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The Tafsīr of Sūrat An-Naml (Chapter - 27)

Which was revealed in Makkah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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سُورَةُ النَّمْلِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

طَسَّ تِلْكَ ءَايَةُ الْقُرْآنِ وَكِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ① هُدًى وَبُشْرَى
لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ② الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ
بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ③ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ رَبَّنَا لَهُمْ
أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَهُمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ④ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ الْعَذَابِ
وَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ الْآخِسُونَ ⑤ وَإِنَّكَ لَتَلْقَى الْقُرْآنَ مِنْ
لَدُنْ حَكِيمٍ عَلِيمٍ ⑥ إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِأَهْلِهِ إِنِّي آنَسْتُ نَارًا سَائِغًا
مِنْهَا خَبِيرًا أَوْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ قَبِيسٍ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ ⑦ فَلَمَّا
جَاءَهَا نُوذِيَ أَنْ يَبْرُكَ مَنْ فِي النَّارِ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ
الْعَالَمِينَ ⑧ يَمْسُكُ إِلَهُهُ أَنَا اللَّهُ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ⑨ وَأَلْقِ عَصَاكَ
فَلَمَّا رَأَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَانٌّ وَلَّى مُدْمِرًا وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ يَمْسُكُ لَأَخْفَفَ
إِنِّي لَا أَخَافُ لَدَى الْمُرْسَلُونَ ⑩ إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ ثُمَّ بَدَلْ حُسْبًا بَعْدَ
سُوءٍ فَإِنِّي عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ⑪ وَأَدْخِلْ يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجْ يَيْبُضًا
مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوءٍ فِي ذِيئِ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ
⑫ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ ءَايَاتُنَا مُبْصِرَةً قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ ⑬

طَسَّ تِلْكَ ءَايَةُ الْقُرْآنِ وَكِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ① هُدًى وَبُشْرَى
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①. Ta Sīn. These are the Āyāt of the Qur'ān, and (it is) a Book (that is) clear.﴾

②. A guide and glad tidings for the believers.﴾

③. Those who perform the Ṣalāh and give the Zakāh and they believe with certainty in the Hereafter.﴾

④. Verily, those who believe not in the Hereafter, We have made their deeds fair seeming to them, so that they wander about blindly.﴾

﴿5. They are those for whom there will be an evil torment. And in the Hereafter they will be the greatest losers.﴾

﴿6. And verily, you are being taught the Qur'ān from One, All-Wise, All-Knowing.﴾

The Qur'ān is Guidance and Glad Tidings for the Believers, a Warning to the Disbelievers, and it is from Allāh

In (the comments on) *Sūrat Al-Baqarah*, we discussed the letters which appear at the beginning of some *Sūrahs*.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تُفْعَلُونَ﴾

﴿These are the Āyāt of the Qur'ān, and (it is) a Book (that is) clear.﴾

It is plain and evident.

﴿هُدًى وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

﴿A guide and glad tidings for the believers.﴾

meaning, guidance and good news may be attained from the Qur'ān for those who believe in it, follow it and put it into practice. They establish obligatory prayers, pay *Zakāh* and believe with certain faith in the Hereafter, the resurrection after death, reward and punishment for all deeds, good and bad, and Paradise and Hell. This is like the Āyāt:

﴿قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يُمْنُونَ فِي مَآذِنِهِمْ وَقْرٌ﴾

﴿Say: "It is for those who believe, a guide and a healing. And as for those who disbelieve, there is heaviness (deafness) in their ears..."﴾ (41:44).

﴿لِيُنْذِرَ بِهِ السَّاعِيَةَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ﴾

﴿that you may give glad tidings to those who have Taqwā, and warn with it the Ludd (most quarrelsome) people﴾ (19:97).

Allāh says here:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ﴾

﴿Verily, those who believe not in the Hereafter,﴾

meaning, those who deny it and think that it will never happen,

﴿زَرَّأْنَاهُمْ أَفْعَالَهُمْ فَلَهُمْ بِمَعُونَةٍ﴾

﴿We have made their deeds fair seeming to them, so that they wander about blindly.﴾

means, 'We have made what they are doing seem good to them, and We have left them to continue in their misguidance, so they are lost and confused.' This is their recompense for their disbelief in the Hereafter, as Allāh says:

﴿وَنُقَلِّبُ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَارَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ﴾

﴿And We shall turn their hearts and their eyes away, as they refused to believe therein for the first time﴾ (6:110).

﴿أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ الْعَذَابِ﴾

﴿They are those for whom there will be an evil torment.﴾
in this world and the Hereafter.

﴿وَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ﴾

﴿And in the Hereafter they will be the greatest losers.﴾

means, no one but they, among all the people who will be gathered, will lose their souls and their wealth.

﴿وَلَقَدْ لَعَلْنَا الْقُرْآنَ مِنْ لَدُنِّ حَكِيمٍ عَلِيمٍ﴾

﴿And verily, you are being taught the Qur'ān from One, All-Wise, All-Knowing.﴾

﴿وَإِنَّكَ﴾

﴿And verily, you﴾ O Muḥammad. Qatādah said:

﴿لَعَلَّنَا﴾

﴿are being taught﴾ "Are receiving."

﴿الْقُرْآنَ مِنْ لَدُنِّ حَكِيمٍ عَلِيمٍ﴾

﴿the Qur'ān from One, All-Wise, All-Knowing.﴾

from One Who is Wise in His commands and prohibitions, and Who knows all things, major and minor. Whatever He says is absolute Truth, and His rulings are entirely fair and just, as Allāh says:

سورة النازعات

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الْمُرْسَلَاتُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

وَحَمْدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَفْتَنَتْهَا أَنْفُسُهُمْ ظُلُمًا وَعُلُوًّا فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ
كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿١١﴾ وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عَلِمًا
وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٢﴾
وَوَرِثَ سُلَيْمَانُ دَاوُدَ وَقَالَ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ عَلِمْنَا مَنَاطِقَ الطَّيْرِ
وَأَوْتَيْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿١٣﴾ وَحِشْرَ
لِّسَلِيمَانَ جُنُودَهُ مِنَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ وَالطَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿١٤﴾
حَتَّىٰ إِذَا اتَّوَعَلَ وَإِذَا التَّمَلَّيْتُ قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ادْخُلُوا
مَسْكَنَكُمْ لَا يَحْطِئَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمَانُ وَجُنُودُهُ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٥﴾
فَنَبَسَهُ ضَاحِكًا مِنْ قَوْلِهَا وَقَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ
نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا
تَرْضَاهُ وَأَدْخِلْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِي عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١٦﴾
وَتَقَعَّدَ الطَّيْرَ فَقَالَ مَا لِيَ لَا أَرَىٰ الْهَدْيَ هَذَا مَا كَانَ مِنْ
الْفَكَايِسِ ﴿١٧﴾ لَا عَذِيبَتَهُ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا أَوْ لَا أَدْبَحْتَهُ
أَوْ لِيَأْتِنِي بِسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١٨﴾ فَمَكَثَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ
أَحْطْتُ بِمَا لَمْ تَحِطُوا بِهِ وَجِئْتُكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّئٍ يَبْلُو فِينِ ﴿١٩﴾

﴿وَرِثْتَ كَمَثَرِ رَبِّكَ مِثْقًا
وَعَدْلًا﴾

﴿And the Word of your Lord has been fulfilled in truth and in justice﴾ (6:115).

﴿إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِأَهْلِيهِ إِنِّي آنَسْتُ
نَارًا سَائِغَةً رَبِّيَ فَخَرُّوا وَابْعَثُوا رَجُلًا
يَكُونُ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ النَّارِ فَمَكَثَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ
فَنَبَسَهُ ضَاحِكًا مِنْ قَوْلِهَا وَقَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي
أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ
وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَدْخِلْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ
فِي عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ﴾ ﴿١٦﴾ وَتَقَعَّدَ الطَّيْرَ
فَقَالَ مَا لِيَ لَا أَرَىٰ الْهَدْيَ هَذَا مَا كَانَ مِنْ
الْفَكَايِسِ ﴿١٧﴾ لَا عَذِيبَتَهُ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا
أَوْ لَا أَدْبَحْتَهُ أَوْ لِيَأْتِنِي بِسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١٨﴾
فَمَكَثَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحْطْتُ بِمَا لَمْ
تَحِطُوا بِهِ وَجِئْتُكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّئٍ يَبْلُو فِينِ ﴿١٩﴾

فَخَرَجَ يَصْفَاءَ مِنَ غَيْرِ سَوْءٍ فِي نَجْعٍ مَّائِيٍّ إِلَىٰ رِزْقِهِمْ وَقَوْمِهِ إِتْمَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمًا نَّفِيقِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْهُمْ مَائِنَتُهُمْ
مُجِيرَةٌ قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَحَمْدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَفْتَنَتْهَا أَنْفُسُهُمْ ظُلُمًا وَعُلُوًّا فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ
عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

﴿7. (Remember) when Mūsā said to his household: "Verily, I have seen a fire; I will bring you from there some information, or I will bring you a burning ember, that you may warm yourselves."﴾

﴿8. But when he came to it, he was called: "Blessed is whosoever is in the fire, and whosoever is round about it! And glorified be Allāh, the Lord of all that exists."﴾

﴿9. "O Mūsā! Verily, it is I, Allāh, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise."﴾

﴿10. "And throw down your stick!" But when he saw it moving as if it were a snake, he turned in flight, and did not look back. (It was said:) "O Mūsā! Fear not: verily, the Messengers fear not in front of Me."﴾

﴿11. "Except him who has done wrong and afterwards has changed evil for good; then surely, I am Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."﴾

﴿12. "And put your hand into opening of your garment, it will come forth white without hurt. (These are) among the nine signs (you will take) to Fir'awn and his people. Verily, they are a people who are rebellious."﴾

﴿13. But when Our Āyāt came to them, clear to see, they said: "This is a manifest magic."﴾

﴿14. And they belied them wrongfully and arrogantly, though they themselves were convinced thereof. So, see what was the end of the mischief-makers.﴾

The Story of Mūsā and the End of Fir'awn

Here Allāh tells His Messenger Muḥammad ﷺ about what happened to Mūsā, peace be upon him, how Allāh chose him, spoke with him and gave him mighty, dazzling signs and overwhelming proof, and sent him to Fir'awn and his people, but they denied the proof, disbelieved in him and arrogantly refused to follow him. Allāh says:

﴿إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لَأَهْلِيهِ﴾

﴿when Mūsā said to his household﴾,

meaning, remember when Mūsā was traveling with his family and lost his way. This was at night, in the dark. Mūsā had seen a fire beside the mountain, i.e., he had noticed a fire burning brightly, and said,

﴿لَأَهْلِيهِ إِنِّي آنَسْتُ نَارًا مِّنْ أَمَّاكٍ مِّنْهَا يَخْرُجُ﴾

﴿to his household: "Verily, I have seen a fire; I will bring you from there some information..."﴾ meaning, 'about the way we should take.'

﴿أَوْ أَنبَأِكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ أَمَّاكٍ مِّنْهَا يَخْرُجُ﴾

﴿or I will bring you a burning ember, that you may warm yourselves.﴾

meaning, so that they could keep warm. And it was as he said: "He came back with great news, and a great light." Allāh says:

﴿قَلْنَا جَاءَكَ نُورٌ أَن بُرِّكَ مَن فِي النَّارِ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا﴾

﴿But when he came to it, he was called: "Blessed is whosoever is in the fire, and whosoever is round about it!"﴾

meaning, when he came to it, he saw a great and terrifying sight: the fire was burning in a green bush, and the fire was burning ever brighter while the bush was growing ever more green and beautiful. Then he raised his head, and saw that its light was connected to the clouds of the sky. Ibn 'Abbās and others said, "It was not a fire, rather it was shining light." According to one report narrated from Ibn 'Abbās, it was the Light of the Lord of the worlds.^[1] Mūsā stood amazed by what he was seeing, and

﴿نُورٌ أَن بُرِّكَ مَن فِي النَّارِ﴾

﴿he was called: "Blessed is whosoever is in the fire..."﴾

Ibn 'Abbās said, "This means, Holy is (whosoever is in the fire)."^[2]

﴿وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا﴾

﴿and whosoever is round about it﴾ means, of the angels. This was the view of Ibn 'Abbās, 'Ikrimah, Sa'īd bin Jubayr, Al-Ḥasan and Qatādah.^[3]

﴿وَسُبْحَنَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

﴿And glorified be Allāh, the Lord of all that exists﴾,

Who does whatever He wills and there is nothing like Him among His creation. Nothing He has made can encompass Him, and He is the Exalted, the Almighty, Who is utterly

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:428.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:428.

[3] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:429, Al-Muḥarrar Al-Wajiz 4:250, Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr 6:341

unlike all that He has created. Heaven and earth cannot contain Him, but He is the One, the Self-Sufficient Master, Who is far above any comparison with His creation.

﴿يَسْمُوعُ إِنَّهُ أَنَا اللَّهُ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾

◀O Mūsā! Verily, it is I, Allāh, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.▶

Allāh told him that the One Who was addressing him was his Lord Allāh, the All-Mighty, Who has subjugated and subdued all things, the One Who is Wise in all His words and deeds. Then He commanded him to throw down the stick that was in his hand, so that He might show him clear proof that He is the One Who is able to do all things, whatever He wills. When Mūsā threw that stick down, it changed into the form of a huge and terrifying snake, moving quickly despite its size. Allāh says:

﴿فَلَمَّا رَأَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَانٌّ﴾

◀But when he saw it moving as if it were a Jānn (snake).▶

Jānn refers to a type of snake that is the fastest-moving and most agile. When Mūsā saw that with his own eyes,

﴿وَلَمْ يَتَوَلَّ وَرَّ بِمُخْبٍ﴾

◀he turned in flight, and did not look back.▶

meaning, he did not turn around, because he was so afraid. Allāh's saying:

﴿يَسْمُوعُ لَا تَخَفْ إِنِّي لَا أَخَافُ لَدَى الْمُرْسَلُونَ﴾

◀O Mūsā! Fear not: verily, the Messengers fear not in front of Me.▶

means, 'do not be afraid of what you see, for I want to choose you as a Messenger and make you a great Prophet.'

﴿إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ ثُمَّ بَدَّلْ حُسْنًا بَعْدَ سُوءٍ فَإِنِّي غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾

◀Except him who has done wrong and afterwards has changed evil for good; then surely, I am Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.▶

This is an exception of the exclusionary type. This is good news for mankind, for whoever does an evil deed then gives it

up and repents and turns to Allāh, Allāh will accept his repentance, as He says:

﴿وَلِيّ لَّنَفَّارٍ لِّمَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ آهْتَدَىٰ﴾

﴿And verily, I am indeed forgiving to him who repents, believes and does righteous good deeds, and then Ahtadā.^[1]﴾ (20:82)

﴿وَمَن يَعمَلْ سُوًّا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ فَسَمُهُ﴾

﴿And whoever does evil or wrongs himself...﴾ (4:110).

And there are many other Āyāt which say the same.

﴿وَأَدْخِلْ يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجْ يَصْفَا مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوٍّ﴾

﴿And put your hand into the opening of your garment, it will come forth white without hurt.﴾

This is another sign, further brilliant proof of the ability of Allāh to do whatever He wills. It is also confirmation of the truth of the one to whom the miracle was given. Allāh commanded him to put his hand into the opening of his garment, and when he put his hand in and took it out again, it came out white and shining as if it were a piece of the moon or a flash of dazzling lightning.

﴿فِي تِسْعَ آيَاتٍ﴾

﴿among the nine signs﴾ means, ‘these are two of the nine signs which you will be supported with and which will serve as proof for you.’

﴿إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ وَقَوْمَهُ إِتَمَّ كَأُولَىٰ قَوْمٍ فَاسِقِينَ﴾

﴿to Fir‘awn and his people. Verily, they are a people who are rebellious.﴾

These were the nine signs of which Allāh said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ تِسْعَ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ﴾

﴿And indeed We gave Mūsā nine clear signs﴾ (17:101) – as we have stated there.^[2]

﴿فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَا أَنشَأْنَا مَعَهُمْ﴾

^[1] Meaning, he is guided. See the Tafsīr of Sūrah Ṭa Ha (20:82).

^[2] See volume nine, the Tafsīr of Sūrat Al-Isrā (17:101)

﴿But when Our Āyāt came to them, clear to see,﴾, i.e., clear and obvious,

﴿قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ﴾

﴿they said: "This is a manifest magic".﴾

They wanted to oppose it with their own magic, but they were defeated and were returned disgraced.

﴿وَمَحَدُوا بِهِ﴾

﴿And they belied them﴾ means, verbally,

﴿وَأَسْتَفْتَنَاهَا أَنْفُسَهُمْ﴾

﴿though they themselves were convinced thereof.﴾

means, they knew deep down that this was truth from Allāh, but they denied it and were stubborn and arrogant.

﴿ظَلَمْنَا وَعَلَّوْا﴾

﴿wrongfully and arrogantly﴾ means, wronging themselves because this was the despicable manner to which they were accustomed, and they were arrogant because they were too proud to follow the truth. Allāh said:

﴿فَنَنْظُرُ كَيْفَ كَانَتْ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ﴾

﴿So, see what was the end of the mischief-makers.﴾

meaning, 'see, O Muḥammad, what were the consequences of their actions when Allāh destroyed them and drowned every last one of them in a single morning.'

The point of this story is: beware, 'O you who disbelieve in Muḥammad and deny the Message that he has brought from his Lord, lest the same thing that befell them befall you also.' But what is worse, is that Muḥammad ﷺ is nobler and greater than Mūsā, and his proof is stronger than that of Mūsā, for the signs that Allāh has given him are combined with his presence and his character, in addition to the fact that previous Prophets foretold his coming and took a covenant from the people that they would follow him if they should see him, may the best of blessings and peace from his Lord be upon him.

﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عَلَمًا وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ يَعْبُدُونَ﴾

وَرَبِّ سُلَيْمَانَ دَاوُدَ وَقَالَ يٰٓأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ عَلِمْنَا سَبْطَ الطَّاغُوتِ وَأُوتِينَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ
 الْفَضْلُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿١٥﴾ وَحُشِرَ لِسُلَيْمَانَ جُنُودُهُ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ وَالطَّاغُوتِ فَهُمْ يُؤْخَذُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا
 أَتَوْا عَلَىٰ وَادِ النَّمْلِ قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يٰٓأَيُّهَا النَّمْلُ ادْخُلُوا مَسَاكِمَكُمْ لَا يَحْطِئُكُمْ سُلَيْمَانُ وَجُنُودُهُ
 وَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ فَنَبَسَهُ ضَاحِكًا مِنْ قَوْلِهَا وَقَالَ رَبِّ ارْزُقْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ بِفِعْمَتِكَ إِلَٰهِي
 أَتَمَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَلَعَلَّ وَلَدَكَ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَدْخِلْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِي عِبَادِكَ
 الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

﴿15. And indeed We gave knowledge to Dāwud and Sulaymān, and they both said: "All praise be to Allāh, Who has preferred us above many of His believing servants!"﴾

﴿16. And Sulaymān inherited from Dāwud. He said: "O mankind! We have been taught the language of birds, and we have been given from everything. This, verily, is an evident grace."﴾

﴿17. And there were gathered before Sulaymān his hosts of jinn and men, and birds, and they all were set in battle order (marching forward).﴾

﴿18. Till, when they came to the valley of the ants, one of the ants said: "O ants! Enter your dwellings, lest Sulaymān and his armies should crush you, while they perceive not."﴾

﴿19. So he (Sulaymān) smiled, amused at her speech and said: "My Lord! Grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your favors which You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do righteous good deeds that will please You, and admit me by Your mercy among Your righteous servants."﴾

Dāwud and Sulaymān (peace be upon them), the organization of Sulaymān's Troops and His passage through the Valley of the Ants

Here Allāh tells us about the great blessings and favors which He bestowed upon two of His servants and Prophets, Dāwud (David) and his son Sulaymān (Solomon), peace be upon them both, and how they enjoyed happiness in this world and the Hereafter, power and authority in this world, and the position of being Prophets and Messengers. Allāh says:

﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عِلْمًا وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

«And indeed We gave knowledge to Dāwud and Sulaymān, and they both said: "All the praises and thanks be to Allāh, Who has preferred us above many of His believing servants!"»

