

(أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ خَرْجًا)

(Or is it that you ask them for some Kharj) Al-Hasan said, "A reward." Qatadah said, "Some payment."

(فَخَرَّاجُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ)

(But the recompense of your Lord is better,) means, you are not asking for any wages or payment or anything for calling them to right guidance, rather you are hoping for a great reward from Allah, as He says:

(قُلْ مَا سَأَلْتُكُمْ مِنْ أَجْرٍ فَهُوَ لَكُمْ إِنَّ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا  
عَلَى اللَّهِ)

(Say: "Whatever wage I might have asked of you is yours. My wage is from Allah only.") )34:47(

(قُلْ مَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ  
الْمُتَكَلِّفِينَ)

(Say: "No wage do I ask of you for this, nor am I one of the pretenders.") )38:86(

(قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَى)

(Say: "No reward do I ask of you for this except to be kind to me for my kinship with you.") )42:23(

(وَجَاءَ مِنْ أَقْصَى الْمَدِينَةِ رَجُلٌ يَسْعَى قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ  
اتَّبِعُوا الْمُرْسَلِينَ اتَّبِعُوا مَنِ لَمْ يَسْأَلْكُمْ أَجْرًا)

(And there came a man running from the farthest part of the town. He said: "O my people! Obey the Messengers. Obey those who ask no wages of you, and who are rightly guided.") )35:20-21(

(وَإِنَّكَ لَتَدْعُهُمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ - وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ  
لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ عَنِ الصِّرَاطِ لَنُكَيِّبُونَ)

(And certainly, you call them to the straight path. And verily, those who believe not in the Hereafter are indeed deviating far astray from the path.)

### The Situation of the Disbelievers

(وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ عَنِ الصِّرَاطِ  
لَنَكِبُونَ )

(And verily, those who believe not in the Hereafter are indeed deviating far astray from the path.) meaning, they have gone astray and deviated.

(ن)

(And though We had mercy on them and removed the distress which is on them, still they would obstinately persist in their transgression, wandering blindly.) Here Allah tells of their stubbornness in their disbelief, in that even if He had removed the calamity from them and made them understand the Qur'an, they still would not follow it; they would still persist in their disbelief and stubborn transgression. This is like the Ayat:

(وَلَوْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا لَأَسْمَعَهُمْ وَلَوْ أَسْمَعَهُمْ  
لَتَوَلَّوْا وَهُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ )

(Had Allah known of any good in them, He would indeed have made them listen; and even if He had made them listen, they would but have turned away with aversion.) )8:23(

(وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذْ وَقَفُوا عَلَى النَّارِ فَقَالُوا يَلَيْتَنَا نُرَدُّ  
وَلَا نُكَذِّبُ بَايَتِ رَبِّنَا وَنَكُونُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بَلْ  
بَدَا لَهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُخْفُونَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَوْ رُدُّوا لَعَدُّوا  
لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ)

(And if (Lauw) you could but see when they will be held over the (Hell) Fire! They will say: "Would that we were but sent back (to the world)! Then we would not deny the Ayat of our Lord, and we would be of the believers!" Nay, it has become manifest to them what they had been concealing before. But if they were returned (to the world), they would certainly revert to that which they were forbidden.) )6:27-29( Until His statement:

## (بِمَبْعُوثِينَ)

(be resurrected) This has to do with the knowledge of Allah. He knows about some- thing that will not happen, but if it were to happen, He knows how it would be. Ad-Dahhak reported from Ibn ` Abbas: "Every- thing that is implied in the word:

## (لَوْ)

(If (Lauw)) is something that will never happen."

(وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِالْعَذَابِ فَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَمَا يَتَضَرَّعُونَ - حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَابًا ذَا عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ إِذَا هُمْ فِيهِ مُبْلِسُونَ - وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنشَأَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَرَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ - وَهُوَ الَّذِي ذَرَأَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ - وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ وَلَهُ اخْتِلَافُ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ - بَلْ قَالُوا مِثْلَ مَا قَالَ الْأَوَّلُونَ - قَالُوا أَءِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظْمًا أَءِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ - لَقَدْ وُعِدْنَا نَحْنُ وَعَآبَاؤُنَا هَذَا مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا أَسْطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ )

(76. And indeed We seized them with punishment, but they humbled not themselves to their Lord, nor did they invoke with submission to Him.) (77. Until, when We open for them the gate of severe punishment, then lo! they will be plunged in despair.) (78. It is He Who has created for you hearing, eyes, and hearts. Little thanks you give.) (79. And it is He Who has created you on the earth, and to Him you shall be gathered back.) (80. And it is He Who gives life and causes death, and His is the alternation of night and day. Will you not then understand) (81. Nay, but they say the like of what the men of old said.) (82. They said: "When we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we be resurrected indeed") (83. "Verily, this we have been promised -- we and our fathers before! This is only (from) tales of the ancients!") Allah's saying:

(وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِالْعَذَابِ)

(And indeed We seized them with punishment,) means, 'We tried and tested them with difficulties and calamities.' His saying:

(فَمَا اسْتَكَاثُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَمَا يَتَضَرَّعُونَ)

(but they humbled not themselves to their Lord, nor did they invoke with submission to Him.) means, that did not deter them from their disbelief and resistance, rather they persisted in their sin and misguidance,

(فَمَا اسْتَكَاثُوا)

(but they humbled not themselves)

(وَمَا يَتَضَرَّعُونَ)

(nor did they invoke (Allah) with submission to Him. ) they did not call on Him. This is like the Ayah:

(فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَكِنْ قَسَتْ  
قُلُوبُهُمْ)

(When Our torment reached them, why then did they not humble themselves But their hearts became hardened,) )6:43( Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Abu Sufyan came to the Messenger of Allah and said, 'O Muhammad, I ask you by Allah and by the ties of kinship between us, we have been reduced to eating camel hair and blood.' Then Allah revealed,

(وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِالْعَذَابِ فَمَا اسْتَكَاثُوا)

(And indeed We seized them with punishment, but they humbled not themselves.) This was also recorded by An-Nasa'i. The basis of this Hadith is in the Two Sahih, where it says that the Messenger of Allah prayed against the Quraysh when he could not make any headway with them, and he said,

«اللَّهُمَّ أَعِنِّي عَلَيْهِمْ بِسَبْعِ كَسْبَعِ يُوسُفَ»

(O Allah, help me against them sending on them seven years (of famine) like the seven (years of drought) of Yusuf.)

(حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَابًا ذَا عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ إِذَا هُمْ فِيهِ مُبْلِسُونَ )

(Until, when We open for them the gate of severe punishment, then lo! they will be plunged in despair.) When the command of Allah reaches them and the Hour comes to them suddenly, and they are overtaken by the punishment of Allah which they were not expecting, then they will despair of any ease and goodness, and all their hopes will disappear.

### **A reminder of the Blessings of Allah and His immense Power**

Then Allah mentions His blessings to His servants, in that He has given them hearing, sight and understanding through which they come to know things and draw lessons from them, the signs which attest to the Oneness of Allah and indicate that He is the One Who does what He wills and chooses what He wants.

(قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ)

(Little thanks you give.) means, how little you thank Allah for the blessings He has given you. This is like the Ayah:

(وَمَا أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ )

(And most of mankind will not believe even if you desire it eagerly.) )12:103( Then Allah tells us about His great power and overwhelming authority, for He is the One Who originated creation and put people in all parts of the earth, with their different nations, languages and characteristics, then on the Day of Resurrection He will gather them all together, the first of them and the last, at a fixed time on a day appointed, and none will be left out, young or old, male or female, noble or insignificant, but all will be brought back as they were originally created. Allah said:

(وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ)

(And it is He Who gives life and causes death,) meaning, He will bring the scattered bones back to life and cause the death of the nations,

(وَلَهُ اخْتِلَافُ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ)

(and His is the alternation of night and day. ) meaning, by His command night and day are subjugated, each of them following the other and never departing from that pattern, as Allah says:

(لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنْبَغِي لَهَا أَنْ تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلَا اللَّيْلُ  
سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ)

(It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor does the night outstrip the day))36:40(.

(أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ)

(Will you not then understand) means, do you not have minds that tell you of the Almighty, All-Knowing to Whom all things are subjugated, Who has power over all things and to Whom all things submit

### **The Idolators thought that Resurrection after Death was very unlikely**

Then Allah tells us about those who denied the resurrection, who were like the disbelievers who came before them:

(بَلْ قَالُوا مِثْلَ مَا قَالَ الْأَوَّلُونَ - قَالُوا أَءِذَا مِتْنَا  
وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظْمًا أَءِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ )

(Nay, but they say the like of what the men of old said. They said: "When we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we be resurrected indeed") They thought it very unlikely that this would happen after they had disintegrated into nothing.

(لَقَدْ وَعَدْنَا نَحْنُ وَءَابَاؤُنَا هَذَا مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنْ هَذَا  
إِلَّا أَسْطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ )

("Verily, this we have been promised -- we and our fathers before (us)! This is only the tales of the ancients!") This means, "It is impossible that we could be brought back. This was said by those who learned it from the books and disputes of the ancients." This denial and rejection on their part is like the Ayah where Allah tells us about them:

(أَءِذَا كُنَّا عِظْمًا تَّخِرَةً - قَالُوا تِلْكَ إِذًا كَرَّةٌ  
خَسِرَةٌ - فَايَّمَا هِيَ زَجْرَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ - فَإِذَا هُمْ  
بِالسَّاهِرَةِ )

("Even after we are crumbled bones" They say: "It would in that case, be a return with loss!"  
But it will be only a single Zajrah, When behold, they find themselves on the surface of the  
earth alive after their death.) 79:11-14(

(أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ  
خَصِيمٌ مُّبِينٌ - وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَنَسِيَ خَلْقَهُ قَالَ  
مَنْ يُحْيِي الْعِظْمَ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ - قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا الَّذِي  
أَنْشَأَهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ )

(Does not man see that We have created him from Nutfah. Yet behold he (stands forth) as an  
open opponent. And he puts forth for Us a parable, and forgets his own creation. He says: "Who  
will give life to these bones after they are rotten and have become dust" Say: "He will give life  
to them Who created them for the first time! And He is the All-Knower of every creation!")  
36:77-79(

(قُلْ لِمَنْ الْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ -  
سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ - قُلْ مَنْ رَبُّ  
السَّمَوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ )  
سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ-

قُلْ مَنْ بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلَا  
يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ- سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ

فَأَيُّ مُسْحَرُونَ- بَلْ أَتَيْنَهُم بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّهُمْ  
لَكَاذِبُونَ-

(84. Say: "Whose is the earth and whosoever is therein If you know!") (85. They will say: "It is Allah's!" Say: "Will you not then remember") (86. Say: "Who is (the) Lord of the seven heavens, and (the) Lord of the Great Throne") (87. They will say: "Allah." Say: "Will you not then have Taqwa") (88. Say: "In Whose Hand is the sovereignty of everything And He protects, while against Whom there is no protector, if you know") (89. They will say: "(All that belongs) to Allah." Say: "How then are you deceived and turn away from the truth") (90. Nay, but We have brought them the truth, and verily, they are liars.)

