter of mine and deliver it to them. Then withdraw from them and observe how they respond.

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

﴿and deliver it to them. Then withdraw from them﴾ that is, move away from them, but not too far

﴿and observe how they respond﴾ to you.

﴿قَالَتْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَؤُا۟ إِنِّىٓ أُلْقِىَ إِلَىَّ كِتَٰبٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٢٩﴾ إِنَّهُۥ مِن سُلَيْمَٰنَ وَإِنَّهُۥ بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿٣٠﴾ أَلَّا تَعْلُوا۟ عَلَىَّ وَأْتُونِى مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٢٩-٣١)

27:29. She said: O chiefs, an honourable letter has been delivered to me.

27:30. It is from Sulaymân, and it starts: In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

27:31. Do not be arrogant towards me, but come to me in submission.

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

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

Then she highlighted the content of the letter, saying:

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

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

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

﴿قَالَتْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَؤُا۟ أَفْتُونِى فِىٓ أَمْرِى مَا كُنتُ قَاطِعَةً أَمْرًا حَتَّىٰ تَشْهَدُونِ ﴿٣٢﴾ قَالُوا۟ نَحْنُ أُو۟لُوا۟ قُوَّةٍ وَأُو۟لُوا۟ بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ وَٱلْأَمْرُ إِلَيْكِ فَٱنظُرِى مَاذَا تَأْمُرِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ قَالَتْ إِنَّ ٱلْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا۟ قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوٓا۟ أَعِزَّةَ أَهْلِهَآ أَذِلَّةً ۖ وَكَذَٰلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ وَإِنِّى مُرْسِلَةٌ إِلَيْهِم بِهَدِيَّةٍ فَنَاظِرَةٌۢ بِمَ يَرْجِعُ ٱلْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٣٢-٣٥)

27:32. She said: O chiefs, advise me regarding this matter with which I am now faced, for I make no decision without your consent.

27:33. They said: We are powerful and great warriors, but you are in command. Consider, then, what orders you will give.

27:34. She said: Kings, when they invade a city, ravage it and humiliate its prominent leaders. That is what they always do.

27:35. But I shall send him a gift, then see with what response the envoys will return.

As a sign of her resolve and wisdom, she gathered together the senior and prominent figures of her kingdom and said:
﴿O chiefs, advise me regarding this matter with which I am now faced﴾ that is, tell me how we should respond. Should we obey him and submit, or what should we do?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿فَلَمَّا جَآءَ سُلَيْمَٰنَ قَالَ أَتُمِدُّونَنِ بِمَالٍ فَمَآ ءَاتَىٰنِۦَ ٱللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّآ ءَاتَىٰكُم بَلْ أَنتُم بِهَدِيَّتِكُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ ٱرْجِعْ إِلَيْهِمْ فَلَنَأْتِيَنَّهُم بِجُنُودٍ لَّا قِبَلَ لَهُم بِهَا وَلَنُخْرِجَنَّهُم مِّنْهَآ أَذِلَّةً وَهُمْ صَٰغِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٣٦-٣٧)

27:36. When [the envoy] came to Sulaymân, he said: Do you seek to appease me with gifts? What Allah has given me is better than what He has given you. Rather it is you who take pleasure in gifts.

27:37. Go back to them [with your gift]. We will surely come to them with forces that they cannot resist. We will surely expel them therefrom, abased and humiliated.

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿قَالَ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَؤُا۟ أَيُّكُمْ يَأْتِينِى بِعَرْشِهَا قَبْلَ أَن يَأْتُونِى مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾ قَالَ عِفْرِيتٌ مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ
أَنَا ءَاتِيكَ بِهِۦ قَبْلَ أَن تَقُومَ مِن مَّقَامِكَ ۖ وَإِنِّى عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِىٌّ أَمِينٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ قَالَ ٱلَّذِى عِندَهُۥ عِلْمٌ مِّنَ

ٱلْكِتَٰبِ أَنَا۠ ءَاتِيكَ بِهِۦ قَبْلَ أَن يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ ۚ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهُ مُسْتَقِرًّا عِندَهُۥ قَالَ هَٰذَا مِن فَضْلِ رَبِّى لِيَبْلُوَنِىٓ ءَأَشْكُرُ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ ۖ وَمَن شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّى غَنِىٌّ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾ قَالَ نَكِّرُوا۟ لَهَا عَرْشَهَا نَنظُرْ أَتَهْتَدِىٓ أَمْ تَكُونُ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ (سورة النمل: ٣٨-٤١)

27:38. He said [to his own court]: O chiefs, which of you can bring me her throne before they come to me in submission?

27:39. A strong jinni said: I will bring it to you before you rise from your seat. I am surely strong enough and may be trusted.

27:40. One who had knowledge of the scripture said: I will bring it to you in the twinkling of an eye. Then when he saw it set before him, Sulaymân said: This is a favour from my Lord, to test whether I will be grateful or ungrateful. Whoever is grateful, his gratitude is to his own benefit, and whoever is ungrateful, then surely Allah is self-sufficient, most generous.

27:41. He said: Disguise her throne for her; let us see whether she will discover the truth or she will not recognise it.

Sulaymân knew that they would inevitably come to him, so he said to the jinn and humans who were present with him:
﴿which of you can bring me her throne before they come to me in submission?﴾ That is, so that it will be permissible for me to dispose of it before they become Muslim, after which their wealth will not be lawful for me.

﴿A strong jinni said﴾ – the word translated here as ﴿strong jinni﴾ refers to one who is strong and very active and energetic.
﴿I will bring it to you before you rise from your seat. I am surely strong enough and may be trusted﴾. What appears to be the case is that at that time Sulaymân was in ash-Shâm (Greater Syria), so between him and Saba' there was a distance of four months' travel, two months outward bound and two months on the return journey. But

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

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

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

Then he explained that gratitude does not benefit Allah; rather it benefits the one who shows gratitude, as he said:
﴿Whoever is grateful, his gratitude is to his own benefit, and whoever is ungrateful, then surely Allah is self-sufficient, most generous﴾ – He is self-sufficient and has no need of that person's deeds, and He is generous and bountiful, bestowing blessings upon both the grateful and the ungrateful, but gratitude for blessings will bring more blessings, whereas ingratitude will lead to a decrease in blessings.

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

﴿let us see﴾ and test her smartness

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

﴿or she will not recognise it﴾.

﴿فَلَمَّا جَآءَتْ قِيلَ أَهَٰكَذَا عَرْشُكِ ۖ قَالَتْ كَأَنَّهُۥ هُوَ ۚ وَأُوتِينَا ٱلْعِلْمَ مِن قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَت تَّعْبُدُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِن قَوْمٍ كَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٤٢-٤٣)

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

27:43. That which she used to worship besides Allah had hindered her [from declaring her faith openly], for she came from a disbelieving people.

﴿So when she arrived﴾ and came to Sulaymân, he showed her her throne; to the best of her knowledge, she had last seen it in her homeland.

﴿she was asked: Is your throne like this?﴾. That is, we know that you have a splendid throne; is it like this throne that we have brought to show you?

﴿She said: It is as if it were the same﴾. This highlights her intelligence and smartness, because she did not say "it is the same", because there were some changes and alterations to it, but she did not deny it either, because she recognised it. So she uttered some vague words that

could mean either thing and would be true in either case. Sulaymân was impressed at how she figured out the reality and how mature her thinking was.

What was meant by her words is: We were given knowledge about the dominion and authority of Sulaymân, and his great power, before this incident (the bringing of her throne), in which we have seen his ability to bring the throne from a great distance. So we submit to him and we have come submitting to his authority.

﴿That which she used to worship besides Allah had hindered her [from declaring her faith openly]﴾ that is, from becoming Muslim, otherwise she had the smartness and intelligence to recognise the truth and distinguish it from falsehood. But false beliefs take away insight from the heart.
﴿for she came from a disbelieving people﴾ so she continued to follow their religion, because for one person to have a different religion when he can see that those around him are misguided and wrong, is something very rare. Therefore it is not strange that she had remained a disbeliever until that point.

Later on, Sulaymân wanted to show her his dazzling power and might, so he told her to enter the palace, which was in a high and vast place, and was made of glass, under which rivers flowed.

﴿قِيلَ لَهَا ٱدْخُلِى ٱلصَّرْحَ ۖ فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً وَكَشَفَتْ عَن سَاقَيْهَا ۚ قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ صَرْحٌ مُّمَرَّدٌ مِّن قَوَارِيرَ ۗ قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّى ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِى وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَٰنَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٤٤)

27:44. It was said to her: Enter the palace.[26] But when she saw it, she thought that its [floor] was a pool of water, and she [lifted her

[26] The entire palace was made of glass, with water flowing beneath its floors.

hem], baring her legs. He said: This is a palace made of smooth glass. She said: O my Lord, verily I have wronged myself [by previously worshipping the sun] and I submit [in Islam] with Sulaymân to the Lord of the worlds.

﴿It was said to her: Enter the palace. But when she saw it, she thought that its [floor] was a pool of water﴾ because the glass was transparent, and the water could be seen beneath it, as if it was flowing by itself with nothing in between.
﴿and she [lifted her hem], baring her legs﴾ in order to wade into the water. This was a further example of her smartness and etiquette, for she did not refrain from entering the place that she had been instructed to enter, because she knew that she had only been invited by way of honour, and that Sulaymân's dominion, and the system thereof, was built on the basis of wisdom. She did not have the slightest suspicion in her heart of any harm that could result from stepping into it, after all that she had seen.

When she was about to wade into it, it was said to her: ﴿This is a palace made of smooth glass﴾, so there is no need for you to bare your legs. At that point, having come to Sulaymân and seen what she had seen, she realised that he was indeed a Prophet and Messenger, so she repented and gave up her disbelief.
﴿She said: O my Lord, verily I have wronged myself [by previously worshipping the sun] and I submit [in Islam] with Sulaymân to the Lord of the worlds﴾.

This is what Allah has told us about the story of the Queen of Saba' and what happened between her and Sulaymân. All other details that are connected to this story, and the stories from Jewish sources, have nothing to do with the interpretation of the word of Allah; they come under the heading of things that one cannot be certain of, because there is no proof that it is narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ). Most, if not all, of the reports of this nature are not narrated from him, so we should

be diligent and turn away from these reports, and not introduce them into commentaries on the Qur'an. And Allah knows best.

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَٰلِحًا أَنِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَإِذَا هُمْ فَرِيقَانِ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ لِمَ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِٱلسَّيِّئَةِ قَبْلَ ٱلْحَسَنَةِ ۖ لَوْلَا تَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ قَالُوا۟ ٱطَّيَّرْنَا بِكَ وَبِمَن مَّعَكَ ۚ قَالَ طَٰٓئِرُكُمْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ بَلْ أَنتُمْ قَوْمٌ تُفْتَنُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٤٥-٤٧)

27:45. We sent to Thamood their brother Ṣâliḥ, saying: Worship Allah. Then they divided into two parties [believers and disbelievers] disputing with each other.

27:46. He said: O my people, why do you seek to hasten on the evil [divine punishment] rather than the good [divine mercy]? Why do you not seek forgiveness from Allah, so that you may be shown mercy?

27:47. They said: We regard you and those who are with you as an evil omen. He said: Your ill fortune is only from Allah [because of your disbelief]; rather you are people who are being tested.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He sent to Thamood, the well-known tribe, their brother in lineage Ṣâliḥ, and he instructed them to worship Allah alone and to give up worshipping the idols and rivals.

﴿Then they divided into two parties [believers and disbelievers] disputing with each other﴾ some of them were believers and some were disbelievers, and the latter were the majority.

﴿He said: O my people, why do you seek to hasten on the evil [divine punishment] rather than the good [divine mercy]?﴾ That is, why do you hasten to do evil deeds and why are you so keen to do them, rather than doing good deeds by means of which your affairs,

both spiritual and worldly, will be put right? In fact there is no reason at all for you to commit evil deeds.

﴿Why do you not seek forgiveness from Allah﴾ by repenting from your polytheism and sins, and praying to Him to forgive you ﴿so that you may be shown mercy﴾ for the mercy of Allah (ﷻ) is close to the doers of good, and the one who repents from sin is one of those who do good.

﴿They said﴾ to their Prophet Ṣâliḥ, rejecting and objecting to the message:

﴿We regard you and those who are with you as an evil omen﴾ – they claimed that they did not see any sign of good in Ṣâliḥ's face and that he and the believers with him had become a cause of some harm that befell their worldly interests. So Ṣâliḥ said to them:

﴿Your ill fortune is only from Allah [because of your disbelief]﴾ that is, it only befell you because of your sins

﴿rather you are people who are being tested﴾ with ease and hardship, good and bad, to see whether you will give up sin and repent, or not. Thus they persisted in rejecting their Prophet and this is how they responded to him.

﴿ وَكَانَ فِي ٱلْمَدِينَةِ تِسْعَةُ رَهْطٍ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ قَالُوا۟ تَقَاسَمُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ لَنُبَيِّتَنَّهُۥ وَأَهْلَهُۥ ثُمَّ لَنَقُولَنَّ لِوَلِيِّهِۦ مَا شَهِدْنَا مَهْلِكَ أَهْلِهِۦ وَإِنَّا لَصَٰدِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَمَكَرُوا۟ مَكْرًا وَمَكَرْنَا مَكْرًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ مَكْرِهِمْ أَنَّا دَمَّرْنَٰهُمْ وَقَوْمَهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٥١﴾ فَتِلْكَ بُيُوتُهُمْ خَاوِيَةًۢ بِمَا ظَلَمُوٓا۟ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَأَنجَيْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَكَانُوا۟ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة النمل: ٤٨-٥٣)

27:48. There were in the city nine men who spread mischief in the land and never did anything good.

27:49. They said: Let us swear to one another by Allah that we will surely attack him and his family at night, then we will say to his next of kin that we did not witness the slaughter of his people, and we are indeed telling the truth.

27:50. They plotted and planned, and We also planned, but they were not aware of it.

27:51. So see what was the outcome of their plot: We destroyed them and their entire nation.

27:52. Now their houses lie desolate, because of their wrongdoing. Verily in that is a sign for people who have knowledge.

27:53. And We saved those who believed and feared Allah.

﴿There were in the city﴾ in which Ṣâliḥ and most of his people lived

﴿nine men who spread mischief in the land and never did anything good﴾ that is, their aim and goal was to spread mischief in the land, and they had no aim of doing good; rather they took a hostile stance against Ṣâliḥ, reviling his religion and calling their people to do likewise, as Allah (ﷻ) tells us elsewhere that Ṣâliḥ said:

﴿So fear Allah, and obey me, and do not obey the bidding of the transgressors, those who spread mischief in the land and do no good at all.﴾ *(ash-Shu'arâ' 26: 150-152)*

This terrible state of affairs continued until, in their enmity, they swore amongst themselves, each one swearing to the other, ﴿we will surely attack him and his family at night﴾ that is, we will come to him and his family at night, and we will surely kill them.

﴿then we will say to his next of kin﴾ if they come after us and claim that we killed him, we will deny it and will say that we did not do it, and we will swear an oath to the effect that ﴿we are indeed telling the truth﴾, and they unanimously agreed to that.

﴿They plotted and planned﴾ and they resolved to kill Ṣâliḥ and his family, keeping the plot secret even from their own people, for fear of his next of kin
﴿and We also planned﴾ to support Our Prophet Ṣâliḥ (ﷺ), make things easy for him and destroy his people who disbelieved
﴿but they were not aware of it﴾.

﴿So see what was the outcome of their plot﴾ – did they achieve their goal by means of that plot, or did they fail to do so? Hence Allah says:
﴿We destroyed them and their entire nation﴾. We destroyed them and eradicated them utterly. The blast came upon them as a punishment, and every last one of them was destroyed.

﴿Now their houses lie desolate﴾ – their roofs fell in on their walls, and they are devoid of their inhabitants
﴿because of their wrongdoing﴾ that is, these are the consequences of their wrongdoing, ascription of partners to Allah and transgression in the land.

﴿Verily in that is a sign for people who have knowledge﴾ of the facts and they reflect upon how Allah dealt with His close friends and His enemies, thus they learn lessons from that and know that the outcome of wrongdoing is destruction and doom, whereas the outcome of faith and justice is salvation and triumph.

Hence Allah says: ﴿And We saved those who believed and feared Allah﴾ that is, We saved those who believed in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and the divine decree, both good and bad, and they avoided ascribing partners to Allah and committing sin, and they obeyed Allah and His Messenger.

﴿وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِۦٓ أَتَأْتُونَ ٱلْفَٰحِشَةَ وَأَنتُمْ تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ أَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ ٱلرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِّن دُونِ ٱلنِّسَآءِ ۚ بَلْ أَنتُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٥٤-٥٥)

27:54. And [remember] when Loot said to his people: Do you commit this shameful deed, knowing [that it is shameful]?

27:55. Do you approach men with lust instead of women? Verily you are ignorant people!

﴿And [remember] when Loot said to his people: Do you commit this shameful deed, knowing [that it is shameful]?﴾ That is, remember Our slave and Messenger Loot and the story of his virtue, when he said to his people, calling them to Allah and advising them:

﴿Do you commit this shameful deed﴾ that is, this repulsive deed that is abhorrent to sound minds and sound human nature, and it is regarded as abhorrent according to the teachings of all religions ﴿knowing [that it is shameful]﴾, yet you stubbornly persist in that, wrongfully on your part and out of audacity towards Allah.

Then he explained what this shameful deed was: ﴿Do you approach men with lust instead of women?﴾ That is, how has it come to this, that your desire is for men and their rear ends which are places of excrement and dirt, and you forsake that which Allah has created for you of wives and the proper place for intimacy, for which people are created with a natural inclination. But you have turned things upside down, and you think of evil as good and good as evil.

﴿Verily you are ignorant people﴾ who overstep the limits set by Allah and dare to transgress His sacred limits.

﴿فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوٓا۟ أَخْرِجُوٓا۟ ءَالَ لُوطٍ مِّن قَرْيَتِكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ أُنَاسٌ يَتَطَهَّرُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾ فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَأَهْلَهُۥٓ إِلَّا ٱمْرَأَتَهُۥ قَدَّرْنَٰهَا مِنَ ٱلْغَٰبِرِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِم مَّطَرًا ۖ فَسَآءَ مَطَرُ ٱلْمُنذَرِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٥٦-٥٨)

27:56. But the only response his people gave was to say: Drive the family of Loot out of your city, for they are indeed people who want to keep themselves clean and pure!

27:57. So We saved him and his family, except his wife; We decreed that she should be one of those who stayed behind.

27:58. And We let loose upon them a shower [of stones]. And evil was the shower that fell upon those who had been warned [but did not pay heed].

﴿But the only response his people gave﴾ – their reaction was not acceptance and they were not deterred, nor did they pay heed; rather their response was to oppose him, go against him and threaten their Prophet and Messenger, who was sincere and honest, with banishment from his homeland and expulsion from his city. The only response his people gave ﴿was to say: Drive the family of Loot out of your city﴾.

It is as if it was said: Why are you angry with them, and what is their fault which dictates that they should be driven out? And they said: ﴿for they are indeed people who want to keep themselves clean and pure!﴾. That is, they want to keep away from homosexuality and sodomy. May Allah curse them, for they regarded the best of good deeds as being the same as the worst and most abhorrent of evil deeds, and they did not stop at disobeying their Prophet when he exhorted them; rather they went as far as deciding to expel him and banish him. The punishment is implied in their last statement, for they are the people who said:

﴿...Drive them out of your city, for they are indeed people who want to keep themselves clean and pure!﴾ *(al-A'râf 7: 82)*

What this implies is: "You are immersing yourselves in evil and filth, which dictates that the punishment will befall your city, and that those who leave it will be saved."

Hence Allah says: ﴿So We saved him and his family, except his wife; We decreed that she should be one of those who stayed behind﴾. That was when the angels came to him in the form of human guests, and his people heard about them, so they came to him, intending ill towards them, and he shut the door so that they could not get in, and he was very distressed. Then the angels told him what was really happening, and that they had come to save him and bring him out from their midst; they intended to destroy them, and the appointed time for their destruction was dawn. They instructed Loot to leave by night with his family, except his wife, for she would suffer the same fate as the people. So he left with his family at night, and they were saved. The punishment came upon the people at dawn; Allah turned their houses upside down on them, and sent upon them a shower of stones of baked clay, one after another, specifically marked, and kept with your Lord *(cf. 11: 82-83)*.

Hence Allah says here: ﴿And We let loose upon them a shower [of stones]. And evil was the shower that fell upon those who had been warned [but did not pay heed]﴾ that is, evil was the shower that rained down upon them, and how terrible was the punishment, because they had been warned but they were not deterred. Therefore Allah sent upon them this severe punishment.

﴿قُلِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَسَلَٰمٌ عَلَىٰ عِبَادِهِ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱصْطَفَىٰٓ ءَآللَّهُ خَيْرٌ أَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾ أَمَّنْ
خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَأَنزَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَنۢبَتْنَا بِهِۦ حَدَآئِقَ ذَاتَ
بَهْجَةٍ مَّا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَن تُنۢبِتُوا۟ شَجَرَهَآ ۗ أَءِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾
أَمَّن جَعَلَ ٱلْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَجَعَلَ خِلَٰلَهَآ أَنْهَٰرًا وَجَعَلَ لَهَا رَوَٰسِىَ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ
ٱلْبَحْرَيْنِ حَاجِزًا ۗ أَءِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ أَمَّن يُجِيبُ ٱلْمُضْطَرَّ

إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ ٱلسُّوٓءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَآءَ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ أَءِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ أَمَّن يَهْدِيكُمْ فِى ظُلُمَٰتِ ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ وَمَن يُرْسِلُ ٱلرِّيَٰحَ بُشْرًۢا بَيْنَ يَدَىْ رَحْمَتِهِۦٓ ۗ أَءِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ تَعَٰلَى ٱللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ أَمَّن يَبْدَؤُا۟ ٱلْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُۥ وَمَن يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ أَءِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ قُلْ هَاتُوا۟ بُرْهَٰنَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾ (سورة النمل: ٥٩-٦٤)

27:59. Say: Praise be to Allah and peace be upon His slaves whom He has chosen.[27] Is Allah better, or those they ascribe as partners to Him?

27:60. Is not He [better] Who created the heavens and the earth, and sends down for you water from the sky, with which We cause to grow gardens of delightful beauty? It is not in your power to cause the trees thereof to grow. Can there be another god besides Allah? But they are people who ascribe equals [to Him].

27:61. Is not He [better] Who has made the earth a stable place to live in, caused rivers to flow through it, placed therein mountains standing firm, and placed a barrier between two flowing bodies of water? Can there be another god besides Allah? But most of them have no knowledge.

27:62. Is not He [better] Who responds to the desperate one when he calls on Him and relieves his suffering, and Who has made you successive generations on earth? Can there be another god besides Allah? Little is it that you pay heed!

27:63. Is not He [better] Who guides you through the depths of darkness on land and sea, and Who sends forth the winds as harbingers of His mercy? Can there be another god besides Allah? Exalted be Allah far above the partners they ascribe to Him.

27:64. Is not He [better] Who originates creation then repeats it, and Who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? Can there

[27] This refers to the Prophets and their followers.

be another god besides Allah? Say: Produce your evidence if you are telling the truth.

﴿Say: Praise be to Allah﴾ Who is deserving of perfect praise because of the perfect nature of His attributes and the beautiful nature of His favours, gifts, justice and wisdom in punishing the disbelievers and wrongdoers. And send salutations of peace upon His slaves whom He chose and selected above the worlds, namely the Prophets and Messengers, those whom Allah has chosen from among all people. That is so as to raise their renown and highlight their high status and their being free of evil and abominations, and because what they said concerning their Lord was free of shortcomings and faults.

﴿Is Allah better, or those they ascribe as partners to Him?﴾ This is a question, the answer to which is already established and well known. In other words, is Allah, the Almighty Lord Who is perfect in His attributes and bountiful towards all of His creation, better – or the idols and images that they worship alongside Him, which are imperfect in all aspects, cannot bring benefit or ward off harm, and cannot do the slightest good for their own selves or for those who worship them? Verily Allah is better than those they ascribe as partners to Him.

Then Allah tells us the details through which it may be known and become clear that He is the only God Who is deserving of worship, and that worship of Him is the truth whereas worship of anything else other than Him is falsehood:

﴿Is not He [better] Who created the heavens and the earth, and sends down for you water from the sky, with which We cause to grow gardens of delightful beauty? It is not in your power to cause the trees thereof to grow. Can there be another god besides Allah? But they are people who ascribe equals [to Him]﴾ that is, Who created the heavens and all that is in them of the sun, moon, stars, and angels? Who created the earth and all that is in it of mountains, seas, rivers, trees and so on?

﴿and sends down for you﴾ that is, for your sake
﴿water from the sky, with which We cause to grow gardens of delightful beauty﴾ that is, they are beautiful to look at, with their many and varied trees, and they bear beautiful fruit.
﴿It is not in your power to cause the trees thereof to grow﴾ that is, were it not for the blessing that Allah bestows upon you by sending down the rain.
﴿Can there be another god besides Allah﴾ who does these things, such that he should be worshipped alongside Him and associated with Him?

﴿But they are people who ascribe equals [to Him]﴾ that is, they regard others as equal to Him even though they know that He alone is the Creator of the upper and lower realms, and is the One Who sends down provision.

﴿Is not He [better] Who has made the earth a stable place to live in, caused rivers to flow through it, placed therein mountains standing firm, and placed a barrier between two flowing bodies of water? Can there be another god besides Allah? But most of them have no knowledge﴾. That is, are the idols and images that are lacking in all aspects, that do not do anything or grant provision or anything good, better – or Allah Who ﴿has made the earth a stable place to live in﴾ so that people are able to settle and live on it, cultivate it and build on it, and come and go freely
﴿caused rivers to flow through it﴾ that is, He has caused rivers to flow throughout the earth, from which people benefit in their agriculture, growing trees, drinking their water and giving it to their flocks
﴿placed therein mountains standing firm﴾ that is, mountains that make the earth steady, so that it does not shake, and they act as pegs for it so that it does not become unstable
﴿and placed a barrier between two flowing bodies of water﴾ the salty water and the fresh water; He has placed a barrier between them to prevent the two types of water mixing, which would cause the benefits of each to be lost. Rather He has created a barrier of earth between

them, and has created channels for the rivers through the earth, far away from the seas. Thus they yield their benefits.
﴿Can there be another god besides Allah﴾ who does these things, such that he should be worshipped alongside Him and associated with Him? ﴿But most of them have no knowledge﴾, so they ascribe partners to Allah in imitation of their leaders. Otherwise, if they had true knowledge, they would not associate anything with Him.

﴿Is not He [better] Who responds to the desperate one when he calls on Him and relieves his suffering, and Who has made you successive generations on earth? Can there be another god besides Allah? Little is it that you pay heed!﴾
That is, does anyone answer the desperate one who is beset by distress, faces difficulty in attaining what he seeks and is desperate to be saved from what he is going through, except Allah alone? Who can relieve calamity, trouble and suffering except Allah alone? Who makes you successive generations in the earth, enables you to make use of the earth, grants you provision and bestows blessings upon you, so that you succeed those who came before you, as He will cause you to die and will bring other people after you? Can there be any god besides Allah who does these things?

No one does any of that alongside Allah, even by your admission, O polytheists. Hence, when harm befell them, they would call upon Allah, professing sincere devotion to Him alone, because they know that He alone is able to ward off that harm and remove it.

﴿Little is it that you pay heed﴾ that is, little is it that you remember and reflect upon matters by which, if you reflected on them and paid heed to them, you would be guided. But heedlessness has overwhelmed you and you turn away, therefore you never refrained from evil and you were not guided.

﴿Is not He [better] Who guides you through the depths of darkness on land and sea, and Who sends forth the winds as harbingers of His mercy? Can there be another god besides Allah? Exalted be Allah far

above the partners they ascribe to Him﴾ that is, Who is it that guides you when you are in the depths of darkness on land or sea, when there is no guide, no visible landmark and no means of deliverance except His guiding you, making the route easy for you and making available to you the means by which you are guided?

﴿and Who sends forth the winds as harbingers of His mercy﴾ that is, He sends the winds ahead of the rain; He sends the winds to stir up the clouds, then put them together, then collect them, then fecundate them, then the rain comes down. So the people feel cheered by the wind before the rain comes down.

﴿Can there be another god besides Allah﴾ who did that? Or is it He alone Who does that? Why do you ascribe others as partners to Him, and worship them instead of Him?

﴿Exalted be Allah far above the partners they ascribe to Him﴾ for He is far greater, far holier and far above their ascription of partners to Him and their regarding others as equal to Him.

﴿Is not He [better] Who originates creation then repeats it, and Who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? Can there be another god besides Allah? Say: Produce your evidence if you are telling the truth﴾ that is, Who is it that initiates and originates creation, and will repeat creation on the Day of Resurrection? Who provides for you from the heavens and the earth by means of rain and vegetation? ﴿Can there be another god besides Allah﴾ who does that or is able to do that?

﴿Say: Produce your evidence﴾ that is, your proof for what you say ﴿if you are telling the truth﴾, otherwise, assuming that you say that the idols have a share in all of that, this is a mere claim, so bring evidence to confirm it; if you cannot, then you should realise that you are people of falsehood, with no evidence or proof. So you should accept the certain proof and definite evidence which indicates that Allah is the only One Who does all of these things, and He is the only One Who deserves that all types of worship should be devoted to Him alone.

﴿قُل لَّا يَعْلَمُ مَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ۚ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ بَلِ ادَّارَكَ عِلْمُهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ ۚ بَلْ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهَا ۖ بَلْ هُم مِّنْهَا عَمُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَإِذَا كُنَّا تُرَابًا وَآبَاؤُنَا أَئِنَّا لَمُخْرَجُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ لَقَدْ وُعِدْنَا هَٰذَا نَحْنُ وَآبَاؤُنَا مِن قَبْلُ إِنْ هَٰذَا إِلَّا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٦٥-٦٨)

27:65. Say: No one in the heavens or on earth knows the unseen except Allah, and they do not know when they will be resurrected.

27:66. Rather their knowledge of the hereafter is confused; nay, they are in doubt about it; nay, they are blind to it.

27:67. Those who disbelieve say: What! When we have become dust, we and our forefathers, will we be brought forth [alive, from our graves]?

27:68. We and our forefathers have been promised this before; it is nothing but tales of the ancients.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He alone knows the unseen in the heavens and on earth. This is like the verses in which He says:

﴿With Him are the keys of the unseen; no one knows them but He. He knows all that is in the land and in the sea. Not a leaf falls but He knows it; there is no grain in the darkest bowels of the earth, nor anything fresh or dry, but it is [inscribed] in a clear record.﴾ *(al-An'ām 6: 59)*

– and:

﴿Verily, Allah alone has knowledge of the Hour; it is He Who sends down rain and He knows what every womb contains. No soul knows what it will do on the morrow, and no soul knows in what land it will die. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.﴾ *(Luqmān 31: 34)*

These matters of the unseen and the like are known only to Allah; no angel who is near to Allah and no Prophet who was sent has any

knowledge of them. As He is the only One Who has knowledge of that, and Whose knowledge encompasses all that is in people's hearts and all that is hidden and subtle, so He is the only One Who should be worshipped.

Then Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the lack of knowledge of those who denied the hereafter, moving from one thing to something that is more unknown than it.

﴿and they do not know when they will be resurrected﴾ that is, when they will be raised up and brought forth from their graves, therefore they have not prepared for it.

﴿Rather their knowledge of the hereafter is confused﴾ that is, their knowledge is weak and little, never certain, for they have no knowledge that is clear in their minds. This is the lowest level of knowledge, when it is weak and vague. Indeed they have no knowledge, either strong or weak; rather ﴿they are in doubt about it﴾ – namely the hereafter. It never occurs to them that it may happen, for it is not even a possibility in their minds; rather they deny it and think it unlikely. Hence Allah says:

﴿Those who disbelieve say: What! When we have become dust, we and our forefathers, will we be brought forth [alive, from our graves]?﴾ That is, this is far-fetched and impossible. They compared the power of the One Who is perfect in might with their own weak power.

﴿We and our forefathers have been promised this﴾ that is, the hereafter ﴿before﴾, and it did not come to us, and we never saw anything of it.

﴿it is nothing but tales of the ancients﴾ that is, stories that they told to pass the time, but which have no basis and are not true.

Here Allah tells us about the situation of these disbelievers by telling us that they do not know when the hereafter will come, then He moves on to telling us that their knowledge of the hereafter is

weak, then He tells us that they are in doubt concerning it, then He tells us that they are blind to it, then He tells us that they deny it and think it unlikely to happen. Because of these doubts, fear of the hereafter left their hearts; as a result, they had the audacity to disobey Allah and it became easy for them to deny the truth and believe in falsehood, so they indulged in their physical desires and kept away from worshipping Allah. Thus they lost out both in this world and the hereafter.

Then Allah points out the truthfulness of the warning brought by the Messengers:

﴿قُلْ سِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُن فِى ضَيْقٍ مِّمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾ وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا ٱلْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٧١﴾ قُلْ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونَ رَدِفَ لَكُم بَعْضُ ٱلَّذِى تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٦٩-٧٢)

27:69. Say: Travel through the land and see what was the fate of the evildoers.

27:70. Do not grieve over them, and do not be distressed because of their plots.

27:71. They say: When will this promise come to pass, if you speak the truth?

27:72. Say: It may be that some of that which you seek to hasten is close at your heels.

﴿Say: Travel through the land and see what was the fate of the evildoers﴾ for you will not find any evildoer who persisted in his evildoing but his fate was the worst of fates, for Allah sent upon him the punishment that matched his evil deeds.

﴿Do not grieve over them, and do not be distressed because of their plots﴾ that is, do not grieve, O Muhammad (ﷺ), for these disbelievers and their lack of faith, for if you knew what is in them of evil, and that they are not fit for anything good, you would not despair or grieve, and you would not feel distressed or worry about their plots, for their plots will backfire on them.

﴿...They plot and plan, and Allah also plans; but Allah is the best of planners.﴾ *(al-Anfāl 8: 30)*

Those who disbelieve in the resurrection and in the truth that the Messenger (ﷺ) brought say, seeking to hasten the punishment: ﴿When will this promise come to pass, if you speak the truth?﴾ They say this out of foolishness and ignorance, because the time when it will happen is something that Allah has already ordained and decreed.

Nevertheless, Allah (ﷻ) says, warning them of that which they sought to hasten: ﴿Say: It may be that some of that which you seek to hasten﴾ of the punishment ﴿is close at your heels﴾ and will soon befall you.

﴿ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾ وَمَا مِنْ غَآئِبَةٍ فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا فِى كِتَٰبٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٧٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة النمل: ٧٣-٧٥)

27:73. Verily your Lord is most gracious to humankind, but most of them are ungrateful.

27:74. Verily your Lord knows what their hearts conceal and what they disclose.

27:75. There is nothing hidden in heaven or on earth, but it is [inscribed] in a clear record.

Here Allah highlights His vast generosity and abundant bounty, and urges them to give thanks to Him. Yet despite that, most people turn away and fail to give thanks; they are distracted by the blessings from the Bestower of those blessings.

﴿Verily your Lord knows what their hearts conceal﴾ that is, what is hidden in their hearts
﴿and what they disclose﴾, so let them beware of the Knower of all that is hidden and all that is disclosed, and let them remember that He is always watching them.

﴿There is nothing hidden in heaven or on earth﴾ that is, there is nothing concealed or secret in either the upper or lower realm,
﴿but it is [inscribed] in a clear record﴾; that record encompasses all that has happened and will happen until the onset of the Hour. Every incident that occurs, whether it is manifest or hidden, happens in accordance with what is written in al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfoodh.

﴿إِنَّ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ يَقُصُّ عَلَىٰ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ أَكْثَرَ ٱلَّذِى هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٧٦-٧٧)

27:76. Verily this Qur'an explains to the Children of Israel most of that wherein they differ.

27:77. And verily it is a guidance and mercy for the believers.

Here Allah tells us how the Qur'an confirms and supersedes the previous scriptures, and it explains and clarifies that which was ambiguous and unclear therein, and that concerning which the Children of Israel differed. The Qur'an speaks about that in such a way as to remove any confusion and explain the correct view concerning the matters in which they differed. As it is of such a majestic nature

and very clear, and it dispels all differences and clarifies everything that is unclear, it is the greatest blessing that Allah has bestowed upon His slaves, but not everyone responds to the blessing with gratitude.

Hence Allah tells us that its benefit, light and guidance are only for the believers:

﴿And verily it is a guidance﴾ that saves one from misguidance and confusion

﴿and mercy﴾ that gives comfort and puts straight their religious and worldly affairs

﴿for the believers﴾ that is, those who believe in it and accept it, reflect on it, and ponder its meanings. They will attain through it guidance to the straight path and mercy that leads to happiness, triumph and success.

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِي بَيْنَهُم بِحُكْمِهِۦ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٧٨﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٧٨)

27:78. Verily your Lord will judge between them by His justice, for He is the Almighty, All-Knowing.

That is, Allah (ﷻ) will judge between the disputants and those who differ, with justice and fairness. Even though there are matters concerning which the two disputing parties may be confused, because the evidence is subtle and not clear, or for some other reason, Allah will explain the truth that reflects reality concerning these issues, when He judges concerning them.

﴿for He is the Almighty﴾ Who subjugates all creatures, so they submit to Him

﴿All-Knowing﴾ for He knows all views and what they are based on, and the aims and motives behind them, so He will requite each individual according to what He knows of him.

﴿ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَى ٱلْحَقِّ ٱلْمُبِينِ ﴿٧٩﴾ إِنَّكَ لَا تُسْمِعُ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَلَا تُسْمِعُ ٱلصُّمَّ ٱلدُّعَآءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا۟ مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَمَآ أَنتَ بِهَٰدِى ٱلْعُمْىِ عَن ضَلَٰلَتِهِمْ ۖ إِن تُسْمِعُ إِلَّا مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا فَهُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨١﴾ ﴾ (سورة النمل: ٧٩-٨١)

27:79. So put your trust in Allah, for you are on the path of clear truth.

27:80. Verily you cannot make the dead hear you, nor can you make the deaf hear your call, [especially] if they turn their backs and walk away;

27:81. Nor can you guide the blind out of their error. You cannot make anyone hear you except those who believe in Our revelations, for they are ready to submit [to the truth].

That is, put your trust in your Lord to attain that which will benefit you and ward off that which may harm you, to convey the message, establish the religion and strive in jihad against your enemies.

﴿for you are on the path of clear truth﴾ and for the one who is on the path of clear truth – calling people to it and supporting it – it is more appropriate that he should put his trust in Allah. For he is striving concerning a matter that is definitely sound and is known to be true, concerning which there is no doubt or confusion. Moreover, it is the truth that is very clear and manifest, with no ambiguity or uncertainty concerning it. If you do what you are charged with and you put your trust in Allah when doing so, you will not be harmed by the fact that some go astray, and you are not responsible for guiding them. Hence Allah says:

﴿Verily you cannot make the dead hear you, nor can you make the deaf hear your call﴾ when you call them, especially ﴿if they turn their backs and walk away﴾, for in that case it is more unlikely that you can make them hear.

﴿Nor can you guide the blind out of their error﴾. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Verily, you [O Muhammad] cannot guide whomever you like, but Allah guides whomever He wills, and He knows best who is rightly guided.﴾ *(al-Qaṣaṣ 28: 56)*

﴿You cannot make anyone hear you except those who believe in Our revelations, for they are ready to submit [to the truth]﴾ that is, it is they who will submit to you and will believe in the revelations of Allah, put the teachings into practice and surrender. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Only those who hear will respond; as for the dead, Allah will resurrect them, then to Him they will be brought back.﴾ *(al-An'âm 6: 36)*

﴿وَإِذَا وَقَعَ ٱلْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَخْرَجْنَا لَهُمْ دَآبَّةً مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ تُكَلِّمُهُمْ أَنَّ ٱلنَّاسَ كَانُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٨٢)

27:82. When the time for the fulfilment of the warning[28] comes, We will bring forth to them out of the earth a Beast that will tell them that humankind did not believe in Our signs.

That is, when the time for the fulfilment of the warning comes, which Allah has made inevitable and has ordained its time,
﴿We will bring forth to them out of the earth a Beast﴾ or one of the beasts of the earth, not of the heavens. This Beast ﴿will tell them﴾ that is, it will speak to the people and tell them that the people did not have certain faith in Our signs, the reason being that the people's knowledge and faith in the signs of Allah is becoming weak. Therefore

[28] The warning refers to the punishment of the Day of Resurrection; this verse speaks of one of the portents of that day.

Allah will cause this Beast to emerge as one of His wondrous signs to prove to the people what they were doubting.

This Beast is the famous Beast that will emerge at the end of time, and will be one of the portents of the Hour, as is mentioned in many hadiths. There is no sound evidence to describe it or say what kind of animal it will be; this verse only indicates that Allah will bring it forth to the people and that its speaking will be something extraordinary and will be one of the proofs of the truth of what Allah said in His Book. And Allah knows best.

﴿ وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ فَوْجًا مِّمَّن يُكَذِّبُ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءُو
قَالَ أَكَذَّبْتُم بِـَٔايَـٰتِى وَلَمْ تُحِيطُوا۟ بِهَا عِلْمًا أَمَّاذَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَوَقَعَ ٱلْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِم بِمَا
ظَلَمُوا۟ فَهُمْ لَا يَنطِقُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة النمل: ٨٣-٨٥)

27:83. And [remember] the day when We will gather from every nation a multitude of those who rejected Our signs, and they will be assembled [then driven],

27:84. Until, when they come [before their Lord at the place of reckoning], He will say: Did you reject My signs even though you did not comprehend them fully? Or what is it that you were doing?

27:85. The warning [of punishment] will inevitably be fulfilled concerning them because of their wrongdoing, and they will be unable to speak.[29]

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the situation of the disbelievers on the Day of Resurrection; He will gather them, and will gather from every

[29] That is, because they have no excuse to give that may save them from the punishment.

nation a multitude and a group ﴿of those who rejected Our signs, and they will be assembled [then driven]﴾. They will be gathered, the first of them and the last of them, so that they may all be questioned, blamed and rebuked.

﴿Until, when they come [before their Lord at the place of reckoning], He will say﴾ to them, rebuking them:
﴿Did you reject My signs even though you did not comprehend them fully?﴾ That is, what you should have done was not to take a stance until the truth had become clear to you, and you should not have spoken except on the basis of knowledge, so how come you rejected something before you had full knowledge of it?
﴿Or what is it that you were doing?﴾ That is, He will ask them about their knowledge and their deeds, and He will find that their knowledge was rejection of the truth and their deeds were not done for the sake of Allah and were not in accordance with the Sunnah of their Messenger (ﷺ).

﴿The warning [of punishment] will inevitably be fulfilled concerning them because of their wrongdoing﴾ that is, the punishment will become due for them because of their wrongdoing in which they persisted and because of the proof that is established against them ﴿and they will be unable to speak﴾ because they will have no argument.

﴿أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا ٱلَّيْلَ لِيَسْكُنُوا۟ فِيهِ وَٱلنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٨٦)

27:86. Do they not see that We made the night for you to rest in, and the day for you to see? Verily in that there are signs for people who believe.

That is, have they not seen this great sign and immense blessing, which is that Allah has made the night and the day to be of service to them: the night with its darkness, so that they may settle down and rest therein from their labours and prepare to work again, and the day with its light, so that they may go about earning their living and running errands.

﴿Verily in that there are signs for people who believe﴾ that is, signs of the oneness of Allah and His great blessings.

﴿ وَيَوْمَ يُنفَخُ فِي ٱلصُّورِ فَفَزِعَ مَن فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَن فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَكُلٌّ أَتَوْهُ دَٰخِرِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ وَتَرَى ٱلْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ ٱلسَّحَابِ ۚ صُنْعَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِيٓ أَتْقَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ مَن جَآءَ بِٱلْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُۥ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهَا وَهُم مِّن فَزَعٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ ءَامِنُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾ وَمَن جَآءَ بِٱلسَّيِّئَةِ فَكُبَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فِي ٱلنَّارِ هَلْ تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة النمل: ٨٧-٩٠)

27:87. And [remember] the day when the Trumpet will be blown, and all who are in the heavens and on earth will be struck with terror, except whomever Allah wills, and all will come to Him, utterly humbled.

27:88. You will see the mountains and think them firmly fixed, but they will be moving like clouds.[30] Such is the work of Allah, Who has perfected all things. Verily He is well aware of all that you do.

27:89. Whoever comes [on the Day of Resurrection] having done good will be rewarded with something better than it, and will be safe from the terror of that day.

[30] The commentators are of the view that this verse describes what will happen to the mountains during the cataclysmic events of the Day of Resurrection.

27:90. And whoever comes having done evil will be flung down on their faces in the fire. [It will be said to them:] Will you be requited for anything other than what you used to do?

Here Allah (ﷻ) alerts His slaves to what lies ahead of them on the Day of Resurrection, with all its trials and distress, which cause alarm.

﴿And [remember] the day when the Trumpet will be blown﴾, because of which ﴿all who are in the heavens and on earth will be struck with terror﴾ and filled with alarm, and they will surge like waves against one another *(cf. 18: 99)*, out of fear of what awaits them, ﴿except whomever Allah wills﴾ of those whom He will honour, make steadfast and protect from terror

﴿and all﴾ creatures, when the Trumpet is blown, ﴿will come to Him, utterly humbled﴾. This is like the verse in which Allah says:

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

On that day, leaders and followers will be equal in submission and humility before the Sovereign of all dominion.

Because of the terror of that awful day, ﴿You will see the mountains and think them firmly fixed﴾, as if nothing is missing from them and they are still as they always were, but they will have gone through such hardship and terror that they will be crushed and will vanish, becoming like scattered dust. Hence Allah says: ﴿but they will be moving like clouds﴾ because they will be so light, and as the result of that intense fear. That is ﴿the work of Allah, Who has perfected all things. Verily He is well aware of all that you do﴾ and He will requite you in accordance with your deeds.

Then He explains how He will requite them:

﴿Whoever comes [on the Day of Resurrection] having done good﴾ – this includes every good deed, word or belief in the heart

﴿will be rewarded with something better than it, and will be safe from the terror of that day﴾ that is, they will be safe from that which terrified other people (namely hell), even if they were terrified along with them.

﴿And whoever comes having done evil﴾ of any kind ﴿will be flung down on their faces in the fire﴾ that is, they will be thrown face-first into hell and it will be said to them: ﴿Will you be requited for anything other than what you used to do?﴾

﴿إِنَّمَآ أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ رَبَّ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْبَلْدَةِ ٱلَّذِى حَرَّمَهَا وَلَهُۥ كُلُّ شَىْءٍ وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَأَنْ أَتْلُوَا۟ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ فَمَنِ ٱهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِى لِنَفْسِهِۦ وَمَن ضَلَّ فَقُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلْمُنذِرِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾ وَقُلِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ سَيُرِيكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ فَتَعْرِفُونَهَا ۚ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾﴾ (سورة النمل: ٩١-٩٣)

27:91. [Say, O Muhammad:] I am commanded only to worship the Lord of this city Who has made it sacred and to Whom all things belong. And I am commanded to be one of those who submit to Allah [in Islam].

27:92. And [I am commanded] to recite the Qur'an. Then whoever is guided, is only guided for [the good of] his own soul; if anyone goes astray, then say: I am only a warner.

27:93. And say: Praise be to Allah. He will show you His signs, then you will acknowledge them. And your Lord is not unaware of what you do.

﴿[Say, O Muhammad:] I am commanded only to worship the Lord of this city﴾ namely Makkah al-Mukarramah, which He made sacred and blessed its people, so they should respond to that with gratitude and acceptance.

﴿and to Whom all things belong﴾ in both the upper and lower realms. Allah mentions that lest anyone think that He is Lord of the Kaaba only.

﴿And I am commanded to be one of those who submit to Allah [in Islam]﴾ that is, one of those who hasten to submit. And the Prophet (ﷺ) did that; he was the first of this Ummah to submit and was foremost in surrendering to Allah.

﴿And [I am commanded] to recite the Qur'an﴾ to you, so that you may be guided by it, follow its teachings, and learn its words and meanings. This is my duty and I have fulfilled it.

﴿Then whoever is guided, is only guided for [the good of] his own soul﴾ that is, it is to his own benefit and he will reap the fruits thereof. ﴿if anyone goes astray, then say: I am only a warner﴾ and I have no control over guidance.

﴿And say: Praise be to Allah﴾ to Whom be all praise in this world and the hereafter, from all of creation, especially the chosen elite, because they are the ones who are more expected to praise and extol their Lord than others, because of their high status and closeness to Him, and because of His great blessings to them.

﴿He will show you His signs, then you will acknowledge them﴾ in such a way that will show you what is true and what is false. So He will inevitably show you His signs, which will give you light in the depths of darkness,

﴿...so that those who chose to perish [by choosing disbelief] might do so after seeing clear evidence, and those who chose to live [by choosing faith] might do so after seeing clear evidence...﴾ *(al-Anfāl 8: 42)*

﴿And your Lord is not unaware of what you do﴾; rather He knows your deeds and circumstances, and He knows the extent of reward for those deeds. He will judge between you with a judgement for

which you will praise Him, so you will have no argument against Him whatsoever.

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

28.
Soorat al-Qaṣaṣ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

﴿طسٓمٓ ﴿١﴾ تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلْمُبِينِ ﴿٢﴾ نَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْكَ مِن نَّبَإِ مُوسَىٰ وَفِرْعَوْنَ بِٱلْحَقِّ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ١-٣)

28:1. Ṭâ'. Seen. Meem.[31]

28:2. These are verses of the clear Book.

28:3. We recount to you some of the story of Moosâ and Pharaoh in truth, for people who believe.

﴿These﴾ verses that deserve to be venerated and respected ﴿are verses of the clear Book﴾ which explain everything that people need to know about their Lord, His rights, His close friends, and His

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

enemies, and the punishment that He sent against the disbelievers, the reward for deeds and the requital of the doers. This Qur'an explains all that in a very clear manner.

Among the things that it explains is the story of Moosâ and Pharaoh, which is repeated in several places, including this soorah.