﴿وَرَبِّكَ سَلِيمٌ ذَاوُدَ﴾

«And Sulaymān inherited from Dāwud.» means, in kingship and prophethood. What is meant here is not wealth, because if that were the case, Sulaymān would not have been singled out from among the sons of Dāwud, as Dāwud had one hundred wives. Rather what is meant is the inheritance of kingship and prophethood, for the wealth of the Prophets cannot be inherited, as the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

«نَحْنُ مَعَائِرُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ لَا نُورَثُ، مَا تَرَكَنَاهُ فَهُوَ صَدَقَةٌ»

«We Prophets cannot be inherited from; whatever we leave behind is charity.»^[1]

And Sulaymān said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ عَلِّمْنَا مَنطِقَ الطَّيْرِ وَأَوْعِنَا مِن كُلِّ شَيْءٍ﴾

«O mankind! We have been taught the language of birds, and we have been given from everything.»

Here Sulaymān was speaking of the blessings that Allāh bestowed upon him, by giving him complete authority and power, whereby mankind, the Jinn and the birds were subjugated to him. He also knew the language of the birds and animals, which is something that had never been given to any other human being – as far as we know from what Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ told us. Allāh enabled Sulaymān to understand what the birds said to one another as they flew through the air, and what the different kinds of animals said. Sulaymān said:

﴿عَلِّمْنَا مَنطِقَ الطَّيْرِ وَأَوْعِنَا مِن كُلِّ شَيْءٍ﴾

[1] Tuhfat Al-Aḥwadhī 5:234. Similar was recorded by Al-Bukhārī no. 6727.

﴿We have been taught the language of birds, and we have been given from everything.﴾

i.e., all things that a king needs.

﴿إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ﴾

﴿This, verily, is an evident grace.﴾ means, 'this is clearly the blessings of Allāh upon us.'

﴿وَحِجْرَ لَيْلَيْنِ جُئِدُوا مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ وَالطَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ﴾

﴿And there were gathered before Sulaymān his hosts of Jinn and men, and birds, and they all were set in battle order.﴾

means, all of Sulaymān's troops of Jinn, men and birds were gathered together, and he rode with them in a display of might and glory, with people marching behind him, followed by the Jinn, and the birds flying above his head. When it was hot, they would shade him with their wings.

﴿فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ﴾

﴿and they all were set in battle order.﴾

The first and the last of them were brought together, so that none of them would step out of place. Mujāhid said: "Officials were appointed to keep each group in order, and to keep the first and the last together so that no one would step out of line – just as kings do nowadays."^[1]

﴿حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَتَوْا عَلَىٰ وَادِ النَّمْلِ﴾

﴿Till, when they came to the valley of the ants,﴾

meaning, when Sulaymān, the soldiers and the army with him crossed the valley of the ants,

﴿قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ بِأُتْبُعِهَا النَّمْلُ ادْخُلُوا مَسْكِنَكُمْ لَا يَحْطَبَنَّكُمْ مَلِكُنْ وَجُودُ وَهُوَ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ﴾

﴿one of the ants said: "O ants! Enter your dwellings, lest Sulaymān and his armies should crush you, while they perceive not."﴾

Sulaymān, peace be upon him, understood what the ant said,

﴿فَتَبَسَّ ضَاحِكًا يَنْقُلُهَا وَقَالَ رَبِّي أَوْفَیَّ أَنْ أَشْكُرَ بِمَعْنَاكَ إِلَهِی أَنْتَ عَلَّیَّ وَفَّیَّ وَلَدَیَّ﴾

^[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:500, 501.

﴿وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ﴾

«So he smiled, amused at her speech and said: "My Lord! Grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your favors which You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do righteous good deeds that will please You,»

meaning: 'inspire me to give thanks for the blessings that You have bestowed upon me by teaching me to understand what the birds and animals say, and the blessings that You have bestowed upon my parents by making them Muslims who believe in You.'

﴿وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ﴾

«and that I may do righteous good deeds that will please You,» means, 'deeds that You love which will earn Your pleasure.'

﴿وَأَدْخِلْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِي عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ﴾

«and admit me by Your mercy among Your righteous servants.»

means, 'when You cause me to die, then join me with the righteous among Your servants, and the Higher Companion among Your close friends.'

﴿وَقَفَّذَهُ الْقَهْرَ فَقَالَ مَا لِيَ لَا أَرَى الْهُدُودَ أَمْ كَانَتْ مِنَ الْغَائِبِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ لَأُعَذِّبَنَّهُ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا أَوْ لَأَذْبَحَنَّهُ أَوْ لِيَأْتِنِي بِسُلْطَانٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٢١﴾﴾

«20. He inspected the birds, and said: "What is the matter that I see not the hoopoe? Or is he among the absentees?"»

«21. "I will surely punish him with a severe torment or slaughter him, unless he brings me a clear reason."»

The Absence of the Hoopoe

Mujāhid, Sa'īd bin Jubayr and others narrated from Ibn 'Abbās and others that the hoopoe was an expert who used to show Sulaymān where water was if he was out in open land and needed water. The hoopoe would look for water for him in the various strata of the earth, just as a man looks at things on the surface of the earth, and he would know just how far below the surface the water was. When the hoopoe showed

him where the water was, Sulaymān would command the *Jinn* to dig in that place until they brought water from the depths of the earth. One day Sulaymān went to some open land and checked on the birds, but he could not see the hoopoe.

﴿فَقَالَ مَا لَآ أَرَى الْهُدُودَ أَمْ كَانَ مِنَ الْغَائِبِينَ﴾

﴿and (Sulaymān) said: "What is the matter that I see not the hoopoe? Or is he among the absentees?"﴾

One day 'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās told a similar story, and among the people was a man from the Khawārij whose name was Nāfi' bin Al-Azraq, who often used to raise objections to Ibn 'Abbās. He said to him, "Stop, O Ibn 'Abbās; you will be defeated (in argument) today!" Ibn 'Abbās said: "Why?" Nāfi' said: "You are telling us that the hoopoe can see water beneath the ground, but any boy can put seed in a trap and cover the trap with dirt, and the hoopoe will come and take the seed, so the boy can catch him in the trap." Ibn 'Abbās said, "If it was not for the fact that this man would go and tell others that he had defeated Ibn 'Abbās in argument, I would not even answer." Then he said to Nāfi': "Woe to you! When the decree strikes a person, his eyes become blind and he loses all caution." Nāfi' said: "By Allāh I will never dispute with you concerning anything in the Qur'ān."^[1]

﴿لَأُعَذِّبَنَّ عَنَابَ نَكِيرِي﴾

﴿I will surely punish him with a severe torment﴾

Al-A'mash said, narrating from Al-Minhāl bin 'Amr from Sa'īd that Ibn 'Abbās said: "He meant, by plucking his feathers."^[2] 'Abdullāh bin Shaddād said: "By plucking his feathers and exposing him to the sun."^[3] This was also the view of more than one of the Salaf, that it means plucking his feathers and leaving him exposed to be eaten by ants.

﴿أَوْ لَأَذْبَحَنَّهُ﴾

﴿or slaughter him,﴾ means, killing him.

[1] Al-Qurṭubī 13:177 178.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:443.

[3] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:443.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي

﴿أَوْ لِيَأْتِيَنِي بِسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾

إِنِّي وَجَدْتُ امْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَجَدْتُهَا وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّيْءِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَزَيْنَ لَهُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ أَأَلَّا يَسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ الَّذِي يُخْرِجُ الْخَبْءَ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُخْفُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٥﴾ قَالَ سَنْظُرُهُ أَصْدَقَتْ أَمُكُنْتَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾ أَذْهَبَ يَكْتُمْنِي هَذَا قَالِقَهُ إِلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّى عَنَّهُمْ فَأَنْظُرْ مَاذَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾ قَالَتْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ إِنِّي أُلْقِيَ بِالْكِتَابِ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٢٨﴾ إِنَّهُ مِنْ سُلَيْمٍ وَإِنَّهُ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٢٩﴾ أَلَا تَعْلَمُونَ أَنِّي وَأُوتِيَتْ مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾ قَالَتْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ أَفْتُونِي فِي أَمْرِي مَا كُنْتُ قَاطِعَةً أَمْرًا حَتَّى تَشْهَدُونِ ﴿٣١﴾ قَالُوا نَحْنُ أَوْلُوا أَمْرِهِمْ وَأُولُوا أَمْرِهِمْ شَدِيدُونَ أَمْرًا إِلَيْكَ فَأَنْظُرِي مَاذَا تَأْمُرِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾ قَالَتْ إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوا أَعِزَّةَ أَهْلِهَا أَذِلَّةً وَكَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَإِنِّي مُرْسِلَةٌ إِلَيْهِمْ بِهَدِيَّةٍ فَنَاظِرَةٌ بِمَ يَرْجِعُ الْأَمْرُ سُلُوكًا ﴿٣٤﴾

◀unless he brings me a clear reason.▶ i.e., a valid excuse. Sufyān bin 'Uyaynah and 'Abdullāh bin Shaddād said: "When the hoopoe came back, the other birds said to him: "What kept you? Sulaymān has vowed to shed your blood." The hoopoe said: "Did he make any exception [did he say 'unless']?" They said, "Yes, he said:

﴿لَأُعَذِّبَنَّهُ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا أَوْ لَأَذْهَبَنَّهُ أَوْ لَيَأْتِيَنِي بِسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾ ﴿٢٢﴾

◀I will surely punish him with a severe torment or slaughter him,

unless he brings me a clear reason.▶

The hoopoe said, "Then I am saved."

﴿فَمَكَتْ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحَطْتُ بِمَا لَمْ حِطُ بِهِ. وَجِئْتُكَ مِنْ سَبَإٍ بِنَبَأٍ يَقِينٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِنِّي وَجَدْتُ امْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَجَدْتُهَا وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّيْءِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَزَيْنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ أَأَلَّا يَسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ الَّذِي يُخْرِجُ الْخَبْءَ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُخْفُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٦﴾﴾

◀22. But (the hoopoe) stayed not long, he said: "I have grasped which you have not grasped and I have come to you from Saba' with true news."▶

◀23. "I found a woman ruling over them, she has been given

all things, and she has a great throne."﴾

﴿24. "I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allāh, and Shayṭān has made their deeds fair seeming to them to prevent them from the way, so they have no guidance."﴾

﴿25. So they do not prostrate themselves before Allāh, Who brings to light what is hidden in the heavens and the earth, and knows what you conceal and what you reveal.﴾

﴿26. Allāh, La ilāha illā Huwa, the Lord of the Supreme Throne!"﴾

How the Hoopoe came before Sulaymān and told Him about Saba'

Allāh says:

﴿فَمَكَتْ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ﴾

﴿But (the hoopoe) stayed not long,﴾

meaning, he was absent for only a short time. Then he came and said to Sulaymān:

﴿أَحْطْتُ بِمَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ﴾

﴿I have grasped which you have not grasped﴾ meaning, 'I have come to know something that you and your troops do not know.'

﴿وَجِئْتُكَ مِنْ سَبَإٍ بِنْتٍ دَيُّوْبٍ﴾

﴿and I have come to you from Saba' with true news.﴾

meaning, with true and certain news. Saba' (Sheba) refers to Ḥimyar, they were a dynasty in Yemen. Then the hoopoe said:

﴿إِنِّي وَجَدْتُ امْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ﴾

﴿I found a woman ruling over them,﴾

Al-Ḥasan Al-Baṣrī said, "This is Bilqīs bint Sharāḥīl, the queen of Saba'."^[1] Allāh's saying:

﴿وَأُوْتِيَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ﴾

﴿she has been given all things,﴾ means, all the conveniences of

^[1] Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr 6:351.

this world that a powerful monarch could need.

﴿وَلَمَّا عَرَّشُ عَظِيمٌ﴾

﴿and she has a great throne.﴾ meaning, a tremendous chair adorned with gold and different kinds of jewels and pearls. The historians said, "This throne was in a great, strong palace which was high and firmly constructed. In it there were three hundred and sixty windows on the east side, and a similar number on the west, and it was constructed in such a way that each day when the sun rose it would shine through one window, and when it set it would shine through the opposite window. And the people used to prostrate to the sun morning and evening. This is why the hoopoe said:

﴿وَجَدْتُهَا وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّمْسِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ
الْبَيْلِ﴾

﴿I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allāh, and Shayṭān has made their deeds fair seeming to them, and has prevented them from the way,﴾
meaning, from the way of truth,

﴿فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ﴾

﴿so they have no guidance.﴾

Allāh's saying:

﴿وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ الْبَيْلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ أَلَّا يَسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ﴾

﴿and Shayṭān has made their deeds fair seeming to them, and has prevented them from the way, so they have no guidance, so they do not prostrate themselves before Allāh.﴾

They do not know the way of truth, prostrating only before Allāh alone and not before anything that He has created, whether heavenly bodies or anything else. This is like the *Āyah*:

﴿وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ الَّيْلُ وَالنَّهَارُ وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ لَا تَسْجُدُوا لِلشَّمْسِ وَلَا لِلْقَمَرِ وَاسْجُدُوا
لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَهُنَّ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾

﴿And from among His signs are the night and the day, and the sun and the moon. Prostrate yourselves not to the sun nor to the moon, but prostrate yourselves to Allāh Who created them, if you indeed worship Him.﴾ (41:37)

﴿الَّذِي يُخْرِجُ الْغَبَّ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ﴾

﴿Who brings to light what is hidden in the heavens and the earth,﴾

‘Ali bin Abi Ṭalhah reported that Ibn ‘Abbās said: “He knows everything that is hidden in the heavens and on earth.”^[1]

This was also the view of ‘Ikrimah, Mujāhid, Sa‘īd bin Jubayr, Qatādah and others.^[2] His saying:

﴿وَمَنْ مَّا تُخْفُونَ وَمَا تُكَلِّمُونَ﴾

﴿and knows what you conceal and what you reveal.﴾

means, He knows what His servants say and do in secret, and what they say and do openly. This is like the Āyah:

﴿سَوَاءٌ يَسْكُرَ مِنْ أَسْرَ الْقَوْلِ وَمَنْ جَهَرَ بِهِ. وَمَنْ هُوَ مُسْتَخْفٍ بِأُتَيْلٍ وَسَارِبٍ بِالنَّهَارِ﴾

﴿It is the same whether any of you conceals his speech or declares it openly, whether he be hid by night or goes forth freely by day﴾ (13:10).

His saying:

﴿اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ﴾

﴿Allāh, Lā ilāha illā Huwa, the Lord of the Supreme Throne!﴾

means, He is the One to be called upon, Allāh, He is the One other than Whom there is no god, the Lord of the Supreme Throne, and there is none greater than Him in all of creation. Since the hoopoe was calling to what is good, and for people to worship and prostrate to Allāh alone, it would have been forbidden to kill him.

Imām Aḥmad, Abu Dāwud and Ibn Mājah recorded that Abu Hurayrah, may Allāh be pleased with him, said that the Prophet ﷺ forbade killing four kinds of animals: ants, bees, hoopoes and the sparrow hawks. Its chain of narration is *Ṣaḥīḥ*.^[3]

[1] *Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr* 6:352.

[2] *Aṭ-Ṭabari* 19:445, ‘Abdur-Razzāq 3:81, *Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr* 6:352

[3] Aḥmad 1:332, Abu Dāwud 5:418, Ibn Mājah 2:1074, also narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās.

﴿قَالَ سَنْظُرُ أَصَدَقْتَ أَمْ كُنتَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ﴾ ٢٧ ﴿أَذْهَبْ بِكِتَابِي هَذَا قَالِفَةً إِلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّ عَنَّهُمْ فَأَنْظُرْ مَاذَا يَرْجِعُونَ﴾ ٢٨ ﴿قَالَتْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُوْا إِلَيَّ أَلْفِي إِنَّ كِتَابَ كَرِيمٍ﴾ ٢٩ ﴿إِنَّمَا مِنْ شَلِيلَيْنِ وَإِنَّمَا بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾ ٣٠ ﴿أَلَا تَمْلَأُوا عَلَيَّ وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾ ٣١

﴿27. (Sulaymān) said: "We shall see whether you speak the truth or you are (one) of the liars."﴾

﴿28. "Go you with this letter of mine and deliver it to them, then draw back from them and see what they return."﴾

﴿29. She said: "O chiefs! Verily, here is delivered to me a noble letter,"﴾

﴿30. "Verily, it is from Sulaymān, and it (reads): 'In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful;'﴾

﴿31. 'Be you not exalted against me, but come to me submitting (as Muslims).' "﴾

Sulaymān's Letter to Bilqīs

Allāh tells us what Sulaymān said to the hoopoe when he told him about the people of Saba' and their queen:

﴿قَالَ سَنْظُرُ أَصَدَقْتَ أَمْ كُنتَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ﴾ ٢٧

﴿(Sulaymān) said: "We shall see whether you speak the truth or you are (one) of the liars."﴾

meaning, 'are you telling the truth?'

﴿أَمْ كُنتَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ﴾

﴿or you are (one) of the liars.﴾ meaning, 'or are you telling a lie in order to save yourself from the threat I made against you?'

﴿أَذْهَبْ بِكِتَابِي هَذَا قَالِفَةً إِلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّ عَنَّهُمْ فَأَنْظُرْ مَاذَا يَرْجِعُونَ﴾ ٢٨

﴿Go you with this letter of mine and deliver it to them then draw back from them and see what they return.﴾

Sulaymān wrote a letter to Bilqīs and her people and gave it to the hoopoe to deliver. It was said that he carried it on his wings, as is the way with birds, or that he carried it in his beak. He went to their land and found the palace of Bilqīs, then he went to her private chambers and threw the letter through a small window, then he stepped to one side out of

good manners. Bilqīs was amazed and confused when she saw that, then she went and picked up the letter, opened its seal and read it. The letter said:

﴿إِنَّهُ مِنْ سُلَيْمَانَ وَإِنَّهُ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝ أَلَا تَقْلُوا عَلَىٰ وَائِقٍ مُّسْلِمِينَ ۝﴾

﴿It is from Sulaymān, and it (reads): 'In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful; Be you not exalted against me, but come to me submitting (as Muslims).'\﴾

So she gathered her commanders and ministers and the leaders of her land, and said to them:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ إِنَّ إِلَيْنَا كُتِبَ كَرِيمٌ﴾

﴿"O chiefs! Verily, here is delivered to me a noble letter."﴾

She described it as such because of the wondrous things she had seen, that it was delivered by a bird who threw it to her, then stood aside out of good manners. This was something that no king could do. Then she read the letter to them:

﴿إِنَّهُ مِنْ سُلَيْمَانَ وَإِنَّهُ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝ أَلَا تَقْلُوا عَلَىٰ وَائِقٍ مُّسْلِمِينَ ۝﴾

﴿Verily, it is from Sulaymān, and it (reads): 'In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful; Be you not exalted against me, but come to me submitting (as Muslims).'\﴾

Thus they knew that it was from Allāh's Prophet Sulaymān, upon him be peace, and that they could not match him. This letter was the utmost in brevity and eloquence, coming straight to the point.

