

(Verily, we are both Messengers of your Lord) (20:47). which means, `both of us have been sent to you,'

(أَنْ أَرْسِلَ مَعَنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ )

(So allow the Children of Israel to go with us.) Meaning, `let them go, free them from your captivity, subjugation and torture, for they are the believing servants of Allah, devoted to Him, and with you they are in a position of humiliating torture.' When Musa said that to him, Fir`awn turned away and ignored him completely, regarding him with scorn and thinking little of him. Saying:

(أَلَمْ نُرَبِّكَ فِينَا وَلِيدًا)

(Did we not bring you up among us as a child) meaning, we brought you up among us, in our home and on our bed, we nourished you and did favors for you for many years, and after all that you responded to our kindness in this manner: you killed one of our men and denied our favors to you.' So he said to him:

(وَأَنْتَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ)

(While you were one of the ingrates.) meaning, one of those who deny favors. This was the view of Ibn `Abbas and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam, and was the view favored by Ibn Jarir.

(قَالَ فَعَلْتُهَا إِذَا)

((Musa) said: "I did it then...") meaning, at that time,

(وَأَنَا مِنَ الضَّالِّينَ)

(when I was in error.) meaning, `before revelation was sent to me and before Allah made me a Prophet and sent me with this Message.'

(فَقَرَرْتُ مِنْكُمْ لَمَّا خِفْتُكُمْ فَوَهَبَ لِي رَبِّي حُكْمًا  
وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ )

(So, I fled from you when I feared you. But my Lord has granted me Hukm, and made me one of the Messengers.) means, `the first situation came to an end and another took its place. Now Allah has sent me to you, and if you obey Him, you will be safe, but if you oppose Him, you will be destroyed.' Then Musa said:

(وَتِلْكَ نِعْمَةٌ تَمُنُّهَا عَلَيَّ أَنْ عَبَّدتَّ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ )

(And this is the past favor with which you reproach me, -- that you have enslaved the Children of Israel.) meaning, `whatever favors you did in bringing me up are offset by the evil you did by enslaving the Children of Israel and using them to do your hard labor. Is there any comparison between your favors to one man among them and the evil you have done to all of them What you have mentioned about me is nothing compared to what you have done to them.'

(قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَا رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ - قَالَ رَبُّ  
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُوقِنِينَ  
- قَالَ لِمَنْ حَوْلَهُ أَلَا تَسْتَمِعُونَ - قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ  
ءَابَائِكُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ - قَالَ إِنْ رَسُولِكُمُ الَّذِي أُرْسِلَ  
إِلَيْكُمْ لَمَجْنُونٌ - قَالَ رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَمَا  
بَيْنَهُمَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ )

(23. Fir`awn said: "And what is the Lord of Al-`Alamin") (24. (Musa) said: "The Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, if you seek to be convinced with certainty.") (25. (Fir`awn) said to those around: "Do you not hear (what he says)") (26. (Musa) said: "Your Lord and the Lord of your ancient fathers!") (27. (Fir`awn) said: "Verily, your Messenger who has been sent to you is a madman!") (28. (Musa) said: "Lord of the east and the west, and all that is between them, if you did but understand!")

**Allah tells us about the disbelief, rebellion, oppression and denial  
of Fir`awn, as He says:**

(وَمَا رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

((Fir`awn said:) "And what is the Lord of the `Alamin") This is because he used to say to his people:

(مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِي)

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

## (فَاسْتَخَفَّ قَوْمَهُ فَاطَاعُوهُ)

(Thus he fooled his people, and they obeyed him.) (43:54) They used to deny the Creator, may He be glorified, and they believed that they had no other lord than Fir`awn. When Musa said to them: "I am the Messenger of the Lord of the worlds," Fir`awn said to him, "Who is this who you are claiming is the Lord of Al-`Alamin other than me" This is how it was interpreted by the scholars of the Salaf and the Imams of later generations. As-Suddi said, "This Ayah is like the Ayah,

## (قَالَ فَمَنْ رَبُّكُمَا يَمُوسَى - قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَى )

((Fir`awn) said: "Who then, O Musa, is the Lord of you two" He said: "Our Lord is He Who gave to each thing its form and nature, then guided it aright.") (20:49-50) Those among the philosophers and others who claimed that this was a question about the nature or substance )of Allah( are mistaken. Fir`awn did not believe in the Creator in the first place, so he was in no position to ask about the nature of the Creator; he denied that the Creator existed at all, as is apparent from the meaning, even though proof and evidence had been established against him. When Fir`awn asked him about the Lord of Al-`Alamin, Musa said:

## (قَالَ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا)

((Musa) said: "The Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them..." meaning, the Creator, Sovereign and Controller of all that, their God Who has no partner or associate. He is the One Who has created all things. He knows the higher realms and the heavenly bodies that are in them, both those that are stationary and those that move and shine brightly. He knows the lower realms and what is in them; the oceans, continents, mountains, trees, animals, plants and fruits. He knows what is in between the two realms; the winds, birds, and whatever is in the air. All of them are servants to Him, submitting and humbling themselves before Him.

## (إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُوقِنِينَ)

(if you seek to be convinced with certainty. ) means, if you have believing hearts and clear insight. At this, Fir`awn turned to the chiefs and leaders of his state around him, and said to them -- mockingly expressing his disbelief in Musa:

## (أَلَا تَسْتَمِعُونَ)

("Do you not hear") meaning, `are you not amazed by what this man is claiming -- that you have another god other than me' Musa said to them:

## (رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ آبَائِكُمُ الْأُولِينَ)

(Your Lord and the Lord of your ancient fathers!) meaning, the One Who created you and your forefathers, those who came before Fir`awn and his time.

(قَالَ)

(He said) that is, Fir`awn said:

(إِنَّ رَسُولَكُمْ الَّذِي أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ لَمَجْنُونٌ)

(Verily, your Messenger who has been sent to you is a madman!) meaning, there is no sense in his claim that there is any god other than me!

(قَالَ)

((Musa) said) -- to those in whose hearts Fir`awn had planted doubts:

(رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ)

(Lord of the east and the west, and all that is between them, if you did but understand!) `He is the One Who made the east the place where the heavenly bodies rise, and made the west the place where they set; this is the system to which He has subjugated all the heavenly bodies, stationary and moving. If what Fir`awn claims is true, that he is your lord and your god, then let him turn things around so that the heavenly bodies set in the east and rise in the west.' This is similar to the Ayah,

(الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ أَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا أَحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ)

(who disputed with Ibrahim about his Lord, because Allah had given him the kingdom When Ibrahim said: "My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death." He said, "I give life and cause death." Ibrahim said, "Verily, Allah brings the sun from the east. So cause it to rise from the west.") (2:258) So when Fir`awn was defeated in debate, he resorted to the use of his force and power, believing that this would be effective in dealing with Musa, peace be upon him, so he said, as Allah tells us:

(قَالَ لئن اتَّخَذْتَ إِلَهًا غَيْرِي لأَجْعَلَنَّكَ مِنَ  
 الْمَسْجُونِينَ - قَالَ أَوَلَوْ جِئْتُكَ بِشَيْءٍ مُّبِينٍ - قَالَ  
 فَأْتِ بِهِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ - فَأَلْقَى عَصَاهُ  
 فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَاءُ  
 لِلنَّظِيرِينَ قَالَ لِلْمَلَأِ حَوْلَهُ إِنَّ هَذَا لَسِحْرٌ عَلِيمٌ  
 يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُخْرِجَكُمْ مِنْ أَرْضِكُمْ بِسِحْرِهِ فَمَاذَا  
 تَأْمُرُونَ قَالُوا أَرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ وَأَبْعَثْ فِي الْمَدَائِنِ  
 حَاشِرِينَ يَاأْتُوكَ بِكُلِّ سِحَارٍ عَلِيمٍ )

(29. He said: "If you choose a god other than me, I will certainly put you among the prisoners.") (30. He said: "Even if I bring you something manifest") (31. He said: "Bring it forth then, if you are of the truthful!") (32. So he threw his stick, and behold, it was a serpent, manifest.) (33. And he drew out his hand, and behold, it was white to all beholders!) (34. He said to the chiefs around him: "Verily, this is indeed a well-versed sorcerer.") (35. "He wants to drive you out of your land by his sorcery: what is it then that you command") (36. They said: "Put him off and his brother (for a while), and send callers to the cities;") (37. "To bring up to you every well-versed sorcerer.")

### After the Rational Proof, Fir`awn resorts to Force

When proof had been established against Fir`awn, clearly and rationally, he resorted to using force against Musa, thinking that after this there would no further room for discussion. So he said:

(لئن اتَّخَذْتَ إِلَهًا غَيْرِي لأَجْعَلَنَّكَ مِنَ  
 الْمَسْجُونِينَ)

(If you choose a god other than me, I will certainly put you among the prisoners.) To this, Musa responded:

(أَوَلَوْ جِئْتُكَ بِشَيْءٍ مُّبِينٍ)

(Even if I bring you something manifest) meaning, clear and definitive proof.

قَالَ فَأْتِ بِهِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ - فَأَلْقَى  
عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ )

(Fir`awn said: "Bring it forth then, if you are of the truthful!" So he threw his stick, and behold, it was a serpent, manifest.) meaning, it was very clear and obvious, with a huge body and a big mouth, terrifying in appearance.

(وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُ)

(And he drew out his hand,) meaning, from his sleeve,

فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَاءُ لِلنَّاظِرِينَ)

(and behold, it was white to all beholders!) It was shining like a piece of the moon. Since Fir`awn was already doomed, he hastened to stubborn denial, and said to the chiefs around him:

(إِنَّ هَذَا لَسِحْرٌ عَلِيمٌ)

(Verily, this is indeed a well-versed sorcerer.) One who knows a great deal of magic or witchcraft. Fir`awn was trying to convince them that this was sorcery, not a miracle. Then he provoked them against Musa, trying to make them oppose him and disbelieve in him, and said:

(يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُخْرِجَكُمْ مِّنْ أَرْضِكُمْ بِسِحْرِهِ)

(He wants to drive you out of your land by his sorcery...) meaning, `he wants to capture the people's hearts and win them over by doing this, so that they will support him, and help him and follow him, and he will defeat you in your own land and take the land from you. So advise me, what should I do with him'

قَالُوا أَرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ وَأَبْعَثْ فِي الْمَدَائِنِ حَاشِرِينَ  
- يَا تُوكِ بِكُلِّ سَحَّارٍ عَلِيمٍ )

(They said: "Put him off and his brother, and send callers to the cities; to bring up to you every well-versed sorcerer.") meaning, `delay him and his brother until you gather together all the sorcerers from every city and region of your kingdom so that they may confront him and produce something like he produces, then you will defeat him and have the victory.' So Fir`awn did as they suggested, which is what Allah decreed would happen to them, so that all the

people would gather in one place and the signs and proof of Allah would be made manifest before them all in one day.

(فَجُمِعَ السَّحَرَةُ لِمِيقَاتِ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ - وَقِيلَ لِلنَّاسِ هَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُجْتَمِعُونَ - لَعَلْنَا نَتَّبِعُ السَّحَرَةَ إِنْ كَانُوا هُمُ الْغَالِبِينَ - فَلَمَّا جَاءَ السَّحَرَةُ قَالُوا لِفِرْعَوْنَ أَإِنَّا لَنَا لِأَجْرٍ إِنْ كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغَالِبِينَ - قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ إِذَا لَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ - قَالَ لَهُمْ مُوسَى أَلْقُوا مَا أَنْتُمْ مُلقُونَ - فَأَلْقَوْا حِبَلَهُمْ وَعِصِيَّهُمْ وَقَالُوا بِعِزَّةِ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الْغَالِبُونَ - فَأَلْقَى مُوسَى عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ - فَأَلْقَى السَّحَرَةُ سَجْدِينَ - قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ رَبِّ مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ )

(38. So, the sorcerers were assembled at a fixed time on a day appointed.) (39. And it was said to the people: "Are you (too) going to assemble") (40. "That we may follow the sorcerers if they are the winners.") (41. So, when the sorcerers arrived, they said to Fir`awn: "Will there surely be a reward for us if we are the winners") (42. He said: "Yes, and you shall then verily be of those brought near (to myself).") (43. Musa said to them: "Throw what you are going to throw!") (44. So, they threw their ropes and their sticks, and said: "By the might of Fir`awn, it is we who will certainly win!") (45. Then Musa threw his stick, and behold, it swallowed up all that they falsely showed!) (46. And the sorcerers fell down prostrate.) (47. Saying: "We believe in the Lord of Al-`Alamin.") (48. "The Lord of Musa and Harun.")

**Between Musa, peace be upon him, and the Sorcerers Allah describes the actual encounter between Musa, peace be upon him, and the Egyptians in Surat Al-A`raf, Surah Ta Ha, and in this Surah.**

The Egyptians wanted to extinguish the Light of Allah with their words, but Allah insisted that His Light should prevail even though the disbelievers disliked that. This is the issue of disbelief and faith; they never confront one another but faith always prevails:

بَلْ نَقْذِفُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلَى الْبَاطِلِ فَيَدْمَغُهُ فَإِذَا هُوَ  
زَاهِقٌ وَلَكُمْ الْوَيْلُ مِمَّا تَصِفُونَ )

(Nay, We fling the truth against the falsehood, so it destroys it, and behold, it disappears. And woe to you for that which you ascribe.) (21:18)

(وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ)

(And say: "Truth has come and falsehood has vanished.") (17:81) The sorcerers of Egypt were the most skilled in the art of illusion, but when a huge group of them gathered from all corners of the land, and the people came together on that day whose exact numbers are known to Allah Alone, one of them said:

(لَعَلَّنَا نَتَّبِعُ السَّحَرَةَ إِنْ كَانُوا هُمُ الْغَالِبِينَ )

(That we may follow the sorcerers if they are the winners.) They did not say: `we will follow the truth, whether it rests with the sorcerers or with Musa;' the people were followers of the religion of their king.

(فَلَمَّا جَاءَ السَّحَرَةُ)

(So, when the sorcerers arrived,) means, when they reached the court of Fir`awn, and a pavilion had been erected for him. There he gathered his servants, followers, administrators, and provincial leaders, and the soldiers of his kingdom. The sorcerers stood before Fir`awn, asking him to treat them well and bring them closer to him if they prevailed in this matter which he had brought them together for. They said:

(فَلَمَّا جَاءَ السَّحَرَةُ قَالُوا لِفِرْعَوْنَ أَإِنَّا لَنَا لِأَجْرٍ  
إِنْ كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغَالِبِينَ - قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ إِذَا لَمِنَ  
الْمُقَرَّبِينَ )

("Will there surely be a reward for us if we are the winners" He said: "Yes, and you shall then verily be of those brought near.") meaning, `and you will be given more than what you are asking for; I will make you among those who are close to me, those who sit with me.' So they went back to their places:

قَالُوا يَمُوسَىٰ إِمَّا أَنْ تُلْقِيَ وَإِمَّا أَنْ نَكُونَ أَوَّلَ  
مَنْ أَلْقَىٰ قَالَ بَلْ أَلْقُوا

(They said: "O Musa! Either you throw first or we be the first to throw" (Musa) said: "Nay, throw you (first)!") (20:65-66). Here the incident is described more briefly. Musa said to them:

أَلْقُوا مَا أَنْتُمْ مُلقُونَ فَأَلْقَوْا حِبَالَهُمْ وَعِصِيَّهُمْ  
وَقَالُوا بِعِزَّةِ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الْغَالِبُونَ

("Throw what you are going to throw!" So, they threw their ropes and their sticks, and said: "By the might of Fir`awn, it is we who will certainly win!") This is what the ignorant masses say when they do something: `this is by the virtue of So-and-so!' In Surat Al-A`raf Allah mentioned that they:

سَحَرُوا أَعْيُنَ النَّاسِ وَاسْتَرَهُبُوهُمْ وَجَاءُوا  
بِسِحْرِ عَظِيمٍ

(They bewitched the eyes of the people, and struck terror into them, and they displayed a great magic) (7:116). And in Surah Ta Ha He said:

فَإِذَا حِبَالُهُمْ وَعِصِيَّهُمْ يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ سِحْرِهِمْ  
أَنَّهَا تَسْعَىٰ

(Then behold! their ropes and their sticks, by their magic, appeared to him as though they moved fast.) until Allah saying:

وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السَّحَرُ حَيْثُ أَتَىٰ

(and the magician will never be successful, whatever the amount (of skill) he may attain) (20:69). And here Allah says:

فَأَلْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ

(Then Musa threw his stick, and behold, it swallowed up all that they falsely showed!) by snatching up and catching them from every corner and swallowing them up, and it did not leave any of them untouched. Allah says:

(فَوَقَعَ الْحَقُّ وَبَطَلَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ )

(Thus truth was confirmed, and all that they did was made of no effect.) until

(رَبِّ مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ )

(The Lord of Musa and Harun.) (7:118-122) This was a very serious matter, furnishing decisive proof leaving no room for any excuse. Fir`awn's supporters, who sought and hoped that they would prevail over Musa, were themselves defeated. At that moment they believed in Musa and prostrated to Allah, the Lord of Al` Alamin Who sent Musa and Harun with the truth and an obvious miracle. Fir`awn was defeated in a manner the likes of which the world had never seen, but he remained arrogant and stubborn despite the clear evidence, may the curse of Allah and the angels and all of mankind be upon him. He resorted to arrogance and stubbornness and propagating falsehood. He began to issue threats against them, saying:

(إِنَّهُ لَكَبِيرُكُمْ الَّذِي عَلَّمَكُمُ السِّحْرَ)

(Verily, he is your chief who has taught you magic) (20:71).

(إِنَّ هَذَا لَمَكْرٌ مَّكْرْتُمُوهُ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ)

(Surely, this is a plot which you have plotted in the city) (7:123).

(قَالَ ءَامَنْتُمْ لَهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَادِّنَ لَكُمْ إِنَّهُ لَكَبِيرُكُمْ  
الَّذِي عَلَّمَكُمُ السِّحْرَ فَلَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ لَأَقْطَعَنَّ  
أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ مِّنْ خِلَافٍ وَلَأَصْلَبَنَّكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ  
- قَالُوا لَا ضَيْرَ إِنَّا إِلَى رَبِّنَا مُنْقَلِبُونَ - إِنَّا نَطْمَعُ  
أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لَنَا رَبُّنَا خَطِيئَتَنَا أَنْ كُنَّا أَوَّلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ )

(49. He said: "You have believed in him before I give you leave. Surely, he indeed is your chief, who has taught you magic! So verily, you shall come to know. Verily, I will cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides, and I will crucify you all.") (50. They said: "No harm! Surely, to our Lord we are to return.") (51. "Verily, we really hope that our Lord will forgive us our sins, as we are the first of the believers.")

**Between Fir`awn and the Sorcerers**

His threats against them resulted only in an increase in their faith and submission to Allah, for the veil of disbelief had been lifted from their hearts and the truth became clear to them because they knew something that their people did not: that what Musa had done could not have been done by any human being unless Allah helped him, making it proof and an evidence of the truth of what he had brought from his Lord. Then Fir`awn said to them:

(ءَامَنْتُمْ لَهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَاذِنَ لَكُمْ)

(You have believed in him before I give you leave.) meaning, `you should have asked my permission for what you did, and you did not consult with me; if I had given you permission you could have done it, and if I did not allow you, you should not have done it, for I am the ruler and the one to be obeyed.'