﴿We recount to you some of the story of Moosâ and Pharaoh in truth﴾ for their story is indeed amazing and wonderful ﴿for people who believe﴾. It is addressed to them, for they have the faith to focus and reflect on it, which would prompt them to accept it and learn from it, so that they will learn from it and be guided, and it will increase them in faith and certainty, adding goodness to their goodness.

As for others, they will not benefit from it except in the sense that proof will be established against them. Allah has protected the Qur'an from them and created a barrier between them and it, so that they will not understand it.

﴿إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضْعِفُ طَائِفَةً مِنْهُمْ يُذَبِّحُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٤﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ٤)

28:4. Verily Pharaoh behaved arrogantly in the land; he divided its people into factions and oppressed one group among them, slaughtering their sons and letting their womenfolk live. Verily he was one of the mischief-makers.

The beginning of the story is that ﴿Pharaoh behaved arrogantly in the land﴾ because of what he possessed of dominion, authority, troops and might. So he became one of the arrogant, not one of the people of virtue in the land.

﴿he divided its people into factions﴾ that is, he divided them into various groups, controlling them on the basis of his whims and desires, subjugating them as he wanted by means of his power.

﴿and oppressed one group among them﴾ namely the Children of Israel, whom Allah had favoured over all others; he should have honoured them and respected them, but he regarded them as insignificant, because he saw that they had no power to protect themselves from what he wanted to do to them. Therefore he did not care about them, and he went so far as to slaughter their sons and let their womenfolk live, for fear that they might increase in numbers and overwhelm him in his own country, and thus gain power.

﴿Verily he was one of the mischief-makers﴾ those who have no intention of taking care of religious or worldly interests; this was part of his mischief-making in the land.

﴿ وَنُرِيدُ أَن نَّمُنَّ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتُضْعِفُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ ٱلْوَٰرِثِينَ ﴿٥﴾ وَنُمَكِّنَ لَهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَنُرِىَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَٰمَٰنَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا مِنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَحْذَرُونَ ﴿٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة القصص: ٥-٦)

28:5. But it was Our will to bestow favour upon those who were oppressed in the land, to make them leaders and cause them to inherit [the land],

28:6. And to establish them in the land, and through them to show Pharaoh, Hâmân and their troops, the very thing they feared.

﴿But it was Our will to bestow favour upon those who were oppressed in the land﴾ by taking away from them the factors that made them weak, and destroying those who were resisting them, causing to fail anyone who opposed them.

﴿to make them leaders﴾ in religion, which could not happen when they were oppressed and weak; rather it was essential to first give them power in the land.

﴿and cause them to inherit [the land]﴾ and thus grant them victory and a good end in this world, before the hereafter

﴿And to establish them in the land﴾. It was Allah's will that all of these things should happen.

Likewise He also wanted ﴿through them﴾, namely this oppressed group, ﴿to show Pharaoh, Hâmân﴾, his adviser, ﴿and their troops﴾, by means of whom they had gained power and control, and they behaved arrogantly and transgressed all bounds

﴿the very thing they feared﴾ which was their expulsion from their land. Hence they strove hard to suppress the Israelites, break their will and kill their children who had the potential to achieve that. Allah willed that all of this should happen, and when He wills a thing, He makes the means thereof available and paves the way for it. This matter was like that: He decreed it and created the means that would lead to it – of which neither His close friends nor His enemies were aware.

﴿ وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ ۖ فَإِذَا خِفْتِ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِى ٱلْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِى وَلَا تَحْزَنِىٓ ۖ إِنَّا رَآدُّوهُ إِلَيْكِ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٧﴾ فَٱلْتَقَطَهُۥٓ ءَالُ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوًّا وَحَزَنًا ۗ إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَٰمَٰنَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا كَانُوا۟ خَٰطِـِٔينَ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾ (سورة القصص: ٧-٨)

28:7. We inspired the mother of Moosâ, saying: Breastfeed him, but when you fear for him, throw him into the river, and do not be afraid or grieve, for We will surely bring him back to you, and We will make him one of Our Messengers.

28:8. The family of Pharaoh picked him up only for him to become an enemy to them and a source of grief. Verily Pharaoh and Hâmân and their troops were wrongdoers.

The beginning of this process was when Allah safeguarded His Messenger Moosâ so that the Israelites would be delivered at his hands and because of him. At that time of great fear, when the Egyptians were slaughtering their sons, Allah inspired his mother to breastfeed him and keep him with her.

﴿but when you fear for him﴾ that is, when you sense that there is someone who may take him to them,
﴿throw him into the river﴾ namely the Nile, in a closed box.
﴿and do not be afraid or grieve, for We will surely bring him back to you, and We will make him one of Our Messengers﴾. Thus Allah gave her the glad tidings that He would return him to her, and he would grow up and be safe from their plot, and Allah would make him a Messenger.
This was the greatest of glad tidings, which were given to the mother of Moosâ so as to reassure her and calm her fears, for she was afraid for him. She did as she was instructed; she threw him into the river, and Allah caused him to drift until the family of Pharaoh picked him up and were the ones who found him,
﴿only for him to become an enemy to them and a source of grief﴾ that is, so that ultimately, and as a result of them picking him up, he would become an enemy to them and a source of grief, because precautions cannot ward off the divine decree. What they feared from the Israelites was their becoming united and undermining their authority, and Allah ensured that the leader of the Israelites would be raised by them, under their supervision and sponsorship.

Upon reflection, you will find that what happened as a result of that was in the interests of the Children of Israel, and it warded off many serious troubles from them and prevented many transgressions

before Moosâ's mission began, because he rose to a senior position in the kingdom.

Naturally he would inevitably stand up for the rights of his own people, because of what he was, namely a man of high ambition who was protective towards his own people. Hence some of these oppressed people, who had reached such a low point of humiliation – some of which Allah has told us about – developed the courage to challenge the oppressors who were acting arrogantly in the land, as we shall see below, because Moosâ was shielding them.

This was the starting point. Allah's way dictates that things should develop gradually, little by little, and not happen all at once.

﴿Verily Pharaoh and Hâmân and their troops were wrongdoers﴾ that is, it was Our will to punish them for their wrongdoing and to plan against them in requital for their plotting and scheming.

﴿وَقَالَتِ ٱمْرَأَتُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرَّتُ عَيْنٍ لِّى وَلَكَ ۖ لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَنفَعَنَآ أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُۥ وَلَدًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ٩)

28:9. Pharaoh's wife said: He may bring joy to you and me. Do not kill him, for perhaps he will be of benefit to us, or we may adopt him as a son. They had no inkling [of what was to happen].

When the family of Pharaoh picked him up, Allah caused Pharaoh's wife to feel compassion towards him. She was the great and virtuous believing woman, Âsiyah bint Muzâḥim.

﴿She said﴾: This child ﴿may bring joy to you and me. Do not kill him﴾ that is, let him live, so that he may bring joy to us and be a source of happiness for us.

﴿for perhaps he will be of benefit to us, or we may adopt him as a son﴾ that is, either he will be a servant who will strive to benefit us, or we will give him a higher status than that, by taking him as a son and loving and honouring him.

Allah (ﷻ) decreed that he should be a source of benefit to the wife of Pharaoh who said these words, for when he became a source of joy to her and she loved him dearly, he continued to be like a loving son towards her, until he grew up and Allah appointed him as a Prophet and Messenger. Then she hastened to submit and believe in him. May Allah be pleased with her and make her pleased.

Allah (ﷻ) tells us that in this discussion about Moosâ, ﴿They had no inkling [of what was to happen]﴾ that is, they were unaware of what had been decreed and decided of how events would unfold. This was by the kindness of Allah (ﷻ), for if they had been aware of that, they would have treated him differently.

﴿ وَأَصْبَحَ فُؤَادُ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ فَٰرِغًا إِن كَادَتْ لَتُبْدِي بِهِۦ لَوْلَآ أَن رَّبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ قَلْبِهَا لِتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَقَالَتْ لِأُخْتِهِۦ قُصِّيهِ ۖ فَبَصُرَتْ بِهِۦ عَن جُنُبٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١١﴾ ۞ وَحَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِ ٱلْمَرَاضِعَ مِن قَبْلُ فَقَالَتْ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ يَكْفُلُونَهُۥ لَكُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُۥ نَٰصِحُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ فَرَدَدْنَٰهُ إِلَىٰٓ أُمِّهِۦ كَىْ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا وَلَا تَحْزَنَ وَلِتَعْلَمَ أَنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾

(سورة القصص: ١٠-١٣)

28:10. Moosâ's mother felt an aching void in her heart. She would have disclosed who he was, had We not strengthened her heart so that she might maintain her faith [in the promise of Allah].

28:11. She said to [Moosâ's] sister: Go and find him. And she caught sight of him from a distance, while they did not notice.

28:12. We had already ordained that he would refuse all wet-nurses. Then she [his sister] said: Shall I direct you to a household who will bring him up for you and take good care of him?

28:13. Thus We restored him to his mother, so that she might be comforted and not grieve, and so that she might know that the promise of Allah is true. Yet most of them do not know.

When Moosâ's mother began to miss him and was very sad, she felt an aching void in her heart because of the anxiety she experienced – as is human nature – even though Allah (ﷻ) had told her not to grieve or be afraid, and He had promised to return him to her.

﴿She would have disclosed who he was, had We not strengthened her heart﴾ and made her steadfast so that she would not disclose who he was.

﴿so that﴾ by means of this patience and steadfastness ﴿she might maintain her faith [in the promise of Allah]﴾. If, when calamity befalls a person, he remains patient and steadfast, his faith increases thereby. This indicates that continuing to panic is a sign of weakness of faith.

﴿She﴾ namely the mother of Moosâ ﴿said to [Moosâ's] sister: Go and find him﴾ that is, go and look for your brother, without letting anyone see you and realise what you are up to. So she went and looked for him,

﴿And she caught sight of him from a distance, while they did not notice﴾ that is, she spotted him from a distance, as if she was simply passing by without wanting anything to do with him.

This was due to her resolve and caution. If she had seen him and come to them deliberately, they would think that it was she who had thrown him into the river, in which case they might have decided to slaughter him, as a punishment to his family.

By Allah's kindness towards Moosâ and his mother, He prevented him from accepting the breast of any woman. They took him out to the marketplace, out of compassion towards him, because perhaps

someone was looking for him. His sister came at that point, and said: ﴿Shall I direct you to a household who will bring him up for you and take good care of him?﴾

That was all they wanted, for they loved him dearly, but Allah had caused him to refuse all wet-nurses, and they were afraid that he would die. When his sister said those words to them, highlighting how this household would take good care of him, they hastened to accept and she directed them to that household.

﴿Thus We restored him to his mother﴾ as We had promised her ﴿so that she might be comforted and not grieve﴾, and so that he would grow up with her and she would be reassured and would rejoice in him, and would be paid handsomely for that.
﴿and so that she might know that the promise of Allah is true﴾ for We showed her some of what We had promised her and she saw it with her own eyes, so that she might be reassured and increase in faith, and so that she might know that Allah's promise to protect him and appoint him as a Messenger would be fulfilled.
﴿Yet most of them do not know﴾, so if they go through some difficulties, that undermines their faith, because they do not have complete knowledge that Allah (ﷻ) sends trials and difficulties and creates obstacles on the way to high aims and goals.

So Moosâ (عليه السلام) stayed with the family of Pharaoh and was raised as one of the ruling family, using the same means of transportation and wearing the same clothes as them, and his mother was reassured thereby, for it was established that she was his mother through breastfeeding, so there would be no objection to her being close to him or showing compassion towards him.

Think about this divine kindness and how Allah protected His Prophet Moosâ from telling lies in his daily speech (for he could still call her his mother), and how He made things easy for him so that the bond between him and her, which to other people appeared to be based on breastfeeding, was the reason why he could call her

his mother. Thus any talk about them as being mother and son was entirely true and appropriate.

﴿وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُۥ وَٱسْتَوَىٰٓ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٤﴾﴾

(سورة القصص: ١٤)

28:14. When he reached his prime and became fully mature, We gave him wisdom and knowledge. Thus do We reward those who do good.

That is, when he reached full strength and became mature and wise, which is typically around the age of forty years,

﴿and became fully mature﴾ that is, when he reached the level of perfection in physical strength, maturity and wisdom

﴿We gave him wisdom and knowledge﴾ that is, wisdom by means of which he could know the rulings of Sharia and judge between people, and a great deal of knowledge.

﴿Thus do We reward those who do good﴾ by worshipping Allah, and treating Allah's creation with kindness. We give them knowledge and wisdom according to their good deeds, and this is indicative of Moosâ's high level of perfection in doing good.

﴿وَدَخَلَ ٱلْمَدِينَةَ عَلَىٰ حِينِ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا فَوَجَدَ فِيهَا رَجُلَيْنِ يَقْتَتِلَانِ هَٰذَا مِن شِيعَتِهِۦ وَهَٰذَا مِنْ عَدُوِّهِۦ ۖ فَٱسْتَغَٰثَهُ ٱلَّذِى مِن شِيعَتِهِۦ عَلَى ٱلَّذِى مِنْ عَدُوِّهِۦ فَوَكَزَهُۥ مُوسَىٰ فَقَضَىٰ عَلَيْهِ ۖ قَالَ هَٰذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ عَدُوٌّ مُّضِلٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّى ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِى فَٱغْفِرْ لِى فَغَفَرَ لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٦﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ١٥-١٦)

28:15. He entered the city at a time when he would not be noticed by its people, and found two men fighting, one from among his own people and the other from among his enemies. The man from among his own people called him to help him against his enemy, so Moosâ struck him with his fist and killed him. Moosâ said: This is of Shayṭân's doing; verily he is an avowed enemy who seeks to lead man astray.

28:16. He said: My Lord, I have wronged myself, so forgive me. Then He forgave Him, for He is indeed the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

﴿He entered the city at a time when he would not be noticed by its people﴾ either because it was the time of the siesta or some other time when people do not go out and about.
﴿and found two men fighting﴾ that is, disputing and exchanging blows
﴿one from among his own people﴾ namely an Israelite
﴿and the other from among his enemies﴾, the Egyptians.

﴿The man from among his own people called him to help him against his enemy﴾ because he was well known, and the people were aware that he was an Israelite. The fact that he asked Moosâ for help indicates that Moosâ (عليه السلام) had reached a high level of influence in the royal family and was someone who could be feared or in whom hope could be placed.

﴿so Moosâ struck him with his fist﴾ that is, he punched his enemy in response to the Israelite's request for help
﴿and killed him﴾ with that blow, because he was so strong and powerful.

Moosâ (عليه السلام) regretted what he had done, and said: ﴿This is of Shayṭân's doing﴾ that is, it is the result of his making it fair-seeming and of his whispers
﴿verily he is an avowed enemy who seeks to lead man astray﴾. And this is why this happened, because of his clear enmity and his eagerness to lead people astray.

Then he prayed to his Lord for forgiveness, and said: ﴿My Lord, I have wronged myself, so forgive me. Then He forgave Him, for He is indeed the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful﴾ especially towards those who are humble and hasten to turn to Him and repent, as Moosâ (ﷺ) did.

﴿ قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَآ أَنۡعَمۡتَ عَلَيَّ فَلَنۡ أَكُونَ ظَهِيرٗا لِّلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ ١٧ فَأَصۡبَحَ فِي ٱلۡمَدِينَةِ خَآئِفٗا يَتَرَقَّبُ فَإِذَا ٱلَّذِي ٱسۡتَنصَرَهُۥ بِٱلۡأَمۡسِ يَسۡتَصۡرِخُهُۥۖ قَالَ لَهُۥ مُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّكَ لَغَوِيّٞ مُّبِينٞ ١٨ فَلَمَّآ أَنۡ أَرَادَ أَن يَبۡطِشَ بِٱلَّذِي هُوَ عَدُوّٞ لَّهُمَا قَالَ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ أَتُرِيدُ أَن تَقۡتُلَنِي كَمَا قَتَلۡتَ نَفۡسَۢا بِٱلۡأَمۡسِۖ إِن تُرِيدُ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَ جَبَّارٗا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَمَا تُرِيدُ أَن تَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُصۡلِحِينَ ١٩ وَجَآءَ رَجُلٞ مِّنۡ أَقۡصَا ٱلۡمَدِينَةِ يَسۡعَىٰ قَالَ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّ ٱلۡمَلَأَ يَأۡتَمِرُونَ بِكَ لِيَقۡتُلُوكَ فَٱخۡرُجۡ إِنِّي لَكَ مِنَ ٱلنَّٰصِحِينَ ٢٠ فَخَرَجَ مِنۡهَا خَآئِفٗا يَتَرَقَّبُۖ قَالَ رَبِّ نَجِّنِي مِنَ ٱلۡقَوۡمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٢١ ﴾ (سورة القصص: ١٧-٢١)

28:17. He said: My Lord, because of the blessings that You have bestowed upon me, I shall never lend support to the evildoers.

28:18. Morning found him in the city, apprehensive and vigilant, when suddenly the man who had sought his help the previous day called out again to him for help. Moosâ said to him: You are clearly a troublemaker.

28:19. Then when he was about to strike the one who was an enemy to them both, he said: O Moosâ, do you intend to kill me as you killed a man yesterday? Your aim is only to become a tyrant in the land; you do not intend to be one of those who put things right!

28:20. A man came rushing from the farthest part of the city, and said: O Moosâ, the chiefs are talking about killing you, so leave [immediately]. I am giving you sincere advice.

28:21. So he left [the city], apprehensive and vigilant. He said: O my Lord, save me from the people who are given to wrongdoing.

﴿He﴾ namely Moosâ (ﷺ) ﴿said: My Lord, because of the blessings that You have bestowed upon me﴾ by enabling me to repent and forgiving me, and many other blessings
﴿I shall never lend support﴾ or help or aid ﴿to the evildoers﴾ that is, I shall never help anyone in sin.

This was a promise from Moosâ (ﷺ) because of the blessings that Allah had bestowed upon him, never to help any evildoer, as he had done when he killed the Egyptian. This indicates that blessings require a person to do good and refrain from doing evil.

After he had killed the man who was his enemy, ﴿Morning found him in the city, apprehensive and vigilant﴾: were the family of Pharaoh aware of him or not? He was only afraid because it was known that no Israelite would dare to do such a thing except Moosâ.

Whilst he was in that state, ﴿suddenly the man who had sought his help﴾ against his enemy ﴿the previous day called out again to him for help﴾ against another Egyptian.
﴿Moosâ said to him﴾, rebuking him for his behaviour,
﴿You are clearly a troublemaker﴾.

﴿Then when he﴾ namely Moosâ ﴿was about to strike the one who was an enemy to them both﴾ that is, an enemy to him and to the one who was arguing and shouting for help. The argument between the Egyptian and the Israelite, who called Moosâ to help him, continued until Moosâ wanted to strike the Egyptian. Then the Egyptian said to him, seeking to prevent him killing him: ﴿O Moosâ, do you intend to kill me as you killed a man yesterday? Your aim is only to become a tyrant in the land﴾, because one of the main attributes of those who become tyrants in the land is that they kill people unlawfully.
﴿you do not intend to be one of those who put things right!﴾ Otherwise, if you wanted to put things right, you would have stood between me

and him, without killing anyone. So Moosâ refrained from killing him and he restrained himself because of the admonition and rebuke of the Egyptian.

News of what Moosâ had done in these two incidents spread until it led to Pharaoh and his chiefs discussing the idea of killing Moosâ. So Allah inspired that sincere man who hastened to tell Moosâ of what the chiefs had agreed to do before it was too late.

﴿A man came rushing from the farthest part of the city﴾ that is, he came running, out of sincerity towards Moosâ and out of fear that they might attack him before he realised.
﴿and said: O Moosâ, the chiefs are talking about killing you, so leave﴾ the city ﴿[immediately]. I am giving you sincere advice﴾.

So Moosâ followed his advice and ﴿left [the city], apprehensive and vigilant﴾ lest he be killed. He called upon Allah and said: ﴿O my Lord, save me from the people who are given to wrongdoing﴾ for he had repented from his sin and what he had done in anger, without intending to kill. Therefore their threat to kill him was wrongdoing on their part and overstepping the bounds.

﴿وَلَمَّا تَوَجَّهَ تِلْقَآءَ مَدْيَنَ قَالَ عَسَىٰ رَبِّيٓ أَن يَهْدِيَنِي سَوَآءَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَآءَ مَدْيَنَ وَجَدَ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّةً مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ يَسْقُونَ وَوَجَدَ مِن دُونِهِمُ ٱمْرَأَتَيْنِ تَذُودَانِ ۖ قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُمَا ۖ قَالَتَا لَا نَسْقِي حَتَّىٰ يُصْدِرَ ٱلرِّعَآءُ ۖ وَأَبُونَا شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَسَقَىٰ لَهُمَا ثُمَّ تَوَلَّىٰٓ إِلَى ٱلظِّلِّ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَآ أَنزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ ﴿٢٤﴾﴾

(سورة القصص: ٢٢-٢٤)

28:22. As he headed towards Madyan, he said: I hope my Lord will show me the right way [on my journey].

28:23. When he arrived at the well of Madyan, he found there a group of men watering [their flocks], and, further away, he found two

women who were holding back [their flock]. He said: What is the matter with you? They said: We cannot water [our flock] until the shepherds move on. And our father is a very old man.

28:24. So he watered [their flock] for them, then he withdrew into the shade and said: O my Lord, I am in need of whatever good You may bestow upon me.

﴿As he headed towards Madyan﴾ which was south of Palestine, where Pharaoh had no authority

﴿he said: I hope my Lord will show me the right way [on my journey]﴾ that is, the straightforward way to reach it, with ease and with no trouble or difficulty. So Allah showed him the right way, and he arrived in Madyan.

﴿When he arrived at the well of Madyan, he found there a group of men watering [their flocks]﴾ – they were people who had a lot of livestock

﴿and, further away﴾ that is, further than that group of men

﴿he found two women who were holding back [their flock]﴾ from the water troughs, because they could not reach it due to the crowd of men, and the men were too mean and ill-mannered to water their flocks for them.

Moosâ said to them: ﴿What is the matter with you?﴾ that is, why are you in this situation?

﴿They said: We cannot water [our flock] until the shepherds move on﴾ that is, usually we cannot water our flocks until the shepherds move on with their flocks, then when there is no one there, we water our flocks

﴿And our father is a very old man﴾ that is, he has no strength to water the flocks, and we have no physical strength ourselves to do it, and we have no menfolk who could push past the shepherds.

Moosâ (ﷺ) felt sorry for them and felt compassion towards them, ﴿So he watered [their flock] for them﴾ without asking for any

payment in return; he had no intention except seeking the pleasure of Allah (ﷻ). After he had watered the flocks for them, at a time of intense heat in the middle of the day, as is indicated by the phrase ﴿then he withdrew into the shade﴾, he sat down to rest in the shade after having exerted himself.

﴿and said﴾ in that situation, seeking provision from his Lord: ﴿O my Lord, I am in need of whatever good You may bestow upon me﴾ that is, I am in need of whatever good You may send to me and make easy for me. Making this implicit request is more eloquent than asking explicitly. And in this situation he continued to call upon his Lord and beseech Him.

﴿فَجَآءَتْهُ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا تَمْشِي عَلَى ٱسْتِحْيَآءٍ قَالَتْ إِنَّ أَبِي يَدْعُوكَ لِيَجْزِيَكَ أَجْرَ مَا سَقَيْتَ لَنَا ۚ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُۥ وَقَصَّ عَلَيْهِ ٱلْقَصَصَ قَالَ لَا تَخَفْ ۖ نَجَوْتَ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾ قَالَتْ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا يَٰٓأَبَتِ ٱسْتَـْٔجِرْهُ ۖ إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنِ ٱسْتَـْٔجَرْتَ ٱلْقَوِيُّ ٱلْأَمِينُ ﴿٢٦﴾ قَالَ إِنِّيٓ أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُنكِحَكَ إِحْدَى ٱبْنَتَيَّ هَٰتَيْنِ عَلَىٰٓ أَن تَأْجُرَنِي ثَمَٰنِيَ حِجَجٍ ۖ فَإِنْ أَتْمَمْتَ عَشْرًا فَمِنْ عِندِكَ ۖ وَمَآ أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَشُقَّ عَلَيْكَ ۚ سَتَجِدُنِيٓ إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ قَالَ ذَٰلِكَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ ۖ أَيَّمَا ٱلْأَجَلَيْنِ قَضَيْتُ فَلَا عُدْوَٰنَ عَلَيَّ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا نَقُولُ وَكِيلٌ ﴿٢٨﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ٢٥-٢٨)

28:25. Then one of the two women came to him, walking modestly, and said: My father is asking you to come so that he may reward you for watering [our flock] for us. When he came to him and told him his story, he said: Fear not, for [now] you are safe from the wicked people.

28:26. One of the two women said: O father, hire him, for the best person whom you can hire is one who is strong and trustworthy.

28:27. He said [to Moosâ]: I intend to give you one of these two daughters of mine in marriage, on condition that you work for me for eight years, and if you make it ten, that will be of your own accord. I do not intend to make things difficult for you. You will find me, if Allah so wills, an upright man.

28:28. Moosâ said: Let that be the agreement between me and you. Whichever term I fulfil, I will be free from further obligation. And Allah is witness to what we say.

The two women went to their father and told him what had happened, then their father sent one of them to Moosâ. She came, ﴿walking modestly﴾, which is indicative of her noble character and good attitude, for modesty is a virtuous characteristic, especially in women.

This indicates that Moosâ (ﷺ), in what he did for them, was not like a hired worker or servant, in front of whom one would not usually feel shy or behave modestly. Rather he was a man of dignity, and from his good manners and sublime attitude, she saw that which made her behave modestly towards him. She said to him:
﴿My father is asking you to come so that he may reward you for watering [our flock] for us﴾ not by way of trying to show generosity, for it was you who took the initiative in showing kindness to us; rather he wants to return the favour. So Moosâ accepted the invitation.

﴿When he came to him and told him his story﴾ and the reason why he had fled, until he reached this land, the older man said to him, so as to reassure him and comfort him, ﴿Fear not, for [now] you are safe from the wicked people﴾ that is, let your fear be gone, for Allah has saved you from them and enabled you to reach this place where they have no authority.

﴿One of the two women﴾ that is, one of his two daughters ﴿said: O father, hire him﴾ that is, make him your employee so that he may take care of the sheep and water them,

﴿for the best person whom you can hire is one who is strong and trustworthy﴾ that is, Moosâ is the best one you could hire because he combines physical strength and honesty, and the best one to hire is the one who combines physical strength and the ability to do what he was hired to do, with honesty so that he will not betray his master. These two characteristics should be taken into account when hiring anyone to do work, because problems only arise when one or both of these characteristics is lacking. But if they are combined, then the work will be done properly. She only said that because she had seen Moosâ's physical strength and energy when he watered the flocks for them and she had seen his trustworthiness and religious commitment, and how he had shown compassion towards them in a situation in which there was no hope of him benefitting from that; rather his only aim in helping them had been to seek the pleasure of Allah (ﷻ).

﴿He﴾ namely the man of Madyan

﴿said [to Moosâ]: I intend to give you one of these two daughters of mine in marriage, on condition that you work for me for eight years, and if you make it ten, that will be of your own accord﴾ that is, a voluntary action on your part, but it is not obligatory for you

﴿I do not intend to make things difficult for you﴾ by imposing ten years on you, and by hiring you I do not wish to impose hard labour on you; rather I am hiring you for easy work in which there is no hardship.

﴿You will find me, if Allah so wills, an upright man﴾. He encouraged him by stating that the work would be easy and that he would treat him well. This indicates that the righteous man should have a good attitude as much as he can, and that what is expected of him with regard to having a good attitude is greater than what is expected of others.

﴿Moosâ said﴾ responding to this request:

﴿Let that be the agreement between me and you﴾ that is, I agree to this condition that you have mentioned, and so it is agreed between me and you.

﴿Whichever term I fulfil, I will be free from further obligation﴾, whether I fulfil the eight obligatory years or I voluntarily do more than that.

﴿And Allah is witness to what we say﴾, for He is watching over us and He knows what we have agreed to.

This man, the father of the two women, who dwelt in Madyan, was not Shu'ayb, the well-known Prophet, as is widely believed. There is no evidence for that view. At most it may be said that Shu'ayb (عليه السلام) lived in Madyan and this story also took place in Madyan, but what is the connection between the two matters?

Moreover, it is not established that Moosâ lived at the time of Shu'ayb, so how could he have met him personally? If that man was Shu'ayb, then Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) would have said so and the two women would have mentioned him by name. Furthermore, Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) destroyed the people of Shu'ayb (عليه السلام) for their rejection of him, and there was no one left except those who believed in him. Allah had protected the believers from having that ignorant attitude towards the daughters of their Prophet and keeping them away from the well, barring the way to their flocks, until a stranger came along and showed kindness towards them by watering their flocks. Shu'ayb would not have accepted for Moosâ to tend his sheep and be a servant to him when he was superior to him and of higher status (unless one says that that was before Moosâ's prophethood began, in which case that may be a valid argument. Whatever the case, we cannot accept that this man was Shu'ayb the Prophet, without a sound report from our Prophet [ﷺ] to that effect, and Allah knows best.)

﴿فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ مُوسَى ٱلْأَجَلَ وَسَارَ بِأَهْلِهِۦٓ ءَانَسَ مِن جَانِبِ ٱلطُّورِ نَارًا قَالَ لِأَهْلِهِ ٱمْكُثُوٓا۟ إِنِّىٓ ءَانَسْتُ نَارًا لَّعَلِّىٓ ءَاتِيكُم مِّنْهَا بِخَبَرٍ أَوْ جَذْوَةٍ مِّنَ ٱلنَّارِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ٢٩)

28:29. When Moosâ had fulfilled the term and was travelling with his family, he saw a fire in the direction of the mountain. He said to his family: Wait here, for I can see a fire. Perhaps I can bring you some news from there, or I will bring you a burning ember so that you may warm yourselves.

﴿When Moosâ had fulfilled the term﴾. It may be that he fulfilled the obligatory term, or that he voluntarily completed the longer term, as would be expected of Moosâ, because of his sincerity. At that point, he longed to go and see his family, his mother, his tribe and his homeland. Since such a long time had passed, he thought that the Egyptians would have forgotten what he had done.

﴿and was travelling with his family﴾, heading towards Egypt

﴿he saw a fire in the direction of the mountain. He said to his family: Wait here, for I can see a fire. Perhaps I can bring you some news from there, or I will bring you a burning ember so that you may warm yourselves﴾ for it was very cold, and they had lost their way.

﴿ فَلَمَّآ أَتَىٰهَا نُودِيَ مِن شَٰطِئِ ٱلْوَادِ ٱلْأَيْمَنِ فِي ٱلْبُقْعَةِ ٱلْمُبَٰرَكَةِ مِنَ ٱلشَّجَرَةِ أَن
يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنِّيٓ أَنَا ٱللَّهُ رَبُّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَأَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ۖ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا
جَآنٌّ وَلَّىٰ مُدْبِرًا وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ ۚ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ أَقْبِلْ وَلَا تَخَفْ ۖ إِنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلْءَامِنِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ ٱسْلُكْ
يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجْ بَيْضَآءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوٓءٍ وَٱضْمُمْ إِلَيْكَ جَنَاحَكَ مِنَ ٱلرَّهْبِ ۖ
فَذَٰنِكَ بُرْهَٰنَانِ مِن رَّبِّكَ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَإِيْهِ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ قَوْمًا فَٰسِقِينَ
﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة القصص: ٣٠-٣٢)

28:30. But when he came to it, he was called from the right-hand side of the valley, from the bush in the blessed spot, saying: O Moosâ, verily I am Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

28:31. Throw down your staff. But when he saw it moving as if it was a snake, he turned and fled without a backward glance. [It was said:] O Moosâ, come back, and do not be afraid, for you are quite safe.

28:32. Insert your hand into your garment; it will come forth shining white, without harm. And put your hand under your arm when you feel afraid [so as to still your fear and compose yourself]. These are two proofs from your Lord to Pharaoh and his chiefs, for they are indeed a rebellious and wicked people.

When he came to it, he was called: ﴿O Moosâ, verily I am Allah, the Lord of the worlds﴾. Thus He informed him of His divinity and Lordship, which must have been followed by the command to worship Him alone and devote himself to Him alone, as is clearly mentioned elsewhere:

﴿Verily, I am Allah; there is no God but Me. So worship Me [alone] and establish prayer to remember Me.﴾ *(Ṭā Hā 20: 14)*

﴿Throw down your staff﴾ so he threw it down

﴿But when he saw it moving﴾ rapidly, presenting a terrifying image

﴿as if it was a snake﴾ the word translated here as ﴿snake﴾ refers to a large male snake

﴿he turned and fled without a backward glance﴾ that is, he was overwhelmed with fear. But Allah said to him:

﴿O Moosâ, come back, and do not be afraid, for you are quite safe﴾. This wording is the most eloquent and most effective in offering reassurance and dispelling fear.

﴿come back﴾ – this phrase is an order to come back, so he had no choice but to comply. But the terrifying thing could still be there, so Allah said: ﴿and do not be afraid﴾. Thus He instructed him to do two things: to come back, and not to be afraid. But there was another possibility, which was that he could come back and not be afraid, but then he might not be protected or safe from harm. Hence Allah

said: ﴿for you are quite safe﴾. Thus he was completely protected in all ways. So Moosâ (ﷺ) came back, without fear; rather he was reassured and trusted what his Lord had told him, having increased in faith and certainty. This was a sign that Allah showed him before he went to Pharaoh, so that he might have complete certainty and more courage, and so that he might be stronger and more resilient.

Then He showed him another sign, as He said:
﴿Insert your hand into your garment; it will come forth shining white, without harm﴾. So he inserted his hand into his garment and then brought it forth, as Allah (ﷻ) had instructed him.

﴿And put your hand under your arm when you feel afraid﴾ and press your upper arm to your side, in order to dispel your fear.
﴿These﴾ namely the staff turning into a snake and the hand coming forth shining white, without harm, were two definitive signs from Allah
﴿to Pharaoh and his chiefs, for they are indeed a rebellious and wicked people﴾ for it is not sufficient for the Messenger merely to warn them and give them instructions; rather there should be some clear signs, in the hope that this might benefit them.

﴿ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي قَتَلْتُ مِنْهُمْ نَفْسًا فَأَخَافُ أَن يَقْتُلُونِ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَأَخِي هَارُونُ هُوَ
أَفْصَحُ مِنِّي لِسَانًا فَأَرْسِلْهُ مَعِيَ رِدْءًا يُصَدِّقُنِيٓ إِنِّيٓ أَخَافُ أَن يُكَذِّبُونِ ﴿٣٤﴾ قَالَ
سَنَشُدُّ عَضُدَكَ بِأَخِيكَ وَنَجْعَلُ لَكُمَا سُلْطَٰنًا فَلَا يَصِلُونَ إِلَيْكُمَا ۚ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ أَنتُمَا
وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَكُمَا ٱلْغَٰلِبُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة القصص: ٣٣-٣٥)

28:33. Moosâ said: My Lord, I killed one of their men, and I fear that they will kill me.

28:34. My brother Hâroon is clearer in speech than I, so send him with me as a helper, to reiterate my words, for I fear that they will reject me.

28:35. Allah said: We will strengthen you through your brother, and give you both power, so that they will not be able to harm you. By virtue of Our signs, you two and those who follow you will be triumphant.

﴿Moosâ said﴾, apologising to his Lord and asking Him for help with the task that He had given him, and mentioning the impediment that hindered him, so that his Lord might help him to overcome what he feared:

﴿My Lord, I killed one of their men, and I fear that they will kill me. My brother Hâroon is clearer in speech than I, so send him with me as a helper, to reiterate my words﴾ for that will help to make the truth clearer

﴿for I fear that they will reject me﴾.

Allah answered his request and said: ﴿We will strengthen you through your brother﴾ that is, We will help you by means of him.

Then Allah dispelled his fear of being killed, as He said:

﴿and give you both power﴾ that is, We will give you authority and power, so that your call will be based on proof and divine support, and you will be protected from your enemies

﴿so that they will not be able to harm you﴾. That is because of Our signs and what they point to of truth and the way in which they impact anyone who sees them and examines them. By means of them, you will attain authority and be protected from the harm of your enemies; that will be more effective for you than troops who are great in number and well equipped.

﴿By virtue of Our signs, you two and those who follow you will be triumphant﴾. This was a promise to Moosâ at that time, when he was alone and had returned to his homeland after having been expelled. Matters continued to develop and unfold until Allah fulfilled his promise and gave him power over the people and the land, and he and his followers prevailed.

﴿فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم مُّوسَىٰ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا بَيِّنَـٰتٍ قَالُوا۟ مَا هَـٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّفْتَرًى وَمَا سَمِعْنَا بِهَـٰذَا فِىٓ ءَابَآئِنَا ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ رَبِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن جَآءَ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ مِنْ عِندِهِۦ وَمَن تَكُونُ لَهُۥ عَـٰقِبَةُ ٱلدَّارِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلظَّـٰلِمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ٣٦-٣٧)

28:36. When Moosâ came to them with Our clear signs, they said: This is nothing but invented magic; we have never heard of such a thing from our forefathers.

28:37. Moosâ said: My Lord knows best who comes with guidance from Him, and whose end will be [best] in the hereafter. Verily the wrongdoers will never prosper.

So Moosâ went with the message of his Lord.

﴿When Moosâ came to them with Our clear signs﴾ which clearly supported what he said to them, with no shortcomings or ambiguity, ﴿they said﴾, wrongfully, arrogantly and stubbornly:

﴿This is nothing but invented magic﴾, as Pharaoh said in that situation in which truth became apparent and prevailed over falsehood, and falsehood diminished, and the leaders who understood the reality of things, submitted to Moosâ:

﴿...He must be your master, who taught you magic!...﴾ *(ash-Shu'arâ' 26: 49)*

Pharaoh, who was intelligent but was not good at heart, sank to such a level of cunning and treachery, as Allah tells us. This man knew

﴿...that none but the Lord of the heavens and the earth has sent down these [signs] as clear evidence...﴾ *(al-Isrâ' 17: 102)*

– but he was overtaken by his fate.

﴿we have never heard of such a thing from our forefathers﴾. But they were lying when they said that, because Yoosuf (ﷺ) was sent before Moosâ (ﷺ), as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿Yoosuf came to you before with clear signs, but you never ceased to doubt the message he brought you. Then when he died, you said: Allah will never send [another] Messenger after him. Thus Allah leaves to stray those who transgress and are given to much doubting.﴾ *(Ghâfir 40: 34)*

﴿Moosâ said﴾ when they claimed that what he brought was magic and misguidance, and that what they were following was true guidance: ﴿My Lord knows best who comes with guidance from Him, and whose end will be [best] in the hereafter﴾ that is, if my meeting with you and my presenting clear signs is of no benefit, and you insist on getting carried away in your misguidance and in your disbelief, then Allah (ﷻ) knows best who is guided and who is not, and whose end will be best in the hereafter, us or you.

﴿Verily the wrongdoers will never prosper﴾ for the best end in the hereafter is for Moosâ and his followers, and these people (the wrongdoers) will be faced with loss, a bad end and doom.

﴿وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَأُ مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرِى فَأَوْقِدْ لِى يَٰهَٰمَٰنُ عَلَى ٱلطِّينِ فَٱجْعَل لِّى صَرْحًا لَّعَلِّىٓ أَطَّلِعُ إِلَىٰٓ إِلَٰهِ مُوسَىٰ وَإِنِّى لَأَظُنُّهُۥ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَٱسْتَكْبَرَ هُوَ وَجُنُودُهُۥ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ وَظَنُّوٓا۟ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ فَأَخَذْنَٰهُ وَجُنُودَهُۥ فَنَبَذْنَٰهُمْ فِى ٱلْيَمِّ ۖ فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾ وَجَعَلْنَٰهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَدْعُونَ إِلَى ٱلنَّارِ ۖ وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ لَا يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ وَأَتْبَعْنَٰهُمْ فِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلدُّنْيَا لَعْنَةً ۖ وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ هُم مِّنَ ٱلْمَقْبُوحِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ٣٨-٤٢)

28:38. Pharaoh said: O chiefs, I do not know of any god for you except myself. So, O Hâmân, light me a fire [to bake bricks] of clay,

and build me a tower, so that I may climb up and have a look at the God of Moosâ, for verily I think he is a liar.

28:39. He and his troops behaved arrogantly in the land without justification, and thought that they would not be brought back to Us.

28:40. So We seized him and his troops and flung them into the sea. So see what was the fate of the wrongdoers.

28:41. We made them leaders who call people to the fire, and on the Day of Resurrection they will not be helped.

28:42. We caused a curse to overtake them in this world, and on the Day of Resurrection they will be among those who are spurned.

﴿Pharaoh said﴾, audaciously challenging his Lord and deceiving his foolish people who were lacking in reason:
﴿O chiefs, I do not know of any god for you except myself﴾ that is, I alone am your god and deserving of your worship; if there was any god other than me, I would have known him. Look at how Pharaoh presented his claim in a very cautious way: he did not say "you have no other god but me"; rather he spoke in a cautious manner and said: ﴿I do not know of any god for you except myself﴾. That is because in their eyes he was the virtuous one who possessed great knowledge; whatever he said was true and whatever he commanded them to do they would obey.

When he said these words, which could be interpreted as meaning that there could possibly be another god besides him, what he wanted was to rule out that possibility. So he said to Hâmân: ﴿light me a fire [to bake bricks] of clay, and build me a tower﴾ that is, a structure, ﴿so that I may climb up and have a look at the God of Moosâ, for verily I think he is a liar﴾, but we will examine this matter and prove what I think, and we will show you that Moosâ is a liar. Look at this great audacity towards Allah, such as no other human ever reached. He disbelieved in Moosâ and claimed to be divine, he denied any

knowledge of the true God, and he took measures to reach the God of Moosâ, and all of that was aimed at deceiving the people. But what is amazing about these chiefs who claimed to be senior figures in the kingdom and running its affairs is the way in which this man toyed with their minds and belittled their intelligence. This was because of their evildoing that was deeply entrenched in their character.

Hence their religious concepts became corrupt, which was followed by corruption of their way of thinking. We ask You, O Allah, to make us steadfast in faith and not to let our hearts deviate now after You have guided us, and bestow upon us mercy from Yourself; for You are the Bestower *(cf. 3: 8)*.

﴿He and his troops behaved arrogantly in the land without justification﴾. They were arrogant towards the slaves of Allah and mistreated them harshly, and they were arrogant towards the Messengers of Allah and what they brought of signs. So they rejected the signs and claimed that what they were following was more sublime and better.

﴿and thought that they would not be brought back to Us﴾. Hence they were audacious. Otherwise, if they had known or thought that they would be brought back to Allah, they would not have done what they did.

﴿So We seized him and his troops﴾ when they persisted in stubbornness and transgression

﴿and flung them into the sea. So see what was the fate of the wrongdoers﴾. This was the worst of punishments and they were the greatest losers, for it was a worldly punishment that was ongoing and was connected to the punishment of the hereafter.

﴿We made them leaders who call people to the fire﴾ that is, We made Pharaoh and his chiefs leaders who may be followed to the abode of loss and doom.

﴿and on the Day of Resurrection they will not be helped﴾ against the punishment of Allah, for they will be too weak to ward it off

from themselves, and they will have no protector or helper against Allah.

﴿We caused a curse to overtake them in this world﴾ that is, in addition to their punishment and disgrace in this world, We have also caused a curse to overtake them, so they are spoken ill of, resented and criticised. This is something that is obvious, for they are the leaders of those who are cursed in this world, and foremost among them. ﴿and on the Day of Resurrection they will be among those who are spurned﴾, cast far away, for their deeds are abhorrent. Thus there is combined against them the resentment of Allah, the resentment of His creation and the resentment of their own selves.

﴿وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَآ أَهْلَكْنَا ٱلْقُرُونَ ٱلْأُولَىٰ بَصَآئِرَ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ وَمَا كُنتَ بِجَانِبِ ٱلْغَرْبِىِّ إِذْ قَضَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَى ٱلْأَمْرَ وَمَا كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلشَّٰهِدِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ٤٣-٤٤)

28:43. We gave Moosâ the Book after We had destroyed the previous nations, as enlightenment for humankind, and as guidance and mercy, so that they might pay heed.

28:44. You were not there on the western side [of the mountain] when We decreed for Moosâ the commission, nor did you witness that event.

﴿We gave Moosâ the Book﴾ namely the Torah ﴿after We had destroyed the previous nations﴾ – the last of those nations who were destroyed *en masse* were Pharaoh and his troops. This indicates that after the revelation of the Torah, wholesale destruction of nations ceased, and jihad against the disbelievers with the sword was prescribed.

﴿as enlightenment for humankind﴾ that is, the Book of Allah, that He sent down to Moosâ, contains enlightenment for humankind. In other words it contains matters through which they may see what benefits them and what harms them. Thus proof is established against the sinner, but the believer benefits from it, because in his case it is mercy and guidance for him to the straight path. Hence Allah says: ﴿and as guidance and mercy, so that they might pay heed﴾.

When Allah told His Messenger (ﷺ) the story of the unseen past, He pointed out that this news came from a purely divine source; the Messenger (ﷺ) had no way of knowing about it except through revelation. Hence He said:

﴿You were not there on the western side [of the mountain]﴾ at the time when We decreed for Moosâ the commission, ﴿nor did you witness that event﴾, so that it might be said that you came to know this information in that manner.

﴿ وَلَٰكِنَّآ أَنشَأْنَا قُرُونًا فَتَطَاوَلَ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْعُمُرُ ۚ وَمَا كُنتَ ثَاوِيًا فِىٓ أَهْلِ مَدْيَنَ تَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا وَلَٰكِنَّا كُنَّا مُرْسِلِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَمَا كُنتَ بِجَانِبِ ٱلطُّورِ إِذْ نَادَيْنَا وَلَٰكِن رَّحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ لِتُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّآ أَتَىٰهُم مِّن نَّذِيرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة القصص: ٤٥-٤٦)

28:45. But We brought forth many nations [after Moosâ], and a long time has gone by since then. And you [O Muhammad] did not dwell among the people of Madyan, learning from them [the story mentioned in] Our revelation; rather it is We Who have sent you as a Messenger [and revealed to you their stories].

28:46. You were not on the side of the mountain when We called [to Moosâ]. But [the revelation is sent to you] as a mercy from your Lord, so that you may warn people to whom no warner was sent before you, in order that they may pay heed.

﴿But We brought forth many nations [after Moosâ], and a long time has gone by since then﴾; knowledge vanished, and Allah's revelations were forgotten. Then We sent you at a time when there was a great need for you and for that which We have taught you and revealed to you.

﴿And you [O Muhammad] did not dwell among the people of Madyan, learning from them [the story mentioned in] Our revelation﴾ teaching them and learning from them, so that you came to know the story of Moosâ in Madyan.

﴿rather it is We Who have sent you as a Messenger [and revealed to you their stories]﴾ that is, the story of Moosâ that you brought is one of the results of Our sending you, and it is revelation that you had no way of knowing without Us sending you and revealing it to you.

﴿You were not on the side of the mountain when We called [to Moosâ]﴾ and commanded him to go to the wrongdoing people and convey to them Our message, showing them Our signs and wonders that We have related to you. The point is that with regard to the events that happened to Moosâ (عليه السلام) in these places and that you have narrated as they happened, without adding or subtracting anything, one of two things must be the case:

The first explanation is that you (O Muhammad [ﷺ]) were present and witnessed them, or you went to the places where they happened, and learned about them from the people there, which does not prove that you are the Messenger of Allah, because matters that one may narrate to others after witnessing them or finding out about them, are commonplace and that is not something that is exclusively for the Prophets. But it is known with certainty that this did not happen, for your friends and enemies alike know that this is not the case.

So the other explanation must be correct, which is that this has come to you from Allah, and is His revelation and message. Thus the truth of your message is proven by means of definitive evidence, and it is known that Allah has sent you as a mercy to His slaves. Hence

Allah says: ﴿But [the revelation is sent to you] as a mercy from your Lord, so that you may warn people to whom no warner was sent before you﴾ namely the Arabs and Quraysh. For the divine message was unknown to them, both at the time when the Messenger (ﷺ) was sent and for a long time before that.

﴿in order that they may pay heed﴾ by learning what is good and doing it, and learning what is bad and refraining from it. If this is what you are, then what they must do is hasten to believe in you and be grateful for this blessing, the worth of which cannot be rightly estimated and for which sufficient thanks can never be given.

The fact that he warned the Arabs does not contradict the fact that he was also sent to others. For he was an Arab, the Qur'an that was sent down to him was Arabic, and the first people he called were the Arabs. So the message was addressed first of all to them, and to others after that. This is like the verses in which Allah says:

﴿Does it seem strange to people that We have sent revelation to a man from among themselves [saying]: Warn the people...?﴾ *(Yoonus 10: 2)* – and:

﴿Say [O Muhammad]: O people, verily I am the Messenger of Allah to you all...﴾ *(al-A'râf 7: 158)*

﴿وَلَوْلَآ أَن تُصِيبَهُم مُّصِيبَةٌۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُوا۟ رَبَّنَا لَوْلَآ أَرْسَلْتَ إِلَيْنَا
رَسُولًا فَنَتَّبِعَ ءَايَٰتِكَ وَنَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْحَقُّ مِنْ عِندِنَا
قَالُوا۟ لَوْلَآ أُوتِىَ مِثْلَ مَآ أُوتِىَ مُوسَىٰٓ ۚ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفُرُوا۟ بِمَآ أُوتِىَ مُوسَىٰ مِن قَبْلُ ۖ قَالُوا۟
سِحْرَانِ تَظَٰهَرَا وَقَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا بِكُلٍّ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ قُلْ فَأْتُوا۟ بِكِتَٰبٍ مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ هُوَ أَهْدَىٰ
مِنْهُمَآ أَتَّبِعْهُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَإِن لَّمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لَكَ فَٱعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا يَتَّبِعُونَ

أَهْوَآءَهُمْ ۚ وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنِ ٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ بِغَيْرِ هُدًى مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾ ﴿سورة القصص: ٤٧-٥٠﴾

28:47. [We have sent you as a Messenger] lest they say, when a calamity befalls them because of the deeds which their own hands have wrought: Our Lord, why did You not send to us a Messenger so that we might follow Your revelations and be among those who believe?

28:48. But when the truth came to them from Us, they said: Why has he not been given the like of that which was given to Moosâ? Did they not reject that which was given to Moosâ before? They say: [These – the Torah and the Qur'an – are] two types of magic, each supporting the other! And they say: We reject both of them.