﴿أَلَا تَقْلُوا عَلَىٰ﴾

﴿Be you not exalted against me,﴾ Qatādah said: "Do not be arrogant with me.

﴿وَائِقٍ مُّسْلِمِينَ﴾

﴿but come to me submitting (as Muslims).﴾^[1]

'Abdur-Raḥmān bin Zayd bin Aslam said: "Do not refuse or be too arrogant to come to me

﴿وَائِقٍ مُّسْلِمِينَ﴾

﴿but come to me submitting (as Muslims).﴾^[2]

[1] Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr 6:354.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:453.

﴿قَالَتْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُوْا أَتُونِي فِي أَمْرِي مَا كُنْتُ قَاطِعَةً أَمْرًا حَتَّى تَتَهَدُّوا ۖ ﴿٣٢﴾ قَالُوا نَحْنُ أَوْلُوْا قُوَّةً
وَأَوْلُوْا بِأَمْرِ شَيْدٍ ۖ وَالْأَمْرُ إِلَيْنَا فَانْظُرِي مَاذَا تَأْمُرِينَ ۖ ﴿٣٣﴾ قَالَتْ إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً
أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوا أَعِزَّةَ أَهْلِهَا أَذِلَّةً ۖ وَكَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ۖ ﴿٣٤﴾ وَلَئِنْ مَرِئْتُهُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَهْدِيْفُوْا فَاسْطِرَّةً ۖ يَوْمَ
يَرْجِعُ الْمُرْسَلُونَ ۖ ﴿٣٥﴾﴾

﴿32. She said: "O chiefs! Advise me in case of mine. I decide no case till you are present with me."﴾

﴿33. They said: "We have great strength, and great ability for war, but it is for you to command; so think over what you will command."﴾

﴿34. She said: "Verily, kings, when they enter a town, they destroy it and make the most honorable among its people the lowest. And thus they do."﴾

﴿35. "But verily, I am going to send him a present, and see with what (answer) the messengers return."﴾

Bilqīs consults with Her Chiefs

When she read Sulaymān's letter to them and consulted with them about this news, she said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُوْا أَتُونِي فِي أَمْرِي مَا كُنْتُ قَاطِعَةً أَمْرًا حَتَّى تَتَهَدُّوا﴾

﴿"O chiefs! Advise me in (this) case of mine. I decide no case till you are present with me."﴾

meaning, 'until you come together and offer me your advice.'

﴿قَالُوا نَحْنُ أَوْلُوْا قُوَّةً وَأَوْلُوْا بِأَمْرِ شَيْدٍ﴾

﴿They said: "We have great strength, and great ability for war..."﴾

They reminded her of their great numbers, preparedness and strength, then they referred the matter to her and said:

﴿وَالْأَمْرُ إِلَيْنَا فَانْظُرِي مَاذَا تَأْمُرِينَ﴾

﴿but it is for you to command; so think over what you will command.﴾

meaning, 'we have the power and strength, if you want to go to him and fight him.' The matter is yours to decide, so instruct us as you see fit and we will obey. Ibn 'Abbās said:

سورة النمل

٣٨٠

الْبَلْقِيسُ

فَلَمَّا جَاءَ سُلَيْمَنُ قَالَ أُمَيْدُوتَنِي بِمَالٍ فَجَاءَ اتْنِي ۚ اللَّهُ خَيْرُ مِمَّا
 ءَاتَيْتُكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ مَهْدَتِكُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ أَرْجِعْ إِلَيْهِمْ فَلَنَأَيِّبَنَّهُمْ
 بِجُنُودٍ لَا يَفْلَحُ لَهُمْ بِهَا وَلَنُخْرِجَنَّهُمْ مِنْهَا أَذِلَّةً وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ قَالَ
 يَتَأَيَّبُوا الْمُلُوكَ أَكْبَمُ بِأُتَيْنِي بِعَرِيشِهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾
 قَالَ عَفَرْتُ مَنِ الْخِنِ أَنَا ۖ إِلَيْكَ بِهِ ۚ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقُومَ مِنْ مَقَامِكَ وَإِنِّي
 عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِيٌّ أَمِينٌ ﴿٤١﴾ قَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ أَنَا آتِيكَ
 بِهِ ۚ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ فَلَمَّا رَآهُ مُسْتَقِرًّا عِنْدَهُ قَالَ هَذَا
 مِنْ فَضْلِ رَبِّي لِيَبْلُوَنِي ۖ أَشْكُرُ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ ۚ وَمَنْ شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ
 لِنَفْسِهِ ۚ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّي غَنِيٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٤٢﴾ قَالَ تَكَرَّوْا لَهَا عَرِشَهَا
 نَنْظُرَ أَتَنْهَدِي أَمْ تَكُونِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ قِيلَ
 أَهَكَذَا عَرَشُكَ قَالَتْ كَآئِهِ ۚ هُوَ وَأَوْدَيْنَا الْعُلَمَاءَ مِنْ قِبَلِهَا وَكَأْمُسْلِمِينَ
 ﴿٤٤﴾ وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَتْ تَعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ
 ﴿٤٥﴾ قِيلَ لَهَا ادْخُلِي الصَّرْحَ ۖ فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً وَكَشَفَتْ عَنْ
 سَاقِيهَا قَالَتْ إِنَّهُ صَرْحٌ مُّمَرَّدٌ مِنْ قَوَارِيرَ ۚ قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي
 ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي ۖ وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَنِ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

"Bilqis said:

﴿إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً
 أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوا أَعِزَّةَ أَهْلِهَا
 أَذِلَّةً﴾

﴿Verily, kings, when
 they enter a town, they
 destroy it and make the
 most honorable amongst
 its people the lowest.﴾

And Allāh said:

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ﴾

﴿And thus they do.﴾^[1]
 Then she resorted to
 peaceful means, seek-
 ing a truce and trying
 to placate Sulaymān,
 and said:

﴿إِنِّي مُرْسِلَةٌ إِلَيْهِمْ بِهَدِيَّةٍ
 فَنَاظِرَةٌ بِمَ يَرْجِعُ الْمُرْسَلُونَ﴾

﴿But verily, I am

going to send him a present, and see with what the messengers
 return.﴾

meaning, 'I will send him a gift befitting for one of his status, and will wait and see what his response will be. Perhaps he will accept that and leave us alone, or he will impose a tax which we can pay him every year, so that he will not fight us and wage war against us.' Qatādah said: "May Allāh have mercy on her and be pleased with her – how wise she was as a Muslim and (before that) as an idolator! She understood how gift-giving has a good effect on people." Ibn 'Abbās and others said: "She said to her people, if he accepts the gift, he is a king, so fight him; but if he does not accept it, he is a

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:455.

Prophet, so follow him."^[1]

﴿فَلَمَّا جَاءَ مُلَيْمَنٌ قَالَ أَتَيْدُونِي بِسَالٍ مِّمَّا مَتَنِيَّ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا مَتَنَكُمْ بَلْ أَنتُمْ يَهْدِيكُمْ
نَقْرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ أَتَجْعَلُ لِلْهِيمِ فَلَنُؤَيِّنَهُمْ يَحْشُرُونَ لَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ يَا وَلَوْخَرَجْتُمْ مِّنَّا أَدَلَّةٌ وَهُمْ مَسْهُرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾﴾

﴿36. So, when (the messengers with the gift) came to Sulaymān, he said: "Will you help me in wealth? What Allāh has given me is better than that which He has given you! Nay, you rejoice in your gift!"﴾

﴿37. "Go back to them. We verily, shall come to them with armies that they cannot resist, and we shall drive them out from there in disgrace, and they will be abased."﴾

The Gift and the Response of Sulaymān

More than one of the scholars of *Tafsīr* among the Salaf and others stated that she sent him a huge gift of gold, jewels, pearls and other things. It is apparent that Sulaymān, peace be upon him, did not even look at what they brought at all and did not pay any attention to it, but he turned away and said, rebuking them:

﴿أَتَيْدُونِي بِسَالٍ﴾

﴿"Will you help me in wealth?"﴾ meaning, 'are you trying to flatter me with wealth so that I will leave you alone with your Shirk and your kingdom?'

﴿فَمَا مَتَنِيَّ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا مَتَنَكُمْ﴾

﴿What Allāh has given me is better than that which He has given you!﴾

means, 'what Allāh has given to me of power, wealth and troops, is better than that which you have.'

﴿بَلْ أَنتُمْ يَهْدِيكُمْ نَقْرُونَ﴾

﴿Nay, you rejoice in your gift!﴾ means, 'you are the ones who are influenced by gifts and presents; we will accept nothing from you except Islām or the sword.'

﴿أَتَجْعَلُ لِلْهِيمِ﴾

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:455.

«Go back to them» means, with their gift,

﴿فَلَنَأْتِيَنَّهُمْ بِجُنُودٍ لَا قِيْلَ لَهَا﴾

«We verily, shall come to them with armies that they cannot resist,»

they have no power to match them or resist them.

﴿وَنُخْرِجُهُمْ مِنْهَا أُذِلَّةً﴾

«and we shall drive them out from there in disgrace,»

‘we shall drive them out in disgrace from their land.’

﴿وَهُمْ مَذْمُورُونَ﴾

«and they will be abased.» means, humiliated and expelled.

When her messengers came back to her with her undelivered gift, and told her what Sulaymān said, she and her people paid heed and obeyed him. She came to him with her troops in submission and humility, honoring Sulaymān and intending to follow him in Islām. When Sulaymān, peace be upon him, realized that they were coming to him, he rejoiced greatly.

﴿قَالَ بَنَاتُهَا ائْتُوا لَكُمْ بِأَيِّهِ بِعَرِشَهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتُوهُ مُسْلِمِينَ﴾ قَالَ عِفْرِيتٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ. قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقُومَ مِن مَّعَايِكَ وَإِنِّي عَلَيَّ لَقَوِيْ أَمِينٌ ﴿٣٨﴾ قَالَ أَلَيْسَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ. قَبْلَ أَنْ يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ فَلَمَّا رَآهُ مُسْتَقِرًّا عِنْدَهُ قَالَ هَذَا مِن فَضْلِ رَبِّي لِيَبْلُوَنِي أَأَشْكُرُ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ وَمَن شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ. وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّيَ غَنِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

«38. He said: "O chiefs! Which of you can bring me her throne before they come to me surrendering themselves in obedience (as Muslims)?"»

«39. An 'Ifrit from the Jinn said: "I will bring it to you before you rise from your place. And verily, I am indeed strong and trustworthy for such work."»

«40. One with whom was knowledge of the Scripture, said: "I will bring it to you within the twinkling of an eye!" Then when he saw it placed before him, he said: "This is by the grace of my Lord – to test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful! And whoever is grateful, truly, his gratitude is for himself; and whoever is ungrateful, certainly my Lord is Rich, Bountiful."»

How the Throne of Bilqīs was brought in an Instant

Muḥammad bin Ishāq reported from Yazīd bin Rūmān: "When the messengers returned with word of what Sulaymān said, she said: 'By Allāh, I knew he was more than a king, and that we have no power to match him, and that we can gain nothing by being stubborn with him. So, she sent word to him saying: "I am coming to you with the leaders of my people to see what you will instruct us to do and what you are calling us to of your religion." Then she issued commands that her throne, which was made of gold and inlaid with rubies, chrysolite and pearls, should be placed in the innermost of seven rooms, one within the other, and all the doors should be locked. Then she told her deputy whom she was leaving in charge, "Take care of my people and my throne, and do not let anyone approach it or see it until I come back to you." Then she set off to meet Sulaymān with twelve thousand of her commanders from the leaders of Yemen, under each of whose command were many thousands of men. Sulaymān sent the *Jinn* to bring him news of her progress and route every day and night, then when she drew near, he gathered together the *Jinns* and humans who were under his control and said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ أَيُّكُمْ يَأْتِينِي بِعَرْشِهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ﴾

«O chiefs! Which of you can bring me her throne before they come to me surrendering themselves in obedience (as Muslims)?»^[1]

﴿قَالَ عِفْرِيتٌ مِّنَ الْجِنَّ﴾

«An 'Ifrit from the Jinn said:»

Mujāhid said, "A giant *Jinn*." Abu Ṣāliḥ said, "It was as if he was a mountain."^[2]

﴿أَنَا مَائِكَ يَدٍ. قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقُومَ مِنْ مَّقَامِكَ﴾

«I will bring it to you before you rise from your place.»

Ibn 'Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with him, said, "Before you get up from where you are sitting."^[3]

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 9:520.

[2] Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr 6:359.

[3] Al-Baghawi 3:420.

As-Suddī and others said: "He used to sit to pass judgements and rulings over the people, and to eat, from the beginning of the day until noon."

﴿وَأَنَا عَلَىٰ لَقْوَىٰ آمِينَ﴾

﴿And verily, I am indeed strong and trustworthy for such work.﴾

Ibn 'Abbās said: "Strong enough to carry it and trustworthy with the jewels it contains. Sulaymān, upon him be peace, said, "I want it faster than that."^[1] From this it seems that Sulaymān wanted to bring this throne as a demonstration of the greatness of the power and authority that Allāh had bestowed upon him and the troops that He had subjugated to him. Power such as had never been given to anyone else, before or since, so that this would furnish proof of his prophethood before Bilqīs and her people, because this would be a great and wondrous thing, if he brought her throne as if he were in her country, before they could come to it, although it was hidden and protected by so many locked doors. When Sulaymān said, "I want it faster than that,

﴿قَالَ أَلَيْسَ عِنْدَ عِلْمٍ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ﴾

﴿One with whom was knowledge of the Scripture said:﴾

Ibn 'Abbās said, "This was Āṣif, the scribe of Sulaymān." It was also narrated by Muḥammad bin Ishāq from Yazīd bin Rūmān that he was Āṣif bin Barkhiyā' and he was a truthful believer who knew the Greatest Name of Allāh.^[2]

Qatādah said: "He was a believer among the humans, and his name was Āṣif."

﴿أَنَا عَائِكَ يَوْمَ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ﴾

﴿I will bring it to you within the twinkling of an eye!﴾

Meaning, lift your gaze and look as far as you can, and before you get tired and blink, you will find it before you. Then he got up, performed ablution and prayed to Allāh, may He be exalted. Mujāhid said: "He said, O Owner of majesty and honor."^[3]

[1] Al-Baghawī 3:420.

[2] Al-Baghawī 3:420.

[3] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:466.

When Sulaymān and his chiefs saw it before them,

﴿قَالَ مِمَّا مِنْ فَضْلِ رَبِّي﴾

﴿he said: "This is by the grace of my Lord..."﴾

meaning, 'this is one of the blessings which Allāh has bestowed upon me.'

﴿يَلْبِثُونَ مَا تُنْكِرُ أَمْ أَكْفَرْتُمْ وَمِنْ شُكْرٍ فَإِنَّا بِتُكْرٍ لِنَفْسِنَا﴾

﴿to test whether I am grateful or ungrateful! And whoever is grateful, truly, his gratitude is for himself;﴾

This is like the Āyāt:

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ. وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ فَلِنَفْسِهِ﴾

﴿Whosoever does righteous good deed, it is for himself; and whosoever does evil, it is against himself.﴾ (41:46)

﴿وَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِأَنْفُسِهِمْ يَمْهَدُونَ﴾

﴿and whosoever does righteous good deed, then such will prepare a good place for themselves.﴾ (30:44).

﴿وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّي غَنِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ﴾

﴿and whoever is ungrateful, certainly my Lord is Rich, Bountiful.﴾

He has no need of His servants or their worship.

﴿كَرِيمٌ﴾

﴿Bountiful﴾ He is Bountiful in and of Himself, even if no one were to worship Him. His greatness does not depend on anyone. This is like what Mūsā said:

﴿إِنْ تَكْفُرُوا أَنْتُمْ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا فَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ تَعَالَى﴾

﴿If you disbelieve, you and all on earth together, then verily, Allāh is Rich, Owner of all praise.﴾ (14:8).

It is recorded in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim:

﴿يَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: يَا عِبَادِيَ لَوْ أَنَّ أَوَّلَكُمْ وَآخِرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجِنَّتُمْ كَانُوا عَلَى أَتَقَى قَلْبِ رَجُلٍ مِنْكُمْ مَا زَادَ ذَلِكَ فِي مُلْكِي شَيْئًا. يَا عِبَادِيَ لَوْ أَنَّ أَوَّلَكُمْ وَآخِرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجِنَّتُمْ كَانُوا عَلَى أَفْجَرِ قَلْبِ رَجُلٍ مِنْكُمْ مَا نَقَصَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ مُلْكِي شَيْئًا. يَا

عِبَادِي إِنَّمَا هِيَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ أَحْصَيْهَا لَكُمْ ثُمَّ أَوْفَيْكُمْ بِهَا قَمَنَ وَجَدَ خَيْرًا فَلْيَحْمَدِ
الله، وَمَنْ وَجَدَ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ فَلَا يُلُومَنَّ إِلَّا نَفْسَهُ،

«Allāh, may He be exalted, says: "O My servants, if the first of you and the last of you, mankind and Jinn alike, were all to be as pious as the most pious among you, that would not add to My dominion in the slightest. O My servants, if the first of you and the last of you, mankind and Jinn alike, were all to be as evil as the most evil one among you, that would not detract from My dominion in the slightest. O My servants, these are deeds which I am recording for you, and I will judge you according to them, so whoever finds something good, let him praise Allāh, and whoever finds otherwise, let him blame no one but himself."»^[1]

﴿قَالَ تَكْرُوا لَهَا عَرْشَهَا نَنْظُرْ أَتَهْتَدِي أَمْ تَكُونُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ﴾ ٤١ ﴿فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ قِيلَ أَهَكَذَا
عَرْشُكَ قَالَتْ كَأَنَّهُ هُوَ وَأُوتِينَا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ﴾ ٤٢ ﴿وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَتْ تُبْشِّرُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
إِنَّمَا كَانَتْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ﴾ ٤٣ ﴿قِيلَ لَهَا ادْخُلِي الصَّرْحَ فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً وَكَشَفَتْ عَنْ سَاقَيْهَا
قَالَ إِنَّهُ صَرْحٌ مُثَمَّرٌ مِنْ قَوَارِيرَ قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي وَأُتِلْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ
الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ ٤٤ ﴿

﴿41. He said: "Disguise her throne for her that we may see whether she will be guided, or she will be one of those not guided."﴾

﴿42. So when she came, it was said, "Is your throne like this?" She said: "As though it were the very same." And he said, "Knowledge was bestowed on us before her, and we had submitted to Allāh (as Muslims)."﴾

﴿43. And Saddaha that which she used to worship besides Allāh has prevented her (from Islām), for she was of a disbelieving people.﴾

﴿44. It was said to her: "Enter Aş-Şarḥ," but when she saw it, she thought it was a pool, and she (tucked up her clothes) uncovering her legs. Sulaymān said: "Verily, it is a Şarḥ Mumarrad of Qawārīr." She said: "My Lord! Verily, I have

[1] Muslim 4:1994.

wronged myself, and I submit, together with Sulaymān to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists.”﴾

The Test of Bilqīs

When Sulaymān brought the throne of Bilqīs before she and her people arrived, he issued orders that some of its features should be altered, so that he could test her and see whether she recognized it and how composed she would be when she saw it. Would she hasten to say either that it was her throne or that it was not? So he said:

﴿تَكْرُوا لَهَا عَرْشَهَا نَنْظُرْ أَتَنْبِئِي أَمْ تَكُونُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ﴾

﴿Disguise her throne for her that we may see whether she will be guided, or she will be one of those not guided.﴾

Ibn ‘Abbās said: “Remove some of its adornments and parts.”^[1] Mujāhid said: “He issued orders that it should be changed, so whatever was red should be made yellow and vice versa, and whatever was green should be made red, so everything was altered.” Ikrimah said, “They added some things and took some things away.” Qatādah said, “It was turned upside down and back to front, and some things were added and some things were taken away.”^[2]

﴿فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ قِيلَ أَهَكَذَا عَرْشِي﴾

﴿So when she came, it was said: “Is your throne like this?”﴾

Her throne, which had been altered and disguised, with some things added and others taken away, was shown to her. She was wise and steadfast, intelligent and strong-willed. She did not hasten to say that this was her throne, because it was far away from her. Neither did she hasten to say that it was not her throne, when she saw that some things had been altered and changed. She said,

﴿كَأَنَّهُ هُوَ﴾

﴿(It is) as though it were the very same.﴾ This is the ultimate in intelligence and strong resolve.