### **The Idolators believe in Tawhid Ar-Rububiyah, which requires them to believe in Tawhid Al-Uluhiyyah**

Allah states that the fact that He is One and that He is independent in His creation, control, dominion and guides one to realize that there is no God except Him and that none should be worshipped except Him Alone, with no partner or associate. He tells His Messenger Muhammad to say to the idolators who worship others besides Him, even though they admit His Lordship, that He has no partner in Lordship. But despite this they still attributed partners in divinity to Him, and worshipped others besides Him even though they recognized the fact that those whom they worshipped could not create anything, did not own anything, nor do they have any control over anything. However, they still believed that these creatures could bring them closer to Allah,

(مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَى)

(We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allah) )39:3(. So Allah says:

(قُلْ لِمَنْ الْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهَا)

(Say: "Whose is the earth and whosoever is therein") meaning, "Who is the Owner Who has created it and whatever is in it of animals, plants, fruits and all other kinds of creation"

(إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ)

("If you know!" They will say: "It is Allah's!") means, they will admit that this belongs to Allah Alone with no partner or associate. If that is the case,

(قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ)

(Say: "Will you not then remember") that none should be worshipped except the Creator and Provider.

(قُلْ مَنْ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ)

(Say: "Who is Lord of the seven heavens, and Lord of the Great Throne") means, "Who is the Creator of the higher realm with its planets, lights and angels who submit to Him in all regions and in all directions Who is the Lord of the Great Throne, which is the highest of all created things" Allah says here:

(وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ)

(and Lord of the Great Throne), meaning the Mighty Throne. At the end of the Surah, Allah says:

(رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ)

(the Lord of the Supreme Throne!) )23:116(, meaning splendid and magnificent. The Throne combines the features of height and vastness with splendor and magnificence. This is why it was said that it is made of red rubies. Ibn Mas'ud said, "There is no night or day with your Lord, and the light of the Throne is from the Light of His Face."

(سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَقْلًا تَتَّقُونَ )

(They will say: "Allah." Say: "Will you not then have Taqwa") meaning, since you admit that He is the Lord of the heavens and the Lord of the Mighty Throne, will you not fear His punishment for worshipping others besides Him and associating others with Him

(قُلْ مَنْ مِنْ يَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ)

(Say: "In Whose Hand is the sovereignty of everything") i.e., sovereignty is in His Hands.

(مَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ آخِذٌ بِنَاصِيَتِهَا)

(There is not a moving creature but He has grasp of its forelock) )11:56(. meaning, He has control over it. The Messenger of Allah used to say,

«لَا وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ»

(By the One in Whose hand is my soul.) When he swore an oath, he would say,

«لَا وَمَقَلَّبِ الْقُلُوبِ»

(By the One Who turns over (controls) the hearts.) He, may He be glorified, is the Creator, the Sovereign, the Controller,

(وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ)

(And He protects (all), while against Whom there is no protector, if you know) Among the Arabs, if a leader announced his protection to a person, no one could go against him in that, yet no one could offer protection against that leader. Allah says:

(وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ)

(And He protects (all), while against Whom there is no protector, ) meaning, He is the greatest Master, and there is none greater than Him. His is the power to create and to command, and none can overturn or oppose His ruling. What He wills happens, and what He does not, will not happen. Allah says:

(لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ)

(He cannot be questioned about what He does, while they will be questioned.) )21:23( He cannot be asked about what He does because of His greatness, Pride, overwhelming power, wisdom and justice, but all of His creation will be asked about what they did, as Allah says:

(فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَسْأَلَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ - عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ)

(So, by your Lord, We shall certainly call all of them to account. For all that they used to do.) )15:92-93(

(سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ)

(They will say: "(All that belongs) to Allah.") means, they will admit that the Almighty Master Who protects all while against Him there is no protector is Allah Alone, with no partner or associate.

(قُلْ فَأَنَّى تُسْحَرُونَ)

(Say: "How then are you deceived and turn away from the truth") means, how can your minds accept the idea of worshipping others besides Him when you recognize and acknowledge that Then Allah says:

(بَلْ أَتَيْنَهُم بِالْحَقِّ)

(Nay, but We have brought them the truth,) which is the declaration that there is no god worthy of worship besides Allah, and the establishment of clear, definitive and sound proof to that effect,

(وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ)

(and verily, they are liars.) means, in their worship of others alongside Allah when they have no evidence for doing so, as Allah says at the end of this Surah:

(وَمَنْ يَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ لَا بُرْهَانَ لَهُ بِهِ فَإِنَّمَا حِسَابُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ )

(And whoever invokes, besides Allah, any other god, of whom he has no proof; then his reckoning is only with his Lord. Surely, the disbelievers will not be successful.) )23:117( The idolators have no evidence for what they are doing, which has led them into lies and misguidance. Rather they are following their forefathers and predecessors who were confused and ignorant, as Allah describes them:

(إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِمْ مُّقْتَدُونَ)

("We found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we will indeed follow their footsteps.") )43:23(

(مَا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ مِنْ وَلَدٍ وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُ مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِذَا لَذَهَبَ كُلُّ إِلَهٍ بِمَا خَلَقَ وَلَعَلَّ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُصِفُونَ عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَتَعَلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ)

(91. No son (or offspring) did Allah beget, nor is there any god along with Him. (If there had been many gods), then each god would have taken away what he had created, and some would have tried to overcome others! Glorified be Allah above all that they attribute to Him!) (92. All-Knower of the unseen and the seen! Exalted be He over all that they associate as partners to Him!)

### **Allah has no Partner or Associate**

Allah declares Himself to be above having any child or partner in dominion, control and worship. He says:

(مَا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ مِنْ وَلَدٍ وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُ مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِذَا  
لَذَهَبَ كُلُّ إِلَهٍ بِمَا خَلَقَ وَلَعَلَّ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى  
بَعْضٍ)

(No son did Allah beget, nor is there any god along with Him. (If there had been many gods), then each god would have taken away what he had created, and some would have tried to overcome others.) meaning, if it were decreed that there should be a plurality of deities, each of them would have exclusive control over whatever he had created, so there would never be any order in the universe. But what we see is that the universe is ordered and cohesive, with the upper and lower realms connected to one another in the most perfect fashion.

(مَا تَرَى فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِنْ تَفَوُّتٍ)

(you can see no fault in the creation of the Most Gracious) 65:3. (Moreover, if there were a number of gods, each of them would try to subdue the other with enmity, and one would prevail over the other. This has been mentioned by the scholars of `Ilm-ul-Kalam, who discussed it using the evidence of mutual resistance or counteraction. This idea states that if there were two or more creators, one would want to make a body move while the other would want to keep it immobile, and if neither of them could achieve what they wanted, then both would be incapable, but the One Whose existence is essential (i.e., Allah) cannot be incapable. It is impossible for the will of both to be fulfilled because of the conflict. This dilemma only arises when a plurality of gods is suggested, so it is impossible for there to be such a plurality, because if the will of one is fulfilled and not the other, the one who prevails will be the one whose existence is essential (i.e., God) and the one who is prevailed over will be merely possible (i.e., he is not divine), because it is not befitting for the one to be defeated whose existence is essential. Allah says:

(وَلَعَلَّ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا  
يَصِفُونَ)

(and some would have tried to overcome others! Glorified be Allah above all that they attribute to Him!) meaning, high above all that the stubborn wrongdoers say when they claim that He has a son or partner.

(عَلِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ)

(All-Knower of the unseen and the seen!) means, He knows what is hidden from His creatures and what they see.

(فَتَعَلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ)

(Exalted be He over all that they associate as partners to Him!) means, sanctified and glorified and exalted be He above all that the wrongdoers and liars say.

(قُلْ رَبِّ إِمَّا تُرِيئِي مَا يُوعَدُونَ - رَبِّ فَلَا  
تَجْعَلَنِي فِي الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ - وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ أَنْ نُرِيكَ  
مَا نَعِدُهُمْ لَقَدِيرُونَ - ادْفَعْ بِآتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ  
السَّيِّئَةِ نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَصِفُونَ - وَقُلْ رَبِّ أَعُوذُ  
بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ - وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَنْ  
يَحْضُرُونِ )

(93. Say: "My Lord! If You would show me that with which they are threatened, ") (94. "My Lord! Then, put me not amongst the people who are the wrongdoers.") (95. And indeed We are able to show you that with which We have threatened them.) (96. Repel evil with that which is better. We are best-acquainted with the things they utter.) (97. And say: "My Lord! I seek refuge with You from the whisperings of the Shayatin.") (98. "And I seek refuge with You, My Lord! lest they should come near me.")

### **The Command to call on Allah when Calamity strikes, to repel Evil with that which is better, and to seek refuge with Allah**

Allah commands His Prophet Muhammad to call on Him with this supplication when calamity strikes:

(رَبِّ إِمَّا تُرِيئِي مَا يُوعَدُونَ)

(My Lord! If You would show me that with which they are threatened.) meaning, 'if You punish them while I am witnessing that, then do not cause me to be one of them.' As was said in the Hadith recorded by Imam Ahmad and At-Tirmidhi, who graded it Sahih:

«وَإِذَا أَرَدْتَ بِقَوْمٍ فِتْنَةً فَتَوَقَّنِي إِلَيْكَ غَيْرَ  
مَقْتُونٍ»

(If You want to test people, then take me to You )cause me to die( without having to undergo the test.)

(وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ أَنْ نُثْرِكَ مَا نَعِدُهُمْ لَقَدِيرُونَ )

(And indeed We are able to show you that with which We have threatened them.) means, 'if We willed, We could show you the punishment and test that We will send upon them.' Then Allah shows him the best way to behave when mixing with people, which is to treat kindly the one who treats him badly, so as to soften his heart and turn his enmity to friendship, and to turn his hatred to love. Allah says:

(ادْفَعْ بِأَلْتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ السَّيِّئَةِ)

(Repel evil with that which is better. ) This is like the Ayah:

(ادْفَعْ بِأَلْتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ  
عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ مَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ  
صَبَرُوا)

(Repel (the evil) with one which is better, then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend. But none is granted it except those who are patient) 41:34-35( meaning, nobody will be helped or inspired to follow this advice or attain this quality,

(إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا)

(except those who are patient) meaning, those who patiently bear people's insults and bad treatment and deal with them in a good manner when they are on the receiving end of bad treatment from them.

(وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا دُوْحَظٌ عَظِيمٌ)

(and none is granted it except the owner of the great portion) means, in this world and the Hereafter. And Allah says:

(وَقُلْ رَبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ )

(And say: "My Lord! I seek refuge with You from the whisperings of the Shayatin.") Allah commanded him to seek refuge with Him from the Shayatin, because no trick could help you against them and you cannot protect yourself by being kind to them. We have already stated, when discussing Isti`adhah (seeking refuge), that the Messenger of Allah used to say,

«أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ السَّمِيعِ الْعَلِيمِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ  
مِنْ هَمَزِهِ وَنَقْخِهِ وَنَقْتِهِ»

(I seek refuge with Allah, the All-Hearing, All-Seeing, from the accursed Shayatin, from his whisperings, evil suggestions and insinuations.) His saying:

(وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَنْ يَحْضُرُونِ )

("And I seek refuge with You, My Lord! lest they should come near me.") means, in any issue of my life. So we are commanded to mention Allah at the beginning of any undertaking, in order to ward off the Shayatin at the time of eating, intercourse, slaughtering animals for food, etc. Abu Dawud recorded that the Messenger of Allah used to say:

«اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْهَرَمِ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ  
الْهَدْمِ وَمِنَ الْغَرَقِ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ أَنْ يَتَخَبَّطَنِي  
الشَّيْطَانُ عِنْدَ الْمَوْتِ»

(O Allah, I seek refuge with You from old age, I seek refuge with You from being crushed or drowned, and I seek refuge with you from being assaulted by the Shayatin at the time of death.)

(حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ  
- لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ كَلَّا إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ  
هُوَ قَائِلُهَا وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ بَرْزَخٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ )

(99. Until, when death comes to one of them, he says: "My Lord! Send me back,") (100. "So that I may do good in that which I have left behind!" No! (Kalla) It is but a word that he speaks; and in front of them is Barzakh until the Day when they will be resurrected.)

**The Disbelievers' Hope when death approaches Allah tells us about what happens when death approaches one of the disbelievers or one of those who have been negligent with the commands of Allah. He tells us what he says and how he asks to come back to this world so that he can rectify whatever wrongs he committed during his lifetime. Allah says:**

رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِي لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ  
(كَلَّا)

("My Lord! Send me back, so that I may do good in that which I have left behind!" No!) This is like the Ayat:

وَأَنْفِقُوا مِنْ مَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ أَحَدَكُمُ  
الْمَوْتَ) (الموت)

(And spend of that with which We have provided you before death comes to one of you,) until His saying:

وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ)

(And Allah is All-Aware of what you do) )63:10-11(

وَأَنْذِرِ النَّاسَ يَوْمَ يَأْتِيهِمُ الْعَذَابُ)

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

(مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ زَوَالٍ)

upto His saying; (that you would not leave (the world for the Hereafter).) )14:44( And His saying:

يَوْمَ يَأْتِي تَأْوِيلُهُ يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ نَسُوهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ قَدْ  
جَاءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ فَهَلْ لَنَا مِنْ شُفَعَاءَ  
فَيَشْفَعُوا لَنَا أَوْ نُرَدُّ فَنَعْمَلْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ)

(On the Day the event is finally fulfilled, those who neglected it before will say: "Verily, the Messengers of our Lord did come with the truth, 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( And:

(وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الْمُجْرِمُونَ نَاكِسُوا رُءُوسِهِمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ رَبَّنَا أَبْصَرْنَا وَسَمِعْنَا فَارْجِعْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا إِنَّا مُوقِنُونَ )

(And if you only could see when the criminals shall hang their heads before their Lord (saying): "Our Lord! We have now seen and heard, so send us back, that we will do righteous good deeds. Verily, we now believe with certainty.") )32:12( And;

(وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ وَقِفُوا عَلَى النَّارِ فَقَالُوا يَايْتَنَا نُرَدُّ وَلَا نُكَذِّبُ بآيَاتِ رَبِّنَا)

(If you could but see when they will be held over the (Hell) Fire! They will say: "Would that we were but sent back! Then we would not deny the Ayat of our Lord. ...") until His saying;

(وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ)

(And indeed they are liars.) )6:27-28(

(وَتَرَى الظَّالِمِينَ لَمَّا رَأُوا الْعَذَابَ يَقُولُونَ هَلْ إِلَىٰ مَرَدٍّ مِّن سَبِيلٍ)

(And you will see the wrongdoers, when they behold the torment, they will say: "Is there any way of return") )42:44(

(قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَمَنَّآ اٰنْتَيْنِ وَاٰحْيَيْتَنَا اٰنْتَيْنِ فَاَعْتَرَفْنَا بِذُنُوبِنَا فَهَلْ إِلَىٰ خُرُوجٍ مِّن سَبِيلٍ )

(They will say: "Our Lord! You have made us to die twice, and You have given us life twice! Now we confess our sins, then is there any way to get out") )40:11( and the Ayah after it:

(وَهُمْ يَصْطَرِحُونَ فِيهَا رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ أَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُم مَّا

يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَنْ تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمْ النَّذِيرُ فَذُوقُوا فَمَا  
لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ نَصِيرٍ )

(Therein they will cry: "Our Lord! Bring us out, we shall do righteous good deeds, not what we used to do." (Allah will reply:) "Did We not give you lives long enough, so that whosoever would receive admonition could receive it And the warner came to you. So taste you (the evil of your deeds). For the wrongdoers there is no helper.") )35:37( Allah says that they will ask to go back, when death approaches, on the Day of Resurrection, when they are gathered for judgment before the Compeller (Allah) and when they are in the agonies of the punishment of Hell, but their prayer will not be answered. Here Allah says:

(كَلَّا إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا)

(No! It is but a word that he speaks;) The word Kalla (No!) is a word that is used to rebuke, and the meaning is: "No, We will not respond to what he asks for and We will not accept it from him."

(إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا)

(It is but a word that he speaks) refers to his asking to go back so that he can do righteous deeds; this is just talk on his part, it would not be accompanied by any action. If he were to go back, he would not do any righteous good deeds, he is merely lying, as Allah says:

(وَلَوْ رُدُّوْا لَعَدُوْا لِمَا نُهُوْا عَنْهُ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُوْنَ)

(But if they were returned, they would certainly revert to that which they were forbidden. And indeed they are liars) )6:28(. Qatadah said: "By Allah, he will not wish to go back to his family and tribe, or to accumulate more of the things of this world or satisfy his desires, but he will wish that he could go back to do acts of obedience to Allah. May Allah have mercy on a man who does that which the disbeliever will wish he had done when he sees the punishment of Hell."

### Barzakh and Punishment therein

(وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ بَرْزَخٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ)

(and in front of them is Barzakh until the Day when they will be resurrected.) Abu Salih and others said that:

(وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ)

(and in front of them) means before them. Mujahid said, Al-Barzakh is a barrier between this world and the Hereafter. Muhammad bin Ka' b said, "Al-Barzakh is what is between this world

and the Hereafter, neither they are the people of this world, eating and drinking, nor are they with the people of the Hereafter, being rewarded or punished for their deeds." Abu Sakhr said, "Al-Barzakh refers to the graves. They are neither in this world nor the Hereafter, and they will stay there until the Day of Resurrection."

(وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ بَرْزَخٌ)

(and in front of them is Barzakh). In these words is a threat to those wrongdoers at the time of death, of the punishment of Barzakh. This is similar to the Ayat:

(مَنْ وَرَائِهِمْ جَهَنَّمُ)

(In front of them there is Hell) )45:10(.

(وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِ عَذَابٌ غَلِيظٌ)

(and in front of him will be a great torment) )14: 17(.

(إِلَى يَوْمٍ يُبْعَثُونَ)

(until the Day when they will be resurrected). means, he will be punished continually until the Day of Resurrection, as it says in the Hadith:

«قَلَّا يَزَالُ مُعَذَّبًا فِيهَا»

(He will continue to be punished in it.) meaning, in the earth.

(فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنْسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ - فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُقْلِحُونَ - وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فِي جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ - تَلْفَحُ وَجُوهُهُمْ النَّارُ وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَالِحُونَ )

(101. Then, when the Trumpet is blown, there will be no kinship among them that Day, nor will they ask of one another.) (102. Then, those whose Scales (of good deeds) are heavy, these! they are the successful.) (103. And those whose Scales (of good deeds) are light, they are those

who lose themselves, in Hell will they abide.) (104. The Fire will burn their faces, and therein they will grin, with displaced lips (disfigured).)

### The sounding of the Trumpet and the weighing of Deeds in the Scales.

Allah says that when the Trumpet is blown for the Resurrection, and the people rise from their graves,

(فَلَا أَنْسَبَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ)

(there will be no kinship among them that Day, nor will they ask of one another.) meaning that lineage will be of no avail on that Day, and a father will not ask about his son or care about him. Allah says:

(وَلَا يَسْأَلُ حَمِيمٌ حَمِيمًا يُبْصِرُونَهُمْ)

(And no friend will ask a friend (about his condition), though they shall be made to see one another) )70:10-11(. meaning, no relative will ask about another relative, even if he can see him and even if he is carrying a heavy burden. Even if he was the dearest of people to him in this world, he will not care about him or take even the slightest part of his burden from him. Allah says:

(يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ - وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبِيهِ -  
وَصَحْبَتِهِ وَبَنِيهِ )

(That Day shall a man flee from his brother. And from his mother and his father. And from his wife and his children.) )80:34-36( Ibn Mas`ud said, "On the Day of Resurrection, Allah will gather the first and the last, then a voice will call out, 'Whoever is owed something by another, let him come forth and take it.' And a man will rejoice if he is owed something or had been mistreated by his father or child or wife, even if it is little. " This is confirmed in the Book of Allah, where Allah says:

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

(Then, when the Trumpet is blown, there will be no kinship among them that Day, nor will they ask of one another.) This was recorded by Ibn Abi Hatim.

(فَمَنْ تَقَلَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ )

(Then, those whose Scales are heavy, these! they are the successful.) means, the one whose good deeds outweigh his bad deeds, even by one. This was the view of Ibn ` Abbas.

**(فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ)**

(they are the successful.) means, those who have attained victory and been saved from Hell and admitted to Paradise. Ibn ` Abbas said, "These are the ones who have attained what they wanted and been saved from an evil from which there is no escape."

**(وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ)**

(And those whose Scales are light,) means, their evil deeds outweigh their good deeds.

**(فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ)**

(they are those who lose themselves,) means, they are doomed and have ended up with the worst deal. Allah says:

**(فِي جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ)**

(in Hell will they abide. ) meaning, they will stay there forever and will never leave.

**(تَلْفَحُ وُجُوهَهُمُ النَّارُ)**

(The Fire will burn their faces,) This is like the Ayah:

**(وَتَعَشَى وُجُوهَهُمُ النَّارُ)**

(and fire will cover their faces) )14:50(. and:

**(لَوْ يَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا حِينَ لَا يَكْفُونُ عَنْ وُجُوهِهِمُ النَّارَ وَلَا عَنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ)**

(If only those who disbelieved knew (the time) when they will not be able to ward off the Fire from their faces, nor from their backs) )21:39(.

**(وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَالْحُوتِ)**

(and therein they will grin, with displaced lips.) ` Ali bin Abi Talhah narrated from Ibn ` Abbas, "Frowning."

(أَلَمْ تَكُنْ ءآيَاتِي تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَكُنْتُمْ بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ -  
قَالُوا رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَالِّينَ  
- رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ )

(105. "Were not My Ayat recited to you, and then you used to deny them") (106. They will say: "Our Lord! Our wretchedness overcame us, and we were (an) erring people.") (107. "Our Lord! Bring us out of this. If ever we return (to evil), then indeed we shall be wrongdoers.")

### Rebuking the People of Hell, their admission of Their Wretchedness and their Request to be brought out of Hell

This is a rebuke from Allah to the people of Hell for the disbelief, sins, unlawful deeds and evil actions that they committed, because of which they were doomed. Allah says:

(أَلَمْ تَكُنْ ءآيَاتِي تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَكُنْتُمْ بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ )

("Were not My Ayat recited to you, and then you used to deny them") meaning, 'I sent Messengers to you, and revealed Books, and cleared the confusion for you, so you have no excuse.' This is like the Ayat:

(لِنَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ )

(in order that mankind should have no plea against Allah after the Messengers) 4:165(

(وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّىٰ نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا )

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

(كُلَّمَا أُلْقِيَ فِيهَا فَوْجٌ سَأَلَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ  
نَذِيرٌ )

(Every time a group is cast therein, its keeper will ask: "Did no warner come to you") Until His saying;

(فَسُحْقًا لِأَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ )

(So, away with the dwellers of the blazing Fire!) They will say:

(رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَالِّينَ)

(Our Lord! Our wretchedness overcame us, and we were (an) erring people.) meaning, evidence has been established against us, but we were so doomed that we could not follow it, so we went astray and were not guided. Then they will say:

(رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ)

(Our Lord! Bring us out of this. If ever we return (to evil), then indeed we shall be wrongdoers.) meaning, send us back to the world, and if we go back to what we used to do before, then we will indeed be wrongdoers who deserve punishment. This is like the Ayat:

(فَاعْتَرَفْنَا بِذُنُوبِنَا فَهَلْ إِلَى خُرُوجٍ مِّن سَبِيلٍ)

(Now we confess our sins, then is there any way to get out) Until His statement:

(فَالْحُكْمُ لِلَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْكَبِيرِ)

(So the judgment is only with Allah, the Most High, the Most Great!) 40:11-12 (meaning, there will be no way out, because you used to associate partners in worship with Allah whereas the believers worshipped Him Alone.