28:49. Say: Then bring a book from Allah that is a better guide than these two so that I may follow it, if you are telling the truth.

28:50. But if they do not respond to you, then know that they only follow their own desires, and who is more astray than one who follows his own desires, without any guidance from Allah? Verily Allah does not guide people who are given to wrongdoing.

﴿[We have sent you as a Messenger] lest they say, when a calamity befalls them because of the deeds which their own hands have wrought﴾ of disbelief and sins

﴿Our Lord, why did You not send to us a Messenger so that we might follow Your revelations and be among those who believe?﴾ That is, so We have sent you, O Muhammad (ﷺ), so as to leave them with no excuse.

﴿But when the truth came to them from Us﴾ concerning which there is no doubt, namely the Qur'an which We revealed to you, ﴿they said﴾, rejecting it and objecting to it on the basis of their flawed argument:

﴿Why has he not been given the like of that which was given to Moosâ?﴾ A Book was sent down to him from heaven in one go. In other words, so long as it comes down piecemeal, it cannot be from Allah. What kind of specious argument is this? How can this prove that it is not from Allah because it was sent down piecemeal?

Rather it is indicative of the perfect nature of this Qur'an, and the perfect care of Allah for the one to whom He sent it down, that it was sent down piecemeal, so that Allah might strengthen the heart of His Messenger (ﷺ) thereby, and increase the believers in faith.

﴿Whenever they come to you [O Muhammad] with an argument, We reveal to you the truth and the best explanation.﴾ *(al-Furqân 25: 33)*

Moreover, their comparison of the Qur'an with the Book of Moosâ was a comparison with something that they did not believe in, so how could they compare it to a book that they rejected and did not believe in? Hence Allah says:

﴿Did they not reject that which was given to Moosâ before? They say: [These – the Torah and the Qur'an – are] two types of magic, each supporting the other!﴾ That is, each supporting the other in their magic and misleading the people

﴿And they say: We reject both of them﴾. Thus it is proven that the people wanted to refute the truth without any proof, they tried to undermine it with a flawed argument and made contradictory statements. This is how every disbeliever is. Hence Allah clearly tells us that they disbelieved in both Books and both Messengers. But did they disbelieve by way of seeking the truth and following something that they had that was better than these two Books, or were they merely following whims and desires?

Then Allah (ﷻ) says, highlighting their flawed argument and challenging them to produce a third book that was more guided:

﴿Say: Then bring a book from Allah that is a better guide than these two﴾ namely the Torah and the Qur'an,

﴿so that I may follow it, if you are telling the truth﴾. But there was no way that they or anyone else could produce something like these two Books, for the world had never received, since the time Allah created it, any book like these two in terms of knowledge, guidance, clarity and mercy for humankind.

It would be perfectly fair for the caller to say: My aim is truth and guidance, and I have brought you this Book which contains that and is in harmony with the Book of Moosâ, so we must all submit to these Books and follow them, because they are guidance and truth, but if you bring me a book from Allah that is more guided than them, I will follow it, otherwise I will not give up guidance and truth of which I am certain for something other than guidance and truth.

﴿But if they do not respond to you﴾ and do not bring a book that is a better guide than these two,

﴿then know that they only follow their own desires﴾ that is, then know that their refusal to follow you is not because they are going to follow some truth that they know or choose some other guidance; rather it is because of merely following their whims and desires.

﴿and who is more astray than one who follows his own desires, without any guidance from Allah?﴾ Such a one is the most misguided of people, because he was offered guidance and the straight path that leads to Allah and to His paradise, but he did not pay any attention to it or accept it; his desire pushed him to follow the paths that lead to doom and misery, so he followed those paths and ignored true guidance.

Can there be anyone who is more misguided than one who is like this? But his wrongdoing, enmity and lack of love for the truth is what dictated that he should persist in his misguidance and not be guided by Allah. Hence Allah says:

﴿Verily Allah does not guide people who are given to wrongdoing﴾ that is, those for whom wrongdoing and stubbornness have become second nature. Guidance came to them but they rejected it, but when whims and desires were offered to them, they followed them, thus

closing the gates of guidance to themselves, and opening the gates of misguidance. Hence they are wandering blindly in their misguidance and wrongdoing, and in their misery and doom.

The words ﴿But if they do not respond to you, then know that they only follow their own desires﴾ indicate that anyone who does not respond to the Messenger (ﷺ) and who follows a view contrary to that of the Messenger (ﷺ) is not following true guidance; rather he is following whims and desires.

﴿وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ ٱلْقَوْلَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ٥١)

28:51. Now We have caused Our word to reach them in stages, so that they may pay heed.

﴿Now We have caused Our word to reach them in stages﴾ that is, We have caused it to reach them piecemeal and We have sent it down little by little, out of mercy and kindness towards them ﴿so that they may pay heed﴾ when the revelations come to them repeatedly, and explanations are sent down when they are needed. Thus it is revealed in stages, as a mercy towards them, so why are they objecting to what is in their best interests?

Some lessons that we learn from this wondrous story

- The signs and lessons of Allah (ﷻ), and the stories He tells us of the previous nations, only benefit and enlighten the believers. What the individual learns from these stories will be commensurate with his level of faith. Allah (ﷻ) only tells the stories for the believers' sake; as for others, Allah does not care about them and they will receive no light or guidance from these stories.

- When Allah (ﷻ) wills something, he prepares the means that lead to it and brings it about stage by stage, gradually, not all in one go.
- No matter how weak an oppressed nation becomes, it should not give in to laziness and give up pursuing its rights, or despair of regaining power and reaching a high level, especially if it is oppressed. Allah saved the Children of Israel, who were a weak nation, from the captivity of Pharaoh and his chiefs, and He gave them power and control over their land.
- So long as a nation is subjugated and humiliated, and cannot stand up for its rights or speak for itself, it will not be able to take care of its religious or worldly affairs, and will not be able to play a leading role.
- Allah showed kindness to the mother of Moosâ, and alleviated the calamity for her by giving her glad tidings that Allah would return her son to her and make him one of the Messengers.
- Allah may decree some hardship for His slave, so as to make him attain greater happiness, or to ward off some greater harm, as He decreed that intense grief and worry for the mother of Moosâ, that were the means of bringing her son back to her, reassuring her, comforting her and increasing her joy and happiness.
- Natural fear of people is not contrary to faith and does not diminish it, as we see in the case of the mother of Moosâ and Moosâ himself.
- Faith may increase and decrease, but one of the greatest means of increasing faith and perfecting certainty is having patience in the face of trouble and feeling confident of the help of Allah when calamity strikes, as Allah tells us about the mother of Moosâ: ﴿She would have disclosed who he was, had We not strengthened her heart so that she might maintain her faith [in the promise of Allah]﴾ *(28: 10)* that is, so that her faith would increase and she would be reassured.

- One of the greatest of Allah's blessings to His slave and one of the greatest ways in which He helps His slave in his affairs is His making him steadfast and strengthening his resolve at the time of fear and overwhelming calamity, thus enabling him to say and do the right thing. This is in contrast to the one who is overwhelmed by worries, fear and panic; he does not think straight and he loses his focus, so he is not able to help himself in that situation.
- Even if a person knows that the divine will and decree and the promise of Allah will inevitably come to pass, he should not neglect to take proper measures as Allah has instructed, and that is not contrary to faith in the promise of Allah. Allah promised the mother of Moosâ that He would return her son to her, yet she took measures to bring him back, and she sent his sister to track him down and find out where he was.
- It is permissible for a woman to go out and attend to her own needs, and to speak to men provided that there is no reason for caution, as the sister of Moosâ and the two daughters of the man of Madyan did.
- It is permissible to receive payment for raising and breastfeeding a child, and to help someone to find a woman who will do that.
- By His mercy towards His weak slave whom He wants to honour, Allah may show him some of His signs and proof, so as to increase him in faith, as Allah returned Moosâ to his mother, so that she would know that the promise of Allah is true.
- Killing a disbeliever who has a covenant with the Muslims or who is regarded as being under a covenant with them on the basis of custom is not permissible. Moosâ regarded his killing of the Egyptian disbeliever as a sin, and he asked Allah to forgive him for it.
- The one who kills people unlawfully is regarded as one of the tyrants who spread mischief in the land.

- The one who kills people unlawfully and claims that he only wants to put things right in the land and deter evildoers is a liar and is spreading mischief, as Allah tells us that the Egyptian said: ﴿...do you intend to kill me as you killed a man yesterday? Your aim is only to become a tyrant in the land; you do not intend to be one of those who put things right!﴾ *(28: 19)*. Allah said this by way of approving of these words, not saying that they were incorrect.
- Telling someone what is being said about him, by way of warning him of some evil that may befall him, is not regarded as spreading malicious gossip. In fact it may be obligatory, as that man came and told Moosâ by way of offering sincere advice and warning him *(28: 20)*.
- If a person fears that he may be killed or harmed if he stays where he is, he should not allow himself to be destroyed or surrender to that. Rather he should leave, as Moosâ did.
- If there are two choices that will lead to harm, but an individual has no alternative but to choose one of them, he should choose the one that leads to lesser harm, as Moosâ did when he had the choice of either remaining in Egypt, but he would be killed, or going to some distant land to which he did not know the route and he had no guide to show him the way except his Lord, but this was more likely to lead to safety than the first option, so Moosâ chose it.
- With regard to one who is researching an issue of knowledge and needs to give a verdict, if he cannot be certain that one of the two views is correct, he should seek the guidance of his Lord and ask Him to guide him to the correct view, after sincerely searching for the truth, for Allah will not disappoint one who is like that. This is what Moosâ did when he set out for Madyan: ﴿As he headed towards Madyan, he said: I hope my Lord will show me the right way [on my journey]﴾ *(28: 22)*.

- Showing mercy to people and being kind to them, whether you know them or not, is one of the characteristics of the Prophets. That kindness includes watering livestock and helping those who are unable to help themselves.
- It is recommended to offer supplication, explaining one's situation and what one needs, even though Allah knows it well, because He loves for His slave to beseech Him and express his humility and need for Him, as Moosâ said: ﴿O my Lord, I am in need of whatever good You may bestow upon me﴾ *(28: 24)*.
- Modesty and shyness, especially in people of dignity and noble character, are praiseworthy characteristics.
- Offering recompense for favours and kindness is an attitude that has existed since the time of the earlier generations.
- If a person does something for the sake of Allah (ﷻ), then receives recompense without having had that in mind from the outset, he is not to be blamed for that. Moosâ accepted recompense for his act of kindness from the man of Madyan, although he had not sought it and had never thought of receiving any recompense.
- It is permissible to hire someone to tend sheep and do similar tasks that may not be well defined and may be worked out on the basis of custom. It is permissible to hire someone in return for benefit, even if that benefit is in the form of marriage.
- A man may offer his daughter in marriage to another man whom he has chosen for her, and there is nothing wrong with that.
- The best worker whom a man may employ is the one who is strong and honest.
- One of the best of good attitudes and manners is to show kindness towards workers and servants, and not impose too much work on them, because Allah tells us that the man of Madyan said: ﴿I do not intend to make things difficult for you. You will find me, if Allah so wills, an upright man﴾ *(28: 27)*.

- It is permissible to make contracts for work and other matters without witnesses, because Moosâ said: ﴿And Allah is witness to what we say﴾ *(28: 28)*.
- Allah caused clear signs and miracles to occur at the hand of Moosâ, such as the snake, his hand turning white without harm, and the protection that Allah granted to Moosâ and Hâroon against Pharaoh and against drowning.
- One of the greatest punishments that may befall a man is to become a leader in evil, and that will be commensurate with the level of his opposition to the revelations and signs of Allah. By the same token, one of the greatest blessings that Allah may bestow upon His slave is to make him a leader in good, so that he is guided and guides others.
- This story offers proof for the message of Muhammad (ﷺ), as this story is narrated in detail, in accordance with what really happened, and in a way that confirms the message of the Messengers and supports the clear truth, without him having been present at any of these events or having visited any of these places. He never read or studied anything about any of these matters, or discussed them with any of the people of knowledge. It is nothing but the message of the Most Gracious, Most Merciful, and revelation that was sent down to him by the Most Generous, the Bestower of blessings, so that he might warn thereby people who were ignorant and who had never been warned before or received any message.

Blessings and peace of Allah be upon the one whose very words indicated that he was the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and whose instructions and prohibitions signalled to wise people that this message was from Allah. How could it be otherwise, when there was so much evidence to prove the soundness of the message he brought, namely: the earlier and later scriptures; the law he brought; the character of the Prophet (ﷺ) which was based on the best attitude and manners,

such as can only be suited to one who is the best of people; and the clear victory granted to his religion and nation, to the extent that his religion reached as far as night and day, and his nation conquered most of the world with the sword and spear, and hearts were won over with knowledge and faith?

But stubborn nations and disbelieving rulers who are standing together against the Ummah are uniting against Islam and plotting against it, scheming to extinguish its light, destroy it and erase it from the face of the earth. But Islam has defeated them and prevailed over them, and is still growing; its signs and proofs become ever more manifest in every age, and new signs emerge which offer lessons to all people, guidance to those who have knowledge, and enlightenment to those who pay heed. Praise be to Allah alone.

﴿ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِن قَبْلِهِۦ هُم بِهِۦ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَإِذَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا بِهِۦٓ إِنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا مِن قَبْلِهِۦ مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُم مَّرَّتَيْنِ بِمَا صَبَرُوا۟ وَيَدْرَءُونَ بِٱلْحَسَنَةِ ٱلسَّيِّئَةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا۟ ٱللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ وَقَالُوا۟ لَنَآ أَعْمَٰلُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَٰلُكُمْ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لَا نَبْتَغِى ٱلْجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة القصص: ٥٢-٥٥)

28:52. Those to whom We gave the scripture before are the ones who believe in it [the Qur'an].

28:53. When it is recited to them, they say: We believe in it, for it is indeed the truth from our Lord. Verily we had already submitted [to Allah, in Islam] before that.

28:54. Such people will be given a twofold reward for their patience and steadfastness; they repel evil with good, and spend out of that which We have provided for them.

28:55. When they hear idle [or offensive] talk, they turn away from it and say: To us our deeds, and to you yours. We wish you peace. We have no desire [to be involved] with the ignorant.

Here Allah (ﷻ) mentions the greatness and truth of the Qur'an and tells us that people who have knowledge of the truth recognise it, believe in it and affirm that it is true.

﴿Those to whom We gave the scripture before﴾ namely the people of the Torah and the Gospel, whose hearts are open to the truth ﴿are the ones who believe in it [the Qur'an]﴾ that is, they believe in the Qur'an and in the one who brought it.

﴿When it is recited to them﴾ they listen and submit, and ﴿they say: We believe in it, for it is indeed the truth from our Lord﴾ because it is in accordance with what the Messengers brought, and is in harmony with what is mentioned in the previous scriptures; it includes true stories (of previous nations), and commands and prohibitions that are in accordance with the utmost wisdom.

These are the people whose testimony is of significance and whose words may be of benefit, for they only say these words on the basis of knowledge and understanding, as they are people of books and scriptures. The rejection and opposition of others to the truth is flawed and they have no sound argument, because they are ignorant or they are acting ignorantly and stubbornly rejecting the truth.

Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿Say: Believe in it, or do not believe. Verily, those who were given knowledge before it,[32] when it is recited to them, fall down on their faces in prostration.﴾ *(al-Isrā' 17: 107)*

﴿Verily we had already submitted [to Allah, in Islam] before that﴾ – that is why Allah kept us steadfast in that with which He had blessed

[32] Namely the People of the Book (Jews and Christians).

us of faith, so we believed in this Qur'an; we believed in the first Book and the last Book, whereas others contradicted their belief in the previous Book by rejecting this Book.

﴿Such people﴾ who believe in both Books
﴿will be given a twofold reward﴾ – a reward for believing the first time and a reward for believing the second time
﴿for their patience and steadfastness﴾ in faith, and their steadfastness in deeds, for their faith was not shaken by doubt and no love of leadership or desire turned them away from faith. Moreover, because of their noble characteristics which result from their sound faith, they ﴿repel evil with good﴾. In other words, their way is to treat everyone kindly, even those who mistreat them in word and deed; they respond with gentle words and kind treatment, because they are aware of the virtue of this noble attitude and they know that no one is guided to that except one who has great good fortune.

﴿When they hear idle [or offensive] talk﴾ from an ignorant person who addresses them in that manner
﴿they turn away from it and say﴾, in the manner of the slaves of the Most Gracious who possess wisdom:
﴿To us our deeds, and to you yours﴾ that is, each will be requited only for the deeds he did, and he will not bear the burden of other people's sins. This implies that they disavow and keep away from the way of the ignorant, and avoid idle talk, falsehood and any talk in which there is no benefit.

﴿We wish you peace﴾ that is, you will not hear anything from us except that which is good, for we will not address you in a manner that matches your ignorance. Even if you accept for yourselves to sink to that level, we put ourselves above that and we protect ourselves from becoming involved in it.
﴿We have no desire [to be involved] with the ignorant﴾ in any way whatsoever.

﴿ إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة القصص: ٥٦)

28:56. Verily, you [O Muhammad] cannot guide whomever you like, but Allah guides whomever He wills, and He knows best who is rightly guided.

Here Allah (ﷻ) is saying: You, O Muhammad (ﷺ) – and others even more so – cannot guide anyone, even if he is among the dearest of people to you. This is something that is beyond the ability of all people, to guide in the sense of making them believe and creating faith in their hearts. Rather that is in the Hand of Allah and He guides whomever He wills, and He knows best who is fit to be guided, so He guides him, and who is not fit to be guided, so He leaves him to go astray.

With regard to the verse in which it is affirmed that the Messenger (ﷺ) guides people –

﴿...Verily, you are indeed calling people to a straight path.﴾ *(ash-Shoorā 42: 52)*

– that is guidance in the sense of explaining and teaching. The Messenger (ﷺ) explains the straight path and urges people to follow it, and he does his utmost to persuade people to follow it. As for instilling faith in their hearts and enabling them to do righteous deeds, there is no way that he can do that.

Therefore if he had been able to do that, he would have guided the one who had been kind to him, supported him and protected him from his people, namely his paternal uncle Abu Ṭâlib. But he was more kind to his uncle as he called him to Islam and was very sincere towards him, which was greater than what his uncle had done for him, but guidance is in the Hand of Allah (ﷻ).

﴿ وَقَالُوٓا۟ إِن نَّتَّبِعِ ٱلْهُدَىٰ مَعَكَ نُتَخَطَّفْ مِنْ أَرْضِنَآ ۚ أَوَلَمْ نُمَكِّن لَّهُمْ حَرَمًا ءَامِنًا
يُجْبَىٰٓ إِلَيْهِ ثَمَرَٰتُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ رِّزْقًا مِّن لَّدُنَّا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَكَمْ
أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَرْيَةٍۭ بَطِرَتْ مَعِيشَتَهَا ۖ فَتِلْكَ مَسَٰكِنُهُمْ لَمْ تُسْكَن مِّنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ إِلَّا
قَلِيلًا ۖ وَكُنَّا نَحْنُ ٱلْوَٰرِثِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾ وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ ٱلْقُرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يَبْعَثَ فِىٓ أُمِّهَا
رَسُولًا يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا ۚ وَمَا كُنَّا مُهْلِكِى ٱلْقُرَىٰٓ إِلَّا وَأَهْلُهَا ظَٰلِمُونَ
﴿٥٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة القصص: ٥٧-٥٩)

28:57. They say: If we were to follow this guidance with you, we would be driven out of our land. Have We not established for them a secure sanctuary, to which fruits of all kinds are brought, as provision from Us? But most of them do not know.

28:58. How many a city did We destroy [for their sins] that was unappreciative of its life of ease. There lie their dwellings, which have scarcely been inhabited since their demise. It was We Who were their [sole] inheritors.

28:59. Your Lord would never destroy the cities until He had sent to their main city a Messenger who would recite Our revelations to them; nor would We destroy the cities unless their people were evildoers.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that the disbelievers among Quraysh and the people of Makkah said to the Messenger (ﷺ): ﴿If we were to follow this guidance with you, we would be driven out of our land﴾ by means of killing, taking prisoners and plundering, for the people are opposing you and going against you, so if we follow you, we will be exposed to the enmity of all the people, and we have no ability to withstand them.

These words of theirs indicate that they thought negatively of Allah (ﷻ) and thought that He would not support His religion or

make His words supreme; rather He would give others power over the followers of His religion, so they would persecute them harshly. They thought that falsehood would prevail over truth.

But Allah said, highlighting to them a blessing that they were enjoying to the exclusion of all others, and pointing out that He had singled them out for this blessing: ﴿Have We not established for them a secure sanctuary, to which fruits of all kinds are brought, as provision from Us?﴾ That is, have We not established that in a secure sanctuary that is frequented and visited by many people, venerated by near and far, so that its people are not disturbed and no one does anything to undermine it?

That was at a time when all the places around them were beset by fear from all directions, and the people of the surrounding areas were not safe and did not feel secure. So they should praise their Lord for this perfect security that no one else enjoyed, and for the abundant provision that came to them from all places, namely fruits, food and other goods, by means of which they were able to earn a living and enjoy a life of ease.

And they should follow this noble Messenger, so that they might enjoy a life of security and ease, and they should beware of rejecting him and becoming insolent as the result of the blessings that have been bestowed upon them, lest their security be turned to fear, and they be faced with humiliation after being in a position of honour, and become poor after having been independent of means. Hence Allah warned them by telling them of what happened to the nations who came before them:

﴿How many a city did We destroy [for their sins] that was unappreciative of its life of ease﴾ that is, those nations were too proud of that life and were distracted by it from believing in the Messengers. Therefore Allah destroyed them, took away the blessing and sent upon them the punishment.

﴿There lie their dwellings, which have scarcely been inhabited since their demise﴾ because destruction and punishment came upon them many times, and their dwellings were left desolate after they were gone.

﴿It was We Who were their [sole] inheritors﴾. We caused them to die, then all that they enjoyed of blessings will come back to Us, then We will bring them back to Us and will requite them for their deeds.

But by His wisdom and mercy, He did not punish those nations for their mere disbelief, before establishing proof against them by sending the Messengers to them. Hence He says:

﴿Your Lord would never destroy the cities﴾ for their disbelief and wrongdoing

﴿until He had sent to their main city﴾ that is, the chief city to which they had ties and always visited and frequented, and to which all the surrounding cities were connected so that news of the main city was not hidden from them

﴿a Messenger who would recite Our revelations to them﴾ that pointed to the truth that he brought, and confirmed the message to which he called them, so that near and far would convey his words. This is unlike the situation if the Messengers were sent to distant cities and remote regions, in which case it is very likely that news of such a Prophet would remain hidden and unknown, whereas anything that happens in the main cities is likely to become well known among all people. Moreover, the people in the main cities are less hard-hearted than those who live elsewhere.

﴿nor would We destroy the cities unless their people were evildoers﴾ who disbelieved and committed sin, and therefore deserved punishment. The point is that Allah does not punish anyone unless it is because of his wrongdoing and after the establishment of proof against him.

﴿وَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّن شَيْءٍ فَمَتَٰعُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتُهَا ۚ وَمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰٓ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾ أَفَمَن وَعَدْنَٰهُ وَعْدًا حَسَنًا فَهُوَ لَٰقِيهِ كَمَن مَّتَّعْنَٰهُ مَتَٰعَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ هُوَ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ مِنَ ٱلْمُحْضَرِينَ ﴿٦١﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ٦٠-٦١)

28:60. Whatever you have been given is but the enjoyment of the life of this world and its splendour; but that which is with Allah is better and more lasting. Will you not then understand?

28:61. Is one to whom We have given a goodly promise, and he will see it fulfilled, like one to whom We have granted enjoyment of the life of this world, then on the Day of Resurrection he will be among those brought up [for punishment]?

Here Allah urges His slaves to have little interest in this world and not to be deceived by it; rather they should focus on the hereafter and make that their main aim and goal. He tells them that all that people are given of gold, silver, animals, belongings, wives, sons, food, drink and pleasure is but the enjoyment of the life of this world and its splendour. In other words, these things are enjoyed only for a short while and bring brief pleasure, but that enjoyment will be interrupted by a great deal of trouble and strife.

A person may enjoy these adornments for a short time, which gives him a reason for pride and showing off, but they will quickly disappear and all come to an end, and he will not gain anything from that except loss, regret, disappointment and deprivation.

﴿but that which is with Allah﴾ of eternal bliss and sound living ﴿is better and more lasting﴾ that is, it is better in terms of both quality and quantity, and it is eternal and everlasting.

﴿Will you not then understand?﴾ That is, do you not have minds with which to reflect and decide what should be given precedence and which of the two realms is more deserving of being striven for?

This indicates that the more rational a person is, the more he will give precedence to the hereafter over this world, and no one gives precedence to this world unless there is a deficiency in his reasoning. Hence Allah points out the importance of weighing up the fate of the one who gives precedence to this world and the fate of the one who gives precedence to the hereafter:

﴿Is one to whom We have given a goodly promise, and he will see it fulfilled﴾ that is, is the believer – who strives for the hereafter as he should, for he strives hard, hoping for the goodly reward that his Lord has promised him, namely paradise and all that it contains of immense delights, for he will undoubtedly find what he was promised, because it is a promise from One Who is most generous and is faithful to His promise and does not break His promise to the one who does that which pleases Him and avoids that which angers Him –

﴿like one to whom We have granted enjoyment of the life of this world﴾ so he is fully engaged in its affairs, eating, drinking and enjoying it in the manner of animals? Such a one has been distracted by his worldly pleasures from the hereafter, and he does not pay attention to the guidance of Allah or follow the Messengers; rather he carries on like that and gains nothing from this world except loss and doom.

﴿then on the Day of Resurrection he will be among those brought up [for punishment]﴾ that is, he will be brought up for the reckoning, but he will already know that he did not send ahead anything that was good for himself; rather he sent ahead all that will harm him, and now he has been brought to the realm where he will be requited for his deeds. What do you think his end will be? What do you think will happen to him? Let the wise man choose for himself that which is best and is more deserving of being given precedence.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

﴿هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ عَلَىٰ مَن تَنَزَّلُ الشَّيَاطِينُ ﴿٢٢١﴾ تَنَزَّلُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿٢٢٢﴾ يُلْقُونَ السَّمْعَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ كَاذِبُونَ ﴿٢٢٣﴾ وَالشُّعَرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ ﴿٢٢٤﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي كُلِّ وَادٍ يَهِيمُونَ ﴿٢٢٥﴾ وَأَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ مَا لَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢٢٦﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَانتَصَرُوا مِن بَعْدِ مَا ظُلِمُوا ۗ وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنقَلَبٍ يَنقَلِبُونَ ﴿٢٢٧﴾﴾ (سورة الشعراء: ٢٢١-٢٢٧)

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

26:222. They descend upon every evil liar,

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

﴿ وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُ أَيْنَ شُرَكَآءِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ كُنتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقَوْلُ رَبَّنَا هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ٱلَّذِينَ أَغْوَيْنَآ أَغْوَيْنَٰهُمْ كَمَا غَوَيْنَا ۖ تَبَرَّأْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ۖ مَا كَانُوٓا۟ إِيَّانَا يَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ وَقِيلَ ٱدْعُوا۟ شُرَكَآءَكُمْ فَدَعَوْهُمْ فَلَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لَهُمْ وَرَأَوُا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ ۚ لَوْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَآ أَجَبْتُمُ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾ فَعَمِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْأَنۢبَآءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَهُمْ لَا يَتَسَآءَلُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة القصص: ٦٢-٦٦)

28:62. On the day when Allah will call to them, saying: Where are My [so-called] partners, as you claimed?,

28:63. those against whom the word will be fulfilled[33] will say: Our Lord, these are the ones whom we led astray; we led them astray as we ourselves were led astray.[34] We disavow them before You; it was not us they worshipped.

28:64. It will be said [to them]: Call on your [so-called] partners. They will call on them, but they will not respond to them. They will see the punishment [and will wish] that they had been rightly guided.

28:65. On that day, Allah will call to them, saying: What was your response to the Messengers?

28:66. They will not be able to think of any reply, and they will not even be able to ask one another.

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[33] This refers to the promoters and leaders of disbelief and misguidance. The word that will be fulfilled against them is the promise of Allah (ﷻ): ﴿...I will certainly fill hell with jinn and men, all together.﴾ *(Hood 11: 119; as-Sajdah 32: 13)*

[34] That is, they were not led astray by force; rather it was merely by means of whispers and making falsehood fair-seeming to them, and they went astray willingly.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us what He will ask people about on the Day of Resurrection: He will ask them about the most fundamental matters, about their worship of Allah and their response to His Messengers.

﴿On the day when Allah will call to them﴾ that is, He will call to those who ascribed partners to Him, whom they worshipped and hoped that they would benefit them and ward off harm from them. He will call them in order to show them their helplessness and misguidance. ﴿saying: Where are My [so-called] partners﴾ – for Allah has no partners; rather that was according to their claims and fabrications. Hence He says:
﴿as you claimed?﴾; Where are they themselves, and where are their benefits and protection?

It is well known that at that point it will become clear to them that that which they worshipped and on which they pinned their hopes is false and is of a diminishing nature; all their hopes will come to naught and they will acknowledge that they were misguided and wrong. Hence ﴿those against whom the word will be fulfilled﴾, namely the leaders of disbelief and evil, will admit that they were misled and they misled others. They will say: ﴿Our Lord, these﴾ followers ﴿are the ones whom we led astray; we led them astray as we ourselves were led astray﴾ that is, we are all the same in misguidance and we are all equally deserving of punishment.
﴿We disavow them before You﴾ that is, we disavow their worship and declare ourselves innocent of them and their actions.
﴿it was not us they worshipped﴾; rather they worshipped the devils.

﴿It will be said [to them]: Call on your [so-called] partners﴾, as you hoped that they would benefit you. So they will be instructed to call upon them at that critical time, when every worshipper will call upon that which he worshipped.
﴿They will call on them﴾ and ask them to help them or ward off the punishment of Allah from them in any way

﴿but they will not respond to them﴾. Then those who disbelieved will realise that they were lying and are deserving of punishment.
﴿They will see﴾ with their own eyes ﴿the punishment﴾ that will befall them after they had denied it and did not believe in it.
﴿[and will wish] that they had been rightly guided﴾ that is, then they would not be suffering as they are suffering now, and they would have been guided to the path that leads to paradise. But they were not guided to the straight path in this world, so they will not be guided to the path that leads to paradise in the hereafter.

﴿On that day, Allah will call to them, saying: What was your response to the Messengers?﴾ Did you believe them and follow them, or did you reject them and go against them?

﴿They will not be able to think of any reply, and they will not even be able to ask one another﴾ that is, they will not know how to answer this question and they will not be guided to the right answer.

It is well known that the only answer that could save them is the correct answer, if it were true in their case, which would be to say that they responded to them, believed in them and followed them. But because they know that they rejected them and opposed what they called them to, they will not say anything. Moreover, it will not be possible for them to ask one another and discuss amongst themselves what answer they may give, even if it is a lie.

﴿ فَأَمَّا مَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَعَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُفْلِحِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة القصص: ٦٧)

28:67. But as for those who repented and believed, and did righteous deeds, they may well be among the successful.

Having mentioned the questioning of people regarding their objects of worship and their response to the Messengers, Allah (ﷻ) now mentions the way in which a person may be saved from His punishment, and that there is no salvation except for the one who repented from ascribing partners to Allah and from sin, and who believed in Allah and worshipped Him, believed in His Messengers, and did righteous deeds, following the Messengers in doing so.

﴿they﴾ namely those who combine these characteristics ﴿may well be among the successful﴾ who attain the goal and are saved from what they fear. There is no way of attaining success without these things.

﴿وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ وَيَخْتَارُ ۗ مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ ٱلْخِيَرَةُ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾ وَرَبُّكَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾ وَهُوَ ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ لَهُ ٱلْحَمْدُ فِى ٱلْأُولَىٰ وَٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ وَلَهُ ٱلْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ٦٨-٧٠)

28:68. Your Lord creates whatever He wills and chooses [whomever He wills]; they have no choice in the matter. Glorified and exalted be Allah far above the partners they ascribe to Him!

28:69. Your Lord knows what their hearts conceal and what they disclose.

28:70. And He is Allah; there is no god but He. To Him be all praise in this world and the hereafter. His is the judgement and to Him you will be brought back.

In these verses it is stated that Allah is the Creator of all creation, all creatures are subject to His will, and He alone chooses whomever and whatever He will of people, commands, times and places; no one has any control or choice in the matter; He is far above all that they

ascribe to Him of partners, helpers, supporters, children, spouses and so on, that the polytheists ascribe to Him; and He knows what their hearts conceal and what they disclose.

He alone is deserving of worship and praise in this world and the hereafter, for what He possesses of the attributes of majesty and beauty, and for what He bestows upon His creation of kindness and grace. He is the One Who issues decrees in both realms, in this world by means of His universal decree, that impacts all that He creates, and by means of His religious decree which impacts all laws, commands and prohibitions.

In the hereafter, He will issue decrees of requital. Hence He says: ﴿and to Him you will be brought back﴾ and He will requite each one of you for his deeds, good or bad.

﴿قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلَّيْلَ سَرْمَدًا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ مَنْ إِلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ ٱللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُم بِضِيَآءٍ ۖ أَفَلَا تَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلنَّهَارَ سَرْمَدًا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ مَنْ إِلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ ٱللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُم بِلَيْلٍ تَسْكُنُونَ فِيهِ ۖ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَمِن رَّحْمَتِهِۦ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ لِتَسْكُنُوا۟ فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا۟ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ٧١-٧٣)

28:71. Say: What do you think, if Allah were to make the night everlasting for you until the Day of Resurrection, what god other than Allah could bring you light? Will you not then listen?

28:72. Say: What do you think, if Allah were to make the day everlasting for you until the Day of Resurrection, what god other than Allah could bring you night in which to rest? Will you not then see?

28:73. By His mercy He has made for you night and day, so that you may rest therein and seek His bounty, and so that you may give thanks.

This is a reminder from Allah to His slaves of His favour, calling upon them to give thanks to Him and be true slaves to Him, for by His mercy He has given them the day in which to seek of Allah's bounty and go about seeking their provision and livelihood in its light; and He has given them the night in which to calm down and rest, so that their bodies and souls may recover from their toil during the day. This is by His grace and mercy towards His slaves. Can anyone else do any of that? If He were to make ﴿the night everlasting for you until the Day of Resurrection, what god other than Allah could bring you light? Will you not then listen?﴾ Why do you not listen to His exhortation and revelations in such a way that you would understand, accept and follow? And if He were to ﴿make the day everlasting for you until the Day of Resurrection, what god other than Allah could bring you night in which to rest? Will you not then see?﴾ Why do you not see and understand the lesson and understand the verses in such a way that you would become enlightened and follow the straight path?

Allah says with regard to the night, ﴿Will you not then listen?﴾ and with regard to the day ﴿Will you not then see?﴾ because hearing is more effective at night than seeing, and it is the other way round during the day.

In these verses, Allah points out that the individual should reflect on the blessings that Allah has bestowed upon him, try to understand them and compare what he has with what his situation would be if he did not have those blessings. If he compares his situation when he has these blessings and what it would be if he did not have them, he will become more aware of the great blessings that he has, unlike the one who thinks of them as nothing out of the ordinary and thinks that he will always have them, and thus is no longer appreciative of the blessings of Allah, and does not realise his need for these blessings at all times. Such a person will never be grateful or pay heed to the blessings that he is enjoying.

﴿وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُ أَيْنَ شُرَكَآءِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ كُنتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾ وَنَزَعْنَا مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا فَقُلْنَا هَاتُوا۟ بُرْهَٰنَكُمْ فَعَلِمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱلْحَقَّ لِلَّهِ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ٧٤-٧٥)

28:74. On the day when Allah will call to them, saying: Where are My [so-called] partners, as you claimed?,

28:75. and We bring forth from every nation a witness, and We say [to the nations]: Bring your proof, then they will know that truth [divinity] belongs to Allah alone, and the [false gods] of their own invention will be lost from them.

That is, on the day when Allah will call to those who ascribed partners to Him, who regarded others as equal to Him, who claimed that He had partners who were deserving of worship and who could bring benefit or cause harm. That will be on the Day of Resurrection, when Allah wants to show how audacious they were and how they lied in their claim, and to prove that they were wrong. So He ﴿will call to them, saying: Where are My [so-called] partners, as you claimed?﴾ That was according to their claim, not as it really was. This is like the verse in which He says:

﴿...Those who call upon their [so-called] partners besides Allah follow nothing but conjecture and they do nothing but lie.﴾ *(Yoonus 10: 66)*

When they and their gods are brought, Allah will select a witness ﴿from every nation﴾ that disbelieved, to testify concerning what happened in this world of their ascription of partners to Him and other beliefs. These witnesses will be selected or chosen.

In other words: We will select from among the leaders of the liars those who will stand up and argue their case, pleading on behalf

of their brothers and those who followed the same path as them. When they are brought forth to be questioned, We will say to them ﴿Bring your proof﴾ that is, your evidence for the soundness of your ascription of partners to Allah; did We instruct you to do that? Did My Messengers command you to do that? Did you find that in any of My scriptures? Is there anyone among them who deserves to be called divine? Can they benefit you, or ward off from you the punishment of Allah, or avail you anything? Let them do that if they are qualified to do so, and let them show you if they have any power.

﴿then﴾ at that point they will realise the falseness and wrongness of what they said, and ﴿they will know that truth [divinity] belongs to Allah alone﴾. The argument will be proven against them and they will have no proof to offer, for the proof of Allah will have utterly refuted them.

﴿and the [false gods] of their own invention will be lost from them﴾ that is, their lies and fabrications will diminish and disappear, and they will realise that Allah has been just towards them, for He does not punish anyone except one who deserves it.

﴿ إِنَّ قَٰرُونَ كَانَ مِن قَوْمِ مُوسَىٰ فَبَغَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلْكُنُوزِ مَآ إِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُۥ
لَتَنُوٓأُ بِٱلْعُصْبَةِ أُو۟لِى ٱلْقُوَّةِ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُۥ قَوْمُهُۥ لَا تَفْرَحْ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْفَرِحِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾
وَٱبْتَغِ فِيمَآ ءَاتَىٰكَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلدَّارَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ ۖ وَلَا تَنسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَأَحْسِن
كَمَآ أَحْسَنَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَلَا تَبْغِ ٱلْفَسَادَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾
قَالَ إِنَّمَآ أُوتِيتُهُۥ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عِندِىٓ ۚ أَوَلَمْ يَعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَدْ أَهْلَكَ مِن قَبْلِهِۦ مِنَ ٱلْقُرُونِ مَنْ
هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ قُوَّةً وَأَكْثَرُ جَمْعًا ۚ وَلَا يُسْـَٔلُ عَن ذُنُوبِهِمُ ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ
قَوْمِهِۦ فِى زِينَتِهِۦ ۖ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا يَٰلَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَآ أُوتِىَ قَٰرُونُ
إِنَّهُۥ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنْ

ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا وَلَا يُلَقَّىٰهَآ إِلَّا ٱلصَّٰبِرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ فَخَسَفْنَا بِهِۦ وَبِدَارِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ
فَمَا كَانَ لَهُۥ مِن فِئَةٍ يَنصُرُونَهُۥ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُنتَصِرِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَأَصْبَحَ
ٱلَّذِينَ تَمَنَّوْا۟ مَكَانَهُۥ بِٱلْأَمْسِ يَقُولُونَ وَيْكَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ
عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقْدِرُ ۖ لَوْلَآ أَن مَّنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا لَخَسَفَ بِنَا ۖ وَيْكَأَنَّهُۥ لَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ (سورة
القصص: ٧٦-٨٢)

28:76. Qâroon was one of the people of Moosâ, but he behaved arrogantly towards them. We had given him such treasures that their very keys would have weighed down a band of strong men. His people said to him: Do not exult, for Allah does not love those who exult [in their riches].

28:77. Seek, by means of that which Allah has bestowed on you, the final abode, without forgetting your rightful share in this world. Be good to others, as Allah has been good to you, and do not seek to spread mischief in the land, for verily Allah does not love those who spread mischief.

28:78. He said: This has been given to me only because of knowledge that I possess. Did he not know that from among the nations who came before him, Allah had destroyed men who were superior to him in terms of might and accumulation of wealth? The wicked will not be questioned about their sins.

28:79. He came out before his people in all his finery. Those who cared only for the life of this world said: Would that we had the like of what Qâroon has been given! He is indeed a man of great good fortune.

28:80. But those who were given knowledge said: Woe to you! Allah's reward is better for those who believe and do righteous deeds, but none will attain it except those who are steadfast.

28:81. Then We caused the earth to swallow him and his house. He had none to support him against [the punishment of] Allah, nor was he able to save himself.

28:82. Those who had previously wished to be in his place began to say: Indeed it is Allah Who grants abundant provision to whomever He wills among His slaves, or gives it in scant measure. Were it not for Allah's grace towards us, He could have caused the earth to swallow us too. Indeed the disbelievers will never prosper.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us the story of Qâroon, what he did and what happened to him, and the advice and exhortation he received.

﴿Qâroon was one of the people of Moosâ﴾ that is, he was one of the Children of Israel who were favoured above all other nations, and were superior to them at that time. Allah blessed them greatly and their well-being was in accordance with their adherence to the right path, but this Qâroon transgressed and went astray, because of what he was given of immense wealth that made him arrogant.

﴿We had given him such treasures﴾ that is, abundant wealth ﴿that their very keys would have weighed down a band of strong men﴾ – the word translated here as ﴿band﴾ refers to a group of between seven and ten men, or thereabouts. Even the keys to the storehouses of his wealth would be too heavy for a strong group to carry, and if this is how the keys were, then what do you think of the treasures themselves?

﴿His people said to him﴾, advising him and warning him against arrogance and transgression:

﴿Do not exult, for Allah does not love those who exult [in their riches]﴾ that is, do not exult in these great worldly gains or boast about them, and do not let that distract you from the hereafter, for Allah does not love those who exult in it and whose focus is only on loving it.

﴿Seek, by means of that which Allah has bestowed on you, the final abode﴾ that is, you have been granted means of helping yourself advance in the hereafter that had not been granted to other people, namely your wealth, so seek therewith that which is with Allah; give

in charity and do not spend it only on fulfilling your own desires and physical pleasures.

﴿without forgetting your rightful share in this world﴾ that is, We are not telling you to give all your wealth in charity and become destitute; rather you should spend for your hereafter and enjoy your share of this world in a manner that does not undermine your religious commitment or harm your well-being in the hereafter.

﴿Be good to others, as Allah has been good to you﴾ by bestowing this wealth upon you

﴿and do not seek to spread mischief in the land﴾ by means of arrogance, disobeying Allah and being distracted by the blessings from the Bestower of those blessings

﴿for verily Allah does not love those who spread mischief﴾; rather He will punish them severely for that.

But Qâroon said – rejecting their advice and showing ingratitude for the blessings of his Lord: ﴿This has been given to me only because of knowledge that I possess﴾ that is, I have only acquired this wealth because of my own efforts and knowledge of ways of making money, and because of my smartness; the phrase in question may also be interpreted as meaning: Allah knows my situation and He knows that I deserve this. So why are you advising me regarding that which Allah (ﷻ) has given to me?

But Allah (ﷻ) says, explaining that His giving is not necessarily indicative of the good condition of the recipient: ﴿Did he not know that from among the nations who came before him, Allah had destroyed men who were superior to him in terms of might and accumulation of wealth?﴾ What was there to prevent the destruction of Qâroon, when it was Our way to destroy others who were like him or greater in terms of wealth, if they did that which incurs destruction?

﴿The wicked will not be questioned about their sins﴾; rather Allah will punish them on the basis of what He knows about them. Even though they try to prove that they are in a good situation and say that

they will be saved, their words will not be accepted and that will not ward off the punishment from them, because their sins are not hidden. Therefore their denial is pointless. But Qâroon persisted in his stubbornness and transgression, and in rejecting the advice of his people, exulting in his wealth and filled with self-admiration. He was deceived by what he had been given of wealth.

One day Qâroon ﴿came out before his people in all his finery﴾ that is, looking his best in terms of worldly adornment, as he had a great deal of wealth and he had prepared himself and beautified himself to the greatest extent, and adornment is usually tremendous in the case of such people, as it is a combination of worldly adornment and splendour. All eyes were on him at that moment and his clothing and adornment dazzled the people, who fell into two categories, each according to their aspirations and the focus of their desires.

﴿Those who cared only for the life of this world﴾ that is, those whose ambitions were focused only on this world, which represented their ultimate aim, and they had no desire for anything else ﴿said: Would that we had the like of what Qâroon has been given﴾ of worldly gains, conveniences and adornment ﴿He is indeed a man of great good fortune﴾.

These words could have been true if all that existed was what they aspired to and there was no hereafter beyond this world, for what he had been given was the ultimate in worldly joy, and he was able to get all that he wanted by means of what he had been given. So this was great good fortune, according to their aspirations. But the aspiration of one who has made that (namely great good fortune in worldly terms) his ultimate aim is indeed the lowest and most base ambition, and the one who thinks in that way has no lofty ambition or sublime goal.

﴿But those who were given knowledge﴾, who understood the reality of things and looked at the true nature of this world, whereas the first group only looked at it in a superficial manner,

﴿said: Woe to you﴾, feeling sorry for the first group because of their wishing for themselves what Qâroon had been given, and finding their words odd and objectionable

﴿Allah's reward﴾ in this world, in the pleasure of worshipping Him, loving Him and turning to Him, and in the hereafter, in paradise and what it contains of all that one could desire and all that may bring delight

﴿is better﴾ than what you wish for and desire. This is the reality of the matter, but not everyone who knows that would give precedence to what is sublime over what is base. No one will attain that or be enabled to have this attitude ﴿except those who are steadfast﴾ and devote themselves to obeying Allah, refrain from disobeying Him, and accept His decree even when it is painful, so they are patient in resisting the attractions and temptations of this world, lest they distract them from their Lord and prevent them from fulfilling the purpose for which they were created. These are the ones who give precedence to Allah's reward over fleeting worldly gains.

When Qâroon's parade ended, in which he had shown arrogance and pride, displayed the adornment he possessed, and made a show of his self-admiration, the punishment came upon him suddenly. ﴿Then We caused the earth to swallow him and his house﴾ as a requital that matched his deed, for he had put himself above the slaves of Allah, so Allah brought him to the lowest of the low, him and the things by which he had been deceived, namely his house, furnishings and other possessions.

﴿He had none﴾ that is, he had no group, clan, servants or troops ﴿to support him against [the punishment of] Allah, nor was he able to save himself﴾ that is, the punishment came upon him and he was not helped nor was he able to help himself.

﴿Those who had previously wished to be in his place﴾ that is, those who had wanted worldly gain and had said: ﴿Would that we

had the like of what Qâroon has been given﴾ *(28: 79)* now began to say, feeling sorry, having learned their lesson, and fearing that the punishment might befall them:

﴿Indeed it is Allah Who grants abundant provision to whomever He wills among His slaves, or gives it in scant measure﴾ that is, He restricts provision for whomever He wills. Now we know that the abundant provision that was granted to Qâroon was not indicative of any good in him, and we were mistaken when we said: ﴿He is indeed a man of great good fortune﴾.

﴿Were it not for Allah's grace towards us﴾, and His not punishing us for what we said; were it not for His grace and kindness, ﴿He could have caused the earth to swallow us too﴾. So the destruction of Qâroon was a punishment for him and a lesson and admonition for others. Even those who had envied him regretted it and changed their way of thinking.

﴿Indeed the disbelievers will never prosper﴾ either in this world or in the hereafter.

﴿تِلْكَ ٱلدَّارُ ٱلْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا ۚ وَٱلْعَٰقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ٨٣)

28:83. That abode of the hereafter We will give to those who do not seek to exalt themselves in the land or spread mischief; and the best outcome is for those who fear Allah.

Having mentioned Qâroon and what he was given of worldly gain, and what happened to him in the end, and that the people of knowledge said: ﴿Allah's reward is better for those who believe and do righteous deeds﴾ *(28: 80)*, Allah (ﷻ) now urges us to seek the hereafter and tells us of the means by which we may attain it:

﴿That abode of the hereafter﴾ of which Allah told us in His scriptures and of which His Messengers spoke, which contains all delights and from which is warded off all that may spoil it of stress and trouble

﴿We will give﴾ as an abode and dwelling place

﴿to those who do not seek to exalt themselves in the land or spread mischief﴾ that is, they have no desire – let alone take any action – to exalt themselves in the land above the slaves of Allah or to act in an arrogant manner towards people or towards the truth

﴿or spread mischief﴾ – this includes all kinds of sins.

As they have no desire to exalt themselves in the land or spread mischief, this implies that all their thinking and devotion is directed towards Allah alone, and their aim is the abode of the hereafter; their attitude is one of humility towards the slaves of Allah, submission to the truth, and doing righteous deeds.

These people are the pious who fear Allah, and who will have a good end. Hence Allah says: ﴿and the best outcome﴾ that is, prosperity and success that will be steady and ongoing, for those who fear Allah (ﷻ). As for others, even if they attain some conveniences and pleasures of this world, that will not last for long and it will soon disappear. As this verse tells us that the best outcome is only for those who fear Allah, it is known that those who seek to exalt themselves in the land and spread mischief will have no share in the hereafter.

﴿مَن جَآءَ بِٱلْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُۥ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهَا ۖ وَمَن جَآءَ بِٱلسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَى ٱلَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا۟ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾﴾ (سورة القصص: ٨٤)

28:84. Whoever comes [on the Day of Resurrection] having done good will be rewarded with something better than it, and whoever

comes having done evil, those who did evil will be requited only according to their deeds.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the multiplication of His bounty and the perfect nature of His justice:
﴿Whoever comes [on the Day of Resurrection] having done good﴾ – provided that what he has done is not spoiled by something that could render it invalid, in which case it will not be counted.

The word translated here as ﴿good﴾ is a general term which refers to everything that Allah (ﷻ) and His Messenger have enjoined of words and deeds, visible and hidden, having to do with the rights of Allah and the rights of His slaves.
﴿will be rewarded with something better than it﴾ that is, greater than it. Elsewhere Allah says:

﴿Whoever comes [on the Day of Resurrection] with a good deed will be repaid tenfold...﴾ *(al-An'âm 6: 160)*

This multiplication of the reward for good deeds is inevitable, and there may be reasons for it to be increased, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...Allah gives manifold increase to whomever He wills. And Allah is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing.﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 261)*

That multiplication will be according to the status of the doer and his deed, how much benefit it brings, and the context and place in which it occurs.