^[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:469.

^[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:469.

﴿وَأَوَيْنَا الْإِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُتْلِينَ﴾

«Knowledge was bestowed on us before her, and we had submitted to Allāh.»

Mujāhid said, "This was spoken by Sulaymān."^[1]

﴿وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَتْ تُعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ﴾

«And Ṣaddaha that which she used to worship besides Allāh has prevented her, for she was of a disbelieving people.»

This is a continuation of the words of Sulaymān – according to the opinion of Mujāhid and Saʿd bin Jubayr, may Allāh be pleased with them both – i.e., Sulaymān said:

﴿وَأَوَيْنَا الْإِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُتْلِينَ﴾

«Knowledge was bestowed on us before her, and we had submitted to Allāh.»

and what stopped her from worshipping Allāh alone was

﴿مَا كَانَتْ تُعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ﴾

«that which she used to worship besides Allāh, for she was of a disbelieving people.»

What Mujāhid and Saʿd said is good; it was also the view of Ibn Jarīr.^[2] Then Ibn Jarīr said, "It could be that the subject of the verb.

﴿وَصَدَّهَا﴾

«And Ṣaddaha» refers to Sulaymān or to Allāh, so that the phrase now means:

﴿مَا كَانَتْ تُعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ﴾

«She would not worship anything over than Allāh.»

﴿إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ﴾

«for she was of a disbelieving people.» I say: the opinion of Mujāhid is supported by the fact that she declared her Islām after she entered the Ṣarḥ, as we shall see below.

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:471.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:472

﴿قِيلَ لَهَا ادْخُلِي الصَّرْحَ فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً وَكَفَّتْ عَنْ سَاقِهَا﴾

﴿It was said to her: "Enter Aṣ-Ṣarḥ" but when she saw it, she thought it was a pool, and she (tucked up her clothes) uncovering her legs.﴾

Sulaymān had commanded the *Shayāṭīn* to build for her a huge palace of glass beneath which water was flowing. Anyone who did not know the nature of the building would think that it was water, but in fact there was a layer of glass between a person walking and the water.

Verily, it is a *Ṣarḥ Mumarrad* of *Qawārīr*

Ṣarḥ means a palace or any lofty construction. Allāh says of Fir'awn – may Allāh curse him – that he said to his minister Hāmān:

﴿أَنِّى لِي صَرْحًا لَّعَلِّ أَتِلُغَ الْأَسْبَابَ﴾

﴿Build me a *Ṣarḥ* that I may arrive at the ways.﴾ (40:36-37)

Ṣarḥ is also used to refer to the high constructed palaces in Yemen. *Mumarrad* means sturdily constructed and smooth.

﴿مِنْ قَوَارِيرَ﴾

﴿of *Qawārīr*﴾ means, made of glass, i.e., it was built with smooth surfaces. *Mārid* is a fortress in Dawmat Al-Jandal. What is meant here is that Sulaymān built a huge, lofty palace of glass for this queen, in order to show her the greatness of his authority and power. When she saw for herself what Allāh had given him and how majestic his position was, she submitted to the command of Allāh and acknowledged that he was a noble Prophet, so she submitted to Allāh and said:

﴿رَبِّ إِنِّى ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِى﴾

﴿My Lord! Verily, I have wronged myself,﴾

meaning, by her previous disbelief and *Shirk* and by the fact that she and her people had worshipped the sun instead of Allāh.

﴿وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

﴿and I submit, together with Sulaymān to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists.﴾

سورة النازعات ٣٨١

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَالِحًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ فَإِذَا هُمْ فَرِيقَانِ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ قَالَ يَتَقَوَّمُ لِمَ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ قَبْلَ الْحَسَنَةِ لَوْلَا تَسْتَغْفِرُونَ اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ قَالُوا أَطِيعْنَا بَكَ وَبَيْنَ مَعَكَ قَالَ طَعْتُمْكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّفْسِدُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَكَانَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ بَسْعَةٌ رَّهُطٌ يَفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ قَالُوا نَقَاسُوا بِاللَّهِ لَنُبَيِّنَنَّ وَأَهْلَهُ ثُمَّ لَنَقُولَنَّ لَوْ لِيهِ مَا شَاءَ دَنَّا مَهْلِكٌ أَهْلِيهِ، وَإِنَّا لَالصِّدِّقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَمَكْرُؤًا مَكَرًا وَمَكْرُؤًا مَكَرًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ فَأَنْظِرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَنُقِبُهُمْ مَكْرَهُمْ أَنَاذَرْنَاهُمْ وَقَوْمَهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٥١﴾ فَتِلْكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَاوِبَةٌ يُمْحَاظِلْمُوا إِيَّاكَ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَأَمَّا إِنَّا الْغَنِيُّونَ فَامْنُوا وَكَانُوا يُفْتَقُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ وَلَوْ طَا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفُلْجَةَ وَأَنْتُمْ تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ أَيْنَكُم مِّنَ الْوَقُونَ الْرِّجَالِ شَهْوَةٌ مِّنْ دُونِ الْإِسَاءِ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ بِجَهْلُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

meaning, following the religion of Sulaymān, worshipping Allāh alone with no partner or associate, Who created everything and measured it exactly according to its due measurements.

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَالِحًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ فَإِذَا هُمْ فَرِيقَانِ يَخْتَصِمُونَ﴾ ﴿٤٥﴾ قَالَ يَتَقَوَّمُ لِمَ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ قَبْلَ الْحَسَنَةِ لَوْلَا تَسْتَغْفِرُونَ اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ قَالُوا أَطِيعْنَا بِكَ وَبَيْنَ مَعَكَ قَالَ طَعْتُمْكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّفْسِدُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

445. And indeed
We sent to

Thamūd their brother Ṣāliḥ, (saying): "Worship Allāh." Then look! They became two parties quarreling with each other. ﴿

446. He said: "O my people! Why do you seek to hasten the evil before the good? Why seek you not the forgiveness of Allāh, that you may receive mercy?" ﴿

447. They said: "We augur an omen from you and those with you." He said: "Your omen is of Allāh; nay, but you are a people that are being tested." ﴿

Ṣāliḥ and Thamūd

Allāh tells us about Thamūd and how they responded to their Prophet Ṣāliḥ, when Allāh sent him to call them to worship Allāh alone, with no partner or associate.

﴿فَإِذَا هُمْ فَرِيقَانِ يَخْتَصِمُونَ﴾

«Then look! They became two parties quarreling with each other.»

Mujāhid said, "These were believers and disbelievers."^[1] This is like the Āyah,

﴿قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ لِلَّذِينَ اسْتُضِعُوا لِمَنْ أَمَنَّ مِنْهُمْ اسْكُتُوا أَنكُمْ كَلِمًا تَرْسَلُ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلَ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ قَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا بِالَّذِي آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾﴾

«The leaders of those who were arrogant among his people said to those who were counted weak – to such of them as believed: "Know you that Ṣāliḥ is one sent from his Lord." They said: "We indeed believe in that with which he has been sent." Those who were arrogant said: "Verily, we disbelieve in that which you believe in."» (7:75-76)

﴿قَالَ يَنْفَرُوا لِمَ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِالْخَيْرِ قَبْلَ الْكَرَةِ﴾

«He said: "O my people! Why do you seek to hasten the evil before the good?"»

meaning, 'why are you praying for the punishment to come, and not asking Allāh for His mercy?' Then he said:

﴿لَوْلَا تَسْتَغْفِرُونَ اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾ قَالُوا اطَّيَّرْنَا بِكَ وَبِمَنْ مَعَكَ﴾

«"Why seek you not the forgiveness of Allāh, that you may receive mercy?" They said: "We augur an omen from you and those with you."»

This means: "We do not see any good in your face and the faces of those who are following you." Since they were doomed, whenever anything bad happened to any of them they would say, "This is because of Ṣāliḥ and his companions." Mujāhid said, "They regarded them as bad omens."^[2] This is similar to what Allāh said about the people of Fir'aun:

﴿فَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ السَّيْئَةُ قَالُوا لَنَا هَذَا. وَإِنْ تُبْتِغِمُ سَيِّئَةً بَطَّرْنَا بِمُوسَى وَمَنْ مَعَهُ﴾

[1] At-Ṭabari 19:475.

[2] Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr 6:369.

﴿But whenever good came to them, they said: "Ours is this." And if evil afflicted them, they saw it as an omen about Mūsā and those with him﴾ (7:131).

And Allāh says:

﴿وَلَمَّا نُبِيَّهُمْ حَسَنَةً يَقُولُوا هَٰذَا مِنَّا وَلَمَّا نُبِيَّهُمْ سَيِّئَةً يَقُولُوا هَٰذَا مِن عِنْدِكَ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ﴾

﴿And if some good reaches them, they say, "This is from Allāh," but if some evil befalls them, they say, "This is from you." Say: "All things are from Allāh."﴾ (4:78)

i.e., by virtue of His will and decree.

And Allāh tells us about the dwellers of the town, when the Messengers came to them:

﴿قَالُوا إِنَّا نَطْرُقُكُمْ لَعَنًا لَّيْسَ لَنَا بَأْسٌ مِّنْكُمْ وَبَشِيرَةٌ مِّنَّا قَالُوا طَائِفُكُمْ مِّنكُمْ﴾

﴿They (people) said: "For us, we see an omen from you; if you cease not, we will surely stone you, and a painful torment will touch you from us." They (Messengers) said: "Your omens are with yourselves!﴾ (36:18)

And these people [Thamūd] said:

﴿الْأَخْبَرْنَا بِكَ وَبِمَن مَّعَكَ قَالَ طَائِفُكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ﴾

﴿"We augur an omen from you and those with you." He said: "Your omen is of Allāh;﴾

meaning, Allāh will punish you for that.

﴿بَلْ أَنتُمْ قَوْمٌ تُفْتَنُونَ﴾

﴿nay, but you are a people that are being tested.﴾

Qatādah said: "You are being tested to see whether you will obey or disobey."^[1] The apparent meaning of the phrase

﴿تُفْتَنُونَ﴾

﴿are being tested﴾ is: you will be left to get carried away in your state of misguidance.

[1] Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr 6 :369 .

﴿وَكَاثَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ نِسْمَةٌ رَهْطٍ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ﴾ ٤٨ ﴿قَالُوا تَنَاسُوا بِاللَّهِ
لَتَنَسِفَنَّهُ وَأَمَلُهُ ثُمَّ لَنَقُولَنَّ لِلرَّحْمَةِ مَا شَهِدْنَا مَهْلِكَ أَهْلِهِ وَإِنَّا لَصَادِقُونَ﴾ ٤٩ ﴿وَمَكْرًا مَكْرًا
وَمَكْرًا مَكْرًا وَقَمْ لَا بُشْرُورُ﴾ ٥٠ ﴿فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَتْ عِقَابُهُ مَكْرِهِمْ أَنَا
دَمَرْنَاهُمْ وَقَوْمَهُمْ لَجْعَيْنَ ۖ فَنِلْكَ بِيُوتُهُمْ خَاوِبَةً بِمَا ظَلَمُوا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً
لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ ٥١ ﴿وَأَنبِئْنَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَنْتَفُونَ﴾ ٥٢

﴿48. And there were in the city nine Raḥṭīn, who made mischief in the land, and would not reform.﴾

﴿49. They said: "Swear one to another by Allāh that we shall make a secret night attack on him and his household, and thereafter we will surely say to his near relatives: 'We witnessed not the destruction of his household, and verily, we are telling the truth.'"﴾

﴿50. So, they plotted a plot, and We planned a plan, while they perceived not.﴾

﴿51. Then see how was the end of their plot! Verily, We destroyed them and their nation all together.﴾

﴿52. These are their houses in utter ruin, for they did wrong. Verily, in this is indeed an Āyah for people who know.﴾

﴿53. And We saved those who believed, and had Taqwā of Allāh.﴾

The Plot of the Mischief-Makers and the End of the People of Thamūd

Allāh tells us about the evildoers of Thamūd and their leaders who used to call their people to misguidance and disbelief, and to deny Ṣāliḥ. Eventually they killed the she-camel and were about to kill Ṣāliḥ too. They plotted to let him sleep with his family at night, then they would assassinate him and tell his relatives that they knew nothing about what happened to him, and that they were telling the truth because none of them had seen anything. Allāh says:

﴿وَكَاثَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ﴾

﴿And there were in the city﴾ meaning, in the city of Thamūd,

﴿نِسْمَةٌ رَهْطٍ﴾

﴿nine Raḥṭ,﴾ meaning, nine people,

﴿يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ﴾

﴿who made mischief in the land, and would not reform.﴾

They forced their opinions on the people of Thamūd, because they were the leaders and chiefs. Al-'Awfi reported that Ibn 'Abbās said: "These were the people who killed the she-camel,"^[1] Meaning, that happened upon their instigation, may Allāh curse them. Allāh says:

﴿فَادَّأَوْا صَاحِبَهُ فَتَمَاطَى فَعَرَّ﴾

﴿But they called their comrade and he took (a sword) and killed (the she-camel).﴾ (54:29)

﴿إِذْ أُنْمِتَتْ لَهَا أَشَقُّهَا﴾

﴿When the most wicked man among them went forth (to kill the she-camel).﴾ (91:12)

'Abdur-Razzāq said that Yaḥyā bin Rabī'ah As-San'āni told them, "I heard 'Aṭā' – i.e. Ibn Abi Rabāh – say:

﴿وَكُنَّا فِي الْمَدِينَةِ نَتَعَمَّرُ وَهَلْ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ﴾

﴿And there were in the city nine Raḥṭ, who made mischief in the land, and would not reform.﴾

They used to break silver coins.'"^[2] They would break off pieces from them, as if they used to trade with them in terms of numbers [as opposed to weight], as the Arabs used to do.

Imām Mālik narrated from Yaḥyā bin Sa'īd that Sa'īd bin Al-Musayyib said: "Cutting gold and silver (coins) is part of spreading corruption on earth." What is meant is that the nature of these evil disbelievers was to spread corruption on earth by every means possible, one of which was that mentioned by these Imāms.

﴿قَالُوا تَقَسَّمُوا بِاللَّهِ لَنَنِيَّتَهُ وَأَعْمَلَهُ﴾

﴿They said: "Swear one to another by Allāh that we shall make a secret night attack on him and his household..."﴾

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:477.

[2] Abdur-Razzāq 3:83.

They took a mutual oath, pledging that during the night, whoever met the Allāh's Prophet Ṣāliḥ, peace be upon him, he would assassinate him. But Allāh planned against them and caused their plot to backfire. Mujāhid said, "They took a mutual oath pledging to kill him, but before they could reach him, they and their people were all destroyed."^[1]

'Abdur-Raḥmān bin Abi Ḥātim^[2] said: "When they killed the she-camel, Ṣāliḥ said to them:

﴿تَسْمَعُوا فِي دَارِكُمْ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ ذَلِكَ وَعْدٌ غَيْرُ مَكْذُوبٍ﴾

﴿"Enjoy yourselves in your homes for three days. This is a promise (i.e., a threat) that will not be belied."﴾ (11:65).

They said: 'Ṣāliḥ claims that he will finish with us in three days, but we will finish him and his family before the three days are over.' Ṣāliḥ had a place of worship in a rocky tract in a valley, where he used to pray. So they set out to go to a cave there one night, and said, 'When he comes to pray, we will kill him, then we will return. When we have finished him off, we will go to his family and finish them off too.' Then Allāh sent down a rock upon them from the mountains round about; they feared that it would crush them, so they ran into the cave and the rock covered the mouth of the cave while they were inside. Their people did not know where they were or what had happened to them. So Allāh punished some of them here, and some of them there, and He saved Ṣāliḥ and the people who were with him. Then he recited:

﴿وَمَكَرُوا مَكْرًا وَمَكَرْنَا مَكْرًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ فَاَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْرِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾ اِنَّا دَمَّرْنَاهُمْ وَقَوْمَهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾ فَتِلْكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَاوِيَةٌ﴾

﴿So, they plotted a plot, and We planned a plan, while they perceived not. Then see how was the end of their plot! Verily, We destroyed them and their nation, all together. These are their houses in utter ruin,﴾ i.e., deserted."

﴿بِمَا ظَلَمُوا رَبَّكَ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ وَأَنجَيْنَا آلَ زَيْدٍ مَّا سَأَوْا وَكَانُوا يَسْتَفْتُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾﴾

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:478.

[2] That is 'Abdur-Raḥmān bin Zayd. This narration is recorded by Ibn Abi Ḥātim no. 16485, and Aṭ-Ṭabari no. 27054.