(قَالَ اخْسَئُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونَ - إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ  
مِّنْ عِبَادِي يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا ءَامِنَّا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا  
وَارْحَمْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّاحِمِينَ - فَاتَّخَذْتُمُوهُمْ  
سِخْرِيًّا حَتَّى أَنْسَوْكُمْ ذِكْرِي وَكُنْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ  
تَضْحَكُونَ - إِنِّي جَزَيْتُهُمُ الْيَوْمَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا إِنَّهُمْ  
هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ)

(108. He (Allah) will say: "Remain you in it with ignominy! And speak you not to Me!") (109. Verily, there was a party of My servants who used to say: "Our Lord! We believe, so forgive us and have mercy on us, for You are the Best of all who show mercy!") (110. But you took them for a laughing stock, so much so that they made you forget My remembrance while you used to laugh at them!) (111. Verily, I have rewarded them this Day for their patience; they are indeed the ones that are successful.)

## Allah's Response and Rejection of the Disbelievers

This is the response of Allah to the disbelievers when they ask Him to bring them out of the Fire and send them back to this world. He will say:

(اٰخَسُوْا فِيْهَا)

(Remain you in it with ignominy!) meaning, abide therein, humiliated, despised and scorned.

(وَلَا تُكَلِّمُوْنَ)

(And speak you not to Me!) means, `do not ask for this again, for I will not respond to you. Al-`Awfi reported from Ibn `Abbas concerning this Ayah,

(اٰخَسُوْا فِيْهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُوْنَ)

(Remain you in it with ignominy! And speak you not to Me!) "These are the words of Ar-Rahman when silencing them." Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `Abdullah bin `Amr said, "The people of Hell will call on Malik for forty years, and he will not answer them. Then he will respond and tell them that they are to abide therein. By Allah, their cries will mean nothing to Malik or to the Lord of Malik. Then they will call on their Lord and will say,

(قَالُوْا رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَالِّينَ  
- رَبَّنَا اٰخْرَجْنَا مِنْهَا فَاِنَّ عُدْنَا فَاِنَّا ظٰلِمُوْنَ )

(Our Lord! Our wretchedness overcame us, and we were (an) erring people. Our Lord! Bring us out of this. If ever we return (to evil), then indeed we shall be wrongdoers.) )23:106-107( Allah will not answer them for a time span equivalent to twice the duration of this world. Then He will reply:

(اٰخَسُوْا فِيْهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُوْنَ)

(Remain you in it with ignominy! And speak you not to Me!) By Allah, the people will not utter a single word after that, and they will merely be in the Fire of Hell, sighing in a high and low tone. Their voices are likened to those of donkeys, which start in a high tone and end in a low tone." Then Allah will remind them of their sins in this world and how they used to make fun of His believing servants and close friends:

(إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِي يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا ءَامَنَّا  
فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّحِمِينَ  
فَاتَّخَذْتُمُوهُمْ سِخْرِيًّا)

(Verily, there was a party of My servants who used to say: "Our Lord! We believe, so forgive us and have mercy on us, for You are the Best of all who show mercy!" But you took them for a laughing stock,) meaning, `you made fun of them for calling on Me and praying to Me,'

(حَتَّىٰ أَنْسَوَكُمُ ذِكْرِي)

(so much so that they made you forget My remembrance) means, your hatred for them made you forget what I would do to you.

(وَكُنْتُمْ مِّنْهُمْ تَضْحَكُونَ)

(while you used to laugh at them!) means, at their deeds and worship. This is like the Ayah:

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا كَانُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا  
يَضْحَكُونَ - وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِهِمْ يَتَغَامَزُونَ)

(Verily, those who committed crimes used to laugh at those who believed. And, whenever they passed by them, used to wink one to another.) 83:29-30( meaning, they used to slander them in mockery. Then Allah tells us how He will reward His friends and righteous servants, and says:

(إِنِّي جَزَيْتُهُمُ الْيَوْمَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا)

(Verily, I have rewarded them this Day for their patience;) meaning, `for the harm and mockery that you inflicted on them,

(أَنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ)

(they are indeed the ones that are successful.) I have caused them to attain the victory of joy, safety, Paradise and salvation from the Fire.'

(قَالَ كَمْ لَبِئْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ - قَالُوا لَبِئْنَا  
يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ فَاسْأَلِ الْعَادِّينَ - قَالَ إِنْ لَبِئْتُمْ  
إِلَّا قَلِيلًا لَوْ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ - أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا  
خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ - فَتَعَلَى  
اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ  
الْكَرِيمِ )

(112. He will say: "What number of years did you stay on earth") (113. They will say: "We stayed a day or part of a day. Ask of those who keep account.") (114. He will say: "You stayed not but a little, if you had only known!") (115. "Did you think that We had created you in play, and that you would not be brought back to Us") (116. So Exalted be Allah, the True King: None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Lord of Al-`Arsh Al-Karim!)

**Allah tells them how much they wasted in their short lives in this world by failing to obey Allah and worship Him Alone.**

If they had been patient during their short stay in this world, they would have attained victory just like His pious close friends.

(قَالَ كَمْ لَبِئْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ )

(He will say: "What number of years did you stay on earth") means, how long did you stay in this world

(قَالُوا لَبِئْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ فَاسْأَلِ الْعَادِّينَ )

(They will say: "We stayed a day or part of a day. Ask of those who keep account.") meaning, those who keep the records.

(قَالَ إِنْ لَبِئْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا)

(He will say: "You stayed not but a little...") meaning, it was only a short time, no matter how you look at it.

(لَوْ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ)

(if you had only known!) means, you would not have preferred the transient to the eternal, and treated yourself in this bad way, and earned the wrath of Allah in this short period. If you had patiently obeyed Allah and worshipped Him as the believers did, you would have attained victory just as they did.

### Allah did not create His Servants in vain

(أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا)

(Did you think that We had created you in play,) means, 'did you think that you were created in vain, with no purpose, with nothing required of you and no wisdom on Our part' Or it was said that "in play" meant to play and amuse yourselves, like the animals were created, who have no reward or punishment. But you were created to worship Allah and carry out His commands.

(وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ)

(and that you would not be brought back to Us) means, that you would not be brought back to the Hereafter. This is like the Ayah:

(أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى)

(Does man think that he will be left neglected) )75:36(

(فَتَعَالَى اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ)

(So Exalted be Allah, the True King.) means, sanctified be He above the idea that he should create anything in vain, for He is the True King Who is far above doing such a thing.

(لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ)

(None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Lord of Al-`Arsh Al-Karim!) The Throne is mentioned because it is the highest point of all creation, and it is described as Karim, meaning beautiful in appearance and splendid in form, as Allah says elsewhere:

(أُنَبِّئْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍ كَرِيمٍ)

(every good kind We cause to grow therein) )26:7(.

(وَمَنْ يَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ لَا بُرْهَانَ لَهُ بِهِ  
فَإِنَّمَا حِسَابُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ -  
وَقُلْ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ وَارْحَمْ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّحِمِينَ )

(117. And whoever invokes besides Allah, any other god, of whom he has no proof; then his reckoning is only with his Lord. Surely, disbelievers will not be successful.) (118. And say : "My Lord! Forgive and have mercy, for You are the Best of those who show mercy!")

**Shirk is the Worst form of Wrong, its Practitioner shall never succeed. Allah threatens those who associate anything else with Him and worship anything with Him. He informs that those who associate others with Allah:**

(لَا بُرْهَانَ لَهُ)

(of whom he has no proof), meaning no evidence for what he says. Then Allah says:

(وَمَنْ يَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ لَا بُرْهَانَ لَهُ بِهِ)

(And whoever invokes, besides Allah, any other god, of whom he has no proof;) this is a conditional sentence, whose fulfilling clause is:

(فَإِنَّمَا حِسَابُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ)

(then his reckoning is only with his Lord.) meaning, Allah will call him to account for that. Then Allah tells us:

(إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ)

(Surely, disbelievers will not be successful.) meaning, they will not be successful with Him on the Day of Resurrection; they will not prosper or be saved.

(وَقُلْ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ وَارْحَمْ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّحِمِينَ )

(And say: "My Lord! Forgive and have mercy, for You are the best of those who show mercy!") Here Allah is teaching us to recite this supplication, for forgiveness, in a general sense, means wiping away sins and concealing them from people, and mercy means guiding a person and helping him to say and do good things.

## The Tafsir of Surat An-Nur

(Chapter - 24)

Which was Revealed in Al-Madinah

(بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ)

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

(سُورَةٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهَا وَفَرَضْنَاهَا وَأَنْزَلْنَا فِيهَا آيَاتٍ  
بَيِّنَاتٍ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ - الزَّانِيَةُ وَالزَّانِي فَاجْلِدُوا  
كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا مِائَةَ جَلْدَةٍ وَلَا تَأْخُذْكُمْ بِهِمَا رَأْفَةٌ  
فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ  
وَلِيَشْهَدُوا عَذَابَهُمَا طَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(1. A Surah which We have sent down and which We have enjoined (Faradnaha), and in it We have revealed manifest Ayat, that you may remember.) (2. The Zaniyah and the Zani, flog each of them with a hundred stripes. Let not pity withhold you in their case, in a punishment prescribed by Allah, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. And let a party of the believers witness their punishment.)

### The Importance of Surat An-Nur

(سُورَةٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهَا)

(A Surah which We have sent down) Here Allah is pointing out the high esteem in which He holds this Surah, which is not to say that other Surahs are not important.

(وَفَرَضْنَاهَا)

(and which We have enjoined,) Mujahid and Qatadah said, "This means: We have explained what is lawful and unlawful, commands and prohibitions, and the prescribed punishments." Al-Bukhari said, "Those who read it: Faradnaha, say that it means: "We have enjoined them upon you and those who come after you."

(وَأَنْزَلْنَا فِيهَا آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ)

(and in it We have revealed manifest Ayat,) means, clearly explained,

(لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ)

(that you may remember.)