﴿and whoever comes having done evil﴾ which is everything forbidden and prohibited by the Lawgiver
﴿those who did evil will be requited only according to their deeds﴾. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Whoever comes [on the Day of Resurrection] with a good deed will be repaid tenfold, but whoever comes with an evil deed will be recompensed only with the like thereof; and no one will be wronged.﴾ *(al-An'âm 6: 160)*

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِى فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لَرَآدُّكَ إِلَىٰ مَعَادٍ ۚ قُل رَّبِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ مَن جَآءَ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ وَمَنْ هُوَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٨٥﴾ وَمَا كُنتَ تَرْجُوٓا۟ أَن يُلْقَىٰٓ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبُ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۖ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ ظَهِيرًا لِّلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَلَا يَصُدُّنَّكَ عَنْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أُنزِلَتْ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ ۖ وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ وَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ ۘ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ كُلُّ شَىْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُۥ ۚ لَهُ ٱلْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾﴾

(سورة القصص: ٨٥-٨٨)

28:85. Verily He Who revealed the Qur'an to you [O Muhammad] will surely bring you back to the place of return. Say: My Lord knows best who has brought true guidance and who is clearly misguided.

28:86. You [O Muhammad] were not expecting this Book to be conferred on you; but [it is] a mercy from your Lord. So do not be a helper to the disbelievers.

28:87. Do not let them turn you [O Muhammad] away from the revelations of Allah after they have been sent down to you; call people to your Lord, and do not be one of those who ascribe partners to Allah.

28:88. Do not call upon any other god alongside Allah; there is no god but He. All will perish but He. His is the judgement and to Him you will be brought back.

﴿Verily He Who revealed the Qur'an to you﴾ that is, with regard to the One Who sent it down, enjoined rulings in it, explained in it what is lawful and what is prohibited, and instructed you to convey it to humankind, and explain all the rulings having to do with those who are accountable, it does not befit His wisdom that life should be no more than the life of this world, without any reward or punishment for people. Rather He will inevitably bring you to the place of return,

where He will requite the doers of good for their good deeds and the doers of evil for their disobedience.

You (O Muhammad [ﷺ]) have already explained guidance to them and shown them the way. If they follow you, then they are fortunate and blessed, but if they insist on disobeying you, criticising the guidance that you have brought, and giving precedence to what they have of falsehood over the truth, then there is no longer any room for argument and there is nothing left but requital for deeds by the Knower of the unseen and the seen, Who will requite the follower of truth and the follower of falsehood. Hence Allah says:
﴿Say: My Lord knows best who has brought true guidance and who is clearly misguided﴾; He knows that His Messenger (ﷺ) is the one who is guided and guides others, and that his enemies are the ones who have gone astray and are leading others astray.

﴿You [O Muhammad] were not expecting this Book to be conferred on you﴾ that is, you were not seeking or hoping for this Book to be sent down to you; you were not prepared for that and you were not looking for it
﴿but [it is] a mercy from your Lord﴾ to you and to other people. He sent you with this Book by means of which He bestowed mercy upon humankind, taught them that which they did not know, purified them and taught them the Book and wisdom, even though before that they had clearly been misguided.

If you know that He sent it down to you as a mercy from Him, you will know that everything that He enjoins and forbids is also mercy and grace from Allah. So your heart should not be troubled by it, and you should not think that what is contrary to it may be more appropriate or more beneficial.

﴿So do not be a helper to the disbelievers﴾ that is, do not help them in that which is part of their disbelief. One aspect of helping them is to say that any part of the book is contrary to wisdom, what is in people's best interests or what is beneficial.

﴿Do not let them turn you [O Muhammad] away from the revelations of Allah after they have been sent down to you﴾; rather you should convey them and put them into practice, and do not pay any attention to their scheming or be diverted from its verses, and do not follow their whims and desires.

﴿call people to your Lord﴾ that is, make calling people to your Lord your ultimate goal, and whatever is contrary to that should be rejected, whether it is showing off, seeking reputation, or going along with the aims of the followers of falsehood, for that will lead to being with them and helping them in their aims. Hence Allah says: ﴿and do not be one of those who ascribe partners to Allah﴾ that is, do not be one of them either in terms of their ascription of partners to Allah or in any of the minor issues thereof, which refers to all kinds of sin.

﴿Do not call upon any other god alongside Allah﴾; rather devote your worship to Allah alone, for ﴿there is no god but He﴾. Therefore no one is deserving of your devotion, love and worship except Allah, the Most Perfect, the Eternal, for ﴿All will perish but He﴾. If everything except Him will perish and vanish, then worship of that which will perish and is false is itself false, because its aim is false and corrupt.

﴿His is the judgement﴾ in this world and the hereafter

﴿and to Him﴾ and no one else

﴿you will be brought back﴾. Because everything other than Allah is false and will perish, and it is Allah alone Who will remain, besides Whom there is no other god, His is the judgement in this world and the hereafter, and to Him all creatures will return, and He will requite them for their deeds. Therefore anyone who has any understanding must worship Allah alone, with no partner or associate, and must strive to do that which will bring him closer to Him, and he must beware of His wrath and punishment, lest he come to his Lord without having repented or given up his sins.

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

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

29.
Soorat al-'Ankaboot

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

﴿الٓمٓ ۝١ أَحَسِبَ ٱلنَّاسُ أَن يُتْرَكُوٓا۟ أَن يَقُولُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ۝٢ وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۖ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا۟ وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ۝٣﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ١-٣)

29:1. Alif. Lâm. Meem.[35]

29:2. Do people think that once they say: We believe, they will be left alone and not be tested?

29:3. Indeed We tested those who came before them. For Allah will surely make known those who are sincere and will surely make known those who are liars.

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

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the perfect nature of His wisdom, and that His wisdom does not dictate that anyone who says that he is a believer and claims to have faith will be safe from trials and tests, and will not be exposed to that which may cause confusion with regard to their faith and related issues. If that were the case, there would be nothing to distinguish one who is sincere from one who is lying, or the follower of truth from the follower of falsehood. Rather His way with the earlier nations and with this Ummah is to test them by means of ease and hardship, times when one feels energised and times when one feels reluctant, wealth and poverty, causing their enemies to have the upper hand over them at times, and causing them to strive against the enemy in word and deed, and other kinds of tests, all of which may lead to confusion that is indicative of doubts and overwhelming desires on his part.

When faced with doubts, whoever does not waver in his faith and wards off those doubts by means of the truth in which he believes, and when faced with desires that would call him to sin or error, or distract him from that which Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) have enjoined, he still persists in doing as faith dictates, striving against his desires, this is proof of the sincerity and soundness of his faith.

But when faced with specious arguments that impact his heart by stirring up doubts and confusion, and when faced with desires that lead him to commit sin or that distract him from doing obligatory deeds, if a person yields to those pressures, this indicates that his faith is not sound or sincere.

People are of varying degrees in this regard, and only Allah knows the level at which anyone is. We ask Allah (ﷻ) to make us steadfast with the word that stands firm in this world and in the hereafter, and to make our hearts steadfast in adhering to His religion, for tests and trials are like the bellows that eliminate dross and make hearts good.

﴿أَمْ حَسِبَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ أَن يَسْبِقُونَا ۚ سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٤﴾﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٤)

29:4. Do those who do evil deeds think that they can outwit Us? How ill they judge.

That is, do those whose main concern is doing evil deeds and committing sins think that their deeds will be ignored, and that Allah will not pay any attention to them, or that they can outwit Him, and that is why they did those deeds and it was easy for them to do so?

﴿How ill they judge﴾ that is, how badly they think, and how unjust is their verdict, because it is an implicit denial of the power and wisdom of Allah, and suggests that they have the power to protect themselves from the punishment of Allah, when in fact they are the weakest and most incapable of all.

﴿مَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا۟ لِقَآءَ ٱللَّهِ فَإِنَّ أَجَلَ ٱللَّهِ لَـَٔاتٍ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٥﴾ وَمَن جَـٰهَدَ فَإِنَّمَا يُجَـٰهِدُ لِنَفْسِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَغَنِىٌّ عَنِ ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿٦﴾﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٥-٦)

29:5. Whoever hopes to meet his Lord, the time appointed by Allah [for that meeting] is surely coming, and He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

29:6. Whoever strives only strives for his own benefit. Verily Allah has no need of the worlds.

That is, O you who love your Lord and long to be near Him and meet Him, and hasten to seek His pleasure, receive the glad tidings that your meeting with the Beloved is at hand and will soon come, for

everything that is coming is near at hand. So prepare to meet Him and start your journey towards Him with your heart full of hope, hoping to reach Him. But not everyone who makes a claim will be accepted as having a sound claim, and not everyone who wishes for something will be given what he wishes for. For Allah hears all voices and knows all intentions. Whoever is sincere in that will attain what he hopes for, but whoever is insincere, his claim will not benefit him. Allah knows best who is deserving of His love and who is not.

﴿Whoever strives﴾ against his own self (*nafs*), against his devil and against his disbelieving enemy

﴿only strives for his own benefit﴾ because the benefit of that will come back to him. Allah has no need of people, and He did not ordain commands to them in order to benefit Himself, or ordain prohibitions for them out of miserliness towards them.

It is known that commands and prohibitions require the accountable person to strive and make an effort, because his nafs (self) is reluctant to do good by nature, his devil tells him not to comply, and his disbelieving enemy tries to prevent him from practising his religion as he should. All of these are obstacles that one must strive hard to overcome.

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَنُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَحْسَنَ ٱلَّذِى كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧﴾﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٧)

29:7. As for those who believe and do righteous deeds, We will surely expiate their bad deeds and We will surely grant them their reward according to the best of their deeds.

That is, with regard to those whom Allah blesses with faith and righteous deeds, He will expiate their bad deeds, because good deeds erase bad deeds.

﴿and We will surely grant them their reward according to the best of their deeds﴾ namely their good deeds, both obligatory and encouraged. They are the best of a person's deeds, because he also does permissible deeds and others.

﴿وَوَصَّيْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ حُسْنًا ۖ وَإِن جَٰهَدَاكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِى مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَآ ۚ إِلَىَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٨)

29:8. We have enjoined upon man kindness to his parents, but if they endeavour to make you ascribe partners to Me of which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them. To Me you will all return, then I will inform you about what you used to do.

That is, We have enjoined and instructed man to show kindness to his parents, by honouring them and treating them kindly in word and deed, which he must do constantly, and not disobey them or mistreat them in word or deed.

﴿but if they endeavour to make you ascribe partners to Me of which you have no knowledge﴾ – for there is no evidence of the validity of ascribing partners to Allah. This is indicative of the gravity and serious nature of polytheism

﴿then do not obey them. To Me you will all return, then I will inform you about what you used to do﴾ and I will requite you for your deeds. So honour your parents and give precedence to obeying them, but do not give it precedence over obedience to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), for that takes precedence over all things.

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَنُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ فِى ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٩﴾﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٩)

29:9. As for those who believe and do righteous deeds, We will surely include them among the righteous.

That is, whoever believes in Allah and does righteous deeds, Allah has promised him that He will admit him to paradise among His righteous slaves, namely the Prophets, those who are strong and true in faith, the martyrs and the righteous, each one according to his level and status before Allah. Sound faith and righteous deeds indicate that a person is blessed and that he is one of the people of the Most Gracious, the righteous slaves of Allah (ﷻ).

﴿ وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ فَإِذَآ أُوذِىَ فِى ٱللَّهِ جَعَلَ فِتْنَةَ ٱلنَّاسِ كَعَذَابِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَئِن جَآءَ نَصْرٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّا كُنَّا مَعَكُمْ ۚ أَوَلَيْسَ ٱللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِمَا فِى صُدُورِ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ ﴿١١﴾ ﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ١٠-١١)

29:10. There are some people who say: We believe in Allah, but when they are made to suffer in Allah's cause, they equate the persecution of people with the punishment of Allah. But if victory comes from your Lord, they say: We have always been with you! Does not Allah know best all that is in people's hearts?

29:11. Allah will surely make known those who believe and He will surely make known those who are hypocrites.

Having stated that He will inevitably test those who claim to believe, in order to distinguish the sincere from the insincere, Allah (ﷻ) now explains that some people have no patience in bearing such tests, and they are not steadfast in the face of some calamities:

﴿There are some people who say: We believe in Allah, but when they are made to suffer in Allah's cause﴾ by being beaten, or having their

wealth taken away, or being subjected to shaming, in order to make them recant their religion and go back to falsehood,

﴿they equate the persecution of people with the punishment of Allah﴾ that is, they make that a deterrent to faith and steadfastness, as suffering will deter a person from the cause thereof.

﴿But if victory comes from your Lord, they say: We have always been with you!﴾ because that is in accordance with their whims and desires. These types of people are among those of whom Allah says:

﴿Among people there are some who worship Allah on the edge [of faith]. If something good comes to them, they are content with it, but if a trial befalls them, they make an about-face, thus forfeiting both this world and the hereafter. That is indeed manifest loss.﴾ *(al-Ḥajj 22: 11)*

﴿Does not Allah know best all that is in people's hearts?﴾ for He has told you about this type of people who are as He has described to you, so that you may come to know thereby of His perfect knowledge and vast wisdom.

﴿Allah will surely make known those who believe and He will surely make known those who are hypocrites﴾ therefore He has decreed tests and trials, so that what He already knows about them may be made manifest, then He will requite them for the deeds that they manifest, not simply on the basis of His knowledge alone, because in that case they might argue with Him, saying that if they had been tested, they would have been steadfast.

﴿وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّبِعُوا۟ سَبِيلَنَا وَلْنَحْمِلْ خَطَٰيَٰكُمْ وَمَا هُم بِحَٰمِلِينَ مِنْ خَطَٰيَٰهُم مِّن شَىْءٍ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ وَلَيَحْمِلُنَّ أَثْقَالَهُمْ وَأَثْقَالًا مَّعَ أَثْقَالِهِمْ ۖ وَلَيُسْـَٔلُنَّ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ عَمَّا كَانُوا۟ يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ١٢-١٣)

29:12. The disbelievers say to the believers: Follow our path, and we will bear the burden of your sins. But they will never bear any of their sins. They are surely lying.

29:13. They will surely bear their own burdens, and other burdens along with their own, and on the Day of Resurrection they will surely be questioned about the lies they fabricated.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the fabrication of lies by the disbelievers and how they call the believers to follow their religion. This is an implicit warning to the believers against being deceived by them and falling into their trap.

﴿The disbelievers say to the believers: Follow our path﴾ and give up your religion, or part of it, and follow us in our religion, and we will give you our guarantee
﴿and we will bear the burden of your sins﴾. But this is something that is not in their power to do. Hence Allah says:
﴿But they will never bear any of their sins﴾, whether few or many. This is impossible, even if the individual agrees to it, so it will not avail anything. Rather that has to do with the dues of Allah, and Allah (ﷻ) has not given power to anyone to decide about any shortfall in what is due to Him. The matter can only be dealt with in accordance with His command, rulings and wisdom, and His ruling is that:

﴿...no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another...﴾ *(al-An'âm 6: 164)*

As Allah says: ﴿But they will never bear any of their sins﴾, it may be misunderstood that the disbelievers who promote their disbelief – and others of their ilk who call to falsehood – will not have to carry any burden of sin except their own, excluding the sins that others did, even if they were the cause of that. Hence Allah says, addressing this misunderstanding:
﴿They will surely bear their own burdens﴾ that is, the burden of the sins that they committed

﴿and other burdens along with their own﴾ – this refers to the sins that were committed because of them. For each sin committed by the follower, both the follower and the one whom he followed will have a share of it, the follower because he himself did it and the one whom he followed because he was the cause of his doing it and he called him to do it. By the same token, if the follower does a good deed, he will have the reward for doing it himself, and the one who called him to it will have a reward for being the cause of it.

﴿and on the Day of Resurrection they will surely be questioned about the lies they fabricated﴾ of evil, which they made fair-seeming, and their claim when they said: ﴿and we will bear the burden of your sins﴾ *(29: 12)*.

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ فَلَبِثَ فِيهِمْ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ إِلَّا خَمْسِينَ عَامًا فَأَخَذَهُمُ ٱلطُّوفَانُ وَهُمْ ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَأَصْحَٰبَ ٱلسَّفِينَةِ وَجَعَلْنَٰهَآ ءَايَةً لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٥﴾﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ١٤-١٥)

29:14. We sent Nooḥ to his people and he remained among them for a thousand years less fifty. Then the Flood overtook them in the midst of their evildoing.

29:15. But We saved him and those who were on board the ark, and We made it [the ark] a sign for all people.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of His ruling and wisdom in punishing the disbelieving nations. Allah sent His slave and Messenger Nooḥ (عليه السلام) to his people, to call them to affirm His oneness and worship Allah alone, and to forbid them to worship the rivals and idols.

﴿and he remained among them﴾ as a Prophet, calling them to Allah ﴿for a thousand years less fifty﴾ during which he never spared any effort in calling them, and he never tired of advising them and calling

them by night and by day, in private and in public. But they did not pay heed and they did not follow guidance; rather they persisted in their disbelief and transgression, until their Prophet Nooḥ (ﷺ) prayed against them, even though he was so patient, forbearing and steadfast, and he said:

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

﴿Then the Flood﴾ that is, the water that was sent down from the sky in abundance, and gushed forth from the earth

﴿overtook them in the midst of their evildoing﴾ when they were deserving of punishment.

﴿But We saved him and those who were on board the ark﴾ that is, those who had embarked with him, namely his family and those who believed with him

﴿and We made it [the ark]﴾ or the story of Nooḥ

﴿a sign for all people﴾ so that they may learn a lesson from it, that whoever rejects the Messengers will ultimately be doomed, but Allah will grant the believers relief from all distress and a way out from all hardship.

Allah also made ships in general a sign for all people, from which they may learn of the mercy of their Lord, Who has granted them the means to make ships and benefit from them, and He has made them to carry them and their goods from one place to another, and from one country to another.

﴿وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱتَّقُوهُ ۖ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ إِنَّمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْثَٰنًا وَتَخْلُقُونَ إِفْكًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ لَكُمْ رِزْقًا فَٱبْتَغُوا۟ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرِّزْقَ وَٱعْبُدُوهُ

وَٱشْكُرُوا۟ لَهُۥٓ ۖ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَإِن تُكَذِّبُوا۟ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ أُمَمٌ مِّن قَبْلِكُمْ ۖ وَمَا
عَلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ إِلَّا ٱلْبَلَٰغُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿١٨﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ كَيْفَ يُبْدِئُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ
يُعِيدُهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾ قُلْ سِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ بَدَأَ
ٱلْخَلْقَ ۖ ثُمَّ ٱللَّهُ يُنشِئُ ٱلنَّشْأَةَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٠﴾ يُعَذِّبُ مَن
يَشَآءُ وَيَرْحَمُ مَن يَشَآءُ ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ تُقْلَبُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَمَآ أَنتُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِى
ٱلسَّمَآءِ ۖ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مِن وَلِىٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ
ٱللَّهِ وَلِقَآئِهِۦٓ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يَئِسُوا۟ مِن رَّحْمَتِى وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ (سورة
العنكبوت: ١٦-٢٣)

29:16. And [remember] Ibrâheem, when he said to his people: Worship Allah [alone] and fear Him; that is better for you, if only you knew.

29:17. Those that you worship besides Allah are mere idols, and you fabricate lies. Verily those whom you worship besides Allah have no power to grant you provision. So seek provision from Allah, worship Him [alone] and be grateful to Him; for to Him you will be brought back.

29:18. If you reject [the message], other nations before you did likewise. The duty of the Messenger is only to convey the message in the clearest way.

29:19. Do they not see how Allah originates creation? Then He will repeat it.[36] Verily that is easy for Allah.

29:20. Say: Travel through the land and see how Allah originated creation. Then Allah will repeat that a second time. Verily Allah has power over all things.

29:21. He punishes whomever He will and shows mercy to whomever He will, and to Him you will be returned.

[36] This refers to the Day of Resurrection.

29:22. You can never escape [Allah's punishment] on earth or in heaven, and besides Him you have neither protector nor helper.

29:23. Those who deny the signs of Allah and the meeting with Him [in the hereafter] – it is they who will have no hope of My mercy and for them there will be a painful punishment.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He sent His close friend Ibrâheem (عليه السلام) to his people, to call them to Allah, so he said to them: ﴿Worship Allah [alone]﴾ that is, affirm His oneness, devote your worship to Him alone, and obey whatever He commands you to do ﴿and fear Him﴾ lest He become angry with you and punish you; that means refraining from acts of disobedience that incur His wrath ﴿that﴾ namely worshipping Allah and fearing Him ﴿is better for you﴾ than not doing so.

There is nothing good whatsoever in failing to worship Allah and fear Him; rather fearing Allah and worshipping Him is best for people, because there is no way to attain His reward in this world and the hereafter except by doing that. All goodness that exists in this world and the hereafter is the outcome of worshipping Allah and fearing Him.

﴿if only you knew﴾ that, so you should understand the reality of things and realise what is more deserving of being given precedence.

Having instructed them to worship Allah and fear Him, Ibrâheem then forbade them to worship idols, and explained to them that the idols were imperfect and were not deserving of worship: ﴿Those that you worship besides Allah are mere idols, and you fabricate lies﴾, for you carve them and make them with your own hands, and you make up names of gods for them and fabricate lies by enjoining worship of them and adhering to that

﴿Verily those whom you worship besides Allah﴾ because they are imperfect and there is nothing to justify worshipping them, ﴿have no

power to grant you provision﴾. It is as if it was said: It has become clear to us that these idols are created and imperfect, and they have no power to bring benefit or cause harm, or to cause death, give life or resurrect, and one who is like that does not deserve even the tiniest speck of worship and devotion. Hearts have a strong inclination to seek an object of worship to be devoted to and ask of it whatever they need. So Ibrâheem said, urging them to turn to the One Who is truly deserving of worship: ﴿So seek provision from Allah﴾ for He is the One Who provides it and decrees it, and He is the One Who answers the call of the one who calls upon Him with regard to his religious and worldly affairs.

﴿worship Him [alone]﴾, with no partner or associate, because He is the Most Perfect, Who brings benefit and causes harm, the only One Who has control over all things

﴿and be grateful to Him﴾ alone, because everything that reached and still reaches people of blessings is from Him, and everything that was warded off and is still warded off from them of harm is only warded off by Him.

﴿for to Him you will be brought back﴾ and He will requite you for your deeds and tell you of all that you concealed or disclosed. So beware lest you come to Him when you are ascribing partners to Him, and focus on that which will bring you closer to Him, and He will reward you for that when you come to Him.

﴿Do they not see how Allah originates creation? Then He will repeat it﴾ on the Day of Resurrection. ﴿Verily that is easy for Allah﴾. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿It is He Who originates creation then repeats it, and that is [even] easier for Him...﴾ *(ar-Room 30: 27)*

﴿Say﴾ to them, if they have any doubts about the origination of creation:

﴿Travel through the land﴾ physically, and reflect in your hearts

﴿and see how Allah originated creation﴾ for you will find communities of humans and animals still coming into being gradually; you will find plants and trees, and how they come into being time after time; you will find the clouds and the winds continually being renewed. In fact creation is always beginning and being repeated.

Look at them at the time of their lesser death – that is, sleep – when the night covers them with its darkness and their movements become still and their voices become silent, and in their beds and dens they become like the dead. Then they remain like that all night long, until dawn breaks and they wake up from their sleep and are raised from their lesser death, whereupon they say: "Praise be to Allah Who has brought us back to life after causing us to die, and to Him we will be resurrected." Hence Allah says:

﴿Then﴾ after repeating that, ﴿Allah will repeat that a second time﴾ – that will be the resurrection after which they will no longer be susceptible to death or sleep; rather it will be eternal life in either paradise or hell.

﴿Verily Allah has power over all things﴾ and nothing is beyond His power. As He was able, by means of His power, to initiate creation, it is more appropriate to say that He has the power to repeat it.

﴿He punishes whomever He will and shows mercy to whomever He will﴾ that is, He alone requites for deeds, rewarding and showing mercy to those who obey Him, and punishing and wreaking vengeance upon those who disobey Him.
﴿and to Him you will be returned﴾ that is, you will be returned to that realm where you will be subjected to punishment or mercy, so seek in this realm that which will be the cause of His mercy, by doing acts of obedience, and keep away from that which will be the cause of His wrath, namely acts of disobedience.

﴿You can never escape [Allah's punishment] on earth or in heaven﴾ that is, O disbelievers who dare to disobey Allah, do not

think that you are overlooked or that you can escape Allah on earth or in heaven, and do not be deceived by your power or that which your own souls make fair-seeming to you and deceive you thereby, by suggesting that you will be saved from the punishment of Allah. For you cannot escape Allah in any part of the universe.

﴿and besides Him you have neither protector﴾ to protect you and take care of you so that you attain what is in your religious and worldly interests

﴿nor helper﴾ to help you and ward off harm from you.

﴿Those who deny the signs of Allah and the meeting with Him [in the hereafter] – it is they who will have no hope of My mercy and for them there will be a painful punishment﴾. Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us who are the people who will attain nothing good and will encounter what is bad. They are the ones who disbelieved in Him and His Messengers, and the message that they brought, and they denied the meeting with Allah. They will have nothing but this world, therefore they did what they did of ascribing partners to Allah and committing sin, because there is nothing in their hearts to make them fear the consequences of that. Hence Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿it is they who will have no hope of My mercy﴾, therefore they did not take a single measure to attain mercy. Otherwise, if they had hoped for mercy, they would have striven to attain it. Despairing of the mercy of Allah is one of the gravest of errors, and it is of two types:

- The despair of the disbelievers, who failed to take any measures to approach it
- The despair of the sinners because of their many transgressions; that makes them feel alienated from Allah and overwhelms their hearts, which causes them to lose hope of His mercy.

﴿and for them there will be a painful punishment﴾ that is, an agonising punishment. It is as if these verses are inserted between the words of Ibrâheem (عليه السلام) to his people, and their response to him. And Allah knows best about that.

﴿فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوا۟ ٱقْتُلُوهُ أَوْ حَرِّقُوهُ فَأَنجَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَقَالَ إِنَّمَا ٱتَّخَذْتُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْثَٰنًا مَّوَدَّةَ بَيْنِكُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ ثُمَّ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يَكْفُرُ بَعْضُكُم بِبَعْضٍ وَيَلْعَنُ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا وَمَأْوَىٰكُمُ ٱلنَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن نَّٰصِرِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٢٤-٢٥)

29:24. But the only response his [Ibrâheem's] people gave was to say: Kill him or burn him. But Allah saved him from the fire. Verily in that are signs for people who believe.

29:25. Ibrâheem said: You have only taken idols [for worship] instead of Allah to cement the bonds among you in the life of this world, but on the Day of Resurrection you will disavow one another and curse one another. Your abode will be the fire, and you will have no helpers.

That is, the response of Ibrâheem's people to him, when he called them to his Lord, was not acceptance of his call, following his advice or recognising the blessing that Allah had bestowed upon them by sending him to them. Rather their response to him was the worst of responses.

﴿But the only response his [Ibrâheem's] people gave was to say: Kill him or burn him﴾, which is the worst kind of killing. They were people who had the power to carry out that threat, because they had authority. So they threw him into the fire, ﴿But Allah saved him﴾ from it.

﴿Verily in that are signs for people who believe﴾ and know that what the Messengers brought is true, and they know how kind and sincere the Messengers were, and how false were the words of those who opposed them and went against them. It is as if those who

opposed the Messengers had all agreed and enjoined one another to disbelieve and reject the Messengers (because they all responded in the same manner).

﴿Ibrâheem said﴾ to them, among other advice that he gave:
﴿You have only taken idols [for worship] instead of Allah to cement the bonds among you in the life of this world﴾ that is, all that you achieved by that is some worldly bonds that will be severed and will vanish
﴿but on the Day of Resurrection you will disavow one another and curse one another﴾ that is, both the worshippers and their objects of worship will disavow one another.

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

So how can you be attached to that which you know will disavow and curse its worshippers?

﴿Your abode﴾ that is, the abode of all, both worshippers and objects of worship
﴿will be the fire﴾ and no one will protect them from the punishment of Allah, or ward it off from them.

﴿ ۞ فَـَٔامَنَ لَهُۥ لُوطٌ ۘ وَقَالَ إِنِّى مُهَاجِرٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّىٓ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُۥٓ إِسْحَٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِى ذُرِّيَّتِهِ ٱلنُّبُوَّةَ وَٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ أَجْرَهُۥ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَإِنَّهُۥ فِى ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ لَمِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٢٦-٢٧)

29:26. Looṭ believed in him. Ibrâheem said: I shall migrate [where I have been commanded to] by my Lord. Verily He is the Almighty, Most Wise.

29:27. We bestowed upon him Is-ḥâq and Ya'qoob, and conferred upon his descendants prophethood and the scriptures. We granted him his reward in this world, and in the hereafter he will be among the righteous.

That is, Ibrâheem (ﷺ) kept calling his people, and they persisted in their stubbornness, but Loot believed in him, whom Allah appointed as a Prophet and sent him to his people, as we shall see below.

﴿Ibrâheem said﴾ when he saw that his call to his people was of no avail,

﴿I shall migrate [where I have been commanded to] by my Lord﴾ that is, I shall leave the land of evil and migrate to the blessed land, namely ash-Shâm (Greater Syria).

﴿Verily He is the Almighty﴾ that is, the One Who has all power and is able to guide you, but He is ﴿Most Wise﴾, and His wisdom did not dictate that. Ibrâheem left them when they were the same as ever, but Allah does not tell us that He destroyed them with any punishment; rather He tells us that Ibrâheem left them and migrated elsewhere.

With regard to what is mentioned in the Isrâ'eeliyât (stories narrated from Jewish sources), that Allah sent punishment upon his people in the form of mosquitoes which drank their blood and ate their flesh, and destroyed them to the last man, certainty about that would depend on *shar'i* evidence, of which there is none. If Allah had eradicated them all by means of the punishment, He would have mentioned that as He mentioned the destruction of other disbelieving nations.

Perhaps the reason why they were not destroyed is that Ibrâheem (ﷺ), who was one of the most compassionate, virtuous, forbearing and noble of all people, did not pray against his people as others did, and therefore there was no wholesale divine punishment because of him.

One of the matters which may indicate that is the fact that he disputed and argued with the angels concerning the destruction of Loot's people, and tried to defend them, although they were not his people. And Allah knows best what really happened.

﴿We bestowed upon him Is-ḥâq and Ya'qoob﴾ that is, after he migrated to ash-Shâm

﴿and conferred upon his descendants prophethood and the scriptures﴾. No Prophet came after him but he was descended from him, and no scripture was revealed to anyone but his descendants, until prophethood ended with Muhammad (ﷺ).

This is one of Ibrâheem's greatest virtues, that guidance, mercy, blessing and prosperity were bestowed upon his descendants, and at their hands people would be guided, believe and become righteous. ﴿We granted him his reward in this world﴾, such as a wife who was extremely beautiful, abundant provision, and children who were a source of joy to him; and knowing, loving and turning to Allah. ﴿and in the hereafter he will be among the righteous﴾. Indeed he and Muhammad (ﷺ) will be among the best of the righteous, and the highest in status. Thus Allah granted him happiness both in this world and in the hereafter.

﴿وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ ٱلْفَٰحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُم بِهَا مِنْ
أَحَدٍ مِّنَ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾ أَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ ٱلرِّجَالَ وَتَقْطَعُونَ ٱلسَّبِيلَ
وَتَأْتُونَ فِى نَادِيكُمُ ٱلْمُنكَرَ ۖ فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوا۟ ٱئْتِنَا
بِعَذَابِ ٱللَّهِ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ ٱنصُرْنِى عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ
ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَلَمَّا جَآءَتْ رُسُلُنَآ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ بِٱلْبُشْرَىٰ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا مُهْلِكُوٓا۟ أَهْلِ
هَٰذِهِ ٱلْقَرْيَةِ ۖ إِنَّ أَهْلَهَا كَانُوا۟ ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ قَالَ إِنَّ فِيهَا لُوطًا ۚ قَالُوا۟

نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن فِيهَا ۖ لَنُنَجِّيَنَّهُۥ وَأَهْلَهُۥٓ إِلَّا ٱمْرَأَتَهُۥ كَانَتْ مِنَ ٱلْغَٰبِرِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾
وَلَمَّآ أَن جَآءَتْ رُسُلُنَا لُوطًا سِىٓءَ بِهِمْ وَضَاقَ بِهِمْ ذَرْعًا وَقَالُوا۟ لَا تَخَفْ
وَلَا تَحْزَنْ ۖ إِنَّا مُنَجُّوكَ وَأَهْلَكَ إِلَّا ٱمْرَأَتَكَ كَانَتْ مِنَ ٱلْغَٰبِرِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ إِنَّا
مُنزِلُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَهْلِ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْقَرْيَةِ رِجْزًا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْسُقُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾
وَلَقَد تَّرَكْنَا مِنْهَآ ءَايَةًۢ بَيِّنَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٢٨-٣٥)

29:28. And [remember] Loot, when he said to his people: Verily you commit this shameful deed that no one in the world has ever committed before you.

29:29. Do you approach men with lust, waylay travellers on the road, and commit shameful acts in your meeting places? But the only response his people gave was to say: Bring us the punishment of Allah, if you are telling the truth.

29:30. He said: O my Lord, help me against those who spread mischief.

29:31. When Our messengers [angels] came to Ibrâheem with glad tidings, they said: We are going to destroy the people of this city, for they have indeed been persisting in wickedness.

29:32. He said: But Loot is there! They said: We know full well who is there. We will surely save him and his family, except his wife; she is one of those who will stay behind.

29:33. When Our messengers came to Loot, he was perturbed by their coming and felt troubled on their account. They said: Fear not nor grieve, for we will surely save you and your family, except your wife; she is one of those who will stay behind.

29:34. We are going to bring down on the people of this city a punishment from heaven, because of their defiant disobedience.

29:35. Surely the ruins We left of that city are a clear sign for people of understanding.

We have seen above that Loot (ﷺ) believed in Ibrâheem and was one of those who were guided by him. Some say that he was not one

of the descendants of Ibrâheem; rather he was his nephew (the son of his brother). If the words ﴿and conferred upon his descendants prophethood and the scriptures﴾ *(29: 27)* are general in meaning, that does not contradict the fact that Looṭ was a Prophet and Messenger, even though he was not one of the progeny of Ibrâheem, because the context of the verse is one of praising Ibrâheem. Allah tells us that Looṭ was guided at the hands of Ibrâheem, and the one who was guided at his hands is of higher standing than those of his progeny who were guided, when taking into consideration the virtue of the guide. And Allah knows best.

Allah sent Looṭ to his people, who alongside their ascription of partners to Allah had combined immoral deeds with males, banditry and committing shameful acts in their gatherings. Looṭ advised them to give up these things and explained to them that they were abhorrent in and of themselves and because of what they lead to of severe punishment. But they were not deterred and did not pay heed: ﴿But the only response his people gave was to say: Bring us the punishment of Allah, if you are telling the truth﴾.

So their Prophet despaired of them and realised that they were deserving of punishment; he was very annoyed at their total rejection and prayed against them: ﴿He said: O my Lord, help me against those who spread mischief﴾. Allah responded to his supplication: He sent the angels to destroy them, and they passed by Ibrâheem before that and gave him the glad tidings of Is-ḥâq and, after Is-ḥâq, Ya'qoob.

Then Ibrâheem asked them: Where are you going? And they told him that they were going to destroy the people of Looṭ. Ibrâheem began to argue with them, saying: ﴿But Looṭ is there!﴾ They said to him: ﴿We know full well who is there. We will surely save him and his family, except his wife; she is one of those who will stay behind﴾. Then they went on their way, and when they came to Looṭ, he was perturbed by their coming and felt troubled on their account, because he did not know who they were; he thought that they were wayfarers

and guests, so he feared that they might be harmed by his people. But they said to him: ﴿Fear not nor grieve﴾, and they told him that they were messengers from Allah: ﴿for we will surely save you and your family, except your wife; she is one of those who will stay behind. We are going to bring down on the people of this city a punishment from heaven, because of their defiant disobedience﴾. They instructed him to leave at night, with his family, then when morning came Allah turned their houses upside down on them and sent upon them a shower of stones of baked clay, one after another, until they destroyed them and they became a tale to be told at night and a lesson.

﴿Surely the ruins We left of that city are a clear sign for people of understanding﴾ that is, We left a clear trace of the dwellings of the people of Loṭ for people of understanding to learn lessons from them and benefit thereby. This is like the verses in which Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿Surely you pass by their ruins by day and by night. Will you not then understand?﴾ *(aṣ-Ṣâffât 37: 137-138)*

﴿وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا فَقَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَارْجُوا الْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَلَا تَعْثَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دَارِهِمْ جَاثِمِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٣٦-٣٧)

29:36. To Madyan We sent their brother Shu'ayb. He said: O my people, worship Allah and expect the Last Day, and do not strive to spread mischief in the land.

29:37. But they rejected him. So an earthquake overtook them, and morning found them lying lifeless in their homes.

That is, and We also sent to Madyan, the well-known tribe, ﴿Shu'ayb﴾, to command them to worship Allah alone, with no partner

or associate, and to believe in the resurrection, hope for it and strive for it; and to forbid them to spread mischief in the land, cheat in weights and measures, or to strive in banditry. But they rejected him, so the punishment of Allah overtook them, ﴿and morning found them lying lifeless in their homes﴾.

﴿وَعَادًا وَثَمُودَا۟ وَقَد تَّبَيَّنَ لَكُم مِّن مَّسَٰكِنِهِمْ ۖ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَكَانُوا۟ مُسْتَبْصِرِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَقَٰرُونَ وَفِرْعَوْنَ وَهَٰمَٰنَ ۖ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَهُم مُّوسَىٰ بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ سَٰبِقِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾ فَكُلًّا أَخَذْنَا بِذَنۢبِهِۦ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ حَاصِبًا وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ أَخَذَتْهُ ٱلصَّيْحَةُ وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ خَسَفْنَا بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ أَغْرَقْنَا ۚ وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾﴾

(سورة العنكبوت: ٣٨-٤٠)

29:38. And [We also punished] 'Âd and Thamood, as is clear to you from the ruins of their dwellings. The Shayṭân made their deeds fair-seeming to them and barred them from the right path, even though they were intelligent people.

29:39. And [We also punished] Qâroon, Pharaoh and Hâmân. Moosâ came to them with clear signs, but they showed arrogance in the land. They could not outwit [Us].

29:40. Each of them We punished for their sin: against some of them We sent a violent squall of pebbles, some were overtaken by the blast, some We caused the earth to swallow, and some We drowned. It was not Allah Who wronged them, but it was they who wronged themselves.

That is, We did likewise to 'Âd and Thamood. You know their stories, and that is clear to you from some of what you see with your own eyes of their dwellings and ruins that they left behind. Their Messengers came to them with clear signs for those who would pay heed, but they rejected them and argued with them.

﴿The Shaytân made their deeds fair-seeming to them﴾ so that they thought that they were better than the Messengers who came to them, as did Qâroon, Pharaoh and Hâmân, when Allah sent Moosâ ibn 'Imrân to them with clear signs and definitive proof, but they did not submit; they behaved arrogantly in the land towards the slaves of Allah and humiliated them, and towards the truth, which they rejected. But they could not save themselves when the punishment came upon them, and ﴿They could not outwit﴾ Allah. They could not escape; rather they surrendered and submitted to the punishment.

﴿Each of them﴾ that is, these disbelieving nations
﴿We punished for their sin﴾ that is, We sent upon them a punishment that was appropriate to their sin.
﴿against some of them We sent a violent squall of pebbles﴾ that is, a strong wind that carried the pebbles, as in the case of the people of 'Âd, when Allah sent against them the devastating wind:

﴿Which He unleashed against them for seven nights and eight days in succession, so that you would have seen the people lying lifeless as if they were the trunks of fallen palm trees.﴾ *(al-Ḥâqqah 69: 7)*

﴿some were overtaken by the blast﴾ like the people of Ṣâliḥ
﴿some We caused the earth to swallow﴾, like Qâroon
﴿and some We drowned﴾ like Pharaoh and Hâmân and their troops.

﴿It was not Allah Who wronged them﴾ that is, it is not appropriate or befitting for Him to wrong them, because of His perfect justice and because He has no need whatsoever of any of His creation.
﴿but it was they who wronged themselves﴾ by depriving their souls of their rights that they were seeking, for they were created to worship Allah alone, but these people directed their souls in a

different direction and distracted them with whims and desires and sins. Thus they did their souls serious harm when they thought that they were doing good.

﴿مَثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْلِيَآءَ كَمَثَلِ ٱلْعَنكَبُوتِ ٱتَّخَذَتْ بَيْتًا ۖ وَإِنَّ أَوْهَنَ ٱلْبُيُوتِ لَبَيْتُ ٱلْعَنكَبُوتِ ۖ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَتِلْكَ ٱلْأَمْثَٰلُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ ۖ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَآ إِلَّا ٱلْعَٰلِمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٤١-٤٣)

29:41. The likeness of those who take protectors other than Allah is that of the spider that makes itself a house. Verily the flimsiest of houses is that of the spider, if only they knew.

29:42. Verily Allah knows what things they call upon besides Him, and He is the Almighty, Most Wise.

29:43. Such are the comparisons We set forth for humankind, but none understand them except those who have knowledge.

This is a likeness that Allah gives of those who worship others alongside Him, seeking thereby honour, strength and benefit, in order to explain that the outcome will be contrary to that which they seek to achieve. The likeness of such a person is that of the spider which makes a house to protect itself from heat, cold and dangers, but ﴿Verily the flimsiest﴾ that is, the weakest ﴿of houses is that of the spider﴾. The spider is one of the weakest of creatures, and its house is among the weakest of houses, and it only becomes weaker by building it. This is how those people are who take others besides Allah as allies: they are weak and incapable in all ways, and when they take these allies besides Allah, for the purpose of seeking honour and help from

them, that only adds to their weakness, because they put their trust in them to achieve many of the goals that they seek to achieve, and they leave it to those allies; they stop striving to achieve it for themselves on the basis that those allies will take care of the matter for them, but the allies let them down, so they do not achieve any result through them and they do not get any help from them.

If they truly understood their situation and that of those whom they take as allies, they would not take them as allies; they would disavow them and take as their protector and ally the Powerful, Most Merciful Lord Who, if His slave takes Him as his protector and puts his trust in Him, He will suffice him and take care of all his needs, both spiritual and worldly, and He will increase him in strength, spiritually and physically.

Having explained how weak the gods of the polytheists were, Allah then went further than that, describing them in a more effective and eloquent manner, by suggesting that they were nothing; rather they were mere names that people fabricated, and ideas that they believed in. All that it takes is for the wise man to think about that and realise that they are false and non-existent. Hence Allah says:

﴿Verily Allah knows what things they call upon besides Him﴾ that is, He knows – for He is the knower of the unseen and the seen – that they are not calling, besides Him, upon anything that exists or upon any real god. This is like the verses in which He says:

﴿They are no more than names you have named, you and your forefathers, for which Allah has not sent down any authority...﴾ *(an-Najm 53: 23)*

– and:

﴿...Those who call upon their [so-called] partners besides Allah follow nothing but conjecture and they do nothing but lie.﴾ *(Yoonus 10: 66)*

﴿and He is the Almighty, Most Wise﴾ to Whom belongs all power, by which He has subjugated all creatures

﴿Most Wise﴾, Who does what is appropriate, Who created all things well and Who does all things with precision.

﴿Such are the comparisons We set forth for humankind﴾ that is, for their sake and for their benefit, and to teach them, because they are ways of explaining knowledge; they make abstract ideas become clear by comparing them to something tangible, thus the intended meaning becomes clear because of this comparison. Hence it serves the interests of all people.

﴿but none understand them﴾ in the sense of comprehending them, reflecting upon them and understanding the point of this comparison, ﴿except those who have knowledge﴾ that is, the people of true knowledge, whose knowledge has indeed reached their hearts and who understand what they have learned.

This is praise for the comparisons that He gives, urging people to reflect upon them and understand them. It is also praise for those who understand the comparisons, and it is evidence that such people are indeed people of knowledge. Thus it is known that those who do not understand them do not have knowledge.

The reason for that is that the comparisons that Allah gives in the Qur'an have to do with important issues, sublime goals and noble ideas. Therefore the people of knowledge understand that they are more important than others, because Allah mentions them and urges His slaves to reflect on them and ponder their meanings, and do their utmost to understand them.

As for those who do not understand them, despite their importance, that indicates that they are not people of knowledge, because if they do not understand important issues, it is more likely that they will not understand other matters. Hence most of the likenesses that Allah gives have to do with the fundamentals of religion and other important matters.

﴿ خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٤٤)

29:44. Allah created the heavens and the earth for a true purpose. Surely in that there is a sign for the believers.

That is, Allah (ﷻ) is the only One Who created the heavens, despite their great height, vastness and beauty, and all that they contain of the sun, moon, stars and angels; and He created the earth and all that it contains of mountains, seas, wilderness, deserts, trees and so on. He created that for a true purpose; in other words, He did not create it in vain or with no purpose and for no benefit. Rather He created that so that His command and law would be established, and so that His blessings upon His slaves would be perfected, so that they may see of His wisdom, might and control that which will show them that He alone is deserving of their worship, love and devotion.

﴿Surely in that there is a sign for the believers﴾ that points to many issues of faith by which, if the believer reflects upon that, he will increase in faith and certainty.

﴿ ٱتْلُ مَآ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ وَٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ وَلَذِكْرُ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٤٥)

29:45. Recite what has been revealed to you [O Muhammad] of the Book, and establish prayer, for verily prayer keeps [one] away from obscenity and wickedness. And indeed your remembering

Allah is of greater merit [than other acts of worship]. And Allah knows all that you do.

Here Allah (ﷻ) instructs us to recite His revelation, which is this great Book. What is meant by reciting it is following it, complying with what it enjoins, avoiding what it prohibits, following its guidance, believing its stories, pondering its meanings, and reciting its phrases. Reciting its words is just part of what is meant.

As this is what is meant by reciting the Book, it is known that establishing the entire religion is included in recitation of the Book. The words ﴿and establish prayer﴾ come under the heading of mentioning a specific part of the whole, because of the virtue and importance of the prayer, and the good effect of the prayer, for ﴿verily prayer keeps [one] away from obscenity and wickedness﴾.
Obscenity is that which is regarded as grave and offensive of sins that one may desire and have the inclination to do. Wickedness refers to everything that is regarded as abhorrent and wrong on the basis of rational thinking and sound human nature.

The reason why prayer keeps one away from obscenity and wickedness is that if a person establishes prayer, fulfilling its essential parts and conditions, and focusing with proper humility, it will illuminate and purify his heart, increase him in faith, strengthen his desire to do good, and reduce or eliminate his desire to do evil. So praying regularly and persisting in praying in that manner will inevitably keep one away from obscenity and wickedness. This is one of the great aims and outcomes of prayer.

There is also another goal of prayer that is greater and more important than that, which is what the prayer involves of remembering Allah in one's heart as well as verbally and physically. Allah (ﷻ) only created humankind to worship Him, and the best act of worship that people may perform is prayer, because in it all his faculties manifest servitude to Him, which is not the case with other acts of worship.

Hence Allah says: ﴿And indeed your remembering Allah is of greater merit [than other acts of worship]﴾.

It may be that when Allah enjoined and praised prayer, He said that remembrance of Him outside of prayer is of greater merit than prayer, as is the view of the majority of commentators. But the first view is more likely to be correct, because prayer is better than remembrance of Allah outside of prayer, and because it – as mentioned above – in and of itself is one of the greatest forms of remembrance of Allah.

﴿And Allah knows all that you do﴾ of good and evil, and He will requite you for that in full.

﴿ ۞ وَلَا تُجَٰدِلُوٓاْ أَهۡلَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِي هِيَ أَحۡسَنُ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ مِنۡهُمۡۖ وَقُولُوٓاْ ءَامَنَّا بِٱلَّذِيٓ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡنَا وَأُنزِلَ إِلَيۡكُمۡ وَإِلَٰهُنَا وَإِلَٰهُكُمۡ وَٰحِدٞ وَنَحۡنُ لَهُۥ مُسۡلِمُونَ ٤٦ ﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٤٦)

29:46. Do not dispute with the People of the Book except in the most courteous manner, unless it be with those of them who transgress [against you]. And say: We believe in that which has been sent down to us, and in that which was sent down to you, for our God and your God is One, and to Him we submit [as Muslims].

Here Allah forbids disputing with the People of the Book if it is not based on proper knowledge of the people with whom one is arguing, or it is not based on some reasonable guidelines, and He instructs us not to dispute with them except in the most courteous manner, with a good attitude, kind and gentle speech, calling them to the truth and presenting it in the best manner, refuting falsehood and presenting it in a bad light, in the most straightforward manner. The

aim should not be mere argument and defeating one's opponent, or love of prevailing in argument. Rather the aim should be to explain the truth and guide people.

However, in the case of those among the People of the Book who transgress, if it becomes apparent from the individual's aim and situation that he has no desire to find out about the truth, and he is only arguing for the sake of causing trouble and trying to win the argument, then there is no benefit in disputing with him, because there is no purpose to be served thereby.

﴿And say: We believe in that which has been sent down to us, and in that which was sent down to you, for our God and your God is One﴾ that is, let your argument with the People of the Book be based on belief in what was sent down to you and what was sent down to them, and on belief in your Messenger and their Messenger, and on the fact that God is One. Do not frame your argument with them in such a way that it leads to you criticising any of the divinely-revealed Books or any of the Messengers, as the ignorant do when arguing, criticising everything that they have, whether it is right or wrong. This is unfair and is drifting away from the proper manners and etiquette of debate. What one should do is reject what one's opponent has of falsehood and accept what he has of truth, and not reject the truth just because he said it, even if he is a disbeliever.

Moreover, basing the debate with the People of the Book on these guidelines will compel them to accept the Qur'an and the Messenger (ﷺ) who brought it, because if he speaks of the religious fundamentals on which all the Prophets and Books are agreed, which are established in the minds of both sides, and they both agree on them and believe in them as established facts, and the previous Books and Messengers – including the Qur'an and Muhammad (ﷺ) – explained them, preached them and told the people about them, then this will compel them to believe in all the Books and all the Messengers. This is something that is unique to Islam.