سورة النور

٣٨٢

المرأة الغريبة

﴿فَمَا كَانَتْ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوهُ أَلْ لُوطُ مِنْ قَرْيَتِكُمْ إِنَّهُمْ أَنْأَسُ بِنَطَهِرُونَ﴾ (٥٤) ﴿فَأَنجَيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلَّا أَمْرَأَتَهُ قَدَرْنَاهَا مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ﴾ (٥٥) ﴿وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا فَسَاءَ مَطَرُ الْمُنْذَرِينَ﴾ (٥٦) ﴿قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى عِبَادِهِ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَى ۚ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ أَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ﴾ (٥٧) ﴿أَمَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنْبَتْنَا بِهِ حَدَائِقَ ذَاتَ بَهْجَةٍ مَأْكُوتٍ﴾ (٥٨) ﴿أَنْ تُبْسِتُوا شَجَرَهَا ۗ إِنَّهُ مَعَ اللَّهِ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ يَعِدُونَ﴾ (٥٩) ﴿أَمَنْ جَعَلَ الْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَجَعَلَ خِلَالَهَا أَنْهَارًا وَجَعَلَ لَهَا رَوَاسٍ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ حَاجِزًا ۗ إِنَّهُ مَعَ اللَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ (٦٠) ﴿أَمَنْ يُحِبُّ الْمُسْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ ۗ إِنَّهُ مَعَ اللَّهِ قَلِيلًا مَا تَذَكَّرُونَ﴾ (٦١) ﴿أَمَنْ يَهْدِيكُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَنْ يُرْسِلِ الرِّيحَ بِشْرًا ۖ إِنَّهُ يَدْنَىٰ رَحْمَتِهِ ۗ إِنَّهُ مَعَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَىٰ اللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ﴾ (٦٢)

﴿for they did wrong. Verily, in this is indeed an Āyah for people who know. And We saved those who believed, and had Taqwā of Allāh.﴾

﴿وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفِتْنَةَ وَأنْتُمْ تُبْصِرُونَ﴾ (٥٤) ﴿إِن كُنتُمْ تَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِنْ دُونِ الْإِنْسَاءِ ۚ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّجْهَلُونَ﴾ (٥٥) ﴿فَمَا كَانَتْ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوهُ أَلْ لُوطُ مِنْ قَرْيَتِكُمْ إِنَّهُمْ أَنْأَسُ بِنَطَهِرُونَ﴾ (٥٦) ﴿فَأَنجَيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلَّا أَمْرَأَتَهُ قَدَرْنَاهَا مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ﴾ (٥٧) ﴿وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا فَسَاءَ مَطَرُ الْمُنْذَرِينَ﴾ (٥٨)

﴿54. And (remember) Lūṭ! When he said to his people: "Do you commit

immoral sins while you see?"﴾

﴿55. "Do you practice your lusts on men instead of women? Nay, but you are a people who behave senselessly."﴾

﴿56. There was no other answer given by his people except that they said: "Drive out the family of Lūṭ from your city. Verily, these are men who want to be clean and pure!"﴾

﴿57. So, We saved him and his family, except his wife. We destined her to be of those who remained behind.﴾

﴿58. And We rained down on them a rain. So, evil was the rain of those who were warned.﴾

Lūṭ and His People

Allāh tells us about His servant and Messenger Lūṭ, peace be

upon him, and how he warned his people of Allāh's punishment for committing an act of immorality which no human ever committed before them – intercourse with males instead of females. This is a major sin, whereby men are satisfied with men and women are with women (i.e., homosexuality). Lūṭ said:

﴿أَتَأْتُونَ الذَّكَرَ وَأَنْتُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ﴾

﴿Do you commit immoral sins while you see?﴾

meaning, 'while you see one another, and you practice every kind of evil in your meetings.'

﴿أَيُنْكِحُكُمْ لِقَاؤُ الرِّجَالِ شَهْوَةً مِنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ بِجَهْلُونَ﴾

﴿Do you practice your lusts on men instead of women? Nay, but you are a people who behave senselessly.﴾

means, 'you do not know anything of what is natural or what is prescribed by Allāh.' This is like the Āyah:

﴿أَتَأْتُونَ الذَّكَرَانَ مِنَ الْمَخْلُوقِينَ ۖ وَتَذَرُونَ مَا خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ

عَادُونَ﴾

﴿Go you in unto the males of mankind, and leave those whom Allāh has created for you to be your wives? Nay, you are a trespassing people!﴾ (26:165-166)

﴿فَمَا كَانَتْ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوا آلَ لُوطٍ مِنْ قَرْيَتِكُمْ إِنَّهُمْ أَنْفُسٌ

يَبْغُونَهَا﴾

﴿There was no other answer given by his people except that they said: "Drive out the family of Lūṭ from your city. Verily, these are men who want to be clean and pure!"﴾

means, 'they feel embarrassed because of the deeds you are doing, and because you approve of your actions, so expel them from among yourselves, for they are not fit to live among you in your city.' So, the people resolved to do that, and Allāh destroyed them, and a similar end awaits the disbelievers. Allāh says:

﴿فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلَّا امْرَأَتَهُ فَذَرْنَهَا مِنَ الْفَاسِقِينَ﴾

﴿So, We saved him and his family, except his wife. We

destined her to be of those who remained behind. ﴿

meaning, she was one of those who were destroyed, with her people, because she was a helper to what they did and she approved of their evil deeds. She told them about the guests of Lūt so that they could come to them. She did not do the evil deeds herself, which was because of the honor of the Lūt and not because of any honor on her part.

﴿وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا﴾

﴿And We rained down on them a rain.﴾

means; stones of *Sijjūl*,^[1] in a well-arranged manner one after another. Marked from your Lord; and they are not ever far from the evildoers. Allāh said:

﴿فَسَاءَ مَطَرُ الْمُنْذَرِينَ﴾

﴿So, evil was the rain of those who were warned.﴾

meaning, those against whom proof was established and whom the warning reached, but they went against the Messenger and denied him, and resolved to drive him out from among them.

﴿قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى عِبَادِهِ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَىٰ ۚ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا يَشْرُكُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾ أَمَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنْبَتْنَا بِهِ حَدَائِقَ ذَاتَ بَهْجَةٍ مَّا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَنْ تُنْبِتُوا شَجَرَهَا ۚ أَوَلَمْ يَكُنْ مَعَ اللَّهِ بَلٌّ لَهُمْ قَوْمٌ يَعِدُوكَ ﴿٦٠﴾﴾

﴿59. Say : "Praise and thanks be to Allāh, and peace be on His servants whom He has chosen! Is Allāh better, or what they ascribe as partners?"﴾

﴿60. Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth, and sends down for you water from the sky, whereby We cause to grow wonderful gardens full of beauty and delight? It is not in your ability to cause the growth of their trees. Is there any god with Allāh? Nay, but they are a people who ascribe equals!﴾

The Command to praise Allāh and send Blessings on His Messengers

Allāh commands His Messenger ﷺ to say:

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ﴾

[1] See volume five, the Tafsir of Sūrah Hūd (11 : 82).

﴿Praise and thanks be to Allāh,﴾

meaning, for His innumerable blessings upon His servants and for His exalted Attributes and most beautiful Names. And He commands him to send peace upon the servants of Allāh whom He chose and selected, i.e., His noble Messengers and Prophets, may the best of peace and blessings from Allāh be upon them. This was the view of 'Abdur-Raḥmān bin Zayd bin Aslam and others; the meaning of the servants He has chose is the Prophets. He said, "This like He said in the Āyah;

﴿سُبْحَنَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨٠﴾ وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٨١﴾ وَلَحْدٌ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٨٢﴾﴾

﴿Glorified be your Lord, the Lord of honor and power! (He is free) from what they attribute unto Him! And peace be on the Messengers! And all the praises and thanks be to Allāh, Lord of all that exists.﴾ (37:180-182)."

Ath-Thawri and As-Suddī said, "This refers to the Companions of Muḥammad ﷺ, may Allāh be pleased with them all." Something similar was also narrated from Ibn 'Abbās, and there is no contradiction between the two views, because they were also among the servants of Allāh whom He had chosen, although the description is more befitting of the Prophets.

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَيْرٌ أَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ﴾

﴿Is Allāh better, or what they ascribe as partners (to Him)?﴾

This is a question aimed at denouncing the idolators for their worship of other gods besides Allāh.

Some more Proofs of Tawḥīd

Then Allāh begins to explain that He is the Only One Who creates, provides and controls, as He says:

﴿أَمَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ﴾

﴿Is not He Who created the heavens﴾

meaning, He created those heavens which are so high and serene, with their shining stars and revolving planets. And He created the earth, with its varying heights and densities, and He created everything in it, mountains, hills, plains, rugged terrain, wildernesses, crops, trees, fruits, seas and animals of

all different kinds and colors and shapes, etc.

﴿وَأَنزَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً﴾

﴿and sends down for you water from the sky,﴾

means, He sends it as a provision for His servants,

﴿فَأَنبَتْنَا بِهِ حَبَائِبَ ذَاتِ بَهْجَةٍ﴾

﴿whereby We cause to grow wonderful gardens full of beauty and delight?﴾

means, beautiful and delightful to behold.

﴿مَا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَن تُنبِتُوا شَجَرَهَا﴾

﴿It is not in your ability to cause the growth of their trees.﴾

meaning, 'you are not able to cause their trees to grow. The One Who is able to do that is the Creator and Provider, Who is doing all this Alone and Independent of any idol and other rival.' The idolators themselves admitted this, as Allāh says in another Āyah:

﴿وَلَيْن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّن خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ﴾

﴿And if you ask them: "Who has created them?" they will certainly say: "Allāh."﴾ (31:25)

﴿وَلَيْن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّن رَزَقَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ مِن بَعْدِ مَوْتِهَا لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ﴾

﴿And if you were to ask them: "Who sends down water from the sky, and gives life therewith to the earth after its death?" they will surely reply: "Allāh."﴾ (29:63)

Meaning they will admit that He is the One Who does all these things, Alone, with no partner or associate, but then they worship others alongside Him, others who they admit cannot create or provide anything. But the Only One Who deserves to be worshipped is the Only One Who can create and provide, Allāh says:

﴿أَوَلَيْدَ مَعَ اللَّهِ﴾

﴿Is there any god with Allāh?﴾ meaning, 'is there any god that can be worshipped alongside Allāh, when it is clear to you and anyone who with reason that He is the Creator and Provider, as you yourselves admit?' Then Allāh says:

﴿بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ يَعِدُونَ﴾

﴿Nay, but they are a people who ascribe equals (to Him)!﴾

meaning, they describe others as being equal and comparable to Allāh.

﴿أَمَّنْ جَعَلَ الْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَجَعَلَ خِلَالَهَا أَنْهَارًا وَجَعَلَ لَهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ حَاجِزًا أَلَيْسَ مَعَ اللَّهِ بِلَا أَكْثَرُ لَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

﴿61. Is not He Who has made the earth as a fixed abode, and has placed rivers in its midst, and has placed firm mountains therein, and has set a barrier between the two seas (of salt and sweet water)? Is there any ilāh (god) with Allāh? Nay, but most of them know not!﴾

Allāh says:

﴿أَمَّنْ جَعَلَ الْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا﴾

﴿Is not He Who has made the earth as a fixed abode,﴾

meaning, stable and stationary, so that it does not move or convulse, because if it were to do so, it would not be a good place for people to live on. But by His grace and mercy, He has made it smooth and calm, and it is not shaken or moved. This is like the Āyah,

﴿اللَّهُ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَاءً﴾

﴿Allāh, Who has made for you the earth as a dwelling place and the sky as a canopy﴾ (40:64).

﴿وَجَعَلَ خِلَالَهَا أَنْهَارًا﴾

﴿and has placed rivers in its midst,﴾ means, He has placed rivers which are fresh and sweet, cutting through the earth, and He has made them of different types, large rivers, small rivers and some in between. He has caused them to flow in all directions, east, west, south, north, according to the needs of mankind in different areas and regions, as He has created them throughout the world and sends them their provision according to their needs.

﴿وَجَعَلَ لَهَا رَوَاسِيَ﴾

﴿and has placed firm mountains therein,﴾

means, high mountains which stabilize the earth and make it steadfast, so that it does not shake.

﴿وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ حَاجِزًا﴾

﴿and has set a barrier between the two seas﴾

means, He has placed a barrier between the fresh water and the salt water, to prevent them from mixing lest they corrupt one another. Divine wisdom dictates that each of them should stay as it is meant to be. The sweet water is that which flows in rivers among mankind, and it is meant to be fresh and palatable so that it may be used to water animals and plants and fruits. The salt water is that which surrounds the continents on all sides, and its water is meant to be salty and undrinkable lest the air be corrupted by its smell, as Allāh says:

﴿رَهُوَ الَّذِي مَجَّ الْبَحْرَيْنِ هَذَا عَذْبٌ فَرَاتٌ وَهَذَا يَمْحٌ أَمَّا جٌ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزًا وَحِجْرًا تَحْجُرًا ۝٥٣﴾

﴿And it is He Who has let free the two seas, this is palatable and sweet, and that is salty and bitter; and He has set a barrier and a complete partition between them.﴾ (25:53)

Allāh says:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَكُنْ مَعَ اللَّهِ﴾

﴿Is there any god with Allāh?﴾ meaning, any god who could do this, or who deserves to be worshipped? Both meanings are indicated by the context.

﴿بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

﴿Nay, but most of them know not!﴾ means, in that they worship others than Allāh.

﴿أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ أَوَلَمْ يَكُنْ مَعَ اللَّهِ فَلَيْسَ مَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ۝٥٤﴾

﴿62. Is not He Who responds to the distressed one, when he calls on Him, and Who removes the evil, and makes you inheritors of the earth, generations after generations? Is there any god with Allāh? Little is that you remember!﴾

Allāh points out that He is the One upon Whom people call in times of difficulty, and He is the One to Whom they turn when

calamity strikes, as He says elsewhere:

﴿وَإِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فِي الْبَحْرِ ضَلَّ مَنْ تَدْعُونَ إِلَّا إِلَاهَ﴾

«And when harm touches you upon the sea, those that you call upon vanish from you except Him» (17:67),

﴿ثُمَّ إِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فَإِلَيْهِ تَجْتَرُونَ﴾

«Then, when harm touches you, unto Him you cry aloud for help» (16:53).

Similarly, Allāh says here:

﴿أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ﴾

«Is not He Who responds to the distressed one, when he calls on Him,»

meaning, Who is the only One to Whom the person in desperate need turns, and the only One Who can relieve those who are stricken by harm? Imām Aḥmad reported that a man of Balhajīm said: "O Messenger of Allāh, what are you calling for?" He said:

«أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ وَحْدَهُ الَّذِي إِنْ مَسَّكَ ضُرٌّ فَدَعَوْتُهُ كَشَفَ عَنْكَ، وَالَّذِي إِنْ أَضَلَّتْ بِأَرْضٍ قَفِرٍ فَدَعَوْتُهُ رَدَّ عَلَيْكَ، وَالَّذِي إِنْ أَصَابَتْكَ سَهَّةٌ فَدَعَوْتُهُ أَنْبَتَ لَكَ»

«I am calling people to Allāh Alone, the One Who, if you call on Him when harm befalls you, will relieve you; and when you are lost in the wilderness, you call on Him and He brings you back: and when drought (famine) strikes, you call on Him and He makes your crops grow.»

He said: "Advise me." He ﷺ said:

«لَا تَسُبَّنْ أَحَدًا وَلَا تَزْهَدَنَّ فِي الْمَعْرُوفِ، وَلَوْ أَنْ تَلْقَى أَخَاكَ وَأَنْتَ مُنْشَبِطٌ إِلَيْهِ وَجْهَكَ، وَلَوْ أَنْ تُفْرَغَ مِنْ دَلْوِكَ فِي إِنَاءِ الْمُسْتَقِي، وَاتَّزِرَ إِلَى يَنْفِ السَّاقِ فَإِنْ أَبَيْتَ فِإِلَى الْكَغْبِيِّينَ، وَإِيَّاكَ وَإِسْبَالَ الْإِزَارِ فَإِنْ إِسْبَالَ الْإِزَارِ مِنَ الْمَخِيلَةِ وَإِنْ اللَّهُ لَا يُجِبُ الْمَخِيلَةَ»

«Do not slander anyone and do not think of any good deed as insignificant, even if it is only meeting your brother with a cheerful face or emptying your vessel into the vessel of one who is asking for water. Wear your lower garment at mid-calf

length, or – if you insist – let it reach your ankles, and beware of lowering the garment below the ankles along the ground,^[1] for it is a form of showing-off, and Allāh does not like showing-off.^[2]

The Story of a *Mujāhid* who fought for the sake of Allāh

In his biography of Fāṭimah bint Al-Ḥasan Umm Aḥmad Al-ʿAjaliyyah, Al-Ḥāfiẓ bin ʿAsākir reported that she said: “One day the disbelievers defeated the Muslims in a battle. There was a good horse which belonged to a rich man who was also righteous. The horse just stood there, so its owner said, ‘What is the matter with you? Woe to you! I was only preparing you for a day such as this.’ The horse said to him: ‘How can you expect me not to perform badly, when you delegated my feeding to the grooms, and they mistreated me and only fed me a little?’ The man said, ‘I make you a promise before Allāh that from this day on, only I will feed you from my own lap.’ So the horse began to run, and his owner was saved, and after that he only ever fed the horse from his own lap. This story became well known among the people, and they started to come to him to hear the story from his own lips. News of this reached the king of Byzantium, and he said: ‘A city where this man is, will be kept safe from harm.’ He wanted to bring the man to his own city, so he sent an apostate (a man who had left Islām) who was living in his city to go to him, and when he reached him, he pretended that his intentions towards Islām and its followers were good, so the *Mujāhid* trusted him. One day they went out walking along the shore, but the apostate made a pact with another person, a follower of the Byzantine king, to come and help him take the *Mujāhid* prisoner. When they made their move, he lifted his gaze to the sky and said, ‘O Allāh! He has deceived me by swearing in Your Name, so protect me in whatever way You will.’ Then two wild animals came out and seized them, and the *Mujāhid* came back safe and sound.”^[3]

[1] To let one’s lower garment trail along the ground.

[2] Aḥmad 5:64. This narration is not authentic. Most parts of the text are found in other authentic *Ḥadīths*.

[3] *Tārīkh Dimashq* 19:489 MS.

The Inheritance of the Earth

﴿وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ﴾

﴿and makes you inheritors of the earth,﴾

means, each generation inherits from the generation that came before them, one after the other, as Allāh says:

﴿إِنْ يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَسْتَخْلِفَ مِنْ بَدَلِكُمْ مَا يَشَاءُ كَمَا أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِكُمْ قَوْمٍ
آخَرِينَ﴾

﴿if He wills, He can destroy you, and in your place make whom He wills as your successors, as He raised you from the seed of other people﴾ (6:133),

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَائِفَ الْأَرْضِ رَفَعَ بَعْضَكُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ﴾

﴿And it is He Who has made you generations coming after generations, replacing each other on the earth. And He has raised you in ranks, some above others﴾ (6:165),

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً﴾

﴿And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels: "Verily, I am going to place generations after generations on earth."﴾ (2:30)

meaning, people who will come after one another, as we have already stated.

Allāh's saying:

﴿وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ﴾

﴿and makes you inheritors of the earth,﴾

means, nation after nation, generation after generation, people after people. If He had willed, He could have created them all at one time, and not made some of them the offspring of others. If He had willed, He could have created them all together, as He created Ādam from dust. If He had willed, He could have made some of them the offspring of others, but not caused any of them to die until they all died at one time; in this case the earth would have become constricted for them and it would be too difficult for them to live and earn a living, and they would have caused inconvenience and harm to one

another. But His wisdom and decree ruled that they should be created from one soul, then their numbers should be greatly increased, so He created them on the earth and made them generation after generation, nation after nation, until their time will come to an end and there will be no one left on earth, as Allāh has decreed and as He has completely counted out their numbers. Then the Resurrection will come to pass, and each person will be rewarded or punished according to his deeds. Allāh says:

﴿أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَا وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ أُولَئِكَ مَعَ اللَّهِ﴾

﴿Is not He Who responds to the distressed one, when he calls on Him, and Who removes the evil, and makes you inheritors of the earth, generations after generations? Is there any god with Allāh?﴾

meaning, is there anyone else able to do that, or a god with Allāh worth worshipping – while you know that He is the only one who can do that, having no partners?

