

created the heavens and the earth, is able to create the like of them. And He has decreed for them an appointed term, whereof there is no doubt. But the wrongdoers refuse but disbelief.)

**Allah says: ` This punishment, being resurrected blind, dumb and deaf, is what they deserve, because they disbelieved,**

(بَايْتِنَا)

(Our Ayat), i.e., Our proof and evidence, and did not think that the resurrection could ever happen.'

(وَقَالُوا أَءِذَا كُنَّا عِظْمًا وَرَفْتًا)

(and said: "When we are bones and fragments...") meaning, when we have disintegrated and our bodies have rotted away,

(أَعْيَانًا لِمَبْعُوثُونَ خَلْقًا جَدِيدًا)

(shall we really be raised up as a new creation) meaning, after we have disintegrated and disappeared and been absorbed into the earth, will we come back a second time Allah established proof against them and told them that He is able to do that, for He created the heavens and the earth, so raising them up again is easier for Him than that, as He says:

(الْخَلْقُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ خَلْقِ النَّاسِ)

(The creation of the heavens and the earth is indeed greater than the creation of mankind;) )40:57(

(أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَمْ يَعْى بِخَلْقِهِنَّ بِقَادِرٍ عَلَى أَنْ يُحْيِيَ الْمَوْتَى)

(Do they not see that Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth, and was not wearied by their creation, is able to give life to the dead) )46: 33(

(أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ يَقْدِرُ  
عَلَى أَنْ يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ بَلَى وَهُوَ الْخَلَّاقُ الْعَلِيمُ -  
إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ )

(Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth, able to create the like of them Yes, indeed! He is the All-Knowing Supreme Creator. Verily, His command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, "Be!" and it is!) (36:81-82) And Allah says here:

(أُولَئِكَ يَرَوْنَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ  
وَالْأَرْضَ قَادِرٌ عَلَى أَنْ يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ)

(See they not that Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth, is able to create the like of them.) meaning, on the Day of Resurrection, He will recreate and restore their bodies, as He created them in the first place.

(وَجَعَلَ لَهُمْ أَجَلًا لَّا رَيْبَ فِيهِ)

(And He has decreed for them an appointed term, whereof there is no doubt.) means, He has set a time for them to be re-created and brought forth from their graves, an appointed time which must surely come to pass. As Allah says:

(وَمَا نُؤَخِّرُهُ إِلَّا لِأَجَلٍ مَّعْدُودٍ )

(And We delay it only for a term (already) fixed.) (11:104)

(فَأَبَى الظَّالِمُونَ)

(But the wrongdoers refuse) -- after the proof has been established against them,

(إِلَّا كُفُورًا)

((and accept nothing) but disbelief.) means, they persist in their falsehood and misguidance.

(قُلْ لَوْ أَنْتُمْ تَمْلِكُونَ خَزَائِنَ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّي إِذَا  
لَأَمْسَكْتُمْ خَشْيَةَ الْإِنْفَاقِ وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ قَتُورًا )

(100. Say: "If you possessed the treasure of the mercy of my Lord, then you would surely hold back for fear of spending, and man is ever miserly!")

### Holding back is Part of Man's Nature

Allah says to His Messenger : "Tell them, O Muhammad, even if you had authority over the treasures of Allah, you would refrain from spending for fear of exhausting it." Ibn `Abbas and Qatadah said, "This means for fear of poverty," lest it run out, despite the fact that it can never be exhausted or come to an end. This is because it is part of your nature. So Allah says:

(وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ قَتُورًا)

(and man is ever miserly.) Ibn `Abbas and Qatadah said: "(This means) stingy and holding back." Allah says:

(أَمْ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُلْكِ فَإِذَا لَا يُؤْتُونَ النَّاسَ  
نَقِيرًا )

(Or have they a share in the dominion Then in that case they would not give mankind even a Naqira.) (4:53), meaning that even if they had a share in the authority of Allah, they would not have given anything to anyone, not even the amount of a Naqira (speck on the back of a date stone). Allah describes man as he really is, except for those whom Allah helps and guides. Miserliness, discontent and impatience are human characteristics, as Allah says:

(إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا - إِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ  
جَزُوعًا - وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الْخَيْرُ مَنُوعًا - إِلَّا الْمُصَلِّينَ )

(Verily, man was created very impatient; irritable when evil touches him; and stingy when good touches him. Except those who are devoted to Salah (prayers). ) (70:19-22). And there are many other such references in the Qur'an. This is an indication of the generosity and kindness of Allah. In the Two Sahihs it says:

«يَدُ اللَّهِ مَلَأَىٰ لَأَ يَغِيضُهَا نَفَقَةً سَحَاءُ اللَّيْلِ  
وَالنَّهَارِ، أَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا أَنْفَقَ مِنْذُ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ  
وَالْأَرْضَ، فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَغِضْ مَا فِي يَمِينِهِ»

(Allah's Hand is full and never decreases because of His giving night and day. Do you not see how much He has given since He created the heavens and the earth, yet that which is in His right hand never decreases.)

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى تِسْعَ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ فَاَسْأَلَ بَنِي  
إِسْرَائِيلَ إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ فَقَالَ لَهُ فِرْعَوْنُ إِنِّي لَأَظُنُّكَ  
يَمُوسَى مَسْحُورًا - قَالَ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَمَا أَنْزَلَ  
هُوْلَاءِ إِلَّا رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ بِصَائِرٍ  
وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّكَ يَفْرَعُونَ مَثْبُورًا - فَأَرَادَ أَنْ  
يَسْتَفِزَّهُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُ وَمَنْ مَعَهُ جَمِيعًا  
- وَقُلْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ لِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اسْكُنُوا الْأَرْضَ  
فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ الْآخِرَةِ جِئْنَا بِكُمْ لَفِيفًا )

(101. And indeed We gave Musa nine clear signs. Ask then the Children of Israel, when he came to them, then Fir`awn said to him: "O Musa ! I think you are indeed bewitched.") (102. He said: "Verily, you know that these signs have been sent down by none but the Lord of the heavens and the earth. And I think you are indeed, O Fir`awn, doomed to destruction!") (103. So he resolved to turn them out of the land. But We drowned him and all who were with him.) (104. And We said to the Children of Israel after him: "Dwell in the land, then, when the final and the last promise comes near, We shall bring you altogether as mixed crowd.")

### The Nine Signs of Musa

Allah tells us that He sent Musa with nine clear signs, which provided definitive proof that his prophethood was real and that what he was conveying from the One Who had sent him to Fira`wn was true. These clear signs were: his staff, his hand, the years of famine, the sea, the flood, the locusts, the lice, the frogs and the blood. This was the view of Ibn `Abbas. Muhammad bin Ka`b said, "They were his hand and his staff, the five signs mentioned in Al-A`raf, and destruction of wealth and the rock." Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Ash-Sha`bi and Qatadah said: "They are his hand, his staff, the years of famine, the failure of the crops, the flood, the locusts, the lice, the frogs and the blood."

(فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِينَ)

(Yet they remained arrogant, and they were of those people who were criminals,) 7:133 (meaning, despite all these signs and their witnessing of them, they disbelieved them and belied

them wrongfully and arrogantly, although they were themselves were convinced of them, so they did not have any effect on them. By the same token, (Allah tells His Messenger here,) `if We were to respond to what these people are asking you for, who have said that they will not believe in you until you cause springs to gush forth throughout the land for them, they would not respond or believe except if Allah willed.' As Fira`wn said to Musa, even though he had witnessed the signs which he brought,

(إِنِّي لَأَظُنُّكَ يَمُوسَىٰ مَسْحُورًا)

("O Musa! I think you are indeed bewitched. ") It was said that this meant he thought he was a sorcerer, but Allah knows best. These nine signs which were mentioned by the Imams (scholars) quoted above are what is referred to here, and in the Ayah :

(وَأَلْقَ عَصَاكَ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَانٌّ وَلَّىٰ مُدْبِرًا وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ يَمُوسَىٰ لَا تَخَفْ)

("And throw down your stick!" But when he saw it moving as if it were a snake, he turned in flight, and did not look back. (It was said:) "O Musa ! Fear not.") until His saying,

(فِي تِسْعِ آيَاتٍ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ)

(among the nine signs (you will take) to Fir`awn and his people. Verily, they are a people who are rebellious.) )27:10-12( These Ayat include mention of the stick and the hand, and the rest of the nine signs are mentioned in detail in Surat Al-A`raf. Musa was also given many other signs, such as striking the rock with his staff and water flowing from it, their being shaded with clouds, manna and quails, and other signs which were bestowed upon the Children of Israel after they had left the land of Egypt. But here Allah mentions the nine signs which were witnessed by his people in Egypt. These became evidence against them, because they stubbornly rejected them out of disbelief. So Musa said to Fira`wn:

(لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَمَا أَنزَلَ هَؤُلَاءِ إِلَّا رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ بِصَائِرٍ)

("Verily, you know that these signs have been sent down by none but the Lord of the heavens and the earth. ) meaning, as proof and evidence of the truth of what I have brought to you.

(وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّكَ يَفِرْعَوْنَ مُتَّبِعًا)

(And I think you are indeed, O Fir`awn, doomed to destruction!) i.e., bound to be destroyed. This was the view of Mujahid and Qatadah. Ibn `Abbas said: "It means cursed." Ibn `Abbas and Ad-Dahhak said:

(مَتَّبُورًا)

(doomed to destruction.) means defeated. As Mujahid said, "doomed" includes all of these meanings.

### The Destruction of Fir`awn and His People

(فَأَرَادَ أَنْ يَسْتَفِزَّهُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ)

(So he resolved to turn them out of the land.) means, he wanted to expel them and drive them out.

(فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُ وَمَنْ مَعَهُ جَمِيعًا وَقُلْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ لِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اسْكُنُوا الْأَرْضَ)

(But We drowned him and all who were with him. And We said to the Children of Israel after him: "Dwell in the land...") This is good news for Muhammad , a foretelling of the conquest of Makkah, even though this Surah was revealed in Makkah before the Hijrah. Similarly, the people of Makkah wanted to expel the Prophet from the city, as Allah says in two Ayat:

(وَإِنْ كَادُوا لَيَسْتَفِزُّوكَ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ لِيُخْرِجُوكَ مِنْهَا)

(And verily, they were about to frighten you so much as to drive you out from the land...) )17:76-77( Hence Allah caused His Messenger to inherit Makkah, so he entered it by force, according to the better-known of the two opinions, and he defeated its people then out of kindness and generosity, he let them go, just as Allah caused the Children of Israel, who had been oppressed, to inherit the land, east and west, and to inherit the land of Fir`awn's people, with its farmland, crops and treasures. As Allah said,

(كَذَلِكَ وَأَوْرَثْنَاهَا بِنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ )

(thus We caused the Children of Israel to inherit them. ) (26:59). Here Allah says:

وَقُلْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ لِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اسْكُنُوا الْأَرْضَ  
فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعَدُ الْآخِرَةِ جِئْنَا بِكُمْ لَفِيقًا )

(And We said to the Children of Israel after him: "Dwell in the land, then, when the final and the last promise comes near, We shall bring you altogether as mixed crowd.") meaning, all of you, you and your enemies. Ibn `Abbas, Qatadah and Ad-Dahhak said, "It means all together."