(إِنَّهُ لَكَبِيرُكُمْ الَّذِي عَلَّمَكُمُ السِّحْرَ)

(Surely, he indeed is your chief, who has taught you magic!) This is stubborn talk, and anyone can see that it is nonsense, for they had never met Musa before that day, so how could he have been their chief who taught them how to do magic No rational person would say this. Then Fir`awn threatened to cut off their hands and feet, and crucify them. They said:

(لَا ضَيْرَ)

(No harm!) meaning, `no problem, that will not harm us and we do not care.'

(إِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا مُنْقَلِبُونَ)

(Surely, to our Lord we are to return.) means, `the return of us all is to Allah, may He be glorified, and He will never allow the reward of anyone who has done good to be lost. What you have done to us is not hidden from Him, and He will reward us in full for that.' So they said:

(إِنَّا نَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لَنَا رَبُّنَا خَطِيئَاتِنَا)

(Verily, we really hope that our Lord will forgive us our sins,) `the sins we have committed and the magic you forced us to do.'

(أَنْ كُنَّا أَوَّلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(as we are the first of the believers,) means, because we are the first of our people, the Egyptians, to believe. So he killed them all.

(وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَسْرِ بِعِبَادِي إِنَّكَ  
 مَتَّبِعُونَ - فَأَرْسَلَ فِرْعَوْنُ فِي الْمَدَائِنِ حَاشِرِينَ  
 - إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ لَشِرْذِمَةٌ قَلِيلُونَ - وَإِنَّهُمْ لَنَا  
 لَغَائِظُونَ - وَإِنَّا لَجَمِيعٌ حَازِرُونَ - فَأَخْرَجْنَاهُمْ  
 مِنْ جَبَّتٍ وَعُيُونٍ - وَكُنُوزٍ وَمَقَامٍ كَرِيمٍ - كَذَلِكَ  
 وَأَوْرَثْنَاهَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ )

(52. And We revealed to Musa, saying: "Depart by night with My servants, verily, you will be pursued.") (53. Then Fir`awn sent callers to (all) the cities.) (54. (Saying): "Verily, these indeed are but a small band.") (55. "And verily, they have done what has enraged us.") (56. "But we are a host all assembled, amply forewarned.") (57. So, We expelled them from gardens and springs,) (58. Treasures, and every kind of honorable place.) (59. Thus and We caused the Children of Israel to inherit them.)

### The Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt

After Musa stayed in Egypt for a long time, and the proof of Allah was established against Fir`awn and his chiefs, yet they were still arrogant and stubborn, then there was nothing left for them but punishment and vengeance. So Allah commanded Musa, peace be upon him, to take the Children of Israel out of Egypt by night, and take them wherever he would be commanded. So Musa, peace be upon him, did as he was commanded by his Lord, may He be glorified, and he led them forth after they had borrowed an abundance of jewelry from the people of Fir`awn. As more than one of the scholars of Tafsir have said, they left when the moon was rising, and Mujahid, may Allah have mercy on him, said that the moon was eclipsed that night. And Allah knows best. Musa asked about the grave of Yusuf (Prophet Joseph), peace be upon him, and an old woman from among the Children of Israel showed him where it was, so he took the remains with them, and it was said that they were among the things that were carried by Musa himself, may peace be upon them both. It was also said that Yusuf, peace be upon him, had left instructions in his will that if the Children of Israel ever left Egypt, they should take his remains with them. The following morning, when there was nobody to be found in the Israelite quarters, Fir`awn became angry and his anger intensified since Allah had decreed that he was to be destroyed. So he quickly sent his callers to all his cities, i.e., to mobilize his troops and bring them together, and he called out to them:

(إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ)

(Verily, these) meaning, the Children of Israel,

(لَشِرْذِمَةً قَلِيلُونَ)

(indeed are but a small band. ) meaning, a small group.

(وَإِنَّهُمْ لَنَا لَغَائِظُونَ )

(And verily, they have done what has enraged us.) means, `every time we have heard anything about them, it has upset us and made us angry.'

(وَإِنَّا لَجَمِيعٌ حَازِرُونَ )

(But we are a host all assembled, amply forewarned.) means, `we are constantly taking precautions lest they betray us.' Some of the Salaf read this with the meaning, "we are constantly forewarned and forearmed. And I want to destroy them to the last man, and destroy all their lands and property." So he and his troops were punished with the very things he sought to inflict upon the Children of Israel. Allah says:

(فَأَخْرَجْنَاهُمْ مِّنْ جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ - وَكُنُوزٍ وَمَقَامٍ  
كَرِيمٍ )

(So, We expelled them from gardens and springs, treasures, and every kind of honorable place.) meaning, they were thrown out of those blessings and into Hell, and they left behind the honorable places, gardens and rivers, wealth, provision, position and power in this world:

(كَذَلِكَ وَأَوْرَثْنَاهَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ )

(Thus and We caused the Children of Israel to inherit them.) This is like the Ayat:

(وَأَوْرَثْنَا الْقَوْمَ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا يُسْتَضْعَفُونَ مَشْرِقَ  
الْأَرْضِ وَمَغْرِبَهَا الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا)

(And We made the people who were considered weak to inherit the eastern parts of the land and the western parts thereof which We have blessed) (7: 137).

(وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا فِي  
الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ )

(And We wished to do a favor to those who were weak in the land, and to make them rulers and to make them the inheritors) The two Ayat thereafter: )28:5-6(.

(فَأَتَّبَعُوهُمْ مَشْرِقِينَ - فَلَمَّا تَرَاءَا الْجَمْعَانِ قَالَ  
أَصْحَابُ مُوسَى إِنَّا لَمُدْرَكُونَ - قَالَ كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ  
رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ - فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى مُوسَى أَنْ اضْرِبْ  
بِعَصَاكَ الْبَحْرَ فَانْفَلَقَ فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرْقٍ كَالطَّوْدِ  
الْعَظِيمِ - وَأَزَلَفْنَا تَمَّ الْأَخْرِينَ - وَأَنْجَيْنَا مُوسَى  
وَمَنْ مَعَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ - ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا الْأَخْرِينَ - إِنَّ فِي  
ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ  
لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ )

(60. So, they pursued them at sunrise.) (61. And when the two hosts saw each other, the companions of Musa said: "We are sure to be overtaken.") (62. (Musa) said: "Nay, verily with me is my Lord. He will guide me.") (63. Then We revealed to Musa (saying): "Strike the sea with your stick." And it parted, and each separate part became like huge mountain.) (64. Then We brought near the others to that place.) (65. And We saved Musa and all those with him.) (66. Then We drowned the others.) (67. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (68. And verily your Lord, He is truly the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

### **Fir`awn's Pursuit and Expulsion of the Children of Israel, and how He and His People were drowned**

More than one of the scholars of Tafsir said that Fir`awn set out with a huge group, a group containing the leaders and entire government of Egypt at that time, i.e., the decision-makers and influential figures, princes, ministers, nobles, leaders and soldiers.

(فَأَتَّبَعُوهُمْ مَشْرِقِينَ )

(So, they pursued them at sunrise.) means, they caught up with the Children of Israel at sunrise.

(فَلَمَّا تَرَاءَا الْجَمْعَانِ)

(And when the two hosts saw each other,) means, each group saw the other. At that point,

(قَالَ أَصْحَابُ مُوسَىٰ إِنَّا لَمُدْرَكُونَ)

(the companions of Musa said: "We are sure to be overtaken.") This was because Fir`awn and his people caught up with them on the shores of the Red Sea, so the sea was ahead of them and Fir`awn and his troops were behind them. Hence they said:

(قَلَمَّا تَرَآءَا الْجَمْعَانِ قَالَ أَصْحَابُ مُوسَىٰ إِنَّا  
لَمُدْرَكُونَ - قَالَ كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ )

("We are sure to be overtaken." (Musa) said: "Nay, verily with me is my Lord. He will guide me.") meaning, 'nothing of what you fear will happen to you, for Allah is the One Who commanded me to bring you here, and He does not go back on His promise.' Harun, peace be upon him, was in the front, with Yusha` bin Nun and a believer from the family of Fir`awn, and Musa, peace be upon him, was in the rear. More than one of the scholars of Tafsir said that they stood there not knowing what to do, and Yusha` bin Nun or the believer from the family of Fir`awn said to Musa, peace be upon him, "O Prophet of Allah, is it here that your Lord commanded you to bring us" He said: "Yes." Then Fir`awn and his troops drew near and were very close indeed. At that point Allah commanded his Prophet Musa, peace be upon him, to strike the sea with his staff, so he struck it, and it parted, by the will of Allah. Allah says:

(فَانفَلَقَ فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرْقٍ كَالطَّوْدِ الْعَظِيمِ)

(And it parted, and each separate part became like huge mountain.) meaning, like mighty mountains. This was the view of Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Muhammad bin Ka`b, Ad-Dahhak, Qatadah and others. `Ata' Al-Khurasani said, "It refers to a pass between two mountains." Ibn `Abbas said, "The sea divided into twelve paths, one for each of the tribes." As-Suddi added, "And in it there were windows through which they could see one another, and the water was erected like walls." Allah sent the wind to the sea bed to make it solid like the land. Allah says:

(فَاضْرِبْ لَهُمْ طَرِيقًا فِي الْبَحْرِ يَبَسًا لَا تَخَافُ  
دَرْكًا وَلَا تَخْشَىٰ)

(and strike a dry path for them in the sea, fearing neither to be overtaken nor being afraid) (20:77). And here He says:

(وَأَزَلَقْنَا تَمَّ الْأَخْرِينَ )

(Then We brought near the others to that place.) Ibn `Abbas, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, Qatadah and As-Suddi said:

(وَأَزَلُّنَا)

(Then We brought near) means, "We brought Fir`awn and his troops near to the sea."

(وَأَنْجَيْنَا مُوسَى وَمَنْ مَعَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ - ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا  
الْآخَرِينَ )

(And We saved Musa and all those with him. Then We drowned the others.) meaning: `We saved Musa and the Children of Israel and whoever followed their religion, and none of them were destroyed, but Fir`awn and his troops were drowned and not one of them remained alive, but was destroyed.' Then Allah says:

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً)

(Verily, in this is indeed a sign,) meaning, this story with its wonders and tales of aid to the believing servants of Allah is definitive proof and evidence of Allah's wisdom.

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ -  
وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ )

(yet most of them are not believers. And verily your Lord, He is truly the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful. ) The explanation of this phrase has already been discussed above.

(وَإِتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ - إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا  
تَعْبُدُونَ - قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ أَصْنَامًا فَنَنْظِلُّ لَهَا عَافِينَ -  
قَالَ هَلْ يَسْمَعُونَكُمْ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ - أَوْ يَنْفَعُونَكُمْ أَوْ  
يَضُرُّونَ - قَالُوا بَلْ وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا كَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ -  
قَالَ أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ - أَنْتُمْ وءَابَاؤُكُمْ  
الْأَقْدَمُونَ - فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِي إِلَّا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ )

(69. And recite to them the story of Ibrahim.) (70. When he said to his father and his people: "What do you worship") (71. They said: "We worship idols, and to them we are ever devoted.") (72. He said: "Do they hear you when you call") (73. "Or do they benefit you or do they cause

harm") (74. They said: "(Nay) but we found our fathers doing so.") (75. He said: "Do you observe that which you have been worshipping --") (76. "You and your ancient fathers") (77. "Verily, they are enemies to me, save the Lord of Al-`Alamin,")

### How the Close Friend of Allah, Ibrahim spoke out against Shirk

Here Allah tells us about His servant, Messenger and Close Friend, Ibrahim, upon him be peace, the leader of the pure monotheists. Allah commanded His Messenger Muhammad to recite this story to his Ummah so that they could follow this example of sincerity towards Allah, putting one's trust in Him, worshipping Him Alone with no partner or associate, and renouncing Shirk and its people. Allah granted guidance to Ibrahim before, i.e., from a very early age he had denounced his people's practice of worshipping idols with Allah, may He be exalted.

(إِذْ قَالَ لِأَيِّهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ )

(When he said to his father and his people: "What do you worship") meaning: what are these statues to which you are so devoted

(قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ أَصْنَامًا فَنَنْظِلُ لَهَا عَافِينَ )

(They said: "We worship idols, and to them we are ever devoted.") meaning: we are devoted to worshipping them and praying to them.

(قَالَ هَلْ يَسْمَعُونَكَ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ - أَوْ يَنْفَعُونَكَ أَوْ  
يَضُرُّونَ - قَالُوا بَلْ وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا كَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ  
(

(He said: "Do they hear you when you call Or do they benefit you or do they cause harm" They said: "(Nay) but we found our fathers doing so.") They knew that their idols could not do anything, but they had seen their fathers doing this, so they made haste to follow in their footsteps. So Ibrahim said to them:

(قَالَ أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ - أَنْتُمْ وَعَابَاؤُكُمْ  
الْأَقْدَمُونَ - فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِي إِلَّا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ )

(Do you observe that which you have been worshipping --you and your ancient fathers Verily, they are enemies to me, save the Lord of Al-`Alamin.) meaning, `if these idols mean anything and have any influence, then let them do me any kind of harm, for I am an enemy to them and I do not care about them or think anything of them.' This is akin to the way Allah described Nuh:

(فَأَجْمِعُوا أَمْرَكُمْ وَشُرَكَاءَكُمْ)

(So devise your plot, you and your partners) (10:71). And Hud, upon him be peace, said:

(إِنْ تَقُولُ إِلَّا اعْتَرَاكَ بَعْضُ آلِهَتِنَا بِسُوءٍ قَالَ  
إِنِّي أَشْهَدُ اللَّهَ وَأَشْهَدُوا أَنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ  
- مِنْ دُونِهِ فَكِيدُونِي جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ لَا تُنظِرُونَ - إِنِّي  
تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ رَبِّي وَرَبِّكُمْ مَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ  
ءَاخِذٌ بِنَاصِيَتِهَا إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ )

("I call Allah to witness and bear you witness that I am free from that which you ascribe as partners in worship. So plot against me, all of you, and give me no respite. I put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord! There is not a moving creature but He has the grasp of its forelock. Verily, my Lord is on the straight path) (11:54-56). rSimilarly, Ibrahim denounced their gods and idols and said:

(وَكَيْفَ أَخَافُ مَا أَشْرَكْتُمْ وَلَا تَخَافُونَ أَنَّكُمْ  
أَشْرَكْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ)

(And how should I fear those whom you associate in worship with Allah, while you fear not that you have joined in worship with Allah) (6:81). And Allah said:

(قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ)

(Indeed there has been an excellent example for you in Ibrahim) until His saying;

(حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَحَدَهُ)

(until you believe in Allah Alone) (60:4).

(وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّنِي بَرَاءٌ مِّمَّا  
تَعْبُدُونَ - إِلَّا الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي فَإِنَّهُ سَيَهْدِين -  
وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةً بَاقِيَةً فِي عَقْبِهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ )

(And (remember) when Ibrahim said to his father and his people: "Verily, I am innocent of what you worship, except Him Who created me; and verily, He will guide me." And he made it a Word lasting among his offspring, that they may turn back) (43:26-28). meaning: "La Ilaha Illallah."

(الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِين - وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي  
وَيَسْقِين - وَإِذَا مَرَضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِين - وَالَّذِي  
يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِين - وَالَّذِي أَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لِي  
خَطِيئَتِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ )

(78. Who has created me, and it is He Who guides me.) (79. And it is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink.) (80. And when I am ill, it is He Who cures me.) (81. And Who will cause me to die, and then will bring me to life. ) (82. And Who, I hope, will forgive me my faults on the Day of Recompense.)

### Ibrahim mentions Allah's Kindness towards Him

Ibrahim said, "I will not worship any but the One Who does these things:

(الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِين )

(Who has created me, and it is He Who guides me.) He is the Creator Who has decreed certain things to which He guides His creation, so each person follows the path which is decreed for him. Allah is the One Who guides whomsoever He wills and leaves astray whomsoever He wills.

(وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِين )

(And it is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink.) He is my Creator Who provides for me from that which He has made available in the heavens and on earth. He drives the clouds and causes water to fall with which He revives the earth and brings forth its fruits as provision for mankind. He sends down the water fresh and sweet so that many of those whom He has created, animals and men alike, may drink from it.

(وَإِذَا مَرَضْتُ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي يَشْفِينِي )

(And when I am ill, it is He Who cures me.) Here he attributed sickness to himself, even though it is Allah Who decrees it, out of respect towards Allah. By the same token, Allah commands us to say in the prayer,

(اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ )

(Guide us to the straight way) (1:6) to the end of the Surah. Grace and guidance are attributed to Allah, may He be exalted, but the subject of the verb with reference to anger is omitted, and going astray is attributed to the people. This is like when the Jinn said:

(وَأَنَّا لَا نَدْرِي أَشَرٌّ أُرِيدَ بِمَن فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ  
أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا )

(And we know not whether evil is intended for those on earth, or whether their Lord intends for them a right path) (72:10) Similarly, Ibrahim said:

(وَإِذَا مَرَضْتُ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي يَشْفِينِي )

(And when I am ill, it is He Who cures me.) meaning, 'when I fall sick, no one is able to heal me but Him, Who heals me with the means that may lead to recovery'.

(وَالَّذِي يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِي )

(And Who will cause me to die, and then will bring me to life.) He is the One Who gives life and causes death, and no one besides Him is able to do that, for He is the One Who originates and repeats.

(وَالَّذِي أطمعُ أَن يَغْفِرَ لِي خَطِيئَتِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ )

(And Who, I hope, will forgive me my faults on the Day of Recompense.) means, no one is able to forgive sins in this world or the Hereafter except Him. Who can forgive sins except Allah For He is the One Who does whatever He wills.

(رَبِّ هَبْ لِي حُكْمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ -  
وَاجْعَلْ لِي لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِي الْآخِرِينَ - وَاجْعَلْنِي

مِنْ وَرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ النَّعِيمِ - وَاعْفِرْ لِأَبِي إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ  
الضَّالِّينَ - وَلَا تُخْزِنِي يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ - يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ  
مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ - إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ )

(83. My Lord! Bestow Hukm on me, and join me with the righteous.) (84. And grant me an honorable mention in later generations.) (85. And make me one of the inheritors of the Paradise of Delight.) (86. And forgive my father, verily, he is of the erring.) (87. And disgrace me not on the Day when they will be resurrected.) (88. The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail,) (89. Except him who brings to Allah a clean heart.)

### The Prayer of Ibrahim for Himself and for His Father

Here Ibrahim, upon him be peace, asks his Lord to give him Hukm. Ibn `Abbas said, "This is knowledge."

(وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ)

(and join me with the righteous.) means, `make me one of the righteous in this world and the Hereafter.' This is like the words the Prophet said three times when he was dying:

«اللَّهُمَّ فِي الرَّفِيقِ الْأَعْلَى»

(O Allah, with the Exalted Companion (of Paradise)).