﴿قَلِيلًا مَا تَذَكَّرُونَ﴾

﴿Little is that you remember!﴾ meaning, how little they think about that which would guide them to the truth and show them the straight path.

﴿أَمَّنْ يَهْدِيكُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَنْ يُرْسِلُ الرِّيَّحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ أُولَئِكَ مَعَ اللَّهِ قَلِيلًا مَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ﴾

﴿63. Is not He Who guides you in the darkness of the land and the sea, and Who sends the winds as heralds of glad tidings, going before His mercy? Is there any god with Allāh? Exalted be Allāh above all that they associate as partners!﴾

Allāh says,

﴿أَمَّنْ يَهْدِيكُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ﴾

﴿Is not He Who guides you in the darkness of the land and the sea,﴾

meaning, by means of what He has created of heavenly and earthly signposts. This is like the *Āyah*,

﴿وَعَلَّمَنَّا رُبَّاكُمْ وَابْتَغَيْنَا فَمًّا يَمْتَدُونَ﴾

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

۳۴۳

الْأَنْعَامِ

أَمَّنْ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ ۖ وَمَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ

أَوَلَمْ مَعَ اللَّهِ قُلْ هَكَأُنْزِلُكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ۚ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ

أَيَّانَ يَبْعَثُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ بَلْ أَذْرَكَ عِلْمُهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ ۚ بَلْ هُمْ

فِي شَكٍّ مِنْهَا ۚ بَلْ هُمْ مِنْهَا عَمُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

أَيَّذَا كُنَّا تُرَابًا وَآبَاءُؤُنَا أَيَّانَ لُمُخْرَجُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾ لَقَدْ وَعَدْنَا

هَذَا نَحْنُ وَآبَاءُؤُنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ ۖ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ

﴿٧١﴾ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُنْ فِي ضَيْقٍ مِمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَى هَذَا الْوَعْدُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾ قُلْ عَسَى

أَنْ يَكُونَ رَدِفٌ لَكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ

لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَئِنْ أَسْأَلْتَهُمْ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ وَإِنَّ

رَبَّكَ لَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَمِمَّنْ غَابَتْ

فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا فِي كَنْبٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٧٧﴾ إِنَّ هَذَا لَفُتْرَانٌ

يَقْضَى عَلَى بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ أَكْثَرَ الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

﴿And landmarks and by the stars, they guide themselves.﴾ (16:16)

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ النُّجُومَ

لِتَهْتَدُوا بِهَا فِي ظُلُمَاتِ اللَّيْلِ

وَالنَّهَارِ﴾

﴿It is He Who has set the stars for you, so that you may guide your course with their help through the darkness of the land and the sea...﴾

(6:97)

﴿وَمَنْ يُرْسِلُ الرِّيحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ

بَدَنِي رَحِيمَةٍ﴾

﴿and Who sends the winds as heralds of glad tidings, going before His mercy?﴾

meaning, ahead of the clouds which bring rain, by means of

which Allāh shows His mercy to His servants who are suffering drought and despair.

﴿أَوَلَمْ مَعَ اللَّهِ تَعْلَى اللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ﴾

﴿Is there any god with Allāh? Exalted be Allāh above all that they associate as partners!﴾

﴿أَمَّنْ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ ۖ وَمَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ أَوَلَمْ مَعَ اللَّهِ قُلْ هَكَأُنْزِلُكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ بَرِينَكُمْ

إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾﴾

﴿64. Is not He Who originates creation, and shall thereafter repeat it, and Who provides for you from heaven and earth? Is there any god with Allāh? Say: "Bring forth your proofs, if you are truthful."﴾

He is the One Who, by His might and power, originates

creation and then repeats it. This is like the *Āyāt*:

﴿إِنَّ بَلَاءَ رَبِّكَ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿١٢﴾ إِنَّهُ هُوَ يَبْدَأُ وَيُعِيدُ ﴿١٣﴾﴾

«Verily, the punishment of your Lord is severe and painful. Verily, He it is Who begins and repeats.» (85:12-13)

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَهُوَ أَهْوَتْ عَلَيْهِ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾

«And He it is Who originates the creation, then He will repeat it; and this is easier for Him.» (30:27)

﴿وَمَنْ يَرْزُقُكَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾

«and Who provides for you from heaven and earth?»

with the rain He sends down from the sky causing the blessings of the earth to grow, as He says elsewhere:

﴿وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الْآرْضِ ﴿١١﴾ وَالْأَرْضِ ذَاتِ الصَّغِيَرِ ﴿١٢﴾﴾

«By the sky which gives rain, again and again. And the earth which splits.» (86:11-12)

﴿يَعْلَمُ مَا يَلِجُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا وَمَا يَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَمَا يَعْرُجُ فِيهَا ﴿٣٤﴾﴾

«He knows that which goes into the earth and that which comes forth from it, and that which descends from the heaven and that which ascends to it» (34:2).

Allāh, may He be blessed and exalted, sends down water from the sky as a blessing, and causes it to penetrate the earth, and then come forth as springs. After that, by means of the water He brings forth all kinds of crops, fruits and flowers, in all their different forms and colors.

﴿كُلُوا وَارْعَوْا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٥٤﴾﴾

«Eat and pasture your cattle; verily, in this are signs for men of understanding» (20:54).

Allāh says:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَكُنْ مَعَهُ اللَّهُ ﴿٥٤﴾﴾

«Is there any god with Allāh?» meaning, who did this? Or, according to another interpretation: after this (who could be worth worship)?

﴿قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾﴾

﴿Say: "Bring forth your proofs, if you are truthful."﴾

Produce the evidence of that. But it is known that they have no proof or evidence, as Allāh says:

﴿وَمَنْ يَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا مَآخَرَ لَا بَرْهَانَ لَهُ يَدْعُ فَاتِّمَامًا حِسَابَهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ إِنْهُمْ لَا يُفْلِحُونَ
الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾﴾

﴿And whoever invokes besides Allāh, any other god, of whom he has no proof; then his reckoning is only with his Lord. Surely, the disbelievers will not be successful.﴾ (23:117)

﴿قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ بَلِ أَذْرَكَ
يَعْلَمُهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ بَلْ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِنْهَا بَلْ هُمْ تَنْهَاهَا عَمُّونَ ﴿١٦﴾﴾

﴿65. Say: "None in the heavens and the earth knows the Unseen except Allāh, nor can they perceive when they shall be resurrected."﴾

﴿66. Nay, their knowledge will perceive that in the Hereafter. Nay, they are in doubt about it. Nay, they are in complete blindness about it.﴾

The One Who knows the Unseen is Allāh

Allāh commands His Messenger ﷺ to inform all of creation that no one among the dwellers of heaven and earth knows the Unseen, except Allāh.

﴿إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾

﴿except Allāh﴾ This is an absolute exception, meaning that no one knows this besides Allāh, He is alone in that regard, having no partner in that knowledge. This is like the Āyāt:

﴿وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ﴾

﴿And with Him are the keys of the Unseen, none knows them but He﴾ (6:59).

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَيُرْسِلُ الْغَيْثَ﴾

﴿Verily, Allāh, with Him is the knowledge of the Hour, He sends down the rain﴾ (31:34).

until the end of the Sūrah. And there are many Āyāt which mention similar things.

﴿وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ﴾

﴿nor can they perceive when they shall be resurrected.﴾

That is, the created beings who dwell in the heavens and on earth do not know when the Hour will occur, as Allāh says:

﴿ثَقُلَتْ فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا تَأْتِيكُمُ إِلَّا بَغْتَةً﴾

﴿Heavy is its burden through the heavens and the earth. It shall not come upon you except all of a sudden﴾ (7:187).

meaning, it is a grave matter for the dwellers of heaven and earth.

﴿بَلْ أَدْرَاكَ عِلْمُهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ بَلْ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِنْهَا﴾

﴿Nay, their knowledge will perceive that in the Hereafter. Nay, they are in doubt about it.﴾

means their knowledge and amazement stops short of knowing its time. Other scholars read this with the meaning "their knowledge is all the same with regard to that," which reflects the meaning of the Ḥadīth in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim which states that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said to Jibrīl, when the latter asked him when the Hour would come:

«مَا الْمَسْئُولُ عَنْهَا بِأَعْلَمَ مِنَ السَّائِلِ»

«The one who is being asked about it does not know any more than the one who is asking.»^[1]

In other words, they were both equal in the fact that their knowledge did not extend that far.

﴿بَلْ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِنْهَا﴾

﴿Nay, they are in doubt about it.﴾ This refers to the disbelievers in general as Allāh says elsewhere:

﴿وَعَرَّضُوا عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ صَفًا لَّقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ بَلْ زَعَمْتُمْ أَلَّنْ نَجْعَلَ لَكُم مَّوْعِدًا ۚ﴾

﴿And they will be set before your Lord in rows, (and Allāh will say:) "Now indeed, you have come to Us as We created you the first time. Nay, but you thought that We had appointed no

[1] Muslim 1:36.

meeting for you (with Us).” ﴿18:48﴾

i.e., the disbelievers among you. By the same token, Allāh says here:

﴿بَلْ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِنْهَا﴾

﴿Nay, they are in doubt about it.﴾ meaning, they doubt that it will come to pass.

﴿بَلْ هُمْ فِيهَا عَمَوْنَ﴾

﴿Nay, they are in complete blindness about it.﴾

They are blind and completely ignorant about it.

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِذَا كُنَّا تُرَابًا وَءَابَاؤُنَا إِلَيْنَا لَنُجْعِلَنَّهُمْ لُغْلُغًا ۖ لَقَدْ وُعِدْنَا هَذَا نَحْنُ وَءَابَاؤُنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ۚ﴾ قُلْ يَبْرُؤُا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَأَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ۚ﴾ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُنْ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ۖ﴾

﴿67. And those who disbelieve say: "When we have become dust - we and our fathers - shall we really be brought forth?"﴾

﴿68. "Indeed we were promised this - we and our forefathers before, verily, these are nothing but tales of ancients."﴾

﴿69. Say to them: "Travel in the land and see how has been the end of the criminals."﴾

﴿70. And grieve you not over them, nor be straitened (in distress) because of what they plot.﴾

Scepticism about the Resurrection and Its Refutation

Allāh tells us about the idolators who deny the Resurrection, considering it extremely unlikely that bodies will be re-created after they have become bones and dust. Then He says:

﴿لَقَدْ وُعِدْنَا هَذَا نَحْنُ وَءَابَاؤُنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ﴾

﴿Indeed we were promised this - we and our forefathers before,﴾

meaning, 'we and our forefathers have been hearing this for a long time, but in reality, we have never seen it happen.'

﴿إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ﴾

﴿verily, these are nothing but tales of ancients.﴾

the promises that bodies will be restored are

﴿إِلَّا أَسْطُورُ الْأَوَّلِينَ﴾

﴿nothing but tales of ancients.﴾ meaning that they were taken by the people who came before us from books which were handed down from one to the other, but they have no basis in reality. Responding to their thoughts of disbelief and their belief that there would be no Resurrection, Allāh said,

﴿قُلْ﴾

﴿Say﴾ 'O Muḥammad, to these people,'

﴿يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ﴾

﴿Travel in the land and see how has been the end of the criminals.﴾

meaning, those who denied the Messengers and their message of the Resurrection and other matters. See how the punishment and vengeance of Allāh struck them and how Allāh saved from among them the noble Messengers and the believers who followed them. This will be an indication of the truth of the Message brought by the Messengers. Then, to comfort the Prophet ﷺ, Allāh says:

﴿وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ﴾

﴿And grieve you not over them,﴾ meaning, 'but do not feel sorry for them or kill yourself with regret for them,'

﴿وَلَا تَكُنْ فِي ضَيْقٍ مِمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ﴾

﴿nor be straitened because of what they plot.﴾

means, 'because they plot against you and reject what you have brought, for Allāh will help and support you, and cause your religion to prevail over those who oppose you and stubbornly resist you in the east and in the west.'

﴿وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَى هَذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾ (٧١) قُلْ عَسَى أَنْ يَكُونَ رَدٌّ لَكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَلَكُمْ رَبُّكَ لَنْوَ فَضْلٌ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَكِنْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾ وَلَنْ رَبُّكَ لَيَعْلَمَ مَا تُكِيدُوا صُودُورَهُمْ وَمَا يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾ وَمَا مِنْ غَافِلٍ فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٧٥﴾

﴿71. And they say: "When this promise, if you are truthful?"﴾

﴿72. Say: "Perhaps that which you wish to hasten on, may be

close behind you."﴾

﴿73. Verily, your Lord is full of grace for mankind, yet most of them do not give thanks.﴾

﴿74. And verily, your Lord knows what their breasts conceal and what they reveal.﴾

﴿75. And there is nothing hidden in the heaven and the earth but it is in a Clear Book.﴾

Allāh tells us about how the idolators asked about the Day of Resurrection, but thought it unlikely that it would ever come to pass.

﴿وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾﴾

﴿And they say: "When (will) this promise (be fulfilled), if you are truthful?"﴾

Allāh said, responding to them:

﴿قُلْ﴾

﴿Say﴾ 'O Muḥammad,'

﴿عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونَ رَدِفَ لَكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ﴾

﴿Perhaps that which you wish to hasten on, may be close behind you.﴾

Ibn 'Abbās said, "That which you wish to hasten on has come close to you, or some of it has come close."^[1] This was also the view of Mujāhid, Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk, 'Aṭā Al-Khurāsāni, Qatādah and As-Suddī.^[2] This is also what is meant in the Āyāt:

﴿وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾﴾

﴿And they say: "When will that be?" Say: "Perhaps it is near!"﴾ (17:51)

﴿يَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِالْعَذَابِ وَلَئِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمُحِيطَةٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾﴾

﴿They ask you to hasten on the torment. And verily, Hell, of a surety, will encompass the disbelievers﴾ (29:54).

﴿عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونَ رَدِفَ لَكُمْ﴾

^[1] At-Ṭabari 19:492.

^[2] At-Ṭabari 19:492 Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr 6:375.

﴿may be close behind you.﴾ means, it is being hastened for you. This was reported from Mujāhid.^[1]

Then Allāh says:

﴿وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ﴾

﴿Verily, your Lord is full of grace for mankind,﴾

meaning, He abundantly bestows His blessings on them even though they wrong themselves, yet despite that they do not give thanks for those blessings, except for a few of them.

﴿وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ﴾

﴿And verily, your Lord knows what their breasts conceal and what they reveal.﴾

means, He knows what is hidden in their hearts just as He knows what is easily visible.

﴿سَوَاءٌ يَسْكُرَ مَن أَسَرَ الْقَوْلَ وَمَن جَهَرَ بِهِ﴾

﴿It is the same (to Him) whether any of you conceals his speech or declares it openly﴾ (13:10),

﴿يَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ وَآخْفَى﴾

﴿He knows the secret and that which is yet more hidden﴾ (20:7),

﴿أَلَا حِينَ يَسْتَغْشُونَ ثِيَابَهُمْ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُبْسِرُونَ وَمَا يُلْقُونَ﴾

﴿Surely, even when they cover themselves with their garments, He knows what they conceal and what they reveal﴾ (11:5).

Then Allāh tells us that He is the Knower of the unseen in the heavens and on earth, and that He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen, i.e., that which is unseen by His servants and that which they can see. And Allāh says:

﴿وَمَا مِنْ غَائِبَةٍ﴾

﴿and there is nothing hidden﴾ Ibn 'Abbās said, "This means, there is nothing^[2]

﴿فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:492.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:494.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

٣٨٤

الْقُرْآنُ

وَلَهُ، لَهْدَى وَرَحْمَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِي بَيْنَهُمْ
بِحُكْمِهِ، وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٧٨﴾ تَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّكَ عَلَى
الْحَقِّ الْمُبِينِ ﴿٧٩﴾ إِنَّكَ لَا تَسْمَعُ الْمَوْتَى وَلَا تَسْمَعُ الدُّعَاءَ
إِذَا وَلَّوْا مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِهَدَى الْعَمَى عَنْ صُلَّتِيهِمْ إِنْ
تَسْمَعُ إِلَّا مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَإِذَا
وَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَخْرَجْنَا لَهُمْ دَابَّةً مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ تُكَلِّمُهُمْ أَنَّ
النَّاسَ كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ وَيَوْمَ نَخَشِفُهُمْ
فَوْجًا مِّنْ يَّكْذِبٍ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُمْ يُورَعُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُو
قَالَ أَكْذَبْتُمْ بَيِّنَاتٍ وَلَمْ تُخِيطُوا بِهَا عِلْمًا أَمَّاذَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ
﴿٨٤﴾ وَوَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمَا ظَلَمُوا فَهُمْ لَا يَنْطِقُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾ أَلَمْ
يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لَيْسَ كَوَافِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا إِنِّي فِي
ذَلِكَ لَا بَيِّنَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَيَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَتُخْرَجُ
مِنَ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَن فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَن شَاءَ اللَّهُ وَكُلٌّ أَتَوْهُ
دَٰخِرِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ وَنَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسِبُهَا جَامِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ
صُنِعَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْفَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ إِنَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

in the heaven and the earth but it is in a Clear Book. ﴿﴾

This is like the Āyah,

﴿أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ فِي كِتَابٍ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ﴾ ﴿٧٧﴾

﴿Know you not that Allāh knows all that is in the heaven and on the earth? Verily, it is (all) in the Book. Verily, that is easy for Allāh.﴾ (22:70)

﴿إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَنْفُذُ عَلَىٰ بَيْنِ
إِسْرَءِيلَ أَكْثَرَ الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ
يَخْتَلِفُونَ﴾ ﴿٧٨﴾ وَلَهُ لَهْدَى وَرَحْمَةً
لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِي
بَيْنَهُمْ بِحُكْمِهِ، وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٨٠﴾ تَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّكَ

عَلَى الْحَقِّ الْمُبِينِ ﴿٧٩﴾ إِنَّكَ لَا تَسْمَعُ الْمَوْتَى وَلَا تَسْمَعُ الدُّعَاءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِهَدَى الْعَمَى عَنْ صُلَّتِيهِمْ إِنْ تَسْمَعُ إِلَّا مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨١﴾ ﴿﴾

﴿76. Verily, this Qur'ān narrates to the Children of Israel most of that in which they differ.﴾

﴿77. And truly, it is a guide and a mercy for the believers.﴾

﴿78. Verily, your Lord will decide between them by His judgement. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing.﴾

﴿79. So, put your trust in Allāh; surely, you are on manifest truth.﴾

﴿80. Verily, you cannot make the dead to hear nor can you make the deaf to hear the call, when they flee, turning their

backs.﴾

﴿81. Nor can you lead the blind out of their error. You can only make to hear those who believe in Our Āyāt, so they submit (became Muslims).﴾

The Qur'ān tells the Story of the Differences among the Children of Israel, and Allāh judges between Them

Allāh tells us about His Book and the guidance, proof and criterion between right and wrong that it contains. He tells us about the Children of Israel, who were the bearers of the Tawrah and Injil.