(وَبِالْحَقِّ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ وَبِالْحَقِّ نَزَلَ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا  
مُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا - وَقُرْآنًا فَرَقْنَاهُ لِتَقْرَأَهُ عَلَى  
النَّاسِ عَلَى مَكْتَبٍ وَنَزَّلْنَاهُ تَنْزِيلًا )

(105. And with truth We have sent it down, and with truth it has descended. And We have sent you as nothing but a bearer of glad tidings, and a warner.) (106. And a Qur'an which We have divided (into parts), in order that you might recite it to men at intervals. And We have revealed it by stages.)

### The Revelation of the Qur'an in Stages

Allah tells us that His Book, the Glorious Qur'an, has been sent with truth, i.e., it contains the truth, as Allah says:

(لَكِنِ اللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ أَنْزَلَهُ بِعِلْمِهِ  
وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَشْهَدُونَ)

(But Allah bears witness to that which He has sent down unto you; He has sent it down with His knowledge, and the angels bear witness) 4:166( meaning, it contains the knowledge which Allah wanted to teach to you, with His rulings, commands and prohibitions.

(وَبِالْحَقِّ نَزَلَ)

(and with truth it has descended.) means, "It has been sent down to you, O Muhammad, preserved and protected, not contaminated or mixed with anything else, with nothing added or taken away. It has come to you with the truth, brought down by one mighty in power, trustworthy and strong, one who is obeyed by the higher group (angels)."

(وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ)

(And We have sent you) O Muhammad

(إِلَّا مُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا)

(as nothing but a bearer of glad tidings and a warner). a bearer of glad tidings for the believers who obey you and a warner to the disbelievers who disobey you.

(وَقَرَأْنَا فَرَقَنَاهُ)

(And (it is) a Qur'an which We have divided), The word translated here as "We have divided" may be read in two ways. If it is read as "Faraqnahu", with no Shaddah, the meaning is: 'We have made it depart from Al-Lawh Al-Mahfuz to Bayt Al-'Izzah in the lowest heaven, then it was revealed in stages to the Messenger of Allah, according to events, over a period of twenty-three years.' This was narrated by `Ikrimah from Ibn `Abbas. It was also narrated that Ibn `Abbas read it as "Farraqnahu", with a Shaddah, meaning, 'We revealed it Ayah by Ayah, and have explained it and made it clear.' Hence Allah says:

(لِتَقْرَأَهُ عَلَى النَّاسِ)

(in order that you might recite it to men), meaning, convey it to the people and recite it to them,

(عَلَى مَكْتٍ)

(at intervals.) meaning slowly.

(وَنَزَّلْنَاهُ تَنْزِيلًا)

(And We have revealed it by stages.) means, little by little.

(قُلْ ءَامِنُوا بِهِ أَوْ لَا تُؤْمِنُوا إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ  
مِنْ قَبْلِهِ إِذَا يُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ يَخِرُّونَ لِلأَذْقَانِ سُجَّدًا -  
وَيَقُولُونَ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّنَا إِنْ كَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّنَا لَمَفْعُولًا  
- وَيَخِرُّونَ لِلأَذْقَانِ يَبْكُونَ وَيَزِيدُهُمْ خُشُوعًا )

(107. Say: "Believe in it or do not believe (in it). Verily, those who were given knowledge before it, when it is recited to them, fall down on their chins (faces) in humble prostration.")

(108. And they say: "Glory be to our Lord! Truly, the promise of our Lord must be fulfilled.")

(109. And they fall down on their chins (faces) weeping and it increases their humility.)

## Those Who were given Knowledge before truly admit the Qur'an

Allah says to His Prophet Muhammad :

(قُلْ)

(Say) O Muhammad to these disbelievers concerning what you have brought to them of this Glorious Qur'an:

(ءَامِنُوا بِهِ أَوْ لَا تُؤْمِنُوا)

("Believe in it (the Qur'an) or do not believe (in it).) meaning, it is all the same whether you believe in it or not, for it is true in and of itself. It was revealed by Allah, Who mentioned it previously in the Books that He revealed to other Messengers. Hence He says:

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ)

(Verily, those who were given knowledge before it,) meaning righteous people among the People of the Book, who adhered to their Books and appreciated them without distorting them.

(إِذَا يُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ)

(when it is recited to them,) means, when this Qur'an is recited to them,

(يَخِرُّونَ لِلْأَذْقَانِ سُجَّدًا)

(fall down on their chins (faces) in humble prostration. ) means, to Allah, in gratitude for the blessing He has bestowed on them by considering them fit to live until they met this Messenger to whom this Book was revealed. Hence they say:

(سُبْحَانَ رَبِّنَا)

(Glory be to our Lord!), meaning, they extol and glorify their Lord for His perfect power and for not delaying the fulfillment of the promise which He made through His earlier Prophets, that He would send Muhammad . Hence they said:

(سُبْحَانَ رَبِّنَا إِنْ كَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّنَا لَمَفْعُولًا)

(Glory be to our Lord! Truly, the promise of our Lord must be fulfilled.)

(وَيَخِرُّونَ لِلْأَذْقَانِ يَبْكُونَ)

(And they fall down on their chins (faces) weeping) means, in submission to Allah, may He be glorified, and in expression of their belief and faith in His Book and His Messenger .

(وَيَزِيدُهُمْ حُشُوعًا)

(and it increases their humility.) means, it increases them in faith and submission. As Allah says:

(وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَءَاتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ )

(While as for those who accept guidance, He increases their guidance and bestows on them their Taqwa. ) (47:17).

(وَيَخِرُّونَ)

(And they fall down) is a description rather than an action (i.e., this is a further description of their humility as referred to in Ayah 107; it does not imply that they prostrate twice).

(قُلْ اَدْعُوا اللّٰهَ اَوْ اَدْعُوا الرَّحْمٰنَ اَيًّا مَّا تَدْعُوْا  
فَلَهُ الْاَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنٰى وَلَا تَجْهَرُ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا  
تُخَافِتْ بِهَا وَابْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ سَبِيْلًا - وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ  
لِلّٰهِ الَّذِى لَمْ يَخْذْ وِلْدًا وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهٗ شَرِيْكٌ فِى  
الْمُلْكِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهٗ وِلىٌّ مِّنَ الدُّلِّ وَكَبْرُهٗ تَكْبِيْرًا )

(110. Say: "Invoke Allah or invoke Ar-Rahman (the Most Gracious), by whatever name you invoke Him (it is the same), for to Him belong the Best Names. And offer your Salah (prayer) neither aloud nor in a low voice, but follow a way between.) (111. And say: "All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has not begotten a son, and Who has no partner in (His) dominion, nor is He low to have a supporter. And magnify Him with all magnificence.")

### To Allah belong the Most Beautiful Names

Allah says:

(قُلْ)

(Say) O Muhammad, to these idolators who deny that Allah possesses the attribute of mercy and refuse to call Him Ar-Rahman,

ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَنَ أَيًّا مَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ  
الْأَسْمَاءَ الْحُسْنَى

("Invoke Allah or invoke Ar-Rahman (the Most Gracious), by whatever name you invoke Him (it is the same), for to Him belong the Best Names.) meaning, there is no difference between calling on Him as Allah or calling on Him as Ar-Rahman, because He has the Most Beautiful Names, as He says:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ  
وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

(He is Allah, beside Whom none has the right to be worshipped but He the All-Knower of the unseen and the seen. He is the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.) (59:22) Until His saying;

لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ  
وَالْأَرْضِ

(To Him belong the Best Names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorify Him.) 59:24( Makhul reported that one of the idolators heard the Prophet saying when he was prostrating: "O Most Gracious, O Most Merciful." The idolator said, he claims to pray to One, but he is praying to two! Then Allah revealed this Ayah. This was also narrated from Ibn ` Abbas, and by Ibn Jarir.

### The Command to recite neither loudly nor softly

(وَلَا تَجْهَرُ بِصَلَاتِكَ)

(And offer your Salah neither aloud) Imam Ahmad reported that Ibn ` Abbas said: "This Ayah was revealed when the Messenger of Allah was preaching underground in Makkah."

(وَلَا تَجْهَرُ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافِتُ بِهَا)

(And offer your Salah neither aloud nor in a low voice,) Ibn ` Abbas said: "When he prayed with his Companions, he would recite Qur'an loudly, and when the idolators heard that, they insulted the Qur'an, and the One Who had revealed it and the one who had brought it. So Allah said to His Prophet :

(وَلَا تَجْهَرُ بِصَلَاتِكَ)

(And offer your Salah (prayer) neither aloud) means, do not recite it aloud, lest the idolators hear you and insult the Qur'an,

(وَلَا تُخَافِتُ بِهَا)

(nor in a low voice,) means, nor recite it so quietly that your companions cannot hear the Qur'an and learn it from you.

(وَابْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا)

(but follow a way between. )" This was also reported in the Two Sahihs. Ad-Dahhak also narrated something similar from Ibn ` Abbas, and added: "When he migrated to Al-Madinah, this no longer applied, and he recited as he wished." Muhammad bin Ishaq said that Ibn ` Abbas said, "When the Messenger of Allah recited Qur'an quietly while he was praying, the (idolators) would disperse and refuse to listen to him; if one of them wanted to hear some of what he was reciting in his prayer, he would try to listen without anyone seeing him, because he was afraid of them. If he realized that anybody knew he was listening, he would go away lest they harm him, so he would stop listening. If the Prophet lowered his voice, those who wanted to listen to his recitation could not hear anything, so Allah revealed,

(وَلَا تَجْهَرُ بِصَلَاتِكَ)

(And offer your Salah neither aloud) meaning, do not recite aloud, lest those who want to listen disperse for fear of attracting unwelcome attention,

(وَلَا تُخَافِتُ بِهَا)

(nor in a low voice,) but do not make your voice so soft that the one who is trying to listen without being seen cannot hear anything at all. Perhaps he will pay attention to some of what he hears and benefit from it.

(وَابْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا)

(but follow a way between. )" This was the view of `Ikrimah, Al-Hasan Al-Basri and Qatadah that this Ayah was revealed concerning recitation in prayer. It was narrated from Ibn Mas`ud: "Do not make it so soft that no one can hear it except yourself."

## Declaration of Tawhid

(وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا)

(And say: "All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has not begotten a son...") because Allah has stated that the Most Beautiful Names belong to Him, and has declared Himself to be above having any faults or defects.

(وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمُلْكِ)

(And say: "All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has not begotten a son, and Who has no partner in (His) dominion...") indeed, He is Allah, (the) One, the Self-Sufficient Master, Who begets not, nor was He begotten, and there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him.

(وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وَلِيٌّ مِّنَ الدُّلِّ)

(nor He is low to have a supporter.) means, He is not so humble or weak that He needs to have a helper or supporter or adviser, rather He Alone, with no partner or associate, may He be exalted, is the Creator of all things and is the One Who is running and controlling them by His will, with no partner or associate.

(وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وَلِيٌّ مِّنَ الدُّلِّ)

(nor He is low to have a supporter.) Mujahid said: He does not form an alliance with anyone, nor does He seek the support or help of anyone.