(وَأَجْعَلْ لِي لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِي الْأَخْرِينَ )

(And grant me an honorable mention in later generations.) meaning, `cause me to be remembered in a good manner after my death, so that I will be spoken of and taken as a good example.' This is like the Ayah,

(وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِي الْأَخْرِينَ سَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ  
كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ )

(And We left for him (a goodly remembrance) among the later generations: "Salam (peace) be upon Ibrahim. Thus indeed do we reward the good doers.) (37:108-110)

(وَأَجْعَلْنِي مِنْ وَرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ النَّعِيمِ )

(And make me one of the inheritors of the Paradise of Delight.) meaning, 'bless me in this world with honorable mention after I am gone, and in the Hereafter by making me one of the inheritors of the Paradise of Delight.'

(وَاعْفِرْ لَأَبِي)

(And forgive my father,) This is like the Ayah,

(رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ)

(My Lord! Forgive me, and my parents) (71:28). But this is something which Ibrahim, peace be upon him, later stopped doing, as Allah says:

(وَمَا كَانَ اسْتِغْفَارُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ إِلَّا عَنْ مَوْعِدَةٍ وَعَدَّهَا إِيَّاهُ)

(And Ibrahim's supplication for his father's forgiveness was only because of a promise he had made to him) (9:114) until:

(إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَأَوَّاهٌ حَلِيمٌ)

(Verily, Ibrahim was Awwah and was forbearing) (9:114). Allah stopped Ibrahim from asking for forgiveness for his father, as He says:

(قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ)

(Indeed there has been an excellent example for you in Ibrahim and those with him), until His saying:

(وَمَا أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ)

(but I have no power to do anything for you before Allah. ) (60:4),

(وَلَا تُخْزِنِي يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ)

(And disgrace me not on the Day when they will be resurrected.) means, 'protect me from shame on the Day of Resurrection and the Day when all creatures, the first and the last, will be raised.' Al-Bukhari recorded that Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, said that the Prophet said:

«إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَأَىٰ أَبَاهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَيْهِ الْغَبْرَةُ  
وَالْقَتْرَةُ»

(Ibrahim will see his father on the Day of Resurrection, covered with dust and darkness.)  
According to another narration, also from Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, the  
Prophet said:

«يَلْقَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمُ أَبَاهُ فَيَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّ إِنَّكَ وَعَدْتَنِي  
أَنَّكَ لَا تُخْزِينِي يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ، فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَىٰ:  
إِنِّي حَرَّمْتُ الْجَنَّةَ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ»

(Ibrahim will meet his father and will say: "O Lord, You promised me that You would not  
disgrace me on the Day when all creatures are resurrected." And Allah will say to him: "I have  
forbidden Paradise to the disbelievers.") He also recorded this in the Hadiths about the  
Prophets, upon them be peace, where the wording is:

«يَلْقَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمُ أَبَاهُ آزَرَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَعَلَىٰ وَجْهِ  
آزَرَ قَتْرَةٌ وَغَبْرَةٌ، فَيَقُولُ لَهُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ: أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكَ  
لَا تَعْصِينِي، فَيَقُولُ أَبُوهُ: قَالِيَوْمَ لَا أُعْصِيكَ،  
فَيَقُولُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ: يَا رَبِّ إِنَّكَ وَعَدْتَنِي أَنْ لَا  
تُخْزِينِي يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ، فَأَيُّ خِزْيٍ أَخْزَىٰ مِنْ أَبِي  
الْأَبْعَدِ فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَىٰ: إِنِّي حَرَّمْتُ الْجَنَّةَ عَلَى  
الْكَافِرِينَ، ثُمَّ يُقَالُ: يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ انظُرْ تَحْتَ  
رَجْلِكَ، فَيَنْظُرُ، فَإِذَا هُوَ بِذِيخٍ مُتَلَطِّخٍ، فَيُؤْخَذُ  
بِقَوَائِمِهِ فَيُلْقَىٰ فِي النَّارِ»

(Ibrahim will meet his father Azar on the Day of Resurrection, and there will be dust and  
darkness on Azar's face. Ibrahim will say to him, "Did I not tell you not to disobey me" His father

will say to him: "Today I will not disobey you." Ibrahim will say: "O Lord, You promised me that You would not disgrace me on the Day when they are resurrected, but what disgrace can be greater than seeing my father in this state" Allah will say to him: "I have forbidden Paradise to the disbelievers." Then it will be said: "O Ibrahim! Look beneath your feet." So he will look and there he will see (that his father was changed into) a male hyena covered in dung, which will be caught by the legs and thrown in the Fire.) This was also recorded by Abu `Abdur-Fahman An-Nasa'i in the Tafsir of his Sunan Al-Kubra.

(يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ )

(The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail,) means, a man's wealth will not protect him from the punishment of Allah, even if he were to pay a ransom equivalent to an earthful of gold.

(وَلَا بَنُونَ)

(nor sons) means, 'or if you were to pay a ransom of all the people on earth.' On that Day nothing will be of any avail except faith in Allah and sincere devotion to Him, and renunciation of Shirk and its people. Allah says:

(إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ )

(Except him who brings to Allah a clean heart. ) meaning, free from any impurity or Shirk. Ibn Srin said, "The clean heart knows that Allah is true, that the Hour will undoubtedly come and that Allah will resurrect those who are in the graves." Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib said, "The clean heart is the sound heart." This is the heart of the believer, for the heart of the disbeliever and the hypocrite is sick. Allah says:

(فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ)

(In their hearts is a disease) (2:10). Abu `Uthman An-Nisaburi said, "It is the heart that is free from innovation and is content with the Sunnah."

(وَأَزَلِفَتْ الْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ - وَبُرِّزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ  
لِلْغَاوِينَ - وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ - مِنْ  
دُونِ اللَّهِ هَلْ يَنْصُرُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَنْتَصِرُونَ -  
فَكَبَّبُوا فِيهَا هُمْ وَالْغَاوُونَ - وَجُنُودُ إِبْلِيسَ  
أَجْمَعُونَ - قَالُوا وَهُمْ فِيهَا يَخْتَصِمُونَ - تَاللَّهِ إِنْ

كُنَّا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ - إِذْ نُسَوِّكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
 - وَمَا أَضَلَّنَا إِلَّا الْمُجْرِمُونَ - فَمَا لَنَا مِنْ شَافِعِينَ  
 - وَلَا صَدِيقٍ حَمِيمٍ - قُلُوا أَنْ لَنَا كَرَّةٌ فَنَكُونُ مِنَ  
 الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ  
 مُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ )

(90. And Paradise will be brought near to those who had Taqwa.) (91. And the (Hell) Fire will be placed in full view of the astray.) (92. And it will be said to them: "Where are those that you used to worship.") (93. "Instead of Allah Can they help you or help themselves") (94. Then they will be thrown on their faces into it (the Fire), they and the astray.) (95. And all of the hosts of Iblis together.) (96. They will say while contending therein,) (97. "By Allah, we were truly in a manifest error,) (98. "When we held you as equals with the Lord of all that exists;" (99. "And none has brought us into error except the criminals.") (100. "Now we have no intercessors,") (101. "Nor a close friend.") (102. "(Alas! If we only had a chance to return, we shall truly be among the believers!") (103. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (104. And verily your Lord, He is truly the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

### Those Who have Taqwa and the Astray on the Day of Resurrection, and the Arguments and Sorrow of the Erring

(وَأُزْلِفَتِ الْجَنَّةُ)

(And Paradise will be brought near) means, it will be brought close to its people, adorned and decorated for them to behold it. Its people are the pious who preferred it to whatever was in this world, and strove for it in this world.

(وَبُرِّزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِلْغَاوِينَ )

(And the (Hell) Fire will be placed in full view of the astray.) meaning, it will be shown to them and a neck will stretch forth from it, moaning and sighing, and their hearts will reach their throats. It will be said to its people by way of reproach and rebuke:

(وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ - مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ  
 هَلْ يَنْصُرُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَنْتَصِرُونَ )

(Where are those that you used to worship instead of Allah Can they help you or help themselves) meaning, `the gods and idols whom you used to worship instead of Allah cannot help you today, and they cannot even protect themselves. You and they are fuel for Hell today, which you will surely enter.'

(فَكُبِّبُوا فِيهَا هُمْ وَالْغَاوُونَ )

(Then they will be thrown on their faces into it (the Fire), they and the astray.) Mujahid said, "This means, they will be hurled into it." Others said: "They will be thrown on top of one another, the disbelievers and their leaders who called them to Shirk. "

(وَجُنُودُ إِبْلِيسَ أَجْمَعُونَ )

(And all of the hosts of Iblis together.) they will all be thrown into it.

(قَالُوا وَهُمْ فِيهَا يَخْتَصِمُونَ - تَاللَّهِ إِنْ كُنَّا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ - إِذْ نُسَوِّكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ )

(They will say while contending therein, "By Allah, we were truly in a manifest error, when we held you as equals with the Lord of all that exists.") The weak ones among them will say to their arrogant leaders: `Verily, we were following you; can you avail us anything from the Fire' Then they will realize that themselves are to blame and will say: a

(تَاللَّهِ إِنْ كُنَّا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ - إِذْ نُسَوِّكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ )

(By Allah, we were truly in a manifest error, when we held you as equals with the Lord of all that exists.) meaning, `we obeyed your commands as we should have obeyed the commands of the Lord of the all that exists, and we worshipped you along with the Lord of all that exists.'

(وَمَا أَضَلَّنَا إِلَّا الْمُجْرِمُونَ )

(And none has brought us into error except the criminals.) meaning, `nobody called us to do that except the evildoers.'

(فَمَا لَنَا مِنْ شَافِعِينَ )

(Now we have no intercessors.) This is like the Ayah which tells us that they will say:

فَهَلْ لَنَا مِنْ شُفَعَاءَ فَيَشْفَعُوا لَنَا أَوْ نُرَدُّ فَنَعْمَلْ  
غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ

(...now are there any intercessors for us that they might intercede on our behalf Or could we be sent back so that we might do deeds other than those deeds which we used to do) (7:53). Similarly, in this Surah, Allah tells us that they will say:

(فَمَا لَنَا مِنْ شَافِعِينَ - وَلَا صَدِيقٍ حَمِيمٍ )

(Now we have no intercessors, nor a close friend.)

(فَلَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَكُونُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ )

((Alas!) If we only had a chance to return, we shall truly be among the believers!) They will wish that they could come back to this world so that they could do deeds of obedience to their Lord -- as they claim -- but Allah knows that if they were to come back to this world, they would only go back to doing forbidden things, and He knows that they are liars. Allah tells us in Surah Sad about how the people of Hell will argue with one another, as He says:

(إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَحَقٌّ تَخَاصُمُ أَهْلِ النَّارِ )

(Verily, that is the very truth -- the mutual dispute of the people of the Fire!) (38:64) Then He says:

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ )

(Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) meaning, in the dispute of Ibrahim with his people and his proof of Tawhid there is a sign, i.e., clear evidence that there is no God but Allah.

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ -  
وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ )

(yet most of them are not believers. And verily, your Lord, He is truly the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

(كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ  
نُوحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ - إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ - فَاتَّقُوا  
اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا - وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ  
أَجْرِي إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ  
وَأَطِيعُوا )

(105. The people of Nuh denied the Messengers.) (106. When their brother Nuh said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") (107. "I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.") (108. "So have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (109. "No reward do I ask of you for it; my reward is only from the Lord of all that exists.") (110. "So have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.")

### Nuh's preaching to His People, and Their Response

Here Allah tells us about His servant and Messenger Nuh, peace be upon him, who was the first Messenger sent by Allah to the people of earth after they started to worship idols. Allah sent him to forbid that and to warn people of the consequences of idol worship. But his people belied him and continued their evil practice of worshipping idols besides Allah. Allah revealed that their disbelieving in him was akin to disbelieving in all the Messengers, So Allah said:

(كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ  
نُوحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ )

(The people of Nuh belied the Messengers. When their brother Nuh said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") meaning, `do you not fear Allah when you worship others instead of Him'

(إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ )

(I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.) means, `I am the Messenger of Allah to you, faithfully fulfilling the mission with which Allah has sent me. I convey the Messages of my Lord to you, and I do not add anything to them or take anything away from them.,

(فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ )

(So have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me. No reward do I ask of you for it;) means, `I do not want any payment for the advice I give you; I will save my reward for it with Allah. '

(فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا)

(So have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.) `It is clear to you that I am telling the truth and that I am faithfully fulfilling the mission with which Allah has entrusted me.'

(قَالُوا أَنْتُمْ لَكُمْ وَاتَّبَعَكَ الْأَرْذَلُونَ - قَالَ وَمَا عَلِمِي بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ - إِنَّ حِسَابَهُمْ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّي لَوْ تَشْعُرُونَ - وَمَا أَنَا بِطَارِدِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ - إِنَّ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ)

(111. They said: "Shall we believe in you, when the inferior follow you") (112. He said: "And what knowledge have I of what they used to do") (113. "Their account is only with my Lord, if you could (but) know.") (114. "And I am not going to drive away the believers.") (115. "I am only a plain warner.")

### The Demand of the People of Nuh and His Response

They said: "We do not believe in you, and we will not follow you and become equal to the meanest of the people, who follow you and believe in you, and they are the lowest among us."

(قَالُوا أَنْتُمْ لَكُمْ وَاتَّبَعَكَ الْأَرْذَلُونَ - قَالَ وَمَا عَلِمِي بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ)

(They said: "Shall we believe in you, when the inferior follow you" He said: "And what knowledge have I of what they used to do") meaning, `what does it have to do with me if they follow me No matter what they used to do before, I do not have to check on them and examine their background; all I have to do is accept it if they believe in me; whatever is in their hearts is for Allah to know.'

(إِنَّ حِسَابَهُمْ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّي لَوْ تَشْعُرُونَ - وَمَا أَنَا بِطَارِدِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(Their account is only with my Lord, if you could (but) know. And I am not going to drive away the believers.) It seems that they asked him to drive these people away, then they would follow him, but he refused to do that, and said:

(وَمَا أَنَا بِطَارِدِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ - إِن أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ  
(

(And I am not going to drive away the believers. I am only a plain warner.) meaning, 'I have been sent as a warner, and whoever obeys me and follows me and believes in me, then he belongs to me and I to him, whether he is noble or common, upper-class or lower-class.'

(قَالُوا لَئِن لَّمْ تَنْتَهَ يُّوحُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمَرْجُومِينَ  
- قَالَ رَبِّ إِن قَوْمِي كَذَّبُون - فَأَفْتَحْ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُمْ  
فَقْهًا وَنَجِّنِي وَمَنْ مَعِيَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ - فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ  
وَمَنْ مَعَهُ فِي الْفُلِكِ الْمَشْحُون - ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا بَعْدُ  
الْبَاقِينَ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ  
وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ )

(116. They said: "If you cease not, O Nuh you will surely be among those stoned.") (117. He said: "My Lord! Verily, my people have denied me.") (118. "Therefore judge You between me and them, and save me and those of the believers who are with me.") (119. And We saved him and those with him in the laden ship.) (120. Then We drowned the rest thereafter.) (121. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (122. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

### His People's Threat, Nuh's Prayer against Them, and Their Destruction

Nuh stayed among his people for a long time, calling them to Allah night and day, in secret and openly. The more he repeated his call to them, the more determined were they to cling to their extreme disbelief and resist his call. In the end, they said:

(لَئِن لَّمْ تَنْتَهَ يُّوحُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمَرْجُومِينَ)

(If you cease not, O Nuh you will surely be among those stoned.) meaning, 'if you do not stop calling us to your religion,'

(لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمَرْجُومِينَ)

(you will surely be among those stoned.) meaning, 'we will stone you.' At that point, he prayed against them, and Allah responded to his prayer. Nuh said:

(رَبِّ إِنِّ قَوْمِي كَذَّبُوْنِ فَافْتَحْ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُمْ فَتْحًا)

(My Lord! Verily, my people have denied me. Therefore judge You between me and them.) This is like the Ayah:

(فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَغْلُوبٌ فَانْتَصِرْ)

(Then he invoked his Lord (saying): "I have been overcome, so help (me)!")(54:10) And Allah says here:

(فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ وَمَنْ مَعَهُ فِي الْفُلِكِ الْمَشْحُونِ - ثُمَّ  
أَغْرَقْنَا بَعْدَ الْبَاقِينَ)

(And We saved him and those with him in the laden ship. Then We drowned the rest thereafter.) The "laden ship" is one that is filled with cargo and the couples, one pair from every species, that were carried in it. This Ayah means: 'We saved Nuh and all of those who followed him, and We drowned those who disbelieved in him and went against his commands, all of them.'

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِنَّ  
رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ)

(Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

(كَذَّبَتْ عَادُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ هُودٌ  
أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ - إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ  
وَأَطِيعُوا وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ  
إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ أَتَبْنُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيْعٍ ءَايَةً  
تَعْبَثُونَ)



(أَتَّبُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيْعٍ ءَايَةً)

(Do you build on every Ri` an Ayah) i.e., a well-known landmark,

(تَعْبُونَ)

(for your amusement) meaning, `you are only doing that for the purpose of frivolity, not because you need it, but for fun and to show off your strength.' So their Prophet, peace be upon him, denounced them for doing that, because it was a waste of time and exhausted people's bodies for no purpose, and kept them busy with something that was of no benefit in this world or the next. He said:

(وَتَتَّخِذُونَ مَصَانِعَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ )

(And do you get for yourselves Masani` as if you will live therein forever) Mujahid said, "This means fortresses built up strong and high and structures that are built to last."

(لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ)

(as if you will live therein forever) means, `so that you may stay there forever, but that is not going to happen, because they will eventually cease to be, just as happened in the case of those who came before you.'

(وَإِذَا بَطِشْتُمْ بَطِشْتُمْ جَبَّارِينَ )

(And when you seize (somebody), seize you (him) as tyrants) They are described as being strong, violent and tyrannical.

(فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا)

(So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.) `Worship your Lord and obey your Messenger.' Then Hud began reminding them of the blessings that Allah had bestowed upon them. He said:

(وَاتَّقُوا الَّذِي أَمَدَّكُمْ بِمَا تَعْلَمُونَ - أَمَدَّكُمْ بِأَنْعَمٍ  
وَبَنِينَ - وَجَبَّتِ وَعُيُونَ - إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ  
عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ )

(And have Taqwa of Him, Who has aided you with all that you know. He has aided you with cattle and children, and gardens and springs. Verily, I fear for you the torment of a Great Day.)

meaning, 'if you disbelieve and oppose (your Prophet).' So he called them to Allah with words of encouragement and words of warning, but it was to no avail.

(قَالُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَوَعَظْتَ أَمْ لَمْ تَكُنْ مِنَ  
الْوَعَّظِينَ - إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا خُلُقُ الْأَوَّلِينَ - وَمَا نَحْنُ  
بِمُعَذَّبِينَ )

(فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ  
أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ )

(136. They said: "It is the same to us whether you preach or be not of those who preach.") (137. "This is no other than Khuluq of the ancients,") (138. "And we are not going to be punished.") (139. So they denied him, and We destroyed them. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (140. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the Almighty, the Most Merciful.)