As for the idea that we believe in what it says in one particular Book, but not another Book, when the other Book confirms what is mentioned in the previous Book, this is unfair and wrong, and it results in rejecting all of them, because if a person rejects the Qur'an, which speaks of the same fundamentals and confirms what came before it of the Torah, then he will be rejecting what he claims to believe in.

Moreover, no matter what argument is given to prove the prophethood of any Prophet, a similar or stronger argument would also prove the prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ), and no matter what specious argument is offered to cast aspersions upon the prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ), a similar or stronger argument would cast aspersions on the prophethood of others. If an argument is proven to be flawed in the case of anyone else, then it is more so in the case of our Prophet (ﷺ).

﴿and to Him we submit [as Muslims]﴾ that is, We submit and yield to His command. Whoever believes in Him, takes Him as his god, believes in His Books and Messengers, submits to Allah and follows His Messengers, is the one who is blessed, and whoever goes astray from this path is the one who is doomed.

﴿وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ۚ فَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ ۖ وَمِنْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِهِۦ ۚ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ إِلَّا ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَمَا كُنتَ تَتْلُوا۟ مِن قَبْلِهِۦ مِن كِتَٰبٍ وَلَا تَخُطُّهُۥ بِيَمِينِكَ ۖ إِذًا لَّٱرْتَابَ ٱلْمُبْطِلُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٤٧-٤٨)

29:47. In like manner We have sent down the Book to you. Those to whom We gave the scripture believe in it, and some of these people [the People of the Book] also believe in it. And no one denies Our revelations except the disbelievers.

29:48. You were not able to read any book before this [Qur'an], nor were you able to write anything with your right hand. In that case the followers of falsehood would indeed have had cause to doubt.

﴿In like manner We have sent down the Book to you﴾, O Muhammad (ﷺ), namely this noble Book that foretells every great event, calls to all good characteristics and attitudes, enjoins everything that is perfect, confirms the previous Books, and was foretold by the earlier Prophets.

﴿Those to whom We gave the scripture﴾ and they acknowledge it as it should be acknowledged, and are not affected by jealousy or whims and desires

﴿believe in it﴾ because they are certain that it is true, because of what they see of it being in harmony with what they have of prophecies and what they are distinguished by of knowledge of what is good and bad, true and false.

﴿and some of these people [the People of the Book]﴾ at the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)
﴿also believe in it﴾ with faith based on insight.
﴿And no one denies Our revelations except the disbelievers﴾ who persistently deny the truth and stubbornly reject it. This states that only the disbelievers reject His revelation, because rejection cannot come from one whose aim is to follow the truth. Otherwise, anyone with good intentions will inevitably believe in it, because of what it contains of clear proofs for anyone who has sound reason or who pays heed.

One of the indications that it is sound is the fact that it was brought by this trustworthy Prophet (ﷺ), who was known among his people for his sincerity and honesty, and they were aware of all his comings and goings and all his circumstances. They knew that he was unlettered and could not read or write. The fact that he brought it against this

background is one of the clearest of proofs which leaves no room for any doubt that it is from Allah, the Almighty, the Most Praiseworthy. Hence He says:

﴿You were not able to read any book before this [Qur'an], nor were you able to write anything with your right hand﴾. If that had been the case, ﴿the followers of falsehood would indeed have had cause to doubt﴾ for they would have said that he had learned it from the previous scriptures or had copied it from them.

But a noble Book was revealed to you, with which you challenged the eloquent and bitter enemies to produce something like it, or even a soorah like it, yet they failed utterly and in fact never even thought of meeting the challenge, because they knew how eloquent it was, and that the words of any human could never match it or be in the same style. Therefore Allah says:

﴿بَلْ هُوَ ءَايَٰتٌۢ بَيِّنَٰتٌ فِى صُدُورِ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ ۚ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ إِلَّا ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٤٩)

29:49. Rather it [the Qur'an] is clear verses preserved in the hearts of those who have been given knowledge. And no one denies Our revelations except the wrongdoers.

﴿Rather it [the Qur'an] is clear﴾, not ambiguous ﴿verses preserved in the hearts of those who have been given knowledge﴾ – they are the leaders of people, and the foremost in rational thinking, people of sound reasoning and the perfect ones among them.

Because it is clear verses preserved in the hearts of people such as these, it is proof against others, and the rejection of others does not matter and cannot be anything but wrongdoing. Hence Allah says:

﴿And no one denies Our revelations except the wrongdoers﴾, because no one denies it except one who is ignorant and speaks without knowledge, and does not follow in the footsteps of the people of knowledge or those who are well-versed in it and know its real nature, or he is acting in an ignorant manner, stubbornly rejecting it and going against it even though he knows it is true.

﴿وَقَالُوا۟ لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَٰتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۖ قُلْ إِنَّمَا ٱلْـَٔايَٰتُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَإِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٥٠﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِهِمْ أَنَّآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَرَحْمَةً وَذِكْرَىٰ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَكُمْ شَهِيدًا ۖ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ وَكَفَرُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٥٠-٥٢)

29:50. They say: Why have no signs been sent down to him from his Lord? Say [O Muhammad]: Signs are in the power of Allah alone. I am but a clear warner.

29:51. Is it not enough for them that We have sent down to you the Book [Qur'an] which is recited to them? Verily in that is mercy and a reminder for people who believe.

29:52. Say: Allah is sufficient between me and you as a witness. He knows all that is in the heavens and on earth. Those who believe in falsehood and disbelieve in Allah, it is they who are the losers.

These wrongdoers, who disbelieved in the Messenger (ﷺ) and what he brought, objected and demanded that specific signs be sent down to him. This is like when they said:

﴿...We will never believe in you until you cause a spring to gush forth from the earth for us.﴾ *(al-Isrā' 17: 90)*

The choice of specific signs is not up to them or the Messenger (ﷺ); such a demand is trying to interfere with that which is for Allah alone to decide. As that is the case, no one has any say in the matter. Hence Allah says:

﴿Say [O Muhammad]: Signs are in the power of Allah alone﴾ – and He sends them down or withholds them according to His will ﴿I am but a clear warner﴾ and I have no status greater than that.

If the aim is to differentiate between truth and falsehood, then once this aim has been achieved – by any method – demanding specific signs, after it has been achieved by other means, constitutes wrongdoing, transgression and arrogance towards Allah and towards the truth.

Even if it so happened that these signs were to be sent down, and they had the intention in their hearts that they would not believe in the truth except on the basis of those signs, that would not be true faith. Rather it would be something that coincided with their whims and desires, and therefore they believed. They would not have believed because it was the truth; rather it would have been because of those signs. So what benefit could be achieved by sending these signs, assuming that they could have been sent?

Because the aim was to highlight the truth, Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the way that leads to it:

﴿Is it not enough for them﴾, in order to know that you speak the truth and that what you bring is true ﴿that We have sent down to you the Book [Qur'an] which is recited to them?﴾ These are concise words in which there are many signs and proofs. As we mentioned above, for the Prophet (ﷺ) to bring this Book on its own, when he was unlettered, was one of the greatest signs of his sincerity and truthfulness.

Then their failure to produce something to match it, and the challenge to them in the Qur'an, is another sign. Moreover, the Qur'an appeared and was presented openly to them and was recited to them,

and they were told that it came from Allah; the Messenger (ﷺ) presented it to them openly, at a time when he had few supporters and his opponents and enemies were many, yet he did not conceal it. That did not weaken his resolve; rather he presented it openly before all people and called all people to it, city-dwellers and desert-dwellers alike, saying: This is the word of my Lord.

Is anyone able to present something to match it, or utter words more beautiful than it? Then Allah tells us about the stories of earlier nations and stories of the past, and foretells matters of the future, and everything He said is exactly what happens. Moreover, it takes precedence over previous Books, confirming what is correct and rejecting distortions and alterations that have been introduced. It guides people to the straight path in what it commands and forbids, so it never enjoins anything of which reason might say: Would that it did not enjoin that, and it does not forbid anything of which reason might say: Would that it did not forbid that. Rather it is in accordance with what is just and proper, and is in accordance with the wisdom of those who have deep insight and understanding. Moreover its guidance and rulings are proven to be the best for every situation and every time, to the extent that people's affairs cannot be in a good state except on the basis of it.

All of that offers sufficient evidence for anyone who really wants to believe in what is true and strives to seek truth. May he never be content, the one who is not content with the Qur'an, and may he never be healed, the one who is not healed by the Qur'an. Whoever is guided by it and is content with it, it is good for him. Hence Allah says:

﴿Verily in that is mercy and a reminder for people who believe﴾, because of what they find in it of abundant knowledge, much good, purification of hearts and souls, correction of belief, that which may perfect good manners and attitudes, and ways of understanding inspired by the divine.

﴿Say: Allah is sufficient between me and you as a witness﴾ – so I call upon Him to bear witness, and if I am lying, may He send upon me a punishment that will become a lesson for you. But if it is the case that He is supporting me, helping me and making things easy for me, then let this great divine testimony suffice you. But if you think in your hearts that His testimony – even though you did not see or hear Him – is not sufficient, then you should realise that ﴿He knows all that is in the heavens and on earth﴾, and part of what He knows is my situation and yours, and what I am telling you. If I am attributing lies to Him – despite the fact that He knows that and is able to punish me – that would be undermining His knowledge, power and wisdom. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿If he [Muhammad] had falsely attributed something to Us, We would surely have seized him by the right hand, then We would surely have severed his aorta.﴾ *(al-Ḥâqqah 69: 44-46)*

﴿Those who believe in falsehood and disbelieve in Allah, it is they who are the losers﴾ as they have lost out on belief in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day, and they will miss out on eternal bliss, and what they believe in – instead of truth that is sound and correct – is everything false and abhorrent, and instead of bliss they will suffer every painful punishment. Thus they will lose themselves and their families on the Day of Resurrection.

﴿وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِٱلْعَذَابِ ۚ وَلَوْلَآ أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى لَّجَآءَهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ وَلَيَأْتِيَنَّهُم بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ يَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِٱلْعَذَابِ وَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمُحِيطَةٌۢ بِٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾ يَوْمَ يَغْشَىٰهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ مِن فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ وَيَقُولُ ذُوقُوا۟ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾﴾

(سورة العنكبوت: ٥٣-٥٥)

29:53. They ask you to hasten on the punishment. Had there not been an appointed time for it, the punishment would already have come upon them. It will surely come upon them suddenly, when they least expect it.

29:54. They ask you to hasten on the punishment, but verily hell will encompass the disbelievers,

29:55. on the day when the punishment will overwhelm them from above them and from beneath their feet, and it will be said: Taste [the punishment] for what you used to do!

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the ignorance of those who disbelieve in the Messenger (ﷺ) and the message he brought. They said, seeking to hasten the punishment and emphasising their disbelief:

﴿...When will this promise come to pass, if you speak the truth?﴾ *(Yoonus 10: 48)*

﴿Had there not been an appointed time for it﴾ that is, a time decreed for the punishment, that had not yet come ﴿the punishment would already have come upon them﴾ because of their attitude and attempts to outwit Us, and their rejection of the truth. If We were to bring them to account for their ignorance, then what they said would have hastened the punishment. But – despite that – they should not think that it is slow in coming, for it will surely come to them ﴿suddenly, when they least expect it﴾.

And it came to pass as Allah (ﷻ) foretold. When they came to Badr, insolently boasting and thinking that they were able to achieve their goal, Allah humiliated them, killing their senior figures and most of their evil ones. He did not leave any household among them but that calamity struck them. Thus the punishment came upon them from where they did not expect, and it befell them when they did not realise.

Moreover, even if no worldly punishment befell them, there lies ahead of them punishment in the hereafter, from which none of them

will be saved, whether punishment was hastened for them in this world or not.

﴿but verily hell will encompass the disbelievers﴾ and there is no way they can escape it or avert it. It will encompass them on all sides, just as their sins, evil deeds and disbelief encompass them. That will be the most severe punishment.

﴿on the day when the punishment will overwhelm them from above them and from beneath their feet, and it will be said: Taste [the punishment] for what you used to do!﴾ The punishment is the consequence of your deeds, and the punishment will envelop you as disbelief and sins enveloped you.

﴿يَٰعِبَادِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِنَّ أَرۡضِي وَٰسِعَةٞ فَإِيَّٰيَ فَٱعۡبُدُونِ ٥٦ كُلُّ نَفۡسٖ ذَآئِقَةُ ٱلۡمَوۡتِۖ ثُمَّ إِلَيۡنَا تُرۡجَعُونَ ٥٧ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُمۡ مِّنَ ٱلۡجَنَّةِ غُرَفٗا تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهَا ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَاۚ نِعۡمَ أَجۡرُ ٱلۡعَٰمِلِينَ ٥٨ ٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُواْ وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمۡ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ٥٩﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٥٦-٥٩)

29:56. O My slaves who believe, verily My earth is spacious, so worship Me alone.

29:57. Every soul will taste death, then to Us you will be brought back.

29:58. As for those who believe and do righteous deeds, We will surely lodge them in lofty dwellings in paradise, through which rivers flow, to abide therein forever. How excellent a reward for those who work [and strive]!

29:59. [They are those] who patiently persevere and put their trust in their Lord.

﴿O My slaves who believe﴾ in Me and My Messenger (ﷺ)

﴿verily My earth is spacious, so worship Me alone﴾. If you are unable to worship your Lord in one land, then leave it and travel to another land where worship is for Allah alone, for places where one may worship Allah are vast and spacious. The Lord is One, and death will inevitably befall you, then you will be brought back to your Lord and He will requite those who worshipped Him properly and combined faith with righteous deeds, by causing them to dwell in lofty abodes that contain all that their hearts could desire and all that could delight the eyes, and you will abide therein forever.

﴿How excellent﴾ those dwellings will be, in gardens of bliss, ﴿reward for those who work [and strive]﴾ for the sake of Allah.

﴿[They are those] who patiently persevere﴾ in their striving. Patience in worshipping Allah requires doing one's utmost, putting all one's energy into that and intensely fighting the Shaytân who calls them not to put the required effort into that.

Their trust in Him requires them to rely on Allah and think positively of Him, trusting Him to fulfil what they have resolved to do of good deeds. Allah mentions trust in Him, even though it is part of patience, because it is needed in every deed and in the resolve to refrain from all that one is enjoined to refrain from, and patience is not complete without it.

﴿ وَكَأَيِّن مِّن دَآبَّةٍ لَّا تَحْمِلُ رِزْقَهَا ٱللَّهُ يَرْزُقُهَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٦٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٦٠)

29:60. How many are the creatures that do not carry [or store] their own provision. It is Allah Who provides for them and for you, and He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

That is, the Creator has guaranteed the provision of all creatures, both the strong and the incapable. How many are ﴿the creatures﴾ on earth that are physically weak and lacking in intelligence ﴿that do not carry [or store] their own provision﴾; they do not carry anything and do not keep any provision with them, yet Allah keeps sending them provision at appropriate times.

﴿It is Allah Who provides for them and for you﴾ therefore all of you are dependent upon Allah, Who is in charge of your provision, as He created you and is in control of you.

﴿and He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing﴾ so nothing is hidden from Him and no creature dies for lack of provision because it is hidden from Him. This is like the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿There is no creature that lives on the earth but its sustenance is guaranteed by Allah. He knows its dwelling place and its resting place; all is [inscribed] in a clear record.﴾ *(Hood 11: 6)*

﴿وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَسَخَّرَ ٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ ٱللَّهُ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقْدِرُ لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٢﴾ وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّن نَّزَّلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَحْيَا بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَوْتِهَا لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُ ۚ قُلِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٦١-٦٣)

29:61. If you ask them who created the heavens and the earth, and made the sun and moon to be of service, they will surely say: Allah. Then how could they have gone so far astray?

29:62. Allah grants abundant provision to whomever He wills among His slaves, or gives it in scant measure. Verily Allah has knowledge of all things.

29:63. And if you ask them who sends down water from the sky and gives life thereby to the earth after its death, they will surely say: Allah. Say: Praise be to Allah. But most of them do not understand.

These verses establish proof against the polytheists who associate others with Allah in worship, so as to make them adhere to the implications of what they already affirm of the unity of divine Lordship. If you ask them who created the heavens and the earth, and who sends down rain from the sky with which the earth is revived after its death, and in Whose Hand is the control of all things, ﴿they will surely say: Allah﴾ alone, and they will acknowledge that the idols and those whom they worship besides Allah are incapable of doing any of those things.

So their lies and fabrications are very strange indeed, as is the fact that they turn to those who they admitted are helpless and are not fit to control anything. You may conclude that they have no reason and that they are foolish and weak minded. Can you find anyone more lacking in reason and insight than one who comes to a rock or a grave and the like, knowing that it has no power to bring benefit, cause harm, create anything or grant provision, then he shows the utmost devotion to it, directing his worship to it and associating it with the Lord, the Creator and Provider, Who alone grants benefit or causes harm?

Say: praise be to Allah Who has made guidance distinct from misguidance, and has explained the falseness of the path of the polytheists, so that those who are guided may beware of it.

Say: praise be to Allah Who has created the upper and lower realms, and He controls them, grants provision to them and bestows abundance upon whomever He will and gives in scant measure to whomever He will, in accordance with His wisdom and knowledge of what is appropriate for His slaves.

﴿وَمَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَآ إِلَّا لَهْوٌ وَلَعِبٌ ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱلدَّارَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ لَهِىَ ٱلْحَيَوَانُ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ فَإِذَا رَكِبُوا۟ فِى ٱلْفُلْكِ دَعَوُا۟ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَمَّا نَجَّىٰهُمْ إِلَى ٱلْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ لِيَكْفُرُوا۟ بِمَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمْ وَلِيَتَمَتَّعُوا۟ ۖ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا حَرَمًا ءَامِنًا وَيُتَخَطَّفُ ٱلنَّاسُ مِنْ حَوْلِهِمْ ۚ أَفَبِٱلْبَٰطِلِ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَبِنِعْمَةِ ٱللَّهِ يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَهُۥ ۚ أَلَيْسَ فِى جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ جَٰهَدُوا۟ فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَمَعَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾﴾ (سورة العنكبوت: ٦٤-٦٩)

29:64. The life of this world is nothing but a distraction and play. Verily the life of the hereafter is the only true life, if only they knew.

29:65. When they board a ship, they call upon Allah, with sincere devotion to Him alone, but when He has delivered them safely to the shore, they ascribe partners to Him,

29:66. showing their ingratitude for what We have given them. Let them take their pleasure now, but they will soon know the consequences.

29:67. Do they not see that We have made [Makkah] a secure sanctuary, while people are being snatched away[37] from all around them? Will they then believe in falsehood and show ingratitude for the blessings of Allah?

29:68. Who does greater wrong than he who fabricates lies against Allah, or denies the truth when it comes to him? Is there not in hell an abode for the disbelievers?

29:69. As for those who strive hard in Our cause, We will surely guide them to Our paths, for verily Allah is with the doers of good.

[37] This refers to being killed or captured in the constant raids that Arab tribes made on one another during the pre-Islamic period; Makkah, however, remained untouched by such violence.

Here Allah (ﷻ) speaks of this world and the hereafter in a manner which implies that one should lose interest in this world and long for the hereafter.

﴿The life of this world is﴾ in reality, ﴿nothing but a distraction and play﴾ which distracts people's hearts and minds, because of what Allah has created in it of adornment, pleasures and desires that attract those whose hearts have turned away from the truth and that look attractive to the eyes of the negligent and give joy to souls whose main pursuit is falsehood. But it quickly passes and comes to an end, and the one who is in love with it will get nothing but sorrow, loss and regret.

The hereafter, on the other hand, is the abode of ﴿life﴾, that is, the perfect life, one of the characteristics of which is that people there will be physically strong, because their bodies and strength will be created for life, and everything will be available there that makes life perfect and brings pleasure and joy and fulfilment of physical desires, by way of food, drink, spouses and so on, such as no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it entered the mind of man.

﴿if only they knew﴾, they would not give precedence to this world over the hereafter, and if only they understood, they would not have lost interest in the abode of the only true life or been distracted by this abode of distraction and play. This indicates that those who have such knowledge must inevitably give precedence to the hereafter over this world, because of what they know about the nature of the two realms.

Then Allah (ﷻ) proves the polytheists to be wrong on the basis that they show sincerity to Allah (ﷻ) alone at times of distress when travelling by sea, when they are tossed about by the waves and fear death. At that time they forsake the rivals and call sincerely upon Allah alone, with no partner or associate. But when the hardship is over and the One on Whom they called sincerely has delivered them safely to the shore, they associate with Him those who could not save them or grant them relief at the time of difficulty. Why do they not

show sincerity to Allah at times of both ease and hardship, so that they might truly be believers in Him, deserving of His reward and warding off His punishment?

But this ascription of partners to Allah, after We bestowed blessings upon them by saving them from the sea, reflects the consequences of their ingratitude for what We gave them, for they responded to that blessing with a bad attitude. So let them carry on enjoying this world in the manner of cattle, for they only care about food and fulfilment of their physical desires.

﴿but they will soon know the consequences﴾ when they depart this world for the hereafter, where they will feel deep regret and suffer the painful punishment.

Then Allah reminds them of His secure sanctuary, telling them that they are its people, enjoying its security and abundant provision, whilst the people all around them are being snatched away, filled with fear. Will they not worship the One Who has provided them with food lest they go hungry and saved them from fear?

﴿Will they then believe in falsehood﴾ which is what they follow of ascribing partners to Allah, and false words and deeds
﴿and show ingratitude for the blessings of Allah﴾. What is the matter with them? Have they lost their minds? For they prefer misguidance to guidance, falsehood to truth, doom to bliss, and they are the most misguided of people.

﴿Who does greater wrong than he who fabricates lies against Allah﴾, thus attributing what he follows of misguidance and falsehood to Him,
﴿or denies the truth when it comes to him﴾ at the hands of Allah's Messenger, Muhammad (ﷺ).

But ahead of this stubborn wrongdoer, there lies hell: ﴿Is there not in hell an abode for the disbelievers?﴾ where the score will be

settled with them and they will be disgraced; it will be their eternal abode, from which they will never depart.

﴿As for those who strive hard in Our cause﴾ – this refers to those who migrated in Allah's cause, strove in jihad against their enemies and did their utmost to follow the path that would earn His pleasure ﴿We will surely guide them to Our paths﴾ that is, that paths that lead to Us, because they are doers of good.
﴿for verily Allah is with the doers of good﴾; He gives them help, support and guidance. This indicates that the most likely of people to be in accordance with what is right are the people of jihad, and that whoever does well in doing what he is commanded to do, Allah will help him and make means of guidance available to him; whoever strives hard to seek Islamic knowledge, will attain guidance and divine help to achieve his goals to an extent that goes beyond his efforts. Learning will be made easy for him, because seeking Islamic knowledge comes under the heading of jihad in the cause of Allah; in fact it is one of the two types of jihad, that is not undertaken by any but the elite of humankind, namely verbal jihad against the disbelievers and hypocrites, and jihad in the sense of teaching people about religion and refuting the arguments of those who drift away from the truth, even if they are Muslims.

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

30.
Soorat ar-Room

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

الٓمٓ ﴿١﴾ غُلِبَتِ الرُّومُ ﴿٢﴾ فِي أَدْنَى الْأَرْضِ وَهُم مِّن بَعْدِ غَلَبِهِمْ سَيَغْلِبُونَ ﴿٣﴾ فِي بِضْعِ سِنِينَ ۗ لِلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ مِن قَبْلُ وَمِن بَعْدُ ۚ وَيَوْمَئِذٍ يَفْرَحُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤﴾ بِنَصْرِ اللَّهِ ۚ يَنصُرُ مَن يَشَاءُ ۖ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥﴾ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ ۖ لَا يُخْلِفُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦﴾ يَعْلَمُونَ ظَاهِرًا مِّنَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ غَافِلُونَ ﴿٧﴾ (سورة الروم: ١-٧)

30:1. Alif. Lâm. Meem.[38]

30:2. The Romans [Byzantines] have been defeated,

30:3. in a nearby land. But they, after their defeat, will be victorious

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

30:4. within a few years. The power of decree belongs to Allah both before and after [that victory]. On that day, the believers will rejoice

30:5. at the victory granted by Allah. He grants victory to whomever He wills, and He is the Almighty, Most Merciful.

30:6. [This is] the promise of Allah. Allah does not break His promise, but most people do not realise.

30:7. They only know the superficial realities of the life of this world, but they are oblivious to the hereafter.

At that time, the Persians and the Romans (Byzantines) were among the strongest nations on earth, and there were wars and conflicts between them, such as occur between states with equal powers. The Persians were polytheists who worshipped fire, whereas the Romans were People of the Book who claimed to follow the Torah and Gospel, and they were closer to the Muslims than the Persians. So the believers liked for the Romans to prevail and defeat the Persians, whilst the polytheists – who had in common with the Persians polytheistic beliefs – liked for the Persians to defeat the Romans.

The Persians prevailed over the Romans and defeated them, but did not take over their lands except the areas closest to their borders. And the polytheists of Makkah rejoiced at that, whilst the Muslims were saddened by it. But Allah told them and promised them that the Romans would defeat the Persians,

﴿within a few years﴾ that is, eight or nine years, or thereabouts, but no more than ten and no less than three. The Persian defeat of the Romans, then the Roman defeat of the Persians, all happened in accordance with the will and decree of Allah. Hence He said: ﴿The power of decree belongs to Allah both before and after [that victory]﴾. Victory does not occur just because of worldly means; rather it must also be according to the divine will and decree.

﴿On that day﴾ that is, on the day when the Romans prevail over the Persians and defeat them,

﴿On that day, the believers will rejoice at the victory granted by Allah. He grants victory to whomever He wills﴾ that is, they will rejoice at the Romans' victory over the Persians, for even though they are all disbelievers, some evils are less than others, and on that day the polytheists will grieve.

﴿and He is the Almighty﴾ Who is possessed of might that subdues all creation; He grants power to whomever He wills and takes away power from whomever He wills; He honours whomever He wills and He humiliates whomever He wills

﴿Most Merciful﴾ towards His believing slaves, for He has made available to them means by which they may attain bliss and victories such as never cross their minds.

﴿[This is] the promise of Allah. Allah does not break His promise﴾ – so be certain of that and be sure of it, and know that it will inevitably come to pass.

When these verses which contained this promise were revealed, the Muslims believed in them and the polytheists disbelieved in them, to such an extent that some Muslims and some polytheists placed bets on the exact number of years involved. When the time decreed by Allah came, the Romans defeated the Persians and drove them out of their lands that they had taken over, and the promise of Allah was fulfilled.

This is one of the matters of the unseen which Allah foretold before it happened, and it came to pass at the time stated by Allah, and was witnessed by both Muslims and polytheists.

﴿but most people do not realise﴾ that what Allah promises is true. Hence there are some who disbelieve in the promise of Allah and reject His signs, and these are the ones who do not realise – that is, they do not see things in depth or understand the consequences thereof. Rather ﴿They only know the superficial realities of the life of this

world﴾. So they look at the causes and are certain that some evils happen because the causes thereof are present, and they are certain that some things are not going to happen if they do not see the causes thereof happening. They focus only on the causes, without thinking of the One Who makes these causes available and is in control of them.

﴿but they are oblivious to the hereafter﴾, for their hearts and their whims and desires are focused on this world and its worthless splendours, so they strive for that and focus all their efforts on it. And they neglect the hereafter, so they do not long for paradise or fear hell, and they do not fear standing before Allah, and the meeting with Him does not cause them any concern. This is a sign of doom and of being oblivious to the hereafter.

It is strange indeed that many of this type of people have a stunningly high level of smartness and intelligence with regard to superficial worldly matters. They have achieved amazing things in the fields of energy, electricity and means of transportation on land and sea and in the air. In that regard they have surpassed others, to the extent that they are filled with self-admiration for their own intelligence, and they regard others as incapable of achieving that which Allah has enabled them to achieve; therefore they look upon them with scorn and contempt. Yet despite that, they are the most unintelligent of people with regard to spiritual well-being, and they are more negligent than others with regard to the hereafter, and have the least knowledge of the ultimate consequences of matters. People with deep insight see them and realise how they are wandering blindly in their ignorance, misguidance and falsehood, for they have forgotten Allah, so He caused them to forget themselves. These are the evildoers.

Moreover, people of insight look at what Allah has granted to these disbelievers and has given them the ability to develop subtle ideas that have to do with this world and its superficialities, but they are deprived of sublime reasoning. Thus they (the people of insight) realise that all matters are in the Hand of Allah and it is He Who decrees concerning

His slaves; it is He Who grants help and guidance, or causes some to fail. So they fear their Lord and ask Him to perfect for them what He has granted them of the light of reason and faith, so that they may reach Him and draw close to Him. As for these achievements (of the disbelievers), if their achievements had been coupled with faith and based on faith, that would have led to sublime refinement and a good life, but because much of it was based on atheism, it only resulted in a decline in ethics and morality, and development of the means of total destruction and annihilation of the planet.

﴿ أَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِم ۗ مَّا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۗ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ بِلِقَآئِ رَبِّهِمْ لَكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٨﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَانُوٓا۟ أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَأَثَارُوا۟ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَعَمَرُوهَآ أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا عَمَرُوهَا وَجَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ ۖ فَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾ ثُمَّ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسَٰٓـُٔوا۟ ٱلسُّوٓأَىٰٓ أَن كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَكَانُوا۟ بِهَا يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٨-١٠)

30:8. Have they not reflected within themselves: Allah has not created the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, except for a true purpose and for an appointed term? But indeed many people deny the meeting with their Lord.

30:9. Have they not travelled in the land and seen what was the fate of those who came before them? They were more powerful than them; they dug the earth[39] and built upon it more than these [people of Makkah] have built. Their Messengers came to them with clear signs. It was not Allah Who wronged them, but it was they who wronged themselves.

[39] This may refer to agriculture or to digging wells and mining, and so on.

30:10. And utterly evil will be the fate of those who did evil, for they rejected the signs of Allah and used to ridicule them.

That is, have these people who reject the Messengers of Allah and denied the meeting with Him ﴿not reflected within themselves﴾, for in their own selves there are signs by which they may know that the One Who created them from nothing will recreate them after that, and that it is not appropriate that the One Who caused them to develop in stages – from a sperm drop, to a clinging clot, to a chewed lump of flesh, to a human being into whom the soul was breathed, to a child, to a young man, to an old man, to a senile man – should leave them aimless and neglected, not given any commands or prohibitions, and not rewarded or punished.

﴿Allah has not created the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, except for a true purpose﴾ which is to test you and show who among you is best in deed

﴿and for an appointed term﴾ that is, a period that will last until a certain point at which this world will come to an end, then will come the resurrection, when the earth will be changed to another earth and so will the heavens *(cf. 14: 48)*.

﴿But indeed many people deny the meeting with their Lord﴾, therefore they have not prepared to meet Him and they did not believe His Messengers who told them of that. There is no evidence for this disbelief; rather the definitive evidence indicates that the resurrection and requital of deeds will take place. Hence Allah tells them to travel through the land and see the fate of those who rejected their Messengers and disobeyed their commands, among nations who were more powerful than them and who left more traces on the earth, such as huge fortresses and great works, and who planted trees, grew crops and dug channels for irrigation. Their strength and works did not avail them at all when they rejected their Messengers who came to them with clear signs that pointed to the truth and the soundness of

the message they brought. When they look at what those nations left behind, they will not find anything but nations that vanished, people who were destroyed, dwellings that were left desolate and bad things that were said about them throughout the generations. This is the first stage of punishment, a foretaste of the punishment in the hereafter, and the beginning thereof.

Allah did not wrong any of these doomed nations by destroying them; rather they wronged themselves and brought about their own destruction.

﴿And utterly evil will be the fate﴾ that is, the terrible situation ﴿of those who did evil, for they rejected the signs of Allah and used to ridicule them﴾. This is the punishment for their bad deeds and sins.

Moreover, their ridicule and rejection are the cause of the greatest punishment and ultimate vengeance.

﴿ٱللَّهُ يَبْدَؤُا۟ ٱلْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُۥ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١١﴾ وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ يُبْلِسُ ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُم مِّن شُرَكَآئِهِمْ شُفَعَٰٓؤُا۟ وَكَانُوا۟ بِشُرَكَآئِهِمْ كَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَتَفَرَّقُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَهُمْ فِى رَوْضَةٍ يُحْبَرُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَكَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَلِقَآءِ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ فِى ٱلْعَذَابِ مُحْضَرُونَ ﴿١٦﴾﴾ (سورة الروم: ١١-١٦)

30:11. Allah originates creation then repeats it, then to Him you will be brought back.

30:12. On the day when the Hour begins, the evildoers will be speechless with despair.

30:13. They will have no intercessors among their [so-called] partners [whom they associated with Allah], and they will deny those partners.

30:14. On the day when the Hour begins, on that day they will be divided.

30:15. As for those who believed and did righteous deeds, they will be honoured and made happy in a garden.

30:16. And as for those who disbelieved, and rejected Our signs and denied the meeting in the hereafter, they will be delivered up for punishment.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He alone originates the creation of all creatures, then He will repeat it, then to Him they will be returned after their recreation, so that He may requite them for their deeds. Hence He mentions the requital of the evildoers, then the requital of those who did good:

﴿On the day when the Hour begins﴾ that is, when the people are resurrected to stand before the Lord of the worlds, and they see the Day of Resurrection with their own eyes. On that day, ﴿the evildoers will be speechless with despair﴾ that is, they will despair of all good, because they did not send ahead for that day anything but evil deeds, namely their sins of disbelief, ascription of partners to Allah and acts of disobedience.

Because they sent ahead that which incurs punishment, and they did not mix with it anything of that which brings reward, they will be filled with despair, speechless and helpless, and the (false gods) of their own invention – namely the so-called partners which they claimed would intercede for them – will be lost from them.

Hence Allah says: ﴿They will have no intercessors among their [so-called] partners﴾ whom they worshipped alongside Allah, ﴿and they will deny those partners﴾ that is, these polytheists will disavow those whom they associated with Allah, and those whom they worship will disavow them and will say:

﴿...We disavow them before You; it was not us they worshipped.﴾ *(al-Qaṣaṣ 28: 63)*

They will trade curses and shun one another, and on that day the people of good and the people of evil will be divided and be separate, just as their deeds were separate in this world.

﴿As for those who believed and did righteous deeds﴾ that is, they believed in their hearts and confirmed that belief by doing righteous deeds

﴿they will be honoured and made happy in a garden﴾ in which there are all kinds of plants and desirable things. They will be happy, enjoying delicious food and drink, beautiful companions, servants, melodious voices, delightful sounds, wonderful views, gentle breezes, joy, delight and pleasure, such as cannot be described.

﴿And as for those who disbelieved﴾ and denied Allah's blessings, responding to them with ingratitude

﴿and rejected Our signs﴾ which were brought to them by Our Messengers

﴿and denied the meeting in the hereafter, they will be delivered up for punishment﴾ and hell will encompass them on all sides; their faces will be scalded with hot water which will pierce their bowels. What a great difference there will be between the two groups, so how can those who will enjoy bliss and those who will be punished be equal?

﴿ فَسُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ حِينَ تُمْسُونَ وَحِينَ تُصْبِحُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَهُ ٱلْحَمْدُ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَعَشِيًّا وَحِينَ تُظْهِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ يُخْرِجُ ٱلْحَىَّ مِنَ ٱلْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ ٱلْمَيِّتَ مِنَ ٱلْحَىِّ وَيُحْىِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ تُخْرَجُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ١٧-١٩)

30:17. So glorify Allah in the evening and the morning –

30:18. To Him be all praise in the heavens and on earth – [and glorify Him] in the afternoon and when the sun begins to decline.

30:19. He brings forth the living from the dead, and brings forth the dead from the living. He gives life to the earth after its death, and in like manner you will be brought forth [from your graves].

Here Allah tells us that He is above all bad qualities and shortcomings, and He is above any of His creation being like unto Him. He commands His slaves to glorify Him in the evening and in the morning, in the afternoon and in the middle of the day.

These five times are the times of the five daily prayers. Allah commands His slaves to glorify and praise Him at these times, which includes that which is obligatory, such as the five daily prayers that are required at these times, and that which is recommended or encouraged, such as the *adhkâr* that are to be recited morning and afternoon, and following the obligatory prayers, as well as supererogatory prayers that accompany the obligatory prayers. That is because these times that Allah has chosen for the obligatory prayers are better than other times.

Therefore glorifying and praising Allah, and worshipping Him, at those times is better than at other times. In fact worship, even if it does not include the phrase "*Subḥân Allâh* (glory be to Allah)", is in fact – if it is done with sincerity – a kind of glorifying Allah in one's actions, and declaring Him to be above having any partner and denying that any creature is deserving of what He deserves of sincere devotion.

﴿He brings forth the living from the dead﴾ as He brings forth the plant from the dead earth, the corn from the seed, the tree from the seed, the chick from the egg, the believer from the disbeliever, and so on.

﴿and brings forth the dead from the living﴾ as in the opposite of the cases mentioned above.

﴿He gives life to the earth after its death﴾. So He sends down rain at the time when the earth is dead and lifeless, then when He sends down rain upon it, it stirs and swells, and brings forth beautiful plants of every kind *(cf. 22: 5)*.

﴿and in like manner you will be brought forth [from your graves]﴾. This offers definitive evidence and clear proof that the One Who gives life to the earth after its death will give life to the dead.

There is no difference, from a rational point of view, between the two matters, and there is no reason to regard one as unlikely when we can see the other.

﴿ وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ خَلَقَكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ إِذَآ أَنتُم بَشَرٌ تَنتَشِرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُم مَّوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَـٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٢٠-٢١)

30:20. Among His signs is this: He created you from dust, then – behold! – you became human beings ranging far and wide.

30:21. Among His signs is this: He created for you from among yourselves spouses, so that you might find comfort in them, and He has instilled love and compassion between you. Verily in that there are signs for people who reflect.

This is the beginning of a list of Allah's signs that point to His oneness, His perfect greatness, His will that is always done, His mighty power, the beauty of His creation, and the vastness of His mercy and kindness.

﴿Among His signs is this: He created you from dust﴾ this refers to the creation of the origin of humankind, namely Adam (عليه السلام).
﴿then – behold! – you became human beings ranging far and wide﴾ that is, the One Who created you from a single origin and one substance scattered you far and wide throughout the earth. In that there are signs that the One Who created you from this origin and scattered you throughout the earth is the Lord Who is deserving of worship, the

Sovereign Who is deserving of praise, the Most Merciful and Most Loving, Who will bring you back by resurrecting you after death.

﴿Among His signs﴾ that point to His mercy and care for His slaves, and His great wisdom and all-encompassing knowledge
﴿is this: He created for you from among yourselves spouses﴾ who feel in harmony with you and you feel in harmony with them, and you are compatible with one another.
﴿so that you might find comfort in them, and He has instilled love and compassion between you﴾ because of what results from marriage of love and compassion.

Thus a man will find physical pleasure in his wife, and the benefit of having and raising children, and he will find comfort in his spouse. Usually you will not find between any two people what you find between spouses of love and mercy.
﴿Verily in that there are signs for people who reflect﴾ and use their minds to reflect upon the signs of Allah, and in one thing they find an indication of another.

﴿ وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ خَلْقُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱخْتِلَٰفُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَٰنِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّلْعَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٢٢)

30:22. Among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the diversity of your languages and colours. Verily in that there are signs for those who have knowledge.

Those who have knowledge are people who understand and learn lessons, and who reflect upon the signs. There are many such signs, one of which is the creation of the heavens and the earth and all that is in them. That is indicative of the greatness of Allah's authority and the perfect nature of His might, for He brought into being these mighty

creations. It is also indicative of His perfect wisdom, because of what they contain of precision; and of the vastness of His knowledge, because the Creator must inevitably know what He has created.

﴿How could He Who created not know His own creation?...﴾ *(al-Mulk 67: 14)*

It also points to the vastness of His mercy and grace, because of what His creation contains of great benefits, and it indicates that He is the One Who chooses whatever He wills, because of what it contains of variations and distinguishing features. And it highlights the fact that He alone deserves to be worshipped and His oneness affirmed, for He alone creates, so He alone must be worshipped.

Allah draws our attention to all of this rational evidence and instructs us to reflect upon it and learn lessons from it.

﴿and﴾ likewise there is a sign in ﴿the diversity of your languages and colours﴾, of which there is such a great variety, despite having a single origin, and despite the fact that the sounds made by human voices come from the same place. Even though that is the case, you will not find two voices that are similar in all ways, or two colours that are similar in all ways. Rather you will find differences between them so that you can tell them apart. This is indicative of the perfect nature of His might and shows us that His will is always done.

One aspect of His care and mercy towards His slaves is that He has decreed these differences lest things resemble one another too closely, which would lead to confusion and would be detrimental to people's interests.

﴿وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦ مَنَامُكُم بِٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ وَٱبْتِغَآؤُكُم مِّن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَـٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾﴾ (سورة الروم: ٢٣)

30:23. Among His signs is your sleep at night and in the daytime, and your seeking of His bounty. Verily in that there are signs for people who listen [attentively].

That is, they listen attentively by way of reflecting upon the meanings and reflecting upon the signs.

This is indicative of Allah's mercy, as He says elsewhere:

﴿By His mercy He has made for you night and day, so that you may rest therein and seek His bounty, and so that you may give thanks.﴾ *(al-Qaṣaṣ 28: 73)*

It is also indicative of His perfect wisdom, for His wisdom dictates that people should rest sometimes and go about their business sometimes, taking care of their religious and worldly interests. That can only be achieved with the alternation of night and day for them, and the only One Who does that is the only One Who is deserving of worship.

﴿ وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦ يُرِيكُمُ ٱلْبَرْقَ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَيُنَزِّلُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَيُحْىِۦ بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَآ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَـٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٢٤)

30:24. Among His signs, He shows you the lightning, giving rise to both fear and hope, and He sends down water from the sky whereby He gives life to the earth after its death. Verily in that there are signs for people of understanding.

That is, one of His signs is that He sends down to you the rain by means of which the land and the people are revived. Before the rain comes, He shows them its precursors, namely the thunder and lightning which give rise to both fear and hope.

﴿Verily in that there are signs﴾ of the all-encompassing nature of His kindness, the vastness of His knowledge, the perfect nature of His precision, and the greatness of His wisdom. It indicates that He will give life to the dead, just as He gives life to the earth after its death. ﴿for people of understanding﴾ that is, those who have minds with which to understand what they hear, see and remember, and are able to understand what the signs point to.

﴿وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَن تَقُومَ ٱلسَّمَآءُ وَٱلْأَرْضُ بِأَمْرِهِۦ ۚ ثُمَّ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ دَعْوَةً مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ إِذَآ أَنتُمْ تَخْرُجُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَلَهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ كُلٌّ لَّهُۥ قَٰنِتُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى يَبْدَؤُا۟ ٱلْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُۥ وَهُوَ أَهْوَنُ عَلَيْهِ ۚ وَلَهُ ٱلْمَثَلُ ٱلْأَعْلَىٰ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾ (سورة الروم: ٢٥-٢٧)

30:25. Among His signs is this: the heaven and the earth are maintained by His command, then when with one call He summons you to come forth from the earth, you will immediately come forth.

30:26. To Him belong all those who are in the heavens and on earth; all are subservient unto Him.

30:27. It is He Who originates creation then repeats it, and that is [even] easier for Him. To Him belong the most sublime attributes [as confirmed by all those who are] in the heavens and on earth, and He is the Almighty, the Most Wise.

That is, one of the greatest of His signs is the fact that the heavens and earth are maintained and remain stable and steady by His command. Therefore they do not shake, and the sky does not fall upon the earth. His great might, by means of which He sustains the heavens and the earth lest they decline, is also the means by which, when He summons them to come forth from the earth, they will immediately emerge.

﴿Indeed, the creation of the heavens and the earth is a greater matter than the creation [or recreation] of humankind...﴾ *(Ghâfir 40: 57)*

﴿To Him belong all those who are in the heavens and on earth﴾ all are His creation and slaves, and He controls them without anyone else to dispute with Him, help Him or oppose Him. They are all subservient to His majesty, submitting to His perfection.

﴿It is He Who originates creation then repeats it﴾ that is, repeating creation after they die will be ﴿[even] easier for Him﴾ than their original creation. This is as far as human minds are concerned. So just as you affirm that He is able to originate creation, it is more appropriate that you should affirm that He is able to repeat it, which is easier.

Having mentioned these great signs from which those who are willing may learn lessons, the believers may be exhorted and those who are guided may increase in insight, Allah now mentions an important issue:
﴿To Him belong the most sublime attributes [as confirmed by all those who are] in the heavens and on earth﴾. This refers to all attributes of perfection, for His is the most perfect degree of every attribute, and with regard to His slaves, the most perfect love and the most perfect subservience to Him is in the hearts of His sincere slaves, and the highest level of veneration is when they remember and worship Him.

Hence when the scholars speak of the divine attributes, they use the analogy of what is most appropriate. So they say: whatever perfect attribute may be found in created beings, the Creator of that attribute is more deserving of possessing it in a manner that no one shares with Him; whatever shortcomings may be found in created beings, it is more appropriate to declare the Creator to be far above them.

﴿and He is the Almighty, the Most Wise﴾ that is, to Him belong the perfect might and great wisdom. By His might He created all things and issued His commands, and by His wisdom He perfected all that He created and He issued the best laws and decrees.

﴿ ضَرَبَ لَكُم مَّثَلًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ ۖ هَل لَّكُم مِّن مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُكُم مِّن شُرَكَآءَ فِى مَا رَزَقْنَٰكُمْ فَأَنتُمْ فِيهِ سَوَآءٌ تَخَافُونَهُمْ كَخِيفَتِكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ بَلِ ٱتَّبَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَهْوَآءَهُم بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۖ فَمَن يَهْدِى مَنْ أَضَلَّ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن نَّٰصِرِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٢٨-٢٩)

30:28. He makes this comparison, drawn from your own lives: do you have partners among those slaves whom you own, who share as equals in the wealth We have bestowed on you, so that you fear them[40] as you fear one another? Thus We explain the revelations in detail for people of understanding.

30:29. Nay, the wrongdoers follow their own desires, without any knowledge. But who can guide those whom Allah has caused to go astray? And they will have no helpers.

This is a likeness that Allah gives of the abhorrent nature of polytheism. It is a likeness that is drawn from their own lives, which does not require much effort to understand.

﴿do you have partners among those slaves whom you own, who share as equals in the wealth We have bestowed on you﴾ that is, do any of your slaves share your provision with you in such a way that you think that you and they have equal rights concerning it?

﴿so that you fear them as you fear one another﴾ that is, like free men who are partners in reality, who dread dividing the wealth, and each one takes his own share? That is not the case; none of your slaves is a partner in the wealth that Allah (ﷻ) has bestowed upon you.

[40] What is meant by fearing one another is when two free men have equal shares of some wealth, and one fears that the other may take more than his due share, thus depriving him of his portion of that wealth.

Moreover, you are not the ones who created those slaves or granted them provision, and they are slaves to Allah like you, so how can you accept to ascribe a partner to Allah from among His creation whom you regard as equal to Him and equally worthy of worship, when you do not accept for your slaves to become equal to you?

This is something that is most strange and is most indicative of the foolishness of those who ascribe partners to Allah, and it indicates that what he takes as a god is false and will diminish; it is not equal to Allah and it has no right to be worshipped.

﴿Thus We explain the revelations in detail﴾ by means of comparisons ﴿for people of understanding﴾ who understand and recognise the realities of things. As for those who do not understand, even if the revelations are explained to them and proof is presented to them, they have no rational minds with which to understand what is presented to them. It is people of reason and understanding who should be addressed.

Once it is established, from this comparison, that the one who regards others as partners with Allah whom he worships and puts his trust in is utterly wrong, then it becomes clear that the foundation on which he based this notion is wrong. Rather what led him to adopt this false notion is following his whims and desires. Hence Allah says:

﴿Nay, the wrongdoers follow their own desires, without any knowledge﴾. Those who are lacking in rational thinking went along with their whims and desires, and they adopted an idea that is clearly flawed and contrary to rational thinking and will be rejected by sound human nature, without any knowledge or any proof that led to that idea.

﴿But who can guide those whom Allah has caused to go astray?﴾ That is, do not be surprised by the fact that they are not guided, for Allah (ﷻ) has caused them to go astray because of their wrongdoing, and there is no way to guide those whom Allah has caused to go astray,

because no one can oppose Allah or dispute with Him concerning His dominion.

﴿And they will have no helpers﴾ to help them when the decree of punishment comes to pass and their connections with others are severed.

﴿ فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا ۚ فِطْرَتَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِى فَطَرَ ٱلنَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ مُنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ وَٱتَّقُوهُ وَأَقِيمُوا ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيَعًا ۖ كُلُّ حِزْبٍۭ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٣٠-٣٢)

30:30. Adhere exclusively and sincerely to the true faith of monotheism, the natural disposition that Allah instilled in humankind. There can be no change in what Allah has created. This is the right religion, but most people do not realise.

30:31. Turn to Him and fear Him; establish prayer, and do not be among those who ascribe partners to Allah,

30:32. those who differed concerning their religion and divided into sects, each group rejoicing in what it has.

Here Allah (ﷻ) enjoins sincere devotion to Him alone in all situations and exclusive adherence to His religion.

﴿Adhere exclusively and sincerely to the true faith of monotheism﴾ that is, turn to and focus on the true religion, which is Islam, *eemân* (faith) and iḥsân,[41] by focusing with all your heart and devoting all

[41] Iḥsân is referred to in the well-known hadith in which it was narrated that 'Umar said: =

your efforts to establishing the outward commands of the faith, such as prayer, zakâh, fasting, Hajj and so on, and its inward commands such as loving Allah, fearing Him, putting one's hopes in Him, and turning to Him, and striving to perfect everything you do, both outwardly and inwardly, with regard to religion, and worshipping Allah as if you can see Him, for if you do not see Him, verily He sees you.

This that We have enjoined upon you is ﴿the natural disposition that Allah instilled in humankind﴾ and has instilled in their minds the inclination to find it beautiful and to find anything else ugly. Allah has instilled in the hearts of all people an inclination towards all the rulings of Islam, both outward and inward, so they are naturally inclined to love truth and give precedence to it. This is the true nature of man.