(وَكَبِّرْهُ تَكْبِيرًا)

(And magnify Him with all magnificence.) means, glorify and extol Him far above whatever the transgressors and aggressors say. Ibn Jarir recorded that Al-Qurazi used to say about this Ayah,

(وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا)

(And say: "All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has not begotten a son...") that the Jews and Christians said that Allah has taken a son; the Arabs said, "At Your service, You have no partner except the partner You have, and You possess him and whatever he owns;" and the Sabians and Magians said, "If it were not for the supporters of Allah, He would be weak." Then Allah revealed this Ayah :

وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ  
شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمُلْكِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وِليٌّ مِّنَ الدُّلِّ  
وَكَبَّرَهُ تَكْبِيرًا )

(And say: "All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has not begotten a son, and Who has no partner in (His) dominion, nor is He low to have a supporter. And magnify Him with all magnificence.") End of Tafsir Surah Subhan )Surat Al-Isra'(. And to Allah be the praise and blessings.

## The Tafsir of Surat Al-Kahf

(Chapter - 18)

Which was revealed in Makkah

**What has been mentioned about the Virtues of this Surah and the first and last ten Ayat, which provide protection from the Dajjal**

Imam Ahmad recorded that Al-Bara' said: "A man recited Al-Kahf and there was an animal in the house which began acting in a nervous manner. He looked, and saw a fog or cloud overhead. He mentioned this to the Prophet , who said:

«أَقْرَأَ فُلَانٌ، فَإِنَّهَا السَّكِينَةُ تَنْزِلُ عِنْدَ الْقُرْآنِ أَوْ  
تَنْزَلَتْ لِلْقُرْآنِ»

(Keep on reciting so and so, for this is the tranquillity which descends when one reads Qur'an or because of reading Qur'an;) This was also recorded in the Two Sahihs. This man who recited it was Usayd bin Al-Hudayr, as we have previously mentioned in our Tafsir of Surat Al-Baqarah. Imam Ahmad recorded from Abu Ad-Darda' that the Prophet said:

«مَنْ حَفِظَ عَشْرَ آيَاتٍ مِنْ أَوَّلِ سُورَةِ الْكَهْفِ  
عَصِمَ مِنَ الدَّجَالِ»

(Whoever memorizes ten Ayat from the beginning of Surat Al-Kahf will be protected from the Dajjal.) This was also recorded by Muslim, Abu Dawud, An-Nasa'i and At-Tirmidhi. According to the version recorded by At-Tirmidhi,

«مَنْ حَفِظَ ثَلَاثَ آيَاتٍ مِنْ أَوَّلِ الْكَهْفِ»

(Whoever memorizes three Ayat from the beginning of Al-Kahf.) He said, it is "Hasan Sahih. " In his Mustadrak, Al-Hakim recorded from Abu Sa`id that the Prophet said:

«مَنْ قَرَأَ سُورَةَ الْكَهْفِ فِي يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ أَضَاءَ لَهُ  
مِنَ النُّورِ مَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ الْجُمُعَتَيْنِ»

(Whoever recites Surat Al-Kahf on Friday, it will illuminate him with light from one Friday to the next.) Then he said: "This Hadith has a Sahih chain, but they (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) did not record it." Al-Hafiz Abu Bakr Al-Bayhaqi also recorded it in his Sunan from Al-Hakim, then he narrated with his own chain that the Prophet said:

«مَنْ قَرَأَ سُورَةَ الْكَهْفِ كَمَا نَزَلَتْ، كَانَتْ لَهُ  
نُورًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ»

(Whoever recites Surat Al-Kahf as it was revealed, it will be a light for him on the Day of Resurrection.)

(بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ)

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

(الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ الْكِتَابَ وَلَمْ  
يَجْعَلْ لَهُ عِوَجًا - فَيَمَّا لِيُذِرَ بِأَسَا شَدِيدًا مِّنْ لَّدُنْهُ  
وَيُبَشِّرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ  
لَهُمْ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا - مَّا كَثِيرِينَ فِيهِ أَبَدًا - وَيُذِرَ الَّذِينَ  
قَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا - مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ وَلَا  
لِآبَائِهِمْ كَبُرَتْ كَلِمَةً تَخْرُجُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ إِنْ  
يَقُولُونَ إِلَّا كَذِبًا )

(1. All praise is due to Allah, Who has sent down to His servant the Book, and has not placed therein any crookedness.) (2. (He has made it) straight to give warning of a severe punishment from Him, and to give good news to the believers, who do righteous deeds, that they shall have a fair reward.) (3. They shall abide therein forever.) (4. And to warn those who say, "Allah has

begotten a child.") (5. No knowledge have they of such a thing, nor had their fathers. Mighty is the word that comes out of their mouths. They utter nothing but a lie.)

## The Revelation of the Qur'an brings both Good News and a Warning

In the beginning of this Tafsir, we mentioned that Allah, praises His Holy Self at the beginning and end of matters, for He is the One to be praised in all circumstances, all praise and thanks be to Him, in the beginning and in the end. He praises Himself for revealing His Mighty Book to His Noble Messenger Muhammad , which is the greatest blessing that Allah has granted the people of this earth. Through the Qur'an, He brings them out of the darkness into light. He has made it a Book that is straight, neither distorted nor confusion therein. It clearly guides to a straight path, plain and manifest, giving a warning to the disbelievers and good news to the believers. This is why Allah says:

(وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ عِوَجًا)

(and has not placed therein any crookedness.) meaning, there is nothing twisted or confusing about it. But He has made it balanced and straightforward as He said;

(قَيِّمًا)

((He has made it) straight), meaning straightforward,

(لِيُنذِرَ بَأْسًا شَدِيدًا مِّن لَّدُنْهُ)

(to give warning of a severe punishment from Him,) meaning, to those who oppose His Prophet and disbelieve in His Book, He issues a warning of severe punishment hastened in this world and postponed to the world Hereafter.

(مِّن لَّدُنْهُ)

(from Him) means, from Allah. For none can punish as He punishes and none is stronger or more reliable than Him.

(وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(and to give good news to the believers,) means, those who believe in this Qur'an and confirm their faith by righteous actions.

(أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا)

(that they shall have a fair reward.) means, a beautiful reward from Allah.

(مَّاكُتِّينَ فِيهِ)

(They shall abide therein) means, in what Allah rewards them with, and that is Paradise, where they will live forever.

(أَبَدًا)

(forever.) means, for always, never ending or ceasing to be.

(وَيُنذِرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا )

(And to warn those who say, "Allah has begotten a child.") Ibn Ishaq said: "These are the pagan Arabs, who said, ` We worship the angels who are the daughters of Allah."

(مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ)

(No knowledge have they of such a thing, ) meaning, this thing that they have fabricated and made up.

(وَلَا لِآبَائِهِمْ)

(nor had their fathers.) meaning, their predecessors.

(كَبُرَتْ كَلِمَةً)

(Mighty is the word) This highlights the seriousness and enormity of the lie they have made up. Allah says:

(كَبُرَتْ كَلِمَةً تَخْرُجُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ)

(Mighty is the word that comes out of their mouths.) meaning, it has no basis apart from what they say, and they have no evidence for it apart from their own lies and fabrications. Hence Allah says:

(إِنْ يَقُولُونَ إِلَّا كَذِبًا)

(They utter nothing but a lie.)

**Reason why this Surah was revealed**

Muhammad bin Ishaq mentioned the reason why this Surah was revealed. He said that an old man from among the people of Egypt who came to them some forty-odd years ago told him, from `Ikrimah that Ibn `Abbas said: "The Quraysh sent An-Nadr bin Al-Harith and `Uqbah bin Abi Mu`it to the Jewish rabbis in Al-Madinah, and told them: `Ask them (the rabbis) about Muhammad, and describe him to them, and tell them what he is saying. They are the people of the first Book, and they have more knowledge of the Prophets than we do.' So they set out and when they reached Al-Madinah, they asked the Jewish rabbis about the Messenger of Allah . They described him to them and told them some of what he had said. They said, `You are the people of the Tawrah and we have come to you so that you can tell us about this companion of ours.' They (the rabbis) said, `Ask him about three things which we will tell you to ask, and if he answers them then he is a Prophet who has been sent (by Allah); if he does not, then he is saying things that are not true, in which case how you will deal with him will be up to you. Ask him about some young men in ancient times, what was their story For theirs is a strange and wondrous tale. Ask him about a man who travelled a great deal and reached the east and the west of the earth. What was his story And ask him about the Ruh (soul or spirit) -- what is it If he tells you about these things, then he is a Prophet, so follow him, but if he does not tell you, then he is a man who is making things up, so deal with him as you see fit.' So An-Nadr and `Uqbah left and came back to the Quraysh, and said: `O people of Quraysh, we have come to you with a decisive solution which will put an end to the problem between you and Muhammad. The Jewish rabbis told us to ask him about some matters,' and they told the Quraysh what they were. Then they came to the Messenger of Allah and said, `O Muhammad, tell us,' and they asked him about the things they had been told to ask. The Messenger of Allah said,

«أَخْبِرْكُمْ غَدًا عَمَّا سَأَلْتُمْ عَنْهُ»

(I will tell you tomorrow about what you have asked me.) but he did not say `If Allah wills.' So they went away, and the Messenger of Allah stayed for fifteen days without any revelation from Allah concerning that, and Jibril, peace be upon him, did not come to him either. The people of Makkah started to doubt him, and said, `Muhammad promised to tell us the next day, and now fifteen days have gone by and he has not told us anything in response to the questions we asked.' The Messenger of Allah felt sad because of the delay in revelation, and was grieved by what the people of Makkah were saying about him. Then Jibril came to him from Allah with the Surah about the companions of Al-Kahf, which also contained a rebuke for feeling sad about the idolators. The Surah also told him about the things they had asked him about, the young men and the traveler. The question about the Ruh was answered in the Ayah;

(وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ)

(And they ask you concerning the Ruh (the spirit); say: "The Ruh...") )17:85(.

(فَلَعَلَّكَ بَخِيعٌ نَفْسِكَ عَلَىٰ ءَاثِرِهِمْ إِن لَّمْ يُؤْمِنُوا  
 بِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ أَسَفًا - إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ  
 زِينَةً لَّهَا لِنَبْلُوَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا - وَإِنَّا  
 لَجَاعِلُونَ مَا عَلَيْهَا صَعِيدًا جُرُزًا )

(6. Perhaps, you would kill yourself in grief, over their footsteps, because they believe not in this narration.) (7. Verily, we have made that which is on earth an adornment for it, in order that We may test which of them are best in deeds.) (8. And verily, We shall make all that is on it bare, dry soil.)

**Do not feel sorry because the Idolators do not believe Allah consoles His Messenger for his sorrow over the idolators because they would not believe and keep away from him. He also said:**

(فَلَا تَذْهَبْ نَفْسُكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَتٍ)

(So destroy not yourself in sorrow for them.) )35:8(

(وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ)

(And grieve not over them.) )16:127(

(لَعَلَّكَ بَخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ أَلَّا يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ )

(It may be that you are going to kill yourself with grief, that they do not become believers.) )26:3( meaning, maybe you will destroy yourself with your grief over them. Allah says:

(فَلَعَلَّكَ بَخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ عَلَىٰ ءَاثَرِهِمْ إِن لَّمْ يُؤْمِنُوا  
بِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ)

(Perhaps, you would kill yourself in grief, over their footsteps, because they believe not in this narration.) meaning the Qur'an.

(أَسَفًا)

(in grief) Allah is saying, 'do not destroy yourself with regret.' Qatadah said: "killing yourself with anger and grief over them." Mujahid said: "with anxiety." These are synonymous, so the meaning is: 'Do not feel sorry for them, just convey the Message of Allah to them. Whoever goes the right way, then he goes the right way only for the benefit of himself. And whoever goes astray, then he strays at his own loss, so do not destroy yourself in sorrow for them.'