### The Explanation of the Prescribed Punishment for Zina (Illicit Sex)

Then Allah says:

(الزَّانِيَةُ وَالزَّانِي فَاجْلِدُوا كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا مِائَةَ جَلْدَةٍ)

(The Zaniyah and the Zani, flog each of them with a hundred stripes.) This honorable Ayah contains the ruling on the law of retaliation for the person who commits illegal sex, and details of the punishment. Such a person will either be unmarried, meaning that he has never been married, or he will be married, meaning that he has had intercourse within the bounds of a lawful marriage, and he is free, adult and of sound mind. As for the virgin who is unwedded, the prescribed punishment is one hundred stripes, as stated in this Ayah. In addition to this he is to be banished from his homeland for one year, as was recorded in the Two Sahihs from Abu Hurayrah and Zayd bin Khalid Al-Juhani in the Hadith about the two bedouins who came to the Messenger of Allah . One of them said, "O Messenger of Allah, this son of mine was employed by this man, and committed Zina with his wife. I paid a ransom with him on behalf of my son one hundred sheep and a slave-girl, but when I asked the people of knowledge, they said that my son should be given one hundred stripes and banished for a year, and that this man's wife should be stoned to death." The Messenger of Allah said:

«وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَأَقْضِيَنَّ بَيْنَكُمَا بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى، الْوَالِيدَةَ وَالْغَنَمَ رَدًّا عَلَيْكَ، وَعَلَى ابْنِكَ جَدُّ مِائَةٍ وَتَعْرِيبُ عَامٍ، وَأَعْدُ يَا أُنَيْسُ لِرَجُلٍ مِنْ أَسْلَمَ إِلَى امْرَأَةٍ هَذَا، فَإِنْ اعْتَرَفَتْ فَأَرْجُمُهَا»

(By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, I will judge between you both according to the Book of Allah. Take back the slave-girl and sheep, and your son is to be given one hundred stripes and banished for one year. O Unays -- he said to a man from the tribe of Aslam -- go to this man's wife, and if she confesses, then stone her to death.) Unays went to her and she confessed, so he stoned her to death. This indicates that if the person who is guilty of illegal sex is a virgin and unmarried, he should be banished in addition to being given one hundred stripes. But if

married, meaning he has had intercourse within the bounds of lawful marriage, and he is free, adult and of sound mind, then he should be stoned to death. Imam Malik recorded that `Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, stood up and praised and glorified Allah, then he said; "O people! Allah sent Muhammad with the truth, and revealed to him the Book. One of the things that was revealed to him was the Ayah of stoning to death, which we have recited and understood. The Messenger of Allah carried out the punishment of stoning and after him we did so, but I am afraid that as time goes by, some will say that they did not find the Ayah of stoning in the Book of Allah, and they will go astray because they abandoned one of the obligations revealed by Allah. Stoning is something that is prescribed in the Book of Allah for the person -- man or woman -- who commits illegal sex, if he or she is married, if decisive evidence is produced, or if pregnancy results from that, or if they confess to it." It was also recorded in the Two Sahihs in the lengthy Hadith of Malik, from which we have quoted briefly only the portion that is relevant to the current discussion.

### Do not feel pity for Them when carrying out the Prescribed Punishment

(وَلَا تَأْخُذْكُمْ بِهِمَا رَأْفَةٌ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ)

(Let not pity withhold you in their case, in a punishment prescribed by Allah,) Meaning, with a ruling prescribed by Allah. So the meaning of the Ayah is: "Do not feel too sorry for them where the laws of Allah are established." This does not mean that we should not naturally feel pity when carrying out the punishment. What is prohibited here is the kind of pity that may make the judge ignore the punishment altogether. This is what is not permitted for the judge. Mujahid said,

(وَلَا تَأْخُذْكُمْ بِهِمَا رَأْفَةٌ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ)

(Let not pity withhold you in their case, in a punishment prescribed by Allah,) "If the matter is taken to the ruling authority, the punishment has to be carried out and cannot be stopped." This was also narrated from Sa`id bin Jubayr and `Ata' bin Abi Rabah. It was recorded in a Hadith:

«تَعَاقُوا الْحُدُودَ فِيمَا بَيْنَكُمْ، فَمَا بَلَغَنِي مِنْ حَدٍّ فَقَدْ وَجَبَ»

(Compromise with the matter of prescribed punishment mutually sorting it out among yourselves, for once a matter where the prescribed punishment is required reaches me, I am obliged to carry it out.) Allah's saying:

(إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ)

(if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. ) means, then do that, carry out the punishments on those who commit illegal sex, and strike them hard without causing any wound, so that he and

others like him will be deterred by the terror of that. In Al-Musnad, it was recorded that one of the Companions said, "O Messenger of Allah, when I slaughter a sheep I feel pity for it." He said,

«وَلَا فِي ذَلِكَ أَجْرٌ»

(You be rewarded for that.)

### Carry out the Prescribed Punishment in Public

وَلْيَشْهَدْ عَذَابَهُمَا طَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

(And let a party of the believers witness their punishment.) This is more humiliating for the people who are guilty of illegal sex, if they are flogged in front of the people. This is because it is more effective as a deterrent and it conveys the sense of scandal and rebuke. Al-Hasan Al-Basri said,

وَلْيَشْهَدْ عَذَابَهُمَا طَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

(And let a party of the believers witness their punishment.) "Publicly."

الزَّانِي لَا يَنْكِحُ إِلَّا زَانِيَةً أَوْ مُشْرِكَةً وَالزَّانِيَةُ لَا يَنْكِحُهَا إِلَّا زَانٍ أَوْ مُشْرِكٌ وَحُرْمٌ ذَلِكَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

(3. The Zani marries not but a Zaniyah or a Mushrikah; and the Zaniyah, none marries her except a Zani or a Mushrik. Such a thing is forbidden to the believers.) Here Allah tells us that the Zani (male who is guilty of illegal sex) does not have intercourse except with a Zaniyah (female who is guilty of illegal sex) or a Mushrikah (female idolator), meaning that no one would go along with him in this action except a sinful woman who is also guilty of Zina, or a Mushrikah who does not think it is unlawful. By the same token,

وَالزَّانِيَةُ لَا يَنْكِحُهَا إِلَّا زَانٍ

(and the Zaniyah, none marries her except a Zani) a sinful man who is guilty of fornication,

(أَوْ مُشْرِكَةً)

(or a Mushrik) (a man) who does not think it is unlawful.

## (وَحُرِّمَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(Such a thing is forbidden to the believers.) meaning, indulging in this, or marrying prostitutes, or marrying chaste women to immoral men. Qatadah and Muqatil bin Hayyan said: "Allah forbade the believers from marrying prostitutes." This Ayah is like the Ayah (about marrying slave-girls):

## (مُحْصَنَاتٍ غَيْرَ مُسَفِّحَاتٍ وَلَا مُتَّخِذَاتِ أَخْدَانٍ)

(they should be chaste, not committing illegal sex, nor taking boyfriends.) 4:25( And His saying:

## (مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحِينَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِي أَخْدَانٍ)

(desiring chastity not committing illegal sexual intercourse, nor taking them as girlfriends) 5:5( Imam Ahmad recorded that `Abdullah bin `Amr, may Allah be pleased with him, said that a man among the believers asked the Messenger of Allah for permission (to marry) a woman known as Umm Mahzul, who used to commit adultery, and who had stated the condition that she should spend on him. So he asked the Messenger of Allah for permission, or he mentioned the matter to him. The Messenger of Allah recited to him:

## (الزَّانِي لَا يَنْكِحُ إِلَّا زَانِيَةً أَوْ مُشْرِكَةً وَالزَّانِيَةُ لَا يَنْكِحُهَا إِلَّا زَانٍ أَوْ مُشْرِكٌ وَحُرِّمَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(The Zani marries not but a Zaniyah or a Mushrikah; and the Zaniyah, none marries her except Zani or a Mushrik. Such a thing is forbidden to the believers.) 24:3( Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Abu Hurayrah said,

## «لَا يَنْكِحُ الزَّانِي الْمَجْلُودُ إِلَّا مِثْلَهُ»

(A Zani who has been flogged should not marry anyone except someone who is like him.) A similar report was recorded by Abu Dawud in his Sunan.

## (وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَاجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمَانِينَ جَلْدَةً وَلَا تَقْبَلُوا لَهُمْ

شَهَادَةٌ أَبَدًا وَأَوْلِيكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا  
مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ )

(4. And those who accuse chaste women, and produce not four witnesses, flog them with eighty stripes, and reject their testimony forever. They indeed are the rebellious.) (5. Except those who repent thereafter and do righteous deeds; (for such) verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.)

### The Prescribed Punishment for slandering Chaste Women

This Ayah states the prescribed punishment for making false accusations against chaste women, i.e., those who are free, adult and chaste. If the person who is falsely accused is a man, the same punishment of flogging also applies. If the accuser produces evidence that what he is saying is true, then the punishment does not apply. Allah said:

(ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَاجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمَانِينَ  
جَلْدَةً وَلَا تَقْبَلُوا لَهُمْ شَهَادَةً أَبَدًا وَأَوْلِيكَ هُمُ  
الْفَاسِقُونَ)

(and produce not four witnesses, flog them with eighty stripes, and reject their testimony forever. They indeed are the rebellious.) If the accuser cannot prove that what he is saying is true, then three rulings apply to him: (firstly) that he should be flogged with eighty stripes, (secondly) that his testimony should be rejected forever, and (thirdly) that he should be labelled as a rebellious who is not of good character, whether in the sight of Allah or of mankind.

### Explaining the Repentance of the One Who makes a False Accusation

Then Allah says:

(إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ  
غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ )

(Except those who repent thereafter and do righteous deeds; (for such) verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) This exception refers to the second and third rulings mentioned above. The flogging has been carried out regardless of whether he repents or persists, and after that there is no further punishment, as is agreed among the scholars. If he repents, then

his testimony may be accepted, and he is no longer to be regarded as a rebellious. This was the view of Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib -- the leader of the Tabi`in -- and also a group among the Salaf. Ash-Sha`bi and Ad-Dahhak said, "His testimony cannot be accepted even if he does repent, unless he himself admits that he said something false, in which case his testimony may be accepted." And Allah knows best.

(وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ أَزْوَاجَهُمْ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُمْ شُهَدَاءُ إِلَّا  
أَنْفُسُهُمْ فَشَهَدُوا أَحَدِهِمْ أَرْبَعُ شَهَادَاتٍ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ  
لَمِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ - وَالْخَامِسَةَ أَنَّ لَعْنَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ  
كَانَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ - وَيَذَرُوهَا عَنْهَا الْعَذَابَ أَنْ  
تَشْهَدَ أَرْبَعَ شَهَادَاتٍ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ -  
وَالْخَامِسَةَ أَنَّ غَضَبَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ  
الصَّادِقِينَ - وَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ  
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ حَكِيمٌ )

(6. And for those who accuse their wives, but have no witnesses except themselves, let the testimony of one of them be four testimonies by Allah that he is one of those who speak the truth.) (7. And the fifth (testimony); invoking of the curse of Allah on him if he be of those who tell a lie.) (8. But she shall avert the punishment from her, if she bears witness four times by Allah, that he is telling a lie.) (9. And the fifth; should be that the wrath of Allah be upon her if he speaks the truth.) (10. And had it not been for the grace of Allah and His mercy on you! And that Allah is the One Who forgives and accepts repentance, the All-Wise.)

### Details of Al-Li`an

This Ayah offers a way out for husbands. If a husband has accused his wife but cannot come up with proof, he can swear the Li`an (the oath of condemnation) as Allah commanded. This means that he brings her before the Imam and states what he is accusing her of. The ruler then asks him to swear four times by Allah in front of four witnesses

(إِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ)

(that he is one of those who speak the truth) in his accusation of her adultery.

وَالْخَامِسَةَ أَنَّ لَعْنَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ  
الْكَذِبِينَ )

(And the fifth; the invoking of the curse of Allah on him if he be of those who tell a lie.) If he says that, then she is divorced from him by the very act of this Li`an; she is forever forbidden for him and he must give her Mahr to her. The punishment for Zina should be carried out on her, and nothing can prevent the punishment except if she also swears the oath of condemnation (Li`an) and swears by Allah four times that he is one of those who lied, i.e., in what he is accusing her of;

وَالْخَامِسَةَ أَنَّ غَضَبَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ  
الصَّادِقِينَ )

(And the fifth; should be that the crath of Allah be upon her if he speaks the truth.) Allah says:

(وَيَذَرُوهَا عَنْهَا الْعَذَابَ)

(But she shall avert the punishment) meaning, the prescribed punishment.

(وَيَذَرُوهَا عَنْهَا الْعَذَابَ أَنْ تَشْهَدَ أَرْبَعَ شَهَادَاتٍ  
بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الْكَذِبِينَ - وَالْخَامِسَةَ أَنَّ غَضَبَ  
اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ )

(if she bears witness four times by Allah, that he is telling a lie. And the fifth; should be that the wrath of Allah be upon her if he speaks the truth.) The wrath of Allah is mentioned specially in the case of the woman, because usually a man would not go to the extent of exposing his wife and accusing her of Zina unless he is telling the truth and has good reason to do this, and she knows that what he is accusing her of is true. So in her case the fifth testimony calls for the wrath of Allah to be upon her, for the one upon whom is the wrath of Allah, is the one who knows the truth yet deviates from it. Then Allah mentions His grace and kindness to His creation in that He has prescribed for them a way out of their difficulties. Allah says:

(وَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ)

(And had it not been for the grace of Allah and His mercy on you!) meaning, many of your affairs would have been too difficult for you,

(وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ)

(And that Allah is the One Who forgives and accepts repentance,) means, from His servants, even if that comes after they have sworn a confirmed oath.

(حَكِيمٌ)

(the All-Wise. ) in what He prescribes and commands and forbids. There are Hadiths which explain how we are to put this Ayah into effect, why it was revealed and concerning whom among the Companions it was revealed.

### The Reason why the Ayah of Li` an was revealed

Imam Ahmad recorded that Ibn ` Abbas said: "When the Ayah

(وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِأَرْبَعَةِ  
شُهَدَاءَ فَاجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمَانِينَ جَلْدَةً وَلَا تَقْبَلُوا لَهُمْ  
شَهَادَةً أَبَدًا)

(And those who accuse chaste women, and produce not four witnesses, flog them with eighty stripes, and reject their testimony forever) )24:4( was revealed, Sa` d bin ` Ubadah, may Allah be pleased with him, -- the leader of the Ansar -- said, `Is this how it was revealed, O Messenger of Allah' The Messenger of Allah said:

«يَا مَعْشَرَ الْأَنْصَارِ أَلَا تَسْمَعُونَ مَا يَقُولُ  
سَيِّدُكُمْ؟»

(O Ansar, did you hear what your leader said) They said, `O Messenger of Allah, do not blame him, for he is a jealous man. By Allah, he never married a woman who was not a virgin, and he never divorced a woman but none of us would dare to marry her because he is so jealous.' Sa` d said, `By Allah, O Messenger of Allah, I know that it (the Ayah) is true and is from Allah, but I am surprised. If I found some wicked man lying down with my wife, should I not disturb him until I have brought four witnesses By Allah, he would have finished what he was doing before I could bring them!' A little while later, Hilal bin Umayyah -- one of the three whose repentance had been accepted -- came back from his lands at night and found a man with his wife. He saw with his own eyes and heard with his own ears, but he did not disturb him until the morning. In the morning he went to the Messenger of Allah and said, `O Messenger of Allah, I came to my wife at night and found a man with her, and I saw with my own eyes and heard with my own ears.' The Messenger of Allah did not like what he had said and got very upset. The Ansar gathered around him and said, `We were being tested by what Sa` d bin Ubadah said, and now the Messenger of Allah will punish Hilal bin Umayyah and declare his testimony before people

to be unacceptable.' Hilal said: `By Allah, I hope that Allah will make for me a way out from this problem.' Hilal said, `O Messenger of Allah, I see how upset you are by what I have said, but Allah knows that I am telling the truth.' By Allah, the Messenger of Allah wanted to have him flogged, but then Allah sent revelation to His Messenger . When the revelation came upon him, they knew about it from the change in his face, so they would leave him alone until the revelation was finished. Allah revealed the Ayah:

(وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ أَزْوَاجَهُمْ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُمْ شُهَدَاءُ إِلَّا  
أَنْفُسُهُمْ فَشَهَدَتْ أَحَدِهِمْ أَرْبَعُ شَهَادَاتٍ بِاللَّهِ)

(And for those who accuse their wives, but have no witnesses except themselves, let the testimony of one of them be four testimonies by Allah....) Then the revelation was finished and the Messenger of Allah said,

«أَبْتِئِرْ يَا هِلَالُ فَقَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكَ فَرَجًا وَمَخْرَجًا»

(Rejoice, O Hilal, for Allah has made a way out for you.) Hilal said, `I had been hoping for this from my Lord, may He be glorified.' The Messenger of Allah said:

«أَرْسِلُوا إِلَيْهَا»

(Send for her.) So they sent for her and she came. The Messenger of Allah recited this Ayah to them both, and reminded them that the punishment of the Hereafter is more severe than the punishment in this world. Hilal said, `By Allah, O Messenger of Allah, I have spoken the truth about her.' She said, `He is lying.' The Messenger of Allah said,

«لَاعِنُوا بَيْنَهُمَا»

(Make them both swear the Li`an.) So Hilal was told, `Testify.' So he testified four times by Allah that he was one of those who speak the truth. When he came to the fifth testimony, he was told, `O Hilal, have Taqwa of Allah, for the punishment of this world is easier than the punishment of the Hereafter, and this will mean that the punishment will be inevitable for you.' He said, `By Allah, Allah will not punish me for it, just as He has not caused me to be flogged for it.' So he testified for the fifth time that the curse of Allah would be upon him if he was telling a lie. Then it was said to his wife, `Testify four times by Allah that he is telling a lie.' And when his wife reached the fifth testimony, she was told, `Have Taqwa of Allah, for the punishment of this world is easier than the punishment of the Hereafter, and this will mean that the punishment will be inevitable for you.' She hesitated for a while, and was about to admit her guilt, then she said: `By Allah, I will not expose my people to shame, and she swore the fifth oath that the wrath of Allah would be upon her if he was telling the truth.' Then the Messenger of Allah separated them, and decreed that her child should not be attributed to any father, nor should the child be accused, and whoever accused her or her child, they would be subject to punishment. He also decreed that Hilal( was not obliged to house her or feed her, because they had not been separated by divorce, nor had he died and left her a widow. He said,

«إِنْ جَاءَتْ بِهِ أَصَيْهَبَ (أُرَيْسِحَ) حَمَشَ  
السَّاقَيْنِ، فَهُوَ لِهَيْلَالٍ، وَإِنْ جَاءَتْ بِهِ أَوْرَقَ جَعْدًا  
جُمَالِيًّا خَدَلَجَ السَّاقَيْنِ سَايَغَ الْأَلَيْتَيْنِ، فَهُوَ لِلَّذِي  
رُمِيَتْ بِهِ»

(If she gives birth to a red-haired child (with skinny thighs) and thin legs, then he is Hilal's child, but if she gives birth to a curly-haired child with thick legs and plump buttocks, then this is what she is accused of.) She subsequently gave birth to a child who was curly-haired with thick legs and plump buttocks, and the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَوْ لَا الْأَيْمَانُ لَكَانَ لِي وَلَهَا شَأْنٌ»

(Were it not for the oath that she swore, I would deal with her.)" `Ikrimah said, "The child grew up to become the governor of Egypt, and he was given his mother's name and was not attributed to any father." Abu Dawud recorded a similar but briefer report. This Hadith has corroborating reports in the books of Sahih and elsewhere, with many chains of narration, including the report narrated by Al-Bukhari from Ibn `Abbas, that Hilal bin Umayyah accused his wife before the Prophet with Sharik bin Sahma'. The Prophet said,

«الْبَيِّنَةُ أَوْحَدٌ فِي ظَهْرِكَ»

(Evidence or the punishment on your back.) He said, "O Messenger of Allah, if any one of us saw a man with his wife, how could he go and get evidence" The Prophet again said,

«الْبَيِّنَةُ وَالْأَحَدُ فِي ظَهْرِكَ»

(Evidence otherwise the punishment on your back.) Hilal said, "By the One Who sent you with the truth! I am telling the truth and Allah will reveal something that will protect my back from the punishment. " Then Jibril came down and brought the revelation,

(وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ أَزْوَاجَهُمْ)

(And for those who accuse their wives,) Then he recited until he reached:

(إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ)

(that he is one of those who speak the truth) 24:6. When the revelation had finished, the Prophet sent for them both. Hilal came and gave his testimony, and the Prophet said,

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّ أَحَدَكُمَا كَاذِبٌ، فَهَلْ مِنْكُمَا  
تَائِبٌ؟»

(Allah knows that one of you is lying. Will one of you repent) Then she stood up and gave her testimony, and when she reached the fifth oath, they stopped her and said, "If you swear the fifth oath and you are lying, the curse of Allah will be inevitable." Ibn `Abbas said, "She hesitated and kept quiet until we thought that she had changed her mind, then she said, 'I will not dishonor my people today', and she went ahead. Then the Messenger of Allah said,

«أُبْصِرُوهَا، فَإِنْ جَاءَتْ بِهِ أَكْحَلُ الْعَيْنَيْنِ سَابِغِ  
الْأَلْيَتَيْنِ خَدَّجِ السَّاقَيْنِ، فَهُوَ لِشَرِيكِ ابْنِ  
سَحْمَاءَ»

(Wait until she gives birth, and if she gives birth to a child whose eyes look as if they are ringed with kohl and who has plump buttocks and thick legs, then he is the child of Sharik bin Sahma'.) She gave birth to a child who matched this description, and the Prophet said,

«لَوْ لَأ مَا مَضَى مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ لَكَانَ لِي وَ لَهَا  
شَأْنٌ»

(Were it not for the Book of Allah, I would deal with her.) This version was recorded only by Al-Bukhari, but the event has been narrated with additional chains of narration from Ibn `Abbas and others. Imam Ahmad recorded that Sa`id bin Jubayr said: During the governorship of Ibn Az-Zubayr I was asked about the couple who engage in Li`an, and whether they should be separated, and I did not know the answer. I got up and went to the house of Ibn `Umar, and said, "O Abu `Abdur-Rahman, should the couple who engage in Li`an be separated" He said, "Subhan Allah, the first one to ask about this was so-and-so the son of so-and-so. He said, 'O Messenger of Allah, what do you think of a man who sees his wife committing an immoral sin if he speaks he will be speaking about something very serious, and if he keeps quiet he will be keeping quiet about something very serious.' )The Prophet ( kept quiet and did not answer him. Later on, he came to him and said, 'What I asked you about is something with which I myself being tested with.' Then Allah revealed the Ayat,

«وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ أَزْوَاجَهُمْ»

(And for those who accuse their wives,) until he reached:

«أَنَّ غَضَبَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ»

(That the wrath of Allah be upon her if he speaks the truth.) He started to advise the man and remind him about Allah, and told him that the punishment of this world is easier than the punishment of the Hereafter. The man said: `By the One Who sent you with the truth, I was not telling you a lie.' Then the Prophet turned to the woman and advised the woman and reminded her about Allah, and told her that the punishment of this world is easier than the punishment of the Hereafter. The woman said, `By the One Who sent you with the truth, he is lying.' So the Prophet ( started with the man, who swore four times by Allah that he was one of those who speak the truth, and swore the fifth oath that the curse of Allah would be upon him if he were lying. Then he turned to the woman, who swore four times by Allah that he was lying, and swore the fifth oath that the wrath of Allah would be upon her if he was telling the truth. Then he separated them." It was also recorded by An-Nasa'i in his Tafsir, and by Al-Bukhari and Muslim in the Two Sahihs.

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا بِالْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ مِّنْكُمْ لَا تَحْسَبُوهُ شَرًّا لَّكُمْ بَلْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ مَا اكْتَسَبَ مِنَ الْإِثْمِ وَالَّذِي تَوَلَّى كِبْرَهُ مِنْهُمْ لَهُ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ )

(11. Verily, those who brought forth the slander are a group among you. Consider it not a bad thing for you. Nay, it is good for you. Unto every man among them will be paid that which he had earned of the sin, and as for him among them who had the greater share therein, his will be a great torment.)

### Al-Ifk (the Slander)

The next ten Ayat were all revealed concerning `A'ishah, the mother of the believers, may Allah be pleased with her, when the people of slander and falsehood among the hypocrites made their accusations against her and spread lies about her. Allah became jealous on her behalf and on behalf of His Prophet , and revealed her innocence to protect the honor of the Messenger of Allah . He said:

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا بِالْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ مِّنْكُمْ)

(Verily, those who brought forth the slander are a group among you.) meaning they were not one or two, but a group. Foremost among this group was `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul, the leader of the hypocrites, who fabricated the lie and whispered it to others, until some of the Muslims started to believe it, and others thought it might be possible and began to talk about it. This is how matters remained for almost a month, until Qur'an was revealed. This is reported in Sahih Hadiths. Imam Ahmad recorded that Az-Zuhri said: Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib, `Urwah bin Az-Zubayr, `Alqamah bin Waqqas and `Ubaydullah bin `Abdullah bin `Utbah bin Mas`ud told me about the story of `A'ishah, the wife of the Prophet , when the people of the slander said what they said about her, and Allah declared her innocence. Each of them told something about the story, and some of them knew more details than others or had memorized more than others. I learned the story from each of them, who had heard it from `A'ishah

herself, and what one told me confirmed what the others said. They mentioned that `A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, the wife of the Prophet, said: "When the Messenger of Allah wanted to go on a journey, he would cast lots among his wives, and the one whose lot was drawn would go with him." `A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, said, "So he drew lots among us with regard to a campaign he was going out on, and mine was drawn, so I went out with the Messenger of Allah. This was after the commandment of Hijab had been revealed, so I traveled in my howdah and stayed in it when we camped. We traveled until the Messenger of Allah completed his campaign, then we returned. As we were approaching Al-Madinah, we paused for a while, then they announced that the journey was to be resumed. When I heard this, I walked quickly away from the army to answer the call of nature, then I came back to my howdah. Then I put my hand to my chest and noticed that a necklace of mine that was made of onyx and cornelian had broken, so I went back and looked for it, and was delayed because of that. In the meantime, the people who used to lift my howdah onto my camel came along and put it on the camel, thinking that I was inside. In those times women were more slender and not so heavy, they only ate mouthfuls of food. So the people did not think anything of the howdah being so light when they lifted it up, as I was a young woman. They set off, and I found my necklace after the army had moved on. Then I came back to the place where we had stopped, and I saw no one to call or answer. So I went to the place where I had been, thinking that the people would miss me and come back for me. While I was sitting there, I fell asleep. tSafwan bin Al-Mu` attal As-Sulami Adh-Dhakwani had rested during the night behind the army. Then he set out just before daybreak and reached the place where I was in the morning, where he saw the outline of a person sleeping. He came to me and recognized me when he saw me, as he had seen me before Hijab was made obligatory for me. When he saw me and said `Truly, to Allah we belong, and truly, to Him we shall return,' I woke up, and covered my face with my Jilbab (outer garment). By Allah, he did not speak a word to me and I did not hear him say anything except `Truly, to Allah we belong, and truly, to Him we shall return,' until he brought his camel and made it kneel so that I could ride upon it, then he set out leading the camel until we caught up with the army at Zuhr time.

There are people who are doomed because of what happened to me, and the one who had the greater share therein was `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul. When we came back to Al-Madinah, I was ill for a month, and the people were talking about what the people of the slander were saying, and I knew nothing about it. What upset me when I was ill was that I did not see the kindness I used to see on the part of the Messenger of Allah. When I was ill; he would just come in and say,

«كَيْفَ تَيْغَمُ؟»

(How is that (lady)) That is what upset me. I did not feel that there was anything wrong until I went out after I felt better, and Umm Mistah went out with me, walking towards Al-Manasi`, which is where we used to go to relieve ourselves, and we would not go out for that purpose except at night. This was before we had lavatories close to our houses; our habit was similar to that of the early Arabs in that we went out into the deserts to relieve ourselves, because we considered it troublesome and harmful to have lavatories in our houses. So I went out with Umm Mistah, who was the daughter of Abu Ruhm bin Al-Muttalib bin `Abd Manaf, and her mother was the daughter of Sakhr bin `Amir, the paternal aunt of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq. Her son was Mistah bin Uthathah bin `Abbad bin Al-Muttalib. When we finished what we had to do, the daughter of Abu Ruhm Umm Mistah and I came back towards my house. Umm Mistah stumbled over her apron and said, `May Mistah be ruined!' I said to her, `What a bad thing you have said! Are you abusing a man who was present at Badr' She said, `Good grief, have you not heard what he said' I said, `What did he say' So she told me what the people of the slander were saying, which made me even more ill. When I returned home, the Messenger of Allah came in to me and greeted me, then he said,

## «كَيْفَ تَيْكُم؟»

(How is that (lady)) I said to him, `Will you give me permission to go to my parents' At that time I wanted to confirm the news by hearing it from them. The Messenger of Allah gave me permission, so I went to my parents and asked my mother, `O my mother, what are the people talking about' My mother said, `Calm down, for by Allah, there is no beautiful woman who is loved by her husband and has co-wives but those co-wives would find fault with her.' I said, `Subhan Allah! Are the people really talking about that' I wept throughout the whole night until morning. My tears never ceased and I did not sleep at all, and morning came while I was still weeping. Because the revelation had ceased, the Messenger of Allah called `Ali bin Abi Talib and Usamah bin Zayd, and consulted with them about divorcing his wife. As for Usamah bin Zayd, he told the Messenger of Allah about what he knew of his wife's innocence and his fondness for her. He said, `O Messenger of Allah, she is your wife, and we do not know anything about her but good.' But `Ali bin Abi Talib said, `O Messenger of Allah, Allah has not imposed restrictions on you, and there are plenty of other women besides her. If you ask her servant girl, she will tell you the truth.' So the Messenger of Allah called Barirah and said,

«أَيُّ بَرِيرَةَ هَلْ رَأَيْتِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ يَرِيْبِكِ مِنْ عَائِشَةَ؟»

(O Barirah, have you ever seen anything that might make you suspicious about `A'ishah) Barirah said to him, `By the One Who sent you with the truth, I have never seen anything for which I could blame her, apart from the fact that she is a young girl who sometimes falls asleep and leaves her family's dough unprotected so that the domestic goats come and eat it.' So then the Messenger of Allah got up and (addressed the people) and asked who could sort out `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul for him. While he was standing on the Minbar, the Messenger of Allah said,

«يَا مَعْشَرَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مَنْ يَعْذِرُنِي مِنْ رَجُلٍ قَدْ بَلَغَنِي أَدَاهُ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي، فَوَاللَّهِ مَا عَلِمْتُ عَلَى أَهْلِي إِلَّا خَيْرًا، وَلَقَدْ ذَكَرُوا رَجُلًا مَا عَلِمْتُ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا خَيْرًا، وَمَا كَانَ يَدْخُلُ عَلَى أَهْلِي إِلَّا مَعِي»

(O Muslims, who will help me against a man who has hurt me by slandering my family By Allah, I know nothing about my family but good, and the people are blaming a man of whom I know nothing except good, and he has never entered upon my family except with me.) Sa`d bin Mu`adh Al-Ansari stood up and said, `O Messenger of Allah, by Allah I will deal with him for you. If he is from (the tribe of) Al-Aws, then I will cut off his head, and if he is from our brothers of (the tribe of) Al-Khazraj, tell us what to do and we will do it.' Then Sa`d bin `Ubadah stood up. He was the leader of Al-Khazraj, and he was a righteous man, but he was overwhelmed with tribal chauvinism. He said to Sa`d bin Mu`adh, `By Allah, you will not kill him and you will never be able to kill him.' Then Usayd bin Hudayr, who was the cousin of Sa`d bin Mu`adh, stood up and said to Sa`d bin `Ubadah, `You are lying! By Allah, we will kill him,

and you are a hypocrite arguing on behalf of the hypocrites!' Then the two groups, Al-Aws and Al-Khazraj, started to get angry and were about to come to blows, with the Messenger of Allah standing there on the Minbar, trying to calm them down until they became quiet, then the Messenger of Allah also fell silent. On that day I kept on weeping so much, my tears never ceased and I did not sleep at all. My parents thought that my liver would burst from all that weeping. While they were sitting with me and I was weeping, a woman of the Ansar asked for permission to see me. I let her in, and she sat and wept with me. While we were in that state, the Messenger of Allah came in, greeted us and sat down. He had never sat with me since the rumors began, and a month had passed by without any revelation coming to him concerning my case. The Messenger of Allah recited the Tashahhud when he sat down, then he said,

«أَمَّا بَعْدُ، يَا عَائِشَةُ فَإِنَّهُ قَدْ بَلَغَنِي عَنْكَ كَذَا  
وَكَذَا، فَإِنْ كُنْتِ بَرِيئَةً فَسَيَبْرُئُكَ اللَّهُ، وَإِنْ كُنْتِ  
أَلَمَّتْ بِذَنْبٍ فَاسْتَغْفِرِي اللَّهَ ثُمَّ تُؤَيِّبِي إِلَيْهِ، فَإِنَّ  
الْعَبْدَ إِذَا اعْتَرَفَ بِذَنْبِهِ ثُمَّ تَابَ، تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ»

(Thereafter, O `A'ishah, I have been told such and such a thing about you, and if you are innocent, then Allah will reveal your innocence, but if you have committed a sin, then seek Allah's forgiveness and turn in repentance to Him, for when a servant confesses his sin and repents to Allah, He accepts his repentance.) When the Messenger of Allah finished what he had to say, my tears stopped completely and I no longer felt even one drop. Then I said to my father, `Answer the Messenger of Allah on my behalf.' He said, `I do not know what I should say to the Messenger of Allah.' So I said to my mother, `Answer the Messenger of Allah on my behalf.' She said, `I do not know what I should say to the Messenger of Allah.' So even though I was just a young girl who had not memorized much of the Qur'an, I said: `By Allah, I know that you have heard so much of this story that it has become planted in your minds and you believe it. So now if I tell you that I am innocent -- and Allah knows that I am innocent -- you will not believe me; but if I admit something to you -- and Allah knows that I am innocent -- you will believe me. By Allah, I cannot find any example to give you except for that which the Prophet Yusuf's father said,

(فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ وَاللَّهُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَى مَا تَصِفُونَ)

(So (for me) patience is most fitting. And it is Allah Whose help can be sought against that (lie) which you describe) )12:18(. Then I turned my face away and lay down on my bed. By Allah, at that point I knew I was innocent and that Allah would prove my innocence because I was innocent, but by Allah, I did not think that Allah would reveal Qur'an that would be forever recited concerning my situation, because I thought of myself as too insignificant for Allah to reveal anything concerning me. But I hoped that the Messenger of Allah would see a dream in which Allah would prove my innocence. By Allah, the Messenger of Allah did not move from where he was sitting and no one left the house before Allah sent down revelation to His Prophet, and he was overtaken by the state that always overtook him when the revelation came upon him, until drops of sweat like pearls would run down him, even on a winter's day; this was because of the heaviness of the words which were being revealed to him. When that state passed -- and the Messenger of Allah was smiling -- the first thing he said was,

«أَبْشِرِي يَا عَائِشَةُ، أَمَّا اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فَقَدْ بَرَّأَكَ»

(Be glad O `A'ishah, Allah has declared your innocence.) My mother said to me, `Get up and go to him.' I said, `By Allah, I will not go to him and I will not give praise to anyone except Allah, may He be glorified, for He is the One Who has proven my innocence.' So Allah revealed:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا بِالْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ مِّنْكُمْ

(Verily, those who brought forth the slander are a group among you.), until the ten Ayat. Allah revealed these Ayat concerning my innocence. Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, who used to spend on Mistah bin Uthathah because he was a close relative and because he was poor, said, `By Allah, I will never spend anything on him again after what he has said about `A'ishah. ' Then Allah revealed,

وَلَا يَأْتَلِ أُولَئِ الْفَضْلُ مِنْكُمْ وَالسَّعَةِ أَنْ يُؤْتُوا  
أُولَى الْقُرْبَى

(And let not those among you who are blessed with graces and wealth swear not to give to their kinsmen.) until His saying:

أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

(Do you not love that Allah should forgive you And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful) 24:22. So Abu Bakr said, `By Allah, certainly I love that Allah should forgive me.' So he resumed spending on Mistah as he had spent on him before, and he said, `By Allah, I shall never stop spending on him.' The Messenger of Allah asked Zaynab bint Jahsh about my situation, and said,

«يَا زَيْنَبُ مَاذَا عَلِمْتِ أَوْ رَأَيْتِ؟»

(O Zaynab, what do you know and what have you seen) She said, `O Messenger of Allah, may Allah protect my hearing and my sight. By Allah, I know nothing but good.' She is the one who used to compete with me among the wives of the Prophet , but Allah protected her (from telling lies) because of her piety. But her sister Hamnah bint Jahsh kept on fighting on her behalf, so she was doomed along with those who were doomed." Ibn Shihab said, "This is as much as we know about this group of people." It was also by Al-Bukhari and Muslim in their Sahih from the Hadith of Az-Zuhri, and by Ibn Ishaq also from Az-Zuhri. He also said: "Yahya bin `Abbad bin `Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr told me from his father, from `A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, and `Abdullah bin Abi Bakr bin Muhammad bin `Amr bin Hazm Al-Ansari told me from `Amrah, from `A'ishah, (a report) similar to that quoted above. And Allah knows best. Allah's saying:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا بِالْإِفْكِ

(Verily, those who brought forth the slander) means, the lies, falsehood and fabrications.

(عُصْبَةٌ)

(are a group) means, a gang among you.

(لَا تَحْسِبُوهُ شَرًّا لَّكُمْ)

(Consider it not a bad thing for you.) O family of Abu Bakr,

(بَلْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ)

(Nay, it is good for you.) means, in this world and the Hereafter, honorable mention in this world and raised status in the Hereafter. Allah demonstrated the esteem with which He regarded the family of Abu Bakr when He defended `A'ishah the Mother of the believers, may Allah be pleased with her, by revealing her innocence in the Qur'an,

(لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَطْلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ)

(Falsehood cannot come to it from before it or behind it. ...) 41:42( Ibn `Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, entered upon her when she was dying, he said to her, "Rejoice, for you are the wife of the Messenger of Allah and he used to love you; he did not marry any virgin other than you, and your innocence was revealed from heaven."

(لِكُلِّ امْرِيٍّ مِنْهُمْ مَّا كَتَسَبَ مِنَ الْإِثْمِ)

(Unto every man among them will be paid that which he had earned of the sin,) means, each of those who spoke about this matter and accused the Mother of the believers `A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, of any immoral action, will have a great share of punishment.

(وَالَّذِي تَوَلَّى كِبْرَهُ مِنْهُمْ)

(and as for him among them who had the greater share therein,) It was said that this referred to the one who initiated the rumors, or that it was the one who collected rumors and spread them among the people.

(لَهُ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ)

(his will be a great torment.) means, for that. He was `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul, may Allah disfigure him and curse him.

(لَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ  
بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ خَيْرًا وَقَالُوا هَذَا إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ - لَوْلَا جَاءُوا  
عَلَيْهِ بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَإِذْ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِالشُّهَدَاءِ  
فَأُولَئِكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ )

e(12. Why then, did not the believers, men and women, when you heard it, think good of their own people and say: "This is an obvious lie") (13. Why did they not produce four witnesses against him Since they have not produced witnesses! Then with Allah, they are the liars.)

### Disciplining the Believers for spreading the Slander

Here Allah disciplines the believers with regard to the matter of `A'ishah, because some of them spread this evil talk and the slander that had been mentioned. So Allah says:

(لَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ)

(Why then, when you heard it,) meaning, the talk which accused the Mother of the believers, may Allah be pleased with her,

(ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ خَيْرًا)

(the believers, men and women, think good of their own people) means, why did they not compare what was said to themselves -- if it was not befitting for them then it was even less appropriate for the Mother of the believers, and she was more likely to be innocent. Or it was said that this was revealed about Abu Ayyub Khalid bin Zayd Al-Ansari and his wife, may Allah be pleased with them. Imam Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar narrated, "The wife of Abu Ayyub Khalid bin Zayd Al-Ansari, Umm Ayyub, said to him, `O Abu Ayyub, have you heard what the people are saying about `A'ishah' He said, `Yes, and it is all lies. Would you do that, O Umm Ayyub' She said, `No, by Allah, I would not do that.' He said, `And by Allah, `A'ishah is better than you.' When the Qur'an was revealed, Allah mentioned those who spoke about the evil deed among the people of the slander,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا بِالْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ مِّنْكُمْ)

(Verily, those who brought forth the slander are a group among you.) )24:1( This refers to Hassan and his companions who said what they said. Then Allah said,

(لَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ)

(Why then, did not the believers, men, when you heard it, think...) means, as Abu Ayyub and his wife did." Allah's saying:

(ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ)

(the believers, men think...) meaning, 'why did they not think good, because the Mother of the believers is his wife and is closer to him.' This is concerned with innermost feelings;

(وَقَالُوا)

(and say:) means, with their tongues, verbally,

(هَذَا إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ)

("This (charge) is an obvious lie") means, a clear untruth told about the Mother of the believers, may Allah be pleased with her. What happened should not have been the cause of suspicion. The fact that the Mother of the believers came openly, riding on the camel of Safwan bin Al-Mu`attal at midday, with the entire army watching and the Messenger of Allah among them, should have made it clear that there was no cause for suspicion. If there had been anything suspicious about the matter, they would not have come openly in this manner in front of so many witnesses; they would have come secretly. On this basis, what the people of the slander said accusing the Mother of the believers was an utter lie, false speech and evil foolish talk, by which people who indulged in it lost out. Allah said:

(لَوْلَا جَاءُوا عَلَيْهِ بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ)

(Why did they not produce four witnesses against him) meaning, to prove that what they were saying was true.

(فَإِذْ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِالشُّهَدَاءِ فَأُولَئِكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُمُ  
الْكَاذِبُونَ)

(Since they have not produced witnesses! Then with Allah they are the liars.)Allah has ruled that they are indeed wicked liars.

(وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا  
وَالْآخِرَةِ لَمَسَّكُمْ فِي مَا أَفَضْتُمْ فِيهِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ  
- إِذْ تَلَقَّوْنَهُ بِأَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَتَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِكُمْ مَا لَيْسَ

لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَتَحْسَبُونَهُ هَيِّنًا وَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ  
(

(14. Had it not been for the grace of Allah and His mercy unto you in this world and in the Hereafter, a great torment would have touched you for that whereof you had spoken.) (15. When you were propagating it with your tongues, and uttering with your mouths that whereof you had no knowledge, you counted it a little thing, while with Allah it was very great.)

### The Grace of Allah towards the People of the Slander by giving Them the Opportunity to repent

Allah says,

(وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا  
وَالْآخِرَةِ)

(Had it not been for the grace of Allah and His mercy unto you in this world and in the Hereafter,) This is addressed to those who were indulging in discussing the matter of `Aishah, informing them that Allah has accepted their repentance in this world, and forgiven them because of their faith in the Hereafter.

(لِمَسَّكُمْ فِي مَا أَفَضْتُمْ فِيهِ)

(would have touched you for that whereof you had spoken.) with regard to the slander.

(عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ)

(a great torment) This refers to those who had faith in Allah because of their repentance, such as Mistah, Hassan and Hamnah bint Jahsh the sister of Zaynab bint Jahsh. As for the hypocrites who indulged in the slander, such as `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul and his like, they are not the ones who are referred to in this Ayah, because they did not have sufficient faith and righteous deeds to balance or cancel out what they had done. By the same token, the threats that were narrated for a specific deed are bound to be carried out, if there is no repentance or sufficient righteous deeds to balance or outweigh it. Then Allah says:

(إِذْ تَلَقَّوْنَهُ بِالسِّنِّتِمْ)

(When you were propagating it with your tongues,) Mujahid and Sa`id bin Jubayr said, "Some of you were relating it to others," where one says, 'I heard this from so-and-so, and so-and-so said such and such, and some of them mentioned such and such.' Others recited the Ayah: (إِذْ

(بِالسِّنِّتِكُمْ تَلْفُونَهُ) ("When you were inventing a lie with your tongues...") In Sahih Al-Bukhari, it is recorded that `A'ishah recited it like that. According to her, the meaning refers to lies which a person persists in telling. The first recitation is preferred and more popular, and the majority recite it that way, but the second is reported from `A'ishah, the Mother of the believers.

(وَتَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِكُمْ مَا لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ)

(and uttering with your mouths that whereof you had no knowledge,) means, you were speaking about something which you knew nothing about. Then Allah says:

(وَتَحْسَبُونَهُ هَيِّنًا وَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ)

(you counted it a little thing, while with Allah it was very great.) means, `you said what you said about the Mother of the believers and you thought that it was a trifling and insignificant matter, but even if she was not the wife of the Prophet, it still would not be an insignificant matter -- so how about when she is the wife of the Unlettered Prophet, the Seal of the Prophets and Leader of the Messengers' It is a very serious matter with Allah that such a thing should be said about the wife of His Messenger! For Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, feels great fury and anger over such matters, and He would never decree such a thing for the wife of any of His Prophets. If that is the case, then how about the best of the wives of any Prophet, the wife of the best of the sons of Adam in this world and the next Allah says:

(وَتَحْسَبُونَهُ هَيِّنًا وَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ)

(you counted it a little thing, while with Allah it was very great.) In the Two Sahihis it is reported that:

«إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَتَكَلَّمُ بِالْكَلِمَةِ مِنْ سَخَطِ اللَّهِ، لَا يَذْرِي مَا تَبْلُغُ، يَهْوِي بِهَا فِي النَّارِ أَبْعَدَ مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ»

(A man may say a word that angers Allah without realizing how far it will go, and because of that he will be thrown into Hell a distance greater than that between heaven and earth.) According to another report:

«لَا يُلْقِي لَهَا بَالًا»

(And he may not pay any attention to it.)