﴿أَكْثَرَ الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ﴾

﴿most of that in which they differ.﴾ such as their different opinions about 'Isā. The Jews lied about him while the Christians exaggerated in praise for him, so the Qur'ān came with the moderate word of truth and justice: that he was one of the servants of Allāh, and one of His noble Prophets and Messengers, may the best of peace and blessings be upon him, as the Qur'ān says:

﴿ذَٰلِكَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قَوْلَ الْحَقِّ الَّذِي فِيهِ يَمْتَرُونَ﴾

﴿Such is 'Isā, son of Maryam. (It is) a statement of truth, about which they doubt﴾ (19:34).

﴿وَرَأَيْتُمْ لَدَىٰ رَحْمَتِي لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

﴿And truly, it is a guide and a mercy for the believers.﴾

meaning, it is guidance for the hearts of those who believe in it, and a mercy to them.

Then Allāh says:

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِي بَيْنَهُمْ﴾

﴿Verily, your Lord will decide between them﴾

meaning, on the Day of Resurrection,

﴿بِحُكْمِهِ. وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ﴾

﴿by His judgement. And He is the All-Mighty,﴾

means, in His vengeance,

﴿الْعَلِيمُ﴾

﴿the All-Knowing﴾ Who knows all that His servants do and say.

The Command to put One's Trust in Allāh and to convey the Message

﴿تَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ﴾

﴿So, put your trust in Allāh﴾ in all your affairs, and convey the Message of your Lord.

﴿إِنَّكَ عَلَى الْحَقِّ الْمُبِينِ﴾

﴿surely, you are on manifest truth﴾ meaning, you are following manifest truth, even though you are opposed by those who oppose you because they are doomed. The Word of your Lord has been justified against them, so that they will not believe even if all the signs are brought to them. Allāh says:

﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَسْمِعُ الْمَوْتُ﴾

﴿Verily, you cannot make the dead to hear﴾

meaning, you cannot cause them to hear anything that will benefit them. The same applies to those over whose hearts is a veil and in whose ears is deafness of disbelief. Allāh says:

﴿وَلَا تَسْمِعُ الضُّمُّ الدُّعَاءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾ وَمَا أَتَى بِهَدْيِ الْغَنِيِّ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ إِنَّ تُسْمِعُ إِلَّا مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾﴾

﴿nor can you make the deaf to hear the call, when they flee, turning their backs. Nor can you lead the blind out of their error. You can only make to hear those who believe in Our Āyāt, so they submit (became Muslims).﴾

meaning, those who have hearing and insight will respond to you, those whose hearing and sight are of benefit to their hearts and who are humble towards Allāh and to the Message that comes to them through the mouths of the Messengers, may peace be upon them.

﴿وَإِذَا وَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَخْرَجْنَا لَهُمْ دَابَّةً مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ تُكَلِّمُهُمْ أَنَّ النَّاسَ كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾﴾

﴿82. And when the Word is fulfilled against them, We shall bring out from the earth a beast for them, to speak to them because mankind believed not with certainty in Our Āyāt.﴾

The Emergence of the Beast of the Earth

This is the beast which will emerge at the end of time, when mankind has become corrupt and neglected the commands of Allāh and changed the true religion. Then Allāh will cause a beast to emerge from the earth. It was said that it will be brought from Makkah, or from somewhere else, as we shall discuss in detail below, if Allāh wills. The beast will speak to people about matters. Ibn 'Abbās, Al-Ḥasan and Qatādah said, and it was also narrated from 'Ali, may Allāh be pleased with him, that it will speak words, meaning, it will address them.^[1]

Many *Ḥadīths* and reports have been narrated about the beast, and we will narrate as many of them as Allāh enables us to, for He is the One Whose help we seek.

Imām Aḥmad recorded that Ḥudhayfah bin Asīd Al-Ghifārī said, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ came out from his room while we were discussing the matter of the Hour. He said:

«لَا تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ حَتَّى تَرَوْا عَشْرَ آيَاتٍ: طُلُوعُ الشَّمْسِ مِنْ مَغْرِبِهَا، وَالذَّخَانُ وَالذَّابَّةُ وَخُرُوجُ يَأْجُوجَ وَمَاجُوجَ، وَخُرُوجُ عِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، وَالذَّجَالُ، وَثَلَاثَةُ خُسُوفٍ: خَسْفٌ بِالْمَغْرِبِ، وَخَسْفٌ بِالْمَشْرِقِ، وَخَسْفٌ بِجَزِيرَةِ الْعَرَبِ، وَنَارٌ تَخْرُجُ مِنْ قَعْرِ عَدَنٍ تَسُوقُ أَوْ تَخْشُرُ النَّاسَ، تَبِثُ مَعَهُمْ حَيْثُ بَاتُوا وَتَقْبِلُ مَعَهُمْ حَيْثُ قَالُوا»

«The Hour will not come until you see ten signs: the rising of the sun from the west; the smoke (Ad-Dukhān); emergence of the beast; the emergence of Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj; the appearance of 'Īsā bin Maryam, upon him be peace; the Dajjāl; and three land cave-ins, one in the west, one in the east and one in the Arabian Peninsula; and a Fire which will emerge from the midst of Yemen, and will drive or gather the people, stopping with them whenever they stop for the night or to rest during the day.»^[2]

This was also recorded by Muslim and the Sunan compilers from Ḥudhayfah, in a *Mawqūf*^[3] report. At-Tirmidhi said, "It is

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:500.

[2] Aḥmad 4:6.

[3] A narration reaching to a Companion only.

Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ.”^[1] It was also recorded by Muslim from Hudhayfah in a *Marfū* report.^[2] And Allāh knows best.

Another Ḥadīth

Muslim bin Al-Hajjāj recorded that ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Amr said, “I memorized a Ḥadīth from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ which I never forgot afterwards. I heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ say:

«إِنَّ أَوَّلَ الْآيَاتِ خُرُوجًا طُلُوعُ الشَّمْسِ مِنْ مَغْرِبِهَا، وَخُرُوجُ الدَّابَّةِ عَلَى النَّاسِ
ضُحَى، وَأَيُّهُمَا مَا كَانَتْ قَبْلَ صَاحِبَتِهَا فَلَا أُخْرَى عَلَى إِثْرِهَا قَرِيبًا»

«The first of the signs to appear will be the rising of the sun from the west, and the emergence of the beast to mankind in the forenoon. Whichever of them appears first, the other will follow close behind it.»^[3]

Another Ḥadīth

In his Ṣaḥīḥ, Muslim recorded that Abu Hurayrah, may Allāh be pleased with him, said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

«بَادِرُوا بِالْأَعْمَالِ سِتًّا، طُلُوعَ الشَّمْسِ مِنْ مَغْرِبِهَا، وَالْدُّخَانَ، وَالْدَّجَالَ، وَالدَّابَّةَ،
وخاصةً أَحَدِكُمْ، وَأَمْرَ الْعَامَةِ»

«Hasten to do good deeds before six things appear: the rising of the sun from the west; the smoke; the Dajjāl; the beast; the (death) of one of your favorite, or general affliction.»

This was recorded by Muslim alone.^[4] Muslim also recorded that Abu Hurayrah, may Allāh be pleased with him, said that the the Prophet ﷺ said:

«بَادِرُوا بِالْأَعْمَالِ سِتًّا: الدَّجَالَ، وَالْدُّخَانَ، وَدَابَّةَ الْأَرْضِ، وَطُلُوعَ الشَّمْسِ مِنْ
مَغْرِبِهَا، وَأَمْرَ الْعَامَةِ، وَخَوِصَّةَ أَحَدِكُمْ»

«Hasten to do good deeds before six things appear: the Dajjāl;

[1] Muslim 4:2225, Abu Dāwud 4:491, *Tuhfat Al-Aḥwadhī* 6:413, An-Nasā’ī in *Al-Kubrā* 6:456, Ibn Mājah 2:1341.

[2] Muslim 4:2226. *Marfū* meaning a Ḥadīth referred to the Prophet ﷺ.

[3] Muslim 4:2260.

[4] Muslim 4:2267.

the smoke; the beast of the earth; the rising of the sun from the west; and the (death of one of your favorite) or general affliction.»^[1]

Another Ḥadīth

Ibn Mājah recorded from Anas bin Mālik that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

«بَادِرُوا بِالْأَعْمَالِ سِتًّا: طُلُوعَ الشَّمْسِ مِنْ مَغْرِبِهَا، وَالْذُّخَانَ، وَالْذَّابَّةَ، الدَّجَالَ، وَخَوْبَةَ أَحَدِكُمْ، وَأَمْرَ الْعَامَةِ»

«Hasten to do good deeds before six things appear: the rising of the sun from the west; the smoke; the beast; the Dajjāl; and the (death of one of your favorite) or general affliction.»

He was the only one who recorded this version.^[2]

Another Ḥadīth

Abu Dāwud At-Ṭayālisi recorded from Abu Hurayrah, may Allāh be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

«تَخْرُجُ ذَابَّةُ الْأَرْضِ وَمَعَهَا عَصَا مُوسَى وَخَاتَمُ سُلَيْمَانَ عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ، فَتَخْطِمُ أَنْفَ الْكَافِرِ بِالْعَصَا، وَتُجَلِّي وَجْهَ الْمُؤْمِنِ بِالْخَاتَمِ، حَتَّى يَجْتَمِعَ النَّاسُ عَلَى الْخِوَانِ يُعْرِفَ الْمُؤْمِنُ مِنَ الْكَافِرِ»

«A beast will emerge from the earth, and with it will be the staff of Mūsā and the ring of Sulaymān, peace be upon them both. It will strike the nose of the disbelievers with the staff, and it will make the face of the believer bright with the ring, until when people gather to eat, they will be able to recognize the believers from the disbelievers.»^[3]

It also was recorded by Imām Aḥmad, with the wording:

«فَتَخْطِمُ أَنْفَ الْكَافِرِ بِالْخَاتَمِ، وَتَجْلُو وَجْهَ الْمُؤْمِنِ بِالْعَصَا، حَتَّى إِنَّ أَهْلَ الْخِوَانِ الْوَاحِدَ لَيَجْتَمِعُونَ فَيَقُولُ هَذَا: يَا مُؤْمِنُ، وَيَقُولُ هَذَا: يَا كَافِرُ»

«It will strike the nose of the disbelievers with the ring, and

[1] Muslim 4:2267.

[2] Ibn Mājah 2:1348.

[3] At-Ṭayālisi 334.

will make the face of the believer bright with the staff, until when people gather for a meal, they will say to one another, O believer, or O disbeliever.»^[1]

It was also recorded by Ibn Mājah.^[2]

Ibn Jurayj reported that Ibn Az-Zubayr described the beast and said, "Its head is like the head of a bull, its eyes are like the eyes of a pig, its ears are like the ears of an elephant, its horns are like the horns of a stag, its neck is like the neck of an ostrich, its chest is like the chest of a lion, its color is like the colour of a tiger, its haunches are like the haunches of a cat, its tail is like the tail of a ram, and its legs are like the legs of a camel. Between each pair of its joints is a distance of twelve cubits. It will bring out with it the staff of Mūsā and the ring of Sulaymān. There will be no believer left without it making a white spot on his face, which will spread until all his face is shining white as a result; and there will be no disbeliever left without it making a black spot on his face, which will spread until all his face is black as a result, then when the people trade with one another in the marketplace, they will say, 'How much is this, O believer?' 'How much is this, O disbeliever?' And when the members of one household sit down together to eat, they will know who is a believer and who is a disbeliever. Then the beast will say: 'O so-and-so, enjoy yourself, for you are among the people of Paradise.' And it will say: 'O so-and-so, you are among the people of Hell,' This is what Allāh says:

﴿وَلَمَّا وَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَخْرَجْنَا لَهُمْ دَابَّةً مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ تُكَلِّمُهُمْ أَنَّ النَّاسَ كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا لَا يُوقِنُونَ﴾

﴿And when the Word is fulfilled against them, We shall bring out from the earth a beast for them, to speak to them because mankind believed not with certainty in Our Āyāt.﴾^[3]

﴿وَيَوْمَ نَخْتَرُ مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ فَرِيًّا مِّنْ يُكَلِّمُ بَيْنَانَا فَهُمْ يُوقِنُونَ﴾ ﴿٢٧﴾ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَهُ قَالَ أَكَذَّبْتُم بِآيَاتِي وَلَمْ تُحِطُوا بِمَا عَلَّمَا أَنَا كُنْتُمْ تَصَلُّونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَوَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمَا ظَلَمُوا فَهُمْ

[1] Aḥmad 2:295.

[2] Ibn Mājah 2:1351.

[3] Al Baghwi 3:429.

لَا يَطْفِقُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾ أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا آلِيلَ لِنُكْثِرَ فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

﴿83. And (remember) the Day when We shall gather out of every nation a Fawj of those who denied Our Āyāt, and they shall be driven,﴾

﴿84. Till, when they come, He will say: "Did you deny My Āyāt whereas you comprehended them not by knowledge, or what was it that you used to do?"﴾

﴿85. And the Word will be fulfilled against them, because they have done wrong, and they will be unable to speak.﴾

﴿86. See they not that We have made the night for them to rest therein, and the day sight-giving? Verily, in this are Āyāt for the people who believe.﴾

Gathering the Wrongdoers on the Day of Resurrection

Allāh tells us about the Day of Resurrection when the wrongdoers who disbelieved in the signs and Messengers of Allāh will be gathered before Allāh, so that He will ask them about what they did in this world, rebuking, scolding and belittling them.

﴿وَيَوْمَ نَخْتَرُ مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ فَوْجًا﴾

﴿And the Day when We shall gather out of every nation, a Fawj﴾

means, from every people and generation a group

﴿مِمَّنْ يَكْذِبُ بِآيَاتِنَا﴾

﴿of those who denied Our Āyāt﴾. This is like the Āyāt:

﴿اٰتٰهُمْ اَللّٰهَ الْاَيّٰتَ فَكَفَرُوْا وَآٰزَعَهُمْ﴾

﴿"Assemble those who did wrong, together with their companions (from the devils)."﴾ (37:22)

﴿وَإِذَا النُّفُوسُ رُوِّجَتْ﴾

﴿And when the souls are joined with their bodies﴾ (81:7).

﴿فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ﴾

﴿and they shall be driven,﴾

Ibn 'Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: "They will be pushed."^[1] 'Abdur-Raḥmān bin Zayd bin Aslam said: "They will be driven."^[2]

﴿حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوْا﴾

﴿Till, when they come,﴾ and stand before Allāh, may He be glorified and exalted, in the place of reckoning,

﴿قَالَ أَكَذَّبْتُمْ بِآيَاتِي وَلَمْ تَحِيطُوا بِهَا عَلِمًا أَمْ أَأَنْتُمْ تَقُولُونَ﴾

﴿He will say: "Did you deny My Āyāt whereas you comprehended them not by knowledge, or what was it that you used to do?"﴾

meaning they will be asked about their beliefs and their deeds. Since they are among the doomed and, as Allāh says:

﴿لَا مَسَئَةَ لَآ سَلَٰمٍ ۖ وَلَٰكِنَّ كَذَّبَ وَقَوْلَ ﴿٧٥﴾﴾

﴿He neither believed nor performed Ṣalāh! But on the contrary, he denied and turned away!﴾ (75:31-32)

Then the proof will be established against them and they will have no excuse whatsoever, as Allāh says:

﴿هَٰذَا يَوْمٌ لَا يَٰطِقُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَلَا يُؤْنَسُ لَهُمْ فَعَنَادُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾﴾

﴿That will be a Day when they shall not speak. And they will not be permitted to put forth any excuse﴾ (77:35-36).

Similarly, Allāh says here:

﴿وَوَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمَا ظَلَمُوا فَهُمْ لَا يَٰطِقُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾﴾

﴿And the Word will be fulfilled against them, because they have done wrong, and they will be unable to speak.﴾

They will be stunned and speechless, unable to give any answer. This is because they wronged themselves in the world, and now they have returned to the One Who sees the unseen and the seen, from Whom nothing can be hidden.

Then Allāh points out His complete power, immense authority and greatness, all dictating that He is to be obeyed

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:501.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 19:438.

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ۚ خَيْرٌ مِنْهَا وَهُمْ مِنْ فَحْشَىٰ يَوْمِئِذٍ ۚ آمِنُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾
 وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّبْتِ فَكُنْتُ وَجُوهُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ هَلْ تُجْزَوْنَ
 إِلَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾ إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ أَنْ عَبَّدَ رَبَّ هَذِهِ
 الْبَلَدِ الَّذِي حَرَّمَهَا وَلَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ وَأَمْرُهُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ
 الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَإِنْ أَتَوْا الْقُرْآنَ فَقَدْ هَتَدُوا فَأَنَّمَا هَتَدُوا
 لِنَفْسِهِ ۚ وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَقُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾ وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ
 لِلَّهِ سَيَرْجِعُ إِلَيْهِ فَنَعْرِفُونَهَا وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَفِيلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

سُورَةُ الْقَصَصِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 طَسَمَ ﴿١﴾ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ ﴿٢﴾ تَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْهِمْ
 مِنْ نَبَأِ مَوْسَىٰ وَفِرْعَوْنَ بِالْحَقِّ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ
 فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضِعُّ
 طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ بِدِينِ آيَاتِهِ ۚ وَبَدَّعَىٰ سَاءَ لَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَا كَانَتْ
 مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٤﴾ وَتَرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَىٰ الَّذِي تُسْتَضِعُّوهُ
 فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَيْمَةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ ﴿٥﴾

and that His commands must be followed, and that the message of inescapable truth brought by His Prophets must be believed in. Allāh says:

﴿أَمْ يَرَوْنَ أَنَا جَعَلْنَا لَيْلٍ لِنَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ﴾

﴿See they not that We have made the night for them to rest therein,﴾

Due to the darkness of the night they halt their activities and calm themselves down, to recover from the exhausting efforts of the day.

﴿وَالنَّهَارَ مُبِيرًا﴾

﴿and the day sight-

giving﴾

meaning filled with light, so that they can work and earn a living, and travel and engage in business, and do other things that they need to do.

﴿إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

﴿Verily, in this are Āyāt for the people who believe.﴾

﴿وَيَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي السُّورِ فَتُخْرِجُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ وَكُلُّ أَتَوٍّ ذَاخِرِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ وَرَوَى الْجِبَالُ تَحْسَبًا جَائِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ شَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَفْنَىٰ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ خَيْرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِنْهَا وَهُمْ مِنْ فَحْشَىٰ يَوْمِئِذٍ ۚ آمِنُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾ وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّبْتِ فَكُنْتُ وَجُوهُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ هَلْ تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾﴾

﴿87. And (remember) the Day on which the Trumpet (Ṣūr) will

be blown – and all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth, will be terrified except him whom Allāh wills. And all shall come to Him, humbled.﴾

﴿88. And you will see the mountains and think them solid, but they shall pass away as the passing away of the clouds. The work of Allāh, Who perfected all things, verily, He is well-acquainted with what you do.﴾

﴿89. Whoever brings a good deed, will have better than its worth; and they will be safe from the terror on that Day.﴾

﴿90. And whoever brings an evil deed, they will be cast down on their faces in the Fire. (And it will be said to them) "Are you being recompensed anything except what you used to do?"﴾

The Terrors of the Day of Resurrection, the Rewards for Good Deeds and the Punishments for Evil Deeds

Allāh tells us about the terrors of the Day when the *Ṣūr* will be blown. The *Ṣūr*, as described in the *Ḥadīth*, is,

«قَرْنٌ يُنفخُ فيه»

«a horn which is blown into.»