**This World is the Place of Trial Then Allah tells us that He has made this world a temporary abode, adorned with transient beauty, and He made it a place of trial, not a place of settlement. So He says:**

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَهَا لِنَبْلُوَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ  
أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا )

(Verily, we have made that which is on earth an adornment for it, in order that We may test which of them are best in deeds.) Abu Maslamah narrated from Abu Nadrah from Abu Sa`id that the Messenger of Allah said:

«إِنَّ الدُّنْيَا حُلْوَةٌ خَضِرَةٌ، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مُسْتَخْلِفُكُمْ فِيهَا  
فَنَظِرٌ مَّاذَا تَعْمَلُونَ، فَاتَّقُوا الدُّنْيَا، وَاتَّقُوا النِّسَاءَ،  
فَإِنَّ أَوَّلَ فِتْنَةٍ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ كَانَتْ فِي النِّسَاءِ»

(This world is sweet and green, and Allah makes you generations succeeding one another, so He is watching what you will do. Beware of (the beguilements of) this world and beware of women, for the first affliction that Children of Israel suffered from was that of women.) Then Allah tells us that this world will pass away and come to an end, as He says:

وَإِنَّا لَجَاعِلُونَ مَا عَلَيْهَا صَعِيدًا جُرُزًا )

(And verily, We shall make all that is on it bare, dry soil.) means, `after having adorned it, We will destroy it and make everything on it bare and dry, with no vegetation or any other benefit.' Al-`Awfi reported from Ibn `Abbas that this means everything on it would be wiped out and destroyed. Mujahid said: "a dry and barren plain." Qatadah said, "A plain on which there are no trees or vegetation."

(أَمْ حَسِبْتَ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا  
مِنْ ءَايَاتِنَا عَجَبًا - إِذْ أَوَى الْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ  
فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا ءَاتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ  
أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا - فَضْرَبْنَا عَلَى ءَاذَانِهِمْ فِي الْكَهْفِ  
سِنِينَ عَدَدًا - ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِنَعْلَمَ أَيُّ الْحِزْبَيْنِ  
أَحْصَى لِمَا لَبِثُوا أَمَدًا )

(9. Do you think that the people of Al-Kahf and Ar-Raqim were a wonder among Our signs) (10. When the young men fled for refuge to Al-Kahf. They said: "Our Lord! Bestow on us mercy from

Yourself, and facilitate for us our affair in the right way!") (11. Therefore, We covered up their hearing in Al-Kahf for a number of years.) (12. Then We raised them up, that We might test which of the two parties was best at calculating the time period they tarried.)

**The Story of the People of Al-Kahf Here Allah tells us about the story of the people of Al-Kahf in brief and general terms, then He explains it in more detail. He says:**

(أَمْ حَسِبْتَ)

(Do you think) -- O Muhammad --

(أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا مِنْ آيَاتِنَا عَجَبًا)

(that the people of Al-Kahf and Ar-Raqim were a wonder among Our signs) meaning, their case was not something amazing compared to Our power and ability, for the creation of the heavens and earth, the alternation of night and day and the subjugation of the sun, moon and heavenly bodies, and other mighty signs indicate the great power of Allah and show that He is able to do whatever He wills. He is not incapable of doing more amazing things than the story of the people of the Cave. Similarly, Ibn Jurayj reported Mujahid saying about,

(أَمْ حَسِبْتَ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا مِنْ آيَاتِنَا عَجَبًا)

(Do you think that the people of Al-Kahf and Ar-Raqim were a wonder among Our signs) "Among Our signs are things that are more amazing than this." Al-`Awfi reported that Ibn `Abbas said:

(أَمْ حَسِبْتَ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا مِنْ آيَاتِنَا عَجَبًا)

(Do you think that the people of Al-Kahf and Ar-Raqim were a wonder among Our signs) "What I have given to you of knowledge, the Sunnah and the Book is far better than the story of the people of Al-Kahf and Ar-Raqim." Muhammad bin Ishaq said: "(It means) I have not shown My creatures a proof more amazing than the story of the people of the Al-Kahf and Ar-Raqim." iAl-Kahf refers to a cave in a mountain, which is where the young men sought refuge. With regard to the word Ar-Raqim, Al-`Awfi reported from Ibn `Abbas that it is a valley near Aylah. This was also said )in another narration( by `Atiyah Al-`Awfi and Qatadah. Ad-Dahhak said: "As for Al-Kahf, it is a cave in the valley, and Ar-Raqim is the name of the valley." Mujahid said, "Ar-Raqim refers to their buildings." Others said it refers to the valley in which their cave was.

`Abdur-Razzaq recorded that Ibn `Abbas said about Ar-Raqim: "Ka`b used to say that it was the town." Ibn Jurayj reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "Ar-Raqim is the mountain in which the cave was." Sa`id bin Jubayr said, "Ar-Raqim is a tablet of stone on which they wrote the story of the people of the Cave, then they placed it at the entrance to the Cave."

(إِذْ أَوْى الْفِتْيَةَ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا )

((Remember) when the young men fled for refuge to Al-Kahf. They said: "Our Lord! Bestow on us mercy from Yourself, and facilitate for us our affair in the right way!") Here Allah tells us about those young men who fled from their people for the sake of their religion, fearing persecution. So they fled taking refuge in the cave of a mountain, where they hid from their people. When they entered the cave, they asked Allah to show mercy and kindness towards them,

(رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً)

(Our Lord! Bestow on us mercy from Yourself,) meaning, `give us Your mercy and conceal us from our people.'

(وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا)

(and facilitate for us our affair in the right way.) means, direct our matter well, i.e., grant us a good end. As was reported in the Hadith:

«وَمَا قُضِيَ لَنَا مِنْ قَضَاءٍ فَاجْعَلْ عَاقِبَتَهُ رَشَدًا»

(Whatever You have decreed for us, make its consequences good).

(فَضَرَبْنَا عَلَى آذَانِهِمْ فِي الْكَهْفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدًا )

(Therefore, We covered up their hearing in the cave for a number of years.) meaning, `We caused them to sleep when they entered the cave, and they slept for many years.'

(ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ)

(Then We raised them up) from that slumber, and one of them went out with his Dirhams (silver coins) to buy them some food, as it will be discussed in more detail below. Allah says:

(ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِنَعْلَمَ أَيُّ الْحِزْبَيْنِ)

(Then We raised them up, that We might test which of the two parties) meaning, the two parties who disputed about them,

(أَحْصَى لِمَا لَبِثُوا أَمَدًا)

(was best at calculating the time period that they tarried.) It was said that this refers to how long they stayed in the cave.

(نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّهُمْ فِتْيَةٌ ءَامَنُوا  
بِرَبِّهِمْ وَزِدْنَاهُمْ هُدًى - وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ  
قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَنْ  
نَدْعُوَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَهًا لَقَدْ قُلْنَا إِذَا شَطَطًا - هَؤُلَاءِ  
قَوْمُنَا اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ ءَالِهَةً لَوْ لَّا يَأْتُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ  
بِسُلْطَانٍ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِمْ فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ  
كَذِبًا - وَإِذِ اعْتَزَلْتُمُوهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ  
فَأْوُوا إِلَى الْكَهْفِ يَنْشُرْ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ  
وَيَهَيِّئْ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مَرْفَقًا )

(13. We narrate unto you their story with truth: Truly, they were young men who believed in their Lord (Allah), and We increased them in guidance.) (14. And We made their hearts firm and strong when they stood up and said: "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, never shall we call upon any god other than Him; if we did, we should indeed have uttered an enormity in disbelief.) (15. These our people have taken for worship gods other than Him. Why do they not bring for them a clear authority And who does more wrong than he who invents a lie against Allah.) (16. (The young men said to one another:) "And when you withdraw from them, and that which they worship, except Allah, then seek refuge in the cave; your Lord will open a way for you from His mercy and will make easy for you your affair.")

### **Their Belief in Allah and their Retreat from their People**

From here Allah begins to explain the story in detail. He states that they were boys or young men, and that they were more accepting of the truth and more guided than the elders who had

become stubbornly set in their ways and clung to the religion of falsehood. For the same reason, most of those who responded to Allah and His Messenger were young people. As for the elders of Quraysh, most of them kept to their religion and only a few of them became Muslims. So Allah tells us that the people of the cave were young men. Mujahid said, "I was informed that some of them wore some kind of earrings, then Allah guided them and inspired them to fear Him, so they recognized His Oneness, and bore witness that there is no god besides Him."

(وَزَدْنَهُمْ هُدًى)

(and We increased them in guidance.) From this and other similar Ayat, several scholars, such as Al-Bukhari and others, understood that faith may increase, that it may vary in degrees, and that it may fluctuate. Allah says:

(وَزَدْنَهُمْ هُدًى)

(and We increased them in guidance.) as He said elsewhere:

(وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَءَاتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ )

(While as for those who accept guidance, He increases their guidance and bestows on them their Taqwa.) 47:17(

(فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فزَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَهُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ)

(As for those who believe, it has increased their faith, and they rejoice.) 9:124(

(لِيَزِدَّادُوا إِيمَانًا مَعَ إِيمَانِهِمْ)

(...that they may grow more in faith along with their (present) faith.) 48:4( There are other Ayat indicating the same thing. It has been mentioned that they were followers of the religion of Al-Masih `Isa, `Isa bin Maryam, but Allah knows best. It seems that they lived before the time of Christianity altogether, because if they had been Christians, the Jewish rabbis would not have cared about preserving because of their differences. We have mentioned above the report from Ibn `Abbas that the Quraysh sent a message to the Jewish rabbis in Al-Madinah to ask them for things with which they could test the Messenger of Allah, and they told them to ask him about these young men, and about Dhul-Qarnayn (the man who traveled much) and about the Ruh. This indicates that this story was something recorded in the books of the People of the Book, and that it came before Christianity. And Allah knows best.

