

to something other than what they say, which results in them not believing in the correct meaning, even if they believe the wording. Therefore they do not believe in them in a true sense.

﴿and in what was sent before your time﴾. This includes belief in all the previous Books; belief in the Books implies belief in the Messengers and everything that the Books contain, especially the Torah, Gospel and Psalms. This is something unique to the believers, that they believe in all the divinely revealed Books and in all the Messengers, and they do not differentiate between any of them.

﴿and believe with certainty in the hereafter﴾. The hereafter is that which comes after death; it is singled out for mention after discussing beliefs in general terms, because belief in the Last Day is one of the pillars of faith, and because it gives one the strongest motive to hope for reward, fear punishment and strive hard. Certainty is perfect knowledge that leaves no room for doubt at all and should prompt one to strive hard and do righteous deeds.

﴿It is they﴾ that is, those who have these praiseworthy characteristics ﴿who are following guidance from their Lord﴾. The word guidance (*hudā*) appears in the indefinite form, which in Arabic is an indication of how great it is; what guidance can be greater than the characteristics mentioned above, of having sound belief and righteous deeds? True guidance cannot be anything but the guidance followed by these people; anything that is contrary to that is misguidance.

The preposition (in the phrase translated here as ﴿It is they who are following guidance﴾, *lit.* “on guidance”) is indicative of superiority. A different preposition is used when referring to misguidance, as in the verse:

﴿...and verily either we or you are rightly guided or clearly misguided.﴾ (*Saba' 34: 24*)

– because the one who is guided is elevated to a superior position by means of that guidance, whereas the one who is misguided is sinking in it and is despised as a result.