If anyone does not conform to this principle, it is because of something that happened to his natural disposition and caused it to be changed, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

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

«Every child is born in a state of *fiṭrah* (the natural state of man, that is, Islam), then his parents make him into a Jew or a Christian or a Magian.» (Bukhari)

﴿There can be no change in what Allah has created﴾ that is, no one can change the creation of Allah and alter the nature of any created being and make it something other than what Allah created.
﴿This﴾ that We have enjoined upon man
﴿is the right religion﴾ that is, the straight path that leads to Allah and to His paradise. Whoever adheres exclusively and sincerely to the true faith of monotheism is following the straight path in all its prescriptions and details
﴿but most people do not realise﴾ so they do not recognise the right religion, and if they do recognise it, they do not follow it.

﴿Turn to Him and fear Him﴾ this is an explanation of what is meant by adhering exclusively and sincerely to the true faith of monotheism. What is meant is turning in the heart and developing emotions that prompt one to do that which pleases Allah (ﷻ), for that will lead to carrying out physically what is in the heart. This includes acts of worship both outward and inward. That cannot be perfected except by refraining from acts of disobedience, both outward and inward. Hence Allah says ﴿and fear Him﴾, which includes doing that which is enjoined and refraining from that which is prohibited.

Among the deeds that are enjoined, Allah singles out prayer, because it calls one to turn to Him and fear Him, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿...and establish prayer, for verily prayer keeps [one] away from obscenity and wickedness...﴾ *(al-'Ankaboot 29: 45)*

This helps one to attain piety or fear of Allah. Then Allah says:

﴿...And indeed your remembering Allah [in prayer] is of greater merit [than other acts of worship]...﴾ *(al-'Ankaboot 29: 45)*

This is encouraging us to turn to Him.

And Allah mentions specifically the essential element of that which is prohibited, with which no good deed is acceptable, namely the ascription of partners to Him: ﴿and do not be among those who ascribe partners to Allah﴾, because ascription of partners to Allah is contrary to the idea of turning to Allah, the essence of which is sincerity to Him alone in all aspects.

Then He describes the nature of those who ascribe partners to Him, criticising and condemning them, as He says: ﴿those who differed concerning their religion﴾ even though the religion is one, and its foundation is devotion of worship to Allah alone. But these polytheists differed concerning it; some of them worship idols and images, some of them worship the sun and moon, some of them worship saints and righteous people; some of them are Jews and some of them are Christians.

Hence Allah says: ﴿and divided into sects﴾ that is, each group came together, bonded and united on the basis of their efforts to support what they have of falsehood, and opposing and fighting others.

﴿each group rejoicing in what it has﴾ of beliefs and ideas that are contrary to what the Messengers taught. They rejoice in it and deem what they have to be the truth and what others have to be false. This is a warning to the Muslims against becoming divided and splitting into groups, each group blindly supporting what it has of truth and falsehood, lest they become like the polytheists in their division. Rather the religion is one, the Messenger (ﷺ) is one and the God is one.

With regard to most matters of religion there is consensus among the scholars and imams, and Allah has created the ties of brotherhood and made them strong among the believers. So why is all of that overlooked or cancelled out, and why is there division and dissent among the Muslims caused by subtle and very minor differences because of which they regard one another as misguided and they become distinct from one another?

Is this anything but the result of the Shaytân's efforts to achieve one of his greatest aims, by means of which he is scheming against the Muslims? Is the effort to unite the Muslims and overcome the divisions among them that are based on those false principles anything but the best jihad in Allah's cause and the best of deeds that bring one closer to Allah?

As Allah (ﷻ) commanded the believers to turn to Him – and the manner of turning to Him that is enjoined is that which is done voluntarily and should be done in times of both hardship and ease, times of plenty and of constraint – He now goes on to refer to the kind of turning to Him that occurs when one has no choice but to do so, which only happens when people are faced with calamity and distress, then once the calamity is over, they forget all about turning to Him. And that is not good:

﴿وَإِذَا مَسَّ ٱلنَّاسَ ضُرٌّ دَعَوْا۟ رَبَّهُم مُّنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ ثُمَّ إِذَآ أَذَاقَهُم مِّنْهُ رَحْمَةً إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُم بِرَبِّهِمْ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ لِيَكْفُرُوا۟ بِمَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمْ ۚ فَتَمَتَّعُوا۟ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ أَمْ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَٰنًا فَهُوَ يَتَكَلَّمُ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾﴾ (سورة الروم: ٣٣-٣٥)

30:33. When misfortune befalls people, they call upon their Lord [alone], turning to Him in repentance. Then when He grants them relief by His mercy, some of them ascribe partners to their Lord,

30:34. showing their ingratitude for what We have given them. Take your pleasure now, but you will soon know the consequences.

30:35. Or have We sent down to them any authority which speaks in support of their ascription of partners to Allah?

﴿When misfortune befalls people﴾ such as sickness, fear of death, and the like
﴿they call upon their Lord [alone], turning to Him in repentance﴾ and at that moment they forget all that they ascribed as partners to Him, because they know that none can grant relief from misfortune except Allah.

﴿Then when He grants them relief by His mercy﴾ and heals them from their sickness and delivers them from that which they feared ﴿some of them ascribe partners to their Lord﴾ that is, they cancel out that repentance, and they ascribe as partners to Him those who did not protect them or avail them anything, and cannot make them poor or rich. All of that is ingratitude for what Allah gave them and the blessings that He bestowed upon them, when He saved them and delivered them from hardship, and relieved them of difficulty. Should they not have responded to this immense blessing by giving thanks and remaining devoted to Him alone in all situations?

﴿Or have We sent down to them any authority﴾ that is, clear proof ﴿which speaks in support of their ascription of partners to Allah﴾ and tells them: be steadfast in your ascription of partners to Him and persist in your doubts, for what you are following is the truth and what the Messengers call you to is falsehood?

Do they have that authority, so that they should adhere strongly to their ascription of partners to Allah? Or is it not the case that the rational and textual evidence, the divinely revealed Books, the noble Messengers and the most prominent of people have emphatically forbidden that and warned against following the path that leads to that, and they ruled that the one who does that is corrupt in his thinking and in his beliefs?

The ascription of partners to Allah by these people, without any proof or evidence, is based only on their own whims and desires and the promptings of the Shaytân.

﴿ وَإِذَآ أَذَقْنَا ٱلنَّاسَ رَحْمَةً فَرِحُوا۟ بِهَا ۖ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ إِذَا هُمْ يَقْنَطُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٣٦-٣٧)

30:36. If We bestow upon the people mercy [prosperity], they rejoice in it; but when misfortune befalls them because of the deeds which their own hands have wrought, they fall into despair.

30:37. Do they not see that Allah grants abundant provision to whomever He wills, or gives it in scant measure? Verily in that there are signs for people who believe.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the nature of most people at times of both ease and hardship: if Allah gives them a taste of mercy in the form of good health, wealth, victory and the like, they rejoice inordinately in that, but it is not the rejoicing of gratitude and appreciation for the blessings of Allah.

﴿but when misfortune befalls them﴾ that is, anything that saddens them, which is

﴿because of the deeds which their own hands have wrought﴾ namely acts of disobedience and sin

﴿they fall into despair﴾ and think that poverty, sickness and so on will never end. This is reflective of ignorance on their part and a lack of knowledge.

﴿Do they not see that Allah grants abundant provision to whomever He wills, or gives it in scant measure?﴾ Despairing after knowing that both good and bad come from Allah and provision, whether abundant or otherwise, comes by His decree, is inappropriate. So the wise person does not look only at the causes; rather he looks at the One Who created the causes. Hence Allah says: ﴿Verily in that there are signs for people who believe﴾, for they see Allah's

purpose in giving abundantly or withholding for whomever He will, and in that they see the wisdom, mercy and generosity of Allah and how He wants people to turn to Him and ask Him for all kinds of provision.

﴿ فَـَٔاتِ ذَا ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُۥ وَٱلْمِسْكِينَ وَٱبْنَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَمَآ ءَاتَيْتُم مِّن رِّبًا لِّيَرْبُوَا۟ فِىٓ أَمْوَٰلِ ٱلنَّاسِ فَلَا يَرْبُوا۟ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَمَآ ءَاتَيْتُم مِّن زَكَوٰةٍ تُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ ٱللَّهِ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُضْعِفُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٣٨-٣٩)

30:38. Give kinsfolk their due, and those in need, and wayfarers. That is best for those who seek the pleasure of their Lord. It is they who will be successful.

30:39. And that which you give of your surplus wealth [as gifts to others], in order that it may increase [your wealth, by expecting to get better gifts in return] from other people's wealth, will bring no increase [in reward] with Allah. But that which you give as charity, seeking the pleasure of Allah [will increase in reward]. It is those [who seek Allah's pleasure in this manner] who will have multiple reward.

That is, give relatives their due – according to how closely they are related, and according to their need – as enjoined or encouraged by the Lawgiver, such as spending on obligatory maintenance, giving charity, giving gifts, showing kindness, greeting with *salâm*, honouring, overlooking mistakes and overlooking offensive words and deeds. It also includes giving to the one who is in need, who is subdued by his poverty and want, that which will meet his needs for food, water and clothing.

﴿and wayfarers﴾ – the wayfarer is the stranger who is cut off in a foreign land and is most likely to be in a desperate situation because he has no wealth with him and cannot earn anything, unlike the one who is in his own land who, even if he has no wealth, will usually be able to practice his profession, trade or craft and earn enough to meet his needs. Hence Allah has allocated a share of zakâh to those who are in need and to wayfarers.

﴿That﴾ namely giving kinsfolk, the needy and wayfarers their due ﴿is best for those who seek﴾ thereby ﴿the pleasure of their Lord﴾ that is, it will bring about a great deal of good and much reward, because it is one of the best of righteous deeds and an act of charity that benefits others when it is done in the right time and place, and accompanied by sincerity.

If it is not done to seek the pleasure of Allah, then it is not good for the giver, even though it is good and beneficial for the recipient. As Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿There is no good in much of their private conversations, except for one who enjoins charity and good deeds, or seeks to bring about reconciliation between people...﴾ *(an-Nisâ' 4: 114)*

What this means is that the particular deeds mentioned here are good because they bring some benefit to others, but whoever does that seeking the pleasure of Allah, We will bestow upon them a great reward.

﴿It is they﴾ namely those who do these deeds and others for the sake of Allah ﴿who will be successful﴾, for they will attain the reward of Allah and be saved from His punishment.

Having mentioned the deeds – namely types of spending – that are done in pursuit of His pleasure, Allah now mentions those deeds that are done for the sake of worldly gain:

﴿And that which you give of your surplus wealth [as gifts to others], in order that it may increase [your wealth, by expecting to get

better gifts in return] from other people's wealth﴾ that is, whatever you give of your wealth that is surplus to your needs, with the aim of increasing your wealth thereby, in the sense that you give it to those who you hope will recompense you by giving you more, such actions do not lead to reward with Allah, because they do not fulfil the necessary condition, which is sincerity. Such deeds, that are done with the intention of increasing status and showing off to people, bring no reward with Allah.

﴿But that which you give as charity [zakâh]﴾ that is, charity that purifies you from bad manners and attitudes, and purifies your wealth of stinginess, and helps to meet the needs of the recipient ﴿seeking﴾ thereby ﴿the pleasure of Allah [will increase in reward]. It is those [who seek Allah's pleasure in this manner] who will have multiple reward﴾ that is, the reward will be multiplied for them, for what they spend brings reward with Allah and He will multiply the reward for them until it becomes great indeed.

﴿But that which you give as charity [zakâh]﴾ – if charity is given when the giver has dependents who are in desperate need, or he has a debt that he has not yet paid off, but he gives precedence instead to giving charity, that charity is not zakâh (in the sense of charity that purifies the individual and his wealth, as the word zakâh comes from a root meaning purification) for which he may be rewarded, and charity in such cases is invalid according to Islamic teachings and does not fulfil the purpose of self-purification as mentioned elsewhere in the verse in which Allah says, praising such charitable giving:

﴿Who gives his wealth seeking generous reward [with his Lord].﴾ *(al-Layl 92: 18)*

Merely giving money is not something good in and of itself, unless it is given in that manner, which is giving it for the purpose of self-purification.

﴿ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ۖ هَلْ مِن شُرَكَآئِكُم مَّن يَفْعَلُ مِن ذَٰلِكُم مِّن شَىْءٍ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٤٠)

30:40. It is Allah Who created you, then He gave you provision, then He will cause you to die, then He will bring you back to life. Is there any among your [so-called] partners who can do any one of these things? Glorified and exalted be Allah far above the partners they ascribe to Him!

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He alone created you and provides for you; He causes you to die and gives you life, and none of the so-called partners upon whom the polytheists call have any share with Allah in any of these matters. So how can they associate with the One Who alone does all of these things, others who have no control over them at all? May He be glorified and sanctified, and exalted far above their so-called partners. That does not harm Him; rather the bad consequences thereof will come to them.

﴿ ظَهَرَ ٱلْفَسَادُ فِى ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِى ٱلنَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُم بَعْضَ ٱلَّذِى عَمِلُوا۟ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٤١)

30:41. Corruption and disorder have appeared on land and sea[42] because of what people's hands have earned. Thus Allah causes them to

[42] This refers to the widespread occurrence of troubles such as drought, fires and floods, poor yield of crops, decline of fish stocks, market stagnation and difficulty in earning a living. That is because of people's sins, including neglect and abuse of the natural environment.

taste the consequences of some of what they have done, so that they may turn in repentance.

That is, corruption has appeared on land and sea, meaning that their livelihood has declined, with blight damaging the crops, sicknesses and epidemics sweeping over the people, and so on. That is because of what their hands have wrought of corrupt deeds that spread corruption far and wide.

The things mentioned have occurred so that Allah might cause them ﴿to taste the consequences of some of what they have done﴾ that is, so that they might realise that He is the One Who requites people for their deeds, so He gives a foretaste of the requital for their deeds in this world,
﴿so that they may turn in repentance﴾ from their evil deeds, which have resulted in so much corruption and harm, and they may set their affairs straight.

Glory be to the One Who brings about blessings through His trials and tests, and Who bestows grace through His punishment. Otherwise, if He caused them to taste the consequences of all that they have earned, He would not leave any living creature on the face of the earth.

﴿قُلْ سِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّشْرِكِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾﴾ (سورة الروم: ٤٢)

30:42. Say: Travel through the land and see what was the fate of those who came before you; most of them ascribed partners to Him.

The command to travel through the land includes both physical travel and mental or intellectual travel in the sense of pondering the fate of earlier nations.

﴿most of them ascribed partners to Him﴾, and you will find that their fate was the worst of all, namely a punishment that eradicated them all, and criticism and curses from the people who followed them, as well as ongoing disgrace. So beware of doing what they did, lest you meet the same fate, for the justice and wisdom of Allah are applicable in all times and places.

﴿ فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ ٱلْقَيِّمِ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَّا مَرَدَّ لَهُۥ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصَّدَّعُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ مَن كَفَرَ فَعَلَيْهِ كُفْرُهُۥ ۖ وَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَلِأَنفُسِهِمْ يَمْهَدُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ لِيَجْزِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ مِن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٤٣-٤٥)

30:43. Adhere exclusively and sincerely to the right religion, before there comes from Allah a day which no one can avert. On that day, they [humankind] will be separated.[43]

30:44. Whoever disbelieves will suffer the consequences of his disbelief, and whoever does righteous deeds, then it is for themselves that they are preparing [a place in paradise],

30:45. so that He may reward those who believe and do righteous deeds, by His grace. Verily He does not love the disbelievers.

That is, focus with your heart, turn with your face and strive with your efforts in order to establish the true religion; comply with its commands and prohibitions with utmost seriousness, carry out its duties both inwardly and outwardly, and hasten to make the most of your time, your life and your youth,

﴿before there comes from Allah a day which no one can avert﴾ namely the Day of Resurrection, for when it comes it cannot be averted and

[43] They will be separated into two groups: one will be admitted to paradise and the other to hell.

people will not be given any extra time to start doing good deeds. Rather the time for deeds will be over, and there will be nothing left but requital of deeds.

﴿On that day, they [humankind] will be separated﴾ that is, they will go in different directions on that day and will be separated into different groups, to be shown their deeds.

﴿Whoever﴾ among them ﴿disbelieves will suffer the consequences of his disbelief﴾ and will be punished himself, for no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another.
﴿and whoever does righteous deeds﴾, which includes duties towards Allah and towards other people, both obligatory and recommended deeds
﴿then it is for themselves﴾and no one else ﴿that they are preparing [a place in paradise]﴾. They are preparing their dwelling place in the hereafter and are preparing to attain high status and lofty abodes. Nevertheless, the reward will not be limited to the size of their deeds; rather Allah will bestow upon them reward by His unlimited grace and generosity, such that could not be attained by their deeds alone. That is because He loves them, and when Allah loves a person, He bestows upon him precious gifts in abundance and grants him many blessings, both visible and hidden.

This is in contrast to the disbelievers; because Allah despises them and is angry with them, He will punish them, but He will not give them any more than they deserve, in contrast with the reward of the believers. Hence He says: ﴿Verily He does not love the disbelievers﴾.

﴿ وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَن يُرْسِلَ ٱلرِّيَاحَ مُبَشِّرَٰتٍ وَلِيُذِيقَكُم مِّن رَّحْمَتِهِۦ وَلِتَجْرِىَ ٱلْفُلْكُ بِأَمْرِهِۦ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا۟ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٤٦)

30:46. Among His signs is this: He sends forth the winds as harbingers, so that He may let you taste of His mercy, the ships may sail by His command, and you may seek His bounty, in order that you may give thanks.

That is, one of the signs that point to His mercy and the fact that He will resurrect the dead and that He is the only God Who is deserving of worship, the Sovereign Who is worthy of all praise, is that ﴿He sends forth the winds﴾ ahead of the rain,
﴿as harbingers﴾ as the wind stirs up the clouds then gathers them together, so people are cheered before the coming of the rain.

﴿so that He may let you taste of His mercy﴾ for by His mercy He sends the rain to you, so as to revive the land and people, and give them a foretaste of His mercy so that they may know that it is His mercy that may save people and grant them provision, thus you may be motivated to do a lot of righteous deeds, by means of which the treasure of His mercy may be opened up for you.

﴿the ships may sail﴾ on the sea ﴿by His command﴾ and decree, ﴿and you may seek His bounty﴾ by going about seeking your livelihood and taking care of your interests
﴿in order that you may give thanks﴾ to the One Who has caused the means to be available to you and has made things easy for you. This is the purpose of blessings, so that you may respond by giving thanks to Allah, so that Allah (ﷻ) may give you more and continue to bestow His blessings upon you.

As for responding to blessings with ingratitude and disobedience, this is the attitude of those who repay Allah's blessings with ingratitude *(cf. 14: 28)*. His blessing is a test, and ingratitude increases the likelihood of the blessing being taken away and bestowed elsewhere.

﴿ وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ رُسُلًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِمْ فَجَاءُوهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَانتَقَمْنَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا ۖ وَكَانَ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نَصْرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٤٧)

30:47. Indeed We sent Messengers before you [O Muhammad] to their own peoples and they came to them with clear signs. Then We exacted retribution upon the evildoers, for it was incumbent upon Us to help the believers.

﴿Indeed We sent Messengers before you [O Muhammad]﴾ to the previous nations, Messengers who were sent
﴿to their own peoples﴾ when they denied the oneness of Allah and rejected the truth. So their Messengers came to them, calling them to affirm the oneness of Allah and devote their worship to Him alone, and to accept the truth and reject that which they were following of disbelief and misguidance. They brought clear proof and evidence to that effect, but the people did not believe and they did not give up their misguidance and arrogance.

﴿Then We exacted retribution upon the evildoers﴾ and We granted victory to the believers, the followers of the Messengers
﴿for it was incumbent upon Us to help the believers﴾ that is, that was necessary, and We made it one of their due rights which We promised to them, so it inevitably came to pass.

If you, O disbelievers in Muhammad (ﷺ), continue to disbelieve, the punishment will befall you and We will grant victory (to the believers) over you.

﴿ اللَّهُ الَّذِي يُرْسِلُ الرِّيَاحَ فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابًا فَيَبْسُطُهُ فِي السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ وَيَجْعَلُهُ كِسَفًا فَتَرَى الْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خِلَالِهِ ۖ فَإِذَا أَصَابَ بِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ

﴿٤٨﴾ وَإِن كَانُوا۟ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن قَبْلِهِۦ لَمُبْلِسِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَٱنظُرْ إِلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِ رَحْمَتِ ٱللَّهِ كَيْفَ يُحْىِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَآ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ ۖ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٥٠﴾ (سورة الروم: ٤٨-٥٠)

30:48. It is Allah Who sends forth the winds to stir up clouds, then He spreads them in the sky as He wills, or He causes them to break up. Then you see the rain coming forth from their midst, and when He makes it fall upon whomever He wills of His slaves, they rejoice,

30:49. even though before it was sent down to them, before that [sending of the wind and stirring up of the cloud], they had lost all hope.

30:50. Look then at the effects of Allah's mercy, how He gives life to the earth after its death; verily it is He [the Giver of life to the dead earth] Who will give life to the dead, for He has power over all things.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of His perfect might and complete blessings, for He ﴿sends forth the winds to stir up clouds﴾ from the earth ﴿then He spreads them in the sky as He wills﴾ that is, in whatever manner He wants,

﴿or He causes them to break up﴾ that is, He causes the vast cloud to break up into thick clouds, piled on top of one another.

﴿Then you see the rain coming forth from their midst﴾ in small scattered drops, not all coming in one go, because that would lead to destruction of crops.

﴿and when He makes it﴾ namely that rain ﴿fall upon whomever He wills of His slaves, they rejoice﴾ giving one another the glad tidings of its arrival, because of their great need for it. Hence Allah says:

﴿Even though before it was sent down to them, before that [sending of the wind and stirring up of the cloud], they had lost all hope﴾ that

is, they had despaired utterly, because of the delay in the arrival of the rain. In other words, when rain comes in such circumstances, it has a great impact upon them and they rejoice more.

﴿Look then at the effects of Allah's mercy, how He gives life to the earth after its death﴾ and it stirs and swells, and brings forth beautiful plants of every kind *(cf. 22: 5)*.

﴿verily it is He [the Giver of life to the dead earth] Who will give life to the dead, for He has power over all things﴾ for nothing is beyond His power, even though it is beyond the power of people and is beyond their comprehension and understanding.

﴿وَلَئِنْ أَرْسَلْنَا رِيحًا فَرَأَوْهُ مُصْفَرًّا لَّظَلُّوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِۦ يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ فَإِنَّكَ لَا تُسْمِعُ
ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَلَا تُسْمِعُ ٱلصُّمَّ ٱلدُّعَآءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَمَآ أَنتَ بِهَٰدِ ٱلْعُمْىِ عَن ضَلَٰلَتِهِمْ
إِن تُسْمِعُ إِلَّا مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا فَهُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾﴾ (سورة الروم: ٥١-٥٣)

30:51. But if We send a [damaging] wind and they see [their crops] turn yellow, they become ungrateful thereafter.

30:52. Verily you cannot make the dead hear you, nor can you make the deaf hear your call, [especially] if they turn their backs and walk away.

30:53. Nor can you guide the blind out of their error. You cannot make anyone hear you except those who believe in Our revelations, for they are ready to submit [to the truth].

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us how people are: despite these blessings that are bestowed upon them, with the revival of the earth after its death, and Allah's bestowing mercy upon them, if We sent upon these plants that grew after the rain, and upon their crops, a damaging wind that destroyed all of them or some of them,

﴿and they see [their crops] turn yellow﴾, having been spoiled and ruined,

﴿they become ungrateful thereafter﴾, and they forget the past blessings and quickly become ungrateful.

No exhortation or rebuke could benefit them, for ﴿Verily you cannot make the dead hear you, nor can you make the deaf hear your call, [especially] if they turn their backs and walk away﴾. All impediments are present in their case that prevent them from listening in a way that could benefit them, just as all these impediments mentioned here prevent them from hearing the physical sound.

﴿Nor can you guide the blind out of their error﴾ because it is not possible for them to see, so they have no aptitude for seeing things. ﴿You cannot make anyone hear you except those who believe in Our revelations, for they are ready to submit [to the truth]﴾. These are the ones who will benefit from hearing right guidance and are the ones who will truly believe in Our revelations, comply with Our commands and submit to Us, because they have a strong motive to accept advice and exhortation and are ready to believe in every revelation from Allah and to do whatever they are able to do of complying with the commands and prohibitions of Allah.

﴿ ۞ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُم مِّن ضَعْفٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ضَعْفٍ قُوَّةً ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ ضَعْفًا وَشَيْبَةً ۚ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ٱلْقَدِيرُ ﴿٥٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الروم: ٥٤)

30:54. It is Allah Who created you in a state of weakness, then after weakness He gave you strength, then after strength, weakness and grey hair. He creates as He wills, and He is the All-Knowing, Omnipotent.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the vastness of His knowledge, the greatness of His might and the perfect nature of His wisdom, and the beginning of the creation of human beings in a state of weakness. This refers to the first stage of their creation, from a sperm drop to a clinging clot, to a chewed lump of flesh, until they become living beings in the wombs, then the human being is born as an infant, very weak, with no strength or ability. Then Allah increases his strength little by little, until he reaches the pinnacle of his physical strength and all his faculties, hidden and apparent, reached their peak. Then he moves on from this stage, and returns to weakness, grey hair and old age.

﴿He creates as He wills﴾ according to His wisdom. By His wisdom, he shows man his weakness and that his strength is preceded by weakness and followed by weakness, and weakness is inherent in him. Were it not for the help of Allah, he could not have reached any level of power or ability, and if his strength continued to increase, he would transgress, overstep the limits and become arrogant.

People should understand the perfect might of Allah which is constant and ongoing, by means of which He creates things and controls them, and He never grows weary or weak, and never falls short in any way.

﴿وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُقْسِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ مَا لَبِثُوا غَيْرَ سَاعَةٍ كَذَٰلِكَ كَانُوا يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَالْإِيمَانَ لَقَدْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْبَعْثِ فَهَٰذَا يَوْمُ الْبَعْثِ وَلَٰكِنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾ فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مَعْذِرَتُهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾﴾ (سورة الروم: ٥٥-٥٧)

30:55. On the day when the Hour begins, the evildoers will swear that they had not remained [in this world] for longer than an hour. Thus they were ever diverted [from the truth]!

30:56. Those who were given knowledge and faith will say: You remained, according to the decree of Allah, until the Day of Resurrection, and this is the Day of Resurrection, but you did not know.

30:57. On that day, no excuse will benefit those who did wrong, nor will they be allowed to make amends.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the Day of Resurrection and how quickly it will come. When the Hour begins, ﴿the evildoers will swear﴾ by Allah ﴿that they had not remained [in this world] for longer than an hour﴾. This is the excuse they will give in the hope that it will benefit them, because they feel that the duration of this world was very short.

Because their words are false and have no real meaning to them, Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿Thus they were ever diverted [from the truth]﴾ that is, in this world they were constantly diverted from the truth and always told lies. In this world they rejected the truth that was brought by the Messengers and in the hereafter they will deny something tangible, which is their lengthy stay in this world. This reflects their bad attitude, for each person will be resurrected as he died.

﴿Those who were given knowledge and faith﴾ that is, those whom Allah blessed with these favours, which became part of their nature, namely knowledge of the truth and faith that leads to giving precedence to the truth. As they had knowledge of the truth and gave precedence to it, what must result from that is that their words must match reality.

Hence they will say what is correct: ﴿You remained, according to the decree of Allah﴾ that is, according to the decree that Allah ordained for you, subject to His rulings:
﴿until the Day of Resurrection﴾ that is, you lived long enough for anyone to pay heed to the reminder, reflect upon it and learn lessons

from it, until the Resurrection came and you found yourself in this situation.

﴿and this is the Day of Resurrection, but you did not know﴾, therefore you deviated in the previous world and denied the true length of your stay, and you denied that you lived long enough to have been able to repent. So you remained in a state of ignorance, disbelief and loss.

﴿On that day, no excuse will benefit those who did wrong﴾ for if they tell lies and claim that no proof was established against them, or that they did not have the chance to believe, their lies will be exposed by the testimony of the people of knowledge and faith, and by the testimony of their own skin, hands and feet. If they seek to be excused and be given another chance, saying that they will never go back to what they were told not to do, they will not be given that opportunity, because the time for excuses has ended and their excuses will not be accepted,

﴿nor will they be allowed to make amends﴾.

﴿وَلَقَدْ ضَرَبْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِي هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ ۚ وَلَئِن جِئْتَهُم بِآيَةٍ لَّيَقُولَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا مُبْطِلُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ يَطْبَعُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾ فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۖ وَلَا يَسْتَخِفَّنَّكَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾﴾ (سورة الروم: ٥٨-٦٠)

30:58. Verily We have presented to humankind, in this Qur'an, every kind of example. But if you [O Muhammad] were to come to them with a sign, those who disbelieve would surely say [to the believers]: You follow nothing but falsehood.

30:59. Thus does Allah seal the hearts of those who have no knowledge.

30:60. So be patient, for verily the promise of Allah is true; do not let those who lack certainty of faith discourage you.

﴿Verily We have presented﴾ because We care, We are merciful and kind, and We educate in the best way
﴿to humankind, in this Qur'an, every kind of example﴾ in order to clarify realities and so that things will be known and proof will be established. This is general in meaning and applies to all the examples that Allah gives, so that ideas may be clarified by means of tangible examples, and by telling that which will come to pass and explaining its true nature as if it has already happened. An example of that is seen here, where Allah (ﷻ) tells us what will happen on the Day of Resurrection, what the situation of the sinners will be on that day, how regretful they will be, and how no excuse will be accepted from them, nor will they be able to make amends.

But the wrongdoers and disbelievers insist on opposing the clear truth, hence Allah says:
﴿But if you [O Muhammad] were to come to them with a sign﴾ that is, with any sign that points to the truth of the message you have brought,
﴿those who disbelieve would surely say [to the believers]: You follow nothing but falsehood﴾ that is, they will say that the truth is false.

This stems from their disbelief and audacity, and is because Allah has placed a seal on their hearts, and because of their extreme ignorance. Hence Allah says:
﴿Thus does Allah seal the hearts of those who have no knowledge﴾, so nothing good enters their hearts and they do not understand things as they really are; rather they see truth as falsehood and falsehood as truth.

﴿So be patient﴾ in adhering to what is enjoined upon you and in calling them to Allah, and even if you see them turning away, that should not make you give up.
﴿for verily the promise of Allah is true﴾ that is, there is no doubt concerning it. This is something that should help one to be patient, for if he knows that his effort will not be wasted and he will in fact

find it rewarded in full, what he encounters of hardship will become insignificant, and it will become easier for him to bear every difficulty. ﴿do not let those who lack certainty of faith discourage you﴾ that is, their faith is weak and their certainty is lacking, therefore they are lacking in reason and patience. So beware lest they discourage you, for if you are not cautious and do not take precautions, they will discourage you and cause you to not be steadfast in adhering to the commands and prohibitions, and your own inclinations may help them in that, because one may be inclined to be like them and be in agreement with them. This indicates that if a believer has certain faith and a mature outlook, it will be easy for him to remain steadfast, but whoever is lacking in certainty will have an immature outlook.

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

31.
Soorat Luqmân

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

﴿الٓمٓ ۝١ تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلْحَكِيمِ ۝٢ هُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّلْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝٣ ٱلَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَهُم بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ۝٤ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ۝٥﴾ (سورة لقمان: ١-٥)

31:1. Alif. Lâm. Meem.[44]

31:2. These are the verses of the Book of wisdom,

31:3. guidance and mercy for those who do good,

31:4. those who establish prayer and give zakâh, and who believe with certainty in the hereafter.

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

31:5. It is they who are following guidance from their Lord and it is they who will prosper.

Here Allah (ﷻ) refers to respect and veneration for ﴿the verses of the Book of wisdom﴾, for its verses are precise and come from One Who is Most Wise, All-Aware. One aspect of its being wise and precise is that the wording of its verses is most sublime, eloquent, clear, precise in meaning and beautiful. Another aspect of its being wise and precise is that it is protected from changes, alterations, additions, omission and distortion. Moreover, everything in it of stories of the past and future, and matters of the unseen, are all in accordance with reality, and reality is in accordance with it. None of the divinely revealed Books differs with it and no Prophet differed concerning it. There has never been and never will be any knowledge based on the science of sound reasoning that will contradict any of these verses.

Another aspect of it being wise and precise is that it never enjoins anything but that thing serves a clear interest, and it never forbids anything but it is bad and harmful. It often connects a command to the wisdom behind it and the benefits it brings, and it connects a prohibition to the reason behind it, mentioning the harm it causes.

It combines encouragement, warning and clear exhortation, by means of which people with good inclinations will be guided and will follow that exhortation and apply it, which will strengthen their resolve to implement it.

You will find that the meanings of its verses are repeated, such as the stories and rulings that it contains. All of it is in harmony and in agreement, and there are no contradictions or discrepancies in it. The more the one with understanding reflects upon it and ponders it, the more amazed he will be at the level of harmony and agreement, and he will become certain, beyond any doubt, that it is a revelation from One Who is Most Wise, Most Praiseworthy.

But, although it is wise and precise, and it calls to every noble characteristic and forbids every ignoble characteristic, most people are deprived of being guided by it, and they turn away from believing in it and acting upon it, except those whom Allah (ﷻ) guides and protects from misguidance. They are the ones who do good by worshipping their Lord and showing kindness to others.

Indeed it is ﴿guidance﴾ for them; it guides them to the straight path and warns them against the paths that lead to hell.
﴿and mercy﴾ for them, by means of which they may attain happiness in this world and the hereafter, much good, great reward and joy; and misguidance and misery may be warded off from them.

Then Allah describes those who do good as being people of sound knowledge, which is certain faith that requires one to strive and fear the punishment of Allah, so they refrain from disobeying Him. And He describes them as people who take action, singling out two good deeds for mention: prayer which involves devotion, conversing with Allah (ﷻ) and other actions of the heart, words and physical movements, and which helps them to do all kinds of good deeds; and zakâh which purifies the giver of bad characteristics, benefits his Muslim brethren and meets his needs, and by means of it a person demonstrates clearly that he gives precedence to love of Allah over love of wealth, and that he gives away what he loves of wealth for the sake of that which is dearer to him, which is attaining the pleasure of Allah.

﴿It is they﴾ namely those who do good, combining proper knowledge with action
﴿who are following guidance﴾ the word translated here as ﴿guidance﴾ appears in the indefinite form, which indicates that it is great. This guidance comes to them ﴿from their Lord﴾ Who always cares for them, bestows different kinds of blessings on them and wards off harm from them.

This guidance that was sent to them is part of Allah's special care for His close friends, and it is the highest level of care.

﴿and it is they who will prosper﴾ – for it is they who will attain the pleasure of their Lord and His reward in this world and the hereafter, and they will be safe from His wrath and punishment, because they follow the path of success, to which there is no other path.

Having mentioned those who are guided by the Qur'an and are focused on it, Allah (ﷻ) now mentions those who turn away from it and pay no attention to it, stating that they will be punished for that, because by focusing on all kinds of frivolous talk, they have shunned the most sublime of words and the best of speech, replacing it with the lowest and ugliest of speech. Therefore Allah says:

﴿ وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَشۡتَرِي لَهۡوَ ٱلۡحَدِيثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِغَيۡرِ عِلۡمٖ وَيَتَّخِذَهَا هُزُوًاۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٞ مُّهِينٞ ٦ وَإِذَا تُتۡلَىٰ عَلَيۡهِ ءَايَٰتُنَا وَلَّىٰ مُسۡتَكۡبِرٗا كَأَن لَّمۡ يَسۡمَعۡهَا كَأَنَّ فِيٓ أُذُنَيۡهِ وَقۡرٗاۖ فَبَشِّرۡهُ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ٧ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَهُمۡ جَنَّٰتُ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ٨ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَاۖ وَعۡدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقّٗاۚ وَهُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلۡحَكِيمُ ٩ ﴾ (سورة لقمان: ٦-٩)

31:6. But among people are some who resort to frivolous talk[45] in order to mislead others from the path of Allah without knowledge and to make a mockery of it. For such there will be a humiliating punishment.

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[45] This verse was revealed concerning an-Naḍr ibn al-Ḥârith, who acquired books of tales from the Persians. He would narrate these stories to Quraysh and say: If Muhammad is telling you the stories of 'Âd and Thamood, I am telling you the stories of Rustam, Esfandiyar and Chosroes. Frivolous talk refers to spending one's time listening to baseless tales and stories, jokes and idle talk; it may also include singing and music, according to many commentators.

31:7. When Our verses are recited to such a person, he turns away arrogantly, as if he did not hear them, as if there were deafness in his ears. So give him the tidings of a painful punishment.

31:8. But for those who believe and do righteous deeds, there will be gardens of delight,

31:9. to abide therein forever. [This is] a true promise from Allah, and He is the Almighty, Most Wise.

﴿But among people are some﴾ who are deprived and left to their own devices. They ﴿resort to﴾ that is, they choose and prefer ﴿frivolous talk﴾ that is, talk that distracts people's minds and prevents them from attaining sublime goals. This includes all kinds of prohibited speech and all kinds of idle talk, falsehood and nonsense that encourages disbelief, evildoing and sin; as well as the talk of those who oppose the truth and argue on the basis of falsehood in order to undermine the truth; backbiting, malicious gossip, lying, reviling, insulting, singing and musical instruments of the Shaytân, and foolish talk in which there is no benefit in either religious or worldly terms.

This type of people choose idle talk over guidance ﴿in order to mislead others from the path of Allah without knowledge﴾ that is, after going astray by their actions, they lead others astray, because misguidance of others stems from being misguided themselves.

This frivolous talk misguides others by distracting them from beneficial talk, beneficial deeds, clear truth and the straight path.

Such a person cannot achieve that unless he criticises guidance and truth, makes a mockery of the verses of Allah, and ridicules them and the one who brought them. If he combines praise and promotion of falsehood with casting aspersions upon the truth and ridiculing it and its followers, he will lead astray those who have no knowledge and are deceived by what he tells them of arguments and statements in which that misguided person can see no flaws and does not know what he is really talking about.

﴿For such there will be a humiliating punishment﴾ for going astray, leading others astray, ridiculing the revelations of Allah and rejecting the clear truth.

﴿When Our verses are recited to such a person﴾ so that he may believe in them and submit to them
﴿he turns away arrogantly﴾ that is, he turns away, rejecting them, because he is too arrogant to believe in them; they do not enter his heart or have any impact on it. Rather he turns away ﴿as if he did not hear them﴾ and indeed ﴿as if there were deafness in his ears﴾, such that no sound could reach his ears. There is no way that such a person can be guided.
﴿So give him the tidings﴾ that is, tidings that will fill his heart with grief and distress, and will reflect on his appearance, making him look gloomy and dusty
﴿of a painful punishment﴾, which will cause both psychological and physical pain, and no one can estimate how painful or how great it will be. These are the tidings to be given to the evildoers, and what bad tidings they are.

As for the tidings that will be given to those who do good, Allah says:
﴿But for those who believe and do righteous deeds﴾ thus combining inward worship in the sense of faith and outward worship in the sense of complying with Islamic teachings in their conduct, and doing righteous deeds,
﴿there will be gardens of delight﴾. This is glad tidings to them for their righteous deeds.

﴿to abide therein forever﴾ in gardens that will be filled with delights psychological, spiritual and physical.
﴿[This is] a true promise from Allah﴾ that cannot be broken, changed or altered
﴿and He is the Almighty, Most Wise﴾ – He is perfect in might and perfect in wisdom. By His might and wisdom He guides some and

forsakes others, according to what His knowledge and wisdom dictate.

﴿ خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ۖ وَأَلْقَىٰ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ رَوَٰسِىَ أَن تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ دَآبَّةٍ ۚ وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَنۢبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿١٠﴾ هَٰذَا خَلْقُ ٱللَّهِ فَأَرُونِى مَاذَا خَلَقَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن دُونِهِۦ ۚ بَلِ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١١﴾ ﴾ (سورة لقمان: ١٠-١١)

31:10. He created the heavens without any pillars that you can see; He set on the earth mountains standing firm, lest it shake with you; and He scattered throughout [the earth] creatures of all kinds. We send down rain from the sky and cause to grow therein all kinds of beneficial plants.

31:11. This is Allah's creation; so show Me what others [whom you worship] besides Him have created. Nay, the wrongdoers are clearly misguided.

Here Allah (ﷻ) highlights to His slaves some of the signs of His might and some of the wonders of His precise creation and blessings, which are signs of His mercy.

﴿He created the heavens﴾ that is, the seven heavens, in all their greatness, vastness, profundity and great height

﴿without any pillars that you can see﴾ that is, they have no pillars, for if they did have pillars they would be visible. Rather they only remain firm and stable by the might of Allah (ﷻ).

﴿He set on the earth mountains standing firm﴾ that is, great mountains which He has set in various regions and parts of the earth,

﴿lest it shake with you﴾. Were it not for the mountains standing firm, the earth would shake and it would not be stable for its inhabitants to settle on it.

﴿and He scattered throughout [the earth] creatures of all kinds﴾ that is, He scattered throughout the vast earth all kinds of creatures that are made to be of service to the sons of Adam, to serve their interests and benefit them. As He scattered them throughout the earth, He knew that there should be provision to sustain these creatures so He sends down from the sky blessed water,
﴿and cause[s] to grow therein all kinds of beneficial plants﴾ that are beautiful to behold and are beneficial and blessed. So the creatures that are scattered throughout the earth graze on them and animals turn to them for food and shelter.

﴿This﴾ namely the creation of the upper and lower realms, inanimate objects and animate beings, and the provision of sustenance to them
﴿is Allah's creation﴾ that is, created by Him alone, with no partner; everyone acknowledges that, even you, O polytheists.
﴿so show Me what others [whom you worship] besides Him have created﴾ that is, those whom you describe as partners of Allah, and you call upon them and worship them, which would imply that they should have a creation like His and grant provision like His. If they have any of that, then show it to me in order to prove your claim that they deserve to be worshipped.

But it is well known that they are not able to show him anything that these so-called "partners" have created, because they acknowledge that all the things mentioned here were created by Allah alone, and there is nothing else known other than what is mentioned here. Thus it is established that they are unable to prove anything that their gods created, for which they would deserve to be worshipped.

In fact they worship them without knowledge or understanding; rather it is based on ignorance and misguidance. Hence Allah says:
﴿Nay, the wrongdoers are clearly misguided﴾ that is, they are obviously misguided, because they worshipped that which has no power to bring benefit or cause harm, or to cause death, give life or

resurrect, and they failed to show sincere devotion to the Creator, the Provider, the Sovereign of all things.

﴿وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا لُقْمَٰنَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ أَنِ ٱشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ ۚ وَمَن يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَنِىٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿١٢﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَٰنُ لِٱبْنِهِۦ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُۥ يَٰبُنَىَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٣﴾ وَوَصَّيْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُۥ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصَٰلُهُۥ فِى عَامَيْنِ أَنِ ٱشْكُرْ لِى وَلِوَٰلِدَيْكَ إِلَىَّ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٤﴾ وَإِن جَٰهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن تُشْرِكَ بِى مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا ۖ وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا ۖ وَٱتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَىَّ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَىَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ يَٰبُنَىَّ إِنَّهَآ إِن تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُن فِى صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ أَوْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا ٱللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٦﴾ يَٰبُنَىَّ أَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأْمُرْ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَٱنْهَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَٱصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَصَابَكَ ۖ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ ٱلْأُمُورِ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿١٨﴾ وَٱقْصِدْ فِى مَشْيِكَ وَٱغْضُضْ مِن صَوْتِكَ ۚ إِنَّ أَنكَرَ ٱلْأَصْوَٰتِ لَصَوْتُ ٱلْحَمِيرِ ﴿١٩﴾﴾ (سورة لقمان: ١٢-١٩)

31:12. Indeed We granted wisdom to Luqmân, [saying]: Be grateful to Allah. Whoever is grateful, his gratitude is to his own benefit, and whoever is ungrateful, then surely Allah is Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise.

31:13. And [remember] when Luqmân said to his son as he was advising him: O my son, do not associate anything in worship with Allah, for associating others in worship with Him is indeed grievous wrongdoing.

31:14. We have enjoined upon man kindness to his parents. In travail upon travail his mother bears him, and his weaning takes place

within two years. Be grateful to Me and to your parents. Unto Me is the return [of all].

31:15. But if they endeavour to make you ascribe partners to Me of which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them. But keep company with them in this world kindly, and follow the way of those who turn to Me. Then to Me you will all return, and I will inform you about what you used to do.

31:16. [Luqmân said:] O my son, even if [a deed] is the weight of a grain of mustard seed, and it is hidden in a rock, or in the heavens, or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth. Verily Allah is the Knower of subtleties, the All-Aware.

31:17. O my son, establish prayer, enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong; be patient and steadfast in the face of whatever befalls you; that is something that must be adhered to, [as it is enjoined by Allah].

31:18. Do not turn your face away from people [in contempt], and do not walk on the earth with insolence. Verily Allah does not love anyone who is conceited and boastful.

31:19. Be moderate in your gait and lower your voice; verily the most hideous of sounds is the voice [braying] of the donkey.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the blessing of wisdom that He bestowed upon His virtuous slave Luqmân, which refers to attaining proper knowledge concerning the truth and understanding the wisdom behind different issues of knowledge. That is knowledge of rulings and learning the subtle reasons behind them and how precise and proper they are. A man may be knowledgeable without being wise. Wisdom is based on knowledge and also on actions. Hence wisdom is described as being beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds.

Having bestowed this great blessing upon him, Allah instructed him to give thanks for what He had given him, so that He might bless it for him and increase him in virtue. He told him that the benefit of

gratitude comes back to the grateful, but if a person is ungrateful and does not give thanks to Allah, the negative consequences of that will come back to him. Allah has no need of such a person, and He is praiseworthy in all that He decrees and ordains for the one who goes against His command. Among His essential attributes, He has no need of anyone and He is praiseworthy for all His perfect attributes and praiseworthy for all His beautiful actions. Each of these two attributes is an attribute of perfection, and adding one of them to the other is perfection upon perfection.

The commentators differed as to whether Luqmân was a Prophet or a righteous slave. Allah (ﷻ) only tells us that He gave him wisdom and told us something about his exhortation of his son which is indicative of his wisdom, namely the foundations and main pillars of wisdom.

﴿And [remember] when Luqmân said to his son as he was advising him﴾, or he said some words to him, exhorting him with commands and prohibitions, encouragement and warnings. He instructed him to show sincere devotion to Allah alone, and forbade him to ascribe partners to Him, explaining to him the reason for that by saying: ﴿for associating others in worship with Him is indeed grievous wrongdoing﴾. The reason why it is grievous is that there is nothing more horrendous or abhorrent than one who regards that which was created from dust as equal to the Sovereign of all things, and he regards the one who has no control over anything as equal to the One Who has control over all things, and he regards one who is lacking in all ways as equal to the perfect Lord Who is self-sufficient in all respects, and he regards the one who does not bestow even an atom's weight of blessings as equal to the One Who bestows every single blessing that is bestowed upon humankind in terms of their spiritual and worldly affairs, and Who wards off evil from them. Can there be any wrongdoing more grievous than this?

Is there any wrongdoing greater than that of one whom Allah created to worship Him and affirm His oneness, yet he decides to

degrade his noble soul and bring it down to the lowest of ranks by making it a worshipper of that which has no value, thus wronging himself greatly?

Having enjoined fulfilment of His rights by refraining from ascribing partners to Him, which means adhering to affirmation of His oneness, Allah (ﷻ) then enjoined fulfilment of the rights of parents:

﴿We have enjoined upon man kindness to his parents﴾ that is, We have commanded him and given him instructions to that effect, and We will question him as to how he did that and whether he complied or not. We said to him:

﴿Be grateful to Me﴾ by worshipping Me, fulfilling My rights and not using My blessings to disobey Me

﴿and to your parents﴾ by showing kindness to them, speaking gently to them, behaving nicely with them, being humble towards them, honouring them, respecting them, taking care of them, and avoiding mistreating them in any way, in word or deed.

We gave him this advice and We told him that ﴿Unto Me is the return [of all]﴾ that is, you – O humankind – will all return to the One Who instructed you and enjoined these duties upon you, and He will ask you: did you fulfil them, so that He might reward you immensely? Or did you neglect them, so that He might punish you severely?

Then He tells us the reason why parents are to be honoured, which has to do with the mother:

﴿In travail upon travail his mother bears him﴾ that is, in hardship upon hardship; she continues to go through hardship, from the time when he is a sperm drop, faced with cravings, sickness, weakness, heaviness and changing moods, which is followed by the severe pain of childbirth.

Then ﴿his weaning takes place within two years﴾ and throughout these two years he enjoys the care of his mother. Is it not appropriate that in the case of the one who bears all this hardship because of her

child, yet loves him dearly, the child is emphatically enjoined and instructed to show the highest level of kindness to that person?

﴿But if they﴾ namely your parents ﴿endeavour to make you ascribe partners to Me of which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them﴾ and do not think that this comes under the heading of kind treatment of them, because the rights of Allah take precedence over the rights of anyone else, and:

«There is no obedience to any created being if it involves disobedience towards the Creator.» (Recorded by at-Tabrayzi; al-Albâni graded it as sound)

Allah did not say "But if they endeavour to make you ascribe partners to Me of which you have no knowledge, then treat them badly or be defiant towards them." Rather He said ﴿then do not obey them﴾ that is, by ascribing partners to Allah. As for honouring them and treating them kindly, one should persist in that. Hence Allah says: ﴿But keep company with them in this world kindly﴾ that is, keep them company in a kind way. As for following them, when they are in a state of disbelief and disobedience, do not follow them.
﴿and follow the way of those who turn to Me﴾ namely those who believe in Allah, His angels, His Books and His Messengers, those who submit to their Lord and turn to Him.

Following their path means behaving like them in turning to Allah, meaning that all one's emotions and will are focused on Allah, which is then followed by physically taking action to do that which pleases Allah and brings one closer to him.

﴿Then to Me you will all return﴾ both those who obey Allah and those who disobey Him, those who turn to Him and those who do not ﴿and I will inform you about what you used to do﴾ for nothing is hidden from Allah of their deeds.

﴿[Luqmân said:] O my son, even if [a deed] is the weight of a grain of mustard seed﴾ which is the smallest and most insignificant of things

﴿and it is hidden in a rock﴾ that is, in the middle of it
﴿or in the heavens, or in the earth﴾ in any direction whatsoever,
﴿Allah will bring it forth﴾ because of His vast knowledge, perfect awareness and perfect might. Hence He says:
﴿Verily Allah is the Knower of subtleties, the All-Aware﴾ that is, He is subtle in His knowledge and awareness, to the extent that He is aware of all that is hidden and secret, and all that is hidden on land and in the sea.

The point of mentioning this is to urge people to remember that Allah is always watching and to do acts of obedience as much as possible; and to warn against doing evil deeds, small or great.

﴿O my son, establish prayer﴾ prayer is encouraged and singled out for mention because it is the greatest of physical acts of worship ﴿enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong﴾ – this requires one to have knowledge of what is right, so that he may enjoin it, and to have knowledge of what is wrong, so that he may forbid it. That without which one cannot enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong is also enjoined, such as kindness and patience. That is stated clearly in the words: ﴿be patient and steadfast in the face of whatever befalls you﴾ *(31: 17)*. He should do what he enjoins others to do and refrain from what he forbids them to do. Thus he will be striving to perfect himself by doing good and refraining from evil, and will be striving to perfect others by enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong.

Because Allah knew that man would inevitably be faced with troubles if he enjoins what is right and forbids what is wrong, and that doing this is difficult for people, He enjoined them to be patient and steadfast in doing it:
﴿be patient and steadfast in the face of whatever befalls you; that﴾ which Luqmân advised his son to do ﴿is something that must be adhered to, [as it is enjoined by Allah]﴾ that is, it is one of the things that must be adhered to and paid attention to, and no one is able to attain that except people of strong resolve.

﴿Do not turn your face away from people [in contempt]﴾ that is, do not frown at people out of arrogance towards them, looking down on them.
﴿and do not walk on the earth with insolence﴾ that is, with arrogance, feeling proud because of the blessings that have been bestowed upon you whilst forgetting the Bestower, and being filled with self-admiration.
﴿Verily Allah does not love anyone who is conceited﴾ in the way he thinks of himself and carries himself
﴿and boastful﴾ in his speech.

﴿Be moderate in your gait﴾ that is, walk humbly and modestly, not in the manner of one who is insolent and arrogant, or in the manner of one who is weak and exhausted.
﴿and lower your voice﴾ out of good manners towards people and towards Allah
﴿verily the most hideous of sounds﴾ that is, the ugliest and most abhorrent
﴿is the voice [braying] of the donkey﴾. If there was any benefit in raising the voice, the donkey – which is known for being ignoble and stupid – would not have been singled out for mention.

This advice which Luqmân gave to his son represents the main points of wisdom and implies those that were not mentioned. Each piece of advice is mentioned with a reason that motivates one to comply with it.

This supports what we have mentioned about the meaning of wisdom, which is that it means knowing the rulings, understanding the reasons behind them, and knowing when and how to implement them.

Luqmân enjoined on his son the foundation of religion, namely the affirmation of the oneness of Allah; he forbade him to ascribe partners to Allah and explained why he should avoid doing that. He instructed him to honour his parents, and explained the reason for

doing so. He instructed him to give thanks to Allah and to his parents, then he highlighted that the injunction to honour them and comply with their instructions is only applicable so long as they do not enjoin sin, yet he should still not mistreat them or turn against them if they do tell him to commit sin. Rather he should treat them kindly even if he does not obey them when they endeavour to make him ascribe partners to Allah. He instructed him to remember that Allah is always watching, and reminded him to fear the time when he will stand before Him, for Allah will not leave any deed, small or great, good or bad, but He will bring it.

He forbade him to be arrogant and instructed him to be humble; He forbade him to be insolent, boastful or conceited; He instructed him to show humility in the way he moves and talks, and forbade him to do the opposite of that.

He instructed him to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, to establish prayer and to be steadfast and patient, for by means of prayer and patience, everything is made easy, as Allah (ﷻ) says. So it is no wonder that the one who gave these instructions must be a man who was blessed with wisdom and was well known for that. Hence one of the blessings that Allah bestows upon him and upon all His slaves is that He told them the story of his wisdom, so that he might be a good example to them.

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَسْبَغَ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعَمَهُ ظَاهِرَةً وَبَاطِنَةً ۗ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُجَادِلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَلَا هُدًى وَلَا كِتَابٍ مُّنِيرٍ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا ۚ أَوَلَوْ كَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ يَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿٢١﴾﴾ (سورة لقمان: ٢٠-٢١)

31:20. Do you not see that Allah has made all that is in the heavens and on earth to be of service to you, and He has showered you with His blessings, both apparent and hidden? Yet among people there are some who dispute about Allah without knowledge, without guidance and without any clear revealed text.

31:21. When it is said to them: Follow what Allah has revealed, they say: Nay, we will follow the ways of our forefathers. [Would they do that] even if Shaytân is calling them to the punishment of the raging fire?

Here Allah (ﷻ) reminds His slaves of his blessings and calls upon them to give thanks for it and acknowledge it, and not to be heedless about it.

﴿Do you not see﴾ that is, do you not witness and see with your own eyes, and think of it in your hearts

﴿that Allah has made all that is in the heavens﴾ of the sun, moon, and stars, which He has made to be of service and benefit to people

﴿and on earth﴾ of animals, trees, crops, rivers, metals and the like – as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿It is He Who has created for you all things that are on earth...﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 29)*

﴿to be of service to you, and He has showered you with His blessings﴾ that is, He has bestowed His blessings upon you in abundance

﴿His blessings﴾ both visible and hidden, those of which we are aware and those which are hidden from us, worldly blessings and spiritual blessings, granting good things and warding off harm. So your job is to give thanks for these blessings by loving the Bestower, submitting to Him and using them to help you obey Him, not using any of them to disobey Him.

﴿Yet﴾ even though these blessings keep coming, one after another,

﴿among people there are some﴾ who do not give thanks for them; rather they are ungrateful for them and they disbelieve in the One Who bestows them; they deny the truth that He revealed in His Books and with which He sent His Messengers. So they ﴿dispute about Allah﴾ that is, they dispute on the basis of falsehood, trying to undermine the truth, and on that basis they reject what the Messenger (ﷺ) brought of the command to worship Allah alone. The one who argues in this manner has no understanding, so his argument is not based on knowledge, such that he might be left to carry on and his words might be tolerated

﴿without guidance﴾ that people could follow

﴿and without any clear revealed text﴾ that explains the truth, so that his argument is not based on any rational foundation or religious texts, and it is not based on following those who are guided. Rather his argument about Allah is based on imitating forefathers who were not guided and who in fact misguided others.

Hence Allah says:

﴿When it is said to them: Follow what Allah has revealed﴾ at the hands of His Messengers, for it is the truth, and clear proof is presented to them,

﴿they say﴾, objecting to that:

﴿Nay, we will follow the ways of our forefathers﴾ and we will not give up what we found our forefathers following for the words of anyone, no matter who he is.

Allah (ﷻ) said, refuting them and their forefathers: ﴿[Would they do that] even if Shaytân is calling them to the punishment of the raging fire?﴾ And their forefathers responded to the Shaytân, following him and becoming his students, and thus they became confused.

Does that dictate that they should follow them and walk their path? Rather that should make them too scared to follow their path, and highlight their misguidance and the misguidance of those who followed them.

The call of the Shaytân to their forefathers and to them was not based on love or friendship towards them; rather it was based on enmity towards them and on deceiving them. In fact, his followers are among his enemies over whom he was able to gain control, and he was very satisfied when the punishment of the raging fire became inevitable for them as a result of their accepting his call.

﴿ ۞ وَمَن يُسْلِمْ وَجْهَهُۥٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَقَدِ ٱسْتَمْسَكَ بِٱلْعُرْوَةِ ٱلْوُثْقَىٰ ۗ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْأُمُورِ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَلَا يَحْزُنكَ كُفْرُهُۥٓ ۚ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ فَنُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿٢٣﴾ نُمَتِّعُهُمْ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ نَضْطَرُّهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابٍ غَلِيظٍ ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة لقمان: ٢٢-٢٤)

31:22. Whoever submits himself [completely] to Allah and is a doer of good has grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold. Allah decides the outcome of all matters.

31:23. Whoever disbelieves, do not let his disbelief sadden you. To Us they will return, and We will inform them about what they used to do. Verily Allah knows well what is in [their] hearts.

31:24. We will allow them to enjoy life for a little while, then We will drive them to a harsh punishment.

﴿Whoever submits himself [completely] to Allah﴾ that is, he humbles himself before Him and submits to Him by doing what is prescribed by Islamic teaching, with sincere devotion to Him alone ﴿and is a doer of good﴾ in that submission, in the sense that his good deeds are in accordance with Islam, following the Messenger (ﷺ). Or it may be that what is meant is: whoever submits himself (completely) to Allah by doing all acts of worship, and he does them well so that he worships Allah as if he sees Him, and if he does not see Him, Allah sees him;

or: whoever submits himself (completely) to Allah by fulfilling his duties towards Him, and does good in the sense that he is kind towards the slaves of Allah and fulfils his duties towards them.

These meanings are all interconnected and there is no real difference between them, for they all point towards carrying out all the duties enjoined by Islam and doing all Islamic duties in an acceptable and perfect manner. Whoever does that has surrendered to Allah and ﴿has grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold﴾ that is, the hand-hold by which, whoever grasps it will attain certainty and be saved and delivered from doom, and will attain all good.

Whoever does not submit himself (completely) to Allah and do good has not grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, and if he has not grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, there can be nothing but doom and destruction.

﴿Allah decides the outcome of all matters﴾ that is, all matters will return to Him in the end, then He will pass judgement among His slaves and will requite them in accordance with their deeds and where those deeds led them to. So let them prepare for that.

﴿Whoever disbelieves, do not let his disbelief sadden you﴾, because you (O Muhammad [ﷺ]) have done what you were obliged to do of calling them and conveying the message. If they are not guided, your reward is still due from Allah and there is no point in grieving for anyone's not being guided, for if there had been any good in him, Allah would have guided him.

Do not grieve also for their showing enmity towards you, opposing you and persisting in their misguidance and disbelief.

For verily ﴿To Us they will return, and We will inform them about what they used to do﴾ of disbelief, enmity and striving to extinguish the light of Allah and harm His Messengers.

﴿Verily Allah knows well what is in [their] hearts﴾ which is not spoken of, so how about that which is said openly and seen by people?

﴿We will allow them to enjoy life for a little while﴾ in this world, so that they may increase in sin and their punishment may become greater

﴿then We will drive them to a harsh punishment﴾ that is, a punishment that will reach the highest degree of grievousness and will be terrifying, immense, severe and painful.

﴿وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُ ۚ قُلِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْغَنِىُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَلَوْ أَنَّمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مِن شَجَرَةٍ أَقْلَٰمٌ وَٱلْبَحْرُ يَمُدُّهُۥ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ سَبْعَةُ أَبْحُرٍ مَّا نَفِدَتْ كَلِمَٰتُ ٱللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ مَّا خَلْقُكُمْ وَلَا بَعْثُكُمْ إِلَّا كَنَفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌۢ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٨﴾﴾ (سورة لقمان: ٢٥-٢٨)

31:25. If you ask them who created the heavens and the earth, they will surely say: Allah. Say: Praise be to Allah. But most of them do not understand.

31:26. To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth. Verily Allah is Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise.

31:27. If all the trees on earth were pens, and the sea [was ink], replenished by seven more seas, the words of Allah would still not be exhausted. Verily Allah is Almighty, Most Wise.

31:28. The creation and resurrection of all of you are [for Allah, as easy] as [the creation and the resurrection of] a single soul. Verily Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.

That is, if you ask these polytheists who reject the truth ﴿who created the heavens and the earth﴾, they will realise that the idols never created any of that, and they will hasten to say that it is Allah alone Who created them.

So ﴿Say﴾ to them, making them follow through with that idea, and presenting an argument based on what they accepted (that Allah is the Creator of all things) to prove that they were wrong with regard to what they denied (namely the oneness of Allah and His being the only One Who is deserving of worship):

﴿Praise be to Allah﴾ Who has made the light shine clearly and has shown evidence against you from your own selves. For if they understood, they would affirm that the One Who is the only Creator and Controller is the only One Who deserves to be worshipped and to be acknowledged as the only God. But ﴿most of them do not understand﴾; therefore they ascribed others as partners to Him and were content with the contradictions in their beliefs, in a manner that reflects confusion and doubt, not in a manner that reflects understanding.

Then Allah mentions in these two verses examples of how all-encompassing His attributes are, so as to call His slaves to know Him, love Him and devote their worship to Him alone.

Allah tells us that His dominion includes everything, and all that is in the heavens and on earth – which includes both the upper and lower realms – belongs to Him and He controls all of that in accordance with His divine will and decree, and in accordance with His religious commands and prohibitions, and in accordance with His rulings on reward and punishment.

All of them are slaves under His control, and they have no share in dominion. He possesses all things and He does not need what any of His creatures need.

﴿I seek no provision from them, nor do I want them to feed Me.﴾ *(adh-Dhâriyât 51: 57)*

The deeds of the Prophets, the strong and true in faith, the martyrs and the righteous do not benefit Allah in the slightest; rather they only benefit the doers, and Allah has no need of them or their deeds. Part

of His possessing everything is that He gives them what they need in this world and the hereafter.

Then Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He is worthy of all praise, and that praiseworthiness is one of His essential attributes; He cannot be but praiseworthy in all ways, thus He is praiseworthy in His essence, and He is praiseworthy in His attributes. For each of His attributes, He deserves the most perfect praise, because they are attributes of greatness and perfection. He is to be praised for everything that He does and creates, and for everything that He enjoins and forbids. He is to be praised for everything that He has decreed for people and for every judgement that He passes between people, in this world and the hereafter.

Then He tells us of the vastness and greatness of His words, in a manner that deeply penetrates the heart, dazzles the mind, and instils wonder, and makes people of reason and understanding contemplate the depths of its meanings:

﴿If all the trees on earth were pens﴾ with which to write ﴿and the sea [was ink], replenished by seven more seas﴾ of ink, as an additional supply, those pens would break and that ink would run out, yet ﴿the words of Allah﴾ (ﷻ) would not be exhausted.

This is not an exaggeration that has no basis in reality; rather because Allah (ﷻ) knows that human minds are unable to fully comprehend some of His attributes, and He knows that for His slaves, knowing Him is the greatest blessing that He may bestow upon them and the best virtue they could attain, but it is not possible for them to fully understand the divine attributes as they really are – although that which cannot be attained in full should not be forsaken altogether – He pointed out to them this example so as to illuminate their hearts, put their minds at ease and enable them to grasp an idea by means of which they may gain some understanding of what they cannot grasp in full. Hence they may say what the best of them, the one who had the greatest knowledge of his Lord, said:

«We cannot praise You enough; You are as You have praised Yourself.» (Muslim)

Otherwise the matter is much greater than that.

This likeness is by way of simplifying the concept so that people may have some understanding of it, although it cannot be fully grasped. Otherwise even if the trees and seas were many times more than what is mentioned, it can be imagined that they would run out and be exhausted, because they are created things. But when it comes to the words of Allah (ﷻ), it cannot be imagined that they would run out; rather rational and textual evidence indicates that they will never run out and never cease, for everything has an end except the Creator and His attributes.

If one tries to imagine the facts about Allah (ﷻ) that state that He is the First and the Last, whatever one can imagine of times of the past, no matter how far into the past he may go in his imagination, Allah (ﷻ) existed before that, from eternity. And no matter how far into the future he may go in his imagination, Allah (ﷻ) will exist after that, unto eternity, without end.

At all times – past, present and future – Allah has been, is and always will be speaking, saying and doing whatever He wills. When He wills something, nothing can stand in the way of His words and actions. If the mind can understand the above, we will understand that the likeness that Allah gives of His words here is only to give people an idea about them; otherwise, the matter is far greater than that.

Then Allah mentions the majestic nature of His might and the perfect nature of His wisdom:
﴿Verily Allah is Almighty, Most Wise﴾ that is, all might belongs to Him, and whatever power exists in the upper and lower realms comes from Him, and He gave it to His creation. There is no power and no strength except with Him. By His might He subjugated all of creation, and He controls them. By His wisdom, He created all things

and He initiated creation on the basis of wisdom, making the ultimate aims and goals behind creation based on wisdom. His commands and prohibitions are also based on wisdom, and His ultimate aim and goal is wisdom. Hence He is the Most Wise in all that He creates and commands.

Then He tells us of the greatness and perfect nature of His power, and that no mind can imagine it:
﴿The creation and resurrection of all of you are [for Allah, as easy] as [the creation and the resurrection of] a single soul﴾. This is something that astounds people, that the creation of all of humankind – with their great numbers, and their resurrection after death in a single moment, after they had been scattered – is like the creation of a single soul. So there is no reason to think that the resurrection and requital for deeds is unlikely to happen, except for ignorance of the greatness and immense power of Allah.

Then He tells us how He hears all sounds and sees all things: ﴿Verily Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing﴾.

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُولِجُ ٱلَّيْلَ فِى ٱلنَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فِى ٱلَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ ٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِىٓ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٢٩﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ ٱلْبَٰطِلُ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْعَلِىُّ ٱلْكَبِيرُ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾ (سورة لقمان: ٢٩-٣٠)

31:29. Do you not see that Allah causes the night to encroach upon the day, and the day to encroach upon the night; that He has made the sun and moon to be of service, each running its course for an appointed time; and that Allah is well aware of all that you do?

31:30. That is because Allah is the Truth, and those they call upon besides Him are sheer falsehood. Verily Allah is the Most High, the Most Great.

This also points to the fact that Allah alone is in control and managing the affairs of creation, and by means of the vastness of His control He causes the night to encroach upon the day, and the day to encroach upon the night, meaning that one of them infringes upon the other, so when one of them comes, the other one departs.

He has made the sun and moon to be of service, both of them running the course set for them, according to a system that has not faltered since they were created, so that there may be a great deal of benefit for people, and their interests may be served in their religious and worldly affairs, because of which they may contemplate and pay heed.

﴿each﴾ of them (the sun and moon)
﴿running its course for an appointed time﴾ – when that time ends, they will stop running and will lose their positions. That will be on the Day of Resurrection, when the sun will be folded up and the moon will become dark, the world will end and the hereafter will begin.

﴿and that Allah is well aware of all that you do﴾ of good and evil, for nothing is hidden from Him, and He will requite you for those deeds, rewarding those who were obedient and punishing those who were disobedient.

﴿That﴾ which has been explained to you of His greatness and attributes
﴿is because Allah is the Truth﴾ in His essence and His attributes. His religion is true, His Messengers are true, His promise is true, His warning is true, and worship of Him alone is true.
﴿and those they call upon besides Him are sheer falsehood﴾ in their essence and attributes. If Allah had not created them, they would not exist, and if He had not sustained them they would not have survived. If it is false, then worship of it is even more false.
﴿Verily Allah is the Most High﴾ in His essence, above all of His creation. His attributes are so sublime that they cannot be compared

with the attributes of any of His creation; He is above His creation, so He subdued them

﴿the Most Great﴾ to Whom belongs all greatness in His essence and attributes, and He is held in the highest esteem by the inhabitants of both heaven and earth.

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱلْفُلْكَ تَجْرِى فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ بِنِعْمَتِ ٱللَّهِ لِيُرِيَكُم مِّنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَـٰتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ﴿٣١﴾ وَإِذَا غَشِيَهُم مَّوْجٌ كَٱلظُّلَلِ دَعَوُا۟ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَمَّا نَجَّىٰهُمْ إِلَى ٱلْبَرِّ فَمِنْهُم مُّقْتَصِدٌ ۚ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَآ إِلَّا كُلُّ خَتَّارٍ كَفُورٍ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾

(سورة لقمان: ٣١-٣٢)

31:31. Do you not see that the ships sail on the sea by the grace of Allah, so that He may show you some of His signs? Surely in that there are signs for every steadfastly patient and deeply thankful person.

31:32. When waves loom over them like the canopy [of clouds], they call upon Allah, with sincere devotion to Him alone, but when He has delivered them safely to the shore, some of them become lukewarm. But no one rejects Our signs except the perfidious and the ungrateful.

That is, do you not see that one of the signs of His power, mercy and care for His slaves is that He has made the sea to be of service to them, and the ships sail on it by His command and decree, and by His kindness and favour?

﴿so that He may show you some of His signs﴾ because in His signs there is a great deal of benefit and much to contemplate.

﴿Surely in that there are signs for every steadfastly patient and deeply thankful person﴾ for they are the ones who benefit from the

signs; they are steadfastly patient in bearing hardship and deeply thankful at times of ease. They are steadfastly patient in obeying Allah and refraining from disobedience, and in accepting His decree; and they are deeply thankful to Allah for all blessings, both spiritual and worldly.

Allah (ﷻ) mentions the situation of people when they travel by sea, when waves loom over them like the canopy (of clouds), and how they call upon Allah, with sincere devotion to Him alone.

﴿but when He has delivered them safely to the shore﴾, people are divided into two groups:

One group becomes lukewarm – that is, they do not give proper thanks to Allah; rather they commit sin and wrong themselves.

Another group is ungrateful for the blessing of Allah and denies that blessing. Hence Allah says: ﴿But no one rejects Our signs except the perfidious﴾ that is, betrayers. Part of their betrayal is that they promised their Lord: If You save us from the sea and its hardship, we will be among the grateful. But they betrayed that promise and did not fulfil it

﴿and the ungrateful﴾ who do not give thanks for the blessings of Allah. Is it befitting for those whom Allah saved from this hardship to do anything but give proper thanks for the blessings of Allah?

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ وَٱخْشَوْا۟ يَوْمًا لَّا يَجْزِى وَالِدٌ عَن وَلَدِهِۦ وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ هُوَ جَازٍ عَن وَالِدِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا ۚ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۖ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم بِٱللَّهِ ٱلْغَرُورُ ﴿٣٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة لقمان: ٣٣)

31:33. O humankind, fear your Lord and dread a day when no father will avail his child and no child will avail his father at all. Verily the promise of Allah is true, so do not let the life of this world deceive you, or let any deceiver deceive you concerning Allah.

Here Allah (ﷻ) instructs people to fear Him, which means complying with His commands and refraining from what He forbids. He also reminds them to fear the Day of Resurrection, that difficult day when no one will care for anyone except himself, and ﴿no father will avail his child and no child will avail his father at all﴾. No one will be able to increase his good deeds or decrease his bad deeds; everyone's deeds will have been decided and the requital for those deeds will become due.

Allah draws our attention to this momentous day so as to give the individual strength and make it easier for him to fear Allah and comply with His commands. By His mercy towards His slaves, Allah instructs them to fear Him, which will lead to bliss, and He promises reward for that; and He warns of the punishment, motivating them through exhortation and admonition. To You be all praise, O Lord of the worlds.

﴿Verily the promise of Allah is true﴾ so do not doubt it and do not act like one who does not believe. Hence Allah says:
﴿so do not let the life of this world deceive you﴾ with its adornments and attractions, and what it contains of temptations and trials.
﴿or let any deceiver deceive you concerning Allah﴾ – this refers to the Shaytân, who keeps trying to deceive man and never slackens in his efforts at any time. Allah has rights over His slaves, and He has set an appointed time for them when He will requite them for their deeds, whether they fulfilled their duty towards Him or fell short.

This is a matter to which one must pay attention, and keep it in mind at all times, basing all his affairs on that.

One of the greatest obstacles and hindrances that he faces is this tempting world, and the Shaytân who whispers to him and tries to mislead him. Allah has forbidden His slaves to be deceived by this world or to be deceived by the deceivers concerning Allah.

﴿[Shaytân] makes promises to them and fills them with false hopes; but Shaytân makes promises to them only in order to deceive them.﴾ *(an-Nisā' 4: 120)*

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥ عِلْمُ ٱلسَّاعَةِ وَيُنَزِّلُ ٱلْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلْأَرْحَامِ ۖ وَمَا تَدْرِى نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا ۖ وَمَا تَدْرِى نَفْسٌۢ بِأَىِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ ﴾

(سورة لقمان: ٣٤)

31:34. Verily Allah alone has knowledge of the Hour; it is He Who sends down rain and He knows what every womb contains. No soul knows what it will do on the morrow, and no soul knows in what land it will die. Verily Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.

It is established that the knowledge of Allah (ﷻ) encompasses both the unseen and the seen, the visible and the hidden. Allah (ﷻ) may inform His slaves about many unseen matters, but these five things are things of which knowledge is withheld from all creatures, and they are not known to any Prophet who was sent or any angel who is close to Allah, let alone other creatures.

﴿Verily Allah alone has knowledge of the Hour﴾ that is, He alone knows when it will begin, as He says elsewhere:

﴿They ask you about the Hour: when will it come to pass? Say: The knowledge thereof is with my Lord [alone]. None but He can disclose when its time will come. It will weigh heavily on the heavens and the earth; it will not come upon you but suddenly…﴾ *(al-A'rāf 7: 187)*

﴿it is He Who sends down rain﴾ that is, He is the only One Who sends it down, and knows the time when it will come down.

﴿and He knows what every womb contains﴾ for He is the One Who created what is in the womb; He knows what it is, and whether it is

male or female. Hence the angel who is appointed over the womb asks his Lord: Is it male or female? And Allah decrees whatever He wills.

﴿No soul knows what it will do on the morrow﴾ in either spiritual or worldly terms.

﴿and no soul knows in what land it will die﴾; rather it is Allah alone Who has knowledge of all these things.

Having singled out these things for mention, Allah (ﷻ) then highlights the fact that He knows all things, as He says:
﴿Verily Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware﴾ and His knowledge encompasses all things, visible and hidden, subtle matters and what is in people's hearts. By His perfect wisdom, He has withheld knowledge of these five things from His slaves, because that serves some interests, as is clear to anyone who reflects and ponders the matter.

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

32.
Soorat as-Sajdah

(Makkan)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

﴿الٓمٓ ﴿١﴾ تَنزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ مِن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢﴾ أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ ۚ بَلْ هُوَ الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ لِتُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّا أَتَاهُم مِّن نَّذِيرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٣﴾﴾ (سورة السجدة: ١-٣)

32:1. Alif. Lâm. Meem.[46]

32:2. The revelation of the Book, concerning which there is no doubt, is from the Lord of the worlds.

32:3. Or do they say: He has fabricated it? Nay, it is the truth from your Lord, so that you may warn people to whom no warner was sent before you, in order that they may be guided.

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

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that this noble Book has been sent down from the Lord of the worlds, Who cares for them and showers them with His blessings.

One of the greatest means through which Allah educated, cared for and guided people is this Book, in which is all that could put their affairs straight and perfect their manners. It is the Book concerning which there are no doubts, ambiguity or confusion. Yet despite that, the disbelievers said of the Messenger (ﷺ), wrongfully: Muhammad has fabricated it and made it up by himself. This is the greatest audacity in rejecting the words of Allah and accusing Muhammad (ﷺ) of the greatest of lies, assuming that a human is able to produce words like the words of the Creator. Each one of these things is a major offence.

Allah says – refuting those who claimed that he had fabricated it: ﴿Nay, it is the truth﴾ which falsehood cannot reach from before it or behind it – it is a revelation from One Who is Most Wise, Praiseworthy *(cf. 41: 42)*.

﴿from your Lord﴾ Who sent it down as a mercy to His slaves

﴿so that you may warn people to whom no warner was sent before you﴾ that is, they are in a state of need for the sending of the Messenger (ﷺ) and the revelation of the Book, because there has been no warner before; rather they were wandering blindly in their ignorance and misguidance. So We have sent down the Book to you, ﴿in order that they may be guided﴾ away from their misguidance, and they may come to know the truth and give it precedence.

All the things that Allah mentions here are contrary to their lies about the Qur'an, and require them to have strong faith in it and believe that it is indeed ﴿from the Lord of the worlds﴾ and that it is ﴿the truth﴾, for the truth is to be accepted in all cases, and that ﴿there is no doubt﴾ concerning it in any way whatsoever. There is nothing in it to make one doubt, no story that does not speak of exactly what happened, and nothing of which the meaning is unclear and confusing. They are in need of the message, and in the Qur'an there is guidance to all that is good.

﴿ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِى سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ ۖ مَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ مِن وَلِىٍّ وَلَا شَفِيعٍ ۚ أَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤﴾ يُدَبِّرُ ٱلْأَمْرَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ إِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يَعْرُجُ إِلَيْهِ فِى يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُۥٓ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ ﴿٥﴾ ذَٰلِكَ عَٰلِمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٦﴾ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ خَلَقَهُۥ ۖ وَبَدَأَ خَلْقَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنِ مِن طِينٍ ﴿٧﴾ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ نَسْلَهُۥ مِن سُلَٰلَةٍ مِّن مَّآءٍ مَّهِينٍ ﴿٨﴾ ثُمَّ سَوَّىٰهُ وَنَفَخَ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِهِۦ ۖ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ وَٱلْأَفْـِٔدَةَ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة السجدة: ٤-٩)

32:4. It is Allah Who created the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, in six days, and then rose over the Throne [in a manner that befits His Majesty]. You have no protector or intercessor to deliver you from His [punishment]. Will you not then pay heed?

32:5. He governs all things from heaven to earth, then everything will ascend to Him[47] on a day the length of which is one thousand years by your reckoning.

32:6. Such is the Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Almighty, the Most Merciful,

32:7. Who created all things well and initiated the creation of man from clay,

32:8. Then He made his offspring from the extract of an insignificant fluid.

32:9. Then He fashioned him and breathed into him the soul which He created for him. He gave you hearing, sight and intellect; little it is that you give thanks.

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[47] That is, all things will return to Allah on the Day of Resurrection and He will judge between people. (Ibn 'Âshoor, *at-Tahreer wat-Tanweer*).

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the perfect nature of His might by referring to the fact that He created ﴿the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, in six days﴾, the first of which was Sunday and the last was Friday, even though He was able to create them in an instant, but He is Most Kind, Most Wise.
﴿and then rose over the Throne﴾ which is the roof of creation; He rose over it in a manner that befits His Majesty.
﴿You have no protector﴾ who can protect you and care for you
﴿or intercessor﴾ who can intercede for you, if He decides to punish you
﴿to deliver you from His [punishment]﴾.
﴿Will you not then pay heed﴾ and realise that the Creator of the earth and the heavens, Who rose over the mighty Throne, the only One Who is controlling you and in charge of you, and to whom all intercession belongs, is the only one who deserves all kinds of worship?

﴿He governs all things﴾ and decrees what is to happen and what is permissible, for He is the only One Who controls all things; all these decrees come down from the omnipotent Sovereign,
﴿from heaven to earth﴾, and by means of them He will bless some and doom others, make some rich and others poor, honour some and humiliate others, raise some in status and lower others, and send down provision.
﴿then everything will ascend to Him on a day the length of which is one thousand years by your reckoning﴾.

﴿Such﴾ – namely the One Who created all these mighty things, Who rose over the mighty Throne and Who alone is in control of His dominion,
﴿is the Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Almighty, the Most Merciful﴾. By virtue of his vast knowledge, the perfect nature of His might and His all-encompassing mercy, He created it and instilled in it all kinds of benefits, and He never wearies of controlling it and running its affairs.

﴿Who created all things well﴾ that is, everything that Allah has created, He has created it well, giving it a specific shape and form that befits it and is in harmony with the purpose of its creation. This is general in meaning and applies to all creation.

Then He singles out the human being, because of his honour and virtue, and says: ﴿and initiated the creation of man from clay﴾ – this refers to the creation of Adam (ﷺ), the father of humanity.

﴿Then He made his offspring﴾ namely the progeny of Adam; He caused them to originate from ﴿the extract of an insignificant fluid﴾ namely the sperm drop, which is regarded as dirty and insignificant.

﴿Then He fashioned him﴾ with his flesh, bones, sinews and veins; He created him well and placed every faculty and body part in the best and most appropriate place, and no other place could be better ﴿and breathed into him the soul which He created for him﴾ by sending to him the angel who breathed the soul into him, and by Allah's leave he became animate after having been inanimate.

﴿He gave you hearing [and] sight﴾ that is, He kept giving you benefits and all that you need, gradually, until He gave you hearing and sight
﴿and intellect; little it is that you give thanks﴾ to the One Who created you and fashioned you.

﴿ وَقَالُوٓاْ أَءِذَا ضَلَلۡنَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ أَءِنَّا لَفِي خَلۡقٖ جَدِيدِۭۚ بَلۡ هُم بِلِقَآئِ رَبِّهِمۡ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ قُلۡ يَتَوَفَّىٰكُم مَّلَكُ ٱلۡمَوۡتِ ٱلَّذِي وُكِّلَ بِكُمۡ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمۡ تُرۡجَعُونَ ﴿١١﴾ ﴾ (سورة السجدة: ١٠-١١)

32:10. They say: What! When we have been [buried and] lost in the earth, will we then be created anew? In fact, they deny the meeting with their Lord.

32:11. Say [O Muhammad]: The Angel of Death, who has been given charge of you, will take your souls [in death], then to your Lord you will be brought back.

That is, those who disbelieve in the resurrection say, by way of finding it far-fetched:
﴿What! When we have been [buried and] lost in the earth﴾ that is, when we have disintegrated and our remains have scattered and dispersed to places unknown,
﴿will we then be created anew?﴾ That is, will we be resurrected anew? They claimed that this was a most far-fetched notion, and that was because they compared the power of the Creator with their own power.

These words of theirs do not reflect an attitude of seeking the truth; rather it is the result of wrongdoing, stubbornness, disbelief in the meeting with their Lord, and denial. Hence Allah says:
﴿In fact, they deny the meeting with their Lord﴾ so it is quite clear what the basis and aim of the statement are. Otherwise, if their aim had been to find out the truth, the Qur'an could have given them definitive proof of the resurrection that would make the issue as clear as the light of day.

It is sufficient for them that they know that they were created from nothing, so repeating their creation is easier than originating it. Another proof is the dead earth: Allah sends down rain to it and revives it after its death, and brings forth plants from scattered seeds.

﴿Say [O Muhammad]: The Angel of Death, who has been given charge of you﴾ that is, Allah has appointed him to take people's souls, and he has helpers, ﴿will take your souls [in death], then to your Lord you will be brought back﴾, then He will requite you for your deeds. But you denied the resurrection, so wait and see what Allah will do to you.

﴿وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذِ ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ نَاكِسُوا۟ رُءُوسِهِمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ رَبَّنَآ أَبْصَرْنَا وَسَمِعْنَا فَٱرْجِعْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَٰلِحًا إِنَّا مُوقِنُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَءَاتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدَىٰهَا وَلَٰكِنْ حَقَّ ٱلْقَوْلُ مِنِّى لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ ٱلْجِنَّةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ فَذُوقُوا۟ بِمَا نَسِيتُمْ لِقَآءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَآ إِنَّا نَسِينَٰكُمْ ۖ وَذُوقُوا۟ عَذَابَ ٱلْخُلْدِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾﴾ (سورة السجدة: ١٢-١٤)

32:12. If only you could see when the evildoers hang their heads before their Lord, [and say]: Our Lord, We have seen and we have heard. Send us back [to the world]; we will do righteous deeds, for now we believe with certainty.

32:13. If We had so willed, We could have given every soul its guidance, but My decree will be fulfilled: I will certainly fill hell with jinn and men, all together.

32:14. So taste the consequences of your forgetting the meeting of this day of yours. We, too, will forget you, so taste the eternal punishment for what you used to do.

Having mentioned how they will be brought back to Him on the Day of Resurrection, and how they will be when they stand before Him, Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿If only you could see when the evildoers﴾ who persisted in grave sins; that is, you would see something terrible and alarming: people who are losers, who will ask but receive no response, because the time for respite is over.

﴿hang their heads before their Lord﴾ humbled and humiliated, acknowledging their wrongdoing, and asking to go back, saying:

﴿Our Lord, We have seen and we have heard﴾ that is, the matter has become clear to us, for we have seen with our own eyes and we have become certain.

﴿Send us back [to the world]; we will do righteous deeds, for now we believe with certainty﴾ that is, now we are certain of that in which we used to disbelieve.

All of this happens by the will and decree of Allah, as He did not protect them from disbelief and sin. Hence He says: ﴿If We had so willed, We could have given every soul its guidance﴾ that is, We would have guided all people, and We would have united them in following true guidance, for Our will is able to do that. But wisdom dictated that they should not all be guided. Hence Allah says:
﴿but My decree will be fulfilled﴾ that is, it is inevitable and confirmed, and cannot be changed.
﴿I will certainly fill hell with jinn and men, all together﴾. This is a promise that will inevitably come to pass and cannot be avoided, so the means and causes that lead to that – namely disbelief and sin – must be decreed.

﴿So taste the consequences of your forgetting the meeting of this day of yours﴾ that is, this will be said to the evildoers who are overwhelmed by humiliation and will ask to go back to this world so that they might make up for what they failed to do. But the time for going back will be over, and there will be nothing left but the punishment. So taste the painful punishment for your forgetting the meeting of this day of yours. This forgetting was the result of heedlessness; in other words, because you turned away and failed to strive for that day, it is as if you would never come to it or encounter it.

﴿We, too, will forget you﴾ that is, We will leave you to suffer the punishment, a requital that matches your deeds. Just as you forgot, you will be forgotten.
﴿so taste the eternal punishment﴾ that is, the never-ending punishment, for if the punishment had an end and a set term, that would give some hope of relief. But the punishment of hell – may Allah protect us from it – has no respite and no end.
﴿for what you used to do﴾ of disbelief, evildoing and sin.

﴿ إِنَّمَا يُؤْمِنُ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا۟ بِهَا خَرُّوا۟ سُجَّدًا وَسَبَّحُوا۟ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ۩ ﴿١٥﴾ تَتَجَافَىٰ جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ ٱلْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَـٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّآ أُخْفِىَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة السجدة: ١٥-١٧)

32:15. Only those believe in Our revelations who, when they are reminded of them, fall down in prostration, and glorify and praise their Lord, and they are not arrogant;

32:16. who forsake their beds,[48] calling upon their Lord with fear and hope, and spend out of what We have provided for them.

32:17. No soul knows what is kept hidden in store for them of delight as a reward for what they used to do.

Having mentioned those who rejected His revelations and what He has prepared for them of punishment, Allah (ﷻ) now mentions those who believe in them and describes them and what He has prepared for them of reward:

﴿Only those believe in Our revelations﴾ that is, belief in a true sense, on the part of those who show signs of faith.

They are those who, ﴿when they are reminded of﴾ the revelations of their Lord, and the verses of the Qur'an were recited to them, and advice came to them on the lips of the Messengers of Allah, and they were called to pay heed, they would hear the message, accept it and submit to it, and they would ﴿fall down in prostration﴾ that is, they would submit and have the joy of knowing Allah.

﴿and glorify and praise their Lord, and they are not arrogant﴾; they are not arrogant either in their hearts or in their actions. Therefore they do not refrain from submitting and acting in a humble manner towards

[48] This refers to staying awake to offer voluntary prayers during the night.

the revelations, for they accept them and submit to them, they feel at ease with them and surrender to them, thereby attaining the pleasure of the Most Merciful Lord, and being guided to the straight path.

﴿who forsake their beds﴾ that is, they leave their beds and keep away from the comfort thereof for the sake of something that is more enjoyable and dearer to them, namely prayer at night, conversing with Allah (ﷻ).

Hence Allah says: ﴿calling upon their Lord﴾ that is, in order to attain that which will benefit them in spiritual and worldly terms, and to ward off that which will harm them

﴿with fear and hope﴾ that is, combining these two qualities, namely fear of their good deeds being rejected and hope that those deeds will be accepted; fearing the punishment of Allah and hoping for His reward.

﴿and spend out of what We have provided for them﴾ of sustenance, whether it be small or great. Allah does not mention how much they spend, or who the recipients are, so as to indicate that this is general in application. It includes both obligatory spending, such as zakâh, expiations, and spending on wives and relatives; spending that is encouraged, such as spending on various charitable causes; and spending money in order to be kind to others in general, whether one is showing kindness to rich or poor, relatives or strangers. But the reward varies according to the extent of the benefit. This refers to their deeds.

As for the requital for their deeds, Allah says: ﴿No soul knows﴾ – this includes all souls and indicates that no soul at all knows

﴿what is kept hidden in store for them of delight﴾ namely much good, abundant blessings, joy, happiness and pleasure, as Allah has told us on the lips of His Messenger (ﷺ):

«I have prepared for My righteous slaves that which no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever crossed the mind of any man.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Just as they pray at night and call upon Him, and conceal their good deeds, Allah will reward them in a manner that matches their deeds; therefore He has concealed their reward. Hence He says: ﴿as a reward for what they used to do﴾.

﴿ أَفَمَن كَانَ مُؤْمِنًا كَمَن كَانَ فَاسِقًا ۚ لَّا يَسْتَوُۥنَ ﴿١٨﴾ أَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَلَهُمْ جَنَّٰتُ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰ نُزُلًۢا بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ فَسَقُوا۟ فَمَأْوَىٰهُمُ ٱلنَّارُ ۖ كُلَّمَآ أَرَادُوٓا۟ أَن يَخْرُجُوا۟ مِنْهَآ أُعِيدُوا۟ فِيهَا وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ ذُوقُوا۟ عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ٱلَّذِى كُنتُم بِهِۦ تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة السجدة: ١٨-٢٠)

32:18. Is one who is a believer like one who is an evildoer? They are not equal.

32:19. As for those who believe and do righteous deeds, for them there will be gardens to dwell in, as a recompense for what they used to do.

32:20. As for those who rebel and disobey, their abode will be the fire; every time they want to escape from it, they will be driven back into it and it will be said to them: Taste the punishment of the fire which you used to deny!

Here Allah (ﷻ) draws our attention to the established principle that two different things cannot be equal, and that His wisdom dictates that they should not be equal.

﴿Is one who is a believer﴾ whose heart is filled with faith and he has complied fully with Allah's laws, and his faith has left an impact on his behaviour and attitude, such as refraining from that which incurs the wrath of Allah and deeds that are detrimental to faith, ﴿like one who is an evildoer﴾ whose heart is ruined and devoid of faith, so he has no religious deterrent and therefore he hastens to

commit all kinds of sins as a result of ignorance and wrongdoing, and he turns away from obedience to Allah because of his evildoing. Can these two people be equal?

﴿They are not equal﴾ from either a rational or Islamic point of view, just as night and day, light and darkness, cannot be equal. Thus their recompense in the hereafter will not be the same.

﴿As for those who believe and do righteous deeds﴾, both obligatory and supererogatory,

﴿for them there will be gardens to dwell in﴾ that is, gardens in which they will find all kinds of joy and pleasure; they will find happiness, bliss, delight, pleasure, eternal life and the sublime joy of being close to the Sovereign and gazing upon His Countenance and hearing His words.

﴿as a recompense for what they used to do﴾ – for their good deeds, by virtue of what Allah bestowed upon them of His grace, is what enabled them to reach those lofty places that cannot be attained by means of money or by means of troops, servants and children, or even by means of sacrificing lives. Rather they cannot be approached by means of anything at all except faith and righteous deeds.

﴿As for those who rebel and disobey, their abode will be the fire﴾ that is, their eternal abode will be the fire in which are combined all kinds of punishment and wretchedness that will never cease or give them respite for even a moment.

﴿every time they want to escape from it, they will be driven back into it﴾ that is, every time they want to emerge from it, because the pain has reached such a high degree, they will be driven back into it. Hence they will lose any hope of relief and will become extremely distressed.

﴿and it will be said to them: Taste the punishment of the fire which you used to deny!﴾ This is the punishment of the fire, which will be their abode. As for the punishment that comes before that, it is a precursor to it; this is the punishment of *al-barzakh* (the period

between death and resurrection), which is mentioned in the following verse:

﴿وَلَنُذِيقَنَّهُم مِّنَ ٱلْعَذَابِ ٱلْأَدْنَىٰ دُونَ ٱلْعَذَابِ ٱلْأَكْبَرِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢١﴾﴾ (سورة السجدة: ٢١)

32:21. We will surely cause them to taste something of the lesser punishment before the greater punishment, so that they may turn in repentance.

That is, We will cause the evildoers and disbelievers to taste some of the lesser punishment, which is the punishment of al-barzakh. We will cause them to taste a little of it before they die, either by killing and the like, as happened to the polytheists who were slain at Badr, or at the time of death, as mentioned in the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...If you [O Muhammad] could but see the evildoers when they are in the throes of death and the angels are stretching out their hands [saying]: Give up your souls! Today you will be recompensed with a humiliating punishment...﴾ *(al-An'ām 6: 93)*

Then the lesser punishment will continue in al-barzakh.

This verse is among the evidence which proves and clearly indicates that there will be punishment in the grave, because Allah says: ﴿We will surely cause them to taste something of the lesser punishment﴾ that is, some of it and part of it. This indicates that there is a lesser punishment before the greater punishment, which is the punishment of hell.

As this taste in this world of the lesser punishment may not be immediately followed by death, Allah tells (ﷻ) them that He will

cause them to taste it in the hope that they might turn back and repent from their sins, as He says elsewhere:

﴿Corruption and disorder have appeared on land and sea[49] because of what people's hands have earned. Thus Allah causes them to taste the consequences of some of what they have done, so that they may turn in repentance.﴾ *(ar-Room 30: 41)*

﴿وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن ذُكِّرَ بِـَٔايَـٰتِ رَبِّهِۦ ثُمَّ أَعْرَضَ عَنْهَآ ۚ إِنَّا مِنَ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ مُنتَقِمُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾ (سورة السجدة: ٢٢)

32:22. And who does greater wrong than one who is reminded of the revelations of his Lord, but turns away from them? Verily We will exact retribution upon the evildoers.

That is, no one does greater wrong or commits a worse transgression than one who is reminded of the revelations of his Lord, which his Lord caused to reach him and wants to teach him and perfect His blessings to him at the hands of His Messengers, so that these revelations may instruct him, remind him of what is in his best interests, both spiritual and worldly, and forbid him to do that which is detrimental to his interests both spiritual and worldly, to which he should respond by believing, submitting and giving thanks, – but this wrongdoer responded with the opposite of what he should have done, so he did not believe in them and follow them; rather he turned away from them and ignored them. This is one of the worst of evildoers

[49] This refers to the widespread occurrence of troubles such as drought, fires and floods, poor yield of crops, decline of fish stocks, market stagnation and difficulty in earning a living. That is because of people's sins, including neglect and abuse of the natural environment.

who deserves the most severe retribution. Hence Allah says: ﴿Verily We will exact retribution upon the evildoers﴾.

﴿ وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ فَلَا تَكُن فِى مِرْيَةٍ مِّن لِّقَآئِهِۦ ۖ وَجَعَلْنَٰهُ هُدًى لِّبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا۟ ۖ وَكَانُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا۟ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة السجدة: ٢٣-٢٥)

32:23. We gave Moosâ the Book, so do not be in doubt concerning the receiving of it; and We made it a guide for the Children of Israel.

32:24. We made some of them leaders, guiding people by Our command, because they were patient and steadfast, and they believed with certainty in Our revelations.

32:25. Verily it is your Lord Who will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that wherein they differed.

Having mentioned His revelation by means of which He reminded His slaves – namely the Qur'an which He sent down to Muhammad (ﷺ) – Allah (ﷻ) states that it is nothing new among the divinely-revealed scriptures, and the one who brought it is nothing extraordinary among the Messengers.

For Allah gave to Moosâ the Book – namely the Torah – which confirms the Qur'an. Thus it is proven that they are both true, and the proof of both is established,

﴿so do not be in doubt concerning the receiving of it﴾ because there is abundant proof and evidence concerning it, and therefore there is no room for doubt.

﴿and We made it﴾ namely the Book that We gave to Moosâ

﴿a guide for the Children of Israel﴾ by means of which they were guided with regard to the fundamental and minor issues of their religion, and the laws that were appropriate to the Children of Israel at that time.

With regard to this noble Qur'an, Allah has made it a guide for all people, because it is guidance for humankind with regard to their religious and worldly affairs until the Day of Resurrection, because of its perfect and sublime nature:

﴿And verily it [this Qur'an] is in the Mother of the Book [al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfoodh], with Us, sublime and full of wisdom.﴾ *(az-Zukhruf 43: 4)*

﴿We made some of them﴾ that is, some of the Children of Israel ﴿leaders, guiding people by Our command﴾ that is, scholars of the law, teaching the path of guidance; they were themselves guided and they guided others by means of that guidance. The Book which was revealed to them was guidance, and those among them who believed in it fell into two categories: leaders who guided by Allah's command and followers who were guided by them.

The first category was of the highest status after that of the Prophets and Messengers; theirs was the status of the strong and true in faith (ṣiddeeq). They only attained that status by being patient in learning, teaching and calling people to Allah, and putting up with persecution in the course thereof, and by refraining from indulging in sin and giving free rein to whims and desires.

﴿and they believed with certainty in Our revelations﴾ that is, their belief in the revelations of Allah reached the level of certainty, which is perfect knowledge that leads to action. They only attained the level of certainty because they acquired knowledge in the proper manner and based their understanding of various issues on strong evidence.

They continued to learn about different issues of religion, basing that knowledge on a great deal of evidence, until they reached that level of certainty. Positions of leadership in religion may be attained by means of patience and certainty.

There are some issues concerning which the Children of Israel differed; some of them reached the right conclusion and some of them got it wrong, deliberately or otherwise. Allah (ﷻ) ﴿will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that wherein they differed﴾. Moreover, this Qur'an tells the Children of Israel about some of the matters concerning which they differed. With regard to the differences of opinion that arose among them, if the Qur'an confirmed one of the two views concerning a matter, that view is the truth and anything contrary to it is false.

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَهْدِ لَهُمْ كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّنَ ٱلْقُرُونِ يَمْشُونَ فِى مَسَٰكِنِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ ۖ أَفَلَا يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّا نَسُوقُ ٱلْمَآءَ إِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلْجُرُزِ فَنُخْرِجُ بِهِۦ زَرْعًا تَأْكُلُ مِنْهُ أَنْعَٰمُهُمْ وَأَنفُسُهُمْ ۖ أَفَلَا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾ (سورة السجدة: ٢٦-٢٧)

32:26. Has it not become clear to them how many nations We destroyed before them, in whose dwelling places they now walk about? Surely in that there are signs; will they not then listen?

32:27. Do they not see that We send water to barren land and We bring forth thereby crops of which their livestock and they themselves eat? Will they not then see?