# (وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ)

(And We made their hearts firm and strong when they stood up and said: "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth,) Here Allah is saying: "We gave them the patience to go against their people and their city, and to leave behind the life of luxury and ease that they had been living." Several of the earlier and later Tafsir scholars have mentioned that they were sons of the kings and leaders of Byzantium, and that they went out one day to one of the festivals of their people. They used to gather once a year outside the city, and they would worship idols and offer sacrifices to them. They had an arrogant, tyrannical king who was called Decianus, who commanded and encouraged the people to do that. When the people went out to attend this gathering, these young men went out with their fathers and their people, and when they saw their people's actions with clear insight, they realized that the prostrations and sacrifices the people were offering to their idols should only be dedicated to Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth. Each of them started to withdraw from his people and keep aloof from them. The first one of them to move away on his own went and sat in the shade of a tree, then another came and sat with him, then another came and sat with them, then four more followed suit one by one. None of them knew the others, but they were brought together by the One Who instilled faith in their hearts. As it says in the Hadith recorded by Al-Bukhari with an incomplete chain of narrators from `A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her), the Messenger of Allah said:

«الْأَرْوَاحُ جُنُودٌ مُجَبَّدَةٌ، فَمَا تَعَارَفَ مِنْهَا انْتَلَفَ  
وَمَا تَنَافَرَ مِنْهَا اخْتَلَفَ»

(Souls are like recruited soldiers. Those that recognize one another will come together, and those that do not recognize one another will turn away from each another). Muslim also recorded this in his Sahih from the Hadith of Suhayl from his father from Abu Hurayrah from the Messenger of Allah . People say that similar qualities or characteristics are what bring people together. So each of the young men was trying to conceal what he really believed from the others, out of fear of them, not knowing that they were like him. Then one of them said, "O people, you know by Allah that only one thing is making you leave your people and isolate yourselves from them, so let each one of you say what it is in his case." Another said, "As for me, by Allah I saw what my people are doing and I realized that it was false, and that the only One Who deserves to be worshipped Alone with out partner or associate is Allah Who created everything, the heavens, the earth and everything in between." Another said, "By Allah, the same thing happened to me." The others said the same, and they all agreed and became brothers in faith. They adopted a particular location as a place of worship and began worshipping Allah there, but their people found out about them and told their king about them. The king ordered them to appear before him, and asked them about their beliefs. They told him the truth and called him to Allah, as Allah says about them:

(وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ  
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَنْ نَدْعُوَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَهًا)

(And We made their hearts firm and strong when they stood up and said: "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, never shall we call upon any god other than Him...") "Never" (Lan) implies an absolute and eternal negation, meaning, 'this will never happen, and if we were to do that it would be false.' So Allah says about them:

(لَقَدْ قُلْنَا إِذَا شَطَطْنَا)

(...if we did, we should indeed have uttered an enormity in disbelief.) meaning, untruth and utter falsehood.

(هَؤُلَاءِ قَوْمَنَا اتَّخَذُوا مِن دُونِهِ ءَالِهَةً لَّوَلَا يَأْتُونَ عَلَيْهِم بِسُلْطَنٍ بَيِّنٍ)

(These, our people, have taken for worship gods other than Him (Allah). Why do they not bring for them a clear authority) meaning, why do they not produce some clear evidence and genuine proof for their behavior

(فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا)

(And who does more wrong than he who invents a lie against Allah.) They said: 'but by saying that they are lying transgressors.' It was said that when they called their king to believe in Allah, he refused, and warned and threatened them. He commanded them to be stripped of their clothing bearing the adornments of their people, then he gave them some time to think about the situation, hoping that they would return to their former religion. This was a way that Allah showed kindness for them, because during that time they managed to escape from him and flee from persecution for the sake of their religion. This is what is prescribed in the Shari`ah during times of trial and persecution -- a person who fears for his religion should flee from his persecutors, as was reported in the Hadith:

«يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَكُونَ خَيْرُ مَالِ أَحَدِكُمْ غَنَمًا يَتَّبَعُ بِهَا  
شَعَفَ الْجِبَالِ وَمَوَاقِعَ الْقَطْرِ يَفِرُّ بِدِينِهِ مِنَ  
الْفِتَنِ»

(Soon there will come a time when the best wealth any of you can have will be sheep, which he can follow to the tops of the mountains and places where rain falls, (fleeing) for the sake of his religion from persecution. ) In such cases, it is allowed to seclude oneself from people, but this is not prescribed in any other case, because by such seclusion one loses the benefits of congregational and Friday prayers. These young men were determined to flee from their people, and Allah decreed that for them, as He says about them,

(وَإِذِ اعْتَزَلْتُمُوهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ)

(And when you withdraw from them, and that which they worship, except Allah,) meaning, when you depart from them and follow a different religion, opposing their worship of others besides Allah, then separate from them in a physical sense too,

(فَأْوُوا إِلَى الْكَهْفِ يَنْشُرْ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِّن رَّحْمَتِهِ)

(then seek refuge in the cave; your Lord will open a way for you from His mercy) meaning, He will bestow His mercy upon you, by which He will conceal you from your people.

(وَيُهَيِّئْ لَكُمْ مِّنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مِّرْفَقًا)

(and will make easy for you your affair.) means, He will give you what you need. So they left and fled to the cave where they sought refuge. Then their people noticed they were missing, and the king looked for them, and it was said when he could not find them that Allah concealed them from him so that he could not find any trace of them or any information about them, as Allah concealed His Prophet Muhammad and his Companion )Abu Bakr( As-Sddiq, when they sought refuge in the cave of Thawr. The Quraysh idolators came in pursuit, but they did not find him even though they passed right by him. When the Messenger of Allah noticed that As-Sddiq was anxious and said, "O Messenger of Allah, if one of them looks down at the place of his feet, he will see us," he told him:

«يَا أَبَا بَكْرٍ مَا ظَنُّكَ بِاِثْنَيْنِ اللَّهُ تَالِثُهُمَا؟»

(O Abu Bakr, what do you think of two who have Allah as their third) And Allah said:

(إِلَّا تَنْصُرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِيًا إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُودٍ لَّمْ تَرَوْهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا السُّفْلَى وَكَلِمَةَ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ)

(If you help him not, for Allah did indeed help him when the disbelievers drove him out, the second of the two; when they were in the cave, he said to his companion: "Do not grieve, surely, Allah is with us." Then Allah sent down His tranquillity upon him, and strengthened him with forces which you saw not, and made the word of those who disbelieved the lower, while the Word of Allah became the higher; and Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.) 9:40 (-The story of this cave (Thawr) is far greater and more wondrous than that of the people of the Cave.

وَتَرَى الشَّمْسَ إِذَا طَلَعَتْ تَزَاوَرُ عَنْ كَهْفِهِمْ  
ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَإِذَا غَرَبَتْ تَقْرِضُهُمْ ذَاتَ الشَّمَالِ  
وَهُمْ فِي فَجْوَةٍ مِّنْهُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ مَن يَهْدِ  
اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَن يُضِلِّ لَن تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا  
مُّرْشِدًا )

(17. And you might have seen the sun, when it rose, declining to the right from their cave, and when it set, turning away from them to the left, while they lay in the midst of the cave. That is from the Ayat of Allah. He whom Allah guides, he is the rightly-guided; but he whom He sends astray, for him you will find no guardian to lead him.)

**The Location of the Cave This indicates that the entrance to the cave faced north, because Allah tells us that when the sun was rising, sunlight entered the cave**

(ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ)

(the right), meaning that the shade decreased towards the right, as Ibn `Abbas, Sa`id bin Jubayr and Qatadah said:

(تَزَاوَرُ)

(declining) means leaning. Every time the sun rises on the horizon, its rays decline until there is nothing left in such a place when it reaches its zenith. So Allah said,

(وَإِذَا غَرَبَتْ تَقْرِضُهُمْ ذَاتَ الشَّمَالِ)

(and when it set, turning away from them to the left,) meaning, it entered their cave from the left of its entrance, which means from the west. This proves what we say, and it is clear to anyone who thinks about the matter and has some knowledge of astronomy and the paths of the sun, moon and stars. If the entrance of the cave faced east, nothing would have entered it when the sun set, and if it faced the direction of the Qiblah (in this case, south), nothing would have entered it at the time of sunrise or sunset, and the shadows would have leaned neither to the right nor the left. If it had faced west, nothing would have entered it at the time of sunrise, until after the sun had passed its zenith, and would have stayed until sunset. This supports what we have said, and to Allah is the praise. Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid and Qatadah said that "turning away from them" means that it would shine on them and then leave them. Allah has told us this, and He wants us to understand it and ponder its meaning, but He did not tell

us the location of this cave, i.e., in which country on earth it is, because there is no benefit for us in knowing that, and no legislative objective behind it. If there was any spiritual or religious interest that could be served by our knowing that, Allah and His Messenger would have taught us about it, as the Prophet said:

«مَا تَرَكْتُ شَيْئًا يُقَرِّبُكُمْ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَيُبَاعِدُكُمْ مِنَ النَّارِ إِلَّا وَقَدْ أَعَلَّمْتُكُمْ بِهِ»

(I have not left anything that will bring you closer to Paradise and keep you further away from Hell but I have certainly taught you about it.) So Allah has told us about the features of the cave, but He did not tell us where it is, and He said,

(وَتَرَى الشَّمْسَ إِذَا طَلَعَتْ تَزَاوَرُ عَنْ كَهْفِهِمْ)

(And you might have seen the sun, when it rose, declining from their cave.) Malik narrated from Zayd bin Aslam, "Leaning."

(ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَإِذَا غَرَبَتْ تَقَرِّضُهُمْ ذَاتَ الشَّمَالِ وَهُمْ فِي فَجْوَةٍ مِنْهُ)

(the right, and when it set, turning away from them to the left, while they lay in the midst of the cave.) meaning, the sun entered the cave without touching them, because if it had touched them, it would have burnt their bodies and clothes. This was the view of Ibn `Abbas.

(ذَلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ)

(That is from the Ayat of Allah), how He guided them to this cave where He kept them alive, and the sun and wind entered the cave preserving their bodies. Allah says,

(ذَلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ)

(That is from the Ayat of Allah.) Then He says:

(مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ)

(He whom Allah guides, he is the rightly-guided;) meaning that He is the One Who guided these young men to true guidance among their people, for the one whom Allah guides is truly guided, and the one whom Allah leaves astray will find no one to guide him.

(وَتَحْسَبُهُمْ أَيْقَاظًا وَهُمْ رُقُودٌ وَنُقَلِّبُهُمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ  
وَذَاتَ الشَّمَالِ وَكَلْبُهُمْ بَاسِطٌ ذِرَاعَيْهِ بِالْوَصِيدِ لَوِ  
اطَّلَعْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَوَلَّيْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِرَارًا وَلَمُلِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ  
رُعبًا )

(18. And you would have thought them awake, whereas they were asleep. And We turned them on their right and on their left sides, and their dog stretching forth his two forelegs at the Wasid. Had you happened upon them, you would certainly have turned back from them in flight, and would certainly have been filled with awe of them.)

### Their Sleep in the Cave

Some of the scholars mentioned that when Allah caused them to sleep, their eyelids did not close, lest disintegration took hold of them. If their eyes remained open to the air, this would be better for the sake of preservation. Allah says:

(وَتَحْسَبُهُمْ أَيْقَاظًا وَهُمْ رُقُودٌ)

(And you would have thought them awake, whereas they were asleep.) It was mentioned that when the wolf sleeps, it closes one eye and keeps one eye open, then it switches eyes while asleep.

(وَنُقَلِّبُهُمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَذَاتَ الشَّمَالِ)

(And We turned them on their right and on their left sides,) Ibn ` Abbas said: "If they did not turn over, the earth would have consumed them."

(وَكَالْبُهُمْ بَاسِطٌ ذِرَاعَيْهِ بِالْوَصِيدِ)

(and their dog stretching forth his two forelegs at the Wasid) Ibn ` Abbas, Mujahid, Sa` id bin Jubayr and Qatadah said: "The Wasid means the threshold." Ibn ` Abbas said: "By the door." It was said: "On the ground." The correct view is that it means on the threshold, i.e., at the door.

(إِنهَا عَلَيْهِمْ مُّوَصَدَةٌ )

(Verily, it shall be closed upon them) 104:8( Their dog lay down at the door, as is the habit of dogs. Ibn Jurayj said, "He was guarding the door for them." It was his nature and habit to lie down at their door as if guarding them. He was sitting outside the door, because the angels do not enter a house in which there is a dog, as was reported in As-Sahih, nor do they enter a

house in which there is an image, a person in a state of ritual impurity or a disbeliever, as was narrated in the Hasan Hadith. The blessing they enjoyed extended to their dog, so the sleep that overtook them overtook him too. This is the benefit of accompanying good people, and so this dog attained fame and stature. It was said that he was the hunting dog of one of the people which is the more appropriate view, or that he was the dog of the king's cook, who shared their religious views, and brought his dog with him. And Allah knows best. Allah says:

(لو اطلعت عليهم لوليت منهم فرارًا ولملت منهم رعبًا)

(Had you happened upon them, you would certainly have turned back from them in flight, and would certainly have been filled with awe of them.) meaning that Allah made them appear dreadful, so that no one could look at them without being filled with terror, because of the frightening appearance they had been given. This was so that no one would come near them or touch them until the appointed time when their sleep would come to an end as Allah willed, because of the wisdom, clear proof and great mercy involved in that.

(وكذلك بعثهم ليتساءلوا بينهم قال قائل منهم كم لبيتم قالوا لبينا يومًا أو بعض يوم قالوا ربكم أعلم بما لبيتم فابعثوا أحدكم بورقكم هذه إلى المدينة فلينظر أيها أزكى طعامًا فليأتكم برزق منه وليتلطف ولا يشعرن بكم أحداً - إثم إن يظهرُوا عليكم يرجموكم أو يعيدوكم في ملتهم ولن تفلحوا إذا أبدًا )

(19. Likewise, We woke them that they might question one another. A speaker among them said: "How long have you stayed (here)" They said: "We have stayed a day or part of a day." They said: "Your Lord knows best how long you have stayed (here). So send one of you with this silver coin of yours to the town, and let him find out which is the Azka food, and bring some of that to you. And let him be careful and let no man know of you." (20. "For, if they come to know of you, they will stone you or turn you back to their religion; and in that case you will never be successful.")

(كم لبيتم)

(How long have you stayed (here)) meaning, `how long have you slept`

قَالُوا لَبِئْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ

(They said: "We have stayed a day or part of a day.") because they entered the cave at the beginning of the day, and they woke up at the end of the day, which is why they then said,

أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالُوا رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِئْتُمْ

("...or a part of a day." They said: "Your Lord knows best how long you have stayed..." meaning, `Allah knows best about your situation.' It seems that they were not sure about how long they had slept, and Allah knows best. Then they turned their attention to more pressing matters, like their need for food and drink, so they said:

فَابْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ

(So send one of you with this silver coin of yours) They had brought with them some Dirhams (silver coins) from their homes, to buy whatever they might need, and they had given some in charity and kept some, so they said:

فَابْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَذِهِ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ

(So send one of you with this silver coin of yours to the town,) meaning to their city, which they had left. The definite article indicates that they were referring to a known city.

فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَيُّهَا أَزْكَى طَعَامًا

(and let him find out which is the Azka food.) Azka means "purest", as Allah says elsewhere,

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ مَا زَكَا مِنْكُمْ  
مَنْ أَحَدٌ أَبَدًا

(And had it not been for the grace of Allah and His mercy on you, not one of you would ever have been pure )Zaka( from sins) )24:21( and

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى

(Indeed whosoever purifies himself )Tazakka( shall achieve success.) )87:14( From the same root also comes the word Zakah, which makes one's wealth good and purifies it.

(وَلِيَتَلَطَّفْ)

(And let him be careful) meaning when he goes out buying food and coming back. They were telling him to conceal himself as much as he could,

(وَلَا يُشْعِرَنَّ بِكُمْ أَحَدًا إِنَّهُمْ إِنْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ  
يَرْجُمُوكُمْ)

(and let no man know of you. For, if they come to know of you, they will stone you) means, 'if they find out where you are,'

(يَرْجُمُوكُمْ أَوْ يُعِيدُوكُمْ فِي مِلَّتِهِمْ)

(they will stone you or turn you back to their religion;) They were referring to the followers of Decianus, who they were afraid might find out where they were, and punish them with all kinds of torture until they made them go back to their former religion, or until they died, for if they agreed to go back to their (old) religion, they would never attain success in this world or the Hereafter. So they said:

(وَلَنْ تُفْلِحُوا إِذَا أَبَدًا)

(and in that case you will never be successful.)

(وَكَذَلِكَ أَغْتَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ  
وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا إِذْ يَتَنَزَّعُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ  
أَمْرَهُمْ فَقَالُوا ابْنُوا عَلَيْهِمْ بُيُوتًا رَبُّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ  
قَالَ الَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ  
مَسْجِدًا )

(21. And thus We made their case known, that they might know that the promise of Allah is true, and that there can be no doubt about the Hour. (Remember) when they (the people) disputed among themselves about their case, they said: "Construct a building over them; their Lord knows best about them," (then) those who won their point said: "We verily, shall build a place of worship over them.")

## How the People of the City came to know about Them; building a Memorial over the Cave

(وَكَذَلِكَ أَغْتَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ)

(And thus We made their case known,) means, 'We caused the people to find them.'

(لِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا)

(that they might know that the promise of Allah is true, and that there can be no doubt about the Hour.) Several scholars of the Salaf mentioned that the people of that time were skeptical about the Resurrection. `Ikrimah said: "There was a group of them who said that the souls would be resurrected but not the bodies, so Allah resurrected the people of the Cave as a sign and proof of resurrection." They mentioned that when they wanted to send one of their members out to the city to buy them something to eat, he disguised himself and set out walking by a different route, until he reached the city, which they said was called Daqus. He thought that it was not long since he left it, but in fact century after century, generation after generation, nation after nation had passed, and the country and its people had changed. He saw no local landmarks that he recognized, and he did not recognize any of the people, elite or commoners. He began to feel confused and said to himself, "Maybe I am crazy or deluded, maybe I am dreaming." Then he said, "By Allah, I am nothing of the sort, what I know I saw last night was different from this." Then he said, "I had better get out of here." Then he went to one of the men selling food, gave him the money he had and asked him to sell him some food. When the man saw the money he did not recognize it or its imprint, so he passed it to his neighbor and they all began to pass it around, saying, "Maybe this man found some treasure." They asked him who he was and where he got this money. Had he found a treasure Who was he He said, "I am from this land, I was living here yesterday and Decianus was the ruler." They accused him of being crazy and took him to the governor who questioned him about his circumstances, and he told him. He was confused about his situation. When he told them about it, they -- the king and the people of the city -- went with him to the cave, where he told them, "Let me go in first and let my companions know." It was said that the people did not know how he entered it, and that the people did not know about their story. It was also said that they did enter the cave and see them, and the king greeted them and embraced them. Apparently he was a Muslim, and his name was Tedosis. They rejoiced at meeting him and spoke with him, then they bid farewell to him and went back to sleep, then Allah caused them to die. And Allah knows best. A

(وَكَذَلِكَ أَغْتَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ)

(And thus We made their case known,) meaning, 'just as We caused them to sleep then woke them up physically intact, We made their story known to the people of that time.'

لِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَا رَيْبَ  
فِيهَا إِذْ يَتَنَزَّعُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَمْرَهُمْ)

(that they might know that the promise of Allah is true, and that there can be no doubt about the Hour. (Remember) when they (the people) disputed among themselves about their case, ) meaning, about Resurrection. Some believed in it and some denied it, so Allah made their discovery of the people of the cave evidence either in their favor or against them.

فَقَالُوا ابْنُوا عَلَيْهِم بُيُوتًا رَبُّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ)

(they said: "Construct a building over them; their Lord knows best about them,") meaning, seal the door of their cave over them, and leave them as they are.

قَالَ الَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِمُ  
مَسْجِدًا)

(those who won their point said: "We verily, shall build a place of worship over them.") Those who said this were the people of power and influence, but were they good people or not There is some debate on this point, because the Prophet said:

«لَعَنَ اللَّهُ الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَى اتَّخَذُوا قُبُورَ  
أَنْبِيَائِهِمْ وَصَالِحِيهِمْ مَسَاجِدَ»

(Allah has cursed the Jews and the Christians who took the graves of their Prophets and righteous people as places of worship) Warning against what they did. We have reported about the Commander of the faithful `Umar bin Al-Khattab that when he found the grave of Danyal (Daniel) in Iraq during his period of rule, he gave orders that news of this grave should be withheld from the people, and that the inscription containing mention of battles etc., that they found there should be buried.

(سَيَقُولُونَ ثَلَاثَةٌ رَّابِعُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةٌ  
سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًا بِالْغَيْبِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَبْعَةٌ  
وَتَأْمِنُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ قُل رَّبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِعِدَّتِهِمْ مَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ

إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ فَلَا تُمَارِ فِيهِمْ إِلَّا مِرَاءً ظَهْرًا وَلَا  
تَسْتَقْتِ فِيهِمْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا )

(22. They say they were three, the dog being the fourth among them; and they say they were five, the dog being the sixth, guessing at the unseen; and they say they were seven, and the dog being the eighth. Say: "My Lord knows best their number; none knows them but a few." So debate not except with the clear proof. And consult not any of them (about the people of the Cave).)

### Their Number

Allah tells us that people disputed over the number of the people of the Cave. The Ayah mentions three views, proving that there was no fourth suggestion. Allah indicates that the first two opinions are invalid, by saying,

(رَجْمًا بِالْغَيْبِ)

(guessing at the unseen), meaning that they spoke without knowledge, like a person who aims at an unknown target -- he is hardly likely to hit it, and if he does, it was not on purpose. Then Allah mentions the third opinion, and does not comment on it, or He affirms it by saying,

(وَتَأْمِنُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ)

(and the dog being the eighth.) indicating that this is correct and this is what happened.

(قُلْ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِعَدَّتِهِمْ)

(Say: "My Lord knows best their number...") indicating that the best thing to do in matters like this is to refer knowledge to Allah, because there is no need to indulge in discussing such matters without knowledge. If we are given knowledge of a matter, then we may talk about it, otherwise we should refrain.

(مَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ)

(none knows them but a few.) of mankind. Qatadah said that Ibn `Abbas said: "I am one of the few mentioned in this Ayah; they were seven. " Ibn Jurayj also narrated that `Ata' Al-Khurasani narrated from him, "I am one of those referred to in this Ayah," and he would say: "Their number was seven." Ibn Jarir recorded that Ibn `Abbas said:

(مَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ)

(none knows them but a few.) "I am one of the few, and they were seven." The chains of these reports narrated from Ibn `Abbas, which say that they were seven, are Sahih, and this is in accordance with what we have stated above.

(فَلَا تُمَارِ فِيهِمْ إِلَّا مِرَاءً ظَهْرًا)

(So debate not except with the clear proof.) meaning, gently and politely, for there is not a great deal to be gained from knowing about that.

(وَلَا تَسْتَفْتِ فِيهِمْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا)

(And consult not any of them (about the people of the Cave).) meaning, `They do not have any knowledge about it except what they make up, guessing at the unseen; they have no evidence from an infallible source. But Allah has sent you, O Muhammad, with the truth in which there is no doubt or confusion, which is to be given priority over all previous books and sayings.'

(وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَيْءٍ إِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذَلِكَ غَدًا - إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ وَادْكُرْ رَبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ وَقُلْ عَسَى أَنْ يَهْدِيَنِّي رَبِّي لِأَقْرَبَ مِنْ هَذَا رَشَدًا )

(23. And never say of anything, "I shall do such and such thing tomorrow.") (24. Except (with the saying), "If Allah wills!" And remember your Lord when you forget and say: "It may be that my Lord guides me to a nearer way of truth than this.")

### **Saying "If Allah wills" when determining to do Something in the Future**

Here Allah, may He be glorified, shows His Messenger the correct etiquette when determining to do something in the future; this should always be referred to the will of Allah, the Knower of the Unseen, Who knows what was and what is yet to be and what is not to be, and how it will be if it is to be. It was recorded in the Two Sahihs that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said:

«قَالَ سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ دَاوُدَ عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ: لَأُطَوِّقَنَّ اللَّيْلَةَ عَلَى سَبْعِينَ امْرَأَةً وَفِي رِوَايَةٍ: تِسْعِينَ امْرَأَةً، وَفِي رِوَايَةٍ: مِائَةَ امْرَأَةٍ تَلِدُ كُلُّ امْرَأَةٍ

مِنْهُنَّ غُلَامًا يُقَاتِلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، فَقِيلَ لَهُ وَفِي  
 رِوَايَةٍ قَالَ لَهُ الْمَلِكُ: قُلْ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ، فَلَمْ يَقُلْ،  
 فَطَافَ بِهِنَّ فَلَمْ تَلِدْ مِنْهُنَّ إِلَّا امْرَأَةً وَاحِدَةً نِصْفَ  
 إِنْسَانٍ، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:  
 وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، لَوْ قَالَ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَمْ يَحْنَثْ،  
 وَكَانَ دَرَكًا لِحَاجَتِهِ»

رواية وفي:

«وَلَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فُرُسَانًا أَجْمَعُونَ»

(Sulayman bin Dawud (peace be upon them both) said: "Tonight I will go around to seventy women )according to some reports, it was ninety or one hundred women( so that each one of them will give birth to a son who will fight for the sake of Allah." It was said to him, )according to one report, the angel said to him( "Say: ` If Allah wills", but he did not say it. He went around to the women but none of them gave birth except for one who gave birth to a half-formed child.) The Messenger of Allah said, (By the One in Whose hand is my soul, had he said, "If Allah wills," he would not have broken his oath, and that would have helped him to attain what he wanted. ) According to another report, (They would all have fought as horsemen in the cause of Allah.) At the beginning of this Surah we discussed the reason why this Ayah was revealed: when the Prophet was asked about the story of the people of the Cave, he said, "I will tell you tomorrow." Then the revelation was delayed for fifteen days. Since we discussed this at length at the beginning of the Surah, there is no need to repeat it here.

(وَأَذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ)

(And remember your Lord when you forget) It was said that this means, if you forget to say "If Allah wills", then say it when you remember. This was the view of Abu Al-`Aliyah and Al-Hasan Al-Basri. Hushaym reported from Al-A` mash from Mujahid that concerning a man who swears an oath, Ibn ` Abbas said "He may say ` If Allah wills' even if it is a year later." Ibn ` Abbas used to interpret this Ayah:

(وَأَذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ)

(And remember your Lord when you forget) in this way. Al-A` mash was asked, "Did you hear this from Mujahid" He said, "Layth bin Abi Salim told it to me." The meaning of Ibn ` Abbas' view, that a person may say "If Allah wills", even if it is a year later, is that if he forgets to say it when he makes the oath or when he speaks, and he remembers it later, even a year later, the Sunnah is that he should say it, so that he will still be following the Sunnah of saying "If

Allah wills", even if that is after breaking his oath. This was also the view of Ibn Jarir, but he stated that this does not make up for breaking the oath or mean that one is no longer obliged to offer expiation. What Ibn Jarir said is correct, and it is more appropriate to understand the words of Ibn Abbas in this way. And Allah knows best.

(وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَيْءٍ إِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذَٰلِكَ غَدًا إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ وَادْكُرْ رَبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ)

(And never say of anything, "I shall do such and such thing tomorrow." Except (with the saying), "If Allah wills!" And remember your Lord when you forget) At-Tabarani recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that this meant saying, "If Allah wills."

(وَقُلْ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَهْدِيَنِّي رَبِّي لِأَقْرَبَ مِنْ هَٰذَا رَشَدًا)

(and say: "It may be that my Lord guides me to a nearer way of truth than this.") meaning, `if you (O Prophet) are asked about something you know nothing about, ask Allah about it, and turn to Him so that He may guide you to what is right.' And Allah knows best.

(وَلَبِثُوا فِي كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلَاثَ مِئَةٍ سِنِينَ وَازْدَادُوا تِسْعًا - قُلِ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثُوا لَهُ غَيْبُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَبْصِرُ بِهِ وَأَسْمِعُ مَا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا يُشْرِكُ فِي حُكْمِهِ أَحَدًا )

(25. And they stayed in their cave three hundred years, adding nine.) (26. Say: "Allah knows best how long they stayed. With Him is the unseen of the heavens and the earth." How clearly He sees, and hears (everything)! They have no protector other than Him, and He makes none to share in His decision and His rule.)

### The Length of their Stay in the Cave

Here Allah tells His Messenger the length of time the people of the Cave spent in their cave, from the time when He caused them to sleep until the time when He resurrected them and caused the people of that era to find them. The length of time was three hundred plus nine years in lunar years, which is three hundred years in solar years. The difference between one hundred lunar years and one hundred solar years is three years, which is why after mentioning three hundred, Allah says, `adding nine.'

(قُلِ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثُوا)

(Say: "Allah knows best how long they stayed...") ` If you are asked about how long they stayed, and you have no knowledge of that and no revelation from Allah about it, then do not say anything. Rather say something like this:

(اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثُوا لَهُ غَيْبُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ)

(Allah knows best how long they stayed. With Him is (the knowledge of) the Unseen of the heavens and the earth.)" meaning, no one knows about that except Him, and whoever among His creatures He chooses to tell. What we have said here is the view of more than one of the scholars of Tafsir, such as Mujahid and others among the earlier and later generations.

(وَلَبِثُوا فِي كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلَاثَ مِئَةٍ سِنِينَ)

(And they stayed in their cave three hundred years.) Qatadah said, this was the view of the People of the Book, and Allah refuted it by saying:

(قُلِ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثُوا)

(Say: "Allah knows best how long they stayed...") meaning, that Allah knows better than what the people say. This was also the view of Mutarraf bin `Abdullah. However, this view is open to debate, because when the People of the Book said that they stayed in the cave for three hundred years, without the extra nine, they were referring to solar years, and if Allah was merely narrating what they had said, He would not have said,

(وَازِدَادُوا تِسْعًا)

(adding nine.) The apparent meaning of the Ayah is that Allah is stating the facts, not narrating what was said. This is the view of Ibn Jarir (may Allah have mercy on him). And Allah knows best.

(أَبْصِرْ بِهِ وَأَسْمِعْ)

(How clearly He sees, and hears (everything)!) He sees them and hears them. Ibn Jarir said, "The language used is an eloquent expression of praise." The phrase may be understood to mean, how much Allah sees of everything that exists and how much He hears of everything that is to be heard, for nothing is hidden from Him! It was narrated that Qatadah commented on this Ayah:

(أَبْصِرْ بِهِ وَأَسْمِعْ)

(How clearly He sees, and hears (everything)!) "No one hears or sees more than Allah."

(مَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا يُشْرِكُ فِي حُكْمِهِ  
أَحَدًا)

(They have no protector other than Him, and He makes none to share in His decision and His rule.) meaning, He, may He be glorified, is the One Who has the power to create and to command, the One Whose ruling cannot be overturned; He has no adviser, supporter or partner, may He be exalted and hallowed.

(وَإِذْ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ كِتَابِ رَبِّكَ لَا مُبَدِّلَ  
لِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مُلْتَحَدًا - وَاصْبِرْ  
نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ  
يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ  
الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا  
وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا )

(27. And recite what has been revealed to you (O Muhammad) of your Lord's Book. None can change His Words, and none will you find as refuge other than Him.) (28. And keep yourself (O Muhammad) patiently with those who call on their Lord morning and afternoon, seeking His Face; and let not your eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp and glitter of the life of the world; and obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance, and who follows his own lusts, and whose affair has been lost.)

### **The Command to recite the Qur'an and to patiently keep Company with the Believers**

Commanding His Messenger to recite His Holy Book and convey it to mankind, Allah says,

(لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ)

(None can change His Words,) meaning, no one can alter them, distort them or misinterpret them.

(وَلَنْ تَجِدَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مُلْتَحَدًا)

(and none will you find as a refuge other than Him.) It was reported that Mujahid said, "A shelter," and that Qatadah said, "A helper or supporter." Ibn Jarir said: "Allah is saying, `if you O Muhammad, do not recite what is revealed to you of the Book of your Lord, then you will have no refuge from Allah.'" As Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ  
لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ  
النَّاسِ

(O Messenger! Proclaim (the Message) which has been sent down to you from your Lord. And if you do not, then you have not conveyed His Message. Allah will protect you from mankind.))5:67(

إِنَّ الَّذِي فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لَرَادُّكَ إِلَى  
مَعَادٍ

(Verily, He Who has given you the Qur'an, will surely bring you back to the place of return.)  
)28:85( meaning, `He will call you to account for the duty of conveying the Message which He entrusted you with. '

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ  
وَالعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ

(And keep yourself patiently with those who call on their Lord morning and afternoon, seeking His Face;) meaning, sit with those who remember Allah, who say "La Ilaha Illallah", who praise Him, glorify Him, declare His greatness and call on Him, morning and evening, all the servants of Allah, whether rich or poor, strong or weak. It was said that this was revealed about the nobles of Quraysh when they asked the Prophet to sit with them on his own, and not to bring his weak Companions with him, such as Bilal, `Ammar, Suhayb, Khabbab and Ibn Mas`ud. They wanted him to sit with them on his own, but Allah forbade him from doing that, and said,

وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ

(And turn not away those who invoke their Lord, morning and afternoon.) Allah commanded him to patiently content himself with sitting with those people (the weak believers), and said:

(وَأَصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ  
وَالْعَشِيِّ)

(And keep yourself patiently with those who call on their Lord morning and afternoon...) Imam Muslim recorded in his Sahih that Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas who said: "There was a group of six of us with the Prophet . The idolators said, `Tell these people to leave so they will not offend us.' There was myself, Ibn Mas`ud, a man from Hudayl, Bilal and two other men whose names I have forgotten. Allah's Messenger thought to himself about whatever Allah willed he should think about, then Allah revealed:

(وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ  
يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ)

(And turn not away those who invoke their Lord, morning and afternoon.) Only Muslim reported this; excluding Al-Bukhari.

(وَلَا تَعُدُّ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الدُّنْيَا)

(and let not your eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp and glitter of the life of the world;) Ibn `Abbas said, `(this means) do not favor others over them, meaning do not seek the people of nobility and wealth instead of them.'

(وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا)

(and obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance) means, those who are distracted by this world from being committed to the religion and from worshipping their Lord.

(وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا)

(and whose affair (deeds) has been lost.) means, his actions and deeds are a foolish waste of time. Do not obey him or admire his way or envy what he has. As Allah says elsewhere:

(وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْهُمْ  
زَهْرَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ وَرَزَقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ  
وَأَبْقَىٰ)

(And strain not your eyes in longing for the things We have given for enjoyment to various groups of them, the splendor of the life of this world, that We may test them thereby. But the provision of your Lord is better and more lasting.) )20:131(

(وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ  
فَلْيُكْفُرْ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ  
سُرَادِقُهَا وَإِنْ يَسْتَغِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ  
يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهُ بِئْسَ الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا )

(29. And say: "The truth is from your Lord." Then whosoever wills, let him believe; and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve. Verily, We have prepared for the wrongdoers, a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them. And if they ask for drink, they will be granted water like Al-Muhl, that will scald their faces. Terrible is the drink, and an evil Murtafaq!)