### The Response of the People of Hud, and Their Punishment

Allah tells us how the people of Hud responded to him after he had warned them, encouraged them, and clearly explained the truth to them.

(قَالُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَوَعَظْتَ أَمْ لَمْ تَكُنْ مِنَ  
الْوَعَّظِينَ )

(They said: "It is the same to us whether you preach or be not of those who preach.") meaning, 'we will not give up our ways.'

(وَمَا نَحْنُ بِتَارِكِي آلِهَتِنَا عَنْ قَوْلِكَ وَمَا نَحْنُ  
لَكَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ )

(And we shall not leave our gods for your (mere) saying! And we are not believers in you) (11:53). This is how it was, as Allah says:

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنْذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ  
تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ )

(Verily, those who disbelieve, it is the same to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe) (2:6).

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ )

(Truly, those, against whom the Word of your Lord has been justified, will not believe) (10:96-97). And they said:

(إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا خُلُقُ الْأَوَّلِينَ )

(This is no other than Khuluq of the ancients.) Some scholars read this: "Khalq". According to Ibn Mas`ud and according to `Abdullah bin `Abbas -- as reported from Al-`Awfi -- and `Alqamah and Mujahid, they meant, "What you have brought to us is nothing but the tales (Akhlaq) of the ancients." This is like what the idolators of Quraysh said:

(وَقَالُوا أُسْطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ اكْتَتَبَهَا فَهِيَ تُمْلَى عَلَيْهِ  
بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا )

(And they say: "Tales of the ancients, which he has written down, and they are dictated to him morning and afternoon.") (25:5) And Allah said:

(وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا إِفْكٌ افْتَرَاهُ  
وَأَعَانَهُ عَلَيْهِ قَوْمٌ ءَاخِرُونَ فَقَدْ جَاءُوا ظُلْمًا  
وَزُورًا وَقَالُوا أُسْطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ)

(Those who disbelieve say: "This is nothing but a lie that he has invented, and others have helped him in it. In fact, they have produced an injustice and a lie." And they say: "Tales of the ancients...") (25:4-5)

(وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ مَآذَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ قَالُوا أُسْطِيرُ  
الْأَوَّلِينَ )

(And when it is said to them: "What is it that your Lord has sent down" They say: "Tales of the ancient!") (16:24). Some other scholars recited it,

(إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا خُلُقُ الْأَوَّلِينَ )

(This is no other than Khuluq of the ancients,) "as Khuluq," meaning their religion. What they were following was the religion of the ancients, their fathers and grandfathers, as if they were saying: "We are following them, we will live as they lived and die as they died, and there will be no resurrection and no judgement." Hence they said:

(وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ )

(And we are not going to be punished.) Allah's saying;

(فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ)

(So they denied him, and We destroyed them.) meaning, they continued to disbelieve and stubbornly oppose Allah's Prophet Hud, so Allah destroyed them. The means of their destruction has been described in more than one place in the Qur'an: Allah sent against them a strong and furious wind, i.e., a fiercely blowing wind that was intensely cold. Thus the means of their destruction was suited to their nature, for they were the strongest and fiercest of people, so Allah overpowered them with something that was even stronger and fiercer than them, as Allah says:

(أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ - إِرَمَ ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ )

(Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with `Ad of Iram Possesors of the pillars) (89:6-7). This refers to the former `Ad, as Allah says:

(وَأَنَّهُ أَهْلَكَ عَادًا الْأُولَى )

(And that it is He Who destroyed the former `Ad) (53:50). They were descendents of Iram bin Sam bin Nuh,

(ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ)

(Possesors of the pillars) They used to live among pillars. Those who claim that Iram was a city take this idea from Isra'iliyyat narrations, from the words of Ka`b and Wahb, but there is no real basis for that. Allah says:

(الَّتِي لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلَهَا فِي الْبَلَدِ )

(The like of which were not created in the land) (89:8). meaning, nothing like this tribe was created in terms of might, power and tyranny. If what was meant was a city, it would have said, "The like of which was not built in the land." And Allah says:

فَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ  
وَقَالُوا مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي  
خَلَقَهُمْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ  
(

(As for `Ad, they were arrogant in the land without right, and they said: "Who is mightier than us in strength" See they not that Allah Who created them was mightier in strength than them. And they used to deny Our Ayat!) (41:15) And Allah says:

وَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَأَهْلِكُوا بِرِيحٍ صِرَاصٍ عَاتِيَةٍ )

(And as for `Ad, they were destroyed by a furious violent wind!) until His saying:

(حُسُومًا)

(in succession) (69:6-7) meaning, consecutively (i. e., seven nights and eight days).

فَقَتَرَى الْقَوْمَ فِيهَا صَرَعى كَانَهُمْ أَعْجَازُ نَخْلِ  
خَاوِيَةٍ)

(so that you could see men lying overthrown (destroyed), as if they were hollow trunks of date palms!) (69:7) means, they were left as headless bodies, because the wind would come and carry one of them, then drop him on his head, so that his brains were spilled out, his head was broken and he was thrown aside, as if they were uprooted stems of date-palms. They used to build fortresses in the mountains and caves, and they dug ditches half as deep as a man is tall, but that did not help them against the command of Allah at all.

إِنَّ أَجَلَ اللَّهِ إِذَا جَاءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ)

(Verily, the term given by Allah, when it comes, cannot be delayed) (71:4). Allah says here:

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ)

(So they denied him, and We destroyed them.)

(كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ  
صَالِحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ  
وَأَطِيعُوا وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ  
إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ )

(141. Thamud denied the Messengers.) (142. When their brother Salih said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") (143. "I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.") (144. "So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (145. "No reward do I ask of you for it; my reward is only from the Lord of Al-`Alamin.")

### Salih and the People of Thamud

Here Allah tells us about His servant and Messenger Salih, whom He sent to his people Thamud. They were Arabs living in the city of Al-Hijr -- which is between Wadi Al-Qura and Greater Syria. Their location is well known. In our explanation of Surat Al-A`raf, we mentioned the Hadiths which tell how the Messenger of Allah passed by their dwelling place when he wanted to launch a raid on Syria. He went as far as Tabuk, then he went back to Al-Madinah to prepare himself for the campaign. Thamud came after `Ad and before Ibrahim, peace be upon him. Their Prophet Salih called them to Allah, to worship Him alone with no partner or associate, and to obey whatever commands were conveyed to them, but they refused, rejecting him and opposing him. He told them that he did not seek any reward from them for his call to them, but that he would seek the reward for that with Allah. Then he reminded them of the blessings of Allah.

(أَتُرْكُونَ فِي مَا هَاهُنَا ءَامِنِينَ - فِي جَبَّتٍ  
وَعُيُونٍ - وَزُرُوعٍ وَنَخْلٍ طَلْعُهَا هَضِيمٌ -  
وَتَنْحِتُونَ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا فَرَاهِينَ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ  
وَأَطِيعُوا وَلَا تُطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ الَّذِينَ  
يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ )

(146. "Will you be left secure in that which you have here") (147. "In gardens and springs.") (148. "And crops and date palms with soft clusters.") (149. "And you hew out in the mountains, houses with great skill.") (150. "So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (151. "And follow not the command of the extravagant,") (152. Who make mischief in the land, and reform not.")

### A Reminder to Them of their Circumstances and the Blessings

They enjoyed Salih preached to them, warning them that the punishment of Allah could overtake them and reminding them of the blessings that Allah had bestowed upon them, by giving them ample provision and making them safe from all kinds of dangers, giving them gardens and flowing springs, and bringing forth for them crops and fruits.

(وَنَخْلٍ طَلْعَهَا هَضِيمٌ)

(and date palms with soft clusters.) Al-`Awfi narrated from Ibn `Abbas, "Ripe and rich." `Ali bin Abi Talhah narrated from Ibn `Abbas that this meant growing luxuriantly. Isma`il bin Abi Khalid narrated from `Amr bin Abi `Amr -- who met the Companions -- from Ibn `Abbas that this means, "When it becomes ripe and soft." This was narrated by Ibn Abi Hatim, then he said: "And something similar was narrated from Abu Salih."

(وَتَنْحِتُونَ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا فَرَاهِينَ)

(And you hew out in the mountains, houses with great skill.) Ibn `Abbas and others said, "With great skill." According to another report from him: "They were greedy and extravagant." This was the view of Mujahid and another group. There is no contradiction between the two views, because they built the houses which they carved in the mountains as a form of extravagant play, with no need for them as dwelling places. They were highly skilled in the arts of masonry and stone-carving, as is well known to anyone who has seen their structures. So, Salih said to them:

(فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا)

(So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.) Pay attention to that which could benefit you in this world and the Hereafter; worshipping your Lord Who created you, who granted you provisions so that you could worship Him alone and glorify Him morning and evening.

(وَلَا تُطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ - الَّذِينَ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي  
الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ)

(And follow not the command of the extravagant, who make mischief in the land, and reform not.) meaning, their chiefs and leaders, who called them to Shirk, disbelief and opposition to the truth.

(قَالُوا إِيْمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسْحَرِينَ - مَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ  
مِّثْلُنَا فَأْتِ بَيِّتِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ - قَالَ  
هَذِهِ نَاقَةٌ لَهَا شِرْبٌ وَلَكُمْ شِرْبُ يَوْمٍ مَعْلُومٍ - وَلَا

تَمَسُّوْهَا بِسُوِّءٍ فَيَأْخُذْكُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمَ عَظِيمٍ -  
 فَعَقَرُوهَا فَأَصْبَحُوا نَدِيمِينَ - فَأَخَذَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ إِنَّ  
 فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ )  
 وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ-

(153. They said: "You are only of those bewitched!") (154. "You are but a human being like us. Then bring us a sign if you are of the truthful.") (155. He said: "Here is a she-camel: it has a right to drink (water), and you have a right to drink (water) (each) on a day, known.") (156. "And touch her not with harm, lest the torment of a Great Day should seize you.") (157. But they killed her, and then they became regretful.) (158. So, the torment overtook them. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (159. And verily, your Lord He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

### The Response of Thamud, Their Demand for a Sign, and Their Punishment

Allah tells us how Thamud responded to their Prophet Salih, upon him be peace, when he called them to worship their Lord, may He be glorified.

(قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِينَ )

(They said: "You are only of those bewitched!") Mujahid said, "They meant he was one affected by witchcraft." Then they said:

(مَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا)

(You are but a human being like us.) meaning, `how can you receive Revelation when we do not' This is like the Ayah where they are described as saying:

(أَعْلَقِيَ الذِّكْرُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا بَلْ هُوَ كَذَّابٌ أَشِرٌّ -  
 سَيَعْلَمُونَ غَدًا مِّنَ الْكَذَّابِ الْأَشِرِّ )

("Is it that the Reminder is sent to him alone from among us Nay, he is an insolent liar!" Tomorrow they will come to know who is the liar, the insolent one!) (54:26-27) Then they asked him for a sign to prove that what he brought to them from their Lord was the truth. A crowd of them gathered and demanded that he immediately bring forth from the rock a she-camel that was ten months pregnant, and they pointed to a certain rock in their midst. Allah's

Prophet Salih made them promise that if he responded to their request, they would believe in him and follow him. So they agreed to that. The Prophet of Allah Salih, peace be upon him, stood and prayed, then he prayed to Allah to grant them their request. Then the rock to which they had pointed split open, revealing a she-camel that was ten months pregnant, exactly as they had requested. So some of them believed, but most of them disbelieved.

(قَالَ هَذِهِ نَاقَةٌ لَهَا شِرْبٌ وَلَكُمْ شِرْبُ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ  
(

(He said: "Here is a she-camel: it has a right to drink (water), and you have a right to drink (water) (each) on a day, known.) meaning, 'she will drink from your water one day, and on the next day you will drink from it.'

(وَلَا تَمَسُّوْهَا بِسُوءٍ فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ عَذَابُ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ )

(And touch her not with harm, lest the torment of a Great Day should seize you.) He warned them of the punishment of Allah if they should do her any harm. The she-camel stayed among them for a while, drinking the water, eating leaves and grazing, and they benefitted from her milk which they took in sufficient quantities for every one to drink his fill. After this had gone on for a long time, and the time for their destruction drew near, they conspired to kill her:

(فَعَقَرُوهَا فَاصْبَحُوا نَدِمِينَ فَاْخَذَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ )

(But they killed her, and then they became regretful. So, the torment overtook them.) Their land was shaken by a strong earthquake, and there came to them an overwhelming Sayhah (shout) which took their hearts from their places. They were overtaken by events which they were not expecting, so they were left (dead), lying prostrate in their homes.

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ )

(وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ )

(Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

(كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ لُوطٍ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ  
لُوطُ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

وَأَطِيعُونَ وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ  
إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ )

(160. The people of Lut denied the Messengers.) (161. When their brother Lut said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") (162. "Verily, I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.") (163. "So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (164. "No reward do I ask of you for it; my reward is only from the Lord of all that exists.")

### Lut and His Call

Here Allah tells us about His servant and Messenger Lut, peace be upon him. He was Lut bin Haran bin Azar, the nephew of Ibrahim Al-Khalil, upon him be peace. Allah sent him to a mighty nation during the lifetime of Ibrahim, peace be upon them both. They lived in Sadum (Sodom) and its environs, where Allah destroyed them and turned the area into a putrid, stinking lake, which is well-known in the land of Al-Ghur )the Jordan Valley(, bordering the mountains of Jerusalem, between the mountains and the land of Al-Karak and Ash-Shawbak. He called them to Allah, to worship Him alone with no partner or associate, and to obey the Messenger whom Allah sent to them. He forbade from disobeying Allah and committing the sin that they had invented which was unknown on earth before their time; intercourse with males instead of with females. Allah said:

(أَتَأْتُونَ الذُّكْرَانَ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ - وَتَدْرُونَ مَا خَلَقَ  
لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ عَادُونَ -  
قَالُوا لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْتَهَ يَلُوطُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُخْرَجِينَ -  
قَالَ إِنِّي لِعَمَلِكُمْ مِنَ الْقَالِينَ )

رَبِّ نَجْنِي وَأَهْلِي مِمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ- فَنجَيْنَهُ وَأَهْلَهُ  
أَجْمَعِينَ- إِلَّا عَجُوزاً فِي الْغَيْرِينَ- ثُمَّ دَمَرْنَا  
الْآخِرِينَ- وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا فَسَاءَ مَطَرُ  
الْمُنذَرِينَ- إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ  
مُؤْمِنِينَ- وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ-)

(165. "Go you in unto the males of Al-`Alamin (people),") (166. "And leave those whom Allah has created for you to be your wives Nay, you are a trespassing people!") (167. They said: "If

you cease not, O Lut, verily, you will be one of those who are driven out!") (168. He said: "I am indeed of those who disapprove with severe anger and fury your behavior.") (169. "My Lord! Save me and my family from what they do.") (170. So, We saved him and his family, all,) (171. Except an old woman among those who remained behind.) (172. Then afterward We destroyed the others.) (173. And We rained on them a rain, and how evil was the rain of those who had been warned!) (174. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (175. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

## Lut's Denunciation of His People's Deeds, Their Response and Their Punishment

The Prophet of Allah forbade them from committing evil deeds and intercourse with males, and he taught them that they should have intercourse with their wives whom Allah had created for them. Their response was only to say:

(لَيْن لَمْ تَنْتَه يَلُوطُ)

(If you cease not, O Lut,) meaning, `if you do not give up what you have brought,'

(لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُخْرَجِينَ)

(verily, you will be one of those who are driven out!) meaning, `we will expel you from among us.' This is like the Ayah,

(فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوا آلَ لُوطٍ مِّنْ قَرْيَتِكُمْ إِنَّهُمْ أَنَاسٌ يَّتَطَهَّرُونَ)

(There was no other answer given by his people except that they said: "Drive out the family of Lut from your city. Verily, these are men who want to be clean and pure!") (27:56). When he saw that they would not give up their ways, and that they were persisting in their misguidance, he declared his innocence of them, saying:

(إِنِّي لِعَمَلِكُمْ مِنَ الْقَالِينَ)

(I am, indeed, of those who disapprove with severe anger and fury) `Of those who are outraged, I do not like it and I do not accept it, and I have nothing to do with you. ' Then he prayed to Allah against them and said:

(رَبِّ نَجِّنِي وَأَهْلِي مِمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ)

(My Lord! Save me and my family from what they do.) Allah says:

فَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ - إِلَّا عَجُوزًا فِي  
الْغَيْرِينَ )

(So, We saved him and his family, all. Except an old woman among those who remained behind.) This was his wife, who was a bad old woman. She stayed behind and was destroyed with whoever else was left. This is similar to what Allah says about them in Surat Al-A`raf and Surat Hud, and in Surat Al-Hijr, where Allah commanded him to take his family at night, except for his wife, and not to turn around when they heard the Sayhah as it came upon his people. So they patiently obeyed the command of Allah and persevered, and Allah sent upon the people a punishment which struck them all, and rained upon them stones of baked clay, piled up. Allah says:

ثُمَّ دَمَّرْنَا الْآخَرِينَ وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا )

(Then afterward We destroyed the others. And We rained on them a rain) until Allah's saying;

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ )

(And verily, your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful. )

كَذَّبَ أَصْحَابُ لَيْكَةِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ - إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ  
شُعَيْبٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ )

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا - وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ  
إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ - )

(176. The companions of Al-Aykah denied the Messengers.) (177. When Shu`ayb said to them: "Will you not have Taqwa") (178. "I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.") (179. "So, have Taqwa of Allah, and obey me.") (180. "No reward do I ask of you for it; my reward is only from the Lord of Al-`Alamin.")

### Shu`ayb and His Preaching to the Dwellers of Al-Aykah

The companions of Al-Aykah were the people of Madyan, according to the most correct view. The Prophet of Allah Shu`ayb was one of them, but it does not say here, their brother Shu`ayb, because they called themselves by a name denoting their deification of Al-Aykah, which was a tree which they used to worship; it was said that it was a group of trees which were tangled, like trees in a thicket. For this reason, when Allah said that the companions of Al-Aykah denied the Messengers, He did not say, "When their brother Shu`ayb said to them." Rather, He said:

(إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ شُعَيْبٌ)

(When Shu` ayb said to them) He is not described as belonging to them because of the meaning that was inherent in the name given to them even though he was their brother by blood. Some people did not notice this point, so they thought that the dwellers of Al-Aykah were different from the people of Madyan, and claimed that Shu` ayb was sent to two nations; some said that he was sent to three.

(أَصْحَابُ لَيْكَةِ)

(The companions of Al-Aykah) were the people of Shu` ayb. This was the view of Ishaq bin Bishr. Someone besides Juwaybir said, "The dwellers of Al-Aykah and the people of Madyan are one and the same." And Allah knows best. Although there is another opinion that they were different nations with two identities, the correct view is that they were one nation, but they are described differently in different places. Shu` ayb preached to them and commanded them to be fair in their weights and measures, the same as is mentioned in the story of Madyan, which also indicates that they were the same nation.

(أَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُخْسِرِينَ - وَزِنُوا  
بِالْقِسْطِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ)

(وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ وَلَا تَعْتُوا فِي  
الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ-)

(وَاتَّقُوا الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالْحِيلَةَ الْأُولِينَ-)

(181. "Give full measure, and cause no loss (to others).") (182. "And weigh with the true and straight balance.") (183. "And defraud not people by reducing their things, nor do evil, making corruption and mischief in the land.") (184. "And have Taqwa of Him Who created you and the generations of the men of old.")

### The Command to give Full Measure

Allah commanded them to give full measure, and forbade them to give short measure. He said:

(أَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُخْسِرِينَ)

(Give full measure, and cause no loss.) meaning, 'when you give to people, give them full measure, and do not cause loss to them by giving them short measure, while taking full measure when you are the ones who are taking. Give as you take, and take as you give.'

(وَزِنُوا بِالْقِسْطِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ )

(And weigh with the true and straight balance.) The balance is the scales.

(وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ)

(And defraud not people by reducing their things,) means, do not shortchange them.

(وَلَا تَعْتُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ)

(nor do evil, making corruption and mischief in the land.) means, by engaging in banditry. This is like the Ayah,

(وَلَا تَقْعُدُوا بِكُلِّ صِرَاطٍ تُوعِدُونَ)

(And sit not on every road, threatening) (7:86).

(وَاتَّقُوا الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالْحَيَلَةَ الْأُولِينَ )

(And have Taqwa of Him Who created you and the generations of the men of old. ) Here he is frightening them with the punishment of Allah Who created them and created their forefathers. This is like when Musa, peace be upon him, said:

(رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ آبَائِكُمُ الْأُولِينَ)

(Your Lord and the Lord of your ancient fathers!) (26:26). Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, As-Suddi, Sufyan bin `Uyaynah and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said:

(وَالْحَيَلَةَ الْأُولِينَ)

(the generations of the men of old.) means, He created the early generations. And Ibn Zayd recited:

(وَلَقَدْ أَضَلَّ مِنْكُمْ جِبِلًّا كَثِيرًا)

(And indeed he (Shaytan) did lead astray a great multitude of you) (36:62).

(قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِينَ )  
وَمَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا وَإِنْ نَظُنُّكَ لَمِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ-  
(   
فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسَفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ  
الصَّادِقِينَ-)   
قَالَ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ-)   
فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمَ الظُّلَّةِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابَ  
يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ-)   
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ- وَإِنَّ  
رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ-) )

(185. They said: "You are only one of those bewitched!") (186. "You are but a human being like us and verily, we think that you are one of the liars!") (187. "So, cause a piece of the heaven to fall on us, if you are of the truthful!") (188. He said: "My Lord is the Best Knower of what you do.") (189. But they denied him, so the torment of the Day of Shadow (a gloomy cloud) seized them. Indeed that was the torment of a Great Day.) (190. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers.) (191. And verily your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.)

### **The Response of Shu`ayb's People, Their Disbelief in Him and the coming of the Punishment upon Them**

Allah tells us how his people responded, and how it was like the response of Thamud to their Messenger -- for they were of like mind -- when they said:

(إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِينَ)

(You are only one of those bewitched!) meaning, `you are one of those who are affected by witchcraft.'

(وَمَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا وَإِنْ نَظُنُّكَ لَمِنَ الْكٰذِبِينَ  
(

(You are but a human being like us and verily, we think that you are one of the liars!) means, `we think you are deliberately lying to us in what you say, and Allah has not sent you to us.'

(فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ)

(So cause a piece of the heaven to fall on us,) Ad-Dahhak said: "One side of the heavens." Qatadah said: "A piece of the heaven." As-Suddi said: "A punishment from heaven." This is like what the Quraysh said, as Allah tells us:

(وَقَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ تَفْجُرَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ  
يَبُوعًا )

(And they say: "We shall not believe in you, until you cause a spring to gush forth from the earth for us) until:

(أَوْ تُسْقِطَ السَّمَاءَ كَمَا زَعَمْتَ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا أَوْ  
تَأْتِيَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ قَبِيلًا )

(Or you cause the heaven to fall upon us in pieces, as you have pretended, or you bring Allah and the angels before (us) face to face.") (17:90-92)

(وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ هَذَا هُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ  
فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ)

(And (remember) when they said: "O Allah! If this is indeed the truth from You, then rain down stones on us from the sky....") (8:32). Similarly, these ignorant disbelievers said:

(فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ)

(So, cause a piece of the heaven to fall on us, if you are of the truthful!)

(قَالَ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ )

(He said: "My Lord is the Best Knower of what you do.") means, 'Allah knows best about you, and if you deserve that, He will punish you therewith, and He will not treat you unjustly.' So this is what happened to them -- as they asked for -- an exact recompense. Allah says:

(فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمَ الظُّلَّةِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابَ  
يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ )

(But they denied him, so the torment of the Day of Shadow seized them. Indeed that was the torment of a Great Day.) This is what they asked for, when they asked for a part of the heaven to fall upon them. Allah made their punishment in the form of intense heat which overwhelmed them for seven days, and nothing could protect them from it. Then He sent a cloud to shade them, so they ran towards it to seek its shade from the heat. When all of them had gathered underneath it, Allah sent sparks of fire and flames and intense heat upon them, and caused the earth to convulse beneath them, and He sent against them a mighty Sayhah which destroyed their souls. Allah says:

(إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ)

(Indeed that was the torment of a Great Day.) Allah has mentioned how they were destroyed in three places in the Qur'an, in each of which it is described in a manner which fits the context. In Surat Al-A`raf He says that the earthquake seized them, and they lay (dead), prostrate in their homes. This was because they said:

(لنُخْرِجَنَّكَ يَشُعَيْبُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَعَكَ مِنَ  
قَرْيَتِنَا أَوْ لَتَعُودُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا)

("We shall certainly drive you out, O Shu`ayb, and those who have believed with you from our town, or else you (all) shall return to our religion.") (7:88). They had sought to scare the Prophet of Allah and those who followed him, so they were seized by the earthquake. In Surah Hud, Allah says:

(وَأَخَذَتِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا الصَّيْحَةَ)

(And As-Sayhah seized the wrongdoers) (11:94). This was because they mocked the Allah's Prophet when they said:

أَصْلَوْكَ تَأْمُرُكَ أَنْ تَتْرُكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ ءَابَاؤُنَا أَوْ أَنْ  
تَفْعَلَ فِي أَمْوَالِنَا مَا نَشَاءُ إِنَّكَ لَأَنْتَ الْحَلِيمُ  
الرَّشِيدُ

("Does your Salah command that we give up what our fathers used to worship, or that we give up doing what we like with our property Verily, you are the forbearer, right-minded!") (11:87). They had said this in a mocking, sarcastic tone, so it was befitting that the Sayhah should come and silence them, as Allah says:

فَأَخَذْتَهُمُ الصَّيْحَةَ

(So As-Saihah overtook them) (15:73).

وَأَخَذَتِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا الصَّيْحَةَ

(And As-Saihah seized the wrongdoers) (11:94). And here, they said:

فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ

(So, cause a piece of the heaven to fall on us,) in a stubborn and obstinate manner. So, it was fitting that something they never thought would happen should befall them:

فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمِ الظُّلَّةِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ  
عَظِيمٍ

(so the torment of the Day of Shadow seized them. Indeed that was the torment of a Great Day.) Muhammad bin Jarir narrated from Yazid Al-Bahili: "I asked Ibn ` Abbas about this Ayah:

فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمِ الظُّلَّةِ

(so the torment of the Day of Shadow seized them. ) He said: `Allah sent upon them thunder and intense heat, and it terrified them )so they entered their houses and it pursued them to the innermost parts of their houses and terrified them further(, and they ran fleeing from their houses into the fields. Then Allah sent upon them clouds which shaded them from the sun, and they found it cool and pleasant, so they called out to one another until they had all gathered beneath the cloud, then Allah sent fire upon them.' Ibn ` Abbas said, ` That was the torment of the Day of Shadow, indeed that was the torment of a Great Day."

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ -  
وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ )

(Verily, in this is an Ayah, yet most of them are not believers. And verily, your Lord, He is truly, the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.) (26:8-9) meaning, He is All-Mighty in His punishment of the disbelievers, and Most Merciful towards His believing servants.

وَإِنَّهُ لَتَنْزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ - نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ  
الْأَمِينُ - عَلَى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ - بِلِسَانٍ  
عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ )

(192. And truly, this is a revelation from the Lord of all that exists,) (193. Which the trustworthy Ruh (Jibril) has brought down.) (194. Upon your heart that you may be (one) of the warners,) (195. In the plain Arabic language.)

### The Qur'an was revealed by Allah

Here Allah tells us about the Book which He revealed to His servant and Messenger Muhammad.

(وَإِنَّهُ)

(And truly, this) refers to the Qur'an, which at the beginning of the Surah was described as

(وَمَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِّنْ ذِكْرٍ مِّنَ الرَّحْمَنِ مُحَدَّثٍ)

(and never comes there unto them a Reminder as a recent revelation from the Most Gracious...) (26:5).

(لَتَنْزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(is a revelation from the Lord of Al-'Alamin.) means, Allah has sent it down to you and revealed it to you.

(نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ )

(Which the trustworthy Ruh has brought down.) This refers to Jibril, peace be upon him. This was the view of more than one of the Salaf: Ibn `Abbas, Muhammad bin Ka`b, Qatadah,

`Atiyah Al-`Awfi, As-Suddi, Ad-Dahhak, Az-Zuhri and Ibn Jurayj. This is an issue concerning which there is no dispute. Az-Zuhri said, "This is like the Ayah:

(قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ  
بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ)

(Say: "Whoever is an enemy to Jibril -- for indeed he has brought it down to your heart by Allah's permission, confirming what came before it...") (2:97).

(عَلَى قَلْبِكَ)

(Upon your heart) `O Muhammad, free from any contamination, with nothing added or taken away.'

(لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ)

(that you may be of the warners,) means, `so that you may warn people with it of the punishment of Allah for those who go against it and disbelieve in it, and so that you may give glad tidings with it to the believers who follow it.'

(بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ)

(In the plain Arabic language.) meaning, `this Qur'an which We have revealed to you, We have revealed in perfect and eloquent Arabic, so that it may be quite clear, leaving no room for excuses and establishing clear proof, showing the straight path.'

(وَإِنَّهُ لَفِي زُبُرِ الْأَوَّلِينَ أَوْلَمَيَكُنْ لَهُمْ آيَةٌ أَنْ  
يَعْلَمَهُ عُلَمَاءُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ نَزَّلْنَاهُ عَلَى بَعْضِ  
الْأَعْجَمِينَ)

(فَقَرَأَهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ مُؤْمِنِينَ-)

(196. And verily, it is in the Zubur of the former people.) (197. Is it not a sign to them that the learned scholars of the Children of Israel knew it) (198. And if We had revealed it unto any of the non-Arabs,) (199. And he had recited it unto them, they would not have believed in it.)

**The Qur'an was mentioned in the Previous Scriptures**

Allah says: this Qur'an was mentioned and referred to in the previous Scriptures that were left behind by their Prophets who foretold it in ancient times and more recently. Allah took a covenant from them that they would follow it, and the last of them stood and addressed his people with the good news of Ahmad:

(وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ بَيْنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِنِّي  
رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ  
التَّوْرَةِ وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ  
أَحْمَدُ)

(And (remember) when `Isa, son of Maryam, said: "O Children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah unto you, confirming the Tawrah before me, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad.) (61:6) Zubur here refers to Books; Zubur is the plural of Az-Zabur, which is also the name used to refer to the Book given to Dawud. Allah says:

(وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ فَعَلُوهُ فِي الزُّبُرِ )

(And everything they have done is noted in the Az-Zubur.) (54:52), meaning, it is recorded against them in the books of the angels. Then Allah says:

(أُولَئِكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُمْ آيَةٌ أَنْ يَعْلَمَهُ عُلَمَاءُ بَنِي  
إِسْرَائِيلَ)

(Is it not a sign to them that the learned scholars of the Children of Israel knew it) meaning, is it not sufficient witness to the truth for them that the scholars of the Children of Israel found this Qur'an mentioned in the Scriptures which they study The meaning is: the fair-minded among them admitted that the attributes of Muhammad and his mission and his Ummah were mentioned in their Books, as was stated by those among them who believed, such as `Abdullah bin Salam, Salman Al-Farisi and others who met the Prophet . Allah said:

(الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ)

(Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write ...) (7:157)

### The Intense Disbelief of Quraysh

Then Allah tells us how intense the disbelief of Quraysh was, and how stubbornly they resisted the Qur'an. If this Book with all its eloquence had been revealed to a non-Arab who did not know one word of Arabic, they still would not have believed in him. Allah says:

(وَلَوْ نَزَّلْنَاهُ عَلَىٰ بَعْضِ الْأَعْجَمِينَ )

فَقَرَأَهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ مُؤْمِنِينَ -)

(And if We had revealed it unto any of the non-Arabs, And he had recited it unto them, they would not have believed in it.) And Allah says:

(وَلَوْ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ بَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَظَلُّوا فِيهِ  
يَعْرُجُونَ لَقَالُوا إِنَّمَا سُكَّرَتْ أَبْصَرُنَا)

(And even if We opened to them a gate from the heaven and they were to keep on ascending thereto. They would surely say: "Our eyes have been dazzled..." (15:14-15)

(وَلَوْ أَنَّا نَزَّلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَكَلَّمَهُمُ الْمَوْتَىٰ)

(And even if We had sent down unto them angels, and the dead had spoken unto them...) (6:111)

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ )

(Truly, those, against whom the Word of your Lord has been justified, will not believe.) (10:96)

(كَذَلِكَ سَلَكْنَاهُ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ - لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ  
بِهِ حَتَّىٰ يَرَوْا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ - فَيَأْتِيهِمْ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ  
لَا يَشْعُرُونَ - فَيَقُولُوا هَلْ نَحْنُ مُنظَرُونَ -  
أَفْبِعَادَانَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونَ - أَفَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ مَتَّعْنَاهُمْ سِنِينَ  
- ثُمَّ جَاءَهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ - مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُمْ  
مَا كَانُوا يُمْتَعُونَ - وَمَا أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا لَهَا  
مُنذِرُونَ )

## ذِكْرِي وَمَا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ-

(200. Thus have We caused it to enter the hearts of the criminals.) (201. They will not believe in it until they see the painful torment.) (202. It shall come to them of a sudden, while they perceive it not.) (203. Then they will say: "Can we be respited") (204. Would they then wish for Our torment to be hastened on) (205. Think, if We do let them enjoy for years,) (206. And afterwards comes to them that which they had been promised.) (207. All that with which they used to enjoy shall not avail them.) (208. And never did We destroy a township but it had its warners) (209. By way of reminder, and We have never been unjust.)

### The Deniers will never believe until They see the Torment

Allah says: `thus We caused denial, disbelief, rejection and stubbornness to enter the hearts of the sinners.'

(لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ)

(They will not believe in it), i.e., the truth,

(حَتَّى يَرَوْا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ)

(until they see the painful torment.) means, when their excuses will be of no avail, and the curse will be upon them, and theirs will be an evil abode.

(فَيَأْتِيهِمْ بَعْتَةٌ)

(It shall come to them of a sudden,) means, the punishment of Allah will come upon them suddenly,

(وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ وَيَقُولُوا هَلْ نَحْنُ مُنظَرُونَ)

(while they perceive it not. Then they will say: "Can we be respited") means, when they see the punishment, then they will wish they had a little more time so that they can obey Allah -- or so they claim. This is like the Ayah:

(وَأَنْذِرِ النَّاسَ يَوْمَ يَأْتِيهِمُ الْعَذَابُ)

(And warn mankind of the Day when the torment will come unto them) until:

(مَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ زَوَالٍ)

(that you would not leave) (14: 44). When every sinner and evildoer sees his punishment, he will feel intense regret. Such was the case of Fir`awn, when Musa prayed against him:

رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ آتَيْتَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَأَهُ زِينَةً وَأَمْوَالًا  
فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

(Our Lord! "You have indeed bestowed on Fir`awn and his chiefs splendor and wealth in the life of this world) until:

قَالَ قَدْ أُجِيبَتِ دَعْوَتُكُمَا

((Allah) said: "Verily, the invocation of you both is accepted.") (10:88-89). This supplication had an effect on Fir`awn: he did not believe until he saw the painful torment:

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَدْرَكَهُ الْغَرَقُ قَالَ ءَأَمِنْتُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ  
إِلَّا الَّذِي ءَأَمِنْتُ بِهِ بَنُو إِسْرَائِيلَ

(till when drowning overtook him, he said: "I believe that none has the right to be worshipped but He in Whom the Children of Israel believe.") until:

وَكُنْتَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

(and you were one of the mischief-makers) (10:90-91). And Allah says:

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْا بَأْسَنَا قَالُوا ءَأَمِنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَحَدُّهُ

(so when they saw Our punishment, they said: "We believe in Allah Alone...") (40:84-85).

أَفَبِعَذَابِنَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونَ

(Would they then wish for Our torment to be hastened on) This is a denunciation and a threat, because they used to say to the Messenger, by way of denial, thinking it unlikely ever to happen:

اِنْتِنَا بِعَذَابِ اللَّهِ

(Bring Allah's torment upon us) (29:29). This is as Allah said:

(وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِالْعَذَابِ)

(And they ask you to hasten on the torment...) (29:53-55). Then Allah says:

(أَفَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ مَتَّعْنَاهُمْ سِنِينَ - ثُمَّ جَاءَهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ - مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُمَتَّعُونَ )

(Think, if We do let them enjoy for years, and afterwards comes to them that which they had been promised, all that with which they used to enjoy shall not avail them.) meaning, `even if We delay the matter and give them respite for a short while or for a long time, then the punishment of Allah comes upon them, what good will their life of luxury do them then'

(كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ ضُحَاهَا )

(The Day they see it, (it will be) as if they had not tarried (in this world) except an afternoon or a morning) (79:46). And Allah says:

(يَوَدُّ أَحَدُهُمْ لَوْ يُعَمَّرُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمُزَحَّزِحٍ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ أَنْ يُعَمَّرَ)

(Everyone of them wishes that he could be given a life of a thousand years. But the grant of such life will not save him even a little from punishment) (2:96).

(وَمَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالُهُ إِذَا تَرَدَّى )

(And what will his wealth avail him when he goes down) (92:11) Allah says here:

(مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُمَتَّعُونَ )

(All that with which they used to enjoy shall not avail them.) According to an authentic Hadith:

«يُوتَىٰ بِالْكَافِرِ فَيُعْمَسُ فِي النَّارِ غَمْسَةً ثُمَّ يُقَالُ لَهُ: هَلْ رَأَيْتَ خَيْرًا قَطُّ؟ هَلْ رَأَيْتَ نَعِيمًا قَطُّ؟»

فَيَقُولُ: لَا وَاللَّهِ يَا رَبِّ، وَيُوتَى بِأَشَدِّ النَّاسِ بُؤْسًا  
كَانَ فِي الدُّنْيَا، فَيُصْبَعُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ صَبْغَةً، ثُمَّ يُقَالُ  
لَهُ: هَلْ رَأَيْتَ بُؤْسًا قَطُّ؟ فَيَقُولُ: لَا وَاللَّهِ يَا رَبُّ»

(The disbelievers will be brought and once dipped into the Fire, then it will be said to him: "Did you ever see anything good Did you ever see anything good" He will say, "No, O Lord!" Then the most miserable person who ever lived on earth will be brought, and he will be put in Paradise for a brief spell, then it will be said to him, "Did you ever see anything bad" He will say, "No, O Lord.") meaning: as if nothing ever happened. Then Allah tells us of His justice towards His creation, in that He does not destroy any nation until after He has left them with no excuse, by warning them, sending Messengers to them and establishing proof against them. He says:

(وَمَا أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا لَهَا مُنذِرُونَ )  
(ذِكْرَى وَمَا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ )

(And never did We destroy a township but it had its warners by way of reminder, and We have never been unjust.) This is like the Ayat:

(وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّى نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا )

(And We never punish until We have sent a Messenger) (17:15).

(وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ الْقُرَى حَتَّى يَبْعَثَ فِي أُمَّهَاتِهَا  
رَسُولًا يَلُوقُ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِنَا)

(And never will your Lord destroy the towns until He sends to their mother town a Messenger reciting to them Our Ayat.) until;

(وَأَهْلُهَا ظَالِمُونَ)

(the people thereof are wrongdoers) (28:59).

(وَمَا تَنْزَلَتْ بِهِ الشَّيَاطِينُ - وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُمْ وَمَا  
يَسْتَطِيعُونَ - إِنَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّمْعِ لَمَعَزُولُونَ )

(210. And it is not the Shayatin (devils) who have brought it down.) (211. Neither would it suit them nor are they able.) (212. Verily, they have been removed far from hearing it.)

### The Qur'an was brought down by Jibril, not Shaytan

tells us about His Book, which falsehood cannot approach from before or behind it, sent down by the All-Wise, Worthy of all praise. He states that it has been brought down by the trustworthy Ruh (i.e., Jibril) who is helped by Allah,

(وَمَا تَنْزَلَتْ بِهِ الشَّيَاطِينُ )

(And it is not the Shayatin who have brought it down.) Then He tells us that it could not be the case for three reasons that the Shayatin brought it down. One is that it would not suit them, i.e., they have no desire to do so and they do not want to, because their nature is to corrupt and misguide people, but this contains words enjoining what is right and forbidding what is evil, and light, guidance and mighty proofs. There is a big difference between this and the Shayatin, Allah says:

(وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُمْ)

(Neither would it suit them)

(وَمَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ)

(nor are they able.) meaning, even if they wanted to, they could not do it. Allah says:

(لَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى جَبَلٍ لَرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا  
مُتَّصِدًّا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ)

(Had We sent down this Qur'an on a mountain, you would surely have seen it humbling itself and rent asunder by the fear of Allah) (59:21). Then Allah explains that even if they wanted to and were able to bear it and convey it, they still would not be able to achieve that, because they were prevented from hearing the Qur'an when it was brought down, for the heavens were filled with guardians and shooting stars at the time when the Qur'an was being revealed to the Messenger of Allah , so none of the Shayatin could hear even one letter of it, lest there be any confusion in the matter. This is a part of Allah's mercy towards His servants, protection of His Laws, and support for His Book and His Messenger . Allah says:

(إِنَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّمْعِ لَمَعْزُورُونَ )

(Verily, they have been removed far from hearing it.) This is like what Allah tells us about the Jinn:

وَأَنَا لَمَسْنَا السَّمَاءَ فَوَجَدْنَهَا مَلِيئَاتٍ حَرَسًا شَدِيدًا  
وَشُهَبًا - وَأَنَا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقْعِدَ لِلسَّمْعِ فَمَنْ  
يَسْتَمِعِ الْآنَ يَجِدْ لَهُ شِهَابًا رَّصَدًا )

(And we have sought to reach the heaven; but found it filled with stern guards and flaming fires. And verily, we used to sit there in stations, to (steal) a hearing, but any who listens now will find a flaming fire watching him in ambush.) until;

(أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا)

(or whether their Lord intends for them a right path) )72:8-10(.

(فَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا ءَاخَرَ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُعَذِّبِينَ  
- وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ - وَاخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ  
لِمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ - فَإِنْ عَصَوْكَ فَقُلْ إِنَّي  
بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ - وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْعَزِيزِ  
الرَّحِيمِ - الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ )  
وَتَقْلَبَكَ فِي السَّجْدِينَ- إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ-)

(213. So, invoke not with Allah another god lest you should be among those who receive punishment.) (214. And warn your tribe of near kindred.) (215. And be kind and humble to the believers who follow you.) (216. Then if they disobey you, say: "I am innocent of what you do.") (217. And put your trust in the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful,) (218. Who sees you when you stand up.) (219. And your movements among those who fall prostrate.) (220. Verily, He, only He, is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.)

### The Command to warn His Tribe of near Kindred

Here Allah commands (His Prophet ) to worship Him alone, with no partner or associate, and tells him that whoever associates others in worship with Him, He will punish them. Then Allah commands His Messenger to warn his tribe of near kindred, i.e., those who were most closely related to him, and to tell them that nothing could save any of them except for faith in Allah. Allah also commanded him to be kind and gentle with the believing servants of Allah who followed him, and to disown those who disobeyed him, no matter who they were. Allah said:

(فَإِنْ عَصَوْكَ فَقُلْ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ )

(Then if they disobey you, say: "I am innocent of what you do.") This specific warning does not contradict the general warning; indeed it is a part of it, as Allah says elsewhere:

(لِيُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّا أُنذِرَ ءَابَاؤُهُمْ فَهُمْ غَافِلُونَ )

(In order that you may warn a people whose forefathers were not warned, so they are heedless.) (36:6),

(لِيُنذِرَ أُمَّ الْقُرَىٰ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا)

(that you may warn the Mother of the Towns and all around it) (42:7),

(وَأُنذِرْ بِهِ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنْ يُحْشَرُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ)

(And warn therewith those who fear that they will be gathered before their Lord) (6:51),

(لِيُبَشِّرَ بِهِ الْمُتَّقِينَ وَيُنذِرَ بِهِ قَوْمًا لُدًّا)

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

(لَأُنذِرَكُم بِهِ وَمَنْ بَلَغَ)

(that I may therewith warn you and whomsoever it may reach) (6:19), and

(وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهِ مِنَ الْأَحْزَابِ قَالَنَّارُ مَوْعِدُهُ)

(but those of the sects that reject it, the Fire will be their promised meeting place) (11:17). According to Sahih Muslim, )the Prophet said:(

«وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، لَا يَسْمَعُ بِي أَحَدٌ مِنْ هَذِهِ  
الْأُمَّةِ يَهُودِيٌّ وَلَا نَصْرَانِيٌّ، ثُمَّ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِي إِلَّا  
دَخَلَ النَّارَ»

(By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, no one from these nations -- Jewish or Christian -- hears of me then does not believe in me, but he will enter Hell.) Many Hadiths have been narrated

concerning the revelation of this Ayah, some of which we will quote below: Imam Ahmad, may Allah have mercy on him, recorded that Ibn `Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "When Allah revealed the Ayah,

(وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ )

(And warn your tribe of near kindred.), the Prophet went to As-Safa', climbed up and called out,

«يَا صَبَاحَاهُ»

(O people!) The people gathered around him, some coming of their own accord and others sending people on their behalf to find out what was happening. The Messenger of Allah said:

«يَا بَنِي عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ، يَا بَنِي فَهْرٍ، يَا بَنِي لُؤَيٍّ،  
أَرَأَيْتُمْ لَوْ أَخْبَرْتُكُمْ أَنَّ خَيْلًا يَسْفَحُ هَذَا الْجَبَلَ تُرِيدُ  
أَنْ تُغِيرَ عَلَيْكُمْ صَدَقْتُمُونِي؟»

(O Bani `Abd Al-Muttalib, O Bani Fihr, O Bani Lu'ayy! What do you think, if I told you that there was a cavalry at the foot of this mountain coming to attack you -- would you believe me) They said, "Yes." He said:

«فَإِنِّي نَذِيرٌ لَكُمْ بَيْنَ يَدَيْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ»

(Then I warn you of a great punishment that is close at hand.) Abu Lahab said, "May you perish for the rest of the day! You only called us to tell us this" Then Allah revealed:

(تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ )

(Perish the two hands of Abu Lahab and perish he!) )111:1( This was also recorded by Al-Bukhari, Muslim, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i. Imam Ahmad recorded that `A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her said: "When the Ayah:

(وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ )

(And warn your tribe of near kindred) was revealed, the Messenger of Allah stood up and said:

«يَا فَاطِمَةَ ابْنَةَ مُحَمَّدٍ، يَا صَفِيَّةَ ابْنَةَ  
عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ، يَا بَنِي عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ، لَا أَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ  
مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا سَلُونِي مِنْ مَالِي مَا شِئْتُمْ»

(O Fatimah daughter of Muhammad, O Safiyyah daughter of `Abd Al-Muttalib, O Bani `Abd Al-Muttalib, I cannot help you before Allah. Ask me for whatever you want of my wealth.) This was recorded by Muslim. Imam Ahmad recorded that Qabisah bin Mukhariq and Zuhayr bin `Amr said: "When the Ayah:

(وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ )

(And warn your tribe of near kindred.) was revealed, the Messenger of Allah climbed on top of a rock on the side of a mountain and started to call out:

«يَا بَنِي عَبْدِ مَنَافٍ، إِنَّمَا أَنَا نَذِيرٌ، وَإِنَّمَا مَثَلِي  
وَمَثَلُكُمْ كَرَجُلٍ رَأَى الْعَدُوَّ فَذَهَبَ يَرَبُّهُ أَهْلَهُ  
يَخْشَى أَنْ يَسْبِقُوهُ، فَجَعَلَ يُنَادِي وَيَهْتَفُ: يَا  
صَبَاحَاهُ»

(O Bani `Abd Manaf, I am indeed a warner, and the parable of me and you is that of a man who sees the enemy so he goes to save his family, fearing that the enemy may reach them before he does.) And he started to call out, (O people!) It was also recorded by Muslim and An-Nasa'i. Allah's saying:

(وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْعَزِيزِ الرَّحِيمِ )

(And put your trust in the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful,) means, `in all your affairs, for He is your Helper, Protector and Supporter, and He is the One Who will cause you to prevail and will make your word supreme.'

(الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ )

(Who sees you when you stand up. ) means, He is taking care of you. This is like the Ayah,

(وَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا)

(So wait patiently for the decision of your Lord, for verily, you are under Our Eyes) (52:48) Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah,

(الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ )

(Who sees you when you stand up.) means, "To pray." `Ikrimah said: "He sees him when he stands and bows and prostrates." Al-Hasan said:

(الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ )

(Who sees you when you stand up.) "When you pray alone." Ad-Dahhak said:

(الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ )

(Who sees you when you stand up.) "When you are lying in bed and when you are sitting." Qatadah said:

(الَّذِي يَرَاكَ)

(Who sees you) "When you are standing, when you are sitting, and in all other situations."

(وَتَقَلُّبِكَ فِي السَّجِدِينَ )

(And your movements among those who fall prostrate.) Qatadah said:

(الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ )

(وَتَقَلُّبِكَ فِي السَّجِدِينَ-)

(Who sees you when you stand up. And your movements among those who fall prostrate.) "When you pray, He sees you when you pray alone and when you pray in congregation." This was also the view of `Ikrimah, `Ata' Al-Khurasani and Al-Hasan Al-Basri.

(إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ )

(Verily, He, only He, is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.) He hears all that His servants say and He knows all their movements, as He says:

(وَمَا تَكُونُ فِي شَأْنٍ وَمَا تَتْلُوا مِنْهُ مِنْ قُرْءَانٍ  
وَلَا تَعْمَلُونَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ إِلَّا كُنَّا عَلَيْكُمْ شُهُودًا إِذْ  
نُفِضُونَ فِيهِ)

(Neither you do any deed nor recite any portion of the Qur'an, nor you do any deed, but We are Witness thereof, when you are doing it) (10:61).

(هَلْ أَنْبَيْتُمْ عَلَىٰ مَنْ نَزَّلَ الشَّيْطَانُ - نَزَّلَ  
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ أَقَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ - يُلْقُونَ السَّمْعَ وَأَكْثُرُهُمْ  
كَذِبُونَ - وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ - أَلَمْ تَرَ  
أَنَّهُمْ فِي كُلِّ وَادٍ يَهِيمُونَ - وَأَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ مَا لَا  
يَفْعَلُونَ - إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ  
وَذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَانْتَصَرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُوا  
وَسَيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ )

(221. Shall I inform you upon whom the Shayatin descend) (222. They descend on every lying, sinful person (Athim).) (223. Who gives ear, and most of them are liars.) (224. As for the poets, the astray follow them,) (225. See you not that they speak about every subject in their poetry) (226. And that they say what they do not do.) (227. Except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and remember Allah much and vindicate themselves after they have been wronged. And those who do wrong will come to know by what overturning they will be overturned.)

### Refutation of the Fabrications of the Idolators

Here Allah addresses those idolators who claimed that what was brought by the Messenger was not the truth but was merely something that he had made up by himself, or that it came to him in visions from the Jinn. Allah stated that His Messenger was above their claims and fabrications, and that what he had brought did indeed come from Allah, and that it was a revelation and inspiration, brought down by a noble, trustworthy and mighty angel. It did not come from the Shayatin, because they have no desire for anything like this Noble Qur'an -- they descend upon those who are like them, the lying fortune-tellers. Allah says:

(هَلْ أَنْبِئُكُمْ)

(Shall I inform you) meaning, shall I tell you,

(هَلْ أَنْبِئُكُمْ عَلَىٰ مَنْ تَنْزَلُ الشَّيَاطِينُ - تَنْزَلُ  
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ أَقَاكٍ أَثِيمٍ )

(upon whom the Shayatin descend They descend on every lying, sinful person (Athim))  
meaning, one whose speech is lies and fabrication.

(أَثِيمٍ)

(Athim) means, whose deeds are immoral. This is the person upon whom the Shayatin descend,  
fortune-tellers and other sinful liars. The Shayatin are also sinful liars.

(يُلْقُونَ السَّمْعَ)

(Who gives ear, ) means, they try to overhear what is said in the heavens, and they try to hear  
something of the Unseen, then they add to it a hundred lies and tell it to their human  
comrades, who then tell it to others. Then the people believe everything they say because they  
were right about the one thing which was heard from the heavens. This was stated in an  
authentic Hadith recorded by Al-Bukhari from `A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, who  
said, "The people asked the Prophet about fortune-tellers, and he said:

«إِنَّهُمْ لَيْسُوا بِشَيْءٍ»

(They are nothing.) They said: "O Messenger of Allah, they say things that come true." The  
Prophet said:

«تِلْكَ الْكَلِمَةُ مِنَ الْحَقِّ يَخْطُفُهَا الْجِنُّ فَيُقْرِقِرُهَا  
فِي أُذُنِ وَلِيِّهِ كَقْرِقَرَةِ الدَّجَاجِ، فَيَخْلِطُونَ مَعَهَا  
أَكْثَرَ مِنْ مِائَةِ كَذْبَةٍ»

(That is a word of truth which the Jinn snatches, then he gabbles it like the clucking of a  
chicken into the ear of his friend, but he mixes it with more than one hundred lies.) Al-Bukhari  
also recorded that Abu Hurayrah said, "The Prophet said:

«إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ الْأَمْرَ فِي السَّمَاءِ ضَرَبَتِ  
 الْمَلَائِكَةُ بِأَجْنِحَتِهَا خُضْعَانًا لِقَوْلِهِ، كَأَنَّهَا سِلْسِلَةٌ  
 عَلَى صَفْوَانٍ، فَإِذَا فُزِعَ عَنْ قُلُوبِهِمْ قَالُوا: مَاذَا  
 قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ؟ قَالُوا (لِلَّذِي قَالَ): الْحَقُّ، وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ  
 الْكَبِيرُ، فَيَسْمَعُهَا مُسْتَرْقُو السَّمْعِ، وَمُسْتَرْقُو  
 السَّمْعِ هَكَذَا بَعْضُهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ وَصَفَ سُقْيَانُ  
 يَدَيْهِ، فَحَرَفَهَا وَبَدَّدَ بَيْنَ أَصَابِعِهِ فَيَسْمَعُ الْكَلِمَةَ  
 فَيُلْقِيهَا إِلَى مَنْ تَحْتَهُ، ثُمَّ يُلْقِيهَا الْآخِرُ إِلَى مَنْ  
 تَحْتَهُ، حَتَّى يُلْقِيهَا عَلَى لِسَانِ السَّاحِرِ أَوْ الْكَاهِنِ،  
 فَرُبَّمَا أَدْرَكَهُ الشَّهَابُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُلْقِيَهَا، وَرُبَّمَا  
 أَلْقَاهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يُدْرَكَهُ، فَيَكْذِبُ مَعَهَا مِائَةَ  
 كَذِبَةٍ، فَيُقَالُ: أَلَيْسَ قَدْ قَالَ لَنَا يَوْمَ كَذَا وَكَذَا: كَذَا  
 وَكَذَا؟ فَيُصَدَّقُ بِتِلْكَ الْكَلِمَةِ الَّتِي سُمِعَتْ مِنْ  
 السَّمَاءِ»

(When Allah decrees a matter in heaven, the angels beat their wings in submission to His decree, a chain beating on a rock. And when the fear in their hearts subsides, they say: "What is it that your Lord has said" They say: "The truth. And He is the Most High, the Most Great." Then when the Jinn who are listening out, one above the other) -- and Sufyan illustrated this with a gesture, holding his hand vertically with his fingers outspread -- (when they hear this, they throw it down from one to another, until it is passed to the fortune-teller or soothsayer. The shooting star may strike the Jinn before he passes it on, or he may pass it on before he is struck, and he adds to it one hundred lies, thus it is said: "Did he not tell us that on such and such a day, such and such would happen" So they believe him because of that one thing which was heard from the heavens.) This was recorded by Al-Bukhari. Al-Bukhari recorded from `Aishah, may Allah be pleased with her, that the Prophet said:

«إِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ تَحَدَّثُ فِي الْعَنَانِ وَالْعَنَانُ: الْغَمَامُ  
بِالْأَمْرِ (يَكُونُ) فِي الْأَرْضِ، فَتَسْمَعُ الشَّيَاطِينُ  
الْكَلِمَةَ، فَتَقْرُهَا فِي أُذُنِ الْكَاهِنِ كَمَا تُقْرُ  
الْقَارُورَةُ، فَيَزِيدُونَ مَعَهَا مِائَةَ كَذِبَةٍ»

(The angels speak in the clouds about some matter on earth, and the Shayatin overhear what they say, so they tell it to the fortune-teller, gurgling into his ear like (a liquid poured) from a glass bottle, and he adds to it one hundred lies.)