That is, is it not clear to those who reject the Messenger (ﷺ) who guides them to the truth ﴿how many nations We destroyed before them﴾ who followed the same path as them, ﴿in whose dwelling places they now walk about﴾ and they see them with their own eyes, such as the people of Hood and Ṣâliḥ, and the people of Looṭ?

﴿Surely in that there are signs﴾ from which it may be concluded that the Messengers who came to them were true, and that the path

that they followed of polytheism and evil was false, and that whoever does the same as they did will meet the same fate as others of their ilk, and that Allah (ﷻ) will requite His slaves and will resurrect them on the Day of Judgement?

﴿will they not then listen﴾ to the revelations of Allah, and understand them and benefit from them? If they listened properly and understood properly, they would not persist on the path that will surely lead them to doom.

﴿Do they not see﴾ with their own eyes Our blessings and perfect wisdom? For ﴿We send water to barren land﴾ in which there is no vegetation, then Allah sends water which was not there before, either from the clouds or from rivers,

﴿and We bring forth thereby crops﴾ that is, plants of various kinds ﴿of which their livestock and they themselves eat﴾ so food is provided for both animals and humans.

﴿Will they not then see﴾ that blessing by means of which Allah revives the land and the people, so that they might contemplate and be guided by that insight to the straight path.

But they are mostly blind and heedless, so they do not see and understand as they should, rather they look at it in a heedless manner and regard it as something unremarkable, and thus they are not guided to goodness.

﴿وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا ٱلْفَتْحُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾ قُلْ يَوْمَ ٱلْفَتْحِ لَا يَنفَعُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِيمَٰنُهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَٱنتَظِرْ إِنَّهُم مُّنتَظِرُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾ (سورة السجدة: ٢٨-٣٠)

32:28. They say: When will this judgement come, if you are telling the truth?

32:29. Say [O Muhammad]: On the Day of Judgement, no good will it do to the disbelievers to believe then, nor will they be given any respite.

32:30. So turn away from them and wait; verily they too are waiting.

That is, the evildoers seek to hasten the punishment which they are promised, by way of disbelief, out of ignorance and stubbornness on their part.

﴿They say: When will this judgement﴾ that will decide between us and you, by punishing us, according to your claim ﴿come, if you﴾ – O Messenger – ﴿are telling the truth﴾ in your claim?

﴿Say [O Muhammad]: On the Day of Judgement﴾, on which your punishment will come, nothing will avail you at all. If it was the case that when that day comes, you could be given respite so that you might rectify your situation once you have certain faith, then there could be a point in asking when that day will happen. But when the Day of Judgement comes, the matter will have been settled and there will be no room for tests.

So ﴿no good will it do to the disbelievers to believe then﴾ because that would be faith by compulsion.

﴿nor will they be given any respite﴾ that is, there will be no postponement or delay so that they might rectify the situation.

﴿So turn away from them﴾, because their words reflect such a level of ignorance, and their seeking to hasten the punishment has reached such a degree

﴿and wait﴾ and see what is going to befall them, for it is inevitable, but it has an appointed time which, when it comes, cannot be brought forward or put back.

﴿verily they too are waiting﴾ for some misfortune to befall you, but the best end is for those who fear Allah.

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat as-Sajdah.

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

33.
Soorat al-Aḥzâb

(Madanī)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ وَلَا تُطِعِ الْكَافِرِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١﴾ وَاتَّبِعْ مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿٢﴾ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٣﴾﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ١-٣)

33:1. O Prophet, fear Allah and do not yield to the disbelievers and hypocrites. Verily Allah is All-Knowing, Most Wise.

33:2. Follow that which is revealed to you from your Lord. Verily Allah is well aware of all that you do.

33:3. Put your trust in Allah, for sufficient is Allah as a disposer of affairs.

That is, O you whom Allah has blessed with prophethood, chosen to receive His revelation and favoured above all creation, give thanks for the blessing that your Lord has bestowed upon you by fearing Him, which is more appropriate for you to do than others, for what is expected of you is that you should attain more than anyone else. So

comply with His commands and prohibitions, convey His message, deliver His revelation to His slaves and be sincere towards all people.

Nothing should prevent you from doing that and nothing should deter you from it. So do not yield to any disbeliever who shows enmity towards Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), or to any hypocrite who is concealing his rejection and disbelief, and making a show of the opposite.

These are the real enemies, so do not obey them in some matters that undermine piety and are contrary to it, and do not follow their whims and desires lest they lead you astray from the right path.

Rather ﴿Follow that which is revealed to you from your Lord﴾ for it is guidance and mercy, and hope by doing so for the reward of your Lord, for He is well aware of what they are doing and He will requite them according to what he knows of them, whether good or evil.

If it occurs to you that if you do not yield to their misguided whims and desires, you will suffer some harm from them, or that your efforts to guide people may be undermined, then ward off that notion from your mind and resort to that which will avert such thoughts, namely putting your trust in Allah, by relying on your Lord in the manner of one who has no power to cause harm or benefit himself, or to cause death, give life or resurrect, trusting Him to protect you from their evil and to establish the religion that has been enjoined upon you, and trusting Him to bring that about no matter what the case.

﴿for sufficient is Allah as a disposer of affairs﴾ – therefore matters are to be referred to Him and left to Him, so He will direct them in a way that is in the best interests of the individual, because He knows what is in the best interests of His slave, whereas the individual may not know, and He is able to bring it about in a way that the individual cannot. Allah is more merciful towards His slave than he himself or his parents are, and He is more kind than anyone else, especially in the case of the chosen ones among His slaves, who He has constantly been taking care of and bestowing blessings upon them, both visible

and hidden, especially when He has commanded him to leave his affairs to Him and promised to take care of him.

When a person has put his trust in Allah in that manner, then do not ask about how every endeavour becomes easy, every difficult task becomes smooth, every calamity becomes bearable, every stressful situation is alleviated, all needs are met, blessings come down, trouble is warded off and evils are averted. Then you will see how the weak slave who delegated all his affairs to his master will be able to achieve many things that a group of people could not achieve, for Allah will make easy for him that which is too difficult for the toughest and strongest of men to do. And it is Allah Whose help we seek.

﴿ مَّا جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لِرَجُلٍ مِّن قَلْبَيْنِ فِى جَوْفِهِۦ ۚ وَمَا جَعَلَ أَزْوَٰجَكُمُ ٱلَّٰٓـِٔى تُظَٰهِرُونَ مِنْهُنَّ أُمَّهَٰتِكُمْ ۚ وَمَا جَعَلَ أَدْعِيَآءَكُمْ أَبْنَآءَكُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ قَوْلُكُم بِأَفْوَٰهِكُمْ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَقُولُ ٱلْحَقَّ وَهُوَ يَهْدِى ٱلسَّبِيلَ ﴿٤﴾ ٱدْعُوهُمْ لِءَابَآئِهِمْ هُوَ أَقْسَطُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ تَعْلَمُوٓا۟ ءَابَآءَهُمْ فَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ فِى ٱلدِّينِ وَمَوَٰلِيكُمْ ۚ وَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَآ أَخْطَأْتُم بِهِۦ وَلَٰكِن مَّا تَعَمَّدَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٤-٥)

33:4. Allah has not made for any man two hearts inside him;[50] nor has He made your wives whom you divorce by *dhihâr*[51] your

[50] What is meant is that there cannot coexist in a person's heart faith and disbelief, guidance and misguidance, repentance and persistence in sin, nor does anyone possess two hearts, one for faith and one for disbelief. (al-Qurṭubi) The verse then goes on to state that, likewise, the wife divorced by dhihâr does not become a mother to her husband, for no man can have two mothers, and no man can be the son of two men, his natural father and his adoptive father. (ash-Shawkâni)

[51] Dhihâr is the unlawful act of saying to one's spouse by way of divorce: "You are as impermissible for me [to enjoy intimately] as my mother" – and similar statements.

mothers; nor has He made your adopted sons your sons [in reality]. These are mere words that you utter. But Allah speaks the truth and He guides to the [right] path.

33:5. Call them [adopted sons] after their [real] fathers; that is more appropriate before Allah. If you do not know who their fathers are, then they are your brothers in faith and your allies. There is no sin on you if you make a mistake in that regard, but [you are accountable] for what your hearts deliberately intend. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Here Allah (ﷻ) rebukes His slaves for saying things that have no basis in reality, for He did not decree them to be as they describe them, and such words are lies and fabrications that may lead to evil consequences. This is a general principle that is applicable to all kinds of speech and speaking of things that are not real.

But He singles out the things mentioned because they happen and there is a great need for discussion and explanation of them. Hence He says:

﴿Allah has not made for any man two hearts inside him﴾. This does not happen, so beware of saying of anyone that he has two hearts inside him, for then you would be telling lies about what Allah has created.

﴿nor has He made your wives whom you divorce by dhihâr﴾ that is, by saying to one's wife, "You are to me like my mother's back (*dhahr ummi*)" or "like my mother". Allah has not made them ﴿your mothers﴾, for your mother is the one who gave birth to you, and is the woman who has the most sanctity in relation to you and is the most prohibited for you in marriage, whereas your wife is the most permissible of women for you. So how can you liken something to its opposite?

This is not permissible, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿As for those among you who divorce their wives by likening them to their mothers, they are not their mothers; none can be their mothers

except those who gave them birth. Verily, they utter words that are abhorrent and false...﴾ *(al-Mujādilah 58: 2)*

﴿nor has He made your adopted sons your sons [in reality]﴾. The adopted son is someone whom a man named after himself when he was not his real son, or who was named after a man because he had adopted him, as was the practice during the pre-Islamic period and the beginning of Islam.

But Allah (ﷻ) wanted to put a stop to this practice and abolish it, but before doing so He highlighted its abhorrent nature, because it is invalid and is a lie, and anything that is invalid and a lie is not to be found in the laws of Allah and His slaves should not do such things.

So Allah (ﷻ) tells us: Allah has not made adopted sons whom you claim as your own or who are attributed to you your real sons, for your real sons are those whom you fathered and who come from you. As for these adopted sons, they were fathered by others, and Allah has not made the one like the other.

﴿These﴾ namely the things that you say about the adopted son, describing him as the son of the one who claimed him as his son, or saying that his father is So-and-so (the man who adopted him),
﴿are mere words that you utter﴾ that is, words that have no basis in reality and are of no significance.
﴿But Allah speaks the truth﴾ that is, that which is certain and true. Therefore He instructs you to follow Him in His word and His law, for His word is true and His law is true, and false words and deeds cannot be attributed to Him in any way whatsoever, for they are not part of His guidance, as He only guides to the straight path and the ways of truth.

Although that occurred by His will, His will includes everything that happens, both good and bad.

Then He clearly states that they must give up this false practice, which includes false words: and He says

﴿Call them [adopted sons] after their [real] fathers﴾ who fathered them in a real sense.
﴿that is more appropriate﴾ that is, more just, more fair and more proper ﴿before Allah﴾.
﴿If you do not know who their fathers are﴾ that is, who their real fathers are
﴿then they are your brothers in faith and your allies﴾ that is, they are your brothers in the religion of Allah, and your allies in that regard, so call them true brothers and allies in faith; it is essential to stop attributing them to their adoptive fathers, for doing so is wrong.

As for calling them after their real fathers, if their fathers are known then they must be called after them, but if they are not known, then we should limit it to calling them according to what is known about them, which is that they are brothers in faith and allies. So do not think that if you do not know who their fathers are, that it is an excuse to call them after those who adopted them, because that is not appropriate and the problem cannot be resolved in that manner.

﴿There is no sin on you if you make a mistake in that regard﴾ that is, there is to be no blame if, by a slip of the tongue, someone calls a man after the one who adopted him, if it was widely believed that a particular man was his father so they called him after that man, when in reality he was not his father. There is no blame on you for doing that, if it is a mistake.
﴿but [you are accountable] for what your hearts deliberately intend﴾ of saying things that are not permissible.
﴿And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful﴾ – for He forgave you and showed mercy towards you, as He did not punish you for what is in the past, and He overlooks your mistakes in that regard and has mercy on you, as He has explained to you the rulings that are appropriate with regard to your religious and worldly affairs. To Him be praise.

﴿ٱلنَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ ۖ وَأَزْوَٰجُهُۥٓ أُمَّهَٰتُهُمْ ۗ وَأُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ فِى كِتَٰبِ ٱللَّهِ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُهَٰجِرِينَ إِلَّآ أَن تَفْعَلُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰٓ أَوْلِيَآئِكُم مَّعْرُوفًا ۚ كَانَ ذَٰلِكَ فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مَسْطُورًا ۝٦﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٦)

33:6. The Prophet has a greater claim over the believers [and is closer to them] than their own selves,[52] and his wives are their mothers. And kindred by blood are nearer to one another [regarding inheritance], according to the decree ordained by Allah, than fellow believers and emigrants,[53] except that you may show kindness [by making bequests] to close friends or allies. That is written in the Book [of our decrees].[54]

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells the believers something by which they may recognise the true status of the Messenger (ﷺ) and interact with him accordingly.

﴿The Prophet has a greater claim over the believers [and is closer to them] than their own selves﴾. The closest of things to any person is his own self, but the Messenger (ﷺ) is closer to him than his own self, because he showed them sincerity, compassion and kindness that proved him to be the most merciful and kindest of all people. Thus they owe the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) more than they owe anyone

[52] That is, the believers should give precedence to what the Prophet (ﷺ) decrees over what anyone else decrees and whatever they themselves desire, and they should love him more than they love themselves.

[53] In the earliest days, Muslims would inherit from one another on the basis of Hijrah (migration) and faith, not on the basis of blood ties, then revelation came to abrogate that ruling and restrict inheritance to those related by blood.

[54] That is, al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfoodh.

else, for not the slightest good reached them and not the slightest harm was warded off from them but it was because of him.

Therefore it became a must on them, in the event of a conflict between what they or any of the people want and what the Messenger (ﷺ) wants, that precedence must be given to what the Messenger (ﷺ) wants, and the word of the Messenger (ﷺ) should not be contradicted by the view of anyone, no matter who he is. They should be ready to sacrifice themselves, their wealth and their children to protect him, and give precedence to loving him over loving others; they should not speak until he speaks or put themselves forward before him.

The Prophet (ﷺ) is a father to the believers, as is understood from the recitation of some of his Companions; he takes care of them as a father takes care of his children.

One of the consequences of his being a father to them is that his wives are their mothers; that is, in terms of sanctity, respect and honour, not in terms of it being permissible to be alone with them or regarding them as *maḥrams*. It is as if this was an introduction to what follows of the story of Zayd ibn Ḥârithah (*raḍiya Allâhu 'anhu* – may Allah be pleased with him), who was previously known as Zayd ibn Muhammad, until Allah revealed the words:

﴿Muhammad is not the father of any man among you...﴾ *(al-Aḥzâb 33: 40)*

Thus He severed the father-son connection between them.

In this verse, Allah tells us that all the believers are the children of the Messenger (ﷺ), so there is no superiority of any of them over another. Even if the claim of adoption is ended, the bond of faith is not severed, so there is no need to grieve or be sad.

The fact that the wives of the Messengers are mothers of the believers means that it is not permissible for anyone to marry them after he dies, as Allah clearly states:

﴿...It is not proper for you to cause annoyance to the Messenger of Allah or to ever marry his wives after he is gone...﴾ *(al-Aḥzâb 33: 53)*

﴿And kindred by blood﴾ that is, relatives, whether close or distant ﴿are nearer to one another [regarding inheritance], according to the decree ordained by Allah﴾ that is, according to His ruling. So they inherit from one another and should honour one another, for they are more entitled to alliance and support. Adopted sons used to inherit on the basis of adoption instead of blood relatives, but Allah put an end to that, and ordained that inheritance should be for blood relatives, out of kindness and on the basis of wisdom. If the matter had continued as it was, it would have led to a great deal of corruption, evil and trickery to deprive blood relatives of inheritance.
﴿than fellow believers and emigrants﴾ – whether the relatives are believers who migrated or did not migrate, blood relatives take precedence with regard to inheritance.

This verse offers proof that relatives may be in charge of and have authority over the affairs of their relatives, as in the case of marriage, property and other matters.

﴿except that you may show kindness [by making bequests] to close friends or allies﴾ that is, they have no allocated share of inheritance; rather this is the matter of choice: if you wish you may give them something and show them kindness on your part.

﴿That﴾ namely the rulings mentioned above
﴿is written in the Book [of our decrees]﴾ that is, it has been written, ordained and decreed by Allah, so it must be implemented.

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِيثَاقَهُمْ وَمِنكَ وَمِن نُّوحٍ وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۖ وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُم مِّيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا ﴿٧﴾ لِّيَسْأَلَ الصَّادِقِينَ عَن صِدْقِهِمْ ۚ وَأَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿٨﴾﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٧-٨)

33:7. And [remember] when We took their covenant from the Prophets, and from you [O Muhammad], from Nooḥ, Ibrâheem, Moosâ and 'Eesâ ibn Maryam; We took from them a solemn covenant.

33:8. For Allah will question the truthful about their sincerity; and He has prepared for the disbelievers a painful punishment.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He took a covenant from the Prophets in general, and from the Messengers of strong will – who are the five mentioned here – in particular. That was a solemn covenant and a binding pledge to support the religion of Allah and strive in His cause. This is the path that was followed by the earlier Prophets, until the series of Prophets ended with the leader and the best of them, namely Muhammad (ﷺ). And Allah commands people to follow their example.

Allah will question the Prophets and their followers about this solemn covenant: did they fulfil it and were they true to it, so that He might reward them with paradise, or did they disbelieve, in which case He will inflict upon them the painful punishment? Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah...﴾ *(al-Aḥzâb 33: 23)*

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱذْكُرُواْ نِعْمَةَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَآءَتْكُمْ جُنُودٌ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا وَجُنُودًا لَّمْ تَرَوْهَا ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا ﴿٩﴾ إِذْ جَآءُوكُم مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ وَمِنْ أَسْفَلَ مِنكُمْ وَإِذْ زَاغَتِ ٱلْأَبْصَٰرُ وَبَلَغَتِ ٱلْقُلُوبُ ٱلْحَنَاجِرَ وَتَظُنُّونَ بِٱللَّهِ ٱلظُّنُونَا ﴿١٠﴾ هُنَالِكَ ٱبْتُلِىَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَزُلْزِلُواْ زِلْزَالًا شَدِيدًا ﴿١١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٩-١١)

33:9. O you who believe, remember the favour that Allah bestowed upon you, when [enemy] troops came against you, but We sent against them a strong wind and forces that you could not see. And Allah sees well all that you do.

33:10. That was when they came upon you from above you and from below you, your eyes stared fixedly with horror, and your hearts came up into your throats [out of fear], and you began to entertain various thoughts about Allah.

33:11. In that situation the believers were tested and severely shaken.

Here Allah reminds His believing slaves of His blessings to them, and urges them to give thanks for it, for the troops of the people of Makkah and the Hejaz came to them from above them, and the people of Najd came to them from beneath them, and they resolved to eradicate the Messenger (ﷺ) and his Companions. That was during the Battle of al-Khandaq (the Trench), when the disbelievers were supported by the groups of Jews who lived around Madinah; they came with huge numbers of troops.

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) dug a trench around Madinah, and the pressure on the Muslims grew intense, to the point that until their hearts were in their mouths and some of them began to entertain all sorts of negative thoughts, because of what they saw of the measures being taken against them and the calamities intensifying. The siege of Madinah went on for a long time, and the situation was as Allah describes:

﴿your eyes stared fixedly with horror, and your hearts came up into your throats [out of fear], and you began to entertain various thoughts about Allah﴾ that is, you thought negative thoughts, that Allah would not grant victory to His religion or perfect His word.
﴿In that situation the believers were tested﴾ by this great turmoil ﴿and severely shaken﴾ by fear, anxiety and hunger, so as to highlight the level of faith and increase their certainty. Thus – praise be to Allah

– the high level of their faith and certainty became apparent, by means of which they surpassed the earlier and later nations.

When the turmoil intensified and hardship grew worse, their faith became certain. ﴿When the believers saw the confederates, they said: This is what Allah and his Messenger had promised us, and the promise of Allah and His Messenger is true. And it only increased them in faith and submission﴾ *(33: 22).*

The hypocrisy of the hypocrites, which they had been concealing, also became apparent:

﴿ وَإِذْ يَقُولُ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ وَٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ مَّا وَعَدَنَا ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥٓ إِلَّا غُرُورًا ﴿١٢﴾ ﴾

(سورة الأحزاب: ١٢)

33:12. And [remember] when the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a disease said: Allah and His Messenger made promises to us only in order to deceive us!

This is the usual way of the hypocrite at times of hardship and trials. His faith is not steadfast, and he looks at passing events and reaches the wrong conclusion in an immature manner.

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالَت طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ يَثْرِبَ لَا مُقَامَ لَكُمْ فَٱرْجِعُوا۟ ۚ وَيَسْتَـْٔذِنُ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمُ ٱلنَّبِىَّ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّ بُيُوتَنَا عَوْرَةٌ ۛ وَمَا هِىَ بِعَوْرَةٍ ۛ إِن يُرِيدُونَ إِلَّا فِرَارًا ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ١٣)

33:13. And [remember] when a group among them said: O people of Yathrib, you cannot withstand [the enemy onslaught], so go back. Another group asked the Prophet's permission to leave,

saying: Our houses are exposed, although they were not exposed; they only wanted to flee.

﴿And [remember] when a group among them﴾ namely the hypocrites, after they panicked and grew impatient, and tried to discourage others too. They were not steadfast themselves, and they did not spare other people from their evil. This group said:
﴿O people of Yathrib﴾, meaning, O people of Madinah. They only used the old name of the city, which may indicate that religious commitment and bonds of faith had no value in their hearts, and what made them do that was the fear they felt in their hearts.

﴿O people of Yathrib, you cannot withstand [the enemy onslaught]﴾ that is, you had better leave the positions to which you came outside Madinah. They had camped near the trench, outside the city.
﴿so go back﴾ to Madinah. This group tried to discourage people from engaging in jihad and told them that they had no strength to fight the enemy, and that they should refrain from fighting. This was the worst of the groups and was the group that caused the most harm.

There was another group which was less evil than them; they acted in a cowardly manner and panicked, and they withdrew from the ranks, giving false excuses. They are the ones of whom Allah said:
﴿Another group asked the Prophet's permission to leave, saying: Our houses are exposed﴾ that is, they are in danger and we fear that the enemy may attack them whilst we are away, so give us permission to go back to them and guard them. But they were lying when they said that.
﴿although they were not exposed﴾ that is, their only aim was ﴿to flee﴾ but they used these words as a means and as an excuse. These people were lacking in faith and were unable to be steadfast at times of turmoil and calamity.

﴿ وَلَوْ دُخِلَتْ عَلَيْهِم مِّنْ أَقْطَارِهَا ثُمَّ سُئِلُوا الْفِتْنَةَ لَآتَوْهَا وَمَا تَلَبَّثُوا بِهَا إِلَّا يَسِيرًا ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ١٤)

33:14. If the city had been stormed from all directions and they had been incited [by the enemy] to apostatise and rebel, they would have done so with very little hesitation.

That is, if the disbelievers had entered the city from all directions and taken control of it – Allah forbid – then these people were asked ﴿to apostatise and rebel﴾, that is, to turn away from their religion and go back to the religion of the invaders,
﴿they would have done so with very little hesitation﴾ that is, they would have hastened to do so.

In other words, they did not have any strong or solid commitment to religion; rather as soon as the enemy gained the upper hand and gave them what they wanted, they would go along with them in their disbelief. This is how they were.

﴿ وَلَقَدْ كَانُوا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ مِن قَبْلُ لَا يُوَلُّونَ الْأَدْبَارَ ۚ وَكَانَ عَهْدُ اللَّهِ مَسْئُولًا ﴿١٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ١٥)

33:15. Yet before that they had made a covenant with Allah that they would not turn and flee, and a covenant with Allah will [surely] be asked about.

Yet that was at a time when ﴿they had made a covenant with Allah that they would not turn and flee, and a covenant with Allah will [surely] be asked about﴾. He will ask them about that covenant,

and He will find that they broke it, so how do they think their Lord will deal with them?

﴿قُل لَّن يَنفَعَكُمُ ٱلْفِرَارُ إِن فَرَرْتُم مِّنَ ٱلْمَوْتِ أَوِ ٱلْقَتْلِ وَإِذًا لَّا تُمَتَّعُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٦﴾﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ١٦)

33:16. Say [O Muhammad]: Fleeing will not benefit you. If you manage to escape death or slaughter, you will only be left to enjoy life for a little while.

﴿Say [O Muhammad]﴾ to them, criticising their flight and telling them that it will not avail them in any way:

﴿Fleeing will not benefit you. If you manage to escape death or slaughter﴾, even if you remain in your homes, those for whom death is decreed will go forth to the place of their death.

Taking proper measures of protection may benefit a person, if that is not contrary to the divine will and decree, but when the divine will and decree come to pass, then any measures will be to no avail, and every means one thinks could save him will not do so.

﴿If﴾ when you flee, you manage to save yourself from death and slaughter, and enjoy life, ﴿you will only be left to enjoy life for a little while﴾ – this is a temporary type of pleasure that is not worth fleeing for and abandoning the command of Allah, thus missing out on eternal bliss in an abode of eternal delight.

﴿قُلْ مَن ذَا ٱلَّذِى يَعْصِمُكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ سُوٓءًا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ رَحْمَةً وَلَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿١٧﴾﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ١٧)

33:17. Say: Who is there that can protect you from Allah if it be His will to harm you or if it be His will to show you mercy? And they will not find for themselves, besides Allah, any protector or helper.

Then Allah confirms that means and measures will not avail a person at all, if Allah intends ill for him:

﴿Say: Who is there that can protect you from Allah if it be His will to harm you or if it be His will to show you mercy?﴾ For He is the One Who gives and withholds, causes harm or grants benefit; no one brings good except He and no one wards off evil except He.

﴿And they will not find for themselves, besides Allah, any protector﴾ to protect them and bring them benefit

﴿or helper﴾ to help them and ward off harm from them.

So they should comply with the commands of the One in Whose Hand alone is control of all their affairs, Whose will is always done and Whose decree is always carried out, for no ally or helper can benefit a person if he abandons his alliance with Allah and is deprived of His support.

﴿ قَدْ يَعْلَمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُعَوِّقِينَ مِنكُمْ وَٱلْقَآئِلِينَ لِإِخْوَٰنِهِمْ هَلُمَّ إِلَيْنَا ۖ وَلَا يَأْتُونَ ٱلْبَأْسَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٨﴾ أَشِحَّةً عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَإِذَا جَآءَ ٱلْخَوْفُ رَأَيْتَهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ تَدُورُ أَعْيُنُهُمْ كَٱلَّذِى يُغْشَىٰ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْمَوْتِ ۖ فَإِذَا ذَهَبَ ٱلْخَوْفُ سَلَقُوكُم بِأَلْسِنَةٍ حِدَادٍ أَشِحَّةً عَلَى ٱلْخَيْرِ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا۟ فَأَحْبَطَ ٱللَّهُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرًا ﴿١٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ١٨-١٩)

33:18. Verily Allah knows those among you who discourage others and those who say to their brothers: Come and join us,[55] and they do not take part in the fighting except a little,

33:19. begrudging you any help. Then when danger threatens, you see them looking to you, their eyes rolling like one who is overshadowed by death. Yet when the danger has passed, they lash out at you with sharp tongues, begrudging you all that is good. Such people have not truly believed, so Allah will cause their deeds to come to nothing. That is easy for Allah.

Then Allah (ﷻ) warns those who discourage others and try to weaken their resolve, as He says:

﴿Verily Allah knows those among you who discourage others﴾ from going out, among those who have not yet gone out

﴿and those who say to their brothers﴾ who have gone out: ﴿Come and join us﴾ that is, come back; this is like what they said previously: ﴿O people of Yathrib, you cannot withstand [the enemy onslaught], so go back﴾ *(33: 13)*.

In addition to their discouragement and attempts to weaken the people's resolve, ﴿they do not take part in the fighting﴾ that is, they do not take part in the jihad themselves, ﴿except a little﴾. They are the keenest of people to stay behind, because they have no motive to fight, such as faith and patience, and because they have reasons to be cowardly, namely hypocrisy and lack of faith.

﴿begrudging you any help﴾ whether that is physical help, by joining the fight, or financial help, by spending on the cause. So they do not engage in jihad with their wealth or with their own selves.

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[55] This refers to when the hypocrites sought to discourage others from joining the Prophet (ﷺ) in the defence of Madinah when Quraysh wanted to attack the city. They were leaving the defensive positions and calling on others to join them in doing so.

﴿Then when danger threatens, you see them looking to you﴾ like one who is overshadowed by death, because of their extreme cowardice which has shaken them to the core and the anxiety which has stunned them and their fear that they may be forced to do that which they dislike, namely fighting.

﴿Yet when the danger has passed﴾ and they have become safe and secure,
﴿they lash out at you with sharp tongues﴾ that is, they address you, speaking harshly to you, and start making claims that are not true, and when you hear them you think that they are courageous and daring ﴿begrudging you all that is good﴾ and reluctant to do anything good that is expected of them. This is the worst thing a person can do, to be reluctant to do as he is instructed and to be stingy with his wealth and not spend it in the proper manner, stingy in terms of physical effort and refusing to engage with the enemies of Allah or call people to the path of Allah, and stingy by refusing to benefit others by means of their position, knowledge, advice or opinion.
﴿Such people have not truly believed﴾ – and because of their lack of faith, Allah causes their deeds to come to nothing. ﴿That is easy for Allah﴾.

As for the true believers, Allah protects them from this stingy attitude and enables them to do as they are commanded, by offering their physical effort in fighting in His cause, to make His word supreme, and by offering their wealth in good causes, and by using their status and knowledge to benefit others.

﴿ يَحْسَبُونَ ٱلْأَحْزَابَ لَمْ يَذْهَبُوا۟ ۖ وَإِن يَأْتِ ٱلْأَحْزَابُ يَوَدُّوا۟ لَوْ أَنَّهُم بَادُونَ فِى ٱلْأَعْرَابِ يَسْـَٔلُونَ عَنْ أَنۢبَآئِكُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ كَانُوا۟ فِيكُم مَّا قَـٰتَلُوٓا۟ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٢٠﴾ ﴾

(سورة الأحزاب: ٢٠)

33:20. They think that the confederates have not yet withdrawn; if the confederates did come again, they would wish that they were in the desert with the Bedouin, asking for news of you [from a safe distance], and if they remained among you, they would fight but little.

﴿They think that the confederates have not yet withdrawn﴾ that is, the hypocrites think that these confederates who came together to fight the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and his Companions will not leave until they eradicate the Muslims. But they were disappointed and their calculations proved to be wrong.

﴿if the confederates did come again, they would wish that they were in the desert with the Bedouin, asking for news of you [from a safe distance]﴾ that is, if the confederates came back a second time, like the first time, these hypocrites would wish that they were not in Madinah or anywhere near it, and that they were with the Bedouin in the desert, seeking news of you and asking about you, trying to find out what happened to you.

Away with them, let them perish! For they are not people who one should care whether they are present or not.
﴿and if they remained among you, they would fight but little﴾. So do not pay any attention to them and do not feel sorry to lose them.

﴿ لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٢١)

33:21. Verily in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example for those who look with hope to Allah and the Last Day, and remember Allah much.

﴿Verily in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example﴾ for he himself was present in the battlefield, and he himself took up a position, ready to fight, for he was the perfect leader and courageous hero. So how can you be so reluctant to join the fight when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) himself was involved in it? Therefore you must follow his example in this matter and others.

The scholars of *uṣool* quote this verse to prove that the Messenger's deeds constitute evidence for shar'i rulings and that in principle his Ummah is subject to the same rulings as him, unless there is clear evidence to prove that some rulings are applicable to him alone.

Examples are of two types: good examples and bad examples.

The good example is to be found in the Messenger (ﷺ), because the one who follows his example will be on the path that leads to the blessings of Allah, which is the straight path.

As for following the example of others in matters that are contrary to his teachings, that is following bad examples, such as the words of the disbelievers when the Messengers called them to follow their example and they said:

﴿...We found our forefathers following a certain path, and we are following in their footsteps.﴾ *(az-Zukhruf 43: 22)*

This good example is only followed by those who are guided and enabled to follow it, those who look with hope to Allah and the Last Day, because what they have of faith, fear of Allah, hope for His reward and fear of His punishment motivates them to follow the example of the Messenger (ﷺ).

﴿وَلَمَّا رَءَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ٱلْأَحْزَابَ قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا مَا وَعَدَنَا ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَصَدَقَ ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ ۚ وَمَا زَادَهُمْ إِلَّآ إِيمَٰنًا وَتَسْلِيمًا ﴿٢٢﴾﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٢٢)

33:22. When the believers saw the confederates, they said: This is what Allah and his Messenger had promised us, and the promise of Allah and His Messenger is true. And it only increased them in faith and submission.

Having mentioned the attitude of the hypocrites at times of fear, Allah (ﷻ) now mentions the attitude of the believers, as He says:

﴿When the believers saw the confederates﴾ who had come together and taken up their positions (outside Madinah), and fear was at its peak,

﴿they said: This is what Allah and his Messenger had promised us﴾ when He said:

﴿Or do you think that you will enter paradise without such [trials] as came to those who passed away before you? They encountered suffering and adversity, and were so shaken in spirit that even the Messenger and the believers who were with him said: When will the help of Allah come? Verily, the help of Allah is [always] near.﴾ *(al-Baqarah 2: 214)*

﴿and the promise of Allah and His Messenger is true﴾ for we have seen what He foretold.

﴿And it﴾ namely this matter ﴿only increased them in faith﴾ in their hearts ﴿and submission﴾ in terms of their physical actions and surrender to the command of Allah.

﴿مِّنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا۟ مَا عَٰهَدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّن قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُۥ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَنتَظِرُ ۖ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا۟ تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٢٣﴾﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٢٣)

33:23. Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah. Some of them have fulfilled their pledge

and others are still waiting, and they have never wavered in the least.

Having mentioned that the hypocrites gave their promise to Allah not to turn and flee, but they broke that promise, Allah now tells us how the believers fulfilled it:

﴿Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah﴾ that is, they fulfilled their covenant perfectly and completely, offering their souls in pursuit of His pleasure and in obedience to Him.

﴿Some of them have fulfilled their pledge﴾ that is, their wish and goal, by carrying out their duty, and they were killed in Allah's cause, or they died having fulfilled their duties without falling short in any way, ﴿and others are still waiting﴾ to carry out their duties in full, for they are already engaged in carrying out their duties and fulfilling their covenant, but they have not yet completed it. These people are hoping to complete it and striving hard to attain that.

﴿and they have never wavered in the least﴾ as others did; rather they are still adhering to the pledge and have never faltered or changed. These are real men, and others only appear outwardly to be men, as they have fallen short in terms of manly characteristics.

﴿لِّيَجْزِيَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ بِصِدْقِهِمْ وَيُعَذِّبَ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ إِن شَآءَ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٢٤﴾﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٢٤)

33:24. [Such trials are ordained] so that Allah may reward those who are sincere for their sincerity and punish the hypocrites, if He so wills, or turn to them in mercy [and guide them to repentance]. Verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

﴿[Such trials are ordained] so that Allah may reward those who are sincere for their sincerity﴾ that is, because of their sincerity in word and deed, and their doing things for the sake of Allah, and being the same both outwardly and inwardly. Allah (ﷻ) tells us elsewhere that He will say:

﴿...This is the day when the truthful will benefit from their truthfulness; theirs will be gardens through which rivers flow, to abide therein forever. Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. And that is the supreme triumph.﴾ *(al-Mâ'idah 5: 119)*

In other words: We ordained these turmoils, trials and calamities in order to differentiate the sincere from the insincere. Then Allah will reward the sincere for their sincerity, and He will ﴿punish the hypocrites﴾ who changed their attitude and their actions at times of turmoil, and did not fulfil the pledge that they had made to Allah. ﴿if He so wills﴾ that is, if it is His will to punish them, because it was not His will to guide them. Rather he knew that there was nothing good in them, therefore He did not guide them ﴿or turn to them in mercy﴾ by guiding them to repent and turn back to Him. This is more likely to be the case, because Allah is the Most Generous. Hence the verse ends with two divine names that are indicative of forgiveness, grace and kindness, as He says: ﴿Verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful﴾ – He forgives the sins of those who transgressed against themselves, even if they commit many sins, if they turn to Him in repentance, and He is ﴿Most Merciful﴾ to them, as He enables them to repent, then He accepts that repentance from them and conceals the sins they committed.

﴿وَرَدَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِغَيْظِهِمْ لَمْ يَنَالُوا۟ خَيْرًا ۚ وَكَفَى ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ٱلْقِتَالَ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ قَوِيًّا عَزِيزًا ﴿٢٥﴾﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٢٥)

33:25. Allah turned back the disbelievers in their fury, without any gain; thus Allah spared the believers from fighting. Allah is Strong, Almighty.

﴿Allah turned back the disbelievers in their fury, without any gain﴾ that is, He turned them back empty-handed, and they were not able to achieve their goal (of defeating the Muslims) despite all their rage and fury, even though they had the capability to do that and were certain that they would have the upper hand. They were deceived by their large numbers and were very proud of the confederacy that they had put together; they exulted in their numbers and equipment.

But Allah sent against them a mighty wind, which was the east wind, and it shook their camp, brought down their tents, overturned their cooking pots, caused a great deal of disturbance and struck fear into their hearts. So they left disappointed. This was the help that Allah granted to His believing slaves.

﴿thus Allah spared the believers from fighting﴾ by means of what He made available to them of ordinary measures and extraordinary divine help.

﴿Allah is Strong, Almighty﴾, and no one opposes Him but he is defeated; no one seeks His help but he becomes victorious. Nothing is beyond Him if He wills it, and power and might are of no avail to those who possess them if Allah does not help them by His power and might.

﴿وَأَنزَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَٰهَرُوهُم مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مِن صَيَاصِيهِمْ وَقَذَفَ فِى قُلُوبِهِمُ ٱلرُّعْبَ فَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ وَتَأْسِرُونَ فَرِيقًا ﴿٢٦﴾﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٢٦)

33:26. He brought down from their fortresses those among the People of the Book[56] who had supported them, and cast terror into their hearts, so that some of them you killed and others you took captive.

﴿He brought down from their fortresses those among the People of the Book﴾ namely the Jews
﴿who had supported them﴾ that is, helped them. They were defeated and were subject to the rule of Islam.
﴿and cast terror into their hearts﴾ so that they had no strength to fight; rather they surrendered and submitted, and were humiliated
﴿so that some of them you killed﴾ namely the men of fighting age
﴿and others you took captive﴾ this refers to the rest of them, women and children.

﴿ وَأَوْرَثَكُمْ أَرْضَهُمْ وَدِيَارَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ وَأَرْضًا لَّمْ تَطَئُوهَا ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرًا ﴿٢٧﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٢٧)

33:27. He caused you to inherit their land, their houses and their possessions, and a land on which you had not yet set foot. And Allah has power over all things.

﴿He caused you to inherit﴾ that is, He granted to you as booty
﴿their land, their houses and their possessions, and a land on which you had not yet set foot﴾ that is, land which, because it was so dear to its owners, you had not yet set foot, then Allah made you victorious and caused them to be defeated, and He granted you their wealth as booty, and you killed some of them and took others captive.

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[56] This refers to the tribe of Banu Quraydhah who switched sides when the confederates besieged Madinah, breaking their covenant with the Muslims and supporting their enemies against them.

﴿And Allah has power over all things﴾ – nothing is beyond Him and by His might He decrees for you what He decrees.

This group of the People of the Book was the Jewish tribe of Banu Quraydhah, who lived in a town not far from Madinah. When the Prophet (ﷺ) migrated to Madinah, he made a treaty with them, that he would not fight them and they would not fight him, and they would continue to follow their religion, and nothing would change for them.

But when, on the Day of al-Khandaq, they saw the confederates who had united against the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and how numerous they were in comparison to the small numbers of the Muslims, they thought that they would eradicate the Messenger (ﷺ) and the believers. This idea was reinforced by the lies of some of their leaders, so they broke the treaty that they had with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and took the side of the polytheists in the fight against him.

When Allah defeated the polytheists, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) focused on fighting these Jews. So he besieged them in their fortresses until they agreed to accept the verdict of Sa'd ibn Mu'âdh (رضي الله عنه). His verdict was that their fighting men were to be killed, their women and children were to be taken captive, and their wealth was to be seized as booty.

Thus Allah completed His favour upon His Messenger (ﷺ) and the believers, and showered them with abundant blessings, and gave them the joy of seeing their enemies humiliated, with some of them killed and others taken captive. For Allah is constantly kind to His believing slaves.

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ قُل لِّأَزْوَٰجِكَ إِن كُنتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا فَتَعَالَيْنَ أُمَتِّعْكُنَّ وَأُسَرِّحْكُنَّ سَرَاحًا جَمِيلًا ﴿٢٨﴾ وَإِن كُنتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَٱلدَّارَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْمُحْسِنَٰتِ مِنكُنَّ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٢٨-٢٩)

33:28. O Prophet, say to your wives: If you seek the life of this world and its splendour, then come, I will give you a gift [as compensation] and let you go in an amicable manner.

33:29. But if you seek Allah and His Messenger, and the final abode, then verily Allah has prepared for those among you who do good an immense reward.

When the wives of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) began to make demands on him with regard to maintenance and clothing, they asked for something that he was not able to do all the time, but they all persisted in their demands, which caused him some distress, to the extent that he kept away from them for a month.

Allah wanted to make things easier for His Messenger (ﷺ) and to raise his wives in status, and remove from them anything that could detract from their reward. Therefore He instructed His Messenger (ﷺ) to give them the choice, as He said:

﴿O Prophet, say to your wives: If you seek the life of this world and its splendour﴾ that is, if you have no desire other than that and your happiness is connected to having its splendour, and your anger is connected to that not being available, then I have no need of you if you are like that.

﴿then come, I will give you a gift [as compensation]﴾ that is, I will give you something of what I possess of worldly goods

﴿and let you go in an amicable manner﴾ that is, I will separate from you without argument or trading insults; rather I will do so in an easy manner and willingly, before the problem escalates to an inappropriate level.

﴿But if you seek Allah and His Messenger, and the final abode﴾ that is, if these are your goal and ultimate aim, and if you prefer Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) and paradise, and you do not worry about whether you have plenty or little in this world, or if you have ease or hardship, and you are content with whatever the Messenger of Allah

(ﷺ) can give you, and you do not make demands on him and put pressure on him,

﴿then verily Allah has prepared for those among you who do good an immense reward﴾ – the reward is connected to their being among those who do good, because the promise of reward is connected to doing good, not to being the wives of the Messenger (ﷺ). Simply being his wives is not enough; rather nothing is to any avail without doing good. So the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) gave them the choice, and they all chose Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), and the final abode, and not one of them differed. May Allah be pleased with them all.

From the giving of this choice to his wives, we learn the following:

- Allah cared for His Messenger (ﷺ) and came to his aid, because Allah did not want him to be in this difficult situation with a lot of worldly demands from his wives.
- Allah wanted to keep him away from any wife who preferred this world to Allah, His Messenger (ﷺ) and the final abode, and to prevent him from staying with such a wife.
- Allah wanted to save his wives from sin and from being exposed to the wrath of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). Therefore He protected them, by giving them this choice, from expressing discontent towards the Messenger (ﷺ), which would lead to him becoming displeased, for that would incur the wrath of Allah, and that would in turn lead to His punishment.
- This was a demonstration of their high status and high ambition, because Allah, His Messenger (ﷺ) and the final abode were their goal, not this world and its transient gains.
- Offering this choice prepared them to attain the most sublime levels in paradise, and to be his wives both in this world and the hereafter.
- It demonstrated that there was compatibility between him and them, because he was the most perfect of people, and Allah wanted his wives to be perfect, good and obedient.

﴿...good women are for good men and good men are for good women...﴾ *(an-Noor 24: 26)*

- This choice would bring about contentment, by means of which one would feel at ease and comfortable, and it would take away stinginess and discontent that would lead to anxiety, grief and worry.
- This choice of theirs was a means of increasing and multiplying their reward, and enabling them to reach a status that no other women could attain. Hence Allah said:

﴿يَٰنِسَآءَ ٱلنَّبِيِّ مَن يَأْتِ مِنكُنَّ بِفَٰحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ يُضَٰعَفْ لَهَا ٱلْعَذَابُ ضِعْفَيْنِ ۚ وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرًا ﴿٣٠﴾﴾ (سورة الأحزاب: ٣٠)

33:30. O wives of the Prophet, if any of you were to be guilty of manifestly immoral conduct, the punishment would be doubled for her, and that is easy for Allah.

When they chose Allah, His Messenger (ﷺ) and the final abode, Allah mentioned that they would have a multiple reward, and that their burden of sin would be multiplied if they were to commit sin, so as to make them more cautious and more grateful to Allah (ﷻ). Therefore He ordained that if any of them were to be guilty of manifestly immoral conduct, she would receive a double punishment.

Glossary of Islamic Terms*

abu (or *abi*)	أبو، أبي	father (of)
adhkār		See: *dhikr Allāh*
angel	ملاك	A being made of light who is totally obedient to Allah and has no free will. Allah has assigned some angels specific tasks, like those who record our good and bad deeds, the Angel of Death, the guardians of hell, etc.
banu (or *bani*)	بَنُو، بني	*lit.* 'children (of)'; *usu.* referring to a tribe that claims a common ancestor
barzakh	بَرْزَخ	An intermediate state between death and the Day of Resurrection; it is also said to be a 'place' where the souls of the deceased will remain until the blowing of the trumpet
basmalah	الْبَسْمَلَة	the Arabic noun that refers to the entire phrase *bismillāh ir-raḥmān ir-raḥeem* (in the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful)

* The Arabic words are transliterated according to the conventions of the Transliteration Chart found in this book. If a word has become part of the English language (that is, is found in a dictionary of Standard English), that spelling is used in this book and appears first in this Glossary, with the transliterated form in brackets after it.

dhikr Allâh	ذِكْرُ الله	remembrance of Allah; specifically, remembering Allah through praising and supplicating to Him
eemân	إيمان	faith; belief in all the six pillars of the creed of Islam
fiṭrah	فِطْرة	the natural inclination (of humans) instilled by Allah
Hadith *(ḥadeeth)*	حديث	the collected statements and actions of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that with the Qur'an form the basis of Islamic law
hadith *(ḥadeeth)*	حديث	a statement or action of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that was remembered and recorded by his Companions and followers
Hajj *(Ḥajj)*	حجّ	the major pilgrimage to the Sacred Mosque, site of the Kaaba in Makkah, to be undertaken by every able Muslim once in his or her lifetime
Hejaz *(Ḥijâz)*	حِجاز	the Western region of the Arabian Peninsula, which includes Makkah and Madinah
Hijrah	هِجْرة	migration, *esp.* the migration from Makkah to Madinah by Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and his Companions, which marks the start of the Islamic calendar
Iblees	إبليس	another name for Satan (Shayṭân) in Arabic
iḥsân	إحْسان	goodness, perfection, excellence; to worship Allah as if you see Him knowing that even if you do not see Him, He sees you
Jibreel	جِبْريل	the Arabic name for Gabriel (عليه السلام), the archangel who transmitted the verses of the Qur'an and other communications from Allah (ﷻ) to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)

jihad *(jihâd)*	جِهاد	struggle or striving (in Allah's cause)
jinn (plural of *jinni*)	جِنّ	non-human, rational beings created by Allah from fire, often referred to as 'demons' or 'devils'. They have free will like humans: some are Muslims, others disbelievers; some are obedient to Allah, others disobedient. Satan is a jinni. Some disobedient jinn mislead people into thinking that they can foretell the future, near or distant, or provide people with riches or some sort of power.
juz' (pl. *ajzâ'*)	جُزْء	a section of the Qur'an equal to one-thirtieth of the text
Kaaba (*Ka'bah*)	الكعبة	the House of Allah in Makkah, originally built by Prophets Ibrâheem and Ismâ'eel, which Muslims face when they pray
al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfoodh	اللَّوْح المحفوظ	the Preserved Tablet in Heaven on which Allah's words and decrees are written
maḥram	مَحْرَم	a degree of consanguinity precluding marriage; a man whom a woman may not marry due to the close blood or marriage relationship, e.g., her father, brother, son, uncle, or father-in-law
nafs	نَفْس	inner soul or self
qadr	الْقَدْر	divine predestination; destiny; power; exact measure
qiyâm al-layl	قيام الليل	*lit.* 'standing the night'; praying supererogatory prayers during the late night and early morning before fajr; see *tahajjud*

Quraysh	قُرَيْش	the dominant tribe in Makkah at the time of the Prophet's mission; their society was based on polytheism
Ramadan (*Ramaḍân*)	رمضان	the ninth month in the Islamic calendar; the month of obligatory fasting and the month in which the first verses of the Qur'an were revealed
salâm	السَّلام	*lit.* 'peace'; the Islamic greeting of peace
ash-Shâm	الشَّام	the area that includes the current states of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine
shar'i	شَرْعي	of or pertaining to Sharia; Islamic
Sharia *(sharee'ah)*	شَرِيعة	Islamic law derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah
Shayṭân	شَيْطان	Satan
ṣiddeeqoon	الصِّدِّيقون	*sing. ṣiddeeq*; those who are strong and true in faith
soorah or *soorat*	سُورة	chapter of the Qur'an
subḥân Allâh	سبحان الله	glory be to Allah
Sunnah	سُنَّة	the practice and collected sayings of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that together with the Qur'an forms the basis of Islamic law
tafseer	تَفْسير	exegesis: commentary, or explanation of the meanings (*usu.* of Qur'anic verses)
tahajjud	تَهَجُّد	voluntary night prayer offered between *'ishâ'* and *fajr*

tawheed	التوحيد	the oneness of Allah: the knowledge that He alone deserves to be worshipped and that He has no partners
Ummah	أُمَّة	community or nation: *usu.* used to refer to the entire global community of Muslims
unseen	خفي	a term used to denote phenomena or aspects that cannot be known using ordinary human faculties
uṣool al-fiqh	أُصُول الْفِقْه	principles of Islamic jurisprudence
Yathrib	يَثْرِب	pre-Islamic name of the town that became known as Madinah, where the Islamic state was established after the Hijrah
zakât (or *zakâh)*	زكاة	obligatory charity: an 'alms tax' on wealth that is paid by Muslims and be distributed to others who qualify as recipients

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