### **The Truth is from Allah, and the Punishment of Those Who do not believe in it**

Allah says to His Messenger Muhammad : "Say to the people, `What I have brought to you from your Lord is the truth, in which there is no confusion or doubt."

(فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ)

(Then whosoever wills, let him believe; and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve.) This is a type of threat and stern warning, after which Allah says,

(إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا)

(Verily, We have prepared), meaning made ready,

(لِلظَّالِمِينَ)

(for the wrongdoers,) meaning those who disbelieve in Allah, His Messenger and His Book,

(نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا)

(a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them.) Ibn Jurayj said that Ibn `Abbas said,

(أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا)

(a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them.) "A wall of fire."

(وَإِنْ يَسْتَغِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي  
الْوُجُوهَ)

(And if they ask for drink, they will be granted water like Al-Muhl, that will scald their faces.) Ibn `Abbas said; "Al-Muhl is thick water which is similar to the sediment in oil." Mujahid said, "It is like blood and pus." `Ikrimah said, "It is the thing that is heated to the ultimate temperature." Others said: "It is everything that is melted." Qatadah said, "Ibn Mas'ud melted some gold in a grove, and when it became liquid and foam rose to the top, he said, this is the thing that is most like Al-Muhl." Ad-Dahhak said: "The water of Hell is black, and it itself is black and its people are black." There is nothing contradictory in these comments, for Al-Muhl includes all of these unpleasant characteristics, it is black, evil-smelling, thick and hot, as Allah said,

(يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ)

(it will scald their faces.) meaning because of its heat. When the disbeliever wants to drink it and brings it close to his face, it will scald it so that the skin of his face falls off into it. Sa`id bin Jubayr said, "When the people of Hell get hungry, they will ask for relief from it, and they will be given the tree of Zaqqum from which they will eat. The tree will tear off the skin of their faces, and if anyone who knew them were to pass by, he would recognize the skin of their faces in the tree. Then they will feel thirsty, so they will ask for drink, and they will be granted water like Al-Muhl, that is what has been heated to the ultimate temperature. When it is brought near their mouths, the flesh of their faces from which the skin has been torn off will be baked." After describing this drink in these horrifying qualities, Allah says:

(يُسِّى الشَّرَابُ)

(Terrible is the drink,) meaning, how awful this drink is. Similarly, He says in another Ayah:

(وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ)

(and be given to drink boiling water so that it cuts up their bowels.) 47:15

(تُسْقَى مِنْ عَيْنٍ آَنِيةٍ)

(They will be given to drink from a boiling spring.) 88:5

(وَبَيْنَ حَمِيمٍ ءَانٍ)

(They will go between it (Hell) and the fierce boiling water.) 55:44

(وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا)

(and an evil Murtafaq!) means, how evil a place is the Fire to dwell and rest and gather. As Allah says elsewhere:

(إِنَّهَا سَاءَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا)

(Evil indeed it (Hell) is as an abode and as a place to rest in.) 25:66

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ إِنَّا لَا  
نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا - أَوْلِيكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ  
عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ  
أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِّنْ  
سُنْدُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُّتَّكِنِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ نِعْمَ  
الْأَثَابُ وَحَسُنَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا)

(30. Verily, as for those who believed and did righteous deeds, certainly We shall not make the reward of anyone to be lost who does his (righteous) deeds in the most perfect manner.) (31. These! For them will be Jannatu `Adn; wherein rivers flow beneath them; therein they will be adorned with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of Sundus and Istabraq. They will be Muttaki'in therein on Ara'ik. How good is the reward, and what an excellent Murtafaq!)

### The Reward of those Who believe and do Righteous Deeds

When Allah mentions the state of those who are doomed, He follows that by mentioning the blessed who believed in Allah and believed what His Messengers brought, those who did the righteous deeds that they commanded them to do. They will have Jannatu `Adn. `Adn means lasting.

(تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ)

(wherein rivers flow beneath them,) means, from beneath its rooms and dwellings. Fir`awn said:

(وَهَذِهِ الْأَنْهَارُ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِي)

(and these rivers flowing beneath me...) 43:51

(يُحَلَّوْنَ)

(they will be adorned) means, with jewelry.

(فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ)

(with bracelets of gold,) Allah says elsewhere:

(وَلَوْوُأُ وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ)

(and pearls and their garments therein will be of silk) 22:23. This is explained in more detail here, where Allah says:

(وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِنْ سُنْدُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ)

(and they will wear green garments of Sundus and Istabraq.) Sundus refers to a fine garment, like a shirt and the like, and Istabraq is thick and shiny velvet.

(مُتَّكِنِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ)

(They will be Muttaki'in therein on Ara'ik.) The word Muttaki'in implies lying down, or it was said that it means sitting with one's legs crossed, which is closer to the meaning here. In a Sahih Hadith, the Prophet said:

«أَمَّا أَنَا فَلَا آكُلُ مُتَّكِنًا»

(As for me, I do not eat sitting with legs crossed (Muttaki'an)). Ara'ik is the plural of Arikah, which is a bed under a canopy. And Allah knows best.

(نِعْمَ الثَّوَابُ وَحَسُنَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا)

(How good is the reward, and what an excellent place of rest (Murtafaq)!) means, how blessed is Paradise as a reward for their good deeds. And what an excellent Murtafaq means, and how good a place to dwell and rest and stay. Previously, Allah had said of Hell,

(بِئْسَ الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا)

(Terrible is the drink, and an evil place of rest (Murtafaq)!) 18:29(. In a similar way, He contrasts the two (Paradise and Hell) in Surat Al-Furqan, where He says:

(إِنَّهَا سَاءَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا )

(Evil indeed it (Hell) is as an abode, and as a place to rest in.) 25:66(. Then He mentions the qualities of the believers, then says:

(أُولَئِكَ يُجْزَوْنَ الْعُرْفَةَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَيُلَقَّوْنَ فِيهَا تَحِيَّةً وَسَلَامًا - خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا حَسُنَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا )

(Those will be rewarded with the highest place because of their patience. Therein they shall be met with greetings and the word of peace and respect. Abiding therein excellent it is as an abode, and as a place to rest in.) 25:75-76(

(وَاضْرِبْ لَهُم مَّثَلًا رَجُلَيْنِ جَعَلْنَا لِأَحَدِهِمَا جَنَّتَيْنِ مِنْ أَعْنَبٍ وَحَفَفْنَاهُمَا بِنَخْلٍ وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمَا زُرْعًا - كِلْتَا الْجَنَّتَيْنِ آتَتْ أُكْلَهَا وَلَمْ تَظْلِمْ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا وَفَجَّرْنَا خِلْفَهُمَا نَهْرًا - وَكَانَ لَهُ ثَمَرٌ فَقَالَ لِصَاحِبِهِ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَنَا أَكْثَرُ مِنْكَ مَالًا وَأَعَزُّ نَفْرًا - وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ قَالَ مَا أَظُنُّ أَنْ تَبِيدَ هَذِهِ أَبَدًا - وَمَا أَظُنُّ السَّاعَةَ قَائِمَةً وَلَئِنْ رُدِدْتُ إِلَى رَبِّي لأَجِدَنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهَا مُنْقَلَبًا )

(32. And put forward to them the example of two men: unto one of them We had given two gardens of grapes, and We had surrounded both with date palms; and had put between them green crops (cultivated fields).) (33. Each of those two gardens brought forth its produce, and failed not in the least therein, and We caused a river to gush forth in the midst of both.) (34. And he had Tamar, and he said to his companion in the course of discussion: "I am greater than you in wealth and have a mightier entourage.") (35. And he went into his garden while having been unjust to himself. He said: "I do not think that this will ever perish.") (36. "And I do not think the Hour will ever come, and if indeed I am brought back to my Lord, I surely, shall find better than this when I return to Him.")

## The Example of the Rich Idolators and the Poor Muslims

After mentioning the idolators who were too arrogant to sit with the poor and weak among Muslims, showing off before them with their wealth and noble lineage, Allah then gives a parable for them of two men, one of whom Allah gave two gardens of grapes, surrounded with palm trees and cultivated with crops throughout. All of the trees and plants were abundantly fruitful, providing readily accessible, good quality produce. Allah says:

(كَلِمَا الْجَنَّتَيْنِ آتَتْ أُكْلَهَا)

(Each of those two gardens brought forth its produce,) meaning, produced its fruits,

(وَلَمْ تَظْلِمِ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا)

(and failed not in the least therein,) meaning, nothing at all was diminishing.

(وَفَجَّرْنَا خِلْفَهُمَا نَهْرًا)

(and We caused a river to gush forth in the midst of both.) means, rivers were flowing through them here and there.

(وَكَانَ لَهُ ثَمْرٌ)

(And he had Tamar,) It was said that what was meant here was wealth, and it was said that what was meant were fruits, which is the more apparent meaning here. This is also supported by the alternative recitation, Thumr, which is the plural of Thamrah (fruit) just as Khushb is the plural of Khashab (wood). Others recite it as Tamar.

(فَقَالَ)

(and he said) the owner of the two gardens

(لصاحبه وهو يحاوره)

(to his companion in the course of discussion) means, while he was disputing with him and boasting to him and showing off,

(أَنَا أَكْثَرُ مِنْكَ مَالًا وَأَعَزُّ نَفَرًا)

(I am greater than you in wealth and have a mightier entourage.) meaning, 'I have more servants, attendants and children.' Qatadah said, "This, by Allah, is the wish of the immoral to have a lot of wealth and a large entourage. R

(وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ)

(And he went into his garden having been unjust to himself.) meaning, in his disbelief, rebellion, arrogance and denial of the Hereafter.

(قَالَ مَا أَظُنُّ أَنْ تَبِيدَ هَذِهِ أَبَدًا)

(He said: "I do not think this will ever perish.") Thus he was allowing himself to be deceived because of the plants, fruits and trees that he saw, and the rivers flowing through the different parts of his gardens. He thought that it could never come to an end or cease or be destroyed. This was because of his lack of understanding and the weakness of his faith in Allah, and because he was enamored with this world and its adornments, and because he disbelieved in the Hereafter. So he said:

(وَمَا أَظُنُّ السَّاعَةَ قَائِمَةً)

("And I do not think the Hour will ever come...") meaning, will ever happen

(وَلَئِنْ رُدِدْتُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي لَأَجِدَنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهَا مُنْقَلَبًا)

(and if indeed I am brought back to my Lord, I surely shall find better than this when I return to Him.) meaning, 'if there is a Hereafter and a return to Allah, then I will have a better share than this with my Lord, for if it were not that I am dear to Him, He would not have given me all this.' As Allah says elsewhere:

(وَلَئِنْ رُجِّعْتُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي إِنَّ لِي عِنْدَهُ لَلْحُسْنَىٰ)

(But if I am brought back to my Lord, surely there will be for me the best with Him.) )41:50(

(أَفَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ بِآيَاتِنَا وَقَالَ لَأُوتَيْنَّ مَالًا  
وَوَلَدًا )