According to the *Ḥadīth* about the *Ṣūr* (Trumpet), it is (the angel) *Isrāfīl* who will blow into it by the command of Allāh, may He be exalted. He will blow into it for the first time, for a long time. This will signal the end of the life of this world, and the Hour will come upon the most evil of people ever to live. Everyone who is in the heavens and on earth will be terrified,

﴿إِلَّا مَنْ مَسَاةَ اللَّهِ﴾

﴿except him whom Allāh wills.﴾ these are the martyrs, for they are alive, with their Lord, and being provided for.^[1]

Imām Muslim bin Al-Ḥajjāj recorded that ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Amr, may Allāh be pleased with him, said that a man came to him and said, “What is this *Ḥadīth* that you are narrating, that the Hour will come upon such and such people?” He said, “*Subḥān Allāh* or ‘*Lā Ilāha Illallāh* (or something similar), I had decided

[1] See volume two, the *Tafsīr* of Sūrah *Āl ‘Imrān* (3:169).

that I would not narrate anything to anyone now. I had only said that after a little while, you will see a major event which will destroy the House [the Ka'bah], and such and such will happen." Then he said, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

«يَخْرُجُ الدَّجَالُ فِي أُمَّتِي قِمَكَتُ أَرْبَعِينَ - لَا أَدْرِي أَرْبَعِينَ يَوْمًا أَوْ أَرْبَعِينَ شَهْرًا أَوْ أَرْبَعِينَ عَامًا - فَيَبْعَثُ اللَّهُ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ كَأَنَّهُ عُرْوَةُ بْنُ مَسْعُودٍ فَيَطْلُبُهُ فَيَهْلِكُهُ، ثُمَّ يَمَكُتُ النَّاسُ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ لَيْسَ بَيْنَ اثْنَيْنِ عَدَاوَةٌ، ثُمَّ يُرْسِلُ اللَّهُ رِيحًا بَارِدَةً مِنْ قِلِّ الشَّامِ، فَلَا يَبْقَى عَلَى وَجْهِ الْأَرْضِ أَحَدٌ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ مِنْ خَيْرٍ أَوْ إِيْمَانٍ إِلَّا قَبَضَتْهُ، حَتَّى لَوْ أَنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ دَخَلَ فِي كَيْدِ جَبَلٍ لَدَخَلَتْهُ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّى تَقْبِضَهُ»

«The Dajjāl will emerge in my Ummah, and will remain for forty - I do not know whether he said forty days, or forty months, or forty years - then Allāh will send 'Isā son of Maryam, who looks like 'Urwah bin Mas'ūd, and he will search for him and destroy him. Then mankind will remain for seven years during which there will not be any enmity between any two people. Then Allāh will send a cool wind from the direction of Syria, and no one will be left on the face of the earth who has even a speck of goodness or faith in his heart, but it will take him. Even if he entered into the heart of a mountain, the wind would follow him and seize him.»

He said, "I heard it from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ who said:

«يَبْقَى شِرَارُ النَّاسِ فِي خِفَّةِ الطَّيْرِ وَأَحْلَامِ السَّبَاعِ لَا يَعْرِفُونَ مَعْرُوفًا، وَلَا يُنْكِرُونَ مُنْكَرًا، فَيَمْتَلِكُ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَيَقُولُ: أَلَا تَسْتَجِيبُونَ؟ فَيَقُولُونَ: فَمَا تَأْمُرُنَا؟ فَيَأْمُرُهُمْ بِعِبَادَةِ الْأَوْثَانِ، وَهُمْ فِي ذَلِكَ دَارَ رِزْقِهِمْ حَسَنٌ عَيْنُهُمْ، ثُمَّ يَنْفُخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا يَسْمَعُهُ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا أَصْعَى لِيْنَا وَرَفَعَ لِيْنَا - قَالَ - وَأَوَّلُ مَنْ يَسْمَعُهُ رَجُلٌ يَلُوطُ حَوْضَ إِبِلِهِ، قَالَ: فَيَضَعُ وَيَضَعُ النَّاسُ، ثُمَّ يُرْسِلُ اللَّهُ - أَوْ قَالَ يُنْزِلُ اللَّهُ - مَطَرًا كَأَنَّهُ الظَّلُّ - أَوْ قَالَ: الظِّلُّ - نَعْمَانُ الشَّاكُ - فَتَبَيَّتْ مِنْهُ أَجْسَادُ النَّاسِ، ثُمَّ يَنْفُخُ فِيهِ أُخْرَى فَإِذَا هُمْ قِيَامٌ يَنْظُرُونَ، ثُمَّ يَقَالُ: يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ هَلُّشُوا إِلَى رَبِّكُمْ وَفَقُّوهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ مَسْؤُولُونَ، ثُمَّ يَقَالُ: أَخْرِجُوا بَعَثَ النَّارِ، فَيَقَالُ: مِنْ كَم؟ فَيَقَالُ: مِنْ كُلِّ أَلْفٍ بَسْعِمِائَةٍ وَتِسْعَةٍ وَتِسْعِينَ، قَالَ: فَذَلِكَ يَوْمٌ يَجْعَلُ الْوِلْدَانَ شِيبًا، وَذَلِكَ يَوْمٌ يُكْشَفُ عَنْ سَاقٍ»

«Then the most evil of people will remain, and they will be as

nimble as birds and will be more temperamental than wild beasts. They will not recognize anything good or denounce anything evil. The Shayṭān will appear to them and will say, "Will you do as I tell you?" They will say, "What do you command us to do?" He will command them to worship idols but in spite of this their provision will be plentiful and they will lead comfortable lives. Then the Ṣūr (Trumpet) will be blown, and no one will hear it but he will tilt his head to hear the sound. The first person to hear it will be a man who is setting up the tank for watering his camels. He will fall down, and all the other people will also fall down. Then Allāh will send – or send down – rain like dew – or he said, like shade (Nu'mān was the one who was not sure) – from which will grow the bodies of the people. Then the Trumpet will be blown again, and they will get up and look around. Then it will be said: "O mankind! Go to your Lord!" And they will be stopped, for they are to be questioned. Then it will be said: "Bring forth the people who are to be sent to the Fire." It will be asked: "How many are they?" It will be said, "Out of every thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine." That will be the Day which will make the children grey-headed, and that will be the Day when the Shin shall be uncovered."^[1]

His ﷻ saying;

«ثُمَّ يَنْفُخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا يَسْمَعُهُ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا أَصْعَىٰ لِنَا وَرَفَعَ لِنَا»

«Then the Ṣūr (Trumpet) will be blown, and no one will hear it but he will tilt his head to hear the sound.»

means that they will tilt their heads so that they can better hear the sound coming from the heavens. That is the blast of the Ṣūr which will terrify everyone, then after that will come the blast which will cause them to die, then the blast which will resurrect them to meet the Lord of the worlds – this is when all of the creation will be brought forth from their graves. Allāh says:

﴿وَكُلُّ أُنثَىٰ ذَخِيرَةٍ﴾

«And all shall come to Him, humbled.» meaning, humbling

^[1] Muslim 4 :2258.

themselves and obeying Him, and no one will go against His command. This is like the *Āyāt*:

﴿يَوْمَ يَدْعُوكُمْ فَتَسْتَجِيبُونَ بِحَمْدِهِ﴾

﴿On the Day when He will call you, and you will answer with His praise and obedience﴾ (17:52).

﴿ثُمَّ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ دَعْوَةً مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ إِذَا أَنتَرْتُمْ تَخْرُجُونَ﴾

﴿Then afterwards when He will call you by a single call, behold, you will come out from the earth﴾ (30:25).

According to the *Ḥadīth* about the *Ṣūr*,^[1] when it is blown for the third time, Allāh will command the souls to be put into the hole of the *Ṣūr* (Trumpet), then Isrāfīl will blow into it, after the bodies have grown in their graves and resting places, and when he blows into the *Ṣūr* (Trumpet), the souls will fly, the believers' souls glowing with light, and the disbelievers' souls looking like darkness. And Allāh will say: "By My might and majesty, every soul will go back to its body." And the souls will come back to their bodies and go through them like poison going through a person who is bitten or stung by a poisonous creature. Then they will get up, brushing off the dirt of their graves. Allāh says:

﴿يَوْمَ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْنَادِ يَرَاهَا كَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ نُصُبٍ يُوفِصُونَ﴾

﴿The Day when they will come out of the graves quickly as racing to a goal.﴾ (70:43)

﴿وَرَأَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسِبُهَا جَائِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ﴾

﴿And you will see the mountains and think them solid, but they shall pass away as the passing away of the clouds.﴾ (27:88)

meaning, you will see them as if they are fixed and as if they will remain as they are, but they will pass away as the passing away of the clouds, i.e., they will move away from their places.

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *Aṭ-Ṭīwāl* 36. The author is referring to an unauthentic *Ḥadīth*. Most of the scholars say that the *Ṣūr* will be blown two times, based upon the authentic *Ḥadīths*, including those seen in this discussion.

This is like the Āyāt:

﴿يَوْمَ تَمُورُ السَّمَاءُ مَوْرًا ۚ وَتَبِيرُ الْأَبْجَالُ سِرًّا ۝﴾

﴿On the Day when the heaven will shake with a dreadful shaking, And the mountains will move away with a (horrible) movement.﴾ (52:9-10)

﴿وَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْجِبَالِ فَقُلْ يَنْسِفُهَا رَبِّي نَسْفًا ۖ فَيَذَرُهَا قَاعًا صَفْصَفًا ۖ لَا تَرَى فِيهَا عِوَجًا وَلَا أَمْتًا ۝﴾

﴿And they ask you concerning the mountains: say, "My Lord will blast them and scatter them as particles of dust. Then He shall leave them as a level smooth plain. You will see therein nothing crooked or curved."﴾ (20:105-107),

﴿وَيَوْمَ نُسِِّرُ الْجِبَالُ وَتَرَى الْأَرْضَ بَارِزَةً ۝﴾

﴿And (remember) the Day We shall cause the mountains to pass away, and you will see the earth as a leveled plain.﴾ (18:47).

﴿صَنَعَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْفَعَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ﴾

﴿The work of Allāh, Who perfected all things,﴾ means, He does that by His great power.

﴿الَّذِي أَنْفَعَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ﴾

﴿Who perfected all things,﴾ means, He has perfected all that He has created, and has fashioned it according to His wisdom.

﴿إِنَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

﴿verily, He is well-acquainted with what you do﴾

means, He knows all that His servants do, good or evil, and He will reward or punish them accordingly.

Then Allāh describes the state of the blessed and the doomed on that Day, and says:

﴿مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِنْهَا﴾

﴿Whoever brings a good deed, will have better than its worth.﴾

Qatādah said, "That is sincerely for Allāh alone."^[1] Allāh has

^[1] Aṭ-Ṭabarānī 19:508.

explained elsewhere in the Qur'an that He will give ten like it.

﴿وَهُمْ مِنْ فَتْحِ يَوْمِهِمْ يَاسْتَوُونَ﴾

﴿and they will be safe from the terror on that Day.﴾

This is like the Āyah,

﴿لَا يَحْزَنُهُمُ الْفَزَعُ الْأَكْبَرُ﴾

﴿The greatest terror will not grieve them﴾ (21:103) and Allāh said:

﴿أَفَنْ يُلْقَى فِي النَّارِ خَيْرٌ أَمْ مَنْ يَأْتِي بِأَمَانَةٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ﴾

﴿Is he who is cast into the Fire better or he who comes secure on the Day of Resurrection?﴾ (41:40),

﴿وَهُمْ فِي الْعُفُوفِ يَاسْتَوُونَ﴾

﴿and they will reside in the high dwellings in peace and security﴾ (34:37).

﴿وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَكُبَّتْ وَجُوهُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ﴾

﴿And whoever brings an evil deed, they will be cast down on their faces in the Fire.﴾

means, whoever comes to Allāh with evil deeds, and with no good deeds to his credit, or whose evil deeds outweigh his good deeds. Allāh says:

﴿مَلَّ جُنُودُكَ إِلَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

﴿(And it will be said to them) "Are you being recompensed anything except what you used to do?"﴾

﴿إِنَّمَا أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ رَبَّكَ هَٰذَا الْبَلَدُ الَّذِي حَرَّمَهَا وَلَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾ (١١) وَأَنْ أَتْلُوَ الْقُرْآنَ فَمَنِ اهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَقُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ﴾ (١٢) وَقُلْ لِّلْحَمْدِ لِلَّهِ سَبِّحُكُمْ إِنِّي أَنذَرْتُكُمْ فَعْرِضُوا مَا رَزَقَكُمْ وَيَقْبَلُ عَنَّا تَسْلُونَ﴾ (١٣)

﴿91. I have been commanded only to worship the Lord of this city, Who has sanctified it and to Whom belongs everything. And I am commanded to be from among the Muslims.﴾

﴿92. And that I should recite the Qur'an, then whosoever receives guidance, receives it for the good of himself; and whosoever goes astray, say (to him): "I am only one of the warners."﴾

﴿93. And say: "All the praises and thanks be to Allāh. He will show you His Āyāt, and you shall recognize them. And your Lord is not unaware of what you do."﴾

The Command to worship Allāh and to call People with the Qur'ān

Allāh commands His Messenger ﷺ to say:

﴿إِنَّمَا أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ رَبَّ هَذِهِ الْبَلَدِ الَّذِي حَرَّمَهَا وَلَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ﴾

﴿I have been commanded only to worship the Lord of this city, Who has sanctified it and to Whom belongs everything.﴾

This is like the Āyah,

﴿قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِن كُنْتُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِنْ رَبِّي فَلَا أَعْبُدُ الَّذِينَ تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَكِنْ أَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُمْ﴾

﴿Say: "O you mankind! If you are in doubt as to my religion, then (know that) I will never worship those whom you worship besides Allāh. But I worship Allāh Who causes you to die.﴾
(10:104)

The fact that the word "Rabb" (Lord) is connected to the word city (in the phrase "the Lord of this city") is a sign of honor and divine care for that city. This is like the Āyah,

﴿فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ ۚ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِنْ جُوعٍ وَآمَنَهُمْ مِنْ خَوْفٍ﴾

﴿So let them worship the Lord of this House (the Ka'bah), Who has fed them against hunger, and has made them safe from fear.﴾ (106:3-4)

﴿الَّذِي حَرَّمَهَا﴾

﴿Who has sanctified it﴾ means, the One Who made it a sanctuary by His Law and by His decree, making it sanctified. It was recorded in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs that Ibn 'Abbās said: "On the day of the conquest of Makkah, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

﴿إِنَّ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ حَرَّمَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ، فَهُوَ حَرَامٌ بِحُرْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، لَا يَغْضَدُ شَوْكُهُ، وَلَا يَنْقُرُ صَبْدُهُ وَلَا يَنْتَقِطُ لَقَطَتُهُ إِلَّا مَنْ عَرَفَهَا وَلَا يُخْتَلَى خَلَاهَا﴾

«Verily, this city was made sacred by Allāh the day He

created the heavens and the earth, so it is sacred by the sanctity of Allāh until the Day of Resurrection. Its thorny bushes should not be cut, its game should not be chased, and its lost property should not be picked up except by one who would announce it publicly and none is allowed to uproot its thorny shrubs...»^[1]

This was reported in Ṣaḥīḥ, Ḥasan, Musnad narrations, through various routes, by such a large group that it is absolutely unquestionable,^[2] as has been explained in the appropriate place in the book *Al-Aḥkām*, to Allāh is the praise and thanks.

﴿وَلَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ﴾

﴿and to Whom belongs everything.﴾ This is a statement of general application following a specific statement, i.e., He is the Lord of this city, and the Lord and Sovereign of all things, there is no god worthy of worship besides Him.

﴿وَأُمرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾

﴿And I am commanded to be from among the Muslims.﴾

means, those who believe in Allāh alone, who are sincere towards Him and who obediently follow His commands.

﴿وَأَنْ أُنْقَلَا الْقُرْآنَ﴾

﴿And that I should recite the Qur'ān,﴾ means, to people, so as to convey it to them. This is like the Āyah,

﴿ذَٰلِكَ نَقُورُهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ﴾

﴿This is what We recite to you of the Āyāt and the Wise Reminder.﴾ (3:58)

﴿تَقُولُوا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ نَبَأِ مَوْسَىٰ وَفِرْعَوْنَ بِالْحَقِّ﴾

﴿We recite to you some of the news of Mūsā and Fir'awn in truth.﴾ (28:3)

meaning, 'I am a conveyer and a warner.'

[1] *Faṭḥ Al-Bāri* 4:56.

[2] Muslim 2:986, Abu Dāwud 2:517, An-Nasā'ī 5:203, Ibn Mājah 2:1038, Aḥmad 1:253.

﴿فَمَن يَهْدِي اللَّهُ فَنَحْنُ مُسَبِّحُونَ وَمَن ضَلَّ فَفَلَّ إِنَّمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ﴾

﴿then whosoever receives guidance, receives it for the good of himself; and whosoever goes astray, say (to him): "I am only one of the warners."﴾

meaning, 'I have an example to follow in the Messengers who warned their people, and did what they had to do in order to convey the Message to them and fulfil the covenant they had made.' Allāh will judge their nations to whom they were sent, as He says:

﴿إِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلْغُ وَعَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ﴾

﴿your duty is only to convey and on Us is the reckoning﴾ (13:40).

﴿إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ نَذِيرٌ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ﴾

﴿But you are only a warner. And Allāh is a Protector over all thing﴾ (11:12).

﴿وَقُلْ لِلَّهِ سُبْحَانَكَ يَا بَنِيَّ فَتَعْرِفُونَهَا﴾

﴿And say: "All the praises and thanks be to Allāh. He will show you His Āyāt (signs), and you shall recognize them.﴾

means, praise be to Allāh, Who does not punish anyone except after establishing plea against him, warning him [and leaving him with no excuse]. Allāh says:

﴿سُبْحَانَكَ يَا بَنِيَّ فَتَعْرِفُونَهَا﴾

﴿He will show you His Āyāt (signs), and you shall recognize them.﴾

This is like the Āyah,

﴿سَرُبُّهُمْ يُبَيِّنُ لَنَا فِي الْآفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ﴾

﴿We will show them Our signs in the universe, and in themselves, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the truth﴾ (41:53).

﴿وَمَا رَّبُّكَ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

﴿And your Lord is not unaware of what you do.﴾

means, on the contrary, He witnesses and sees all things. It

was recorded that Imām Aḥmad, may Allāh have mercy upon him, used to recite the following two lines of verse, whether they were written by him or someone else:

“If you are alone one day, do not say, ‘I am alone.’ Rather say, ‘Someone is watching me.’

Do not think that Allāh will let His attention wander for even an instant, or that anything is hidden from Him.”

This is the end of the *Tafsīr* of *Sūrat An-Naml*. All praise and thanks be to Allāh.