### Refutation of the Claim that the Prophet was a Poet

(وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ )

(As for the poets, the astray ones follow them.) `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported from Ibn `Abbas that this means: "The disbelievers follow the misguided among mankind and the Jinn." This was also the view of Mujahid, `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam, and others. `Ikrimah said, "Two poets would ridicule one another in verse, with one group of people supporting one and another group supporting the other. Hence Allah revealed the Ayah,

(وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ )

(As for the poets, the erring ones follow them.)

(أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي كُلِّ وَادٍ يَهِيمُونَ )

(See you not that they speak about every subject in their poetry) `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported from Ibn `Abbas that this means: "They indulge in every kind of nonsense." Ad-Dahhak reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "They engage in every kind of verbal art." This was also the view of Mujahid and others.

(وَأَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ مَا لَا يَفْعَلُونَ )

(And that they say what they do not do. ) Al-`Awfi reported that Ibn `Abbas said that at the time of the Messenger of Allah , two men, one from among the Ansar and one from another tribe, were ridiculing one another in verse, and each one of them was supported by a group of his own people, who were the foolish ones, and Allah said:

وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ - أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي كُلِّ  
وَادٍ يَهِيمُونَ - وَأَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ مَا لَا يَفْعَلُونَ )

(As for the poets, the erring ones follow them. See you not that they speak about every subject in their poetry And that they say what they do not do.) What is meant here is that the Messenger , to whom this Qur'an was revealed, was not a soothsayer or a poet, because his situation was quite obviously different to theirs, as Allah says:

وَمَا عَلَّمْنَاهُ الشُّعْرَ وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ  
وَقُرْءَانٌ مُّبِينٌ )

(And We have not taught him poetry, nor is it suitable for him. This is only a Reminder and a plain Qur'an.) (36:69),

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ - وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَاعِرٍ  
قَلِيلًا مَّا تُوْمِنُونَ - وَلَا يَقُولُ كَمَا هِن قَلِيلًا مَّا  
تَذْكُرُونَ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ )

(That this is verily, the word of an honored Messenger. It is not the word of a poet, little is that you believe! Nor is it the word of a soothsayer, little is that you remember! This is the Revelation sent down from the Lord of all that exists.) (69:40-43)

### The Exception of the Poets of Islam

(إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ)

(Except those who believe and do righteous deeds,) Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated from Yazid bin `Abdullah bin Qusayt, that Abu Al-Hasan Salim Al-Barrad, the freed servant of Tamim Ad-Dari said: "When the Ayah --

وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ )

(As for the poets, the erring ones follow them.) was revealed, Hassan bin Thabit, `Abdullah bin Rawahah and Ka' b bin Malik came to the Messenger of Allah , weeping, and said: "Allah knew when He revealed this Ayah that we are poets. The Prophet recited to them the Ayah,

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ)

(Except those who believe and do righteous deeds,) and said:

«أَنْتُمْ»

((This means) you.)

وَذَكِّرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا)

(and remember Allah much). He said:

«أَنْتُمْ»

((This means) you.)

وَأَنْتَصِرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُوا)

(and vindicate themselves after they have been wronged. ) He said:

«أَنْتُمْ»

((This means) you.) This was recorded by Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Jarir from the narration of Ibn Ishaq. But this Surah was revealed in Makkah, so how could the reason for its revelation be the poets of the Ansar This is something worth thinking about. The reports that have been narrated about this are all Mursal and cannot be relied on. And Allah knows best. But this exception could include the poets of the Ansar and others. It even includes those poets of the Jahiliyyah who indulged in condemning Islam and its followers, then repented and turned to Allah, and gave up what they used to do and started to do righteous deeds and remember Allah much, to make up for the bad things that they had previously said, for good deeds wipe out bad deeds. So they praised Islam and its followers in order to make up for their insults, as the poet ( `Abdullah bin Az-Zab`ari said when he became Muslim: "O Messenger of Allah, indeed my tongue will try to make up for things it said when I was bad -- When I went along with the Shaytan during the years of misguidance, and whoever inclines towards his way is in a state of loss." Similarly, Abu Sufyan bin Al-Harith bin `Abd Al-Muttalib was one of the most hostile people towards the Prophet , even though he was his cousin, and he was the one who used to mock him the most. But when he became Muslim, there was no one more beloved to him than the Messenger of Allah . He began to praise the Messenger of Allah where he had mocked him, and take him as a close friend where he had regarded him as an enemy.

وَأَنْتَصِرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُوا)

(and vindicate themselves after they have been wronged.) Ibn ` Abbas said, "They responded in kind to the disbelievers who used to ridicule the believers in verse." This was also the view of Mujahid, Qatadah and several others. It was also recorded in the Sahih that the Messenger of Allah said to Hassan:

«اهْجُهُمْ»

(Ridicule them in verse.) Or he said:

«هَاجِهِمْ وَجِبْرِيْلُ مَعَكَ»

(Ridicule them in verse, and Jibril is with you.) Imam Ahmad recorded that Ka` b bin Malik said to the Prophet , "Allah has revealed what He revealed about the poets. The Messenger of Allah said:

«إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ يُجَاهِدُ بِسَيْفِهِ وَلِسَانِهِ، وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي  
بِيَدِهِ لَكَأَنَّ مَا تَرْمُونَهُمْ بِهِ نَضْحُ النَّبْلِ»

(The believer wages Jihad with his sword and with his tongue, By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, it is as if you are attacking them with arrows.)

(وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ)

(And those who do wrong will come to know by what overturning they will be overturned.) This is like the Ayah,

(يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ الظَّالِمِينَ مَعذِرَتُهُمْ)

(The Day when their excuses will be of no profit to wrongdoers) (40: 52). According to the Sahih, the Messenger of Allah said:

«إِيَّاكُمْ وَالظُّلْمَ، فَإِنَّ الظُّلْمَ ظُلُمَاتٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ»

(Beware of wrongdoing, for wrongdoing will be darkness on the Day of Resurrection.) Qatadah bin Di` amah said concerning the Ayah --

(وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ)

(And those who do wrong will come to know by what overturning they will be overturned.) this refers to the poets and others. This is the end of the Tafsir Surat Ash-Shu` ara'. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

## The Tafsir of Surat An-Naml

(Chapter - 27)

Which was revealed in Makkah

(بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ )

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

(طس تلك آيات القرآن وكتب مبين - هدى  
وبشرى للمؤمنين - الذين يقيمون الصلوة  
ويؤتون الزكوة وهم بالآخرة هم يوقنون - إن  
الذين لا يؤمنون بالآخرة زينا لهم أعمالهم فهم  
يعمهمون - أولئك الذين لهم سوء العذاب وهم  
في الآخرة هم الأخسرون - وإنيك لتلقى القرآن  
من لدن حكيم عليم )

(1. Ta Sn. These are the Ayat of the Qur'an, and (it is) a Book (that is) clear.) (2. A guide and glad tidings for the believers.) (3. Those who perform the Salah and give the Zakah 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'an from One, All

**The Qur'an is Guidance and Glad Tidings for the Believers, a  
Warning to the Disbelievers, and it is from Allah**

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

(تلك آيات القرآن وكتب مبين)

(These are the Ayat of the Qur'an, 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'an for those who believe in it, follow it and put it into practice. They establish obligatory prayers, pay Zakah 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 Ayat:

(قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هُدًى وَشِفَاءً وَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ فِي آذَانِهِمْ 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).

(لِنُبَشِّرَ بِهِ الْمُتَّقِينَ وَنُنذِرَ بِهِ قَوْمًا لُدًّا)

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

(زَيَّنَّا لَهُمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَهُمْ يَعْمَهُونَ)

(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 Allah says:

(وَنُقَلِّبُ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَرَ لَهُمْ 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 الْآخِسْرُونَ)

(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.

(وَإِنَّكَ لَتُلَقَّى الْقُرْآنَ مِنْ لَدُنْ حَكِيمٍ عَلِيمٍ )

(And verily, you are being taught the Qur'an from One, All-Wise, All-Knowing.)

(وَإِنَّكَ)

(And verily, you) O Muhammad. Qatadah said:

(لَتُلَقَّى)

(are being taught) "Are receiving."

(الْقُرْآنَ مِنْ لَدُنْ حَكِيمٍ عَلِيمٍ)

(the Qur'an 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 Allah says:

(وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ صِدْقًا وَعَدْلًا)

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

(إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِأَهْلِهِ إِنِّي آنَسْتُ نَارًا سَاتِيكُمْ  
مِنْهَا بِخَبْرٍ أَوْ آتِيكُمْ بِسِهَابٍ قَبَسٍ لَعَلَّكُمْ  
تَصْطَلُونَ - فَلَمَّا جَاءَهَا نُودِيَ أَنْ بُورِكَ مَنْ فِي  
النَّارِ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ -  
يَمُوسَىٰ إِنَّهُ أَنَا اللَّهُ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ - وَأَلْقِ

عَصَاكَ فَلَمَّا رَأَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَانٌّ وَلَّى مُدْبِرًا  
وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ يَمُوسَى لَا تَخَفْ إِنِّي لَا يَخَافُ لَدَى  
الْمُرْسَلُونَ - إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ ثُمَّ بَدَّلَ حُسْنًا بَعْدَ سُوءٍ  
فَأِنِّي غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ - وَأَدْخِلْ يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ  
تَخْرُجُ بَيْضَاءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوءٍ فِي تِسْعِ آيَاتٍ إِلَى  
فِرْعَوْنَ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ - فَلَمَّا  
جَاءَهُمْ آيَاتُنَا مُبْصِرَةً قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ -  
وَجَحَدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا  
فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ )

(7. (Remember) when Musa 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 Allah, the Lord of all that exists.") (9. "O Musa! Verily, it is I, Allah, 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 Musa! 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 Ayat 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 Musa and the End of Fir`awn

Here Allah tells His Messenger Muhammad about what happened to Musa, peace be upon him, how Allah 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. Allah says:

(إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِأَهْلِهِ)

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

(لَأَهْلِهِ إِنِّي أَنَسْتُ نَارًا سَاتِيكُمْ مِنْهَا بِخَبْرٍ)

(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 ءَاتِيكُمْ بِشِهَابٍ قَبَسٍ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ)

(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." Allah says:

(فَلَمَّا جَاءَهَا نُودِيَ أَنْ بُورِكَ مَنْ 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 `Abbas and others said, "It was not a fire, rather it was shining light." According to one report narrated from Ibn `Abbas, it was the Light of the Lord of the worlds. Musa stood amazed by what he was seeing, and

(نُودِيَ أَنْ بُورِكَ مَنْ فِي النَّارِ)

(he was called: "Blessed is whosoever is in the fire...") Ibn `Abbas said, "This means, Holy is (whosoever is in the fire)."

(وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا)

(and whosoever is round about it) means, of the angels. This was the view of Ibn `Abbas, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Al-Hasan and Qatadah.

(وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(And glorified be Allah, 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 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.

(يُمُوسَى إِنَّهُ أَنَا اللَّهُ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ )

(O Musa! Verily, it is I, Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.) Allah told him that the One Who was addressing him was his Lord Allah, 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 Musa threw that stick down, it changed into the form of a huge and terrifying snake, moving quickly despite its size. Allah says:

(فَلَمَّا رَأَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَانٌّ)

(But when he saw it moving as if it were a Jann (snake).) Jann refers to a type of snake that is the fastest-moving and most agile. When Musa saw that with his own eyes,

(وَلَّى مُذِيراً وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ)

(he turned in flight, and did not look back.) meaning, he did not turn around, because he was so afraid. Allah's saying:

(يُمُوسَى لَا تَخَفْ إِنِّي لَا يَخَافُ لَدَى الْمُرْسَلُونَ)

(O Musa! 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 بَدَّلَ 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 Allah, Allah will accept his repentance, as He says:

(وَإِنِّي لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدَى)

(And verily, I am indeed forgiving to him who repents, believes and does righteous good deeds, and then Ahtada.) (20:82)

(وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ)

(And whoever does evil or wrongs himself...) (4:110). And there are many other Ayat which say the same.

وَأَدْخِلْ يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجَ بَيْضَاءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ  
(سُوءٍ)

(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 Allah to do whatever He wills. It is also confirmation of the truth of the one to whom the miracle was given. Allah 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 تِسْعِ 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.'

(إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَسِقِينَ)

(to Fir`awn and his people. Verily, they are a people who are rebellious.) These were the nine signs of which Allah said:

(وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى تِسْعَ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ)

(And indeed We gave Musa nine clear signs) (17:101) -- as we have stated there.

(فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ آيَاتُنَا مُبْصِرَةً)

(But when Our Ayat 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.

(وَجَحَدُوا بِهَا)

(And they belied them) means, verbally,

(وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا أَنْفُسُهُمْ)

(though they themselves were convinced thereof.) means, they knew deep down that this was truth from Allah, but they denied it and were stubborn and arrogant.

(ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا)

(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. Allah said:

(فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ)

(So, see what was the end of the mischief-makers.) meaning, `see, O Muhammad, what were the consequences of their actions when Allah 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 Muhammad 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 Muhammad is nobler and greater than Musa, and his proof is stronger than that of Musa, for the signs that Allah 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 ءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عِلْمًا وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ  
لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ -  
وَوَرَّثَ سُلَيْمَانَ دَاوُودَ وَقَالَ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ عُلِّمْنَا  
مَنْطِقَ الطَّيْرِ وَأُوتِينَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ  
الْفَضْلُ الْمُبِينُ - وَحُشِرَ لِسُلَيْمَانَ جُنُودُهُ مِنَ  
الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ وَالطَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ - حَتَّىٰ إِذَا  
أَتَوْا عَلَىٰ وَادِي النَّمْلِ قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّمْلُ  
ادْخُلُوا مَسَكِنَكُمْ لَا يَحْطِمَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمَانُ وَجُنُودُهُ  
وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ - فَنَبَسِمًا ضَاحِكًا مِّنْ قَوْلِهَا

وَقَالَ رَبُّ أَوْزَعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ  
عَلَيَّ وَعَلَى وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ  
وَأَدْخِلْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِي عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ )

(15. And indeed We gave knowledge to Dawud and Sulayman, and they both said: "All praise be to Allah, Who has preferred us above many of His believing servants!") (16. And Sulayman inherited from Dawud. 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 Sulayman 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 Sulayman and his armies should crush you, while they perceive not.") (19. So he (Sulayman) 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.")

### **Dawud and Sulayman (peace be upon them), the organization of Sulayman's Troops and His passage through the Valley of the Ants**

Here Allah tells us about the great blessings and favors which He bestowed upon two of His servants and Prophets, Dawud (David) and his son Sulayman (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. Allah says:

(وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عِلْمًا وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ  
لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ )

(And indeed We gave knowledge to Dawud and Sulayman, and they both said: "All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has preferred us above many of His believing servants!")

(وَوَرِثَ سُلَيْمَانُ دَاوُودَ)

(And Sulayman inherited from Dawud.) means, in kingship and prophethood. What is meant here is not wealth, because if that were the case, Sulayman would not have been singled out from among the sons of Dawud, as Dawud 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 Allah said:

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

(We Prophets cannot be inherited from; whatever we leave behind is charity.) And Sulayman said:

(يَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ عَلَّمْنَا مَنطِقَ الطَّيْرِ وَأَوْتَيْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ  
شَيْءٍ)

(O mankind! We have been taught the language of birds, and we have been given from everything.) Here Sulayman was speaking of the blessings that Allah 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 Allah and His Messenger told us. Allah enabled Sulayman to understand what the birds said to one another as they flew through the air, and what the different kinds of animals said. Sulayman said:

(عَلَّمْنَا مَنطِقَ الطَّيْرِ وَأَوْتَيْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ)

(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 الْمُبِينُ)

(This, verily, is an evident grace.) means, `this is clearly the blessings of Allah upon us.'

(وَحُشِرَ لِسُلَيْمَانَ جُنُودُهُ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ  
وَالتَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ)

(And there were gathered before Sulayman his hosts of Jinn and men, and birds, and they all were set in battle order.) means, all of Sulayman'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. Mujahid 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."

(حَتَّى إِذَا أَتَوْا عَلَى وَادِي النَّمْلِ)

(Till, when they came to the valley of the ants,) meaning, when Sulayman, the soldiers and the army with him crossed the valley of the ants,

(قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّمْلُ ادْخُلُوا مَسَكِنَكُمْ لَا يَحْطِمَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمَانُ وَجُنُودُهُ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ)

(one of the ants said: "O ants! Enter your dwellings, lest Sulayman and his armies should crush you, while they perceive not.") Sulayman, peace be upon him, understood what the ant said,

(فَتَبَسَّ ضَاحِكًا مِّنْ قَوْلِهَا وَقَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَى وَالِدَيَّ 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.'

(وَتَفَقَّدَ الطَّيْرَ فَقَالَ مَا لِيَ لَا أَرَى الْهُدْهُدَ أَمْ كَانَ  
مِنَ الْغَائِبِينَ - لَأُعَذِّبَهُ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا أَوْ لَأَذْبَحَنَّهُ  
أَوْ لِيَأْتِنِي بِسُلْطَنٍ مُّبِينٍ )

(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

Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr and others narrated from Ibn `Abbas and others that the hoopoe was an expert who used to show Sulayman 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, Sulayman would command the Jinn to dig in that place until they brought water from the depths of the earth. One day Sulayman went to some open land and checked on the birds, but he could not see the hoopoe.

(فَقَالَ مَا لِيَ لَا أَرَى الْهُدْهُدَ أَمْ كَانَ مِنَ الْغَائِبِينَ)

(and (Sulayman) said: "What is the matter that I see not the hoopoe Or is he among the absentees") One day `Abdullah bin `Abbas told a similar story, and among the people was a man from the Khawarij whose name was Nafi` bin Al-Azraq, who often used to raise objections to Ibn `Abbas. He said to him, "Stop, O Ibn `Abbas; you will be defeated (in argument) today!" Ibn `Abbas said: "Why" Nafi` 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 `Abbas said, "If it was not for the fact that this man would go and tell others that he had defeated Ibn `Abbas in argument, I would not even answer." Then he said to Nafi` : "Woe to you! When the decree strikes a person, his eyes become blind and he loses all caution." Nafi` said: "By Allah I will never dispute with you concerning anything in the Qur'an. "

(لَأُعَذِّبَهُ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا)

(I will surely punish him with a severe torment) Al-A`mash said, narrating from Al-Minhal bin `Amr from Sa`id that Ibn `Abbas said: "He meant, by plucking his feathers." `Abdullah bin Shaddad said: "By plucking his feathers and exposing him to the sun." 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.

(أَوْ لِيَأْتِيَنِّي بِسُلْطَنٍ مُّبِينٍ)

(unless he brings me a clear reason.) i.e., a valid excuse. Sufyan bin `Uyaynah and `Abdullah bin Shaddad said: "When the hoopoe came back, the other birds said to him: "What kept you Sulayman 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 لَأَذْبَحَنَّهُ أَوْ لِيَأْتِيَنِّي بِسُلْطَنٍ مُّبِينٍ )

(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."

(فَمَكَثَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحَطْتُ بِمَا لَمْ نَحِطُ بِهِ وَجِئْتُكَ مِنْ سَبَأٍ بِنَبَأٍ يَقِينٍ - إِنِّي وَجَدْتُ امْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ - وَجَدْتُهُمْ وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّمْسِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَزَيْنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ - أَلَّا يَسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ الَّذِي يُخْرِجُ الْخَبَاءَ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُخْفُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ - اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ )

(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 Allah, and Shaytan 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 Allah, Who brings to light what is hidden in the heavens and the earth, and

knows what you conceal and what you reveal.) (26. Allah, La ilaha illa Huwa, the Lord of the Supreme Throne!")

### How the Hoopoe came before Sulayman and told Him about Saba'

Allah says:

(فَمَكَثَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ)

(But (the hoopoe) stayed not long,) meaning, he was absent for only a short time. Then he came and said to Sulayman:

(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 بِنَبَأٍ يَقِينٍ)

(and I have come to you from Saba' with true news.) meaning, with true and certain news. Saba' (Sheba) refers to Himyar, they were a dynasty in Yemen. Then the hoopoe said:

(إِنِّي وَجَدْتُ امْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ)

(I found a woman ruling over them,) Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, "This is Bilqis bint Sharahil, the queen of Saba'." Allah's saying:

(وَأُوتِيَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ)

(she has been given all things,) means, all the conveniences of this world that a powerful monarch could need.

(وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ 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:

وَجَدْتُّهَا وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّمْسِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ  
وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ  
السَّبِيلِ

(I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allah, and Shaytan 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.) Allah's saying:

وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ  
السَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ إِلَّا يَسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ

(and Shaytan 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 Allah.) They do not know the way of truth, prostrating only before Allah alone and not before anything that He has created, whether heavenly bodies or anything else. This is like the Ayah:

وَمِنْ ءَايَاتِهِ اللَّيْلُ وَالنَّهَارُ وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ لَا  
تَسْجُدُوا لِلشَّمْسِ وَلَا لِلْقَمَرِ وَاسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ الَّذِي  
خَلَقَهُنَّ إِن كُنْتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ

(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 Allah Who created them, if you indeed worship Him.) (41:37)

(الَّذِي يُخْرِجُ الخَبَاءَ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ)

(Who brings to light what is hidden in the heavens and the earth,) `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said: "He knows everything that is hidden in the heavens and on earth." This was also the view of `Ikrimah, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Qatadah and others. His saying:

(وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُخْفُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ)

(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 Ayah:

(سَوَاءٌ مِّنْكُمْ مَّنْ أَسْرَ الْقَوْلَ وَمَنْ جَهَرَ بِهِ وَمَنْ هُوَ مُسْتَخْفٍ بِاللَّيْلِ وَسَارِبٌ 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 )

(Allah, La ilaha illa Huwa, the Lord of the Supreme Throne!) means, He is the One to be called upon, Allah, 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 Allah alone, it would have been forbidden to kill him. Imam Ahmad, Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah recorded that Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, said that the Prophet forbade killing four kinds of animals: ants, bees, hoopoes and the sparrow hawks. Its chain of narration is Sahih.

(قَالَ سَنَنْظُرُ أَصَدَقْتَ أَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ -  
اذهب بكتابي هذا فألقه إليهم ثم تول عنهم  
فانظرو ماذا يرجعون - قالت يا أيها الملأ إني ألقى  
إلى كتاب كريم - إنه من سليمان وإِنَّهُ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ  
الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ - أَلَّا تَعْلَمُوا عَلَيَّ وَأُنُونِي  
مُسْلِمِينَ )

(27. (Sulayman) 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 Sulayman, and it (reads): `In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious,  
the Most Merciful;') (31. `Be you not exalted against me, but come to me submitting (as Muslims).')

### Sulayman's Letter to Bilqis

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

(قَالَ سَنَنْظُرُ أَصَدَقْتَ أَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْكَذِبِينَ )

((Sulayman) said: "We shall see whether you speak the truth or you are (one) of the liars." meaning, `are you telling the truth'

(أَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْكَذِبِينَ)

(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'

(اذهب بكتّابي هذا فألقه إليهم ثمّ تولّ عنهم  
فانظر ماذا يرجعون )

(Go you with this letter of mine and deliver it to them then draw back from them and see what they return.) Sulayman wrote a letter to Bilqis 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 Bilqis, 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. Bilqis 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  
- أَلَّا تَعْلَمُونَ عَلَىَّ وَأَتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ )

(it is from Sulayman, and it (reads): `In the Name of Allah, 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:

(يَأَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ إِنِّي أُلْقِيَ إِلَيَّ كِتَابٌ 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  
- أَلَّا تَعْلُوا عَلَيَّ وَأَتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ )

(Verily, it is from Sulayman, and it (reads): `In the Name of Allah, 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 Allah's Prophet Sulayman, 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.

(أَلَّا تَعْلُوا عَلَيَّ)

(Be you not exalted against me,) Qatadah said: "Do not be arrogant with me.

(وَأَتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ)

(but come to me submitting (as Muslims). )" `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said: "Do not refuse or be too arrogant to come to me

(وَأَتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ)

(but come to me submitting (as Muslims).)"

(قَالَتْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأَ أَفْتُونِي فِي أَمْرِي مَا كُنْتُ  
قَطِيعَةً أَمْرًا حَتَّى تَشْهَدُونَ - قَالُوا نَحْنُ أَوْلُوا قُوَّةً  
وَأَوْلُوا بِأَسْ شَدِيدٍ وَالْأَمْرُ إِلَيْكِ فَانظُرِي مَاذَا  
تَأْمُرِينَ - قَالَتْ إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً  
أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوا أَعِزَّةَ أَهْلِهَا أَذِلَّةً وَكَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ  
- وَإِنِّي مُرْسِلَةٌ إِلَيْهِمْ بِهَدِيَّةٍ فَنَاظِرَةٌ بِمَ يَرْجِعُ  
الْمُرْسَلُونَ )

(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.")

### Bilqis consults with Her Chiefs

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

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ أَفْتُونِي فِي أَمْرِي مَا كُنْتُ قَطِيعَةً  
أَمْرًا حَتَّى تَشْهَدُونَ

("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 أَوْلُوا قُوَّةٍ وَأَوْلُوا بِأَسْرِ شَدِيدٍ

(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 إِلَيْكَ فَانظُرِي 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 `Abbas said: "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 Allah said:

وَكَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ

(And thus they do. ) Then she resorted to peaceful means, seeking a truce and trying to placate Sulayman, and said:

وَإِنِّي 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.' Qatadah said: "May Allah 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 `Abbas 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 Prophet, so follow him."

(قَلَمَّا جَاءَ سُلَيْمَانَ قَالَ أَتُمِدُّونَنِ بِمَالٍ فَمَا آتَانِي  
اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا آتَاكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ بِهَدِيَّتِكُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ -  
ارْجِعْ إِلَيْهِمْ فَلَنَأْتِيَهُمْ بِجُنُودٍ لَا قِبَلَ لَهُمْ بِهَا  
وَلَنُخْرِجَنَّهُمْ مِنْهَا أَذِلَّةً وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ )

(36. So, when (the messengers with the gift) came to Sulayman, he said: "Will you help me in wealth What Allah 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 Sulayman

More than one of the scholars of Tafsir among the Salaf and others stated that she sent him a huge gift of gold, jewels, pearls and other things. It is apparent that Sulayman, 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:

(أَتُمِدُّونَنِ بِمَالٍ)

("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 آتَانِي اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا آتَاكُمْ)

(What Allah has given me is better than that which He has given you!) means, 'what Allah has given to me of power, wealth and troops, is better than that which you have.'

(بَلْ أَنْتُمْ بِهَدِيَّتِكُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ)

(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 Islam or the sword.'

(ارْجِعْ إِلَيْهِمْ)

(Go back to them) means, with their gift,

(قَلْنَا تَتِيَّبُهُمْ بِجُنُودٍ لَّا قِبَلَ لَهُمْ بِهَا)

(We verily, shall come to them with armies that they cannot resist,) they have no power to match them or resist them.

(وَلَنُخْرِجَهُمْ مِّنْهَا أَذِلَّةً)

(and we shall drive them out from there in disgrace,) `we shall drive them out in disgrace from their land.'

(وَهُمْ صَغُرُونَ)

(and they will be abased.) means, humiliated and expelled. When her messengers came back to her with her undelivered gift, and told her what Sulayman said, she and her people paid heed and obeyed him. She came to him with her troops in submission and humility, honoring Sulayman and intending to follow him in Islam. When Sulayman, peace be upon him, realized that they were coming to him, he rejoiced greatly.

(قَالَ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ أَيُّكُمْ يَأْتِينِي بِعَرْشِهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ  
يَأْتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ - قَالَ عِفْرِيْتُ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ أَنَا  
ءَاتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقُومَ مِنْ مَّقَامِكَ وَإِنِّي عَلَيْهِ  
لَقَوِيٌّ أَمِينٌ - قَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ أَنَا  
ءَاتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهُ  
مُسْتَقِرًّا عِنْدَهُ قَالَ هَذَا مِنْ فَضْلِ رَبِّي لِيَبْلُوَنِي  
أَعَشْكُرُ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ وَمَنْ شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ  
وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّي غَنِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ )

(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 `lfrit 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 Bilqis was brought in an Instant

Muhammad bin Ishaq reported from Yazid bin Ruman: "When the messengers returned with word of what Sulayman said, she said: `By Allah, 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 Sulayman with twelve thousand of her commanders from the leaders of Yemen, under each of whose command were many thousands of men. Sulayman 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:

(يَأْيُهَا 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))."

(قَالَ عِفْرِيْتُ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ)

(An `Ifrit from the Jinn said: ) Mujahid said, "A giant Jinn." Abu Salih said, "It was as if he was a mountain."

(أَنَا ءَاتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقُومَ مِنْ مَّقَامِكَ)

(I will bring it to you before you rise from your place.) Ibn `Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, said, "Before you get up from where you are sitting." As-Suddi 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."

(وَإِنِّي عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِيٌّ أَمِينٌ)

(And verily, I am indeed strong and trustworthy for such work.) Ibn `Abbas said: "Strong enough to carry it and trustworthy with the jewels it contains. Sulayman, upon him be peace, said, "I want it faster than that." From this it seems that Sulayman wanted to bring this throne as a

demonstration of the greatness of the power and authority that Allah 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 Bilqis 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 Sulayman said, "I want it faster than that,

(قَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ)

(One with whom was knowledge of the Scripture said: ) Ibn `Abbas said, "This was Asif, the scribe of Sulayman." It was also narrated by Muhammad bin Ishaq from Yazid bin Ruman that he was Asif bin Barkhiya' and he was a truthful believer who knew the Greatest Name of Allah. Qatadah said: "He was a believer among the humans, and his name was Asif."

(أَنَا ءَاتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ 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 Allah, may He be exalted. Mujahid said: "He said, O Owner of majesty and honor." When Sulayman and his chiefs saw it before them,

(قَالَ هَذَا مِن فَضْلِ رَبِّي)

(he said: "This is by the grace of my Lord...") meaning, 'this is one of the blessings which Allah has bestowed upon me.'

(لِيَبْلُوَنِي أَءَشْكُرُ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ وَمَن شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ)

(to test whether I am grateful or ungrateful! And whoever is grateful, truly, his gratitude is for himself;) This is like the Ayat:

(مَّنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ فَعَلَيْهَا)

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

(وَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَانَفْسِهِمْ 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 Musa said: p

(إِنْ تَكْفُرُوا أَنْتُمْ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ)

(If you disbelieve, you and all on earth together, then verily, Allah is Rich, Owner of all praise.) (14:8). It is recorded in Sahih Muslim:

«يَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: يَا عِبَادِي لَوْ أَنَّ أَوْلَكُمْ  
وَأَخْرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجِنَّكُمْ كَانُوا عَلَى أَنْفَى قَلْبِ  
رَجُلٍ مِنْكُمْ مَا زَادَ ذَلِكَ فِي مُلْكِي شَيْئًا. يَا عِبَادِي  
لَوْ أَنَّ أَوْلَكُمْ وَأَخْرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجِنَّكُمْ كَانُوا عَلَى  
أَفْجَرِ قَلْبِ رَجُلٍ مِنْكُمْ مَا نَقَصَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ مُلْكِي  
شَيْئًا. يَا عِبَادِي إِنَّمَا هِيَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ أَحْصِيهَا لَكُمْ ثُمَّ  
أَوْقِيكُمْ إِيَّاهَا فَمَنْ وَجَدَ خَيْرًا فَلْيَحْمَدِ اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ  
وَجَدَ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ فَلَا يَلُومَنَّ إِلَّا نَفْسَهُ»

(Allah, 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 Allah, and whoever finds otherwise, let him blame no one but himself.")

(قَالَ نَكِّرُوا لَهَا عَرْشَهَا نَنْظُرْ أَتَهْتَدِي أَمْ تَكُونُ  
 مِنَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ - فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ قِيلَ أَهَكَذَا  
 عَرْشُكَ قَالَتْ كَأَنَّهُ هُوَ وَأُوتِينَا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا  
 وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ - وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَتْ تَعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِ  
 اللَّهِ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ - قِيلَ لَهَا ادْخُلِي  
 الصَّرْحَ فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً وَكَشَفَتْ عَنْ  
 سَاقَيْهَا قَالَ إِنَّهُ صَرْحٌ مُّمَرَّدٌ مِّن قَوَارِيرَ قَالَتْ  
 رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ  
 رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ )

(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 Allah (as Muslims).") (43. And Saddaha that which she used to worship besides Allah has prevented her (from Islam), for she was of a disbelieving people.) (44. It was said to her: "Enter As-Sarh," but when she saw it, she thought it was a pool, and she (tucked up her clothes) uncovering her legs. Sulayman said: "Verily, it is a Sarh Mumarrad of Qawarir." She said: "My Lord! Verily, I have wronged myself, and I submit, together with Sulayman to Allah, the Lord of all that exists.")

### The Test of Bilqis

When Sulayman brought the throne of Bilqis 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:

(نَكِّرُوا لَهَا عَرْشَهَا نَنْظُرْ أَتَهْتَدِي 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 `Abbas said: "Remove some of its adornments and parts." Mujahid 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." Qatadah said, "It was turned upside down and back to front, and some things were added and some things were taken away."

(فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ قِيلَ أَهَكَذَا عَرْشُكَ)

(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.

(وَأُوتِينَا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ)

(Knowledge was bestowed on us before her, and we had submitted to Allah.) Mujahid said, "This was spoken by Sulayman."

(وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَتْ تَعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ  
مِنْ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ )

(And Saddaha that which she used to worship besides Allah has prevented her, for she was of a disbelieving people.) This is a continuation of the words of Sulayman -- according to the opinion of Mujahid and Sa`id bin Jubayr, may Allah be pleased with them both -- i.e., Sulayman said:

(وَأُوتِينَا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ)

(Knowledge was bestowed on us before her, and we had submitted to Allah.) and what stopped her from worshipping Allah alone was

(مَا كَانَتْ تَعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ  
كَافِرِينَ)

(that which she used to worship besides Allah, for she was of a disbelieving people.) What Mujahid and Sa`id said is good; it was also the view of Ibn Jarir. Then Ibn Jarir said, "It could be that the subject of the verb.

(وَصَدَّهَا)

(And Saddaha) refers to Sulayman or to Allah, so that the phrase now means:

(مَا كَانَتْ تَعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ)

(She would not worship anything over than Allah.)

(إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ)

(for she was of a disbelieving people.) I say: the opinion of Mujahid is supported by the fact that she declared her Islam after she entered the Sarh, as we shall see below.

(قِيلَ لَهَا ادْخُلِي الصَّرْحَ فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً  
وَكشفت عن ساقَيْهَا)

(It was said to her: "Enter As-Sarh" but when she saw it, she thought it was a pool, and she (tucked up her clothes) uncovering her legs.) Sulayman had commanded the Shayatin 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 Sarh Mumarrad of Qawarir Sarh means a palace or any lofty construction.**

Allah says of Fir`awn -- may Allah curse him -- that he said to his minister Haman:

(ابن لي صرحاً لعلني أبلغ الأَسْبَابَ)

(Build me a Sarh that I may arrive at the ways.) (40:36-37) Sarh is also used to refer to the high constructed palaces in Yemen. Mumarrad means sturdily constructed and smooth.

(مِنْ قَوَارِيرَ)

(of Qawarir) means, made of glass, i.e., it was built with smooth surfaces. Marid is a fortress in Dawmat Al-Jandal. What is meant here is that Sulayman 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 Allah had given him and how majestic his position was, she submitted to the command of Allah and acknowledged that he was a noble Prophet, so she submitted to Allah and said:

(رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي)

(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 Allah.

(وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)

(and I submit, together with Sulayman to Allah, the Lord of all that exists.) meaning, following the religion of Sulayman, worshipping Allah alone with no partner or associate, Who created everything and measured it exactly according to its due measurements.

(وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَى ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَالِحًا أَنْ اعْبُدُوا  
اللَّهَ فَإِذَا هُمْ فَرِيقَانِ يَخْتَصِمُونَ - قَالَ يَقَوْمِ لِمَ  
تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ قَبْلَ الْحَسَنَةِ لَوْلَا تَسْتَغْفِرُونَ  
اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ - قَالُوا اطَّيَّرْنَا بِكَ وَبِمَنْ  
مَعَكَ قَالَ طَائِرُكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ تُقْتَلُونَ )

(45. And indeed We sent to Thamud their brother Salih, (saying): "Worship Allah." Then look! They became two parties quarreling with each other.) (46. He said: "O my people! Why do you seek to hasten the evil before the good Why seek you not the forgiveness of Allah, that you may receive mercy") (47. They said: "We augur an omen from you and those with you." He said: "Your omen is of Allah; nay, but you are a people that are being tested.")

### Salih and Thamud

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

(فَإِذَا هُمْ فَرِيقَانِ يَخْتَصِمُونَ)

(Then look! They became two parties quarreling with each other.) Mujahid said, "These were believers and disbelievers." This is like the Ayah,

(قَالَ الْمَلَأَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ لِلَّذِينَ  
اسْتُضِعُوا لِمَنْ ءَامَنَ مِنْهُمْ أَتَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ صَالِحًا

مُرْسَلٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ قَالُوا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلَ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ  
قَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا بِالَّذِي ءَامَنْتُمْ بِهِ  
كٰفِرُونَ

(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 Salih 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 يَقَوْمٍ لِمَ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ قَبْلَ الْحَسَنَةِ)

(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 Allah for His mercy' Then he said:

(لَوْلَا تَسْتَغْفِرُونَ اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ قَالُوا اظْهَرْنَا  
بِكَ وَيَمَن مَّعَكَ)

("Why seek you not the forgiveness of Allah, 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 Salih and his companions." Mujahid said, "They regarded them as bad omens." This is similar to what Allah said about the people of Fir`awn:

(فَإِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْحَسَنَةُ قَالُوا لَنَا هَذِهِ وَإِنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ  
سَيِّئَةٌ يَطَّيَّرُوا بِمُوسَىٰ وَمَنْ مَّعَهُ)

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

(وَإِنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ  
وَإِنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ قُلْ كُلُّ  
مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ)